

# A Comparative Study of Race and Caste with Reference to W. E. B. Du Bois and B. R. Ambedkar

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## **Abstract**

African Americans are the people of African descent who were brought to America as slaves. Earlier, they were also called as Negroes, later blacks, (with hyphen) African-Americans and now the African Americans. Like the African Americans, Dalit or ex-untouchable is group of humanity in India who were oppressed by the social slavery of Brahmanism. They were oppressed just because they were born in the lower caste. Racism and casteism are to the two social evils that suppressed the African Americans in America and Dalits in India. One would notice an attempt of comparison between the bitter experience of African Americans and Dalits. This article sustains the literary corpus of the margins. I have chosen Du Bois and Ambedkar for comparative discourse with their respective question of Race in America and Caste in India particular. I strongly argue that Ambedkar has been got influenced by Dubois.

**Keywords:** Race, Caste, Dubois, Ambedkar, Brahmanism, Black, Untouchable

The relationship between race and caste is firmly established in the opinions many scholars, thinker, philosopher and activists today. The racial ‘caste’ or ‘color-caste’ became frequent expressions in use. Both legislative bodies and courts in the US, UK and South Asia are facing pressure to acknowledge —caste discrimination and —racial discrimination as kin to base on caste and race. This line of thought linking race and caste has been developed especially by scholars from the United States and India over many decades. Typically, these authors compared past and present racial discrimination in the United States with the caste discrimination in India. National human Genome Institute defines race as: Race is a social construct used to group people. Race was constructed as a hierarchal human-grouping system, generating racial classifications to identify, distinguish and marginalize some groups across nations, regions and the world. Race divides human populations into groups often based on physical appearance, social factors and cultural backgrounds. (National human Genome Institute) As a researcher, W. E. B. Du Bois presented a paper at the American Negro Academy entitled —The Conservation of Races. In his paper he asserted that: The American Negro has always felt an intense personal interest in discussions as to the origins and destinies of races: primarily because back of most discussions of race with which he is familiar, have lurked certain assumptions as to his natural abilities, as to his political, intellectual and moral status, which he felt were wrong. He has, consequently, been led to deprecate and minimize race distinctions, to believe intensely that out of one blood God created all nations, and to speak of human brotherhood as though it were the possibility of an already dawning to-morrow. (Du Bois, the Conservation of Races) Du Bois explain the theory of social change. He proposed the following definition

of race: It is a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life. (qtd. in Bloom 121)

By some Du Bois was viewed as a black leader who was justifying the white system of racism by placing the blame for black failures on the on the shoulders of those black who were in oppressive situations. However, this was not the case. Du Bois presented a powerful argument against institutional racism. Du Bois said that by discouraging blacks from entering certain trades and labor unions, and through segregations and political and social oppression, white unions, and through segregation and political and social oppression, white society condemned all African American behind a wall of social justice. Du Bois joined the faculty of Atlanta University in 1897 as a professor of history an economics. In *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois* he wrote:

I was going to study the facts, any and all facts, concerning the American Negro and his plight, and by measurement and comparison and research, work up to any valid generalization which I could. I entered this primarily with utilitarian object of reform and uplift; but nevertheless, I wanted to do the work with scientific accuracy. Thus, in my own sociology, because of firm belief in a changing racial group, I easily grasped the idea of a changing developing society rather than a fixed social structure. (Du Bois 206)

While end route to Atlanta University in July and August of 1897, Du Bois collected data in Farmville, Virginia, a town he selected because many blacks in his Philadelphia study were from this area. Again, much like the Philadelphia study, Du Bois noted irregular employment opportunities as problematic.

Du Bois asserts that blacks in the United States are unable to simply be Americans; they are daily bombarded with information that reminds them of their status in society. While European Americans are rarely reminded that they are white, black Americans were unable to function in society without having to address issues of racism and prejudice. Segregation, lynching, and general injustice were constant reminders that to be black was not be an American in the sense that blacks could not participate in the benefits of society at the same level as whites.

Du Bois 'work *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) contained more of his powerful statements concerning the state of race relations in the United States and his perspectives on the effects of racism. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois again address the problems of institutionalized racism. By referring to institutionalized as veil that made black virtually invisible to whites, and kept blacks from attaining a clear view of their own circumstances, Du Bois provided the reader with imagery that represented the situation in which blacks found themselves in the United States.

In *The Souls of Blacks Folk* Du Bois wrote It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one 's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one 's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (Du Bois 2)

Further, Du Bois suggested that racism grow from the exploitation of people and that exploitation affects all parties involved both the exploiter and the exploited. Because of his knowledge of history, Du Bois could point out the fact race as mean of categorizing people only gained wide acceptance after the onset of slavery in the New World. Races were then assigned certain psychological and physical characteristic that had little to do with the individual members of racial group. The need to make a distinction between people of different races grows from two sources; the first, when a group of people is increasingly identified slovenly through the marks of their oppression; when there was contrast between Du Bois and

Booker Washington, appeared radical. As Washington gained popularity, he spoke of black taking up their financial system and working within the segregated society in which they lived to achieve their financial goals. Du Bois was willing, at first, to be an advocate for Washington; however, as time progresses, Du Bois became less satisfied with Washington's perspective. While Washington urged the creation of black society and not making demands on white society, Du Bois pushes for perfect equality before the law for black. In *W. E. B. Du Bois and the Evolution of Race* Stephanie J. Shaw observes: Du Bois's paper seems designed to begin redirecting the conversation, first, away from one that was defined by notions of —one blood, which in this case means monogenism and biology, and, second, one increasingly focused on race relations. Du Bois's intent, it seems, was to move the attention to the idea of —race itself. (Shaw online library)

Du Bois studied inner-city life in Philadelphia and published the result in 1899, *The Philadelphia Negro*. In that study, Du Bois observed that: —The city was a social environment of excuse, listless despair, careless indulgence, and lack of inspiration to work (qtd. in Horne 178)

Du Bois noted that the inner city functioned as social entity for economic and social subordination. He also noted that blacks were receiving lower wages than usual or less desirable work and, because of that work and wages, were forced to live. Du Bois often refers Race and caste in one category. In his speech given to The Twentieth Century Club entitled —*Caste in America* he said:

The excuse of caste is the first instance is always the short deficiency of other people but since even the high born are fallible and low born are capable of improvement, the result of caste system is in the long run simply to enthrone over the destinies of the nation that particular form of immorality prevalent among the ruling classes of land. (Du Bois Amherst Libraries)

Early in his fight against racism, Du Bois envisioned democracy within the system of American capitalism; Du Bois envisioned democracy within the system of American capitalism as a way to end oppression of blacks and racism. He said that the —the power of Ballot was an important tool, and striving to preserve the democratic rights of African Americans was crucial. Later in life, Du Bois believed socialism would be a better tool for achieving equality, and ending racism, than democracy. In *A Biography of W.E. B. Du Bois* David Levering Lewis wrote:

Du Bois had done his best to prepare the race not only for the political realities governing FDR but also for the grim consequences of the descent of people of color into pariah caste, a category all but ostracized from the contract. (Lewis 566)

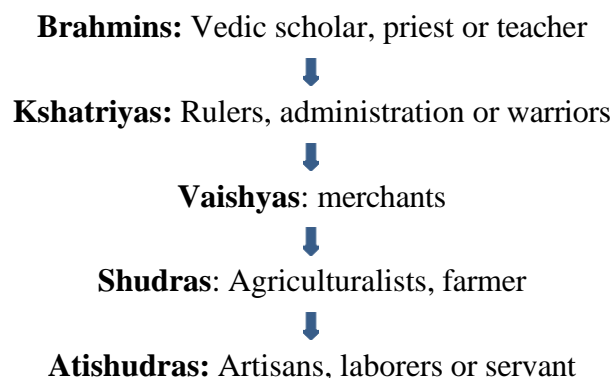
At the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) stated that every leading land on earth is moving toward some form of socialism, so as to restrict the power of wealth, introduce democratic methods on industry, and stop the persistence of poverty, ignorance, disease, and crime. His perspective on the value of socialism grew in part from distaste for class. He referred to these —most intelligent members of black society as the Talented Tenth. As time passed, he became aware that the Talented Tenth were separating themselves from the working classes, and instead of providing leadership, they were taking part in capitalistic society, sometimes to the point of exploiting other blacks. Du Bois saw these class divisions in the black community as a threat to unity, and as such, it would also be a threat to social reform., his belief in cultural pluralism.

Du Bois was one of America's most outspoken intellectual leaders from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. His belief in cultural purism and his dedication to ending racism and oppression transcended color and country. Through his many writings, Du Bois managed to generate discussion at the highest levels of government. Du Bois left behind a legacy of critical inquiry into the problem of race

and racism that continues to provide clarification of the situation of blacks and white in United States. As like Du Bois Jotirao Phuley, the pioneer of socio-political renaissance in modern India, first recounts the problems of African American and Dalits of India. In \_introduction 'of Slavery he wrote: The shudras and atishudras will really appreciate this more than anyone else as they have a direct experience of slavery as compared the others who have never experienced it so. Only slave can understand what it is to be a slave and what joy it is to be delivered from the chains of slavery. Now the only difference between them and slaves in America is that whereas the blacks were captured and enslaved by Bhats and brahmins. Except for this difference, all the others conditions in which they lived were the same. There is simply not an iota of difference between them. All the calamities suffered by blacks were endured by the shudras and the atishudras who probably suffered more but not less at the hands of brahmins. The tales of their suffering would not only cause the hardest hearts to shed tears but would also dissolve the hardest layer of rocks on the earth and realest streams of tears from within which would drown the whole world. (Phule vi)

Here, Phuley used the term 'atishudras' for 'untouchable '. In India there were hierarchy of Varnas, later it became caste system.

Hierarchy of Varnas:



It is interesting that Brahmins considered themselves *Bhudeva* (God of Earth), highest of other Varnas. Moreover, Kshatriyas considered themselves higher than Vaishyas, Shudras and Atishudras, then Vaishyas considered themselves higher than Shudras and Atishudras., again Atishudras have sub castes also. After some time Varna became caste, Atishudras became lowest than lower and also became \_untouchable '(forbidden to the touch).

In *Class and Caste in Literature* J. Bheemaiiah observes as:

The Spanish word —Casta was applied to the mixed breed between European, Indians (Americans) and Negroes. But —castel was not used in its Indian sense till the Seventh century. (Bheemaiiah J. 40)

He quoted Sridhar Ketkar as:

The Indian used is the leading one now, and it has influenced all other uses. As the Indian idea of caste was but vaguely understood, this word was loosely applied to the hereditary classes of Europe resembling the castes of India who keep themselves socially distinct. (qtd. in Bheemaiaj J. 40)

Caste in India has been defined by M. N. Srinivas as hereditary, endogamous, usually localized group having a traditional association with an occupation, and particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Relation between castes is governed by the concepts of pollution and purity and generally, maximum

commensality occurs within the caste.

As like Du Bois and Phuley, Ambedkar also compare race with caste. On June 4, 1913, Ambedkar joined Columbia University as Gaekwad scholar; He was first Mahar to study in a foreign university. Before the Anthropology Seminar of Dr. Goldenweizer during Ambedkar stay at the Columbia University for the Doctoral studies Amedekar read a paper *Caste in India*.in 1913. Naturally he deals with the subject of Caste system from the Anthropological point of view. He observes that the population of India is mixture of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians and Scythians. Ethrically all people are heterogeneous. According to him, it is the unity of culture that binds the people of Indian Peninsula from one end to the other. After evaluating the theories of various authorities on Caste, Ambedkar observes that the superimposition of endogamy over exogamy is the main cause of formation of caste groups. Amedkar has put the definition of caste by various scholars of caste such as Mr. Senart, Mr. Nesfield, Sir H. Risley and Dr. Ketakar, but he has not satisfied with their definitions. He goes beyond and defines caste as: —The superimposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of castel. (Ambedkar 1: 9)

He further recounted the relationship of Negroes and white, and American Indian. According to him the Negroes and the Whites and the various tribal groups that go by name of American Indians in the United States may be cited as more or less appropriate illustrations in support of this view. But we must not confuse matters, for in India the situation is different. As pointed out before, the peoples of India form a homogeneous whole. The various races of India occupying definite territories have more or less fused into one another and do possess cultural unity, which is the only criterion of a homogeneous population. Given this homogeneity as a basis, Caste becomes a problem altogether new in character and wholly absent in the situation constituted by the mere propinquity of endogamous social or tribal groups. Caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. (Ambedkar 1: 8) Ambedkar observes:

Thus, the conclusion is inevitable that Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste, and if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste...Thus the superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste. (Ambedkar 1: 8, 9)

To compare race with caste, there is hierarchy as characterization of race and caste. It is important to understand that several questions concerning hierarchy are involved in the comparison done so far, here only simplest one, stemming from empirical observations. If the races and castes are the same kind of social organization, how to explain the existence of thousands of *Jati*'s in India, as against only two basic groups in the United States? The system of United States was dual, because it was system of the dominant white race and subdued colored race. It was one system which made it very clear which race was the ruling one and there was no way the inferior race could move up the hierarchy. This cannot be said about thousands of *Jatis* in India at all, a fact recognized by researcher several decades ago. A study of social relations, as personal relations, necessitates, at the outset, a clear understanding of what is meant by ethnic groups and the meaning of race and racial conflicts. A historical review of race relations points to antagonism as having its genesis in modern times: it developed, and racial segregation was reinforced, with the discovery that the natives, the colored peoples', could easily be economically exploited by the European especially with the growth of capitalism in Europe and America. The practice of slavery was racial exploitation at its crudest, with the slaves, without disguise, treated like animals. It is necessary to observe different aspects of the social status and family life of the slaves and the relation between the master and the slave: for instance, inter racial sex relations and the emergence in terms of his servitude.

Modern race relations are concerned with economic and social status of whites and the black, their inter-marriage, their classification –into one group or the other—owing mixed blood, as well as the basic ideological problem of whites in altering their relationship with the black as reflected in the white liberalism trend of the post-1960s. Gerald Duane Berreman observes:

Caste is defined in such a way as to be useful cross-culturally. Comparison of race relations in the southern United States and relations between the untouchables and other castes in India demonstrates that the two systems closely similar in operation despite differences of content. Low-caste status in India, as in America, is actively resented. Research emphasis upon the realities of structure and process as revealed by cross-cultural studies of caste interaction is more likely to lead to useful generalizations about this kind of social stratification and intergroup relations than is the more conventional emphasis upon differences of cultural content. (Berreman 120, 127)

According to Ambedkar the untouchables were the broken men. The primitive society was mainly tribal. At a later stage they became settled as soon as they switched to agriculture as means of their livelihood. However, all the tribes did not settle simultaneously. Some were still nomadic while others settled down. The Broken men who were segregated from the village people must have been inclined to embrace Buddhism which was based on liberty, equality and fraternity. The village people who remained in the Hindu fold accepted supremacy of the latter and continued to prefer Buddhism. This caused strife between the two communities which ended in suppression of the Broken men and downfall of Buddhism in the later period. In *Slaves and Untouchable* Ambedkar wrote:

Slavery, it must be admitted, is not a free social order. But can untouchability be described as a free social order? The Hindus who came forward to defend untouchability no doubt claim that it is. They, however, forget that there are differences between untouchability and slavery which makes untouchability a worse type of an unfree social order. Slavery was never obligatory. But untouchability is obligatory. A person is permitted to hold another as his slave. There is no compulsion on him if he does not want to. But an Untouchable has no option. Once he is born an Untouchable, he is subject to all the disabilities of an Untouchable. The law of slavery permitted emancipation. Once a slave is always a slave was not the fate of the slave. In untouchability there is no escape. Once an Untouchable is always an Untouchable. The other difference is that untouchability is an indirect and therefore the worst form of slavery. A deprivation of a man's freedom by an open and direct way is a preferable form of enslavement. It makes the slave conscious of his enslavement and to become conscious of slavery is the first and most important step in the battle for freedom. But if a man is deprived of his liberty indirectly, he has no consciousness of his enslavement. Untouchability is an indirect form of slavery. (Ambedkar 5: 15)

According to Ambedkar, to begin with there was the law of servitude which applied to all servants whether they were Negroes or whites. In course of time a distinction came to be made in the treatment of the Negroes and white servants due to the fear of an alien and pagan people which as they became traditional and gained the sanction of custom, gradually modified the status of the African and transformed Negro servitude into Negro slavery. The slavery of the Negro in the American Colonies grew by the gradual addition of incidents modifying the law and custom of servitude. In this transition from servitude to slavery there are two principal steps. The first step in the transition was taken when the custom of holding Negroes —servants for life was recognized. As has been observed, the distinguishing mark of the state of slavery is not the loss of liberty, political and civil but the perpetuity and absolute character of that loss, whether voluntary or involuntary in origin

Ambedkar, further said that it differs then from other forms of servitude limited in place or time, such as

medieval vassalage, villeinage, modern serfdom, and technical servitude, in degree rather than in kind. The efforts of the planters to lengthen the terms of the service of their servants which failed with the white servants succeeded with the black. Public opinion supported the change because the blacks were regarded as dangerous if left uncontrolled. The second step by which Negro servitude was converted into Negro slavery was taken when the condition and status of the mother was extended to and continued in her offspring. The transmission from mother to child of the conditions of slavery for life grew naturally out of the fact that the master necessarily controlled the child, controlling the mother. It was evident that parents, under an obligation of life service, could make no valid provision for the support of their offspring and that a just title to the service of the child might rest on the master's maintenance. In *Parallel Cases* Ambedkar argued:

This change which had undoubtedly been affected in custom long before it was formally sanctioned by law was recognized by statute in the different states of America between 1662 and 1741. (Ambedkar 5: 83, 84)

Comparing Slavery with untouchable, he went roots of slavery. He explains that how servant became slave. In *Parallel Cases* he wrote:

This is how the Negro who was originally only a servant became a slave. It is to be noted that slavery in Africa the home of the Negro is a native institution and is very ancient. The most common ways of becoming a slave were: (1) By being born a slave, (2) by being sold into slavery for debt, (3) by becoming a slave through capture in war and (4) by kidnapping individuals and selling them into slavery due to revenge or greed and gain. The Negro was really familiar with the slave system and tasted the pleasures of a slave owner. One therefore may not feel the same sympathy with the Negro when he was made to give up the status of a master and made to occupy the position of a slave. But looked at even as a case of retribution well deserved his condition as a slave in the New World to which he was transplanted, cannot fail to excite a righteous indignation for the miseries to which he was subjected by his new and alien masters. (Ambedkar 5: 84)

Ambedkar has given two examples of metaphorical slavery in which he says that a wife is also a property of husband and husband has the complete power over wife so he may ill-treat her he may kill her he can exchange all and his wife for work so in this way wife can be seen as a slip of husband. Another example is that which is also in the sense of Serf and Ambedkar explain it that if Serf worked on fixed days performed fixed service paid fixed some to the lord and was fixed to the land therefore, he was taken as a slave. Ambedkar using two words for the understanding of slavery that a slave is property, this property can be used by Master the master has the complete claim over the property, the master gets benefit out of the property and master can cancel it and transfer it, by meaning of ownership this is that the master can sell out mortgage is without the consent of the slave. According to Ambedkar, a deprivation of a man's freedom by an open and direct way is a preferable form of enslavement. It makes the slave conscious of his enslavement and to become conscious of slavery is the first and most important step in the battle for freedom. But if a man is deprived of his liberty indirectly, he has no consciousness of his enslavement. Untouchability is an indirect form of slavery. Furthermore, Ambedkar explains to tell an Untouchable 'you are free, you are a citizen, you have all the rights of a citizen', and to tighten the rope in such a way as to leave him no opportunity to realize the ideal is a cruel deception. It is enslavement without making the Untouchables conscious of their enslavement. It is slavery though it is untouchability. It is real though it is indirect. It is enduring because it is unconscious. Of the two orders, untouchability is beyond doubt the worse. In —Slaves and Untouchable Ambedkar wrote:

Neither slavery nor untouchability is a free social order. But if a distinction is to be made—and there is no doubt that there is distinction between the two—the test is whether education, virtue, happiness, culture, and wealth is possible within slavery or within untouchability. (Ambedkar 5:16)

Ambedkar also compares slavery with untouchability in following ways:

### Slavery / Untouchability

1. Slave has been identified as a human in the legal field Untouchable are not even given as the status of human.
2. Slave was entitled for basic fundamental rights such as food, clothing, shelter and medical care untouchables were denied even drinking water from public natural resources.
3. Separate colonies were established for slaves, untouchables were denied access to residents and social interaction, and they have to live outside of villages.
4. The master took care of slaves as it was considered to the potential labor, the master did not take care of slaves as it was considerable to be potential labor, selves even allowed to enter in the village and were not forced to tie a broom backside to an print the foot step while walking and hang a are then put in the neck in case of spitting, untouchable was not even allowed to enter in the village and were forced to tie a broom backside to an print the foot step while walking and to hang are then put in the case of spitting.
5. Slavery is not based on the notion of purity and pollution in which untouchability is based on the notion of purity and pollution in which certain communities are polluted and they are not considered to be pure human beings therefore day night basic fundamental human rights such as food, clothing, water, and right to life were denied.

Ambedkar observes as:

But that is not the case with the Untouchables. They too are in a different sense an eternal people who are separate from the rest. But this separateness, their segregation is not the result of their wish. They are punished not because they do not want to mix. They are punished because they want to be one with the Hindus.(Ambedkar 5:5)

According to Ambedkar among the claims made by the Hindus for asserting their superiority other nations the following two are mentioned. One is that there was no slavery in India among the Hindus and the other is that untouchability is infinitely less harmful than slavery.

Ambedkar observes:

The first statement is of course untrue. Slavery is a very ancient institution of the Hindus. It is recognized by Manu, the law giver and has been elaborated and systematized by the other Smriti writers who followed Manu. Slavery among the Hindus was never merely ancient institution which functioned only in some hoary past. It was an institution which continued throughout all Indian history down to the year 1843 and, if it had not been abolished by the British Government by law in that year, it might have continued even today. While slavery lasted it applied to both the touchable as well as the untouchables. (Ambedkar 12: 742)

The Untouchable by reason of their poverty became subject to slavery oftener than did the untouchable. So that up to 1843 the untouchable in India had to undergo the misfortune of being held in double bondage. Ambedkar says —bondage of slavery and bondage of untouchability. The lighter of the bonds has been cut and the untouchable is made free from it. But because of today are not seen wearing the chains of slavery on them, it is not to be supposed that they never did. To do so would be to tear off whole pages of



history. Comparing slavery with untouchability, Ambedkar refers Miss Mayo 's Mother India and Lala Lajpat Raj, he observes as:

The first claim is not so widely made. But the second is. So great a social reformer and so great a friend of the untouchables as Lala Lajpat Rai in replying to the indictment of the Hindu Society by Miss Mayo insisted that untouchability as an evil was nothing as compared with slavery and he fortified his conclusion by a comparison of the Negro in America with the untouchables in India and showed that his conclusion was true. Coming as it does from Lala Lajpat Rai the matter needs to be more closely examined. (Ambedkar 12:742, 743)

Thus, Race has been seen as an unalterably given genetic condition, a natural border that is determined given genetic condition, a natural border that is determined, allowing no mobility or change. But caste is seen as socially determined categories. Caste, even though a socially ascribed status, is still inherited. After the advent of the philosophy of deconstruction, the so called-centers have been decentered, and this has triggered the acceleration of postmodernist, post-colonialist polemic that could be considered responsible for the shift in power structure from a rigid, hegemonic order into a more inclusive, relativist structure.

Alladi Uma observes as:

While it may have taken almost six decades for the world and the United Nations to accede to this comparison between race and caste, and to view caste has not just internal problem but a larger problem, the Dalit movement in India, especially in Maharashtra, has looked to the Black Panther movement as a source of inspiration and named itself the Dalit Panther Party. But how does one look at the complexities of race and caste that are then compounded by class and gender? This question was what propelled me offer the course Reading Dalit Reading Black at the University of Hyderabad. (Uma Alladi 293)

Moreover, Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad offered books of Du Bois and Ambedkar to M.A students for understanding race and caste concepts and its problem. The kernel of such efforts was the comparison between 'African American' and 'Dalits' The comparison come to conclusion that race exemplified by situation of the former slaves in U.S, and caste exemplified by social groups in India called *Jati*. And finally conclude that caste is the worst form of discriminatory institution which still exists in India.

### Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and Rastriya Sawayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

A series of secret originations with the general aim of suppression of African American political and civil right movement, the Ku Klux Klan has appeared in three distinct incarnations from Reconstruction on the present. Most broadly, the Klan can be view as manifestation of the U.S. nativist and antiblack sentiment as reflected in the nineteenth century, for instance, by the anti- Irish —Knowing Nothing Party and by antiabolitionist and antiblack violence. The first Ku Klux Klan was founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1866 by six Confederate veterans. Originally club similar or contemporary social fraternities, the Klan quickly expanded its membership and purpose to seek the overthrow of Reconstruction and the reassertion of white supremacy in the region. The Klan and other similar groups spread throughout the South, employing violence against people, both black and white Republicans, and property before federal intervention in 1871 and 1872 brought effective and to the organization.

In the twentieth century, the Ku Klux Klan was founded in 1915 at Stone Mountain, Georgia, by William J. Simmons, a onetime preacher, teacher, and insurance salesperson. Drawing his ideas about the organization less on his Reconstruction -era predecessor than on the florid depictions of the Invisible

Empire in the novels Thomas W. Dixon, Jr. and D. W. Griffith's film *The Birth of Nation* (1915), Simmons found that his organization had an appeal far beyond the South. (Horne 119) The Klan gained a broad following in the 1920s as many Americans feared that the New Era brought unwelcome changes to their lives: among the perceived threats that the Klan exploited were post-World War I economic and political uncertainties, immigration, the black migration to northern cities, and the widespread belief that American values and 100 percent Americanism were under assault by the forces of modernism. Far more centrally organized than the original Klan, the 1920s version was planned similar to such fraternal lodges as the Elks and the Masons. The Klan appealed not only era's prejudices but to its love of fraternal ceremony, with its robes insignia, and dizzying array of high-sounding titles and orders. Displaying more inclusive bigotry than the first Klan, this new incarnation was not only antiblack but deeply suspicious of Jew, Catholic, Asians and the use of alcohol. By 1924 Klan claimed a membership of nearly 3 million-urban and rural, midwestern and southern-and began to flex its considerable political muscle, winning political office in such states as Indiana and Oregon. The second Klan faded around the time of around World War II, beset by poor financial management and legal and political scandal among its national leadership.

With postwar anticommunism and the rise of the civil rights movement the Klan appeared yet again, this time mainly in the South. While this incarnation would gain much notoriety, especially through campaigns of violence in the 1960s, the third Klan never gained either the power or the membership claimed by the 1920s, Klan. Throughout his long public career, W. E.

B. Du Bois challenged the assumptions of each of these groups, disputing the Reconstruction Klan's characterizations of the postbellum South in *Black Reconstruction* (1935) answering Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans in the pages of the *North American Review* in 1926, and exhorting Americans to forego the reflexive anticommunism that fueled twentieth-century Klans. While discrete organization, each of the Klans restored to violence, terror, and intimidation while claiming to defend traditional politics and moral values. With the benefit of hindsight, the KKK and the American Nazi Party's (ANP) fateful meeting might seem less revolutionary than it did in the 1970s. Several prominent North Carolina Klansmen, among them the locally infamous Carlos Joe Grady, Jr., would vehemently oppose any Klan-Nazi union. The backlash from groups willing to discard their initial hesitancy and distaste for Nazi symbolism and Hitlerian fascism culminated in a public —roasting of ready during a national news conference. The winds of hate were changing with the new generation.

The hesitancy of Ku Klux Klansmen primarily came from the age of the older members of the organization: many of them vociferously supported the war against Adolf Hitler and fought in World War II. However, by the 1970s, the younger members of this —third wave of the KKK did not share the same experiences, being much more familiar with the existential threat of communism through the Korean and Vietnam Wars than the first-hand knowledge of Nazi atrocities. This difference in generational experience, coupled with the Cold War's escalation, enabled the shift in Klan attitudes from anti-Nazi —patriotic Americanist racism to a willingness to work with fascist groups. (Klansville 119)

Similarly, RSS has Fascist connection. The fascist phenomenon has an Indian dimension and connection. There was an affinity between the Nazism and Hindu Nationalism, reflected in the adoration of Manu. In fact, Hindu Mahasabha and RSS (Founded in 1915 and 1925, respectively) had modeled their Hindu Nationalism on Hitler's Nazism, extolling the Aryan race, religion culture and language. Ambassador Afrasiab Mehdi Hashmi Qureshi in his article

*RSS: Hindu Nazis of India* says that:

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) widely known by the acronym RSS, is a Hindu fundamentalist

organization in India working for the promotion of Hindutva ideology. Under the garb of nationalism, Hindutva basically connotes, —expansionist and hegemonic Hinduism. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations, the term Hindutva —has fascist undertones. (Concise Oxford Dictionary)

It is significant that the RSS was born in the land of Phule and Ambedkar, the greatest leaders of dalit-bahujans in modern India. In Maharashtra there were radical movements against Brahmanism from the 1870s onwards, with the establishment of Satyashodhak Samaj. Its ideas and activities were becoming popular among the dalit- bhahujans. Pune the home ground of Lokmanya Tilak was also *the karm-boomi* of Phule who was challenging the Brahmans to bring out of their Veda-Purana in the open.

During the 1920s, the dalits had started organizing themselves under Ambedkar. It is very important that Nagpur, the birthplace of the RSS, was the Centre of social radicalism and also the venue of All Depressed classes Conference in 1920 where Ambedkar had decisively rejected the paternalistic model of social reform advocated by V.R. Shinde and other moderates. Later, Nagpur was also to become the Deekshabhoomi (the land of conversion) where Ambedkar led lakhs of Dalit to accept Buddhism. The Phule- Ambedkar ideology is the strongest rejection of the Brahmanical ideology of the RSS. There is no doubt the RSS targeted Phule-Ambedkarism and touted the theory that their ideology and movement emanated from a divisive caste mentality ‘.

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