

# OPPRESSION AND MARGINALIZATION OF DALIT'S: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOCIETAL HIERARCHIES IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S *UNTOUCHABLE* AND OM PARKASH VALMIKI'S *JOOOTHAN*

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## Abstract

Indian society has a caste system in its roots and it became a tradition to humiliate the low caste people especially Dalits and treat them inhumanly. *Untouchable* the novel by Mulk Raj Anand and the autobiography *Joothan* by Om Parkash depict the suffering and struggle of Dalits to do something but due to their caste, they met against their wishes. Both the writers show that Dalits in India have a miserable life. This study is an attempt to explore the oppression, discrimination, subordination, and marginalization of Dalit in Indian society. The study will examine the ways Dalits are being treated by the upper classes and how society creates societal hierarchies. The research examines the sufferings of Dalit by applying the social dominance theory of Jim Sidanius, how the upper class dominates the lower class. This research study will shed light on the sufferings and plight and then the consequences of oppression that the Dalit community suffers mentally and physically. The conclusion of the study will show that the condition of Dalit going to remain the same no matter how much they tried to be somewhere but the upper class would not let them have their desired place or job.

**Key Words:** caste system, oppression, marginalization, Dalit, untouchable, Indian society.

## Introduction

Literature is the reflection of society and this is the reason that authors around the world write about the things and matters that have not been discussed openly. Writers show us the ugly truth and bitter reality of society and make us realize to look at the things that are being neglected and suffer in silence. It is the power of literature that gives voice to the voiceless and makes it able to be heard and acknowledged. Mulk Raj Anand and Valmiki being the social conscious writers reveal the social evils and hypocrisy and rigidity in the behavior of society towards the low caste. The common thing of both writers that are going to be discussed in this research is how Dalits were treated and how this caste was made low by society. In India there exist a caste system that had been established centuries ago and it still exists.

The Indian caste system has been divided into four main categories for ages: Brahmins (priests and teachers), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (merchants and landowners), Shudras (commoners, peasants, and servants), then comes out-caste, Untouchables (street sweepers and latrine cleaners). Dalits are called untouchable and they are even not included in the caste system. They are out of caste and being treated in Indian society as outsiders. This study is going to discuss the place Dalits have in society and how they live and try to survive in society as untouchables.

Mulk Raj Anand was an Indian writer and novelist. He was born on 12th December in 1905 and died 28 September 2004. He was famous for portraying the lives of the poorer caste and people

who remained condemned throughout their lives in the traditional society of India. He was one of the pioneers of Indo-Anglian fiction and together with R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, and Ahmad Ali was one of the first Indian English writers who gain recognition and readership internationally. Anand is appreciated for his books and short stories, which earned the recognition of classics in current Indian English Literature; he is noted for his astute knowledge into the lives of marginalized and oppressed people who are being exploited in society. He got recognition from his protest novel *Untouchable* that was written in 1935, followed by other works such as *Coolie* (1936) and then *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937). He is also known for initiating and using Punjabi and Hindustani idioms in English and was the receiver of the civilian honor in Padma Bhushan.

*Untouchable* is composed by Mulk Raj Anand and published in 1935, it charts the path of one day in the existence of a young fellow named Bakha. Bakha is an individual from the Untouchables, a designation for individuals so far beneath even the least caste in Indian culture that they are considered outside of the framework. His responsibility is to clear roads and latrines for the privileged, who are illegal from cleaning or contacting human waste. Because he was conceived as an Untouchable, this will be Bakha's work for as long as he can remember, except if there are changes in India.

The story describes the serious and stressed relationships between untouchable subordinates, upper-caste Hindus, Muslims, and British Christian settlers. The novel offers the Anglo-Indian writer a remarkable opportunity to explore a new world of subordinates. The novel *Untouchables* declares hope for both the Hindu and Indian Untouchables and brings the philosophy of Gandhi, which seeks to awaken consciousness to eradicate the caste system as well as the hierarchical system of Indian culture.

It also deals with the option of dripping the curse of untouchability. Bakha the subaltern character is a unique creation in the realm of Indian English literature. Anand puts Bakha in the spotlight and gives him a voice. He shows how Bakha is confronted with difficulties as he leaves the segregated slum (village) in which he lives for the city, the hostile and humiliating attitude of the Brahmins, the temple priest, and all other people of the upper caste disturbs his innocent spirit. Humiliation, but also psychological. The mental anguish and physical humiliations Bakha is exposed to show this realistically. E.M Forster reacts like this: The sweeper is worse than a slave because the slave can change his master and his duties and even become free, but the sweeper is destined forever, born in a state from which he cannot escape and from which he can be excluded from social relationships and the consolation of his religion. (Forster 1935: 710)

Om Prakash Valmiki was born on 30 June 1950 and died on 17 November 2013, he was an Indian writer and poet. He was renowned for his autobiography, *Joothan* that is considered a milestone in the history of Dalit Literature. He wrote a lot about the Dalits the ways they are treated inhumanly and wanted to realize to the world that they are worthy of living. Other than *Joothan*, he wrote the collection of poetry: *Sadiyon Ka Santaap* (1989), *Bas! Bahut Ho Chuka* in 1997 and *Ab Aur Nahin* in 2009. He also wrote a collection of two short stories *Salaam* in 2000 and *Ghuspethiye* in 2004. Besides this, he also composed *Dalit Ka Saundaryshastra* in 2001 and the history of Valmiki *Safai Devata* (2009), and one paly *Do Chera*.

The autobiography *Joothan: A Dalits Life*, manages harsh encounters of Om Prakash being a Dalit in the general public, particularly in the phase of his early education school and College in Indian society. The village of the protagonist is divided into several parts and sectors according to caste and class such as Jinwar, Taga, Muslim Tagis, and Chamras, which surrounded his Basti (slum). The house of Valmiki was neighboring Taga's house and there was a boundary that

separated the houses of Chamras and other castes. On the bank of ponds women, girls, children, younger ones and the older all were taking their shits without any worry of exposing their private parts publically. Everyone talks about the quarrels that are happening in the town to spend their time and it seems like they are discussing something crucial at a round table. He portrayed a real picture of the lower caste in his book. "*Joothan: A Dalit's Life*" would be the voice of many and a multi-value text. The text contributes to the story of Dalit and his account acts as a healing plot for the oppressors.

The opening line itself criticizes the place and the people of the Valmiki caste. The Indian democratic system has opened up a way to educate Dalits to express their experiences. On the contrary, it portrays the brutal realities very strongly and stresses that India has not fully kept its promise, the one made in the Indian constitution independence "*Joothan*" challenges the constitution of its bill by raising the voice of Dalits demanding a place for their people in existing society.

Arun Prabha Mukherjee has translated this book into English to convey the voice of Untouchables throughout Indian and among the people who are having the privilege of being upper class. Furthermore, Mukherjee expressed his viewpoint on *Joothan* by saying that "*Joothan* is one among a body of Dalit writing that is unified by an ideology, an agenda, and a literary aesthetic." (x) The aim of translating this book is to spread the awareness about the miserable and submissive lives of low castes and untouchables. The reading of this book will give an insight look to the real faces of high-class because there found hardly any Dalit literature that is translated in English so, English-reader will get to see through the unheard voice of lowly lives of Dalits caused by the upper caste system.

### **Aims and Objectives**

This research title aims to study the attitude of the society, how it creates social hierarchies based on class and caste difference and the ways people are divided into two main classes superior and inferior. The objective of the study is how the discriminated caste survives without having any advantage over the member of society.

### **Significance of the Study**

This research paper will contribute to understanding how Dalit is the untouchable of society being oppressed by the privileged classes of society within the context of the selected book *Joothan* and the novel *Untouchable*. It will also help to understand that how segregation, racism, and social discrimination affect the psychology of people. This research can be helpful for academicians and readers to understand the class distinction within the context of selected books and novels. This article is also important because there is no such type of research available on this novel and book that could give the comparison of social hierarchies in *Joothan* and *Untouchable*.

### **Literature Review**

Literature is the reflection of society and this is the reason that authors around the world write about the things and matters that have not been discussed openly. Writers show us the ugly truth and bitter reality of the society and make us realize to look at the things that are being neglected and suffer in silence. It is the power of literature that it gives voice to the voiceless and make it able to be heard and acknowledged. Mulk Raj Anand and Valmiki being the social conscious writers, reveal the social evils, hypocrisy and rigidity in the behavior of society towards the low castes especially dalits. The common thing of both writers that is going to be discussed in this research is the ways in which Dalit were treated and how this caste made low by the society. In India there exist caste system that had been established centuries ago and it still exists.

In recent years, a vibrant field of Dalit literature has emerged in India, and some of these works are being made. Dalit literature is being studied for mainstream Indian literature as it articulates the consciousness of historically oppressed people. Dalit literature is the literature of the untouchable. It is a campaign against all forms of marginalization based on class, race, caste, or creed. *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* is, as the title suggests, an autobiography of OmPrakash Valmiki's life as a Dalit. In his foreword to the Hindi edition of the book, Valmiki himself pointed out the main concern in writing the autobiography. According to him, "Dalit's life is excruciatingly painful, charred by experience. Indian high caste writers portray Dalits as "stupid" and pathetic characters who are unable to act or speak about their oppression. Through this book Valmiki shows that Dalits or subordinates can also speak. The autobiography *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* becomes a Milestone in the History of Dalit Literature. Therefore, the article is a sincere attempt to portray Valmiki's efforts to express the problems and difficulties of India's marginalized Dalit community has faced even after independence (V. Kumar).

Dalit literature is oddly Indian in that it is the result of the evil caste system that has long existed in Indian as a nation. Despite the fact that the constitution of India has erased the image of the positions, it actually waits in many different contexts with its firmness in minds. The script that emerges as an outlet against casteism is the Dalit script. The Dalits or "Shudras" suffered in the name of the caste system. Their lives are marked by humiliation, shame and discrimination. For a long time, they endured suffering and humiliation. The pain the Dalits endured is intolerable, as *Joothan* the autobiography by Om Prakash Valmiki describes. This article will attempt to see how Om Prakash Valmiki used his personal story, *Joothan*, as a method to describe agony and opposition to untouchability.

*Joothan: A Dalit's Life* by Om Prakash Valmiki is a case in point. In this book, readers get a clear idea of the extent of Dalit marginalization, the caste hierarchy, and the philosophy of work advocated in Indian society. *Joothan* explains these painful experiences that were difficult to find in a literary context. . Encounters such as Valmiki's personal one, for example, his introduction to the world, his childhood experience in the untouchable Chuhra caste, and his courageous struggle to endure this predetermined existence of relentless physical and mental discrimination and his transformation into a speaking subject and recorder of the mistreatment and abuse he suffered, not only as an individual but also as an individual from a marginalized community which has never been shown in chronicles of Hindi literature. (Thattil)

Dalit literature is the expression of the dissatisfaction that Dalit writers had towards so-called upper caste writers who never considered discriminatory practices because "rarely has a writer assumed an untouchable character and he treated realistically, like a normal human being. Being full of vitality, hope and despair "(Kumar, 2010, p.129). Their experiences of marginalization in almost every area of life have prompted Dalit writers to claim their views which have found expression creatively in the form of almost any genre of literature - poetry, short stories, folklore, dramas and non-fiction (Vyas1) .

Life must be seen in all of its complexities to capture its essence. The resources and transition processes discussed here are not independent; rather, they function as a unitary whole and what emerges from their fusion is a distinct collective identity that cannot be broken down into the same elements from which it emerged. This identity is continually reified, subject to deconstruction and reinterpretation. At the highest level of reflexivity, the social position inscribed on the social scale against the background of a castrated society is itself used as a symbolic resource. This is why writers like Valmiki, "transform this position which symbolizes internalized oppression into an emblem of dissent. They use the horror contained in this social position as a



weapon to challenge that position. This transformation allows them to imagine a new and imaginary world of equality in the midst of a castrated society " (Vyas) and what emerges from the dynamic collective identity of a writer Dalit.

The novel "Untouchable" begins with a description of outcast colony, the lowest stratum of indigenous society that suffers from extreme economic and physical disadvantage. Anand does not make an abstract statement on this, nor does he regret the fact of this deprivation. It just paints an alarming picture of the conditions these people live in. The colony consists of a group of adobe-walled houses grouped in two rows along a single street (S. R. Kumar).

### Research Methodology

Research design for this study on oppression and marginalization of Dalits for understanding power relations and sense of superiority is Qualitative research design as I am collecting data through observation and using theory of Social Dominance that will further help in explaining the observed data collection. The subject of this research is to find the elements that create social class difference through discourse in the context of novels. This research will analyze the oppression of low caste people, racial discrimination, power relations and class conflict by the social dominance perspective and through critically analyzing the discourse in *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand and *Joothan* by Omparkash Valmiki. The primary source is the selected novel and book and researcher's own observation through the books. So the research is set in the context of novel and characters of novel are participants through which the researcher receives data according to subject of research topic. This research will employ Jim\_Sidanius, Shana Levin and Felicia Pratto system of thoughts to examine the *Oppression and Marginalization of Dalit's: A Comparative Study of Societal Hierarchies in Raj's Untouchable and Omparkash Valmiki's Joothan*.

Qualitative Research design will be used to analyze the text. The researcher has used different sources as a support to argument and a support to primary data analysis. The researcher has used journals, books, articles and other online web sources as secondary sources for data collection and will support the main argument with the references of these secondary sources.

### Analysis of *Joothan: A life of Dalit*

The caste system in Indian society is rooted in a way that cannot be uprooted anyway besides tireless efforts of the lower-class and institutions. It is impossible to eradicate the caste system from Indian society. Where identity is given on the basis of caste. In this regard, people have cornered the lower-caste forcefully and oppressed them on the basis of caste. Omprakash Valmiki writes his life story about how difficult is to survive in the prevailed system of caste. The author shed the light on the sufferings, oppression, and miseries of untouchables. *Joothan: A life of Dalit* is full of the series of miseries, helplessness, humiliation, and oppression that imposed on Dalits for being the lower-caste in the society. It is an autobiography that gives voice to the oppressed and voiceless community in India. It is also a satire to the government and all the policies that are made for giving equality to the Dalits. These things and reforms are limited to papers otherwise, practically there is nothing that gives Dalits a chance to stand out in society.

The opening of this book shows the miseries and moot injustice towards Dalits as they are discriminated by the society to live among them. Life has never been easy for Dalits, they have to bear the consequences of being born as Dalits. Valmiki starts his book by narrating the residence of his community that is situated on the edge of a pond. A pond that is used as a latrine for all the lower-caste or more precisely for untouchables. Living conditions are unfavorable for human survival in such conditions but they have to live there because they are untouchables. The stench was so overpowering that one would choke within a minute (Valmiki 1) after narrating this, Valmiki invites the people who believe in the caste system so that they can have a realistic picture

of downtrodden lives and their ways of survival. Besides the narration of residence, they have different scenarios to deal with.

Dalits not only have to suffer for getting facilities of life but they were also forced to do different odd jobs without any payment. Tagas, who was one of the upper classes make it harder for the untouchables to live freely. They deprived them of the rightful amount of money that they deserve for their tiring efforts and hard work. First of all, there was no concept to let the untouchables get education, after a lot of strive of Omparkash's father he anyhow gets the permission to enter in the school at primary school and he was the first child that has been admitted to school from 'Chuhra community'. This is not digestible for the upper castes that a child of chuhra will study with them on the same page. Omprakash has been given a series of tribulations and injustice that he has to face by the children of upper caste and teachers as well. The prejudice and partiality have been stared at from day one as he has to sit away from the other fellows and he was not even allowed to sit on a chair or desk.

The element of being an introvert in Omprakash's personality is inculcated at an early age that resulted due to the behavior of his classmates and teachers as well. "The boys would beat me in any case, but the teachers also punished me" (3). That prejudiced behavior of upper-class children not only torment him but also humiliate him to such a level so that he would leave the school and do his fixed-job. But he managed to study in this environment with his determination and the company of two other low-caste children. The three of them were very good at their study but they always lag behind due to their caste. But they were humiliated because of their dress codes no matter if they wear neat or shabby clothes. "We are humiliated whichever way we dressed" (4). Besides this, they are also not allowed to drink water from the tab that is specified to the children of Tagas.

As a student, he has to face discrimination and social injustice just because of his caste throughout his educational phase. In high school, he encounter his English and Chemistry teachers who also did not allow him to take part in class activities just because of his caste and he was reminded of being Chuhra at every point. Valmiki was befallen into a great depression due to the pathetic behavior of his chemistry teacher Brajbal Singh who did not allow him in the lab and practice any practical. As a result, he was failed for not getting enough marks.

This devastated Valmiki's soul and the financial situation of his family is not enough to get decent food. Among all these situations the words of his that Munshiji... you have to improve the caste with your study gives an untiring urge to study and do something. Due to bias behavior of his teachers he has to leave Barla his village and move to Dehra Dun for completing his studies. At DAV College he also had to face many heartfelt remarks on his appearances, anyhow he managed to overcome his caste there and he has to face less hatred there. Instead, here he got a different environment that was helpful in learning and he rightly took the advantage of this chance and get knowledge rather peacefully. Yet his miseries are not over here a new phase of life is ahead of him.

To keep their high-class status up, upper-caste people make sure to force Dalits to perform all the hideous jobs. Tyagis never skips any chance to humiliate the untouchables and always do this to show their dominance. Once Valmiki's father and brothers have to go out of town and there die one of Tyagi's animals. The responsibility to dispose of the dead animal also is of Chuhra and again they get nothing for cleaning the mess. Due to the unavailability of his father and brother,

Valmiki was asked to dispose of the dead animal as Tyagi has already started abusing everyone for not disposing of the animal timely. “For this very hard work the only recompense is curse—what a cruel society we live in, where hard labor has no value. There is a conspiracy to keep us in perpetual poverty.” (40) Valmiki has never done this before, but this time he has to do because only untouchable can do this work.

The domination and status of authority not limited to making untouchables work every odd job. They try to prevail their dominance with the use of power in the most inhumane ways. When the people of untouchables decide to not work without pay.

It does not matter if he is in school or outside of school he had to face the humiliation of being a Chuhra at every point. Even he was forced to sweep school by the headmaster and after that, he also had to work at his teachers’ home when he went to get help regarding his subject. The wrath and humiliation that he faced at the home of Brajpal’s left a deep scar on his soul. Everyone was treating them normally and also being hospitable and offering them food. The moment it turns out the matter of caste, the behavior of all changed within a moment and they even got beaten by Brajpal’s father.

“The hollowness of their hospitality was exposed. Respect depends on the guest’s caste. How did we have any entitlement to hospitality?” (60).

Most of his friends and relatives even his wife forces him to change his surname in order to get rid of discrimination and baseless hatred from upper-castes. Because they received protocol and normal behavior until people do not know that they are untouchables. They have started to call themselves Dalit instead of Chuhra but the reality makes no difference as people get to who they really are there started discrimination and distinction. Although Valmiki keeps facing discrimination for being Dalit, his wife changed her surname.

My wife, Chanda, has never managed to get used to this surname of mine. Nor does she use it herself. This name is an item on her list of my shortcomings, and once in a while, she comments on it. She prefers using our family’s gotra name, “Khairwal.” (145)

There are many incidents when his wife chooses to not reveal their caste just to be a part of normal life. Even his niece Seema refused to admit that Omprakash Valmiki is her uncle just to save herself from the humiliation and discrimination that she would receive after the confirmation. So denied to be his niece, “What is the point of going around with the drum of caste tied around your neck?” (148). Moreover, his community has started not to reveal their true identity in front of society just to have a problem-free life. This way they can save themselves from marginalization and societal hierarchies. They hide their true identity just to not be teased by society. Another heart-aching moment was when Manju explained why Valmiki’s name is not printed on wedding cards.

“Bhabhi, no one here knows that we are Valmiki. They all think we are Khare. Printing Bhaiya’s name would have let the secret out...,” Manju said, her voice cracking.” (149)

The hiding of names clearly depicts that society has pressurized and traumatized the lower-caste so much that they do not want to reveal their true identity. Valmiki has also suffered a lot because of his surname it also became his identity in a bit good and bad narratives. At the last of the book he said,

“Caste is a very important element of Indian society. As soon as a person born, caste determines his or her destiny. Being born is not in the control of a person.” (153) “Because in their eyes, I am only an SC, the one who stands outside the door.” (154)

These are the ending lines of his series of tribulations, he represents his caste and himself wide openly that no matter how hard they try to be someone or even if anyone reached any high post. Caste is such a strong element that not let any untouchable in peace and also to live his life peacefully in the strong-headed society. This autobiography is a satire on the well-established and unchanging caste system in Indian society that makes it impossible for the untouchables to live freely and peacefully. They have to suffer the consequences of being the lower-caste from day one. Society will not accept the untouchables to live peacefully in a rooted caste system.

### ***Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand**

Mulk Raj Anand was a prominent writer among his contemporaries, with his writings he wanted to make people realize the social injustice. The composition of *Untouchable* is the result of this social injustice and brutal reality of Indian society. He made a bhangi boy the protagonist of his novel and the whole story revolves around him, and that is just to break the conventions of society. By doing so he gives voice to the most downtrodden, voiceless, oppressed, and marginalized community that comes below the belt in social hierarchies of the Indian caste system. They even treated untouchables among the other lower-castes as well just because they are the shit cleaners. Through the character sketch of “Bakha” Anand tries to realize people the countless sufferings, trauma, humiliation, and degradation that untouchables have to face by the upper-caste. He expresses the miserly conditions of untouchables and depicts the hideous lifestyle that was imposed on them by the social norms. They are the vigilant and hardworking community of society without any reward and pay yet they are not acceptable in society. This is the biggest drawback of Indian society yet no one is ashamed of their inhumane behavior with untouchables.

Anand accurately described the discrimination and distinction of untouchables dwelling from the very first line of his novel, “The outcastes,” (13). The first paragraph of the novel shows the biased and prejudiced behavior of the upper castes. Like the name suggested these people are not part of society and that is why they are living in “mud-walled houses that clustered together in two rows” (13). They even also separate and at distance from the other outcastes such as “washer men, the barbers, the water-carrier, the grass-cutters and other outcastes from Hindu society.” (13) Although these people are also considered as outcastes they also keep their grudge against sweepers or bhangis.

The living conditions are very pathetic and inhumane for the untouchables to live but they have no choice except to live in those situations. How can a human live under the circumstances where the dung of sheep, donkeys, and of other animals' dung piled? Without any question, only the untouchables are the ones to live under such ugly and pathetic living conditions. And no one ever considered them as human beings so why bother about their survival and living conditions. This is the only truth of Indian society that they are not going to give them the place deserve as human beings.

These are just the living conditions of untouchables, the behavior of the upper caste towards them is torturing and traumatizing. Besides their lower-caste, they never understand the reason for such wicked and tormenting behavior of upper-caste. Though Anand only describes one day of untouchable the other days of their lives are even worse due to the oppressive and dominating behavior of society. The degradation of any untouchable starts with the rise of the sun and it not even ends as the day end. They face all kinds of humiliation and provocation all day even after



completing their jobs. If by chance there is a delay in cleaning everyone starts abusing and insulting the untouchables without any realization of their routine.

His day started with the abuse of his father, “Get up, oh you Bakhya, you son of a big, ‘came his father’s voice,..., ‘Get up and attend to the latrines or the sepoy will be angry.’ (16) Anyhow he manages to get up though he wants to sleep a little more. He was in his half-sleep he heard the shouting of a person who was saying, “Oh, Bakhya! Oh, Bakhya! Oh, you scoundrel of a sweeper’s son! Come and clear a latrine for me!” someone shouted from without. (18) Whomever the person is calling, he is in full rage and also abusing him for his delay in his duty. His way of calling is contemptuous and he immediately wants Bakha to come without any delay of a moment. He hesitantly says sorry for the delay and starts doing his job. He completed his morning shift without having his breakfast or even a drop of water. As he reached back to his home they have no water at home to drink. Sohini his younger sister went to get water from the brook.

“The outcastes were not allowed to mount the platform surrounding the wall, because if they were ever to draw water from it, the Hindus of the three upper castes would consider the water polluted.” (26)

The Hindus of upper castes do not let the outcaste get water whenever they want. The upper-caste Hindus keep their domination by not providing the untouchables with the basic need of life. All the outcastes have to wait for the arrival of anyone from the upper class and plead them for water. They only managed to get water if the upper caste people were in a good mood or kind enough to have pity on them. Otherwise, they have to wait for the whole day to get water no matter either they needed urgently or not. By keeping the power of brook they let the outcastes wait for them and beg them for their mercy “Oh Maharaj! Maharaj! Won’t you draw us some water, please? We beg you.” (29) That was a strategy to dominate them and rule them the way they want to. They make them miserable so that they beg and do not even try to come in front of them. The behavior of water-giving is also sometimes very insulting instead of pouring water into the pitcher they just throw water from the height so that their utensil does not touch the pitcher of untouchables. Because a slight touch polluted them and then they have to perform rituals to purify themselves.

The behavior of the shopkeeper is no different from the people who behaved like the superior and took the coin after washing it so that he did not get polluted. After that, the shopkeeper threw the packet of a cigarette instead of giving him nicely. These were the norms and tact to behave any bhangi or sweeper. Bakha was used to this behavior he just picked up the packet and leave quietly. After that, he again stopped at a sweets shop after a lot of thinking either he was allowed to have the luxury of buying sweets as he had to give all his money to his father. Anyhow he gathered the courage to buy it and he the confectioner’s way of giving sweet was the same as of the previous shopkeeper’s. “He caught the jalebis which the confectioner threw at him like a cricket ball..., and he walked away embarrassed, yet happy.” (48) He ignored the behavior and happily went on his way after having his desired thing but this happiness last only for few moments. In his thoughts, he just touched a man and there was humility on his way as people gathered around them after hearing the abusive screams of a man.

“Dirty dog! Son of a bitch! The offspring of a pig! He shouted.” (49) And in response to all this Bakha had nothing to say he just stand still in a robotic manner with his joined hands and pleaded for mercy for his mistake. Instead of solving this matter, all the people from the upper caste who gathered there start beating him. Because it was Bakha’s fault for not announcing his coming in the street. The upper caste had set the rule that untouchables could not freely roam around the

street so that the upper class not get polluted. Bakha was treated like an object who could be beaten to death for this and no one would step forward to save him. Now he had made mistake so it was everyone's right to punish him, how even he dared to walk freely in the street. At last, Bakha was released with instructions so that this would not happen again.

'You be sure to shout now, you illegally begotten!' said a shopkeeper from a side, 'if you have learnt your lesson!' Bakha hurried away. (53)

This encounter was humiliating and tormenting that right after the incident he start shouting, "*posh* keep away, *posh*, sweeper coming, *posh*, *posh*, sweeper coming, *posh*, *posh*, sweeper coming!" (53) This is exactly what the upper class want that every sweeper does. And this also to remind them that they are low-caste and they have to shout in order to inform them about their presence though their presence has no value but this only to keep them under their control and maintain their dominance. And this not only happens to Bakha, but all the untouchables also have to face this humiliation and sweepers a bit more.

After this bitter and harsh encounter, he had to go temple for cleaning because his father was not well and could not come for cleaning. He had not the courage to enter the temple, because he knew very well what will be the outcomes of his entering the temple. "He realized that an Untouchable going into a temple polluted it past purification." (59) He had no choice except to clean the temple anyhow he gathered his courage and start cleaning. Sweepers and low-castes were not allowed to visit the holy place as their existence would pollute the temple and then the upper-castes had to perform sacrifices in order to gain the purification of their holy place. As he mounted on the steps of the temple for cleaning he heard shouting from a distance.

'Get off the steps, you scavenger! Off with you! You have defiled our whole service! You have defiled our temple! Now we will have to pay for the purificatory ceremony. Get down, get away, you dog!' (63)

Although he was not allowed to have education, his urge to become a worthy person in society stayed in him. Bakha tried hard to be like English babu in his way of living so that he might be like them but that was of no use. The people would not let him be a respectable person because everyone knew that he was actually in person. Only caste would define your fate and place in the society all his other dreams and hard work make no difference and he was always considered a sweeper no matter what his dreams and desires were. Because it was a social taboo that sweepers could not enter any school but he always wished to turn his lifestyle like babus. Though he had not much to spend on himself still he wanted to learn English from one of the babu's kids. At one point to fulfill his wish to learn English he asked,

"Then, do you think it will be too much trouble for you to give me a lesson a day?' Seeing the boy hesitate, he added: 'I shall pay you for it.' (42)

As the people of high-caste had trained how to treat the untouchables. So they also behaved like their adults. At first, the child hesitates to be in contact with the untouchable, but his greed for money makes a way somehow to teach Bakha something.

Untouchables and lower-caste people were not allowed to enter any school and they were not able to take part in sports as well. If they entered, the coach would not consider his existence and not teach him anything. But Bakha was found of hockey and anyhow managed to get permission to play with the high-caste boys. During the match, there had been started a fight and in the middle of that fight, one of the upper-caste boys got injured. The boy was bleeding from his

head and with the spirit to save the child Bakha picked that boy and ran for his house. As the mother saw her child in the arm of a sweeper's he forget that her son was in a critical condition rather she focused on who carried her son and start yelling and abusing Bakha for holding his son and also put all the blame on Bakha for the injury. Without knowing the truth she abused and cursed Bakha.

'Oh, you eater of your masters! What have you done? You have killed my son! ..., Give me my child! You have defiled my house, besides wounding my son!' (115)

The concern of a mother was right for her son, but she was more concerned with the caste of her son's savior. Even in the critical situation, she had not forgotten to blame the sweeper and also abused him for touching her son. She was not in a state to listen she was just furious by the sight of her injured son in a sweeper's arm. Instead of thanking him she humiliate him and cursed him and here again Bakha blame himself for his touch and his fate of being born as untouchable. Besides, the humiliation and hatred of the upper-class he had to bear his father Lakha's abuse for not being efficient and quick in his work. The behavior of his also very meek and he took the side of upper castes. " 'No, no, my son, no,' said Lakha, we can't do that. They are our superiors." (80) These were the words of his father when told him about the pathetic and ill-treatment of upper-castes'. His father was oppressed by the domination of upper-caste that he never taught his children to say no or speak a word in front of the people.

Lakha himself not disobeyed his master- all the people who are from upper castes were his masters and he considered himself their slave- nor let his children disobey. He confined himself in the walls of slavery as he was told to do and he taught his offspring the same lesson. The web of the caste system has spread in Indian Society that cannot breakable. All people are strictly following the conventions and traditions of behaving like superior that there would be any change in this behavior as it is the formation of Indian society. Although there have been given many rights to the untouchable or Dalits they are only limited to the papers. Otherwise, Dalits are still fighting for their rights and facing the marginalization of the upper class.

## Conclusion

The analysis of *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand and *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* by Omprakash Valmiki shows the ways and societal constructions that create the difference between low class and high-class. This difference is deeply rooted because of the religious aspect as well people believe that to maintain this difference is their ritual and they have to follow it, at any rate. All the incidents that have been discussed in the discussion indicate that people from the high-caste or upper class have the authority to treat people with humiliation. For them, the only way to prove their power is to tell people that they are superior to them in order of being born in the high class.

Although they are trying hard to come along with high-class either by getting an education or through hard work. They still remain the same even after tireless efforts to be different. But being untouchables they are not able to have the potential and abilities to be someone in society. The analysis of both novels shows that society has built such powerful barriers of the cast that cannot demolish as it is all because of human psychology of being superior to low castes. And there seems no change in the behavior of people towards low-caste in future as well.

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