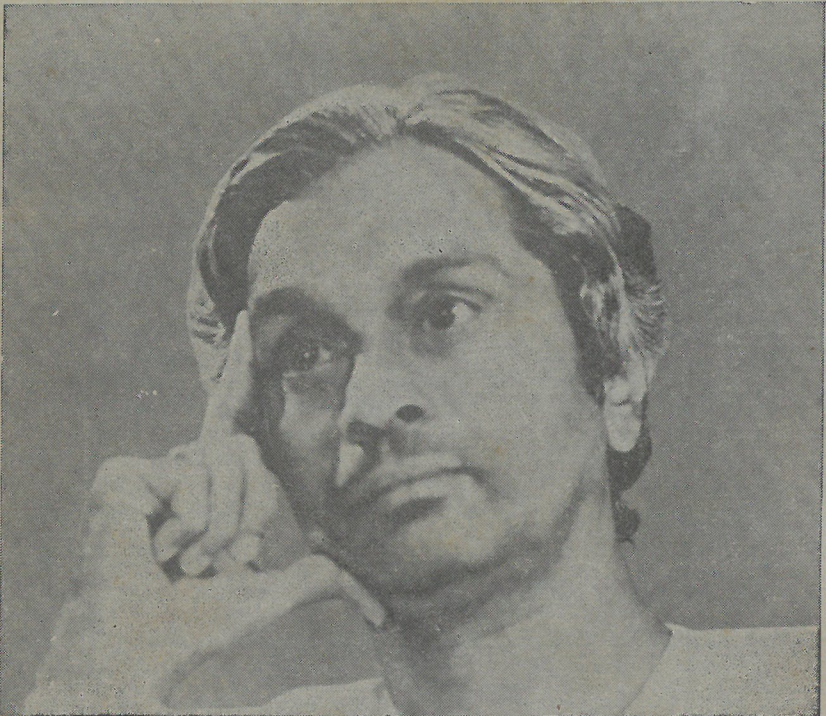


# Aggression On Indian Culture

*Re-read  
on 8/4/00*



V. T. RAJSHEKAR

**AGGRESSION ON  
INDIAN CULTURE**

***CULTURAL IDENTITY OF DALITS  
AND THE  
DOMINANT TRADITION OF INDIA***

**V. T. RAJSHEKAR**

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### ABOUT THE BOOK

*The book deals with the country's all-round atmosphere of violence created by the clash of two cultures – between the brahminical “dominant” culture and the culture of the indigenous peoples of India. The tiny ruling class comprising less than 15% of its 800-million population is desparately trying to gobble up the native culture which is resisting this cultural aggression. Every problem of India is traced to this ruling class failure to impose this “dominant culture” and through that destroy the liberating culture of over 85% of India's indigenous peoples.*

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*The book may be translated and published in any Indian language with the permission of the author.*

## FOREWORD

### What is Culture ?

A plebeian understanding of the word would bring to mind our "famed Sangeet Natak Akademy, Lalit Kala Akademy and Sahitya Akademy kind of definition. But a more honest look it would be obvious that culture is a word that really defies definition. And this mainly because culture is life. The past, present and future of a set of people. Something that is dynamic without being ephemeral, holistic without going into minutiae and colourful without losing its sobriety.

If culture then is life itself, it evidently would have to be made up of the individual components that human existence is made up of : food and clothing, language and other forms of expression, customs and traditions, religion and ethics—indeed life style itself.

The next question that we have to address is ~~as to~~ whether India has a "dominant cultural tradition"? Would we not be fooling ourselves if we assumed that India, which is a desparate pot pourri of heterogeneous nation ~~states~~, can claim to have a single cultural strain? India has ~~as~~ many cultures as the number of nationalities that constitute the union. The dominance or otherwise is only dictated by the ruling culture, which since the last 3,000 years happens to be the barbarian Aryan culture. The highly advanced pre-Dravidian and Dravidian culture (there is a school of thought which says that the Dravidians were the founders and the first occupants of the American continent) were driven into the hills and forests — the last surviving examples of them being the tribals of India. The superiority of

this culture is still evident in terms of the tribal value system where justice, fairplay, socialism, woman's equality and non-exploitation is still a way of life. Even in the Untouchables, who are nothing but mildly Aryanised tribals suffering from the additional stigma of untouchability, these traits are clearly visible. The very fact that the upper castes normally concede that the Scheduled Caste labourer is "honest" and "hard-working" (though impure) proves this point. The "dominant culture" is that which is spawned by the TV and radio in a desperate bid to wipe out the thousand flowers that are trying to bloom in the countryside. This is what is called the "national mainstream". But the culture of the masses is truly resilient. A vibrant and pervasive cultural entity is thriving in the thousands of Dalit hamlets across the country even today. The *mahua*, the *baul*, the spirit worship, the cutting of tender chicken at Mariamma's (Kali) feet and countless such events - a veritable celebration of life - keep the real culture very much alive.

In fact, if across India there can be one common identifiable culture, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Kutch to Kohima, it is that of the Dalits. The Aryan "dominant culture" could not devour it despite thousands of years of efforts to "assimilate, integrate our people. The culture of suffering and oppression, the culture of untouchability, the culture of starvation, the culture of being betrayed, the culture of women being raped by upper castes and yet the culture of fighting back. No other culture (of assimilation) can swallow this culture - the culture of the Dalits—a day in the life of a Dalit.

India's culture is Dalit culture.

The following is an edited and annotated paper read at a consultation held by the Christian Institute for Study of Religion and Society as part its biennial conference at Kottayam, Kerala, on Nov.28, 1987. The paper is brought out as a booklet on public demand.

# *The Cultural Identity of Dalits & the Dominant Cultural Tradition of India*

**Introduction:** I have been given a difficult subject, rather a "controversial" one but I am sure this being a Christian audience which has cultivated logic and reasoning through its egalitarian religious values, you can better appreciate my arguments. Ours being a Dalit point of view, the paper reflects the agony and anger of Untouchables, considered the "lowest" in India. So pardon me if some of my remarks shock you. What is important is you have to judge the paper on the basis of facts.

India is not a nation but a group of warring nationalities—may be striving to become a nation. So India has nothing like a "dominant cultural tradition". But the "Hindu culture" and tradition is being described so because India's ruling class/caste has called it so. When a ruling class calls something as "dominant culture" the rest simply follow it. Imitating the ruling class is a natural habit.

But this ruling class/caste — peddlars of this dominant culture—is not even 15% of India's 800-million population.

**Economic Statistics:** Since economic statistics is music to ruling class ears, we will give you some figures: V.A. Pai Panandikar, an economist, says the gross domestic product is cornered by 20% of the population. (*Hindustan Times*, Dec.3, '87) Those who are literate (both reading and writing) may be about 20%. The English-knowing Population is not even 2%. Only about 2% Indians pay income-tax. Purchasing power is in the hands of less than 15% to 20%. Over 50% of Indians live below the "poverty line" and another 20% are hand to mouth. Only the top 15% have all the wealth. This 15% of the population owns over 60% of the land.

The lowest occupational category in terms of income is now accepted as that of the agricultural labourer. Right at the bottom is the rural landless farm labourer and 50.44% of Scheduled Castes (Dalits) are agricultural labourers, according to data available from various sources as against 14.08% of the non SC/ST population. And this figure does not include SC converts. And 48.98% of the total rural male landless agricultural labourers are Scheduled Castes (SCs). About another 30% of SCs are small cultivators working on nonviable farm holding. Almost all primary leather workers in all parts of the country are SCs. Scavenging is a preserve of the SC women and girls. Do you know the most "unclean" segments of the Indian society help keep the rest of the country "clean"?

In Western and North-Western states of India, weaving is an SC occupation. In West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, fishing is a typically SC occupation. In Himachal, hilly UP and Sikkim, metal-based and wood-based traditional craftsmanship is completely with SCs. In some parts of the country SC women are *dias* and washerwomen. In the urban areas, the SC is primarily a scavenger, the others are rickshaw-pullers, cart-pullers, head-load workers, construction-labourers, cobblers and beedi workers.

Here are some interesting figures on literacy rates : (rural)

	S.C		Non-SC/ST	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1971 census	20.04	5.06	38.51	15.88
1981 do	27.91	8.45	46.41	21.68

The patterns are clear. In 1971, the literacy rate of male SCs is almost half that of the non-SC/ST population, while for females it is almost a third of the non-SC/ST. This has not changed drastically even a decade later. In the order of the ruling class-caste clique SCs are, we presume, ranked below the non-SC/ST women also.

So economic statistics clearly reveal that about 15% of India's people own the wealth. They control power. So they constitute the ruling class : industrialists, professionals, bureaucrats, journalists, judiciary, film, entertainment and sports industries, traders, bankers, educational, religious and trade union leaders, scientists, etc.

**Social Statistics :** Caste-wise they are Brahmins 5%, Kshatriyas 1%, Vaishyas 1%, plus the top landed sudra communities about 10%. A total of 17%.

So both economic and social statistics prove that wealth, power and prestige are concentrated in the hands of about 15%. And the values of this ruling class/caste have come to be recognised as the "dominant culture" and every other culture has to remain subservient to this. People living in the periphery of India do not matter. It is the "Hindi heartland" (the cowbelt) that is the controller of this culture.

**Who is a "Hindu" ? :** So when people talk about this "dominant Hindu culture", they are referring to the 15% of the upper castes of India and not to all those people who are clubbed together and called "Hindus". Hinduism being a foreign religion (Aryan import) its practitioners are mainly the top three *varnas* plus the top landed gentry (Shudras). Scheduled Castes (20%), Tribals (10%), Backward Castes (40%) - a total of 70% are not "Hindus" and were never "Hindus". To this we must add Muslims (15%), Christians (2.5%) and Sikhs (2%) - a total of 19.5%. So a total of 90% of Indians are not "Hindus". This day nobody has challenged our statistics which are based on historical facts.

**What is this "dominant culture" ? :** Culture ideas, values, ethics. This is the basis of every r and preservation of life constitute the essence' from this angle, I will examine the cultural



**1 Does Hinduism recognise equality ?** : Caste system is the foundation on which the edifice of Hinduism is built. In the *Bhagwad Gita*, God Krishna says he is the creator of caste system. *Purusha Sukta* in the *Rig Veda* defines what is caste, which in other words means ascending order of reverence and descending degree of contempt. When god himself has authorised inequality how can there be a room for equality in Hinduism ? The *Manu Smriti* has given caste the legal sanction and the Supreme Court of India itself has upheld this Code of Manu by which only the Brahmin can be a temple priest. That is why even M.K. Gandhi, described by the upper castes as the "Father of the nation", fully supported the caste system. Even the Constitution of India has upheld caste.

I need not go into the havoc played by the caste system of which untouchability is the worst form. So under Hinduism every human being has a grade and rank depending upon his birth. That is how our Prime Ministers of India, a majority of our Ministers, ambassadors, judges, IAS, IPS officers, scientists, journalists, lawyers, auditors, teachers, bankers are Brahmins. This is the caste order which sees "merit" in caste. (V.T. Rajshekar : *Merit, My Foot*, DSA 1987). So inequality is a vital force under Hinduism.

**Sanctified racism** : Hinduism is the only religion in the world which has sanctified racism in the form of untouchability. The South African apartheid has no sanction of the Christian religion. But untouchability has. That is how 20% Untouchables, 10% tribals, and 40% backward castes – a total 70% of Indians are treated as slaves under this caste law. Women, even Brahmin women, are slaves. Widow-burning (*Sati*) bride-burning, dowry demand, prostitution of Dalit girls (*Devadasi*) are all part of Hinduism and no Shankaracharya has condemned it. In other words, slavery has religious sanction under Hinduism.

**2. Does Hinduism recognise democracy ?** : Eternal vigilance, they say, is the price of democracy. But how can

there be vigilance where 75% of its population is deliberately kept illiterate — despite the constitutional provision of free and compulsory primary education ? Deprive man of knowledge and he will become your slave. This is the Law of Manu and India is implicitly following it.

English is reserved for the ruling class and Indian languages for the slaves. Convent schools for the rulers and Government or municipal schools for slaves. Very beautiful and convincing theories are manufactured to enforce slavery in India. This slavery is so sugar-coated that even slaves are enjoying slavery in India.

**3. Does Hinduism recognise Liberty ?** : Caste system has fixed the profession of each *jati*. A person who is a Brahmin will die as Brahmin and one who is a scavenger will die as scavenger. There is neither a promotion nor demotion under Hinduism. So when the freedom of vocation is denied, how can there be liberty ? Mrs. K.R. Gowri may be the most popular "Marxist" leader and might have fetched votes for the Communist Party to win the recent Kerala Assembly elections. But she is unfit to become the Chief Minister because she belongs to the "lowly" — Ezhava caste. Jagjivan Ram was denied prime ministership twice because he was an Untouchable. An upper caste man may be corrupt, characterless, a downright idiot still he is tolerated and paraded. Because virtues go with caste. In parts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Karnataka and elsewhere Untouchables cannot walk with slippers on. Their girls are compelled to run naked on a full moon night. Devadasi system of prostitution is enforced on them. I can give hundreds of examples to prove that under Hinduism there is no room for liberty.

But at the same time it gives full liberty to starve, to go naked. Hundreds of our girls are employed as prostitutes in Bombay's Red Light district under official care. These girls

have full liberty to practise prostitution. Then there are criminal tribes whose job is to steal and eat. Then there are some tribals who live on tree-top like monkeys. On the Calcutta streets, you will see thousands of rickshaw-pullers dragging burly women. All these people have perfect liberty to do what they want.

**4. Does Hinduism recognise fraternity ?** : Fraternity means fellow-feeling, a sense of belonging. But in India charity begins with caste and ends with caste. If Muslims are killed in hundreds, "Hindus" feel happy. In Nellie (Assam) thousands of Muslims were killed but no condolence meeting was called anywhere by Hindus. Rather they celebrated it.

Sharing of joy is not enough. I must share your misery. That is more important. I must suffer with those who are suffering. Co-suffering is, therefore, more important than co-enjoyment.

Sikhs are killed daily. So also Muslims. Untouchables are kicked, killed, burnt and raped and their houses burnt. Does a "Hindu" suffer with them? No. Rather they are happy. It is the absence of this co-suffering, lack of fraternity that is responsible for making the upper caste rulers to declare Sikhs as anti-national, Muslims anti-national, Christians a suspect, Untouchables a dirty lot, tribals troublesome. Only the upper castes are merited and fit to rule.

It is this absence of fraternity that has made India a vast theatre of war - eternal war, caste war, religious war, linguistic war, border war. Recently (1987) there was a "war" between Assam and Nagaland and several people were killed.

No country in the world has such a dismal record of class-war. Nay. The very function of the "caste" is conflict, eternal conflict. The Brahmin Parasuram circled the "earth"

21 times and killed every Kshatriya and finally standing atop the Western Ghats threw his *kodali* (axe) dripping with blood, and the Arabian Sea receded up to the place where the *kodali* fell. The reclaimed land is called *Parasurama Shristi*, the present Kerala. The Kerala people have named the Trivandrum-Mangalore train that pass through this vital artery as "Parasuram Express" and Kerala's topmost "Marxist" leader, EMS Namboodiripad, presented an idol of Parasurama when he met Mao Tse-tung in Beijing. Even our "Marxists" believe in caste rules. It is to see that the Kshatriya population does not go up the Brahmins introduced. *sati* (widow-burning).

The Brahmin-Kshatriya fight started by Parasurama is continuing even today. V.P. Sing is trying to gang up Kshatriyas against Brahmins who are mostly with the Congress Party. The modern Parasurama, Kamalapati Tripathi, is fighting V. P Singh only because of this enmity.

**Philosopher of Facism's gratitude to Manu :** That is how Nietzche, the Philosopher of Facism, has acknowledged that he has borrowed his ideas from Manu. So we can conclude that brahminism is the Father of Nazism. (*Who is the Mother of Hitler ?* - V.T. Rajshekar, Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1984).

**Purity and pollution :** They say Hinduism is the oldest civilization in the world - *sanatana dharma*. If so, why it has failed to elevate over 80% of the country's population and even the women of upper castes, including Brahmin women ?

This is mainly because "Hinduism" is overwhelmed with the fear of pollution. "It has not got the power to purify. It has not got the impulse to serve". (*Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. III, pg. 92, Maharashtra govt., 1987) The Brahmins' the chief salesmen of this religion, have divided all human experiences such as time, space, things, people into pure and impure.

(A) **Time** is divided into pure and impure. A new Prime Minister is sworn in only after a Brahmin priest fixes an "auspicious" time. During the *rahu kala* nothing should be performed. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's plane's arrival (he was returning from a treatment in USA) in Madras was delayed (1987) by 15 minutes to avoid the *rahu kala*.

(B) **Space** is divided into pure and impure :

Agrahara, inhabited by Brahmins, is the "purest" area and the *cheri* where Untouchables live is "dirty". Slums, therefore, are reserved for Dalits and Malabar Hill in Bombay for millionaires who are upper castes.

(C) **Things** are pure and impure : Beef-eating is impure. Vegetarianism is pure. White is pure. Black is impure.

(D) **People** are pure and impure : The person of a Brahmin is sacred and holy. That is why he alone can be a temple pujari. That is how Jesudas was not allowed into Guruvayur. Indira Gandhi was not allowed into the Puri Jagannath temple because she was impure. Jagjivan Ram was not permitted to unveil the statue of Sampurnan and because he was impure.

A woman during menstruation is impure and as a person she is always impure and hence can't enter the *garba gudi* (sanctum sanctorum) even if she is the wife of the temple priest. A woman, even a Brahmin woman, is always impure.

So the entire Hindu religious practices and beliefs are obsessed with purity and pollution. The Ganga water, even with dead bodies floating, is always pure.

**The power to divide pure and impure :** This division of things into "pure" and "impure" gives power to those who divide. Who can divide things into pure and impure ? Only the Brahmin. So he becomes the most sacred and hence the most powerful.

He alone can be the *guru*. Hinduism is the only religion in the world where learning and salvation is possible only through a *guru* (teacher) and this *guru* shall be none other than a Brahmin. So no marriage is possible without a Brahmin. No birth, no death, no function without a priest. *Guru* is greater than the god.

**Vivekananda on Brahmins :** Even Swami Vivekananda, whom the Brahmins consider as a "great Hindu saint" for having given a new lease of life to brahminism, has condemned Brahmins as a pest : "The Brahmana, by his very birth, is the Lord of the Universe ! Even the most wicked Brahmana must be worshipped." (*Caste, Culture and Socialism* – 1983, pg. 35, Advaita Ashrama, No. 5, Delhi Entally Rd., Calcutta 700 014 – Rs. 3.50) There is no word which he has not used to condemn Brahmins. Hear his own words : "Kick out priests who are always against progress because they would never mend. Their hearts would never become big..... Root out priestcraft first ....."(ibid pg. 41). Please read this little booklet of the Ramakrishna Mission's own publishing house.

*Guru* alone is Hari (god) (Arun Shourie : *Hinduism : Essence and Consequences* – Vikas, 1979, pg 357). And this *guru* insists on unquestioned obedience. Implicit faith in *guru* is the most important principle of RSS, a Nazi organisation. Unquestioned obedience is the bedrock of facism. This is also the central message of the *Gita*. (ibid page 130).

Jagjivan Ram was a millionaire and held the second highest office as the Deputy Prime Minister of India during the Janata govt. but his wealth and position was nothing before a poor Brahmin.

So the problem of India is not poverty. If the Untouchables are poor, it is the byproduct of their cultural degradation being classified as impure. As long as purity and pollution notion is allowed to run riot, how can there be human rights ?

5. Does Hinduism recognise "merit"? : Brahmins and other upper castes say they are opposed to "caste-based" reservations. They want job reservations to be done on the basis of "merit". But what is this "merit"? Let us take the post of temple priest (*archaka*). Why the Brahmins want this job to be reserved only for one caste - Brahmin - a principle upheld even by the Supreme Court of India? They want "caste-based reservation in temple *archakas* post but "merit"-based reservation for other posts. This clearly proves the Brahmins have no belief in "merit".

What is merit? : Merit is the product of right environment. If right environment is provided anybody can come up. Heredity plays little role ("*Merit, My Foot*" - V. T. Rajshekar, Dalit Sahitya Akademy, 1987). But over 80% India's population (and women in particular) are called useless, unfit and given no opportunities. How can there be any place for "merit" in a country which does not recognise an individual?

Ban on inter-caste marriages, inter-dining and all other forms of inter-course has made India a country of "meritless" people. The upper castes of India want us to "love the land". But what is the use of loving the land without loving its people? But the upper castes hate over 85% of its people and do not consider them as their brothers and sisters. How can they create a love for the land when they create hatred between person and person? Loving the people is more important than loving the land. With such burning hatred in their hearts how can the upper castes create love? They want everything that is foreign-made including handkerchief and underwear. But tell others that they must love India, be 'nationalist'. These anti-national upper castes are teaching our people to love India.

That is how India has not produced a single Nobel Laureate after "independence". As long as we recognise that merit goes

with caste, India cannot produce a Noble Laureate. How can games and sports develop when it is reserved for the upper castes who mostly happen to be grass-eaters? What stamina can *idli-sambar walahs* have? Valsamma, P.T. Usha and Shiny Abraham could win Gold for India because they were Dalit girls and all beef-eaters. And they got the opportunity also. If the SC/STs of India are given the opportunity, they will beat all Olympic records.

What type of a defence force we can develop as long as the right to bear arms is denied to the really martial races—the Dalits, tribals, BCs and religious minorities? That is why, even our defence force is weak because Muslims, Sikhs, Dalits and tribals are not recruited to defence forces.

**6. Hindu attitude to work:** It is claimed that Hindu scriptures preach "work is worship". Upanishads, they say, call upon people to "work". What do the authors of Upanishads, Brahmasutras mean by "work"? To them "work" means rituals, sacrifices, recitation of Vedas and muttering of mantras. "Work" does not mean socially relevant work.

That is how in India out of 365 days in a year, we have 300 days of holidays. And on other 65 days a "Hindu" only goes to office but need not work. No other country in the world has so many holidays. Indians are called the laziest people on earth. But our people are born to work. SC/ST/BCs are the wage-earners. If they stop work for a day, they will have no food to eat. That means work is reserved for 85% of the population and pleasure for the rest of the 15% upper castes. And this people in pursuit of eternal, unending pleasure are found in all Rotary clubs, Lions clubs, Donkeys clubs, and Monkeys clubs abounding in India. Every facility is given by the govt. itself to cater to their 300 days of holidays. This is the "Hindu attitude to work".

**7. Treatment of women:** Vedas and Upanishads consider women equal to Shudras. That is how the Puri Shankara-



charya, the most honest of the Nazi leaders, defended *Sati* (widow-burning) Devadasi system has the religious sanction. Bride-burning is a daily feature. Delhi and Bangalore are competing with each other.

The woman has no place in the Hindu society. Before marriage she is under the custody of the parents, after marriage under husband and after becoming a widow under her children. At no time a woman can be free. At no time she can be trusted. This is the position of even Brahmin women. Even Sita had to ultimately commit suicide fed up with the attitude of her husband, the "ideal god" Rama. But these people who treat their women (half the population of India) as doormat have suddenly fallen in love with Muslim women. That is why they want a Common Civil Code.

**8. Hindu Tolerance :** Hinduism is called the "most tolerant religion in the world". What is this tolerance? Arun Shourie says Hinduism is tolerant "in matters that did not affect the social order". "Hindu tolerance" is all humbug. (V.T. Rajshekar : "Deceptive Boast of Hindu Tolerance", *Statesman*, Dec. 1, 87). When the Mughals came to India the upper castes simply surrendered to them. They also imitated the Muslim customs and manners. Not because they wanted to please the Muslim rulers but because they were too meek to fight the Muslims. It is this "Hindu" cowardice that is advertised as "Hindu tolerance". A "Hindu" is "tolerant" of the weak but intolerant of the strong. The current mindless, endless violence on Muslims and Sikhs prove how violent the Hindu could be when their social order is questioned.

Hinduism is tolerant of diverse practices. But it is intolerant about violation of social order. It is this "tolerance" that is advertised the world over to say that anybody and everybody is a Hindu in India. Sikhs are called Hindus. So also Jains and Buddhists. If tomorrow Christians admit that Christ is an avatar

of Vishnu, they too will be called Hindu. You may believe in god or not, you may be a meat-eater or vegetarian — anybody and everybody is a Hindu. This is what the Nazis mean by "Hindu tolerance".

But Untouchables entering temples can be killed. BCs claiming reservations can be butchered. Dalits entering Guruvayoor can be attacked. "Hindu tolerance" means you can do anything that you want without violating the caste order. Is this tolerance ?

Ravana, a Dalit hero, is being burnt every year at the end of Ram Lila festival. Dalits have tolerated it. But when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar exposed the sexual exploits of Rama and Krishna, his book (*Riddles in Hinduism*) was burnt and the govt. forced to delete the annexure to the book published by the govt itself. Any number of Brahmin writers had criticised Rama and Krishna. Vivekananda also had done it. But when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar did it, his book was burnt. This is because he was an Untouchable. Is this tolerance ?

I wrote an editorial in *Dalit Voice* giving a Dalit view of the current Sikh struggle for cultural identity, for which I was arrested under the Terrorists Act, handcuffed and dragged all the way from Bangalore to Chandigarh and kept in the jail. Earlier, I was dismissed from the *Indian Express* as its Deputy Chief-Reporter.

In Gujarat, the Dalits and BCs wanted reservation for which upper castes launched two "caste wars". Muslims are killed in hundreds. The latest (1987) took place in Bombay in the pretext of a cricket match.

Can we say that Hindus are the most tolerant people in the world? How can a social order which heaps suffering on millions of its people including its women be called "tolerant" ?

## **Collective salvation and individual salvation :**

Under Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism, Buddhism people are told to seek only "collective salvation". Prayers are held in their respective places of worship "collectively". The people who pray under these religions, they pray for the "collective welfare" of the society. But not so under Hinduism. Here seeking "collective salvation" is strictly prohibited. You can go to a Hindu temple any time and pray alone. A "Hindu" first prays for himself, then his wife and children. Very rarely a Hindu prays for the welfare of the whole society.

This principle of seeking "individual salvation" has played havoc with the Hindu society. Anybody who is working for the "collective welfare" of the people is looked down as a rebel renegade and shot down. That is why Hindu religion has not produced a single revolutionary. Sri Narayana Guru had to face many violent attacks from Brahmins for building a Shiva temple. Swami Ananda Thirtha, himself a Brahmin, was assaulted many times by Brahmins for working for the "collective welfare" of Untouchables (*Ananda Thirtha* - Mr. A. M. Ayrookuzhiel, CISRS, 1987). Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was killed. Mahatma Phule had to face a variety of troubles for trying to awaken the Dalits in Pune. All those who have worked for "collective salvation" are mercilessly treated by the "Hindus".

But every encouragement is given for "individual salvation". Jagjivan Ram was permitted to become a millionaire, even the Dy. Prime Minister of India. You can make any amount of money by fair or foul means. Corruption is always encouraged. Even to get the Tirupati prasada you have to bribe the priests. None will question you. But if you use that money for the "collective welfare" of your community then the Terrorist Act, NSA are reserved to hang you.

This principle of "individual salvation" is the special characteristic of Hinduism, permanently ruining any chance of a

revolutionary springing up from the Hindu fold. That is why Hinduism has not produced a single revolutionary.

**9. Non-violence:** It is also claimed that the Hindu religion is the only one in the world believing in non-violence. The whole world has believed this myth. M.K. Gandhi was the biggest advertising agent of this cult of non-violence. But finally he only fell a victim to a Brahmin bullet—after doing so much of service to publicise their fake non-violence. (*Violence in Hinduism* Prof. K.S. Bhagwan, Dalit Sahitya Akademy, 1986).

In South Africa, the white racist regime is inflicting violence on the Blacks. It does not make a secret of its violence. But in India our rulers do not inflict violence on SC/ST/BCs. This is the beauty. When their religion of Hinduism does this job of enslaving them, why use violence? That is why SC/ST/BCs are not killed in such huge numbers as Muslims & Sikhs. The highest number of the Dalits killed in India was in Kilvenmani, in Tamil Nadu. But the total deaths was within 50. Dalits are made "good Hindus" which helps them become better slaves. Will anybody kill his own unpaid slave, life-long slave? SC/ST/BCs are not only slaves but slaves enjoying their slavery—thanks to this nonviolent religion. The religion of Hinduism has enslaved their minds. Hence there is no need for violence. That is the secret of the upper caste claim that Hinduism stands for non-violence. They are 100% right. If the blacks and other persecuted people of the world are victims of violence, in India our people are the victims of non-violence.

**Karma Theory :** Instead of weapons, Hinduism is applying the weapon of "Karma theory" against SC/ST/BCs. The theory of Karma (fate) takes away the responsibility to work for the welfare of the oppressed. "If you are poor and suffering it is because of your own misdeeds in the past life". That means the society has no responsibility towards the oppressed. Have you ever seen the richest temples of India running a SC/ST/BC welfare centre ?

No. This is because this philosophy of Karma is injected into every blood and everybody believes in it. So there is no revolt in India, let alone a protest under Hinduism. Each person is governed by his destiny, Karma. That is how India's slaves are enjoying their slavery. This is something unparalleled in the whole world.

When there is not even a whimper of protest, where is the need for violence? And if anybody revolts (despite this Karma theory) this can be dubbed a terrorist activity, anti-national and the police and military will take care of them. Blue Star is the ultimate weapon. Nagas are even today under the Army rule.

**Hinduism is not a religion but ideology :** Culture means ideas, values, ethics, morals. They also constitute a religion. So if this test is applied Hinduism cannot be called a religion but an ideology. How effectively this religion is used as an ideology is proved in the Supreme Court judgment on the famous "Soosai case". The highest court of the land has upheld that reservations cannot be extended to those Untouchables quitting Hinduism. That means reservations are given as a dole to those who remain as "Hindus"—meaning slaves. Christians are charged with giving "inducements" for conversion. But here the State itself is giving the inducement to retain them in Hinduism. This is a glaring case of Hindu religion being used as an ideology. Is there a parallel to this in the whole world?

**Impact on Dalits :** This in nutshell are the broad features of India's "dominant culture" which is pushed down the throat of all the rest through the TV serial *Ramayana*, print-media, our education system, etc.

The air that you breathe, the water that you drink, the paper that you read, the book you study in classes, the cinema and TV that you see, the god that you worship, everything is engaged in spreading this "dominant culture". A social scientist called this

process as sanskritisation. It is but natural that Dalits, the very victims of this culture, also succumb to it. In the past 100 years or so this upper caste rulers have been vigorously engaged in sanskritising or hinduising the Dalits and tribals. M.K. Gandhi was the leader of this movement to hinduise the Untouchables. The title of "Mahatma" was conferred on him for this service done to strengthen "Hinduism" which made the Untouchables better slaves.

Reservations are thus used by the upper castes to strengthen Hinduism. Thus the State itself is being used in India to propagate Hinduism and the Supreme Court of India in its judgment on the famous Soosai case upheld this. (V.T. Rajshekar : "State used to promote Hindu religion ?" reprint of DV editorial, Sept. 1. 87).

**Dalits, victims of "Hinduism"** : Dalits are the worst victims of "Hinduism." The rulers are making every effort to make them part of "Hinduism" through assimilation and integration.

That is why our leader, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, advocated conversion as the most important weapon of liberation. (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar : *Why Go for Conversion ?* DSA 1987).

It is true that Dalits are not Hindus and were never Hindus. "Hinduism" or *Vaidhik Dharma* was brought to India by the Aryan invaders. So those who lived prior to this Aryan invasion cannot be Hindus. SC/STs are the indigenous people of India. Even the Backward Castes (40% of India's population) are neither Shudras nor Hindus. They are also untouchables. So over 70% of the so-called "Hindu population" are not "Hindus".

Untouchables have their own cultural identity. They are worshippers of nature. They had their own glorious cultural heritage. As the founders of the Indus Valley Civilisation, they can be ranked as the pioneers of world civilisation.

Even to this day they continue to be separate despite the best efforts to integrate them or assimilate them. They had no caste system. Because, they belonged to a tribal society of primitive communism which gave equal status to women and believe in high moral values and ethics. They are called "out castes" because they are outside the caste system.

That is why those who belonged to the caste system hated those who were outside the caste system. The Aryans condemned those outside the caste and treated them as their enemies. They destroyed our glorious Indus Valley civilization and introduced their barbaric caste order. Those who fought the Aryans were called Dasas, Dasyus, Asuras, Rakshasas (Ravana was called a Rakshasa). Vanaras, (Hanuman was a vanara or a monkey), Daityas, Pishachis, demons. The history of India is an unending war between the invaders and the natives. This war between the invaders and the indigenous people is continuing even to this day. Jharkhand movement is a part of this. So also Mizoram, Nagaland, Gorkhaland, Uttarkhand struggles. The two Gujarat caste wars are also the same. The war on the *Riddles* ("Dalits win war on *Riddles*"—DV Jan 1, 87) is part of this unending strife.

Though the Aryan invasion is today over 3,000 year old still the invaders could not destroy our distinct cultural identity. In every village, our people stick to their life-style, their own languages, their own shrines, their own traditions, their own culture. They have their own temples and priests and dieties. Their dress, food and culture and tradition are even today separate. It is only since the "British imperialism" was replaced by "Brahmin imperialism", this process of hinduising the indigenous people of India got a bit intensified. Still our oppressors are not succeeding, and they will never.

The tribals are resisting this aggression very effectively. The entire Northeast Mangoloid tribals have revolted against the brahminical aggression and not even the army could control

them. Gorkhaland, Jharkhand are other manifestations of this. The Sikh struggle for cultural identity is the other one. In the South, Sri Narayana Guru's and Periyar's Dravidian movements are important anti-Aryan movements. Millions of SC/ST/BCs suffocated by this Aryan poison got converted as Muslims, Christians and Sikhs.

The Aryan "dominant culture" is loosing its battle. That is why it is more and more taking a violent turn and using the State to suppress the "sons of the soil". The country's "national press" is working as the watchdog of this "dominant culture". So also its law courts, bureaucrats. The police and military are being increasingly used to destroy any individual or movement that will work against this "dominant culture". The very Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, is today facing all his troubles because he has refused to surrender and serve this ruling class/caste.

So as days pass and as more of the deprived, oppressed people of India gain little awareness through the teachings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy, Dr. R.M. Lohia etc. (every effort is being made to deny them English language), this fight between the "dominant culture" and the "Dalit culture" will get intensified leading to more and more violence. "Caste war", therefore, is inevitable and unavoidable. India's road to socialism will be only through caste war because in India "caste" is "class". It is a historical process which all of us must welcome. And every one must also get ready. Democrats among upper castes may take note of this warning and join us.

Christians being the most educated of all Indians have contributed a lot in sharpening the class/caste contradictions. Do you know that it is the Christians who taught the upper castes to "fight" the British (Christian) "imperialists"? Do you know that it is the Christian missionaries who brought formal education to Indians? In the other words, it is the Christians who brought civilisation to India.



But all this an ancient story. The Christian milk of human kindness has dried up after the foreign Christian missionaries left the country and upper caste Christians captured the levers of Church. The upper caste Christians are putting up with all the ruling class shackles and thereby doing a disservice to their religion. (Read : *Christians and the Liberation of Dalits* : V.T. Rajshekar, DSA 1986).

But all the more there are enough sympathetic Christians left and Christian values as such being superior, I am sure the Church will sharpen the contradictions to help liberate India.

As the 20th century comes to an end, the Aryan imperialism should also come to end. Towards this, the Christians must arm the struggle of the indigenous people with tremendous intellectual strength which it possesses in abundance. A bloody revolution is in the offing. Don't miss this historic opportunity.

Thank you.



## THE AUTHOR

V. T. Rajshekar (56) is one of India's rare original thinkers. Hailing from India's west coast district of South Kanara, Karnataka (India), he is a noted journalist and writer with over 25 books to his credit. Till 1979, he was the deputy chief reporter of the *Indian Express*, Bangalore, India's largest circulated English daily. Now he is the editor of the powerful *Dalit Voice*, the only English journal of its kind for the country's Black Untouchables and other persecuted minorities totalling over 85% of India's 800 million population. He was dismissed from the *Indian Express* (1979) for taking up the cause of the Untouchables and minorities. He founded the Dalit Sahitya Akademy which has international reputation for publishing books on India's social, cultural and religious problems. Some of his books have been translated to every language inside India and to Japanese, Chinese, German, French, Arabic etc. The third revised edition of his famous "Little Red Book," *Apartheid in India*, is published from USA by a prestigious Black publishing house, Clarity Press, under the title, *Dalit - the Black Untouchables of India*. Beginning as a Marxist, he was soon disappointed by the country's upper caste "Marxist" leadership and found a solution in the philosophy of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. "Class struggle" in India will take the shape of "caste war", he says. Widely travelled all over the world, he led two delegations to China (1980 and 1983) and represented India's Black untouchables at the World Mathaba Conference in Libya (1986). He also toured Japan to study the problem of Burakumin. His foreign travel is now curbed as his passport was impounded in 1987. Since brahminism is India's principal contradiction and even Nazi philosophers in Germany had acknowledged that they borrowed it from brahminism, he wants all victims of brahminism in India including upper caste women to join this holy war. Towards this he founded the Dalit-Muslim alliance which has taken roots in different parts of India. A rainbow alliance of SC/ST/BCs, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and women will be the first step towards a liberation of India, he says. He was amply rewarded by India's upper caste rulers for his work for the persecuted Untouchables and minorities. The Karnataka govt. filed a sedition case against him in 1986. For taking up the cause of Sikhs fighting for identity and dignity, he was arrested under the dreaded Terrorist Act (1986) handcuffed and dragged all the way from Bangalore and lodged in Chandigarh jail. Following a country-wide and international protest, he was released with an apology. Every effort is being made by Nazis to close down his journal and also liquidate him even as over 85% of India's population as well as African Blacks, hail him as a brave fighter for human rights.