

BC 3825: Race, Caste, and University: B. R. Ambedkar at Columbia (reasonably stable, with a few tweaks to come)

Instructor: Professor Anupama Rao

Office Hours: W

Course Description

1. R. Ambedkar is arguably one of Columbia University's most illustrious alumni. A democratic thinker and constitutional lawyer who had an enormous impact in shaping modern India, the world's largest democracy, Ambedkar came to Columbia University in July 1913 to start a doctoral program in Political Science. He graduated in 1915 with a Masters degree, and got his doctorate from Columbia in 1927 after having studied with some of the great figures of interwar American thought including Edwin Seligman, James Shotwell, James Harvey Robinson, and John Dewey.

This course follows the model of the Columbia University and Slavery course and draws extensively on the relevant holdings and resources of Columbia's Rare Book and Manuscript Library (RBML), Burke Library (Union Theological Seminary), the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and others to explore a set of relatively understudied links between Ambedkar, Columbia University, and the intellectual history of the interwar period. Themes include, but are not limited to: the development of academic disciplines at Columbia University and their relationship to new paradigms of social scientific study; the role of historical comparison between caste and race in producing new models of scholarship and political solidarity; links between figures such as Ambedkar, Lala Lajpat Rai, W. E. B. Du Bois and others who were shaped by the distinctive public and political culture of New York City, and more.

This course aims to explore the University archives, and the materials held at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library in particular, to create a finding aid that reproduces the intellectual life and public culture at Barnard and Columbia during B. R. Ambedkar's time (1913-1916). Students will engage in a number of activities toward that purpose. They will attend multiple instructional sessions, likely virtual, to learn how to use archives; they will make public presentations on their topics, which themselves will be archived in video form; and students will produce digital essays on a variety of themes and topics related to the course. In order to accomplish all of this while learning course material, students will work collaboratively in small groups and undertake focused archival research.

This seminar inaugurates an on-going, multi-year effort to globalize the reach and relevance of B. R. Ambedkar's thought, and to share our findings with the Columbia community and beyond.

Please note that there are two aspects to this seminar. Working independently, students will define and pursue individual research projects resulting in short research papers of 15-18 pages. They will also work together in small groups to create digital visualizations around a particular theme or idea.

NOTE: This course is a seminar based on collaboration and interaction between all members of the class. A core element of the class is our discussions. While the texts are central to the class, they are also a starting point for our conversations and collective interpretations which are the work of the course itself. **Attendance at all sessions is therefore critical. You may miss up to 1 session for any reason with no penalty. Beyond this absence, each absence will lower your participation grade by half a grade**, unless we've come to an agreement in advance (regarding medical concerns, for example.). You are responsible for making up missed work and material for any missed class by liaising with your peers.

Learning Outcomes

- ❖ Understanding the relationship between archive, evidence, and subaltern or understudied history with specific focus on locally available institutional archives. Students will thus learn to evaluate the nature of archival evidence, to work across different kinds of evidence, and to construct a new archive from existing documents.
- ❖ Learning about the history of caste and race as these were shaped analytically by disciplines, individuals and global contexts of transmission and engagement, while fore-fronting the unique and under-explored relationship between Columbia University, the cities of New York and Bombay/Mumbai, the idea of democracy as it took shape globally, and B. R. Ambedkar.
- ❖ Learning collaboratively and digitally to develop methods in the digital humanities for presenting research in new formats.

Breakdown of Grades

Research Paper: 30%

Using primary and secondary sources, students will each research and write a 18~20-page paper on an aspect of the relationship between Columbia University, New York city, and B. R. Ambedkar. Students will work with faculty support to investigate a topic of their choosing from a refined set of topics selected carefully by the instructor, owing to limited access to archives, and the complexity of the sources available. This year, we will focus on the archives of female scholars who were associated with Barnard and Columbia, whose engagement with, and creative reinterpretation of the works of some of the male scholars whose personal archives we will be exploring via the RBML throws fresh light on key debates around political equality and social difference in the interwar period. As well, the critical presence of African American scholars within and without the University--e.g., Anna Julia Cooper, W.E. B. D. Du Bois, Hubert Harrison, Bayard Rustin, Booker T. Washington, and others offers a crucial framework for contextualizing this period.

Research will be conducted mainly through collections at Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library and other relevant repositories in the metropolitan area. Students should expect to devote at least one morning or afternoon each week to working on the research project.

Digital Project: 30%

Over the course of the semester, we will collectively participate in the creation of a website on the history of Columbia University and Ambedkar. This project will combine digitized archival exhibitions with visualizations of historical data. For example, you might want to create a map that shows Ambedkar's time in New York and the course he took during this time. You might want to map the area of Columbia, Morningside, and Harlem between 110 and 116th streets, so that we can see the distances between the University and various social justice associations in Harlem, as well as people associated with them. To support this work, we will learn how to create and structure a digital repository, examine the standards for creating metadata, and consider different ways to visualize and interpret our sources. The creation and use of archival metadata is the key mechanism by which unique historical artifacts, texts, and images become usable in a digital platform context. These skills will be useful to students beyond the boundaries of the course.

The final project will be accomplished in a series of interim steps. These waypoints will develop skills and content necessary for the completion of the end product. Finished digital projects will be evaluated for accurate representation of historical evidence, creative use of sources, and the relationship between digital presentation and theoretical argument.

Topics this year (2022) may include: the history of "history" (with a focus on the American constitution and Reconstruction); the relationship between history and anthropology/sociology (with a focus on ideas of social development and historical comparison); links between metropolitan and colonial social science (with a focus on India pre-Partition)

Class Participation: 25%

Class participation will be graded according to how a student contributes to the seminar every week, including a Public Presentation.

Metadata Assignments: 15%

Assignments will constitute ongoing metadata tasks for group projects (**Assignments Due Weeks Four, Seven, Nine**)

Academic Integrity

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when

taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Plagiarism or dishonesty and unethical behavior is unacceptable and you will face punitive measures. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Barnard, or Columbia.

For further information, please refer to the *Barnard Honor Code*:

“We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake. “established 1912, updated 2016.

Classroom Etiquette constitutes best practices of your academic and social lives: be considerate in class; listen well; interact with respect and compassion; and turn off your phone.

Disability-Related Accommodations

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with Disability Services (DS). Faculty must be notified of registered students’ accommodations before exam or other accommodations will be provided. Students who have (or think they may have) a disability are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion.

If you believe you may encounter barriers to the academic environment due to a documented disability or emerging health challenges, please feel free to contact me and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS).

Any student with approved academic accommodations is encouraged to contact me during office hours or via email. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations for the semester, please contact CARDS at (212) 854- 4634, cards@barnard.edu, or learn more: barnard.edu/disabilityservices. CARDS is located in 101 Altschul Hall

OR, email disability@columbia.edu

Additional Policies and Information

[Affordable Access to Course Texts Statement](#)

All students deserve to be able to access course texts. The high costs of textbooks and other course materials prohibit access and perpetuate inequity, and Barnard librarians are partnering with students, faculty, and staff to increase access. By the first day of advance registration for each term, you should be able to view on CourseWorks information provided by your faculty about required texts (including ISBN or author, title, publisher and copyright date) and their prices. Once you have selected your classes, here are some cost-free methods for accessing course texts, recommended by the Barnard Library. I have placed the texts on reserve at Barnard Library, otherwise look for course texts using CLIO (library catalog), Borrow Direct (request books from partner libraries), Interlibrary Loan(request book chapters from any library), and NYPL. Students with financial need or insecurity can check items out from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library and Butler Library and can consult with the Dean of Studies and the Financial Aid Office about additional affordable alternatives for getting access to course texts. Talk with your librarian and visit the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability guide (library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability) for more details.

Class Attendance Policy

Be punctual: respect means also to be timely. I will tolerate up to 10 minutes of delay. If such delay becomes recurrent, it will affect your grade. Class discussion and participation are a fundamental component of this class. Do not miss class! Your grades will be affected. If needed, please justify your absence in advance.

Late assignments

Assignments that are overdue will not be accepted. Exceptions must be certified by medical evidence. If you have any specific concern about meeting a deadline for an assignment, you should contact me at least three days in advance for an extension.

Recommended Texts

Readings marked with “*” will be provided as PDFs in CourseWorks.

The texts below should accompany specified readings, and function as guides to the social historical context of the period. They are available through CLIO, and on order at Book Culture if they are not available as e-books.

1. Anupama Rao, *The Caste Question* (Chapters 1-3) E-book
2. Vivek Bald, *Bengali Harlem* E-book
3. Robert McCaughey, *Stand, Columbia* E-book
4. Charles Lord, *Gods of the Upper Air* E-book
5. Daniel Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* E-book
6. Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism* E-book
7. Sharon Egetta Sutton, *When Ivory Towers Were Black: A Story about Race in America's Cities and Universities*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2017 E-book
8. Aakash Singh Rathore and Ajay Verma eds. *The Buddha and His Dhamma: A Critical Edition*, Delhi: Oxford University Press **on order at book culture**

9. Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015 E-book

*****PLEASE SEE THE LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AT THE END OF THIS SYLLABUS, AND START BROWSING*****

SYLLABUS

If an item is marked with a “*,” it means it can be found under “Files” in CourseWorks, so please do not look for them elsewhere! Essays are listed in the order in which I would like them to be read, and not in alphabetical order.

Please note that the syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the seminar, availability of archival material and scholars, and other unforeseen circumstances that may arise with the constantly evolving global pandemic. For now, Weeks 1-3 are set in stone and we will explore the methods involved in creating an archive of B. R. Ambedkar.

Week One: Who is B. R. Ambedkar? (September 7)

Required Readings:

1. Rao, “Ambedkar in America,” *South Asia*, 2022
2. Daniel Immerwahr, “Caste or Colony? Indianizing Race in the United States,” *Modern Intellectual History*, 4, 2 (2007), pp. 275–301
<http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/daniel-immerwahr/Caste%20or%20Colony%20%28MIH%20pdf%29.pdf>
3. Fran Pritchett’s online site on B. R. Ambedkar (biography, writings, and overall time Columbia)
<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/timeline/index.html>

Discussion in class during our second hour together will focus on models of what we are trying to do, e.g., “university and slavery” courses and reports, as well as a discussion of important open-access archives such as the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) and the Columbia Spectator:

1. Brown University, Slavery and Justice Report:
<https://slaveryandjusticereport.brown.edu/essays/campbell/>
2. Columbia University and Slavery Project Website:
<https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu>
3. The London School of Economics (LSE) Digital Archive: <https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/browse#beaver>
4. A great example of an essay that draws from CU RBML material by Rohini Shukla, Ph.D. candidate in the Religion Dept., <https://www.borderlines->

cssaame.org/posts/2020/1/31/b-r-ambedkar-and-the-study-of-religion-at-columbia-university

5. SAADA- The South Asian American Digital Archive
6. The *Columbia Spectator*

Week Two: The Problem of Biography (September 14)

Discussion with Prof. Thai Jones, Lehman Center, and Tommy Song, CU alum and archival researcher, for a discussion of Ambedkar-related holdings at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library and metadata.

Required Readings:

1. *Suraj Yengde, "Iterations of shared dalit-black solidarity," *Seminar* 737
2. *Dhananjay Keer, *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Life and Mission* [Selections will be provided as PDF, book is out of print]
3. V. Geetha, "Unpacking a Library," *The Wire*, October 29, 2017, <https://thewire.in/caste/unpacking-library-babasaheb-ambedkar-world-books>
4. Essays on Ambedkar's journalism: Exactly 100 years ago Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started his first newspaper named *Mooknayak* on 31 January 1920. Once Ambedkar entered into the world of newspapers as a journalist in 1920, it continued over the period of next 36 years with some breaks in between. *Mooknayak* ceased publication in April 1923 due to financial crisis and a dispute between Ambedkar and Gholap. Closure of *Mooknayak*, didn't prevent Ambedkar from pursuing his journalistic fervour. He went on to establish three more newspapers—*Bahishkrit Bharat* (1927-1929), *Samata* which was later renamed as *Janata* (1928-56), and *Prabuddha Bharat* (1956). Both *Bahishkrit Bharat* and *Janata* were published fortnightly, while *Prabuddha Bharat* was published weekly.
 1. Article about Ambedkar's journal (*Mooknayak*, started January 31, 1920) in *The Hindu*, February 01, 2020 <https://www.thehindu.com/books/in-a-tower-without-a-staircase-an-extract-from-the-inaugural-issue-of-br-ambedkars-journal-mooknayak/article30700662.ece>
 2. Prabodhan Pol, "100 Years of Mooknayak, Ambedkar's first Newspaper that Changed Dalit Politics Forever," *The Wire*, January 31, 2020 <https://thewire.in/media/mooknayak-ambedkar-newspaper>
 3. Goldy M. George, "Ambedkar's Ideological Journalism in a Brahminical Republic—100 years of Ambedkar's Journalism," *Countercurrents.org*, January 31, 2020 <https://countercurrents.org/2020/01/ambedkars-ideological-journalism-in-a-brahminical-republic-100-years-of-ambedkars-journalism>

Recommended:

*Nanak Chand Rattu, *Reminiscences and Remembrance of B. R. Ambedkar*

Week Three: Interwar Intellectual Culture (September 21)

@5:15PM: Making and Doing workshop with Digital Humanities Center —class visit to talk about what it means to create an archive of subaltern knowledge. They will introduce students to a variety of presentational modes for digital humanities scholarship, and introduce students to metadata, tagging, and (digital) methods of archival curation.

Alicia Peaker, Associate Director, DHC

Required Readings:

Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings* (select chapters) The entire book is terrific but recommended are Chs. 1-3; Chs. 6-7; and Ch. 10

Mc Caughey, *Stand Columbia!* [excerpts]

Recommended:

1. Emejulu, Akwugo. "[Another University is Possible.](#)" Verso blog, 12 January 2017.
2. Pluto Press: "Radicals in Conversation," [Episode 12: Decolonising the University](#), Gurminder Bhambra and Dalia Gebrial in conversation, 20 August 2018.

Week Four: Reading *Castes in India* (September 28)

First Metadata Task Due.

We will read this 15-page essay, which Ambedkar wrote for a seminar on "Primitive and Modern Societies" taught by Prof. Alexander Goldenweiser at Columbia University. Focus will be on annotation as method, and on collaborative platforms for annotation such as Hypothes.is

Recommended:

1. Geetha, *Let's Read Ambedkar*, on Ambedkar, his life, and writings:
<https://akscusa.org/lets-read-ambedkar-10-lectures-series/>
2. Aniket Jaaware, "The Subaltern Student in the Classroom"
3. Deepa Dhanraj's film on Rohith Vemula

Week Five: The Boasians (October 5)

Required Readings:

Charles Lord, *Gods of the Upper Air* E-book

Recommended Readings:

1. Jesus Chairez, "B. R. Ambedkar, Franz Boas, and the Rejection of Racial Theories of Untouchability," *South Asia*, Vol. 41, #2, 2018, pp. 281-296

2. *Kamala Visweswaran, *Uncommon Cultures* (selection on Franz Boas, caste and race, Ch. 2) E-book

Week Six: Dewey (October 12)

Discussion with Prof. Scott Stroud—scholar of communication, culture, and John Dewey’s influence on Ambedkar—on Dewey-Ambedkar materials, archival networks of the two individuals, and how to approach archival research.

Discussion of Digital Tools: Alicia Peaker, Jasmin Maço@ 5:00PM

Required Readings:

1. Arun Prabha Mukherjee, “B. R. Ambedkar, John Dewey, and the Meaning of Democracy,” *New Literary History*, 2009

Week Seven: Social Democracy (October 19)

Second Metadata Task Due.

Required Readings:

*Tejas Parasher, “Ambedkar and Social Democracy,” in Anupama Rao and Shailaja Paik eds. *Cambridge Companion to Ambedkar* (forthcoming)

Madeleine Woker, “Edwin Seligman, Initiator of Global Public Finance,” *Journal of Global History*, Volume 13, Issue 3, November 2018, pp. 352-373,

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-global-history/article/edwin-seligman-initiator-of-global-progressive-public-finance/02C6F41727B71445657F0DAB0F3DDE62>

Week Eight: Ambedkar’s Religion (October 26)

Required Readings:

1. B. R. Ambedkar, *The Buddha or Karl Marx*
2. Aakash Singh Rathore and Ajay Verma eds. *The Buddha and His Dhamma: A Critical Edition*, Delhi: Oxford University Press

Recommended:

Scott Stroud on textual differences between Ambedkar’s *Buddha and His Gospel* and *The Buddha and His Dhamma*

Read Stroud's piece posted under Files, "Creative Democracy", and

<https://www.forwardpress.in/2019/06/pragmatist-riddles-in-ambedkars-riddles-in-hinduism/>

Week Nine: City & Social Difference (November 2)

Third Metadata Task Due.

You will take the Alternative Tour of CU campus offered by the CU Historical Justice Initiative on your own

Required Readings:

1. Vivek Bald, *Bengali Harlem*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLipQe3HsH0>
2. *G. R. Pradhan, *Untouchable Workers of Bombay City* (with Foreword by B. R. Ambedkar), Bombay: Karnatak Press, 1938
3. Anupama Rao, "Introduction," *Memoirs of a Dalit Communist: The Many Worlds of R. B. More*. New Delhi: Leftword, 2019.
4. *Asperngren, Sociological Knowledge and Colonial Power in Bombay
5. Juned Shaikh, "Imaging Caste," *South Asia*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2014: 491-514.

Recommended Readings:

1. Saidiya Hartman, "The Terrible Beauty of the Slum," <https://brickmag.com/the-terrible-beauty-of-the-slum/>
2. **Sociological Bulletin*, Special Issue on the Bombay School of Sociology

Week Ten: Discussion of Topics and Research (November 9)

Students will meet individually with Prof. Rao and work on their research topics+Help Session with DHC Staff

Week Eleven: Initial Presentation of Topics (November 16)

Students will each present a five-minute summary of their topic and research plan. These reports will include a working thesis, a description of how the work will add to our knowledge of the history of Columbia and Ambedkar, and a bibliography of primary and secondary sources

Week Twelve: Finalizing Digital Group Task Due, No Class Meeting (November 23)

Week Thirteen and Fourteen: Final In-Class Presentations (November 30, December 7)

Student groups will turn in a digital project drawing on their metadata sheets (and the archival research that they have done) whether it be a spatial map, a timeline, a digital essay, etc. by Friday, December 3, 5PM

*****Final Research Paper Due one week after the end of our course*****

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Links & Sites

Contemporary Politics, Race, and Caste:

- Suraj Yengde, “The Harvest of Casteism,” *The Caravan*, <https://caravanmagazine.in/essay/race-caste-and-what-it-will-take-to-make-dalit-lives-matter>

An essay on race, caste, and the parallels between the Black Lives Matter movement and Dalit rights movements in India

- “Students have been ‘just as good as the police’ at enforcing the legacy of enslavement that would finance and expand Columbia’s prestige,” *Columbia Daily Spectator*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2020/07/12/students-have-been-just-as-good-as-the-police-at-enforcing-the-legacy-of-enslavement-that-would-finance-and-expand-columbias-prestige/>

Good use of *Spectator* archive in writing about the University’s history.

Maps and Walking Tours of New York City:

- Vivek Bald, “Lost in the City: Spaces and Stories of South Asian New York, 1917-1965,” *South Asian Popular Culture* 5, No. 1 (April 2007), 59-76, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14746680701210360?tab=permissions&scroll=top>
- Columbia University Historical Justice Initiative (homepage currently undergoing update), <https://www.cuhistorytour.com/tour-stops>
- Radical Black Women of Harlem Walking Tour, Researched and Written by Asha Futterman (BC ’21) and Mariama Kaba, Researcher in Residence, Barnard Center for Research on Women, <https://bcrw.barnard.edu/publications/radical-black-women-of-harlem-walking-tour/>

Black Desis and Afro-South Asian solidarity:

- Black Desi Secret History: The Secret History of South Asian and African American Solidarity

<https://blackdesisecrethistory.org/>

- South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA), <https://www.saada.org/>
 - H. G. Mudgal: <https://www.saada.org/tides/article/hg-mudgal-harlem-editor>
 - b) Translating Gandhi (Mazumdar; Sridharani): <https://www.saada.org/tides/article/translating-gandhi>

- c) Dalit Histories: Hiding in Plain Sight:
<https://www.saada.org/tides/article/hiding-in-plain-sight>

Dalit Autobiography

(there are many but here are some that I recommend):

- Mallika Amar Shaikh (wife of Namdeo Dhasal) *I am Destroyed?*
- Dilip Chitre on Namdeo Dhasal, in *Dhasal: Poet of the Underworld*
- Babytai Kamble, *The Prisons We Broke*
- Vasant Moon, *Vasti*
- Meenakshi Moon and Urmial Pawar, *We Too Made History: Women in the Ambedkar Movement* [An important resource for oral histories] See also two interviews with women in the Ambedkar movement here: <https://www.sparrowonline.org/archives.html>
- Urmila Pawar, *The Weave of My Life*
- Daya Pawar, *Baluta*
- P. Sivakami, *Grip of Change*
- Omprakash Valmiki, *Joothan*
- Sujatha Gidla, *Ants Among Elephants*
- R. B. More, Rao, and Sonalkar, *Memoirs of a Dalit Communist*

National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW):

- Priyanka Samy “Why a 1995 Beijing Conference Was Significant for the Dalit Women's Movement,” *The Wire*, August 11, 2020 <https://thewire.in/caste/beijing-un-conference-dalit-women>

Over years of engaging from the grassroots to the global level, Dalit feminists have helped unravel wider conversations around oppression and discrimination.

- “Dr Ruth Manorama speaks on the history of dalit womens' international advocacy,” *Dalit Women Fight*, June 25, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-nKGQ9K5Q>

Dr. Ruth Manorama, National Convenor, NFDW, and Recipient of Right Livelihood Award (Alternate Nobel Prize), 2006, talks about the history of dalit womens' engagement in international advocacy.

- “Addressing Caste Based Gender Violence,” *United Nations India*, November 14, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW5fvEc089E>

Dr. Manorama on violence against Dalit women.

Radio Shows and Podcasts:

- Philip Martin, “Caste in America,” Pulitzer Center, <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/caste-america>
- “How to be an Anti-Casteist,” Season 4, Episode 2, “Rough Translation,” Podcast of National Public Radio (NPR) <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/21/915299467/how-to-be-an-anti-casteist>

Ambedkar Cartoons:

- Unnamati Syama Sundar, *No Laughing Matter: The Ambedkar Cartoons, 1932–1956* (Navayana, 2019), <https://theprint.in/pageturner/excerpt/dragging-dead-buffalo-to-wearing-sari-how-ambedkar-was-trolled-by-casteist-cartoonists/246448/>
- Unnamati Syama Sundar, “Dragging dead buffalo to wearing sari: How Ambedkar was trolled by casteist cartoonists,” *The Print*, June 7, 2019, <https://theprint.in/pageturner/excerpt/dragging-dead-buffalo-to-wearing-sari-how-ambedkar-was-trolled-by-casteist-cartoonists/246448/>

From the article:

- In the last stages of work on this book, we received some information that could not be thoroughly investigated but its veracity is not in doubt. During the debates on the Hindu Code Bill from 1948 to 1951—a subject on which you will find thirteen cartoons in this book—Surat Singh Shekhawat published a cartoon in *Hindustan Times*. News of this came to us from Rajasthan through the grandson of Shekhawat, Yashvardhan Singh Shekhawat, an independent political activist (who even contested the 2018 Rajasthan elections). Like the Birlas, this Shekhawat family hailed from Pilani. Surat Singh Shekhawat, a Rajput, was trained at the J.J. School of Art in Bombay and worked at *Hindustan Times* as a cartoonist. He was a close associate of Shankar and had made a cartoon on what he and some critics felt were obsolete provisions that had been included by Ambedkar in the controversial Hindu Code Bill.
- Shekhawat conveyed his critique by showing Ambedkar dragging the carcass of a buffalo outside parliament, with a Rajasthani-slanted Hindi caption that meant: what is the purpose of dragging around a dead weight? Ambedkar was livid. After all, the mahar caste to which he belonged, was meant to dispose of dead cattle. He filed a defamation suit against Shekhawat and *Hindustan Times*. Ambedkar felt that he had been slighted on the basis of his caste. G.D. Birla had to personally intercede and explain to Ambedkar that Shekhawat was indeed a rajput but of a ‘progressive’ kind, that he did not mean to insult Ambedkar’s caste and had just conveyed the spirit of a common saying in Rajasthani. It was pointed out to Ambedkar that Shekhawat had attended a dalit *baaraat* (wedding procession) in 1946, considered to be something worthy in those times (and sadly even now). Before his death in 2011, Shekhawat recounted this forgotten cartoon controversy in an interview to the television channel ETV Rajasthan in 2009

Poetry and Hindu mythology:

- Excerpt of my notes on poet and activist, Dr. Meena Kandasamy: On 15 May 1936...the first edition of *Annihilation of Caste* was published. More than ever this idea—of a complete break from the past, the demand to start afresh without caste, the call to end the very basis of inequality—is relevant now when a virus shows us to be the most inhumane society in the world. Babasaheb asked us to dynamite the Veda and shastras. One way of doing this is to devastate the givenness of myths and mythographic figures who loom over our imagination. Meena Kandasamy does this with her poems: for Sita (*she was adept at walkouts*), Ram (*on cold nights he played Gandhi/ to her waiting wife's body*), Shurpanaka (*She sought a licence, a contract, fixed hours of fuck*), and now a new poem, exclusive to Navayana, on the demon-lover Ravana (*ruler. leader. single. singular./ voice of the deep, dark south.*)
- Meena Kandasamy reading her work: <https://navayana.org/blog/2020/05/15/leadership-lessons-from-ravana-on-aoc-day/?v=c86ee0d9d7ed>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Links & Sites

Contemporary Politics, Race, and Caste:

- Suraj Yengde, “The Harvest of Casteism,” *The Caravan*, <https://caravanmagazine.in/essay/race-caste-and-what-it-will-take-to-make-dalit-lives-matter>

An essay on race, caste, and the parallels between the Black Lives Matter movement and Dalit rights movements in India

- “Students have been ‘just as good as the police’ at enforcing the legacy of enslavement that would finance and expand Columbia’s prestige,” *Columbia Daily Spectator*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2020/07/12/students-have-been-just-as-good-as-the-police-at-enforcing-the-legacy-of-enslavement-that-would-finance-and-expand-columbias-prestige/>

Good use of *Spectator* archive in writing about the University’s history.

Maps and Walking Tours of New York City:

- Vivek Bald, “Lost in the City: Spaces and Stories of South Asian New York, 1917-1965,” *South Asian Popular Culture* 5, No. 1 (April 2007), 59-76, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14746680701210360?tab=permissions&scroll=top>
- Columbia University Historical Justice Initiative (homepage currently undergoing update), <https://www.cuhistorytour.com/tour-stops>
- Radical Black Women of Harlem Walking Tour, Researched and Written by Asha Futterman (BC '21) and Mariama Kaba, Researcher in Residence, Barnard Center for Research on Women, <https://bcrw.barnard.edu/publications/radical-black-women-of-harlem-walking-tour/>

Black Desis and Afro-South Asian solidarity:

- Black Desi Secret History: The Secret History of South Asian and African American Solidarity

<https://blackdesisrethistory.org/>

- South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA), <https://www.saada.org/>
 - H. G. Mudgal: <https://www.saada.org/tides/article/hg-mudgal-harlem-editor>
 - b) Translating Gandhi (Mazumdar; Sridharani): <https://www.saada.org/tides/article/translating-gandhi>
 - c) Dalit Histories: Hiding in Plain Sight: <https://www.saada.org/tides/article/hiding-in-plain-sight>

Dalit Autobiography

(there are many but here are some that I recommend):

- Mallika Amar Shaikh (wife of Namdeo Dhasal) *I am Destroyed?*
- Dilip Chitre on Namdeo Dhasal, in *Dhasal: Poet of the Underworld*
- Babytai Kamble, *The Prisons We Broke*
- Vasant Moon, *Vasti*
- Meenakshi Moon and Urmil Pawar, *We Too Made History: Women in the Ambedkar Movement* [An important resource for oral histories] See also two interviews with women in the Ambedkar movement here: <https://www.sparrowonline.org/archives.html>
- Urmil Pawar, *The Weave of My Life*
- Daya Pawar, *Baluta*
- P. Sivakami, *Grip of Change*
- Omprakash Valmiki, *Joothan*
- Sujatha Gidla, *Ants Among Elephants*
- R. B. More, Rao, and Sonalkar, *Memoirs of a Dalit Communist*

National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW):

- Priyanka Samy “Why a 1995 Beijing Conference Was Significant for the Dalit Women's Movement,” *The Wire*, August 11, 2020 <https://thewire.in/caste/beijing-un-conference-dalit-women>

Over years of engaging from the grassroots to the global level, Dalit feminists have helped unravel wider conversations around oppression and discrimination.

- “Dr Ruth Manorama speaks on the history of dalit womens' international advocacy,” *Dalit Women Fight*, June 25, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-nKGQ9K5Q>

Dr. Ruth Manorama, National Convenor, NFDW, and Recipient of Right Livelihood Award (Alternate Nobel Prize), 2006, talks about the history of dalit womens' engagement in international advocacy.

- “Addressing Caste Based Gender Violence,” United Nations India, November 14, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW5fvEc089E>

Dr. Manorama on violence against Dalit women.

Radio Shows and Podcasts:

- Philip Martin, “Caste in America,” Pulitzer Center, <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/caste-america>
- “How to be an Anti-Casteist,” Season 4, Episode 2, “Rough Translation,” Podcast of National Public Radio (NPR) <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/21/915299467/how-to-be-an-anti-casteist>

Ambedkar Cartoons:

- Unnamati Syama Sundar, *No Laughing Matter: The Ambedkar Cartoons, 1932–1956* (Navayana, 2019), <https://theprint.in/pageturner/excerpt/dragging-dead-buffalo-to-wearing-sari-how-ambedkar-was-trolled-by-casteist-cartoonists/246448/>
- Unnamati Syama Sundar, “Dragging dead buffalo to wearing sari: How Ambedkar was trolled by casteist cartoonists,” *The Print*, June 7, 2019, <https://theprint.in/pageturner/excerpt/dragging-dead-buffalo-to-wearing-sari-how-ambedkar-was-trolled-by-casteist-cartoonists/246448/>

From the article:

- In the last stages of work on this book, we received some information that could not be thoroughly investigated but its veracity is not in doubt. During the debates on the Hindu Code Bill from 1948 to 1951—a subject on which you will find thirteen cartoons in this book—Surat Singh Shekhawat published a cartoon in *Hindustan Times*. News of this came to us from Rajasthan through the

grandson of Shekhawat, Yashvardhan Singh Shekhawat, an independent political activist (who even contested the 2018 Rajasthan elections). Like the Birlas, this Shekhawat family hailed from Pilani. Surat Singh Shekhawat, a Rajput, was trained at the J.J. School of Art in Bombay and worked at *Hindustan Times* as a cartoonist. He was a close associate of Shankar and had made a cartoon on what he and some critics felt were obsolete provisions that had been included by Ambedkar in the controversial Hindu Code Bill.

- Shekhawat conveyed his critique by showing Ambedkar dragging the carcass of a buffalo outside parliament, with a Rajasthani-slanted Hindi caption that meant: what is the purpose of dragging around a dead weight? Ambedkar was livid. After all, the mahar caste to which he belonged, was meant to dispose of dead cattle. He filed a defamation suit against Shekhawat and *Hindustan Times*. Ambedkar felt that he had been slighted on the basis of his caste. G.D. Birla had to personally intercede and explain to Ambedkar that Shekhawat was indeed a rajput but of a ‘progressive’ kind, that he did not mean to insult Ambedkar’s caste and had just conveyed the spirit of a common saying in Rajasthani. It was pointed out to Ambedkar that Shekhawat had attended a dalit *baaraat* (wedding procession) in 1946, considered to be something worthy in those times (and sadly even now). Before his death in 2011, Shekhawat recounted this forgotten cartoon controversy in an interview to the television channel ETV Rajasthan in 2009

Poetry and Hindu mythology:

- Excerpt of my notes on poet and activist, Dr. Meena Kandasamy: On 15 May 1936...the first edition of *Annihilation of Caste* was published. More than ever this idea—of a complete break from the past, the demand to start afresh without caste, the call to end the very basis of inequality—is relevant now when a virus shows us to be the most inhumane society in the world. Babasaheb asked us to dynamite the Veda and shastras. One way of doing this is to devastate the givenness of myths and mythographic figures who loom over our imagination. Meena Kandasamy does this with her poems: for Sita (*she was adept at walkouts*), Ram (*on cold nights he played Gandhi/ to her waiting wife’s body*), Shurpanaka (*She sought a licence, a contract, fixed hours of fuck*), and now a new poem, exclusive to Navayana, on the demon-lover Ravan (*ruler. leader. single. singular./ voice of the deep, dark south.*)
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