

Chapter 1

Social Stratification, Food and Untouchability

Casteism is a major concern that India of the twenty first century struggles with on a daily basis. Vedic period that extends from 1500 to 500 BCE saw the settlement of Indo Aryans to Northern India. With them were brought the culture and traditions that slowly integrated with the pre-existing culture of India. It is believed that the *varna* system emerged during this period. Invention of tools led to a proliferation in agricultural activities, and the division of estates further helped strengthen the four- fold *varna* system.

The history of untouchability in India shows a violent, brutal form of discrimination that bordered on differences in birth status. A person's life, occupation, social acceptability revolved around the caste that s/he was born into. The stratification into Brahmin, Kshathriya, Vaishya and Shudra ensured fixed duties and cultural norms for people. The untouchables who were considered the atishudras and were kept out of the mainstream led a sub human existence at the mercy of those who occupied higher positions in the caste hierarchy. Thus being pushed to the societal margins, they had to abide by the rigid laws prescribed and sanctioned by religious texts, which ensured the pitiable continuance of their plight. Food became a major tool to separate and distinguish different castes.

G. L. Sharma in his chapter on "Food and Caste System" in the work *Caste, Class and Social Inequality in India* argues that there was no distinction on the basis of food across different castes in the *varna* hierarchy during Vedic times. He argues that all the castes followed the same food choices and customs. It was when the Upanishadic and the Buddhist criticism were directed against the Brahmins, that the 'varna-vyavastha' began to lose its ground. With the caste system

toppling down, Brahmins started losing their social prestige. This led the Brahmins to think of ways to protect their respectable and prestigious position in the caste hierarchy. Food was chosen as a convenient weapon to segregate others who occupied positions lower to Brahmins in the caste order. Food became part of their agenda to reconstitute and reshape the social structure. Various scriptures like the *Dharmashastras* and *Dharmasutras* were composed during the age of the Vedas. It is interesting to note that these scriptures were created by the priestly class in order to strengthen their hold and to distinguish themselves as pure and sacred. Dietary rules, prohibitions on food choices found a place among these texts. (175-180)

With the growing exploitation, violence and prejudices against the untouchables, it is crucial to examine the deep frameworks that are responsible for the segregation of people. B.R Ambedkar, hailed as the leader of the dalits, in his essay, "Slaves and Untouchables" argues:

...untouchability is obligatory....Once he is born an Untouchable, he is subject to all the disabilities of an Untouchable....In untouchability, there is no escape. Once an untouchable always an untouchable.... A deprivation of a man's freedom by an open and direct way is a preferable form of enslavement. It makes the slave conscious of his enslavement and to become conscious of slavery is the first and the most important step in the battle for freedom....Untouchability is an indirect form of slavery. (15)

Ambedkar considers endogamy, which ensures that bonds are not formed among members across castes to be the main reason for caste system to persist. Ambedkar also regards food to hold chief agency in the formation of the caste-ridden Indian society. The food of the untouchables was invested with notions of impurity, dirt and pollution. Occupation is another deciding factor that

invested notions of impurity and dirt on the dalits. *Bhangis, Mahars, Dhors, Chambars, Malas, Madigas* are the caste groups whose traditional occupation revolved around clearing of carcasses, human and animal waste, serving as watchmen, sweeping roads and public places, handling animal hides etc. Elimination of dirt that the society expels becomes the sole responsibility of those occupying the lower social strata. The constant contact with the materials deemed unhygienic came to be linked with their habit or way of life. The *Mahars* or the *Bangis* whose traditional occupation prevented them from engaging in any other work maintained the most deplorable status in the society. Thus they came to be looked down by others as filthy and impure. Similar was the condition of the *Chandalas*.

G. S Ghurye analyses the segregation of *Chandalas* through prohibition of food vessels used by them. The *Chandalas*, whose traditional occupation required them to dispose of corpses and undertake unclaimed corpses, suffered the worst discrimination. According to Patanjali, the ancient grammarian, food vessels used by carpenters, black-smiths, washer-men and weavers could be used by other groups after cleansing them in a particular way. But the food- vessels used by the *Chandalas* and *Mritapas* could not be used by others because no kind of cleansing was considered to adequately purify the vessels. (311-312)

Meat of dead cattle became a convenient food option for most dalits who fight hunger. Meat-eating could be ascribed to their limited access to other food options and heavy taxation of essentials along with the forced labour that their caste entitled them to perform. Meat became part of their culinary experience through their journey of struggle for survival. When battles on meat eating are fought, it is note-worthy to remember the history of untouchability and the situations that forced dalits to follow dietary choices that later became part of their relished taste. Accessibility ruled taste preferences and the lack of choices led them to eat what they came across. When the food

that was sidelined by the society became the object of survival for the dalits, the particular food took on paramount significance in their cultural life. Followed for generations, these food choices become a part of their lifestyle and identity. Food also occupies a place of importance in creating solidarity and bondage among dalits.

The contribution of Jotirao Phule (1827-90) is commendable in the sphere of dalit liberation, considering his role in the anti-Brahmin movement which flourished in Maharashtra in the nineteenth century. Phule, who belonged to the caste of gardeners, was instrumental in uniting and organising the *Mahars* against the oppressive forces of the society. He started a school in 1853 for the *Mahars*, thus breaking new grounds and paving way for the emancipation of dalits. Phule, influenced by Western thinkers like Thomas Paine believed in personal freedom and equality as the fundamental values of a human being. By comparing the situation of the untouchables to that of the Africans in the American society, Phule thought of ways in which slavery in the form of untouchability could be wiped out in the Indian context. He founded the *Satyashodak Samaj* (Society for the Search of Truth) in 1873 to bring together all the untouchables under one roof. Phule's influence was tremendous in shaping social and political consciousness among dalits, so that by the time Ambedkar arrived on the public space, the ground was ripe for his activities to spread across the masses.

Mahars who received education and have internalised the reasons for their enslaved position in the society wanted to eliminate it by all costs and means. Some of them started changing their ways and emulated the ways of the Brahmins. Relinquishing meat was one such way of doing so. *Mahars* who realised that *baluta* (the meagre remuneration received in return for their work) and *vatan* (a small piece of land given to them free of tax as reward for their work) systems were root causes for their deprived status, began renouncing those as part of their mission to overcome

discrimination. There were even movements where *Mahars* refused to do their caste bound duties, which resulted in social boycotts. (Jaffrelot 15- 25)

Dalits were cut back from the society through prohibition on activities that fostered social bonding. Inter dining was ruled out on all costs because of this very reason. Marriage ceremonies and other functions had to be conducted in a certain way and they were restrained from public spaces. Rules on clothing and housing were imposed on them, and taxation on necessary goods prevented them from accessing even some basic necessities. All these factors prevented dalits from escaping their wretched condition and positioned them in a socially pitiable state. These rules also played a remarkable role in maintaining the social position of the upper strata. Restriction on a cultural sphere that includes the above mentioned facts over a long period of time forcefully created for the dalits a culture that they unconsciously adopted and later became a part of their existence. Tastes and preferences were shaped in this cultural context. Food choices were moulded in such an environment. Boundaries are cemented and identities are reinforced when one is denied access to a particular food. When Hindu scriptures and texts like *Manusmriti* ascribe different sets of rules for different castes, hierarchical boundaries were placed on food and dietary choices. Food was employed to maintain caste distinctions.

M. N Srinivas, while talking about *Sanskritisation*, regards food as a domain that needs reconsideration and reshaping of notions of purity and impurity for surpassing rigid categorisation based on ideological orientation. Food becomes an important element in their lives since their survival or existence is inextricably tied to meeting their hunger. Wages were given in the form of food to the untouchables so that their immediate needs are met. Food transactions gave way to innumerable problems. Food had witnessed many battles in the name of untouchability. The untouchables faced brutal discrimination that revolved around food. Purchasing, eating and

cooking were bound by restrictions imposed by those who ruled the society. The dalits had no freedom of choice over the food that they consumed. India has had a rigid casteist social makeup that considered even the sight of an untouchable the reason for the upper caste to consider his food polluted. Even the post- independent India is witness to stratification laws based on food. The dismissal of dalit cooks from *anganwadis* for fear that the food cooked by an untouchable would pollute the sanctity of the higher castes, separate eating arrangements in hotels or restaurants and in schools, inclusion or exclusion of certain food in food festivals or ceremonies are some of the cases in point.

In ancient India, commensality was the basis on which caste system thrived. The ban on inter-dining and inter- caste marriages ensured that free mingling across castes does not happen and discrimination persists. As pointed out by Ranbir Chandra:

Social inter- mingling through meals and marriage are experiences of purest proximity and kinship. It is a projection and affirmation of belonging together: and implicit recognition of the equal worth of all those who share the meal. The ban on inter- dining is therefore a powerful means for keeping social sentiments and religious sects apart from each other. The taboo against inter-dining is a clever conspiracy of fragmentation and a psychological ritual mechanism of division. It seeks to foster a mindset of prejudice and rejection. How powerful a social reality stand(s) can be measured by the immense gratitude and encouragement that the dalits...experience when someone from the upper caste background shares meals with them. It is felt as a socially liberating and affirmative step. (110)

Savarkar is the first Indian who started the inter-dining ceremonies and is also remembered for having opened a cafe for all. He considers prohibition on inter-dining to be one of the seven shackles that bind the Indian society. Sharing of food or commensality constitutes an important place in cementing social relationships and strengthening social bonds. When people from across various castes and classes dine together, hierarchy between them is broken, giving rise to a sense of equality and brotherhood. Pointing out the inequality that exists among various castes of the untouchables, Savarkar suggests the need for the *Mahars*, *Bhangis*, *Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas* to dine together, in order to break free from all shackles of casteism. Hindu religion accords food an important place as can be seen from various religious texts and rituals that revolve around food. The practice of growing as well as giving food was considered a great dharma. It was on these grounds that many festivals included worshipping the seed, the crop, the rain and celebrating the harvest were carried out.

Tritiya Upanishad states the role of food thus: “From food (anna), verily, creatures are produced/ Whatsoever dwell on earth.... For truly, food is the chief of beings...” (qtd in Hume 284). “Beings here are born from food, when born they live by food, on deceasing/ they enter into food” (290). “Food is alive, it is not just pieces of carbohydrate, protein and nutrient, it is a being/ it is a sacred being/ Verily, they obtain all food/ who worship Brahma as food” (280). The sacred and privileged position enjoyed by food as a nourishing element of living souls is thus underpinned in various mythologies that cut across cultures and languages. The purity rituals surrounding food that includes maintaining sanctity of kitchen spaces and purity of the person who cooks the food is strictly practised in Hindu households in India.

It is important to look at the discrimination dalits faced around food, and how they regard their food. Dalits went through extremely dehumanising situations at a point in history when their

shadows and footprints were regarded an eyesore. India witnessed untouchability in its worst and most ugly forms when it was mandatory for dalits to have brooms tied behind them, so that their footprints don't leave a mark on the ground and pollute it.

Shamsul Islam's *Untouchables in Manu's India* is a treatise on the rules prescribed in *Manusmriti*. The chapters give insight into how a demeaning status was forced upon the *Sudras* on various grounds. Along with the principles of living, character, personal habits and conduct of the Brahmins, special attention was also paid to the sphere of food. People were divided on the basis of occupational duties and rules on food prohibitions across castes.

“...food of an artisan destroys his (Brahmin's) offspring, that of a washer man his strength; the food of a multitude and of harlots exclude him from (the higher) worlds. A Brahmin... must not eat cooked food given by a *Sudra* who performs no *Sraddha*; but, on failure of (other) means of subsistence, he may accept raw (grain), sufficient for one night (and day) ...” (41). The distinction of raw and cooked food that Levi Strauss makes is applicable in this context. Rawer food contains less human intervention as opposed to the cooked food. Humans create certain criteria to decide on what is fit to be eaten. A set of social factors play a role in deciding the desirability of each of these food items. In the chapter “On food, death and pollution etc”, it is mentioned that the food of the *Sudras* should be “the fragments of an Aryan's meal” (43). It is interesting to look at these laws in the light of theories of purity and dirt.

Separate dwellings were forced upon the untouchables who had to follow strict prohibitions in terms of accessing pure water and food. Their deprived situation was maintained through rules that prevented intermingling of cultures or development in their lifestyle. While the laws inscribed in religious scriptures prevent improvements in the socio- economic conditions of the dalits, they

continue to live a life steeped in helplessness, ignorance and poverty. Religious codes sanction the deteriorated status of the untouchables in the society. Lifestyle, living conditions, food choices and habits of the dalits thus came to be looked at as dirty, polluting and as inciting evil. With strict prescriptions on how to live their lives, what clothes to wear, what names to be adopted, what food to be eaten and how, dalits, more or less have no control over the lives they lead. The practice of untouchability that extends to limiting their food and water intakes proves the total subjugation meted out to dalits by ignoring their hunger and pushing them to live on meagre needs. Along with strict prohibitions on entering temple premises, untouchables were also denied the basic rights to access public well or tap. Many dalit narratives portray the tedium of dalits waiting in long queues to receive water at the mercy of some higher castes. In 1927, Ambedkar launched a *satyagraha* (a passive political resistance advocated by Mahatma Gandhi) to assert the rights of dalits to access public places and water resources. Ambedkar, along with his followers marched to the *Chavdar Tale* (tasty water lake) and proclaimed their right to access water by drinking from the tank. This event was followed by many protests by the caste Hindus who considered it as extremely defiling act. *Pujas* were ordered to be conducted so that the water would regain its lost purity. Such was the situation the untouchables confronted in the first half of the twentieth century. It was only in 1937 that the Bombay High Court allowed untouchables the right to use water from the tank.

The idea of pollution and purity is so entrenched in the minds of the people that it is practiced even among the sub-castes that fall further down in the caste ladder. The practise of sharing of tobacco pipes in some Indian villages displays how purity consciousness works in the consumption of tobacco smoking. Men who share smoking pipes only with those belonging to the same caste reinforce caste hierarchy in a different form. Separate smoking pipes for different castes show how deeply-entrenched the notion of untouchability is among various castes. In some cases,

a cloth is used to wipe the pipe prior to its usage. The ingrained belief of coming into contact with another person's saliva as an extremely polluting act is so strong in the Indian society. Some even consider one's own saliva to be a polluting agent and therefore refuse to touch the lips on the glass, while drinking water. Mary Douglas, British anthropologist writes in her ground-breaking work *Purity and Danger* about the idea of dirt as a 'matter out of place' (36). She illustrates through examples how the concept of dirt or pollution gets tied to ritualistic pollution. By touching upon the root cause for pollution, saliva is looked at as a defiling element. Saliva pollution which is brought about by material substances lead to the practice of drinking water without the lips touching the cup. Douglas also draws distinction between cooked and raw food by discussing how raw food passes the test of pollution, while the process of cooking defiles the food, making it liable to pollution (34). The act of cooking that involves the question of 'who' cooks the food and 'how' it is cooked leads to the notion of defilement. Food gets polarised in the caste conscious society, dividing people on all lines. When food is cooked, it enters a field of humiliation and brutality. The process of cooking embodies various cultural factors and takes into account methods of procurement, cleaning, preservation techniques, preparation, use of vessels and the ingredients. In certain ritualistic functions of the lower castes, those from the upper castes who served as *purohits* (priest) could not accept cooked food and food transactions were limited to raw food stuffs. Cooking itself can be viewed as a product of the civilizational drive that contains within it constructed notions of culture.

It is also worth looking at how certain castes were interdependent on each other for their livelihood. For example, the *Kumhars*, the castes whose traditional occupation is pottery making, exchanged their pottery in return for essential items like grains. Festivals like Bullock or *Pola* festival, *Aktiare* conducted in Indian villages where nature is invoked for its blessings. It is during

these festivals that the interdependence of peasants and *Kumhars* were celebrated through exchange of goods as gifts. With modernisation and capitalism which boosted growth of industries, pottery makers and farmers suffered a huge set back. Although in the present times, one finds an improvement of lifestyle among dalits due to the spread of education, communities like the *Kumhars* or the *Telis* (members whose occupational duty involves oil seed crushing) or *adivasis* (who were the providers of forest products like honey and the like), experience hardship with an absence of market space, taken over by the big corporates to sell their goods. Untouchability has been banned and reservations are made available, but discrimination and exclusion still persist in various forms. (Natrajan 33-35)

The Hindu system discovers in food a firm experiential ground on which to integrate the material with the moral, the sensorial with the intuitive, and to extend the subjective to the mystical.... In such a perspective, food is much more for the Hindu than what food ordinarily is within the 'seen' world. (*Eternal Food* 47)

David Gordon White in his essay "You Are What You Eat: The Anomalous Status of Dog Cookers in Hindu Mythology" details the caste discrimination faced by the *Svapacas*, commonly known as 'dog cooks'. They lived a separate existence in the societal fringes and performed functions of scavenging and clearing of corpses and carcasses. Even though there is no evidence in *puranic* scriptures of them cooking dog meat, they are associated with the name because of their habitation which is a haunt of dogs. The lower position is assigned due to various factors that include them being viewed as a product of a dangerous mixing of castes known as the *varnasamkara*, their involvement with prohibited foods, and their exposure to polluting substances that result from their determined vocations. (53-60)

Belasco Warren, the British food scholar explains the dynamics of a meal. With literary analysts looking at food as a metaphor, symbol and agent by which people communicate, sociologists studying social stratification and construction through food, it is often not food that is the primary motive of inquiry, but a variety of other social factors that can be effectively studied through food (“Identity” 28). He asks questions about how a simple meal speaks one’s personality, ethnicity, gender roles, sexuality, family vitality, sub cultural loyalties, and political commitments (30). He talks about the Victorian period when people constructed elaborate food etiquettes and dining rules. The reason for this is ascribed to the deep suspicion that the Victorians harboured towards eating, which like sex they considered uncivilized. The European settlers had apprehensions to taste food eaten by the locals for fear of being denigrated to their position. Here one finds the connection that food builds in making a person. Distancing oneself from the food of the other was essential to show their superiority and the fear of stooping to a low social order prevented the upper classes from sharing local food choices and culture.

Mughals who came to India in the first half of the sixteenth century propagated their cuisine in the Northern regions of India through treatises on food. It is said that textualization of the culinary took shape with Mughals prescribing dietary patterns for Indians. The presence of Mughalai cuisine is the result of the Mughal rulers who attempted in many ways to impose the Mughal culture through their food. The hierarchy embedded in food finds expression in the way people use food in different social contexts. The European settlers in South Asian and American colonies refused to eat the food of the indigenous people for fear of being degenerated to a lower position. Food is inextricably linked to one’s socio economic status and foraging into another’s food territory offers an indirect way of participating legitimately in their culture. Food offers ways in which to experience another culture. It also acts as a social weapon to exclude people. The role

of food is central when it comes to exclusion on the grounds of class, caste, religion and community. Food reinforces one's identity and binds one to its roots. This is the reason why food occupies a dominant position for the migrant and diasporic communities. The totality of sensations that food embodies makes it unique among other cultural artefacts. It therefore becomes an object strongly rooted in one's psychological and emotional state.

It is interesting to note how the history of a nation's cuisine is linked to the history of the nation itself. Deep meanings of culture are embedded in the layers of food which makes the study of food in exploring cultures rewarding. Historians have analysed many historical truths and evidences by placing food at the centre of academic enquiry. For example, the history of potato unravels information about the growth of industrial revolution and sheds light on what one may dismiss off as a mere vegetable as something that changed the course of European history. Similarly, the study of the history of tobacco details the geographical exploration and travails of Columbus who brought it to the New World. While the cuisine of a particular State is determined by different factors ranging from the geographical terrains to aspects of culture that it associates with, globalisation has brought about the intermingling of varied cultures together. This results in a dilution of the traditional culinary practices. Still, specific food and dietary habits characterise the culinary domain of various ethnic groups in India. The practice of using indigenous techniques, ingredients and raw materials is a way of retaining and reinforcing an identity, considered marginal by the mainstream society. Roland Barthes in *Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption* argues that an entire 'world' is signified by food. He links the preparation of food and cooking to a historical quality that allows the person to get linked to the national past. Barthes sees food as an entity that expresses a national continuity.

Even though much of geographical explorations revolved around some food or the other, there were many prejudices that surrounded the food of the colonised. For example, eating chillies were thought to be an uncivilized activity by the sophisticated Europeans. In this context, one finds how food was adopted to convey power and values. Certain food items represented certain qualities. In the European context, meat on the table meant luxury, while sugar symbolised happiness and prosperity. Taste, a culturally created entity formed over time has clear associations with caste and class values.

Discrimination operates on various levels and through many mediums. It is interesting to look at how food spaces function as an avenue to discriminate people. 'Culturalism' looks at spaces carrying loaded cultural significance as containing strains of micro dominance and micro resistance. Food spaces are a domain where power and authority find a platform to exercise its motives. When we look at the spatial isolation of culture, food spaces like tea shops or pubs assume wider significance. Food spaces exist as sites of oppression even today. Raymond Williams in his essay "Culture is Ordinary" shares an anecdote where he talks about the significance that a tea shop holds for a class of people. Williams discusses the culture of the ordinary as a culture that deserves its praises too (3-4). Here we find how Williams uses the image of the tea shop to drive an important point home. Tea shops, in this context are considered as spaces that acquire a cultural significance through its constant associations in building social bonds and nurturing academic vigour. Similarly, coffee shops are associated with European intellectualism. Restaurants, distinguished on regional and ethnic differences sometimes become spaces that delineate certain sects of people by creating a feeling of aloofness amongst them. Kitchens are regarded as sacred places ruled by religiously codified rules regarding purity and pollution. It is another important

area within a household where power holds authority. As far as dalits are concerned, food spaces have always stood testifying their demeaning position.

India has witnessed some worst famines in the post- independent times. The large number of the population still lives on a meagre income that prevents them from accessing nutritional food. Mary Douglas, in her *Introduction to Food in the Social Order* argues that the horrors of famines could be reduced through an understanding of the social, legal and economic aspects of food problems. She explains how unequal access to food is the result of social inequalities. Even though government provides subsidised food grains for the poor, the labyrinth of caste prevents them from accessing it (1-4). This way all efforts are being taken to prevent dalits from enjoying basic life necessities that allow them to live a comfortable life. In other words, the current system could be viewed as a continuation of the past situation that imposed food based restrictions on the untouchables. The intention behind all this is to ensure that dalits do not rise from their deprived status to be on par with the upper castes. Poverty and hunger remain a reality in Indian society with millions going hungry and cases of malnutrition and deprivation abounding. Food can give multiple perspectives on the living conditions of its consumers. The drought-hit *Bundelkhand* witnessed a large number of families going hungry. The lack of grains and other essentials forced the inhabitants to find alternatives in grass and weeds. The poverty stricken situation in *Bundelkhand* was captured through the image of food when *CNN IBN* did a documentary film on the same. Poverty and hunger found expression in a raw manner through the image of children nibbling on *roti* and *namak* or the ‘*ghaski roti*’ and *subzi* made of weeds. The situation is termed as a man-made disaster by many who examine the corrupt practices in food distribution.

A dalit’s memories related to food form the crux of dalit experience which hinges on torture, humiliation and embarrassment. It is important to look at the place of food in the formation

of caste hierarchy, considering its role as an essential commodity for the existence of mankind. The life of people can be examined through an understanding of their culinary ways which include procurement of food, preparing them, preservation techniques, food storage, serving and eating. Dalit literature documents instances of cooking and eating with much reverence. Food is loaded with memory, happy and sad, painful and nostalgic. For dalits, whose idea of a meal is purely out of necessity, food becomes the sole priority in their day to day experience.

Works Cited

- Ambedkar, Babasaheb R. "Slaves and Untouchables." *Writings and Speeches*. 5 vols. New Delhi: Dr Ambedkar Foundation, 1989. Web. 12 May 2016.
- Barthes, Roland. "Towards a Psychsociology of Contemporary Food Consumption." *Food and Culture*. eds. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. New York: Routledge, 2008. 22-24. Web. 15 Feb 2016.
- Belasco, Warren. "Identity: Are We What We Eat?" *Culture and Agriculture*. 21 (1999): 27-34. Web. 17 May 2016.
- Chandra, Ranbir. "Human Rights- From Rhetoric to Reality." *Human Rights Year Book 2010*. Ed. Pravin, H. Parekh. Delhi: Universal Law Publishing, 2010. Web. 14 May 2016.
- Doughlas, Mary. *Food in the Social Order: Studies of Food and Festivities in Three American Communities*. Vol 9. U.K: Routledge, 2003. Web. 22 May 2016.
- . *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Ghurye, G. S. *Caste and Class in India*. Mumbai: Popular Prakashan, 2008. Web. 21 May 2016.

Hume, Robert Ernest. *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. Trans. 2nd ed. Oxford: OUP, 1931. Web. 15 May 2016.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. *Analysing and Fighting Caste: Dr Ambedkar and Untouchability*. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2005. Print.

Khare, R. S. Ed. *The Eternal Food: Gastronomic Ideas and Experiences of Hindus and Buddhists*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992. Web. 23 Dec 2015.

Natrajan, Balmurli. *The Culturalization of Caste in India: Identity and Inequality in a Multicultural Age*. Oxon: Routledge, 2012. Web. 1 May 2016

Sharma, G. L. *Caste, Class and Social Inequality in India*. Jaipur: Mangal Deep Publication, 2003. Print.

White, David Gordon. "You Are What You Eat: The Anomalous Status of Dog Cookers in Hindu Mythology." *Eternal Food: Gastronomic Ideas and Experiences of Hindus and Buddhists*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992. Web. 23 Dec 2015.

Williams, Raymond. "Culture is Ordinary." *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*. London: Verso, 1989. 3-14. Web. 2 Dec 2015.