

## Abstract

The study aims at bringing in the forefront the history of the Dalit community, especially of the Balmikis in the hills of Darjeeling. The community has thrived for its existence and has always attempted to shatter the norms and unethical beliefs of the society and to rise above the abhorrent behaviour of the upper caste. The hierarchical caste system of India, the upper stratum of the society always push the downtrodden, the dalits, the so called the lower castes who were already at the bottom down further. These downtrodden masses are still hated; hence, they are striving hard to get prominent position in the society.

The history of the dalits is as old as the history of human civilisation. So, is it full with riches. But unfortunately the scholars always remained reluctant to show the contribution made by the dalits in history. The dalit literature in India is although huge in number but these are remained in dark. This study has highlighted on those precious property of age old India, especially the literature of the Balmikis.

Even in scriptures and so called sacred books in the Brahaminical system of Hindu religion, the dalits have been depicted as nasty, heinous, dreadful creatures. The study purposes to reconstruct the history of the Balmikis, by throwing some light upon their deeds and actions, culture and heritage, religion and morality, pride and prestige, society and organization.

The study further, historicises the Balmiki migration to the hill station of Darjeeling. The Britishers brought them from different corners of central and north Indian states. To maintain the sanitation of Darjeeling. Like the Balmikis Nepalese are also immigrants in Darjeeling, but immediately they have over shadowed the Lepachas who were incidentally residents of Darjeeling. as a result the smaller immigrant groups had hardly any space remained for them, in the historico-cultural, socio-economic and political spheres.

One way to uplift the conditions of the dalits is to improve their political scenario of Darjeeling. Usually the politics of Gorkhaland being highlighted there and the minority politics unfortunately failed to make any mark in the hill polity. Due to this, supra-natural phenomenon the Balmikis has become the victim of identity crisis. The Balmikis have tried to retain their own culture, but due to the scare of insecurity they have also attempted to merge with the mainstream of the society. The study thus focuses the dilemma that the Balmiki community suffers from is to mingle with mainstream or to safeguard their own identity at the lieu of being subservient to the Gorkhali aggression. The study tried to find out the solutions to this dilemma, the study has been provided with some answers to the following questions to my mind, very much pertinent to the Balmiki issue, is the condition Balmikis really improved? Or, are they still used as only voters? Are they treated equally with the other communities?

This thesis has been carried out purely from the Ambedkarian epistemology, based on the politics of inclusion and exclusion. My whole endeavour was to pull the subalterns up to the main stream. The high sounding words being philosophised in the preamble to the constitution of India, *Liberty, Equality and Justice* of all kinds, *Political, Social and Economic*, in a word the long cherished dreams and desires of the masses to be accomplished in near future.