

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE WRITINGS OF THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE POST-COLONIAL THEORY

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1. INTRODUCTION

History of Christianity in India can be traced back to the 1st century of Christian era. Yet any serious study on the historiography and its methodology had been so much neglected in the past. No one questioned the authenticity of what had been written or what had been told to us by the early writers who were Western, and who wrote from their own Western perspective. But in these recent years, the native historians and scholars began to study critically the past histories, their methodologies, and historiography as a whole and noticed that re-examination is very much needed. As a result, there has been growing interest in this concerned area in the study of history of Christianity in India and we can proudly say that today we have come to some extent in developing our own historiography and methodology.

The aim of this paper therefore, is to see the changes of methodological issues in the historiography of the history of Christianity with special emphasis on the post-colonial theory. The first part of the essay will be a critical study on the methodological issues in the historiography of the writings during 19th and the early part of the 20th century. The later part will mainly concentrate on the post-colonial methodological issues namely, the Subaltern methodological issues, Dalit issues, Tribal issues, feminist issues and the issue of globalization.

2. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE 19TH AND THE EARLY PART OF THE 20TH CENTURIES

The origin of Christianity in India is attributed to the first century itself. However, “its subsequent widespread in the sub continent is a product of the Catholic and Protestant missionary operations during the Portuguese, Dutch and British colonial period.”¹ Colonialism brought their influences on almost all walks of life in India, even in the writing of Church history. Thus, the historians of the pre-Independent India devalued the social, religious and cultural virtues and wrote history from the colonial power influence perspectives. Hence, their written documents need to be re-examined from the postcolonial perspective.²

¹ O.L. Snaitang, “From Church History to History of Christianity Historiographical Issues in the Study of Missiology in India”, *Mission and Evangelism*, edited by Soman, Das (Delhi: ISPCK, 1998), 136. (Hereafter cited as Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*).

² Cf, Jacob S. Dharmaraj, *Colonialism and Christian Mission: Postcolonial Reflection* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1993) 2, 3. (Hereafter cited as Dharmaraj, *Colonialism*).

Some of the significant Church History books written in the pre-Independent India were such as James Hough, *The History of Christianity in India from the Commencement of the Christian Era* (1838/1850); Sir John Kaye, *Christianity in India: An Historical Narrative* (1859); Rev. M.A Sherring, *The History of Protestant Mission in India from their Commencement in 1706 to 1871* (1875); Julius Richter, *A History of Mission in India* (1908); John Hughes Morris, *The History of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists' Foreign Mission, to the End of the Year 1904*, (1910); Rev. D'Sa, *History of Catholic Church in India*, (1910, 1924); and, Victor H. Sword, *Baptists in Assam: A Century of Missionary Service 1836-1936*, (1937).

James Hough gave total concern in his first two volumes to the Syrian Christian and Roman Catholic upto 1750. The central focus of the two volumes was the Synod of Diamper. The later three volumes deals with the Protestant Christian historiography. Hough described in the first two volumes the failure of the Syrian Christian and Roman Catholic Mission, and the later three volumes display the success of the Protestant Mission. Thus, A.M. Mundadan rightly point out “the author’s main interest was to show that the Roman Catholic Mission was a story of failure and the Protestant Mission was one of success”.³ Hough’s conclusion was that Roman Catholicism and all its ways stood condemned while Evangelical Protestantism was vindicated.⁴ However, Hough’s history became a standard reference work for future historians.

Sir John Kaye’s⁵ *Christianity in India: An Historical Narrative* (1859) focus was on the growth and progress of Christianity in India by the effort of the Protestants Christianity and the measures of the British Government.

The next history was written by Rev. M.A. Sherring, *The History of Protestant Missions in India from their Commencement in 1706-1871* (1875). The emphasis was to stimulate the zeal of the Churches at home on behalf of the great enterprise of Mission in India.⁶ The central focus of the book is the spread of Christianity from one corner of India to the rest of India. For Sherring the history of Christianity in India is the triumphant story of missions, missionaries and missionary methods.⁷

³ A.M. Mundadan, “History of Christianity in India” *Asia and Christianity*, edited by M.D. David, cited by O.L. Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*, 136. See also John C.B. Webster, “The History of Christianity in India: Aims and Methods,” *ICHR*, vol. XIII, No.2 (December, 1979), 90. (Hereafter cited as Webster, *History of Christianity in India*). Hough condemned the Roman Catholics and their methods for deviating from the Scripture; they obscured the light of the Divine Truth. Cf. James Hough, *The History of Christianity in India from the Commencement of the Christian Era*, vol. I, (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1839), 221, 231, 237-238. and vol. II, 251.

⁴ Webster, *The History of Christianity in India*, 94.

⁵ See John, William. Kaye, *Christianity in India: A Historical Narrative* (London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1859).

⁶ M.A. Sherring, *The History of Protestant Mission in India from their Commencement in 1706-1871* (London: Trubner and Co., 1975), 1-115. Here he described historically what Protestant Missions have accomplished in India since their beginning.

⁷ Webster, *History of Christianity in India*, 98. Sherring brought out the history of Christianity in India region by region. Each chapter begin with brief historical background of the people as well as various mission societies and concluded the final chapter with the assessment of the various missionary methods employed.

Julius Richter⁸, *A History of Mission in India*, was methodologically more advanced than the earlier histories. Unlike Hough, he did draw upon more scholarly literature on India and missions activities in the sub-continent of India. He also emphasized the role played by India in the history of missions. Hence, according to Richter “the history of Christianity was a history of missions, missionaries, and missionary methods.”⁹

John Hughes Morris, *The History of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist' Foreign Mission, to the End of the Year 1904* (1910). Like Richter and others, Morris' history emphasized on the success of the Protestant history mainly the Calvinist Methodist history in India.

The History of the Roman Catholic Church in India, (1910 and 1924),¹⁰ was written by Rev. M. D'sa. The writer present a detailed history of Roman Catholic Church History and end up with the defense of padroadoist stand on the jurisdictional disputes of the Roman Catholic Church in India during the 19th century.

The above analysis of the methodological issues in Indian Christian Historiography is no doubt important for methodological studies. However, they were written by western writers and published in the west from western mission perspectives and failed to reflect the understanding of the native Christian community. The progress and growth of Christianity in India is seen as the result of missionaries' success, in which the peoples of India had no history of their own in this account. It was so because the writing of history of Christianity during 19th & 20th centuries was meant for their members and constituencies in the western world. Thus Fr. A.M. Mundadan rightly pointed out:

The histories written in the 19th century and early 20th century were generally by western authors and they were published in the west for a western readership; these were histories of mission and missionaries from the west and not of the Indian Church but Western attempts to create one.¹¹

Thus, in this context we can see that the colonial influenced Church history writings carried elements of colonial flavor too. Hence, many different Christian missions denominations were brought to India for their missionary work, which has been analyzed in the above discussions. Not only that, even they have created so many divisions and denominations among Indian community. Moreover, these histories failed to touch upon the weakness of colonial power. Therefore, history of Christianity in India, “is seen not only as an eastward extension of western ecclesiastical history, but as self-contained unit with an exclusive history”¹² of the western colonial power.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW METHODOLOGY OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

⁸ Richter divided his history into two parts. The introductory chapters stress the land, people, religion and caste structure in India. The remaining parts he mainly dealt with the development of mission in India.

⁹ Julius, Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, translated by Sydney H. Moore (London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1908), 137.

¹⁰ The book consists of two volumes. The first volume devoted to the period from 52 to 1652 is an account of the establishment and spread of Christianity in India. The second volume dealt the history from 1653 to 1924 which emphasis was largely of papal and Portuguese documents pertaining to the jurisdiction of the padroado in India.

¹¹ A.M. Mundadan, *Indian Christian: Search for Identity and Struggle for Autonomy* (Kerala: 1984), 195.

¹² Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*, 138.

Methodological issues in historiography in general, has experienced great shift in the present century. At the same time Indian Christian approach to history also started changing. The Indian Christian historians identified the inadequacies of earlier resources and cultural bias of the European intellectual tradition and religious norms.¹³ Thus, Indian Christian historians insist that the indigenous Church must build its own standard historiography. Through such new thought of awakening influenced the commencement of National Movement for Independence, growing rise of Indian religious renaissance, and ecumenism started. Hence, Indian Christian historiography entered a new stage of methodological perception.¹⁴ Moreover, some of the native Christians in Bengal and Tamil Nadu have even tried to organize inter-denominational Churches like the Christo Samaj or Churchless Christianity.¹⁵ As the changing continues, the ecumenical spirit began to grow within the Indian Christians which enabled the Indian Christian historians to co-operate, participate in conferences and seminars and got involved in writing project of common interest.¹⁶ And with the emergence of India in 1947 as a free nation made Christians also to search for its own selfhood of writing, self-hood of the nation and to re-discover its methodological writings of Indian Christian Historiography.¹⁷

4. POST-INDEPENDENT METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN HISTORIOGRAPHY.

Since Independence important advances were made in both general Indian historiography as well as in Christian historiography in India. The history expanded significantly both in quantity and quality. Soon after independence two histories of Christianity in India¹⁸ were written with the shift from earlier methodological historiography already examined. The first was written in 1952, *The Cross Over India*, by Rajaiah D. Paul¹⁹, and the other, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan* (1954), by P. Thomas.²⁰ D. Paul's History showed the beginning of Indian Christianity and ends with the Church in New India. It was a history of the Indian Church rather than of foreign missions, and the role of Indian Church in the Ecumenical Movement. However, he stated that, "the Church in India cannot afford to dissociate herself from the Church in the West, and in the interests of Christianity should not be allowed to do so."²¹

P. Thomas emphasized more on the Syrian Christian. His approach on non-denominational was another important aspect of his history. For Thomas, "the history of Christianity in India was the history neither of Christian missions, nor of the Indian Church, but of the Christian

¹³ Jacob, S. Dharmaraj, *Colonialism and Christian Mission: Postcolonial Reflection* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1993), 2. (Hereafter cited as Dharmaraj, *Postcolonial Reflection*).

¹⁴ A.M. Mundadan, "Changing Approaches to Historiography" *ICHR*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, (June, 2001), 46. (Hereafter cited as Mundadan, *Changing Approaches to Historiography*).

¹⁵ Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*, 138.

¹⁶ Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*, 147.

¹⁷ T.V. Philip, "Christianity in India During Western Colonialism: Conflict, Reconciliation or Adjustment" *ICHR*, vol, XXI, No. 1, (June, 1987), 22.

¹⁸ Indians wrote both and both were published in England.

¹⁹ R. D. Paul at that time was the General Secretary of the recently founded Church of South India.

²⁰ P. Thomas, a Syrian Christian, who wrote it in order to meet the need for a book giving a connected account of Christianity in India from the time of the Apostle Thomas to the present day. See P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan: A General Survey of the progress of Christianity in India from Apostolic Times to the Present Day* (London: George Allen & Uni Ltd., 1954), i. Introduction. (Hereafter cited as, Thomas, *Christians and Christianity*).

²¹ R. D. Paul, *The Cross Over India* (London: SCM Press, 1952), 123.

community in India.”²² Thus, R. D. Paul, P. Thomas, and others’ histories are histories, which have been written from the Indian perspective for the Indian readership. Hence, “Church history is no longer seen as history of foreign missions but as part of national and social history.”²³ By the 1960s the shift in historiographical methodology began to move ahead. Both historians and readers were no longer exclusively Christians, but also Hindus and Muslims. With this the context of the historiographical methodology broadened and concerns of historians and their readers were not merely churchly preoccupation of the 19th and 20th centuries.²⁴

The above analysis described that several significant changes have taken place in the historiography of Christianity in India. The reorganization of the Church History Association of India (CHAI) in the 1960s is also an important development of a new historiography. During the 19th and early part of 20th centuries, the historians, the publishers and readers were all Western. But in the Post- Independent, a transition took place from the Western historiography to Indian Christian historiography with a focus on the socio-cultural, regional, national and ecumenical perspective. Moreover, by 1960s historians, publishers, and the readers were no longer exclusively Christians or Western, but even include people of other Faiths. Therefore, CHAI in its statement of its aims and objectives provides directives in writing Christian historiography:

The history of Christianity in India is viewed as an integral part of the socio-cultural history of the Indian people rather than as separate from it. The history will therefore focus attention upon the Christian people in India upon who they were and how they understood themselves; upon their social, religious, cultural and political encounters; upon the changes which these encounter produced in them and in their appreciation of the Christian gospel as well as in the Indian culture and society of which they themselves were a part. These elements constitute the history of Christianity in India, and are not to be merely chapter tacked on to the end of an institutional study. This history should therefore, provide an insight into the changing identity of the Christian people of India through the centuries.²⁵

CHAI to some extent has accomplished their aims and objectives in bringing out the *History of Christianity in India* series (vol. I-V), although the series is not yet complete, whatever has been published so far maintains a wider and contextual perspective. For the first time in the historical research on Indian Christianity a much larger canvas has been spread out, especially taking into account the socio-economic formative factors that shaped an authentic and particular space for Christianity in India.²⁶ Moreover, it was also the first time in the history of Christianity in India that there came a shift in the focus – from the Christian elite and the dominant to the people who were really involved in the historical formation of

²² Thomas, *Christians and Christianity*, 82.

²³ Snaitang, *Church History to History of Christianity*, 140.

²⁴ Cf. A. M. Mundadan, *Historiography*, 47-48.

²⁵ Quoted in Frederick S. Downs, *History of Christianity in India*, vol.V, part 5 (Bangalore: CHAI, 1992), viii.

²⁶ George Oommen, “Historiography of Indian Christianity and Challenges of Subaltern Methodology,” in *Journal of Dharma*, vol. XXVIII/2 (April-June 2003), 213. (Hereinafter cited as Oommen, *Historiography of Indian Christianity*).

Christianity in India like the dalits and the tribals. This new approach of writing history is called “history from below approach.”²⁷ Another asset of the CHAI is the India Church History Review, which presents the issues in the History of Christianity in India. Although CHAI is contributing so much to the history of Christianity in India, there are still questions that are arising today like, whether the CHAI really does justice to the objectives i.e. providing an insight into the changing identity of the Christian people of Indian today?

5. POSTCOLONIAL THEORY.

5.1. Introduction.

The word colonialism according to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English is “the practice by which a powerful country controls another country or other countries.”²⁸ So colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people’s land and goods.²⁹ The word “Imperialism” according to the Oxford English Dictionary is “a system in which one country controls other countries, often after defeating them in a war.”³⁰ The colonial ideology and the character of the colonial power influences the whole set of Indian society.³¹ Under the name of civilizing and modernizing, the colonial power expanded their territories around the world, especially in India. Colonizers and missionaries sailed to India on the same boat. Anything that stood against the colonization of the people of India was strongly condemned. “The Muslims, the Brahmins, and their religious beliefs were considered impediments to mission and colonization progress³² in India. Moreover, the religious life, socio-cultural life of the people of India was considered as inferior to the colonizers.³³ Hence, European historiography has been corrupted by colonial epistemology, which reinforced the superiority of the European culture and English education as the solid arbitrator of Christian tradition.³⁴ Therefore, in this context the paper will bring out the Post-colonial theory regarding the methodological issues in Indian Christian historiography.

5.2. Subaltern Studies.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, the term ‘subaltern’ means, any officer in the army who is lower in rank than a captain. The term was popularized by Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist in the 1920s and 1930s, in his attack against Fascism, to mean

²⁷ Oommen, *Historiography of Indian Christianity*, 215.

²⁸ *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English*, 2003, 234.

²⁹ Loomba, *Colonialism*, p. 2. But colonialism in this sense is not merely the expansion of various European powers into Asia, Africa or the Americas from the 16th century onwards; it has been a recurrent and widespread feature of human History .in the early centuries the Roman Empire, then Genghis Khan in the 13th century, the Aztec Empire in the 14th century etc.etc. Therefore modern European colonialism cannot be sealed off from these earlier histories of contact.

³⁰ *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English*, 649.

³¹ See, K.N. Panikkar, *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony: Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Tulika, 1998), 68-72. See also, Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conception of the Orient* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2001), 30-48.

³² Dharmaraj, *Colonialism*, xvi.

³³ *Ibid.* Indian cultural life was seen as archaic, inefficient and static and thus colonizers’ view was injected with their style of education.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

‘proletarian class’³⁵. In India, the term came to the center of critical scholarship in the early eighties through a group of thinkers who were called as the Subaltern Studies Collective. This path-breaking historiographical movement of Subaltern Studies Collective took its root with its pioneering work, *Subaltern Studies. I: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (1982), and *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983) by Ranajit Guha. Since then eleven volumes and several other books have appeared representing this school of history. Although it started twenty years ago, it is only recently that theological researchers are taking this subaltern historiography seriously.³⁶

According to Guha, the term ‘subaltern’ means ‘of inferior rank’, and it was used as a name for the general attitude of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way.³⁷ Hence, the term ‘subaltern’ refers to any group of people who constitute the lower and marginalized strata of the society like the untouchables, the outcaste, the dalits, the tribals, and the women. Thus, Subaltern studies include the studies and issues of the above-mentioned groups of people.

5.2.1. Methodological Issues of Subaltern Studies.

Subaltern Studies basically emerged in an atmosphere of widespread negative response to Marxian orthodox ideology in the academic research in analyzing and understanding the Indian society and the nation. It concentrated on the indigenous self of Indian society and on its unique experiences on its own terms. It also criticized the historiography of Indian nationalism, which has been dominated by colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism. Subaltern Studies strongly opposed the defining of nationalism as the response of the Indian elite to colonial context and Indian resources and as collaboration and competition with the ruling power. Subaltern historiography rejected the view that these processes constituted nationalism and negated the projection of Indian elite and the middle classes as the primary agents of change. They rejected the view that nationalism was entirely an elite achievement.³⁸ According to Guha, such historical writing cannot explain Indian nationalism for us because it fails to acknowledge the contribution made by the people on their own, independently of the elite, to the making and development of Indian nationalism.³⁹ As a result, Subaltern historiography search for the real autonomous agencies and the real locatedness of the agencies of change and transformation in the Indian society and to identify the politics of the people that are neglected in the un-historical historiography.

Another aspect of Subaltern studies is the recategorization of ideas, concepts, people etc., and the deconstruction of history. They emphasized on listening to the people and their voices, which were silenced by the dominant discourses, and enabling them to speak in their own language, language of protest, resistance and negation. This can be accomplished if the historians and other researchers free themselves of the dominant narratives and materialistic categorizations. In connection with this, they also insist on rereading of texts under the issue

³⁵ Sathianathan Clarke, *Dalits and Christianity: Subaltern Religion and Liberation Theology in India* (Delhi: Oxford University press, 1998), 6.

³⁶ George Oommen, “A Commentary on Subaltern Studies Collective: Methodological Implications for Theological Research”, A paper presented during D.Th. colloquim program at UTC, Bangalore, on 12th May 2003, 1. (Hereafter cited as, Oommen, *A Commentary on Subaltern Studies Collective*).

³⁷ Ranajit Guha, ‘Preface’, in *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Ranajit Guha (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), vii. (Hereafter cited as, Guha, *Subaltern Studies I*).

³⁸ Oommen, *A Commentary on Subaltern Studies Collective*, 2.

³⁹ See, Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies I*, 3.

of sources of historical construction. Despite the fact that most of the literature is produced by the dominant, Subaltern studies believes that deconstruction of historical texts is possible, through rereading. First of all, we need to redefine the meaning of text in a wider sense, encompassing both written and oral- traditions and sayings of the subalterns, including their festivals, tales, rituals etc, etc. Thus, Subaltern studies in its methodology includes various themes and issues like indigenism, recategorization, deconstruction, rereading and redefinition of text etc., which are considered necessary tools for their studies.

5.3. Dalit Issues.

The word “Dalit” is derived from a Semitic root word “dal” which means to crack, open, split, scatter, stretch out to be dissected, broken, torn, destroyed and trodden down.⁴⁰ Hence, the term Dalit is especially being used for those people who, on the basis of caste distinction, have been considered outcaste. According to James Massey, these groups of people are outcaste because they were not according to the architect of the system fit to be included in the four-fold graded caste⁴¹ structure of our society.⁴² In this life setting, the Dalits went through economical, social, political oppressions for centuries where they reached a point of losing their total humanness. However, in the present context, the term is considered to have a little more positive connotation as Massey put in the following concerns:

The term Dalit is used to describe these people, many of them today, prefers to use the term themselves. Because this term for them is not a mere name or title, it has in fact become an expression of hope for them in recovering their past identity. In fact, because these people were regarded as outcastes and their struggle, this term Dalit has gained a new connotation, which has a more positive meaning.⁴³

Though in today’s context, Dalit is not a pejorative designation anymore but rather a positive symbol of identity for the depressed classes, which solves the position of origin, roots and history of these people.⁴⁴ However, it doesn’t mean that they are free from discriminations from their rights, oppressions in both religious and social setup. Their struggles are being ignore by the high caste society of India. Therefore, in relative terms, there have been some improvements, but in totality they are still what they were.

5.3.1. Dalit Historiography.

⁴⁰ Other names of dalits are, Dasa, Dasyu, Raksosa, Asura, Avarna, Nisada, Panchama, Mletcha, Svapaca, Chandala, Achuta, Exterior caste, depressed class, Schedule caste, Harijan, Untouchables etc. See, James Massey, *Indigenous People: Dalits*, Delhi: ISPCK, 1994, 6. (Hereafter cited as, Massey, *Indigenous People*). See also, A. P. Nirmal, “A Dialogue with Dalit Literature,” in M.E. Prabhakar ed., *Towards A Dalit Theology*, Delhi” ISPCK, 1988, 66. James Massey, “The Role of the Churches in the Whole Dalit Issue,” *NCCR*, vol. CXVI, No. 5 (May-June, 1996), 396-397. James Massey, “The Role of Partner Churches in the Whole Dalit Issue,” *NCCR*, vol. CXII, No. 7 (September, 1992), 504-505.

⁴¹ The four-folded caste structure includes the Priestly (Brahmins), the Warrior (Kshatriyas), the Traders (Vaisyas), and the Serving (Sudras).

⁴² Massey, *Indigenous People*, 6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁴ Massey, “Christian Dalits in India: An Analysis,” *RS*, vol. XXXVII, No. 3 (September, 1990), 40.

The Dalits in India number more than 200 million populations and with Sudras, the other backward classes (OBC) then the number would be more than 700 million. These are the people who need to know their past, which alone will reveal to them that once they were also fully human beings, enjoying all the benefits of a normal human being which includes land, property, human dignity, natural resources, human freedom etc.⁴⁵ This is possible only when their history is written from their point of view. So far the view that exist is that, whether it is history or theology, they are written by the high caste. Hence, Dalit historiography has to be from their context and situation, and from the Dalit's point of view.

The problems of the Dalits and the struggle for the liberation even today perpetuate the slavery of the Dalits instead of assisting them in getting out of it. The rights of Dalits have been taken away with force and oppression for centuries, and religion has been used as the weapon to oppress the Dalits and thus their very human freedom has been taken away. The historiography of the Dalits make it clear that the development of their problem in reality is continuing on the same ground as in the past. According to Dr. Ambedkar, any effort to improvise the lot of the Dalits should be directed towards uprooting the caste system itself.⁴⁶ It is argued that as long as caste system continues to exist, outcaste will exist. In the present condition the Dalits are becoming aware of the fact that their deplorable condition is not God-given but man-made, which need to be eradicated, and hence their history need to be re-written.

Some Dalits followed Dr. Ambedkar and converted to other religion in order to protest against the system and to end their stigmatized position. Majority of the Dalits embraced Christianity, some Islam, Buddhism and still some to Sikhism. Through conversion they demonstrated the protest of caste system but they have failed to end their problems arising out of their background. The effort by social reformers, Government of India and the Dalits themselves has not changed the deplorable conditions of the Dalits. Majority of the Dalits still live in acute poverty. Though in relative terms, there have been some improvements, but in totality they are still what they were. They have been socially and culturally, economically and politically subjugated and marginalized for many centuries. Even today they are denied individual and social identity.⁴⁷

The point of departure for Dalit historiography is the liberation of the Dalits from their socio-economic and political bondage. Hence, Dalit historiography needs to be produced by the Dalits, based on their own experience, their own sufferings, their own aspirations and their own hopes.⁴⁸ It will anticipate history, which is meaningful to them. Thus Massey pointed out rightly that in order to develop a Dalit history, "it must be based on the history, context of the living stories of the Dalits."⁴⁹ As the Dalit Christians argued that so far there is no specific Dalit historiography, so they have begun to "create ideas, facts and information to construct a possible history for the Dalits."⁵⁰ Thus the Dalits historians are trying to reconstruct the history of the Dalits. The central issue of the Dalits is their enslavement by their fellow humans simply on the basis that they are by birth outside the four-folded caste

⁴⁵ Massey, *Indigenous People*, 4-5.

⁴⁶ See, A. Ramaiah, "The Dalit Issue: A Hindu Perspective," in Massey, *Indigenous People*, 88.

⁴⁷ M.E. Prabhakar, "The Search for a Dalit Theology," in Massey, *Indigenous People*, 206.

⁴⁸ A. P. Nirmal, "Towards a Christian Dalit Theology," in Massey *Indigenous People*, 218-219.

⁴⁹ Massey, "Ingredients of Dalit Theology," in Massey, ed., *Towards a Dalit Theology* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1989), 59.

⁵⁰ Edmund Weber, "Religion: A Source of Oppression and Liberation," *Bulletin of the Christian Institute for Religious Studies*, vol. 23, No. 2 (July, 1994), 1-16 (p.6).

structure of the Indian society. They were forced to suffer utter powerlessness for no fault or sin of their own.⁵¹ This point to only one thing and i.e., violation of their fundamental and human rights which is guaranteed by the Secular Republic Constitution of India.⁵²

Another serious issue with the Dalit historiography is the issue of poverty, low literacy rate, insecure housing, unemployment, participation in electoral politics, denial of their basic human rights, the right to live, the right to property,⁵³ etc, and etc. This also needs to be taken seriously in producing Dalit historiography. Therefore, the most urgent need for the Dalit historians today is to forge unity among the Dalits, cultivate and strengthen Dalit consciousness, create unity and togetherness. Moreover, the Indian history needs a new understanding and interpretation of ancient Indian literature from the perspectives of the Dalits in India.

5.4. Tribal Issues.

5.4.1. *The Term.*

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 'Tribe' or 'Tribal' means "a group of people of the same race, or and with the same customs, or language, or religion"⁵⁴ etc. The term 'tribe' or 'tribal' does not originate with those people who are identified as tribals.⁵⁵ It is a term used by anthropologists to denote a particular group of people.⁵⁶ The term is also popularly used in India to denote those who live a relatively isolated life and are technologically backward.⁵⁷ In Indian context this term suggests primitive people living in the hills and forests, the original but not highly developed inhabitants.⁵⁸ It is unfortunate that in the history of India, tribals have been discriminated against and reduced to the status of slaves. For centuries the Indian Government used the term 'tribal' in a derogatory sense. However, by using the 'tribal' or 'tribe' the tribals are reaffirming that we are primal people⁵⁹ who are not spoiled by modern development and its philosophy of individualism. The term

⁵¹ Consequently Dalits suffer all kinds of discriminations and deprivations are perpetrated against them from generation after generation in the name of religion and moral social order. All this is apparently from the heartless neighbors and fellow citizens of the same society.

⁵² Indian Constitution Articles 25, 26, 28, 30 provided the full freedom of Religion to all citizens, and Articles 15, 16, 29, 325 forbid any kind of discrimination by the State on the basis of Religion, Race, Caste, Sex, place of birth or any of them. See Massey, "Minorities in India with Particular Reference to the Specific Christian Issues," in Wati Longchar and Larry E. Davis, eds., *Doing Theology with Tribal Resources* (Jorhat: ETC, 1999), 1-14

⁵³ Masilamani, Azariah, *A Pastor's Search for Dalit Theology* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 170.

⁵⁴ *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 1387.

⁵⁵ They never make use of the term tribe/advasi, but they are proud to belong to a group- they are Gonds, Chenchus, Bhil, Nagas and Madias, etc. According to Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, "several tribes prefer to call themselves by the simple epithet 'man'. Kamaladevi, Chattopadhyaya, *Tribalism in India* (New Delhi: Vikas Publications, n.d.), 21.

⁵⁶ A group of people speaking a common language, observing uniform rules of social organization, and working together for some common purpose such as trade, agriculture, or warfare.

⁵⁷ K. Thanzauva, *Theology of Community: Tribal Theology in the Making* (Mizoram: MTCA, 1997), 1. (Hereafter cited as Thanzauva, *Tribal Theology*).

⁵⁸ L.P. Vidyarthi and B.K. Rai, *The Tribal Culture of India* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1985), 25. Some of the names used for them are Vanjajati (forest caste), vanvasi (inhabitants of the forest), pahari (hill dwellers), adimjati (primitive people), janjati (folk people), anusuchit janjati (scheduled tribes) and advasi (first settlers).

⁵⁹ The earliest written traditions in India perceived the original inhabitants as Dasas, Vanaras, Rakshasas, Nishadas, Nagas, Yakshas, Sabaras and Kirala. This view assigned an inferior status to the tribals.

‘tribal’ is also an affirmation of our history of suffering from exploitations and discriminations received from the main line society of India. The problem is not with the term tribal, but the attitude of the dominant people of India, which need to change.⁶⁰

5.4.2. Tribal Historiography.

Methodological issues in writing historiography have been understood as a writing principle used by historians in the articulation of history with a view to achieving a historical vision of the tribal community. Like other third world histories, tribal historiography should also be contextual historiography. For many centuries, tribal history has been ignored and neglected by the high caste society of India. They have been discriminated, rejected, exploited in every set up of their lives. The tribals are victims of the patterns of developments that are increasingly displacing them from their traditional habitat. The tribal history that was written was from Colonial and mainline society of Indian perspectives. Tribals need to have their own historiography based on their own life experiences, produced by the tribals of India. Hence, the central focus and the goal of the tribal historians are, to produce and rewrite their history from their native perspectives.⁶¹

The tribals are the most exploited and impoverished people in most parts of India. The history of tribals is a history of suffering from genocide, exploitations, discriminations, displacement and alienation.⁶² They are culturally alienated, socially stigmatized, economically exploited, poor and politically powerless. Thus, in India the position of the tribals is very precarious owing to the peculiar nature of the society. Tribals also lost their precious land due to the lack of written documents to prove it. According to SC/ST Commissioner in 28 Report “in the beginning all the tribal people as a rule were land owners”,⁶³ but at the present set up in India, tribals are at the mercy of others even for the recognition of their basic rights of living. The tribals were not beggars, but now they are deprived of their very basic living. They are forcefully evicted, using repressive measures.⁶⁴ The latest tragedy would be the Narmada Valley project, which resulted in the displacement of many tribals. They are affected but they have no voice. They are ignored, silenced and despised by the mainline society. The tribals are the independent Adi people of India. They have never accepted a subordinate position in their heart and mind even in the face of dominant people of India.⁶⁵

For thousands of years, tribals have been told repeatedly by the high caste society of India that they are no people with any history and culture of their own. The distorted imposed history and culture have become an accepted history among the dominant society of India. This false concept and wrong history must be done away with, for which the starting point is the search for a common historiography for the tribals.⁶⁶ The tribals in India are waging a grim battle for their history and survival. In the past, the tribals struggled for co-existence. In

⁶⁰ Cf. Thanzauva, *Tribal theology*, 7-9.

⁶¹ Cf. A.Wati Longchar, *An Emerging Asian Theology: Tribal Theology Issues, Methods and Perspectives* (Jorhat: CTC, 2000), 24-25.

⁶² Thanzauva, *Tribal Theology*, 11.

⁶³ SC/ST Commissionar’s Report, Extracts in Dalit Voice (December, 16-31,1989), 17.

⁶⁴ Johnson Vadakumchory, “The Original Inhabitants of India: Victims and Written Traditions” *Indigenous People: Dalit*, edited by James Massey (Delhi: ISPCK, 1994), 122-133.

⁶⁵ R.C Verma, *Indian Tribes Through the Ages* (New Delhi: Patiala House, 1990), 74-75.

⁶⁶ Nirmal Minz, “Dalit Tribals: A Search for Common Ideology”, *Indigenous People: Dalit*, edited by James Massey (Delhi: ISPCK,1994), 134-141.

the present, they have to fight for their survival, for their right to life. Therefore, all written religious traditions need to be re-read and re-interpreted from the tribals' own life setting.

5.5. Feminist Issues.

5.5.1. *Women in Indian Society.*

Today in India, Women's Movement has been spreading throughout the nation including both urban as well as rural areas, in installing gender concerns on the social, economic, political and religious agenda. In the past, despite the Constitutional assurances of liberty and equality, women's issues were not given a national priority. Indian society is very much unequal, stratified and hierarchical, with its majority of population in economic deprivation, political powerlessness, cultural domination, and social subjugation under its oppressive structure. In Indian society women are considered as less human than the men folk. If we look back to the traditions such as 'Smritis' and people like Manu have made so many taboos for the women especially in the context of marriage. The tragedy is that "a woman should marry a man only from her caste even though, he may be lame or blind, illiterate or poor."⁶⁷ Even she was restricted for learning and was forbidden for any sort of education. According to Manu her main work was to "look after the husband, children and household affairs."⁶⁸ Even today, Indian women in general are illiterate, and still victims of social discrimination. In India, the Dalits and the women both formed the neglected sections of the nation's society. Both are denied justice and are suppressed under the pressures of socio-economic, political and religious restrictions. The story of women in India in general depicts a continued way of exploitation and discrimination. The society refuses to recognize their potentialities, hard-work and contribution to the welfare of the society. They are considered to be unequal and inferior to men. They are considered men's property and have no independence whatsoever.⁶⁹

Again even among the Indian women, the Dalit women are considered the downtrodden among the downtrodden. Dalit women are found to be less educated and less paid for their strenuous jobs. They work under the most exploitative, dehumanizing and unhealthy circumstances. They are compelled to work in order to meet the basic needs of their families. They are even denied of basic elements such as drinking water, proper health care, and they constantly live under the insecurity of being evicted from their places.⁷⁰ Such is the plight of the Dalit women in India. It is therefore stated that the role of Dalit women is necessary in the search of Dalit liberation and Dalit identity. The vision of the Dalit women is more than that of an equal partner with men, but primarily feminist, non-patriarchal, non-hierarchical and positively ecological.⁷¹ As a result, the vision of Indian women as a whole emerges from their experiences, daily struggles and aspirations which have its roots in the experience of the caste stratified society, patriarchal structure, untouchability and violence. Their sufferings

⁶⁷ Kumud, Pawde, "The Position of Women in Indian Society," *Indigenous People: Dalits*, edited by James Massey (Delhi: ISPCK, 1994), 147. (Hereafter cited as Pawde *The Position of Women*).

⁶⁸ Pawde, *The Position of Women*, 147.

⁶⁹ Ruth Manorama, "Dalit Women: Downtrodden among the Downtrodden", in Massey, *Indigenous People*, 164.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁷¹ Ruth Manorama, "Dalit Women: Breaking The Culture Of Silence Creating A Space For Utterance," *Religion And Politics From Subaltern Perspective* edited by Thomas Kadankavil (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1999), 112.

strengthened them to develop common cause with other oppressed and marginalized groups of Indian society for total transformation.

5.5.2. *Feminist Methodological Issues.*

There is no unanimity when it comes to feminist methodology. However, this absence of unanimity is seen not as a weakness, but as strength, as it testifies to the richness and depth of feminist thought and opinion.⁷² Some feminists appeal to an alternative magisterium drawn from women's experience, as their central norm. Some practice a feminist eclecticism that draws on a variety of sources and norms. Still others, in concert with sources and norms drawn from women's experience, appeal to sources and norms explicitly drawn from the Christian tradition. However, there is an agreed point for all of them and that is, their critique and analysis is on the exclusion, experience, and invisibility of women in the writing of history.⁷³ And it is this alienation that becomes the starting point of their reconstruction of history.

Feminist theologians like Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza realize that feminists are not simply ahistorical beings who spring out of nowhere. They work to reclaim early Christian history as women's past and insist that women's history is an integral part of early Christian historiography.⁷⁴ Women cannot stand as though they had no history at all, because they too are historically situated beings, influenced in the present by their past. Rosemary Radford Ruether stated that women's experience is never at the center of the traditional texts, women are not treated as active thinking experiencing subjects, and therefore, new texts need to be found and used so that women's experience can be made visible.⁷⁵ They argue that women as historical beings cannot merely mimic unquestionably and unthinkingly what our ancestors have said, in matters of faith as well as in any other matters. Hence, the need is for critical historical hermeneutics. Feminists thus advocates a paradigm shift in theology as well as in writing and reading history, critically questioning what has been understood as authoritative, and to challenge the past and present that seeks to limit woman's full humanity, full acceptance as an equal.⁷⁶

In the recent past women historians have articulated the theoretical problem of how to move from androcentric text to historical context and how to write women into history. The task of feminist historical interpretation is the placing of women and their lives at the center of historical reconstructions. Feminist historians asks what it was like to be a woman at various times in history and are exploring women's subjective responses to their environment. In other words, new approaches are being used to attempt to integrate women into the mainstream of historical development rather than isolating woman as a separate category.⁷⁷

⁷² Pamela Dickey Young, *Feminist Theology/ Christian Theology: In Search of Method* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2000), 17.

⁷³ Oommen, *Historiography of Indian Christianity*, 217.

⁷⁴ Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroads Publications, 1986), xix. (Hereafter cited as, Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*).

⁷⁵ Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Womanguides* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), xi.

⁷⁶ Letty M. Russel, "Authority and the Challenge of Feminist Interpretation," *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, edited by Letty M. Russel (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 140.

⁷⁷ A. D. Gordon et al., "The problem of Women's History," in Bernice A. Carroll, ed., *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 75-92. (Hereafter cited as, Carroll, *Liberating Women's History*). Cf. Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 84.

Feminist historians pointed out that women are neglected in the writing of history although the effects of their lives and actions are a reality in history. As a result, ideas of men about women, do not reflect women's historical reality, since it can become obvious that ideological polemics about women's place, role, or nature increase whenever women's actual emancipation and active participation in history become stronger. Feminists therefore seek to comb androcentric records for feminist meaning by reappropriating the patriarchal past for those who have suffered not only its pain of oppression but also participated in its social transformation and development. They seek a theoretical framework that can maintain the dialectical tension of women's historical existence as active participants in history as well as objects of patriarchal oppression. Since gender dimorphism is generated by such patriarchal oppression, it is not "natural" but social.⁷⁸ Therefore feminist historians reject heuristic concepts such as "biological caste" or "women's experience as essentially different from that of men" because these categories render women passive objects of mere biological differences or male dominance. Instead, they seek for heuristic models that explore women's historical participation in social- public development and their efforts to comprehend and transform social structures.

There are some scholars of women's history and religion who have postulated Matriarchy as an oppositional structure to Patriarchy. In response to this some are of the opinion that if such structure can be established at all, they must be relegated to "Pre-history" because recorded history is patriarchal history.⁷⁹ However, rather than restrict women's historical agency and powers to such pre-historical times, some feminist historians seek to construct heuristic models that can help us measure women's power and influence within patriarchal history. In this venture they seek not only to restore women to history and history to women but also to reconceptualize history and culture as the product and experience of both women and men.

5.6. Issue of Globalization.

Globalization has become one of the main concerns for today's society. The form of globalization confronting us today is recolonization done in a more subtle but comprehensive manner. The spectre of colonialism, which is haunting the peoples of India, has taken a new avatar i.e. the avatar of globalization.⁸⁰ Globalization as we are witnessing today is still the continuation of colonization with the use of more sophisticated methods. For examples in the days of colonization the gunboat and the superior military technology of the colonizers were the main weapons used. Today globalization use the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and the multilateral trading bodies like the World Trade Organization (WTO) etc. as the instruments of colonization.⁸¹ Globalization, on the surface, seems to be harmless and even beneficial to developing countries. The rational advanced by the champions of globalization is that the revolution that has taken place in communication technologies and transport systems has reduced the world to a global village. But, the

⁷⁸ Hilda Smith, "Feminism and the Methodology of Women's History," in Carroll, *Liberating Women's History*, 369-684.

⁷⁹ See, Joan Bamberger, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Society," *Women, Culture and Society*, edited by M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 263-280.

⁸⁰ Cf. Jetti, A. Oliver, "Recolonization, Globalization and the Role of the Church," *Globalization A Challenge to the Church*, edited by P. Jegadish Gandhi and George Cheryan (Bangalore: ACISCA & NCCI-URM, 1998), 3. (Hereafter cited as Oliver, *Recolonization, Globalization*).

⁸¹ See also, Victori, Tauli-Corpus, *Globalization and its Impacts on Indigenous Women: The Philippines Experience* (Malaysia: Third World Network, 2001), 1,2.

developing countries such as India are badly in need of capital, science, and technology in order to realize economic growth without which they cannot shake off the shackles of poverty and provide quality of life to all people. So the developed countries are wielding globalization as a magic wand, which can eliminate poverty from developing countries- such as India.⁸²

Globalization is a process that cannot be ignored. In reality, it affects all people in different ways. In the globalization process and practice, Transnational Corporations (TNCs) are instrumental in monopolizing resources, means of production, markets and media channels. The whole system is capitalist, competitive, exploitative, mammonic and elitist.⁸³ It is not concerned with social environmental costs, but destabilizes economics. The globalized society compromises power without accountability or moral legitimacy. Many argue that globalization is the only path to progress. Modernization is inevitable, unstoppable, triumphalist, highly sophisticated with no alternatives. But there is a predominantly feeling of helplessness, powerlessness and oppression among many who are partakers of the all powerful globalization.⁸⁴ The whole system is unsustainable on many counts. Economically, globalization creates wants but does not satisfy the needs of the majority of the poor people. This is creating a serious problem for the present unemployment, which is fundamentally different from the past unemployment caused by economic depression.⁸⁵ Socially, globalization divides the people, explodes the ethnic and cultural values and breeds corruptive practices. Today the state is slowly withdrawing from its welfare role of taking care of the needs of the poor in the areas of food, agriculture, education, housing, health, etc. The attitude of globalization towards environment is exhausting non-replicable natural resources and warming the earth. Nature is considered as a 'thing' a non-living thing, a resource, a constant supplier of raw materials and an absorber of waste, not a living system.

Today, there is a growing sense of a spiritual void, of not fulfilling more fundamental human aspirations of both the affluent and the impoverished. Humanity is evolving and groping towards a more human future. Eventually, the dominant global capitalism has to be resisted, confronted, deligitimized and repelled or at least regulated and moderated, as a beginning, for its replacement by an alternative society that which will respect nature and recover its sustainability.⁸⁶ We are at the crossroads of a great transformation in history. It is imperative to strategize alternatives in the development process.⁸⁷ Inadequacies are inherent in the present system. In evolving alternatives to globalization, we have to know our strengths and weaknesses. Our weakness is we are not free from selfishness, conflicts, ignorance, divisions and sloth and lack of proper information and communication plague poor countries. We are not poor in natural resources, but impoverished and exploited due to the invasion of inappropriate transfer of technologies. The strength of our system is solely dependent on the resources of a vast population.

⁸²Cf. Oliver, *Recolonization, Globalization*, 5.

⁸³Tissa, Balasuriya, "Recolonization and Debt Crisis", *Globalization A Challenge to the Church*, edited by P. Jegadish Gandhi and George Cheryan (Bangalore: ACISCA & NCCI-URM, 1998), 8. (Hereafter cited as Balasuriya, *Recolonization*).

⁸⁴Cf. Balasuriya, *Recolonization*, 9.

⁸⁵ Cf. George Cheryan, "Globalization- A conspiracy of the Rich Against the Poor", *Globalization a Challenge to the Church*, edited by P. Jegadish Gandhi & George Cheryan (Bangalore: ACISCA & NCCI-URM, 1998), 66-67, (Hereafter Cited as Cheryan, *Globalization*).

⁸⁶We do not have any blueprint and readymade master plans for this alternative societal system.

⁸⁷Cf. Johann P. Arnason, "Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity", *Global Culture*, edited by Mike Featherstone (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1995), 209-213.

Globalization is not, as proclaimed, a 'free of charge' or 'free and fair' phenomenon.⁸⁸ The costs are being paid by the developing countries such as India and by the poor in all the nations. Globalization does not address accountability, equity and democracy, which are basis for any development. Globalization may have increased the prosperity, living standards and life style of many; this has not eradicated poverty in the west, but merely exported it to the Third World. Hence, we must remember that when we talk about globalization, it is the dominating consumer culture accompanied by devastating environmental effects, which has resulted in the imbalance of the society in the present context. Therefore, we must also include this issue of globalization (a newer form of colonialism) and the effects it has upon the Third world countries like India and its people particularly the dalits and tribals, in the process of subaltern historiography.

6. Reflections and Conclusion.

Despite the fact that Indian Christian history goes back to the 1st century itself, it was only in recent years that we witness the growing interest in its historiography and methodological concerns. A critical view on the methodology of Indian church historiography particularly of the 19th and 20th century reveals that all was not that well as we were told to believe. Along with the widespread of Christian mission, colonial power had had its fair share of influence in all walks of Indian life, even in the writing of history of Christianity. The pre-Independent historians devalued the social, religious and cultural life of the Indians. Written documents on the history of Christianity in India by the various (examined) scholars mostly highlighted on and elevated the external positive successes of the various missions, missionaries and their strategies or methods. Although one cannot totally reject or devalue their immense contributions which also serve as basic sources for our subsequent studies in the area, still we cannot ignore the fact that they were Western-oriented. The writers were western who published their work in the West, and were written solely from the western perspective. Hence in the process, they failed to reflect the experience, aspirations and understanding of the native Indian Christian community. They were but all success stories of the West, their power and their influence upon the uncivilized, pagan Indian people and their soil. As a result, the need for re-examination of Indian church history emerged.

As mentioned earlier, it was only in recent years that a path-breaking movement took place in the study of historiography, through the works of the native historians and scholars. A paradigm shift occurred, identifying the inadequacies of the age-old resources, which insufficiently camouflaged the European bias. Therefore the native historians emphasized on the indigenism of its own historiography. Alongside the emergence of Indian nationalism, Indian religious renaissance also began to take its root. After the national Independence (1947), successive histories of Christianity were produced with a shift from early methodology (R. D. Paul's and P. Thomas', as already examined), focusing on the native Christian community and from their perspective, rather than from the foreign mission perspective. From thence onward, church history became a national and social history of the Indian Christians.

⁸⁸ Cheriyan, *Globalization*, 67.

The post-colonial theory emerged with a critique that the whole of the Indian society was influenced by the colonial ideology, its power structure and its characteristics. Colonizers who expanded their political territories in India, and the missionaries who came to civilize the uncivilized native Indians through the power of the Gospel, were seen as allies in their attitudes and work strategies. Basing on these findings, we moved on to the subsequent emergence of various methodological issues that comes under the post-colonial theory in India. The issues that came under our discussions were: Subaltern studies, Dalit issues, Tribal Issues, Feminist issues and issue of globalization. As seen, each of them in their own ways and methods draws on the real life experiences of their own as individuals and as community of the marginalized section of the caste stratified Indian society. They emphasized on their vision for a total human liberation from the social, political, economic, cultural and religious discrimination, all of which were based on the caste, race, and sex hierarchy. They fight against the dominant ideologies and concepts that dehumanize them. As a result they have all started to develop their own potentialities, and are now working on toward telling and writing their own histories, from their own perspectives. Today we witness a great shift in paradigm and methodology in historiography. We cannot afford to ignore these voices, if at all we aspire to produce a genuine history of the genuine people of India, for all to read and understand.

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