

# Community & Identities

Contemporary  
Discourses  
on  
Culture  
and  
Politics  
in  
India

图书馆

16

edited by  
SURINDER S. JODHKA

# Community and Identities

## Contemporary Discourses on Culture and Politics in India

Edited by

Surinder S Jodhka

Sage Publications  
New Delhi ❧ Thousand Oaks ❧ London

*in association with*

The Book Review Literary Trust  
New Delhi

*Copyright © Surinder S. Jodhka, 2001*

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

*First published in 2001*

*This paperback edition published in 2013 by*

**SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd**

B1/I-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area

Mathura Road

New Delhi 110044

**SAGE Publications Inc**

2455 Teller Road

Thousand Oaks, California 91320



**SAGE Publications Ltd**

1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road

London EC1Y 1SP

Published by Vivek Mehra for SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, typeset in Dutch 80 RmBT by Line Arts, Pondicherry and printed at Saurabh Printers Pvt Ltd.

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Community and identities: contemporary discourses on culture and politics in india/edited by Surinder S. Jodhka

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Social classes—India. 2. Caste—India. 3. Group identity—India.

I. Jodhka, Surinder S.

HN690.Z9 S61318

305.5'0954—dc21

2001

2001034918

**ISBN: 978-81-321-1394-2 (PB)**

*SAGE Production Team: Shweta Vachani, Mathew P.J. and Santosh Rawat*

# Contents

Preface and Acknowledgements	9
------------------------------	---

<b>PART I: COMMUNITY AND IDENTITIES: CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS</b>	<b>11</b>
---	-----------

1. Introduction Surinder S. Jodhka	13
2. The Concept of Community in Indian Social Sciences: An Anthropological Perspective Carol Upadhyia	32
3. In the Tracks of Community and Identity: Deepening the Interrogations Sasheej Hegde	59
4. The Eclipse or the Renaissance of 'Community'? The Career of the Concept Ravinder Kaur	80

<b>PART II: CASTE, CLASS AND THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITIES</b>	<b>95</b>
---	-----------

5. Is Caste Appeal Casteism? Oppressed Castes in Politics Javeed Alam	97
6. The Ambiguity of Categories: Community and Identity in the Kapunadu Movement D. Parthasarathy	111

7. Narratives in the Reconstitution of Communities A.R. Vasavi	126
8. Community, Identity and Politics: The Baliapal Movement Sujata Patel	140
<b>PART III: GLOBALISATION AND THE SPATIAL REARTICULATION OF COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>161</b>
9. 'Can You Talk Indian?' Shifting Notions of Community and Identity in the Indian Diaspora Aparna Rayaprol	163
10. The Spatiality of Community: Evaluating the Impact of Globalisation on Regional Identities Satish Deshpande	191
<b>PART IV: MINORITIES, WOMEN AND COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>217</b>
11. Negotiating Boundaries and Identities: Christian 'Communities' in India Rowena Robinson	219
12. Community, Women Citizens and a Women's Politics Anupama Roy	239
About the Editor and Contributors	260
Index	263

# Community and Identities



# Community and Identities

## Contemporary Discourses on Culture and Politics in India

Sage Publications  
New Delhi 🌳 Thousand Oaks 🌳 London

*in association with*

The Book Review Literary Trust  
New Delhi



*Copyright © Surinder S. Jodhka, 2001*

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

*First published in 2001*

*This paperback edition published in 2013 by*

**SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd**

B1/I-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area

Mathura Road

New Delhi 110044

**SAGE Publications Inc**

2455 Teller Road

Thousand Oaks, California 91320



**SAGE Publications Ltd**

1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road

London EC1Y 1SP

Published by Vivek Mehra for SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, typeset in Dutch 80 RmBT by Line Arts, Pondicherry and printed at Saurabh Printers Pvt Ltd.

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Community and identities: contemporary discourses on culture and politics in india/edited by Surinder S. Jodhka

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Social classes—India. 2. Caste—India. 3. Group identity—India.

I. Jodhka, Surinder S.

HN690.Z9 S61318

305.5'0954—dc21

2001

2001034918

**ISBN: 978-81-321-1394-2 (PB)**

*SAGE Production Team: Shweta Vachani, Mathew P.J. and Santosh Rawat*

*For Sneha*



# Contents

Preface and Acknowledgements	9
------------------------------	---

<b>PART I: COMMUNITY AND IDENTITIES: CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS</b>	<b>11</b>
---	-----------

1. Introduction	
Surinder S. Jodhka	13
2. The Concept of Community in Indian Social Sciences: An Anthropological Perspective	
Carol Upadhyia	32
3. In the Tracks of Community and Identity: Deepening the Interrogations	
Sasheej Hegde	59
4. The Eclipse or the Renaissance of 'Community'?	
The Career of the Concept	
Ravinder Kaur	80

<b>PART II: CASTE, CLASS AND THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITIES</b>	<b>95</b>
---	-----------

5. Is Caste Appeal Casteism? Oppressed Castes in Politics	
Javeed Alam	97
6. The Ambiguity of Categories: Community and Identity in the Kapunadu Movement	
D. Parthasarathy	111

7. Narratives in the Reconstitution of Communities A.R. Vasavi	126
8. Community, Identity and Politics: The Baliapal Movement Sujata Patel	140
 <b>PART III: GLOBALISATION AND THE SPATIAL REARTICULATION OF COMMUNITIES</b>	
9. 'Can You Talk Indian?' Shifting Notions of Community and Identity in the Indian Diaspora Aparna Rayaprol	163
10. The Spatiality of Community: Evaluating the Impact of Globalisation on Regional Identities Satish Deshpande	191
 <b>PART IV: MINORITIES, WOMEN AND COMMUNITIES</b>	
11. Negotiating Boundaries and Identities: Christian 'Communities' in India Rowena Robinson	219
12. Community, Women Citizens and a Women's Politics Anupama Roy	239
About the Editor and Contributors	260
Index	263

## Preface and Acknowledgements

The eighties were important in the contemporary history of India. Apart from many other changes and shifts, it was in the eighties that the 'new social movements' made their presence felt in India. The 'new' mobilisations by women, farmers, Dalits, tribals and ethnicities raised issues and demands that could not be easily understood or dealt with in the theoretical and political paradigm dominant at the time, that of development. Coupled with other changes, the eighties saw the erosion of the 'Nehruvian agenda', a framework of modernisation that aspired to combine the achievements of the scientific revolutions of western Europe and its 'secular' outlook with those of the planned economies of the socialist regime of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

This 'paradigmatic crisis' also provided a context for new debates on subjects such as secularism, development and modernity, eventually leading to important shifts in the social scientific enterprise and research. Prominent among these was an increasing preoccupation with the study of social identities. Questions of culture and identity had perhaps never been so important for the social science disciplines of sociology, anthropology, history or even geography as they are today. Along with this new interest in the question of identities, there has also been a renewed interest in the processes of dissolution and formation of communities. Issues such as environment, displacement, ethnicity, human rights, caste politics and or even globalisation are being increasingly articulated and discussed in the framework of community. The new discourse of community is not confined to

academics alone. It has permeated the ideologies and practice of political parties of diverse shades and is freely used to consolidate support for struggles against a variety of 'enemies', be they the multinational corporations, consumer culture or the authoritarian state.

This volume attempts to interrogate these new trends in the Indian social sciences and the social and political scene. Most of the chapters presented here were first discussed in a national workshop on the theme organised at the Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India in March 1998, under the auspices of the Special Assistance Programme awarded to the department by the University Grants Commission. I am grateful to the sociology faculty at the University of Hyderabad for giving me the opportunity to organise the workshop. Professor C.S. Bhat, Professor E. Haribabu, Dr. Vinod Jairath and Dr. K. Laxminarayana were extremely helpful and supportive. I am also grateful to Professors Ratna Naidu, T.R. Sharma, Rajen Harshe, Alok Prasher Sen, Probal Das Gupta, G. Haragopal, Dr. Vinod Pavarala and Dr. Sanjay Palshikar of the University of Hyderabad for the help and support I received from them.

The papers presented in this volume have been revised and rewritten keeping in mind the requirements of a book. I am extremely grateful to all the contributors for making the revisions and taking interest in the publication of the volume. The chapters by Javeed Alam, Aparna Rayaprol and Anupama Roy were not presented in the workshop and were written for the volume at my request. I am grateful to them for that.

The comments received from the Sage Publications referee were quite useful in the final revisions. The keen interest that Ms. Omita Goyal of Sage Publications showed in the volume was very encouraging. I am indeed grateful to them all.

Surinder S. Jodhka  
Chandigarh

Part I

**COMMUNITY AND IDENTITIES:  
CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS**



