

From Caste Silence to Caste Consciousness: Dalit Resistance and the Politics of Recognition in Gita Ramaswamy's *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman*

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Abstract— *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman* by Gita Ramaswamy is a significant account of Telangana's political awakening, caste awareness, and group resistance. The story follows Ramaswamy's transition from extreme political action and a privileged caste setting to a closer relationship with Dalit communities and their fight for respect and dignity. The shift from caste silence to caste consciousness and from consciousness to collective political opposition is examined in this essay. The narrative's self-reflexive basis is established when Ramaswamy acknowledges that she comes from "the *Savarna* side of the fence" (Ramaswamy 24). Her admission that caste had been "everywhere, yet rarely discussed" highlights how inadequate caste-blind political structures are. The *Ibrahimpatnam Taluka Vyavasaya Coolie Sangam* shows how caste consciousness evolves into collective organization and resistance, while the Karamchedu massacre of 1985 becomes a pivotal point in turning caste into an explicit political matter. The research places Ramaswamy's memoir within broader discussions on Dalit self-emancipation, political engagement, representation, historical memory, and resistance, drawing on Chenamallu, Shyamamma, Tharu, Narender, Hullur, Guru, Singh, and Verma. According to the publication, the politics of recognition in the book are ultimately about challenging caste hierarchy, affirming Dalit identity, restoring dignity, and creating spaces where oppressed populations can become agents of their own history.

Keywords— self-emancipation, caste quiet, political recognition, Dalit identity, caste consciousness, resistance

I. INTRODUCTION

In India's past, caste has been one of the most enduring social hierarchies. Because caste impacts social rank, community ties, political power, and access to dignity, its relevance goes beyond ritual classification. Caste still has an impact on daily life and political ties, notwithstanding the Indian Constitution's official rejection of untouchability and assurance of equality. The uneven distribution of caste consciousness makes caste persistence especially difficult. While affluent communities might not be sufficiently aware of the systems that uphold their privilege, communities under caste oppression face caste as an immediate social reality.

A particularly important explanation of this conflict can be found in Gita Ramaswamy's *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman*.

Ramaswamy joined the Naxalite movement after being born into an orthodox Tamil Brahmin family. She maintained regular touch with Dalit people, particularly the *Madigas* of Ibrahimpatnam, as a result of her eventual political involvement in Telangana. She acknowledges candidly that she approached these fights from a caste perspective. She declares "I know that I belong to the *Savarna* side of the fence" (Ramaswamy 24). Because it keeps the narrator from portraying herself as an outsider to caste privilege, this assertion is essential to the memoir. She is becoming more conscious of the consequences of her caste location rather than having it vanish as part of her political shift.

Ramaswamy also admits that she still has the ability to "frame," "edit," and "delete," and that privileged communities are still "the dominant storytellers of our times" (Ramaswamy 24). The issue of representation is brought into the memoir by her self-awareness. Who is qualified to describe the experiences of Dalits? When a *Savarna* activist documents the realities of marginalised groups, what happens? In addition to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's critique on representation and the challenges of empowering disadvantaged subjects to speak within dominant structures of knowledge, these questions are in line with the concerns of subaltern studies.

The acknowledgement of caste as a structural issue is the main shift in Ramaswamy's political consciousness. According to her, caste was "everywhere, yet rarely discussed" (Ramaswamy 60). The comment highlights a paradox: in some radical political contexts, caste was not fully acknowledged despite being profoundly ingrained in society. Therefore, she was not inherently caste conscious due to her prior political experience.

The 1985 Karamchedu tragedy turns into a pivotal moment. According to Ramaswamy, caste became a "serious question" for her at Karamchedu (Ramaswamy 60). The Dalit Mahasabha came into being as a result of the violence, which revealed the cruel caste system.

Additionally, Ramaswamy admits that Ambedkarites contributed to “caste and brahminism becoming unavoidable concerns” (Ramaswamy 61). As a result, caste shifts from the periphery to the core of her political worldview.

This metamorphosis is strengthened by the Ibrahimpatnam experience. Ramaswamy comes across Dalit communities that have been subjected to systemic oppression but yet have political acumen and a strong sense of collective resolve. She characterises the Dalits, who are “mostly *Madigas*,” as outsiders and bonded labourers in a Reddy-dominated environment (Ramaswamy 18). However, they are not only portrayed as victims in the narrative. The communities have their own perceptions of their circumstances and their own hopes for political transformation.

This dimension links the scholarship of Chenamallu, Shyamamma, Tharu, Narender, Hullur, Guru, Singh, and Verma with Ramaswamy’s memoir. Together, their writings highlight resistance, voice, representation, political engagement, caste history, and self-emancipation. Therefore, the current study contends that *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman* tells the story of a shift from caste quiet to caste consciousness and, in the end, to a politics of recognition where Dalit people take an active role in politics.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Prof. Dr. Chenamallu Visweswara Rao “Dalit Women and Their Journey toward Self-Emancipation” (2026) offers a helpful framework for comprehending Dalit resistance through the idea of self-emancipation. His talk highlights the agency of excluded populations and stresses that liberation cannot be reduced to something bestowed by institutions or affluent people. This viewpoint is especially helpful when studying Ramaswamy’s portrayal of Ibrahimpatnam, where Dalit groups actively engage in collective struggles and already have political ambitions. As a result, the memoir lends credence to the more general notion that emancipation is most significant when oppressed populations themselves act as change agents.

The importance of biographical and life-writing materials in reconstructing caste histories is demonstrated in Gogu Shyamamma’s PhD dissertation, “Reading Caste Histories via Biographies: A Case Study of the Dalit Women of Telangana” (2018). Individual lives are viewed by Shyamamma as significant historical sources that allow for the recovery of experiences that are not included in prevailing historiography. When interpreting Ramaswamy’s memoir as a counter-historical work, her method is helpful.

The memoir helps to restore local histories of caste resistance by preserving recollections of Dalit activism, village struggles, collective organization, and political transformation.

Tharu Susi’s “The Dalit Woman Question” (2014) offers a more comprehensive theoretical framework for comprehending the uniqueness of Dalit political consciousness. Political strategies that universalise marginalised experiences without sufficiently acknowledging caste are challenged by Tharu’s work. Her talk highlights the significance of independent modes of representation and Dalit political voices. This viewpoint contributes to the explanation of the significance of Ramaswamy’s shift away from caste-blind radicalism. Recognising the unique historical and structural nature of caste is necessary for her political transformation.

The importance of representation and involvement in political empowerment is emphasised in Muddepaka Narender’s research on “Dalit political engagement.” (2023) His claim is pertinent to the Ibrahimpatnam *Sangam* because it gave Dalit groups a cohesive framework for engaging in political and public conflicts. Therefore, the memoir shows how caste consciousness can be converted into political agency through political involvement.

An essential theoretical framework for understanding the memoir’s allusions to Ambedkarite politics is provided by M. H. Hullur’s analysis of “Ambedkar’s vision of Dalit emancipation” (2025). Hullur highlights how Ambedkar’s ideas of equality, liberty, fraternity, education, agitation, and organization are still relevant today. This broader history of anti-caste political thought helps to explain Ramaswamy’s view that Ambedkarites made caste and Brahminism “unavoidable concerns.”

Guru Gopal’s “Dalit Women Talk Differently” (1998) is particularly significant when it comes to the voice issue. Guru questions the notion that universal categories created by socially privileged people can appropriately represent marginalised cultures. Ramaswamy’s self-consciousness over her own authority as a storyteller can be examined through his work. Her awareness of the representational inequality that makes the politics of speech crucial is shown in her ability to frame, edit, and remove content.

The importance of autobiographical writing as a counter-discursive form is demonstrated in Preeti Singh’s work “Caste and Gender in Dalit Women’s Autobiographies” (2022). Ramaswamy’s book challenges mainstream portrayals by retaining memories of caste conflicts and Dalit political agency, even though it is not a Dalit autobiography. A framework for interpreting Ramaswamy’s memoir as a political document is established by Singh’s emphasis on autobiography as a location of testimony and resistance.

Verma Nikita's "Caste, Patriarchy, and Resistance: A Study of Select Dalit Women Autobiographies" (2025) is notably significant since it redirects critical focus from victimhood to defiance. Ramaswamy's depiction of Ibrahimpatnam illustrates a comparable evolution: Dalits are shown not only as victims of caste subjugation but also as organisers, activists, political actors, and chroniclers of their own narratives. Verma's focus on resistance so bolsters the assertion that caste knowledge gains political relevance when personal consciousness evolves into collective agency and structured action.

III. OBJECTIVES

There are six goals for the study:

To look at how caste consciousness and silence are portrayed in *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman*.

To examine how Dalit identity has emerged as a source of political consciousness.

To study how important Karamchedu was in making caste a clear political issue.

To observe how Ambedkarite consciousness contributes to the criticism of caste hierarchy.

To examine the connection between political acknowledgement and Dalit resistance.

To study Ramaswamy's self-reflective handling of her *Savarna* locality and how it affects how Dalit political battles are portrayed.

IV. METHODOLOGY

An In order to analyse *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman* as a memoir of caste consciousness and political struggle, this study uses qualitative textual analysis. A thorough analysis is done on a few texts that deal with caste identity, Dalit communities, Ambedkarite philosophy, political organization, acknowledgement, and representation. Conceptual support for comprehending the source text is provided by secondary scholarship by Chenamallu, Shyamalamma, Tharu, Narender, Hullur, Guru, Singh, and Verma.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Caste's Silence and the Rise of Consciousness

The main conceptual path of Ramaswamy's memoir is the shift from caste quiet to caste consciousness. Her political career starts in a radical setting that questions entrenched hierarchies of power but does not always effectively address caste. When she notes that caste was "everywhere, yet rarely discussed," she acknowledges the shortcomings of this political system in retrospect (Ramaswamy 60).

The expression encapsulates the paradox of caste in contemporary political discourse: its structural underpinnings may go unidentified, yet its social impacts are widespread.

Silence does not eradicate caste, which makes this issue crucial. Rather, it may let caste hierarchy to continue to be naturalised. Ramaswamy's story illustrates how political radicalism that lacks caste awareness may be unable to comprehend the realities of groups whose caste is a major factor in determining social survival. Because it highlights the need of seeing caste as a distinct structure rather than viewing it as an incidental aspect of a larger social issue, Tharu's study on Dalit political consciousness is helpful in this context (Tharu 152–59).

Thus, Ramaswamy's subsequent comprehension is a result of political education. She starts to see that the realities of Dalit communities cannot be adequately explained by the revolutionary language she had previously used. Political consciousness must be extended to include caste consciousness.

B. The Savarna Location and the Representation Issue

Ramaswamy does not identify as Dalit, which makes the narrative especially unique. "I know that I belong to the *Savarna* side of the fence," she declares clearly (Ramaswamy 24). This statement makes a crucial ethical distinction between identity and solidarity. Ramaswamy takes part in Dalit movements, but she doesn't eliminate the caste privilege that allows her to do so.

She also acknowledges that she still has the ability to "frame," "edit," and "delete," and that privileged groups continue to be "the dominant storytellers of our times" (Ramaswamy 24). The memoir has a complex connection with representation as a result of this self-reflexive revelation. The story examines the power dynamics involved in writing about Dalit oppression in addition to providing an account of such oppression.

This part of the memoir is very pertinent to Guru's concept of Dalit voice. His argument highlights how crucial it is to acknowledge that marginalised populations speak from historically particular places. In order to avoid portraying herself as the indisputable authority on Dalit suffering, Ramaswamy must accept her own representational privilege (Guru 80–85).

As a result, the book includes an internal assessment of its own narrative authority. Ramaswamy admits that Dalits would accuse her of patronising them or "taking up their space" (Ramaswamy 24). Such self-criticism highlights the issue of representation rather than solving it.

C. Karamchedu and Caste's Political Visibility

No A pivotal point in the evolution of Ramaswamy's caste consciousness is Karamchedu. She claims that it wasn't until the 1985 incident that caste became a "serious question" for her (Ramaswamy 60). The degree to which caste had not been sufficiently theorised in her prior political consciousness is revealed by this admission.

Karamchedu is significant not just because of the bloodshed but also because of the political reaction it sparked. The slaughter raised awareness of Ambedkarite politics and aided in the formation of the Dalit Mahasabha. According to Ramaswamy, Ambedkarites made "caste and brahminism unavoidable concerns" (Ramaswamy 61).

This change is explained by Hullur's explanation of Ambedkarite emancipation. According to Ambedkar's political philosophy, caste must be addressed head-on rather than being presumed to vanish through more extensive democratic reform. The kind of political consciousness Ramaswamy experiences after Karamchedu is conceptually grounded in his values of equality, liberty, fraternity, education, and organised struggle (Hullur 69–75).

As a result, Ramaswamy's lexicon for understanding society is altered by Karamchedu. Caste is no longer just a background factor. It turns into a clear political framework.

D. The Acknowledgement of Dalit Political Agency and Ibrahimpatnam

Figures The social setting in which caste consciousness becomes experiential is provided by Ramaswamy's 1984 arrival in Ibrahimpatnam. She characterises the Dalits, "mostly *Madigas*," as foreigners and bonded labourers and characterises Ibrahimpatnam as a Reddy-dominated area (Ramaswamy 18).

The passage's transition from abstraction to actual experience is what gives it its relevance. Ramaswamy now experiences caste through the interactions between Dalit communities and dominant-caste landlords rather than just as an ideological issue.

However, the memoir does not depict Dalits as only defenceless victims. Their political shift is shown in the opening testimonies. Gattu Vijayendar says, "We were kept as slaves," recalling how his people were viewed as less than human by the dominant castes. He also describes Ramaswamy as someone who changed their lives. The testimony reflects the historical memory of a society that endured caste persecution, which is more significant even though it acknowledges Ramaswamy's contribution.

Here, Chenamallu's focus on self-emancipation is helpful. External intervention cannot be the exclusive cause of Dalit political development.

According to Chenamallu (608–12), the oppressed community must have and use its own agency. This agency is progressively acknowledged in Ramaswamy's book.

E. The Sangam as a Caste-Conscious Institution

The institutional growth of communal consciousness is symbolised by the *Ibrahimpatnam Taluka Vyavasaya Coolie Sangam*. The *Sangam* turns personal encounters with caste discrimination into coordinated political action. Despite being a memoir, Ramaswamy maintains that the book is more crucially "the story of the *Sangam's*" accomplishments (Ramaswamy 23).

This distinction is important because it moves the focus of the story away from the individual activist. The *Sangam* emerges as the group's main character.

The testimony of Nagati Bacchaama highlights the importance of this group. She remembers how the *Sangam* "transformed our lives" and links the group to her own involvement in politics. The shift from social marginalisation to political engagement is exemplified by her comment.

A helpful foundation for comprehending this process is provided by Narender's research on Dalit political engagement. Political engagement can result in new forms of political consciousness and empowerment; it is not merely an institutional outcome (Narender 1497–1500). Dalits learn how to negotiate institutions, organise as a group, and make their political presence known in the *Sangam*.

F. Opposition and the Recognition Politics

In the memoir, recognition comes via hardship. It is more than just a symbolic recognition from the prevailing society. Members of the *Sangam* frequently challenge authorities and institutions to defend their rights. "We fought the police," Doonimetla Satyamma remembers, recounting the movement's ongoing conflicts, beatings, and arrests. Her story shows that it is frequently necessary to actively create political recognition through resistance.

Verma's focus on resistance in Dalit autobiographical narratives aligns with this aspect of the memoir. Dalit life literature often challenges depictions that reduce marginalised communities to victimisation by turning experiences of oppression into stories of agency (Verma 1913–21). Ramaswamy's account shows the same procedure. Exclusionary conditions are created by caste oppression, but political recognition is made possible via collective organization.

G. Self-Respect as the Basis for Acknowledgement

In the end, self-respect is linked to the politics of recognition in *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman*.

The struggle of underprivileged communities for dignity and self-respect is identified as the book's primary issue in the introduction. This concept aligns with the political history of Dalit resistance, where a basic demand is dignity.

Therefore, the fight for recognition cannot be explained solely in terms of institutional rights. It entails refuting the societal notion that certain communities are inherently inferior. The extent of the issue is revealed by Gattu Vijayendar's memory that the dominating castes did not consider his people to be human.

This rejection of humanity is precisely what Dalit resistance opposes. Self-respect can become a collective political practice through the institutional structure that the *Sangam* offers.

This interpretation is supported by Chenamallu's emphasis on self-emancipation, which entails developing a consciousness that rejects inferiority that is imposed from without (Chenamallu 608–12).

H. Collective Consciousness and Dalit Identity

All Historically, caste identity has been employed as a hierarchical system; however, Dalit political activities have changed the definition of identity. Dalit consciousness may turn shared experience into a foundation for social mobilisation rather than seeing caste as a natural basis for subordination.

This process is depicted in Ramaswamy's narrative through the *Madiga* communities' political organization. Collective action is based on their common experiences of caste discrimination. Identity can become politically useful thanks to the *Sangam*.

Because it shows how individual lives can disclose larger histories of caste identity and political conflict, Shyamamma's study of caste history through biographies is significant in this sense. Similar connections are made between individual testimonies and collective histories in Ramaswamy's memoir (Shyamamma).

As a result, the memoir's political significance resides not just in its documentation of oppression but also in its demonstration of how communities use collective consciousness to reinterpret their social position.

I. Voice Politics

All The politics of recognition revolve around voice. If a community's experiences are ignored or fully represented by others, it cannot be politically acknowledged. Thus, it becomes important that Ramaswamy included testimonies from Dalit activists and villagers.

According to Bhadramoni Shankaraiah, Ramaswamy discussed minimum salaries and constitutional ways to free bonded labourers when she visited his hamlet.

Additionally, he notes that even though he cannot understand English, their hardships have worth since they have been documented in a book. His words show how local hardships can become acknowledged historical memory through written expression.

Ramaswamy is still aware that she has the authority to choose how these tales are told, though. Thus, her remarks about "framing," "editing," and "deleting" are inextricably linked to the politics of voice (Ramaswamy 24).

This conflict is made clearer by Guru's claim regarding the unique qualities of Dalit speech. Acknowledgement necessitates more than just talking about Dalits; it also entails establishing circumstances that keep Dalit experiences at the center of the historical narrative (Guru 80–85).

J. Engagement in Politics and the Growth of Agency

According to the memoir, political engagement is a significant outcome of group organization. Nagati Bacchaama remembers that, with the *Sangam*'s backing, she actively engaged in politics and ran in local elections. Her story shows that caste consciousness may go beyond awareness and involve official political participation.

Here, Narender's study on Dalit political engagement offers a helpful foundation for interpretation. Communities who have previously been disadvantaged might fight exclusion and gain more political prominence by getting involved in politics (Narender 1497–1500).

As a result, the *Sangam* serves as a political school. Its members participate in public struggles, negotiate with authorities, gain organisational experience, and cultivate a sense of collective power. The traditional portrayal of Dalits as passive beneficiaries of social progress is called into question by this process. Instead, they are portrayed in the memoir as political players who contribute to the creation of change.

K. The Reinterpretation of Caste and Ambedkarite Thought

Ambedkarite philosophy offers a conceptual framework that makes caste awareness more methodical. Ramaswamy's subsequent interaction with Ambedkarites alters her perception of caste, which had not been sufficiently addressed by her prior political experience.

The intellectual relevance of Ambedkarite politics is encapsulated in her assertion that Ambedkarites made caste and Brahminism "unavoidable concerns" (Ramaswamy 61). Since caste is a key component of societal inequality, it cannot be considered a secondary issue.

By highlighting the connection between social justice and the eradication of caste, Hullur's analysis of Ambedkar supports this perspective (Hullur 69–75).

Ramaswamy thus gains a vocabulary through Ambedkarite politics that allows her to reframe situations that had previously seemed unrelated.

As a result, the memoir's shift from revolutionary politics to anti-caste consciousness signifies a shift from broad political opposition to a more historically focused critique of caste system.

L. The Counter-History of the Memoir

Additionally, Ramaswamy's memoir serves as a repository for Dalit resistance. She states that she used interviews, press sources, legal papers, writings in Nalupu, and pieces published in *Mainstream* to reconstruct the Ibrahimpatnam years. In order to recreate the movement, these resources serve as basic archives.

In light of Shyamamma's claim that biography can be used to recover caste histories, this archival approach is very crucial. Experiences that formal histories might miss are preserved in personal memoirs.

As a result, Ramaswamy's book adds to Telangana's counter-history. It preserves memories of group struggles and documents the experiences of *Sangam* members, activists, and villages.

Thus, the junction of individual recollections and collective political history is where the memoir's historical significance resides.

M. Transitioning from Victimisation to Opposition

The memoir's strongest political shift is from victimisation to agency. Although caste discrimination has been documented, it does not fully capture the Dalit experience. Acting, organising, resisting, negotiating, and remembering are all characteristics of the communities portrayed in the book.

A succinct illustration of this change can be found in Satyamma's words, "We fought the police." The sentence transforms the community into an engaged political subject rather than an object of repression.

A helpful theoretical link can be found in Verma's examination of resistance in Dalit autobiographical writing. Resistance opposes depictions that perpetually identify disadvantaged communities as being characterised by pain (Verma 1913–21). In a similar vein, Ramaswamy's book focuses more on what Dalits do than just what is done to them.

This interpretation is supported by Chenamallu's emphasis on self-emancipation. According to Chenamallu (608–12), emancipation entails the growth of collective action, political consciousness, and the rejection of imposed inferiority.

N. Historical Recognition and Caste Consciousness

Another crucial aspect of the book is historical recognition. According to Bhadrmoni Shankaraiah, their hardships gain significance when they are included in a book. According to his statement, recognition functions both in the present and through recollections of the past.

A village may be left out of the country's greater tale if its history is still unknown. Ramaswamy helps bring those histories to light by conserving recollections of caste conflicts.

This interpretation is supported by Shyamamma's focus on biographical approaches to caste history. Instead of using institutional records or abstract data, life tales give readers and historians a firsthand look at caste history.

As a result, Ramaswamy's memoir is acknowledged historically. It situates Dalit struggles in Telangana's remembered political past.

O. The Morality of Unity

Ramaswamy's stance presents a difficult moral dilemma pertaining to solidarity. She takes part in Dalit movements as a *Savarna* activist while maintaining structural differences from the populations she works with. It is therefore crucial that she be open to the possibility that Dalits will accuse her of "taking up their space" and condescending them (Ramaswamy24). She does not assert that caste location disparities are eliminated by political solidarity.

This introspective approach aligns with Shyamamma's focus on reclaiming marginalised voices through life narratives and Guru's worries about representational authority. The moral worth of solidarity is found in acknowledging the political agency of oppressed communities rather than speaking over them.

The best parts of Ramaswamy's narrative are when she incorporates community testimonials to refute and enhance her own viewpoint.

P. Transitioning from Silence to Consciousness of Caste

Therefore, the entire story can be viewed as a movement through four interconnected stages: resistance, consciousness, recognition, and stillness. At first, caste is present in social interactions but is not sufficiently expressed in Ramaswamy's political theory. Karamchedu turns caste into an inevitable political issue. Caste oppression can be understood through the lens of Ambedkarite philosophy. Then, Ibrahimpatnam and the *Sangam* show how caste awareness can lead to group political action.

Ramaswamy acknowledges that this change was ambiguous and insufficient. She acknowledges that she was frequently “clueless about the path ahead” and “made a lot of mistakes” (Ramaswamy 23). This acknowledgement is important because it portrays caste consciousness as a continuous learning process rather than an immediate epiphany.

Therefore, the concept that political awakening leads to instant certainty is rejected in the memoir. Rather, encounter, listening, self-criticism, historical contemplation, and involvement in communal struggle are the ways in which awareness grows.

Q. Acknowledgement of Political Change

In the end, the politics of recognition entails altering how oppressed populations interact with power systems. In Ramaswamy’s narrative, Dalit resistance aims to be acknowledged as a living political reality rather than just an abstract moral precept.

This process is encapsulated in Nagati Bacchaama’s testimonial, “The *Sangam* transformed our lives.” The community becomes organised and politically visible, which leads to transformation.

The tactile historical memory of the *Sangam*’s intervention and its significance to the villagers is also documented in Gattu Basha’s testimony. These testimonies show that tangible political activity results in recognition.

This is where Hullur’s emphasis on Ambedkarite social justice, Chenamallu’s emphasis on self-emancipation, and Narender’s emphasis on political engagement come together. Agency, organization, involvement, and a critique of caste hierarchy are necessary for Dalit acknowledgement.

R. The Memoir’s Persistent Significance

Land, Guns, Caste, Woman’s ongoing significance stems from its refusal to portray caste as a problem that only exists in the past. The narrative shows how caste is still ingrained in political systems and social perception.

Its unique narrative position also contributes to its worth. Instead of speaking as a Dalit autobiographer, Ramaswamy explores what it means for a privileged-caste activist to participate in Dalit political movements and then reflect on that experience.

The end product is a multi-layered account that is an archive of Dalit political activism, a political memoir, a history of collective resistance, and an analysis of caste power.

Its main takeaway is that caste awareness calls for more than just compassion.

It necessitates acknowledging structural advantage, paying attention to Dalit political agency, and being prepared to address the caste hierarchy’s historical roots.

VI. CONCLUSION

Caste consciousness is shown in Gita Ramaswamy’s *Land, Guns, Caste, Woman* as a slow transition from quiet to acknowledgement and from acknowledgement to group opposition. Her acknowledgement that caste was “everywhere, yet rarely discussed” highlights the shortcomings of democratic systems that are blind to caste. While Ambedkarite philosophy offers an intellectual framework for challenging caste inequality, Karamchedu views caste as an inevitable political issue. The Ibrahimpatnam *Sangam* converts awareness into political engagement and group organization. This interpretation is strengthened by Chenamallu’s idea of self-emancipation, Shyamamma’s use of biography as caste history, Tharu’s emphasis on Dalit political consciousness, Narender’s emphasis on participation, Hullur’s Ambedkarite framework, Guru’s concern with voice, and Singh and Verma’s work on resistance and life writing. In the end, the narrative shows that Dalit resistance is a fight for dignity, historical visibility, political agency, and recognition in addition to persecution.

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