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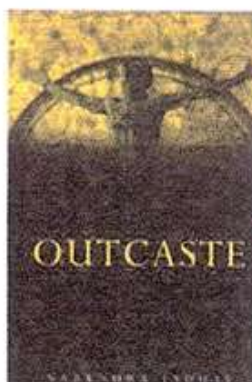
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First published as Intouchable in French, the book traces the remarkable journey of author's parents from a small village to the city of Mumbai to escape persecution.. Enlivening the text are personal anecdotes, some funny, some sad and some heart-warming.

This narrative is a multilayered personalized saga of the social metamorphosis of Dalits in India. At one level it is a loving tribute from a son to his father. At another, it gives an intelligent appraisal of the caste system in India and traces the story of the awakening of Dalits traversing three generations. At still another level, it is reflective of the aspiration of millions of Dalits in India.

Written in the first person, at times from the perspective of Narandra Jadhav's parents, Damu and Sonu, and at other times from his own, the book traces the remarkable journey of Damu from a small village at Ozar in Maharashtra to the city of Mumbai to escape persecution. In the city, although illiterate and despite the disadvantages of his Mahar caste, Damu earns respect in the various jobs he undertakes. Even more heartening, his children and their offspring go on to fulfill all his aspirations, rising to high positions in their chosen careers, and overcoming finally, the barrier that had so bedeviled his own life. Damu's refusal to cave in to any type of injustice and his iron determination form the heart of the book.

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But Outcaste is much more than a personal recounting of the downside of the caste divide in India. It also examines Dalit issues in the context of the Dalits' awakening spearheaded by the champion of human rights, Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Independence movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement, Gandhiji's relation with Ambedkar, the mass conversion of Dalits to Buddhism in 1956, and caste in its contemporary reality. A crucial landmark is Damu's own transformation under the spell of Ambedkar. The radical change in Damu and his family, their sloughing off at servility, and their self-esteem are seamlessly woven into the narrative.

The book ends with a self self-realization: that in modern India dignity rests in the minds and hearts of people, and that obsolete prejudices do not really matter. Enlivening the text are personal anecdotes, some funny, some sad and some heart-warming. And running like a refrain throughout is the clarion of Ambedkar, 'Educate, Unite and Agitate'. Poignant and simple, Outcaste makes for fascinating reading.

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### About the Author

DR JADHAV read economics at the Mumbai University and Indiana University, USA, from where he earned his doctorate.

He was awarded the Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Award for his book Dr. Ambedkar: Economic Thoughts and Philosophy. His Marathi book Amcha Baap Aan Amhi became an instant best-seller.

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