



A call for mutual change and progress: An interview with Aravind Malagatti and Dharani Devi Malagatti

Surya Simon 

University of East Anglia, UK

Abstract

This interview with Dr Aravind Malagatti and Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti, conducted in Mysore, India, in April 2019, was one of several interviews I conducted for my doctoral thesis that examines caste system and Dalit struggles in the context of India. Dr Aravind Malagatti has contributed more than sixty books to Kannada literature, out of which his autobiography, *Government Brahmana* published in 1994 is considered the first Dalit autobiography in Kannada (*Government Brahmana*, 2007). It was translated and published in English in 2007, and Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti is one of the three translators who translated the work. In this interview, *Government Brahmana* is discussed as a springboard to understand the social, economic, religious, political and legal aspects of caste and its practices in modern India. Dr Aravind Malagatti provides anecdotes to explain the significance of Dalit consciousness, what it entails and who can possess it. His responses are powerful statements calling for mutual change and progress for Dalits and non-Dalits. Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti talks about the challenges of translating the radical aesthetics of Dalit personal narratives as well as the scope and possibilities offered through translation. The interview explores the undertones of patriotism in Dalit identity, and the synthesis of individual and collective consciousness.

Keywords

Ambedkar, Aravind Malagatti, autobiography, caste, Dalit, Dalit consciousness, Dharani Devi Malagatti, *Government Brahmana*, translation

Introduction

Dr Aravind Malagatti is a professor of Kannada in the Kuvempu Institute of Kannada Studies, Mysore University. His autobiography *Government Brahmana* received the

Corresponding author:

Surya Simon, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, UK.

Email: simonnile4@gmail.com

Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award in 1996. The Honorary Award of Karnataka Sahitya Academy was bestowed on Dr Aravind in 2002, and he was also given the Rajyotsava award by the Government of Karnataka in 2011 for his contribution to literature. His novel, *Karya* [Rite] (1988), has been translated from Kannada into English by esteemed Indian translator, Susheela Punitha, and was published in 2021 by Penguin Random House.¹ Some of his other notable works are a collection of short stories, *Mugiyada Kategalu* [Unending Stories] (2000); the poetry collections, “Mookanige Baayi Bandaaga” [When the mute opens his mouth] (1980), “Chandaal Swargaarohanam” [The Untouchable Ascends to Heaven] (2003); and, *Masthakaabhisheka* [The Ablution] (1983).²

Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti is an Indian Police Service (IPS) Officer and the Mysuru’s Police Training School Principal. She has made huge contributions towards poetry, fiction, criticism and translation in Kannada. Her noted work, *Bharateeyathe Mattu Strivada* (1998), which explores feminism in India bagged four state level awards in 1998: Goruru Prathistana — the best vaichaarika book of 1998, Kannada Sahithya Parishath-Neela Ganga Endowment Prize, Karnataka Lekhakiyara Sangha Bangalore-Geetha Desai Endowment prize, and S.R. Patil Foundation Gulbarga-Manik Bai Patil Award.³ Dr Dharani Devi also received the Kadali Shri award in 2019.

Being a married couple, the interviewees share the same last name and hence the interviewees are referred to by their first names rather than their last names to avoid confusion. In the interview, Dr Aravind speaks about his intentions when writing, his intended audience(s), and anticipated outcomes. The interviewee expresses the necessity of talking about the experiences of Dalit communities as they continue to face widespread oppression and discrimination on the basis of caste, despite national legislations to protect Dalits. Having written and published in multiple genres such as poetry, plays, short stories, and novels, Dr Aravind explains the reasons behind experimenting with genres. For example, his autobiography, *Government Brahmana* (2007), does not follow the conventional autobiographical style of documenting the life of the author in a chronological manner. This radical experimenting with genre and narrative style to suit the purpose of story-telling is extraordinary, making the translator’s work quite challenging. Dr Dharani Devi sheds light on the various challenges of translating the content and context, narrative style, and affect of *Government Brahmana*.

In the course of the interview, Dr Aravind speaks in Kannada and Dr Dharani Devi translates his responses. This was not pre-planned as both of them are interviewees. At the onset of the interview, Dr Aravind asks if it is possible for him to speak in Kannada, and Dr Dharani Devi enthusiastically agrees to translate while giving her interview as well. The very act of translation during the interview was striking and offers a glimpse into the challenges and possibilities of translating phrases and expressions from Kannada to English. Also, during the interview, there is an emotional moment when Dr Aravind talks about the phrase "Government Brahmana" and its associations which shows the long-term effect of caste discriminations and caste-related labels on individuals. Dr Aravind refuses to take a break and continues explaining. The interview is a reflection of the intellect, emotions, beliefs, and contextual and aesthetic processes that birth personal narratives.

Surya Simon: Dr Aravind, what was the motivation to write your autobiography, *Government Brahmana*?

Aravind

Malagatti: I want to convey social problems... Shall I speak in Kannada?

SS: Absolutely.

(note: from this point on Dharani Devi Malagatti translates AM's responses. AM responds mostly in Kannada except for occasional input in English)

AM (pauses

and then

speaks in

Kannada):

Dharani Devi

Malagatti

(translates):

I write to convey and expose the social problems that may pertain to untouchables or the society as a whole. Thousands of years ago, the caste system was practiced as a part of the main administration but now the system of administration and governance has changed, including how the society is structured. Therefore, many consider the caste system to be irrelevant now. But we are continuing the practice of caste which is just the remnant of the old practice. Hence the caste system is prevalent in and continues to pester our society. My writing talks about how these practices have been detrimental like a hanging noose for my people, and what to do to break free from this system of oppression.

SS:

Would you be able to explain how the caste system continues to affect people?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans):

Like I said, the practice of untouchability is still there in our society and it is also practiced on the animals which human beings rear. The animals belonging to the untouchable communities are harassed because of untouchability practices. The concept of untouchability is also applicable to objects such as the plate in which untouchables eat and also the roads on which they walk. This practice has been deep rooted in our society. Even our mythological stories and folklore justify these differences. For example, there is an incident of sacrificing the buffalo before goddess Marama portrayed in my autobiography, *Government Brahmana*. The folk story behind the incident talks about an inter-caste marriage, wherein a Dalit boy marries a Brahmin girl by convincing her that he was a Brahmin. When she comes to know of it, she kills him and then he becomes a buffalo. Thus, the practice of sacrificing the buffalo to goddess Marama remains. So what we face in our life is reflected in folk stories as well as our mythological stories. Mythological stories reflect history whereas

folk stories reflect the actual reality. Our [Dalits'] life stories talk about the present status of our lives, and it is our history, the history of India, that is passed on through our life stories.

SS: Certain questions in the translator's preface to *Government Brahmana* by Dr Janet Vucinich were striking, such as '[i]s this a Dalit story or is this an individual Dalit's story? What is the difference?' What are your thoughts on such these questions?⁴

AM: Both! It is an individual's Dalit story and it is the society's story. It is not only Aravind Malagatti's story but also of the experiences of many Dalits, like me.

(AM continues in Kannada):

DDM (trans): When people say that my autobiography is very good, I feel bad. Because I am talking about the pain that is suffered by a community and if people's reaction is that the book is fine or good, then it means that the autobiography has not actually reached them or has not touched them. Also, the practice of untouchability was grasped in a superficial way earlier. *Government Brahmana* shows that untouchability has myriad avatars, many forms and shapes, something which cannot be imagined. However, people have commented that this autobiography is lacking completeness and that this book has not talked about non-Dalits. I would like to say that autobiography is not a sack in which we stuff everything. Autobiography for social change would be different from an autobiography which records all the things related to one's life. So I would like to tell the readers not to expect me to give all the details of my life.

SS: Then how do you negotiate or understand individual and collective consciousness, going back to Dr Vucinich's questions?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): After the publication of my autobiography, many Dalits have written to me saying that it reflects their story or there is *our* story or it is *our* story. When my story becomes other Dalit people's story, then it becomes the story of the society and it becomes the story of the country. We can't differentiate between individual experience and collective experience and the country's experience. It is not the life story of a person, rather it is a story of a community.

(AM shifts to explaining in English):

AM: More than five hundred people have written letters to me giving their opinion about the autobiography and about other matters. As an author, these letters convey the effect the book has on the readers, so I am getting the letters published now. Most of the readers who

reacted to the text are non-Dalits saying that *Government Brahmana* is like a guide to them, a handbook.

(note: AM asks DDM to help translate his responses)

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Some have written that my autobiography has helped them to know and understand their society better. As I mentioned before, Dalits have also reacted saying that they have found themselves in the stories in *Government Brahmana*. Whereas for non-Dalits, in addition to finding out about the problems of Dalits, they have realised the ways in which they have to behave with Dalits. One person has written to me that he is a Brahmin and he is actively working with coolies. He brought this book home and his relatives asked him why he is reading this book. His father asked him to not read the book and even threw the book out. But this person picked up the book and kept it in his cupboard. He confronted his father saying that it is a good book and it is not less worthy than the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* which are kept in the house. Also, there are people who have come searching to see me and speak to me after reading my life story. I tell them that there is no point in seeing me. Rather, it is better for them to see the people in their area, in their villages, in their places, who are like me, and treat them in a better way.

SS: There are some parts [of *Government Brahmana*] that really struck me. For example, the first paragraph of the third chapter describes a punishment. It goes something like this, “Fold your hands in the style of a namaskar. Then interweave your fingers together, okay?... Have you hung yourself? No, not like that...” (Malagatti, 2007: 12). Then, you ask questions such as, “can you imagine...” (Malagatti, 2007: 12). For me as a non-Dalit, it felt like those questions were for me and it made me reflect. There are so many parts where the chapters end with such questions encouraging me “to imagine” and “to think”. So even when the text shows solidarity with fellow Dalits, does it also demand or encourage non-Dalits to reflect on their actions? Is that intention there in the questions and in the dramatic narrative style?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): I had two objectives. One is that by telling this story, I would like to [convey] the state of Dalits to non-Dalits. The second thing is, after going through the text or after understanding it, I would like non-Dalits to change. If they feel that they have made some mistakes, then they should not repeat it. If reflexivity is triggered after going through my book, then my writing is successful.

SS: When the work was translated, did the target readership change or grow further?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): I had more similar responses after this book was translated into English. When it was in Kannada, only Kannadikas (native to Karnataka) used to respond. But once it got translated into English, people from all over the world started responding to it. I did not have any intention of translating it into English when I wrote it initially. I have written a few books of fiction before my autobiography and critics were telling me that in those fictional writings, the Dalit is “absent”. When we write a fictional story, personal experience could be lacking, and creative imagination takes over. So instead of writing fiction, I thought of coming out with my lived experience almost as a response to those people who were criticising my works saying that the Dalit is absent in Dalit literature. All the parts and experiences were written over a period of almost ten years. When the autobiography was finally published, there was a lot of discussion about it. So I felt it would be good if it is translated and published in English.

SS: That is interesting. I noticed two words in the text: ‘Dalitism’ and ‘Brahminism’. Could you elaborate on those words?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): In our society, there are some biases. One is that Dalits are dirty, and another is that Brahmins are pure and clean. This is a superficial understanding as the reality is different. The thing is we [Dalits] do not follow their [upper castes’] rituals and practices, that is all. And that is why they treat us differently – because we do not follow their rituals and practices. It is not about purity or cleanliness. Dalit is the most related to whatever is dirty. Now even when Dalits are intellectuals and scholars, they [upper castes] do not recognise us in the same way, and they do not accept us as equals. Take the example of Babu Jagjivan Ram who was the Deputy Prime Minister of India in 1979. He was not allowed to enter the temple and if he or any Dalit entered the temple in those times, the temple would undergo a process of purification. It does not matter what high-ranking post or designation a Dalit has, because when he enters the temple, the higher castes feel that the temple’s purity is lost.

SS: Would you like to talk about on your choice of the autobiography’s title, “Government Brahmana”?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): This title was something which hurt me when I was studying in college. We (Dalits) used to get a caste certificate and on the caste certificate, there would be a round seal stamped by the Tahsildar [government official].⁵ All the other people (non-Dalits) in that

college used to call us “Gundu Sikka”. “Gundu” is round and “Sikka” is seal. They used to call us ‘round seal’.

(note: AM is quite emotional while remembering and narrating. He takes a long pause)

SS: I can pause...

AM: No...

(AM continues in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Our own friends used to tease us saying that you are all government brahmins. Government treats you like brahmins, so government gives you all facilities. They used to tease us and say, “in the government’s view, we are not brahmins, you are brahmins”. So I thought of using the same word as a symbol of self-respect.

SS (to DDM): When you had to translate this emotion, this pain and this trauma, how challenging was it to capture and express that in the English language?

DDM: Out of sheer interest, I thought of translating *Government Brahmana*. I found it very difficult to translate because most of the dialogues were in his [Dr Aravind’s] dialect, Bijapur, since he is from Bijapur. Bijapur Kannada is a bit different from the textual [written or academic] Kannada. It was a challenge to bring all the emotions such as sorrow, in the same way as it is in the original. I still feel that in some places I must have failed in bringing the same emotions. I took many years, almost four years, to translate this but I did not translate it in one stretch. I started translating part by part and I would ask him every time if I have translated a sentence correctly. I used to keep four-five equivalent phrases and synonyms, and I used to ask him which phrase or word comes across well. Since the original writer was with me, I feel that I have been able to bring the original work into the translation. But translation has its inherent limitations. For example, we cannot bring the entire gist or essence completely into another language.

SS (to AM): When I was reading the autobiography, at some point I forgot that this was an autobiography because chapters are in the form of short stories or are small incidents/events of their own. Did you choose to do that for a reason?

AM (in Kannada):

DDM (trans): It was written and structured in that way intentionally. I look for social change and I wanted to convey what aspects of the society have to be changed. I have told whatever I wanted to tell consciously. I want to touch upon the problems so when I want to do that, I have to narrate the problems as separate parts or stories in the autobiography. For example, I want to talk about how water and untouchability

are interrelated. I bring my experience in relation to water and present it in the form of a story. If I had written a novel, then I would have become important rather than the social problem. In my autobiography, I wanted the problem to be the hero and to be the focus, not me. A novel would glorify me and not the problem. I did not want that. So I preferred to write in separate parts or stories.

SS: I remember that in the first chapter, you mentioned that your motive for writing the autobiography is not self-gratification. Also, there are beautiful poems in the work. What were the dynamics between prose-writing and poetry?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): I did not have any intention as to the form of writing, but my idea was to write about problems, that is all. The form and the flow came naturally and that was not conscious writing. Also, I cannot say everything in poetry, and I cannot say everything in prose. I have also written plays when I felt that certain matters can be presented better in the form of a play. Readers are of different categories. Readers of poetry are different, readers of fiction are different, and those who enjoy plays/dramas are also different. I would like to reach all types of readers and audience. The choice of the form depends on the subject. The subject chooses the form or genre, not me.

SS: That brings us to my next question. Towards the end of your work, you have written about carving a Dalit identity for yourself. Did that happen while writing? Did remembering and writing help you to carve out or shape any part of your identity?

AM: Poetry, criticism, my research work, all of my books are my identity.

SS (to DDM): I have not read the original version because I am not familiar with the Kannada script, but this translated text has deeply touched and influenced me. How much do you see this translated version as an independent text from the original?

DDM: The reader should say that, especially someone who is well-versed in both the languages. They can say whether it stands on its own. But any translated version is not different from the original work because there are similarities. There may be some additions or deletions because that is the nature of translation. As I said before, we cannot translate everything, and verbatim translation also will not work. Translation is a skill.

SS: The term "Dalit" is highly discussed now. What does that term mean to you?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Dalits are the people who have been subject to economic, social and political exploitation. They were not allowed to live with the society

and hence had to find a dwelling place outside the village, and depend on menial jobs to earn their living. Dalits are those who felt bad to tell their names and who were totally treated as outcastes. They are the neglected lot from all viewpoints.

SS: What does the term “Dalit” mean to you, Dr Dharani?

DDM: I do not know. I was aware that there are Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) as per the Schedule of the government.⁶ It was during my postgraduate education that I became exposed to the social inequalities and started reading about caste-related issues. Dalits are, as he [AM] said, depressed people. We have legal Acts to protect Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes such as the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989. If you go through the cases that are registered under that Act, you will see many cruel cases. For example, there was one incident in Bendigeri (Karnataka) wherein higher castes fed excreta into the mouths of the Dalits. There are many such incidents that took place in Karnataka and in many places of India, which necessitated the implementation of the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. There are also volumes of books on atrocities committed to Dalit men and women, especially women. Not for their wrongdoings but for the sole reason of being a Dalit, as it happens in the case of gender also. For the sole reason of being a girl or a woman, she becomes a target of many atrocities. There are many Dalits who are still experiencing caste and gender-based atrocities.

SS: When you say there are different types of Dalits, it strikes me because there are also different views of what a Dalit should be. I remember that you had mentioned in the autobiography about how people accused you, saying, “oh now Dr Malagatti is not a Dalit”.

DDM: Or we should not call him a Dalit now. People think that if a Dalit becomes economically stronger, he is no more a Dalit. But it is not that way. The social stigma is *still* there even if he becomes economically stronger. So that is experienced by our next generation as well. People hold onto a specific idea of how Dalits are or how they should be.

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Also, there is a feeling that Dalits cannot speak properly or articulate properly. People cannot master all the languages in the world. If one can master one language, that can be sufficient. When people criticize Dalits on the basis of knowledge of a particular language and when we [Dalits] get mastery over the same language and even use it in a better way, then the same people will be quick to find fault and judge our use of the language.

SS: There is a phrase that I came across in texts such as Sharankumar Limbale’s *Akkarmashi* [The Outcaste] (2003) and *Towards an*

Aesthetic of Dalit Literature (2004), as well as in your text, which is “Dalit consciousness”.⁷ What does that mean to you?

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): It means involving all three contexts - past, present, and future. Dalit consciousness is not just concerned with the past and it's not just concerned with present. It is to choose from the past and then analyse it with the present and find ways for the future.

SS: Can I, as a non-Dalit, have Dalit consciousness? Can I say that I have Dalit consciousness?

AM: It is possible. It depends on how much you have consulted with Dalits through involvement, engagement, and so on. It depends on how you react to Dalit issues, how you define and how you interpret it.

(AM

continues

in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Once Dalit consciousness enters one's head, it will not let the person sleep peacefully. There is an anecdote about Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and it goes like this.⁸ A foreign journalist came to meet people like Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and other Indian leaders, including Dr Ambedkar.⁹ When he wanted to meet Gandhi, Gandhi was asleep as it was night-time. Nehru was also asleep, but Ambedkar was awake. So he asked Dr Ambedkar why Gandhi and Nehru are resting while he is still awake. Dr Ambedkar said that their people are awake, so they are asleep. But my people are sleeping, so I am awake. That consciousness made Dr Ambedkar work relentlessly his whole life. That kind of consciousness keeps you awake. One Ambedkar made the entire country awake, and now, we are in need of more Ambedkars. Some people say that Dalits do not have patriotism but that is not true. Probably, the way Dalits love their country, other people may not. Some people demand a new Indian constitution, but we only need to implement our current constitution properly and follow the values written in the constitution. Dalits love their country first, and religion is secondary to them. Unless and until politics and religion are separated, we cannot have a peaceful society.

AM

(in Kannada):

DDM (trans): Some people prioritize their religion above their country. Our country is of different religions so if people start saying that religion comes first, then our country will be side lined. The country should be given priority over religion. Many Dalit writers including myself have written criticizing certain values that are practiced in our country. It is not criticizing the country exactly. We are the original inhabitants of this country and if we criticize and deny our connection to our country, it

means we are denying our original source. We have to live in this country and that is inevitable and an integral part of our identity, hence the conflict and agitation is also integral and inevitable. Social change does not come by reading alone. Social experience is also quite important. When we talk about the country and society, since we have suffered a lot, our words may be filled with rage, but that is situational and not a permanent thing. It is contextual. The criticism about the upper castes is not about the entire group of people but about certain practices. Even the practice of hating the higher caste people, based on thousands of years' old practices, is like breaking the old wound and making a fresh wound. That is not just. Society is changing, and higher caste people are changing too. We too should change. Non-Dalits should come two steps further and we should go two steps further. It should be mutual. Change will take place by the activity of both communities, not just by one community alone. Two hands are required for a clap.

SS: That is insightful. Thank you so much, Dr Aravind, for those enlightening and touching responses. Thank you, Dr Dharani, for your valuable insight and for continuing your role as a translator today.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express her deepest appreciation to Dr Aravind Malagatti and Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti for their time, commitment, insightful and impassioned responses, and encouragement. She would also like to extend her sincere gratitude to Dr Dharani Devi for translating Dr Aravind's responses during the interview.

Funding

The author disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This interview was conducted as part of my doctoral study which was funded by the University of East Anglia International Postgraduate Research Studentship (no grant number) covering the overseas tuition fees plus a maintenance grant for three years of full-time study (October 2017–December 2020). The University of East Anglia Humanities Faculty Research Support Grant of £1,000.00 (no grant number) facilitated travel to and within India to conduct interviews for my doctoral study (March 2019).

ORCID iD

Surya Simon  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0294-2005>

Notes

1. Susheela Punitha is an acclaimed figure in the discipline of literary translation. She has mainly translated works from Kannada such as U.R. Ananthamurthy's *Bharathipura* (2010), Vaidehi's *Vasudeva's Family* (2012) and *Krauncha Pakshigalu and Other Stories* (2018), Lakshman' *Samboli! Beware!* (2018), and many more short stories, novels, and excerpts on theatre in Karnataka, India.
2. The English translations provided in parenthesis alongside the works are quoted from Dr Aravind Malagatti's blog: <http://aravindmalagatti.blogspot.com/>.

3. Since I am not well-versed with Kannada and due to the inability to find suitable translations, I have left the title of Dr Dharani Devi's *Bharateeyathe Mattu Strivada* untranslated and have briefly mentioned the theme of the work.
4. Along with Dr Dharani Devi Malagatti, Dr Janet Vucinich and Dr N Subramanya are co-translators of *Government Brahmana*. Dr Vucinich is a higher education professional with more than thirty years of teaching experience in different parts of the world such as New Mexico, Belize, India and Texas. Dr Vucinich was a Fulbright Scholar in Manipal, India where she met Drs Aravind and Dharani Devi Malagatti; afterwards, she assisted in the translation of *Government Brahmana*. Dr Subramanya is an author and translator who is currently the Director of the Indian Research Institute, Mysore, India. Other than translation, Dr Subramanya's expertise lies in political science, refugee issues, and human rights.
5. Tahsildar is an official administrative position in the Revenue Department of the Government of India. The Tahsildar has the official power to preside over matters regarding revenue, tax, and land, in their specific taluk. Each state and union territory in India are divided into many districts and each district has administrative sub-districts such as taluk or tahsil.
6. Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are official legal terms used to categorise "depressed classes" in India. SCs were identified as "untouchables" based on the caste system, until the Untouchability Act of 1949 passed by the Indian Constitution. STs are recognised by the Indian Constitution as "tribal communities" and they form the indigenous community in India, widely known as "Adivasis" (original inhabitants).
7. Sharankumar Limbale (b. 1956) is a pre-eminent Dalit activist and writer from Maharashtra, India. He is the author of more than forty creative and critical works, out of which his autobiography, *Akkarmashi*, published in 1984 (English translation 2003), is widely acclaimed. Limbale was awarded one of India's highest literary recognitions, Saraswati Samman, for the year 2020 for his novel, *Sanatan*, published in Marathi in 2018. *Sanatan* portrays the historical and socio-cultural struggles of the Dalit and Adivasi communities.
8. Dr B.R. Ambedkar (1891–1956) was independent India's first law and justice minister and one of the drafters of the Indian Constitution. He is a prominent and a revolutionary Dalit activist, writer, jurist, economist, philosopher, and political leader who passionately advocated for the rights of women, Dalits and other minority groups in India. One of his landmark works, *Annihilation of Caste*, which was originally prepared as a speech in 1936 (Annotated critical edition, 2014), continues to inspire activists and scholars, nationally, and globally. His writings and speeches have been compiled and published across several volumes by the Government of Maharashtra (1970–2003).
9. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) was a national leader during the Indian independence struggle against the British rule in the early 1900s. Nehru was closely associated with the Indian National Congress. He became the first Prime Minister of India in 1947 and held this post until his death in 1964. He also served as a foreign minister of independent India. M.K. Gandhi (1869–1948) was an activist and national leader of the Indian independence movement against the British rule in the early 1900s. Gandhi's advocacy and practice of nonviolent protest against the British rule heavily influenced the freedom struggle.

References

- Ambedkar BR (2014) *Annihilation of Caste: The Annotated Critical Edition*. Edited and annotated by S. Anand. London, New York: Verso.
- Ambedkar BR (1979–2003) *Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches* (BAWS). Volumes 1–17. Mumbai: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra.

- Ananthamurthy UR (2010) *Bharathipura*. Translated by Susheela Punitha. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Malagatti DD (1998) *Bharateeyathe Mattu Strivada*. Mysore: Chetana Book House.
- Lakshman (2018) *Samboli! Beware!* Translated by Susheela Punitha. New Delhi: Niyogi Books.
- Limbale S (2003) *The Outcaste: Akkarmashi*. Translated by Santosh Bhoomkar. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Limbale S (2004) *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations*. Translated and edited by Alok Mukherjee. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Private Limited.
- Limbale S (2018) *Sanatan*. Pune: Dilipraj Prakashan Pvt. Ltd.
- Malagatti A (1980) "Mookanige Baayi Bandaaga". Muddebihal: Shyla Prakashana.
- Malagatti A (1983) *Masthakaabhisheka*. Muddebihal: Sheila Prakashana.
- Malagatti A (2000) *Mugiyada Kategalu*. Mysore: Chetana Book House.
- Malagatti A (2003) "Chandaal Swargaarohanam". Mysore: Abhiruchi Prakashana.
- Malagatti A (2007) *Government Brahmana*. Translated by Dharani Devi Malagatti, Janet Vucinich and N. Subramanya. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Private Limited.
- Malagatti A (2021) *Karya*. Translated by Susheela Punitha. New Delhi: Penguin Random House.
- Vaidehi (2012) *Vasudeva's Family [Asprushyaru]*. Translated by Susheela Punitha. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Vaidehi (2018) *Krauncha Pakshigalu and Other Stories*. Translated by Susheela Punitha. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.