

Problems, Prospects and Possibilities of Oral History: A Missiological Conundrum

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This transdisciplinary research explores oral history of Dalit (Untouchable) women in India with an emphasis on how sociological, archival, bibliographical, cultural, patriarchal and religious implications have been dominating native oral methods of Dalit women. Dalit women were enormously sidelined and thrice discriminated by patriarchal historiography, higher caste methods and postcolonial methodologies. Historical Dalit women were subjected to rape and violence by Dalit men and higher caste men, even still Dalit survivor's voice is not heard in Indian historiography, Indian documentations, Indian archives and Indian Bibliography. Documents, Archives, bibliography were written with power of one-sidedness as male, elite, upper caste perspectives. Dalit women's indigenous knowledge, indigenous wisdom, indigenous music and indigenous healing methods have been considered as ugly, low and secondary. History of Dalit women in India are the people without a written history of their own, because history of India has been written from above but not from below. History of wounded oral stories of Dalit women has been passing through one generation to another generation. This research is not only to investigate oral history of Dalit women in India but also Dalit women who went to Fiji Islands, Trinidad and tobacco, Jamaica and Cayman Islands through Indentured labor system by the colonialists in early Eighteenth century. This exposition shall illuminate the dignity of oral traditions, to affirm the usage of oral history of Dalit women as a credible resource for Dalit Historiography and Christianity.