
Prospects of Studying the Marginalized Communities of Pakistan in Subaltern Studies Framework

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Several subaltern communities living in Pakistan and their conditions are miserable. These marginalized classes in terms of their ethnicity, religion, gender, and race are living a miserable, gloomy and hopeless life. They are deprived of their agency and their voices are unheard. This area of study has been less considered by the researchers so the present study sheds light on how future researchers may approach the subject of subaltern studies taking into consideration these marginalized communities of Pakistan. This study could be a course of research for future researchers and their work could voice the concerns of these people. Exploratory and analytical approaches have been employed while undertaking this study. Therefore, the first section of the research gives an introduction to the Subaltern School of Historiography and the second section explores the prospects of studying the marginalized communities of the country employing the concepts related to the subaltern studies as it is an ignored area of research in Pakistan.

Key Words: Marginalization, Subaltern Communities in Pakistan, Agency, Voice, Gender, Subaltern School of Historiography

Introduction

Many unprivileged subaltern communities are inhabited in Pakistan. These communities include, the *Sheedis* of Makran, *Mohannas* of Manchar Lake, *Kochis* of Baluchistan, *Pawaal*, *Bagris* of Sind, *Pakhiwas*, *Mangarhaars* of Sind, *Paleys* of Kashmir, mine workers, transgender, and bonded labor. These communities are of diverse origin having distinct cultures, traditions, and livelihoods but the concerns of these communities are nearly the same. All of these community members are not provided with the identity cards as they do not have a permanent residence. This leads to the political marginalization of these communities, thus making them as the voiceless people. They are also facing unemployment, health, education and security problems because of the unavailability of identity cards. Most of them are nomads and keep on migrating because of various reasons primarily due to the weather extremities, so they do not get a welcoming response from the local people. Lack of health facilities is raising the mortality rate among these marginalized people.

In Pakistan, there is an absence of employing the Subaltern Studies framework for studying these marginalized groups. This unique approach of study has not received enough consideration yet as there are very few scholars who have taken into account the subalternity or marginality of these forgotten people. The present study is an attempt to have a brief introduction of the Subaltern School of Historiography and also in the later portion highlights the plight of some of the subaltern communities of Pakistan and explores the prospects for studying them with the lens of the subaltern studies. The research has been divided into two sections along with some subsections. The first section gives an overview of the Subaltern School of Historiography while taking into account its major influences, contributors and characteristics. The second section focuses on the prospects of studying the marginalized communities of Pakistan discussing the marginalization, resistance, agency, representation, oral history, and gender issues of some of the subaltern communities of Pakistan. Before discussing the prospects of studying these marginalized communities it sounds pertinent to have a brief introduction of the subaltern school of historiography.

A. Subaltern School of Historiography: An Introduction

The Subaltern Studies are gravitated toward the culture and politics of the unprivileged people. In literal terms, the term Subaltern refers to a person subordinate to another.¹ It was employed by Antonio Gramsci in his

writings for the first time, to refer to the people of inferior rank. The subaltern classes may encompass those who are subjected to the rule of the elite. Pioneering a novel approach for reconstructing the history of the subordinated, the Subaltern studies historians accused the colonialists, nationalists and Marxist interpretations of depriving the ordinary people of their agency. The Subaltern Studies historians proclaimed that the statist historiography, both by the colonialists and nationalists, is power-centered to legitimize their rule and ultimately capture the hegemony. Disregarding the elite historiography, subaltern studies historians set their orientation towards the neglected section of the society, for instance, the peasants, factory laborers, nomads, miners or the tribal people who were characterized as 'others' referring to the colonized subjects.² Insurrections and conscious revolts by these subaltern classes to ameliorate their milieu became the subjects of the subaltern school of historiography.

Subaltern Studies commenced their abiding career in the later years of the 1970s in England, when a handful of English and Indian historians put forward the idea to pioneer a journal in India, discussing the subaltern concerns. Three volumes of essays by the name, *Subaltern Studies: Writing on South Asian History and Society*, were published by Oxford University Press in New Delhi and in 1982 ahead yearly a volume was published.³ This provoked the successful publications of three more volumes in the upcoming five years. All these volumes were edited by Ranajit Guha, the founding father of this school. At the time of his retirement in 1989, Guha and his eight colleagues had edited and/or written six *Subaltern Studies* volumes, including thirty-four of forty-seven essays, and fifteen relevant books.

By 1993, this newly born field of study procured ample international prestige that a Latin America Subaltern Studies Group was inspired by this body of South Asian scholars commanded by Ranajit Guha. To date, eleven *Subaltern Studies* volumes have been published, including essays by forty-four authors, translated into various languages. The Subaltern School referring to the concerns of the marginalized classes and questioning their agency or in other words writing 'history from below', led to the initiation of a new approach in historiography which still holds a distinctive status in the field of history.

The Subaltern historiography has largely been directed by the ideas of Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and Frantz Fanon. The propagators of Subaltern studies frequently entertained the concepts put forwarded by these philosophers in their accounts.

In his theory, Marx⁴ divided society essentially into two classes; one is the bourgeoisie class, which owns the means of production, and the other is the proletariat, the labor class.⁵ He calls these two classes as conflicting classes as both have opposing interests. According to him, the bourgeoisie class holds the means of production, like a factory, and the proletariat class, the laborers, works in these factories under the supervision of the bourgeoisie. The labor class is being suppressed by the upper class and considered as the subjects of the factory owners. The labor class is being marginalized and left devoid of its agency. Thus, becoming aware of the unjust behavior of the bourgeoisie class, the proletariat class organizes itself and raises a revolt against its hegemony. The subaltern historians were persuaded by the ideas of Marx, though he did not use the term subaltern but highlighted the plight of the working class.

An important idea around which Antonio Gramsci's⁶ writing revolves is the cultural hegemony. He argues that the capitalist or the bourgeois class creates its cultural hegemony by subjugating the culture of the subaltern classes. According to Gramsci, the bourgeois class has the potential to create its own worldview and agency to imbue its culture in society. He states that the intellectuals, including editors of newspapers, judges, lawyers and bureaucrats, of any society help the ruling elite to attain hegemony in the society.⁷ The ruling classes secure the consent of the subaltern classes skillfully and then inculcate their culture in the subaltern minds so it becomes common sense knowledge for them. This plays a significant role in subjugating the consciousness of the subaltern people.⁸ Therefore, the subaltern classes remain in the plight of subalternity as neither they defy it, nor construct their own worldview, hence unable to unbind themselves from the bourgeois ideas. Thus, his views assisted the subaltern intellectuals to critically analyze the hegemony of politically organized imperialists in colonial India and the way they subjugated the subaltern classes.

One of Foucault's pivotal ideas is the power/knowledge relationship as both are interdependent for him.⁹ According to Foucault, power subjugates the people and generates submissiveness and subordination.¹⁰ In the classical period, the power used to be exercised in prisons, schools, and hospitals which in return were helpful in producing a docile and productive body at the same time.¹¹ This practice was also frequent during the medieval times. The authorities used to teach the work principles and morality to the madmen to reform them so they could be made productive bodies.¹² The religious text was instructed to the insane patients that the idle life is

condemned by the religion and that being idle is a sin. This was not done to make these people productive and bring normality to their lives rather the knowledge was produced for the purpose that the dominant class could imbue their power structure in the lower class. The views of Foucault were widely accepted by the subaltern historians.

Frantz Fanon's¹³ *political ideas focused on the psychological effects of colonialism and racism on the colonized people. He is often considered a Marxist-oriented thinker because he, like Karl Marx, regarded the revolution by the subjected class as an obvious result of the colonial hegemony. He regarded violence as a significant tool in the process of achieving decolonization. He comprehensively observed what colonialism has done to the psyche of the colonized people.*¹⁴ While living in France, he witnessed the anti-black racism in French society very closely. He argued that black people hold the same ideological views as the white British, but their voices are ignored and are being marginalized because of their black color. This adversely affected the mental health of the blacks. Hence, Fanon's ideas greatly influenced the thinking of the subaltern intellectuals.

Numerous scholars inspired by the ideas of Marx, Gramsci, and Foucault took part in giving rise to the Subaltern historiography. Ranajit Guha¹⁵ renounced the elite-focused writings of the nationalist and colonialist writers. His piece of writing, *Dominance without Hegemony* (1997) illustrates that the colonial rulers created their hegemony among the people through two forces, earlier by the coercive force and afterward by the persuasive force. But the later was only concerned with the ones who were loyal to the royal authority.¹⁶ Guha revealed a case study of *Swadeshi Movement* in which masses were coercively mobilized by the nationalist Brahmans. Social coercion was used as a tool for the infiltration of power among the colonized subjects. The deviators of the *Swadeshi* norms were punished by the upper authorities.¹⁷ David Arnold¹⁸, another significant personality in the subaltern school, primarily centered his attention on the miserable condition of the subaltern class and their coercive subjugation. He tried to spotlight the discriminatory behavior of the authorities toward the subaltern class in the prisons. The caste or status division was also prevailing in the prisons. The subalterns were treated as the marginalized class in the prisons and the elite or the upper strata people were privileged. The prisoners were taught work ethics and were forcefully made habitual of work as the colonizers considered that the only way to reform the Indian people was the application of a coercive mode of power.¹⁹ Partha

Chatterjee²⁰ essentially discusses the character and nature of Indian historiography augmented by the indigenous nationalist intellectuals during colonial rule. The nationalist English-educated class in India rejected and accepted the supremacy of the European modernized culture side by side.²¹ They tried to reconstruct the past using the lens of Western nationalist thinkers. The Orientalists molded the history of the Indian past to attain power.²² Moreover, Chatterjee categorically criticized Gandhi's ideology as he thought that it only served the political interests of the bourgeoisie classes, thus labeling him as a partial intellectual.²³ Dipesh Chakrabarty²⁴ grounded the focus of his writings on the condition of the labor class in industries during the colonial period. He demonstrates that the labor class was subjected to the authoritarian power culture and living in a deprived condition. The managers, *babus* and *sadars* in the mills were responsible for exercising power over the working class and their authority bore the mark of terror.²⁵ Chakrabarty critically analyzed the autocratic power culture that prevailed in the industries using the theoretical framework of post-modernism, primarily of Foucault.²⁶ Shail Mayaram²⁷ examined the subalternity of the marginalized communities with reference to their identity, politics, religion and representation. She has looked deep into the exploration of voices of the subaltern communities and the matter of their representation and their interaction with the dominant political hierarchies. Her work on the *Meo* community²⁸ delved into the historical experiences of these people challenging the popular narratives often ignoring the voices and agency of marginalized communities like *Meos*.

The subaltern studies historians have been very critical of Indian history written from imperialist as well as nationalist perspectives. To them, the Indian past was appropriated by the colonial masters or the imperialists and local nationalist intellectuals for their own political stakes. The strategy embraced by the colonial power while imagining the Indian past was meant to legitimize its hegemony over the colonized subjects, and it was later adopted by the colonized subjects for the nationalist motive. According to the subaltern historians, it was the British who encouraged the statist historiography in India.²⁹ The Subaltern Studies historians criticized the elite trend of historiography. According to them, the knowledge produced on the Indian past through the historiography was purely power centered and the part of common individuals as participants in the historical progress was neglected. The Subaltern Studies intellectuals frequently used the idea of Foucault's power/knowledge thesis while analyzing the historiography of the Indian past. The knowledge produced by the imperialists was revolving

around power. Likewise, the nationalist history led by the indigenous intellectuals was also power-centered. The subaltern historians mentioned that the knowledge produced by the colonizers was used as a tool to exercise their hegemony and power over the colonized. The Subaltern School of historiography tried to excavate the history of the marginalized classes and their revolts against the colonial power. Subaltern intellectuals tried to explore the participation of the deprived classes in political development, thus initiating a new trend in the historiography of India. They primarily focused on the small voices in history that were overshadowed by the statist hegemonic literature and brought to spot the role played by the knowledge produced by the colonialists for attaining domination.

B. Prospects of Studying the Marginalized Communities of Pakistan in Subaltern Studies Framework

Following are the prospects of studying the marginalized communities of the country employing the concepts related to Subaltern Studies, as it is an ignored area of historical research in Pakistan.

(a.) Marginalization of the Subaltern Communities in Pakistan

One of the core concepts of the Subaltern School of historiography is marginalization, which primarily refers to the subjects who have no access to power and are involved in resistance against the center.³⁰ The marginalization could be at multiple levels. Many communities such as *Pakhiwas*, *Mohannas* of *Manchar* Lake, *Bakarwal* and *Kochis*, are marginalized in terms of citizenship, political representation, employment, health, education and security. In addition to these, there are many other similarly marginalized communities in Pakistan that experience multiple layers of marginality. For instance, the *Bagris* of Sind are low caste-Hindus and are considered untouchables. According to the Scheduled Castes Ordinance 1957, *Bagris* are among the 41 scheduled castes in Pakistan.³¹ Like other communities, they also possess no political participation and access to the necessities of life like clean water, electricity gas and a permanent land to live on. But unlike other communities, they face another layer of marginality because of their religious identity. In Pakistan, there are about three million Hindus and 75% among them are Dalits including various castes, such as *Meghwals*, *Odhs*, *Valmikis*, *Kohlis* and *Bhils*.³² The majority of them live in Sind. But some among them occupy the Southern Punjab and some areas of Baluchistan. Many of them are not issued with identity cards and they possess no political representation as they are being

suppressed by the upper caste Hindus and Muslim landlords, hence are called as ‘lowest of the low’.³³ They experience multiple layers of marginality such as living a miserable poor life, being among the low castes and are religious minority. Researchers may explore different levels of marginality observed by these subaltern communities of Pakistan by employing the framework of the Subaltern School of historiography.

(b.) Resistance of the Subaltern Communities of Pakistan

Resistance is one of the most significant elements of the Subaltern School of historiography. The popular narrative created by the elite ignores the role and participation of the subaltern people in the development of the historical process. This was categorically denied by the Subaltern Studies historians, led by Ranajit Guha, thus presenting it as the historiography of protest.³⁴ The resistance could be covert and overt against the hegemony of the state and political authorities suppressing the lower-ranked people. Most of the time, resistance shown by these marginalized communities is covert. For instance, the *Bakarwals*³⁵ have created a platform by the name of *Anjuman All Gujjars Bakarwal Pakistan*. This organization works for settling disputes in the community and also for negotiation with the authorities in case of any issue in the borderland.³⁶

The *Dalits* living in Pakistan, as discussed earlier, are marginalized people but in the last thirty years some struggles have strengthened their communities regarding the political representation of these people. For the first time, a statement about *Dalit* rights in Pakistan was given by Surendar Valasai, a *Dalit* journalist. He, along with Dr. Khatumal Jeewan (a Pakistan People’s Party leader), discussed this issue on provincial and national level. They wanted to organize a full-fledged political party under the supervision of the *Dalit* leadership of PPP to address the rights of these ignored people and to reject the dominance of the landlords, *waderas*, and upper castes people.³⁷ Future scholars may work on exploring the resistance of these communities within the framework of Subaltern School and could raise their voices for the concerns of these unprivileged people.

(c.) Agency of Subaltern Communities in Pakistan

This concept of subaltern agency is one of the central ideas in understanding the Subaltern studies. The term agency means ‘the ability to act or perform an activity’.³⁸ In the context of Subaltern studies, it refers to the ability of the subaltern groups to lead their lives according to their will, make decisions for them, and control and regulate their own lives. As

mentioned earlier the capitalists and wealthy classes deprive the subaltern communities of their agency to raise their voice, make demands, and thus, control their lives. Subaltern communities in Pakistan also do not possess any potent voice for their representation. As most of these community members are illiterate and politically marginalized, no community member can raise his voice for their concerns. There are many such communities which are unvoiced.

Nonetheless, in recent years things have changed, as we have a brilliant example from the *Sheedi* community of Makran and Karachi. The *Sheedis* are Afro-Pakistanis, since centuries ago these black people of African descent were brought to South Asia as slaves but still after hundreds of years about 250,000 *Sheedis* are not labeled as Pakistanis.³⁹ About 50% of *Sheedi*'s population resides in Sind, 20% in Karachi and 30% in Baluchistan on its Makran coast. Most of the *Sheedis* practice Islam as their religion. They have their own particular culture, traditions and norms associating them with their history.⁴⁰ One of the prominent members of this community is Tanzeela Qambrani,⁴¹ a thirty-nine years old woman, appointed as MPA in the Sind Assembly in 2018. Representing the marginalized members of her community, Tanzeela has a journey of long struggle to get equal rights for her community members. In an interview with BCC, she said,

“As a tiny minority lost in the midst of local populations, we have struggled to preserve our African roots and cultural expression, but I look forward to the day when the name Sidi will evoke respect, not contempt.”⁴²

Researchers working on this and many similar communities may highlight the subaltern agency, highlighting the struggle of some members of the group who have successfully voiced their concerns, made their demands heard by those in power, and controlled their own lives.

(d.) Representation and Voice in Subaltern Studies

An important issue in Subaltern Studies is the question of representation. Scholars like, Gayatri Spivak have raised an important question of whether the subalterns speak for themselves, represent themselves, or they are represented by others who do not belong to these subaltern groups. It has been argued that representation is ‘speaking for’ in politics. Sometimes, the members of these subaltern communities cannot represent themselves or speak up for their rights. In such cases, it is again the representatives of privileged classes who speak for these oppressed groups.⁴³

In Pakistan, apart from the self-representation of *Bakarwals* by making an organization for their rights (as mentioned earlier), there is another organization by the name of Young *Sheedi* Welfare Organization.⁴⁴ This organization works to uplift the socio-economic conditions of these community members. They have represented and voiced their concerns through this platform. But unlike *Sheedis* and *Bakarwal*, there are many subaltern communities that do not possess any potent voice to represent themselves directly. In the case of Tanzeela Qambrani, she is one of the community members who are represented by her. Thus, experiencing the same marginality as the other people of the community do, she can voice the concerns and plight of her community members more specifically than the person outside of the community who represents them. As in the case of *Pakhiwas*, a nomadic community of Punjab, a Christian NGO has raised voices for their concerns. However, this is not a direct representation of the marginalization of the community because the representatives do not belong to the same community. NGOs do not always represent these communities, as many of these organizations are founded and run by those who do not belong to these communities. In some cases, these NGOs are funded by international donors. Hence, there are very less subaltern subjects that can represent and speak for themselves. So, future researchers could explore whether the representation of the respective community is direct or indirect. However, the question of representation or voice needs more insights and exploration.

(e.) **Oral History as a Source for Subaltern Studies**

Subaltern studies heavily rely on oral sources of history in the absence of written works about the subaltern communities. Folklore is an important feature of oral history that has widely been used to construct an alternative history. Peter Burke argues that at times printed sources may misdirect a researcher or a reader. In such a case, one can opt for the oral tradition of history.⁴⁵ Oral history was introduced by Professor Allan Nevin at Columbia University in 1948. The prime objective behind this was to explore the accounts that were not taken into consideration in written documents.⁴⁶ For the construction of alternative history folklores play an important role because they represent the perspective of the ordinary people, and at times negate the popular narrative mentioned in the statist historiography.

Likewise, Subaltern studies historians did not generally focus on the historical sources highlighting the official history and the concerns and perspectives of the elite. Instead, they employ sources offering the

perspective of the marginalized communities. Many subaltern historians have beneficially consulted the folk songs of these subaltern communities to assess and explore the plight, misery and marginality of these people, which may not be adequately reflected in the elite sources of history. Moreover, these folk songs may also shed light on the feelings and aspirations of the subaltern communities.

Almost all subaltern communities have a rich heritage of folk songs, handed down to them from their ancestors, preserving the history of their communities. For instance, as discussed in chapter three, the Kochi community has folk songs that they enjoy on different occasions. These songs reflect their culture as well as history. Similarly, some communities in the Punjab have *vars* which are poetic tales relating to important historical events, and highlight the people's perspective.⁴⁷ The historians working on the subaltern communities may use these folk songs as sources of history to construct an alternative history of these communities.

(f.) Gender and Subaltern Studies

Subaltern studies have also focused on gender discrimination that was widely spread by the colonialist authorities. Women, because of their gender, observed multi-layered subalternity, one because of their gender and the other because of their low caste or low socio-economic status. In Pakistan, the women of the subaltern communities are deprived of their rights. Their role in the development of history is entirely neglected. They are suppressed in the society. There are a few examples that show that rural or subaltern women-led resistance movements against the political authorities. One such example is Mai Bakhtawar Shaheed in colonial Sind. Mai Bakhtawar belonged to Dodo Khan Sargani village in Tando Bago tehsil. She was born in a peasant family of Lashari Balochs. Her husband worked as a peasant in the lands of a feudal lord. In 1946, a conflict arose over crop sharing between the peasants and the landlords in the Sanghar, Nawabshah and Tharparkar districts. The landlords demanded a larger share from the peasants, which the former resisted. The poor farmers refused to hand over more than half of their crops to the cruel landlords. As a result, clashes broke out between the peasants and the landlords, who were aided by the help of state machinery. Many villages were attacked. Mai Bakhtawar was shot dead when she was resisting the landlord and his men.⁴⁸ She is remembered in the history of Sindh as a symbol of peasant resistance against tyrant landlords.

A study by Sabah Zaib, "Rethinking Subalternity of the Rural Women of Sindh: A Historical Approach", analyzes the condition of women

in rural Sindh and argues that for centuries the women of rural Sindh have been observing multi-layered marginality. She is of the view that the rural Sindh women are colonized in their own homes. They are considered as second sex in the domestic patriarchal order. She presents a fictional story, *The Daughters of Aai*,⁴⁹ which is the true depiction of the life of an ordinary woman in the areas of rural Sindh. The women fulfill all the household responsibilities and take care of their children but still, their efforts are neglected and their role is ignored. Being a woman, belonging to a low caste, and living in a poor developed area over and over applies a layer of subalternity on women. Apart from this marginality, they are also killed in the name of honor killing. There is a historical silence on the participation of women observed on several occasions. Further studies on the gender subalternity could be done within the framework of the Subaltern School of historiography to explore the role of women in different historical events. Subaltern School of Historiography paved the way to get rid of conventional history and presented a new lens to observe history. It encouraged re-reading or reassessment of the historical sources so that an unbiased history could be produced using authentic sources.⁵⁰ Despite its wide prestigious ideas, the Subaltern School widely faced criticism. The Subaltern historians failed to classify the notion of subalternity in a comprehensive and broader context. For instance, in India, not only the lower class women were subalterns but the upper-class women were also devoid of power and freedom but the subaltern historians ignored their subalternity which led to the fall in the acceptance of the Subaltern School. According to Sreedharan, 'Based on a loose, negative elite-subaltern dichotomy, it has no greater theme than popular militancy and consciousness.'⁵¹ Hence, a few years back, this school of historiography was dissolved yet its name is still alive on the pages of history.

Conclusion

The Subaltern School of historiography employed a novel lens to scrutinize history. The Subaltern studies scholars denied the popular narrative of history produced by the elite while ignoring the marginalized people of the society. The Subaltern School tried to analyze history through a new lens. The Subaltern historians disregarded the writings produced under the shadow of the elite or the colonialists, and argued that the subaltern people play an important role in the progress and development of history, thus it is impossible to neglect their part. The subaltern communities of Pakistan are the voiceless and marginalized people of the society and there is much room that needs to be filled by further research. The scholars could explore the

prospects of these subaltern communities within the framework of the Subaltern School of Historiography. The researchers could work on the marginalization of these subaltern communities and the issues faced by this marginality. The right of agency, a significant element of the Subaltern School of historiography, needs more research and exploration. There is a need to study the resistance offered by these subaltern communities. The gender subalternity is one of the major debates in the Subaltern School. In Pakistan, there are areas, like the rural Sindh in which the women are observing multi-layered subalternity and the researchers can work on this area with the framework of the Subaltern School of historiography.

Notes and References

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² Bill Ashcroft, et al, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (London: Routledge, 1998), 169.

³ David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia* (London: Anthem, 2002), 1-2.

⁴ Karl Heinrich Marx, a German origin philosopher, historian, sociologist, economist, journalist, and political theorist, born on May 5, 1818 in Trier. He was influenced by young Hegelians, the adherents of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a German philosopher, one of the prime propagators of the German idealism and nineteenth century philosophy. While his stay in Paris in 1844, he met Friedrich Engels, a German philosopher, who became his life time supporter. He soon moved to Brussels but he was expelled from here because of his radical ideas and then shifted to Germany. Again he was expelled from Germany and went to London in 1849 and here he lived for rest of his life and breathed his last on March 14, 1883.⁴ His few remarkable writings are, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *Das Kapital*, Volume I (1867), and *The German Ideology* (1932).

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⁶ Antonio Gramsci, a prime mover and one-time leader of Communist Party of Italy, was an Italian Marxist philosopher, linguist, writer, journalist and politician, was born on January 22, 1891. He lived an inconsolable life as Benito Mussolini (r. 1925-43), an Italian nationalist and the father of Italian Fascism, sensed his radical ideas alarming for his Fascist regime, thus imprisoned him. His consequential work includes the *Prison Notebooks* (1948) comprised of three volumes which substantially captivated the attention of subaltern writers.

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¹³ Frantz Omar Fanon was born to a middle-class family in 1925, in Martinique. He left Martinique in 1943 and stayed in France to have an excellence in medicine and psychiatry in Lyon, after volunteering as a fighter in Free French Army in World War II. He, for a short span of time, served at a hospital in Algeria in 1953 but due to the continuous violent attitude of the French government compelled him to settle in Tunisia in 1956. Here he became the editor of the National Liberation Front (NLA) newspaper *El Moudjahid*, till the end to his life and ultimately died of *Leukemia* in 1961.¹³ His influential works include, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), and *Studies in a Dying Colonialism, or A Dying Colonialism* (1959).

¹⁴ Emmanuel Hansen, *Frantz Fanon: A Social and Political Thought* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1977).

¹⁵ Ranajit Guha, a Bengali South Asian historian, born on May 23, 1922, encompasses a pivotal status in the Subaltern Studies Group. He was the editor of the first six volumes of Subaltern Studies. His prominent writings include, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (1963), *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (1997), and *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983). He recently died on April 28, 2023 in Austria.

¹⁶ Ranajit Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7-29.

¹⁷ Ranajit Guha, "Discipline and Mobilize" in *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. 7, eds. Partha Chatterjee and Gyandra Pandey (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 78-79.

¹⁸ David Arnold, a professor of history at Warwick University, England, was born on October 1, 1946. He is one of the founding members of the Subaltern School of historiography and co-edited eighth volume of Subaltern Studies. He was greatly impressed by the post-modernist ideologies. His influential works are *Police Power and Colonial Rule: Madras 1859-1947* (1986) and *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Diseases in Nineteenth-Century India* (1993).

¹⁹ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 159.

²⁰ Partha Chatterjee, a Bengali multidisciplinary scholar, born on November 5, 1947, is one of the notable associates of Subaltern Studies. He teaches anthropology and South Asian Studies at Columbia University, New York. The ideas of Foucault and Edward Said influenced him greatly. His pronounced writings are *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (1986) and *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (1993). He is also an actor and a play writer.

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²² Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Vintage Books, 1978).

²³ Himani Bannerji, "Projects of Hegemony: Towards a Critique of Subaltern Studies' 'Resolution of the Women's Question," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35 (March 11-17, 2000), 909.

²⁴ Dipesh Chakrabarty, a Bengali historian, highly influenced by the post-modernist thinkers, was born on December 15, 1948 in Kolkata. He made noteworthy contributions to the post-colonial and Subaltern Studies literature. He served as a professor at the University of Calcutta, Australian National University in Canberra, and University of Chicago. His famous works include *Rethinking Working Class History of Bengal: 1890-1940* (1989) and *Provintializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000). He also edited several books of Subaltern Studies.

²⁵ Dipesh Chakrabarty, "On Deifying and Defying Authority: Managers and Workers in the Jute Mills of Bengal (circa 1890-1940)", *Journal of Past and Present*, No. 100 (August, 1983), 124-46.

²⁶ David Scott, "Colonial Governmentality," *Journal of Social Text*, No. 43 (August 1995), 191-220.

²⁷ Shail Mayaram, a professor at Centre for the Study of Developing Sciences, has a firm command on the disciplines of history, political science and sociology from the University of Rajasthan, Delhi and Chicago. She also has been an editor in the Subaltern studies volumes. Her notable works include, *Resisting Regimes* (1997) and *Against History Against State* (2000).

²⁸ A significant Muslim community primarily inhibited in the Mewat regions, comprising of the Rajasthan, Haryana and UP part of India.

²⁹ Ranajit Guha, "The Small Voices of History", in *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. 9, eds. Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3.

³⁰ Bill Ashcroft, et al, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (London: Routledge, 1998), 135.

³¹ Ayaz Khan, “Bagris in Search of Land,” *Baluchistan Voices*, June 22, 2022.

³² Yogindar Sikand, “The Pakistani Dalit”, *Himal South Asian*, March 22, 2006. <https://himalmag.com/the-pakistani-dalit/>

³³ For details, see Pirbhu Lal Satyani, *Hamey Bhi Jeeney Do: Pakistan Mai Acchoot Logon ki Suratehal (Let us Also Live: The Situation of the Untouchables in Pakistan)* (Lahore: ASR Resource Centre, 2005).

³⁴ Sreedharan, *A Textbook of Historiography: 500 BC to AD 2000*, 494.

³⁵ A nomadic community lives in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and the region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

³⁶ Arshad Rafiq, “Nomadic Life: A Constant Struggle against Nature, Authorities”, July 11, 2018, *Daily Times*.

³⁷ “ ‘The Manu Smriti Mafia still Haunts us’: A Speech by Pakistan Dalit Rights Leadership, *Round Table India*, June 15, 2017, <https://www.roundtableindia.co.in/the-manu-smriti-mafia-still-haunts-us-a-speech-by-surendar-valasai/>

³⁸ Ashcroft, et al, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, 8.

³⁹ Anam Lodhi, “The Sheedis of Pakistan: Long Forgotten Africans uprooted and still Finding their place in society” *The Africa Report*, August 5, 2021 <https://www.theafricareport.com/109268/the-sheedi-of-pakistan-long-forgotten-africans-uprooted-and-still-finding-their-place-in-society/>

⁴⁰ *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People* (Minority Right Group International, June 2018).

⁴¹ Tanzeela Qambani was nominated by PPP. She completed her post graduation from University of Sindh in Computer Sciences. Her father is a lawyer and mother is a retired school teacher. Tanzeela is mother of three children.

⁴² Riaz Sohail, “Pakistan’s First Lawmaker of African Descent Raises Hopes for Sidi Community,” BBC, August 8, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-45099970>

⁴³ Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak” in *Marxism and Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Nelson and Grossberg (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 271-13.

⁴⁴ *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People*.

⁴⁵ Peter Burke, *Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Temple Smith, 1978) as cited in Ishwar Dayal Gaur, *Martyr as Bridegroom: A Folk Representation of Bhagat Singh* (Delhi: Anthem Press, 2007), 1.

⁴⁶ M. L. Kachroo, “Scope and Value of Oral History”, *The Punjab Past and Present*, 38 (1985), 257.

⁴⁷ For some discussion, see Turab ul Hassan, “Punjab and the War of Independence of 1857,” Unpublished PhD diss., Department of History, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 2011, 37-38.

⁴⁸ Mazhar Abbas, “Mai Bakhtawar: A Forgotten Daughter of Sindh,” *The News International* (Political Economy Section), May 17, 2020.

⁴⁹ Sabah Zaib, et al. “Rethinking Subalternity of the Rural Women of Sindh: A Historical Approach”, *The Women*, Vol. 11. 2019, 64-5.

⁵⁰ Sreedharan, *A Textbook of Historiography 500BC to AD 2000*, 496.

⁵¹ Ibid.