

**When Perceptions Fall Short: Understanding the Relationship Between the Government
and Marginalized Groups in China and India**

A Thesis Presented to the University of Michigan Department of Asian Languages and Cultures
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors

By
Ruchi Wankhede

April 21st, 2021

Professor Christi A. Merrill
Associate Professor of Comparative Literature
Honors Thesis Advisor

Professor Miranda D. Brown
Professor of Chinese Studies
Honors Thesis Second Reader

Dedication

Researching and writing this thesis has been a journey I could not be more thankful for. I want to acknowledge several important individuals who inspired me, encouraged me, and made this thesis the paper it is today.

First and foremost, I want to dedicate this to the people who guided me through the process. This thesis would not be possible without the generosity and advising of Dr. Christi A. Merrill. Professor Merrill met with me in April 2020, helped me narrow down my thesis topic of choice, and agreed to be my thesis advisor for senior year. From there, we built our relationship. Professor, you inspire me in your actions as a Postcolonial scholar, teacher, and overall human and opened my eyes to the world of caste. Thank you for seeing my potential, agreeing to be my thesis advisor, and helping me with the South Asian side of the story.

Dr. Miranda D. Brown has always worked to help me understand the role of China in this thesis. She is unmatched in her ability to recenter me and help me understand the nuances on the side of the Chinese government. Further, she directed me to amazing people such as Katherine Dimmery. Without Professor Brown's support, I would not have been able to sift through hours of Chinese research. Thank you Professor Brown for listening to my fears, questions, and general comments for the last year.

To Katherine Dimmery, it was a privilege to bounce ideas off of you and learn about your experiences in Yunnan. I'm thankful for the time I spent talking to you and about your perspectives on different ethnic minority groups, and about research writing in general. Your work and experiences never fail to amaze me.

This dedication would be incomplete without acknowledging the people who stood through it all with me. Thank you Sahithi Polisetty, Nirja Dave, Samuel So, and Anurima Kumar for being my on-campus support system as I wrote. Your encouragement, eagerness to read over my chapters, and support made the process much easier than if I had no one.

Finally, I want to dedicate this to my family. My brother, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins are number one motivators in life. These people and their weekly phone calls, visits, and general support through it all never wavered and always picked me up at my lowest point. They are the ones who urged me to step out of my comfort zone and approach something I never would have initially considered. They grounded me as I would panic over the smallest thing. Their passion for education, language, and culture was the foundation of my inspiration. This thesis is just as much for them as it is for me.

Abstract

As two important nations in Asian and international spheres, China and India share similarities such as their growth. While both nations claim to value diversity and aim to uplift all groups, there are three groups from each country that are left in the dust. In China, there are 55 ethnic minorities that make up eight percent of the nation's population. The Chinese government acknowledged them in several documents and created protections for them. Similarly, India has the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Indian government has also afforded protection to these groups within the constitution and other legislation. However, in both countries, these groups face problems with social and economic development. In this study, I show how central and local government perceptions of infantilization and backwardness negatively impact the pol-

icy implementation and treatment of these marginalized groups in China and India. Additionally, I demonstrate how the internalization of individual negative biases negatively affect these groups.

Introduction

As nations with the two largest populations in the world, China and India have multiple similarities. Both countries have storied histories and act as cultural centers for East and South Asia, respectively. While there is a lot of scholarship comparing the two nations in terms of economic policy, there is another lens to view the two nations and their governments through diversity and minority policy.

In China, while the Han ethnicity makes up 92% of the Chinese population, there are still 55 ethnic minority groups outside of the Han. According to the 2010 census, the largest ethnic minority outside of the Han is the Zhuang, with 16 million people and at least 17 other ethnic minorities have populations over 1 million people. The rest of the minorities' populations range anywhere from 1 million people to around 3,000 people¹. There are groups such as the Naxi, Miao, and Hui. There are also groups with greater media exposure including the Uyghur of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, Mongolians of Inner Mongolia, and Tibetans in the Tibet Autonomous Region².

¹ Population Census Office Under the State Council. "LibGuides: Chinese Ethnic Groups: Overview Statistics." Overview Statistics - Chinese Ethnic Groups - LibGuides at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2010. https://guides.lib.unc.edu/china_ethnic/statistics.

² Wu, Xiaohui. "From Assimilation to Autonomy: Realizing Ethnic Minority Rights in China's National Autonomous Regions." *Chinese Journal of International Law* 13, no. 1 (2014): 55. Accessed 26 February, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/chinesejil/jmu006>.

In India, there are thousands of different groups and ethnicities within each state's borders. One group often left out of the national conversation is the Scheduled Tribes. The Scheduled Tribes are groups of indigenous tribes of India from all 28 states and nine union territories; they are also known as the Adivasi. There is a set of requirements that groups must exhibit during a census to be eligible for Scheduled Tribe status. In addition to Scheduled Tribes, there are also Scheduled Castes. Also known by other names such as untouchable, Dalit, and Bahujan, this group encompasses multiple groups that upper-caste Hindus and other groups historically oppressed within the caste hierarchy. The Scheduled Castes took unsavory jobs in Hindu society such as slaughtering animals, handling human and animal waste and working with the dead³. For the sake of convenience, the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes will be called India's marginalized groups in this thesis.

To this day, there are still problems within the economic and social development of these groups in China and India. In China, ethnic minorities are some of the poorest ethnic groups in the country and have lower accessibility to higher education and economic benefit compared to the Han. Compared to the urban areas of China, the rural areas have fallen behind in economic, education, and medical developments⁴. Additionally, there is a notable difference in percentages of Han people who work in typically white-collar jobs such as the government spheres, managerial positions, etc. compared to ethnic minorities⁵. There is a notable income gap between Han

³ Jaffrelot, Christophe. "Caste and Politics." *India International Centre Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2010, 95

⁴ Tim, Yuen Siu. Ethnic Minority Policy Of People's Republic Of China: An Overview. *The Hong Kong Institution Of Education*, (Hong Kong, 2020),14-15

⁵ Wu, Xiaogang, and Guangye He. "Empirical Assessment of Ethnic Policy in Urban China." *China Review*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2018, 203

and ethnic minority groups as large as 10 percent in some areas⁶. According to a 2018 study, the average Han income is around 926.49 yuan Ethnic minority income tends to center around 860.95 yuan, demonstrating there is an income gap, that is often further aggravated by whether the income is in an autonomous area versus a nonautonomous area⁷.

India's Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe groups both have higher instances of child labor, lower economic development, lower education rates, and decreased representation in the legislative assembly compared to the rest of the country⁸. Further, Tribe and Caste status in India has led to large instances of inequality between these groups and the rest of the country. A 2020 study notes how the 2011 literacy rate of Scheduled Castes was 66.1%, while the overall population was 73.0%⁹. Additionally, a 2016 National Family Health Survey noted how among children with stunted growth, Scheduled Castes had 43%, while Scheduled Tribes had 44%¹⁰. A 2006-07 survey looked at the distribution of workers across monthly income categories, determining that educational, occupational, and income disadvantages are higher among socially disadvantaged classes such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes¹¹. Additionally, another study looked at income inequality in villages and taking caste into account, different social

⁶ Gustafsson, Björn, and Li Shi. "The Ethnic Minority-Majority Income Gap in Rural China during Transition." *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2003, 805.

⁷ Wu and He, 202-203

⁸ Kaletski, Elizabeth, and Nishith Prakash. "Does Political Reservation for Minorities Affect Child Labor? Evidence from India." *World Development*, vol. 87 (November 2016), 53, Accessed March 28, 2020 doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2016.06.003.

⁹ Raghavendra, R. H. "Literacy and Health Status of Scheduled Castes in India." *Contemporary Voice of Dalit* 12, no. 1 (2020): 102. Accessed April 6, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1177/2455328x19898449>.

¹⁰ Raghavendra, 105

¹¹ Kumar, Rajnish, Satendra Kumar, and Arup Mitra. "Social and Economic Inequalities: Contemporary Significance of Caste in India." *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 50 (2009), 55 Accessed April 10, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25663890>.

groups outside of Scheduled Castes made twice the household income than Scheduled Castes made¹².

These disparities lead to multiple questions such as: Despite government reforms for both groups, why are they in such disparaged positions compared to the rest of the country?; how do these government actors view marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes; and ultimately: does the perception of these marginalized groups affect the policy and status of these groups?. In this thesis, I argue that the Chinese and Indian central and local governments view groups such as ethnic minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes as backward. In an attempt to combat this, the governments infantilize these groups and their needs and fail to provide resources to help with adjustment to a changing world. An essential factor to understanding the question is observing the individual perceptions of these groups on both the Chinese and Indian sides and viewing how negative individual perceptions translate into government policy and implementation as individuals take place in local government and administrative positions. Despite similar perceptions of these groups, there are differences in how each government's responds to these feelings differs with the central Indian government appearing passive in their implementation of policy while the central Chinese government pursues a more aggressive implementation of the policy.

What is the significance of this topic? As an Asian American woman, it is essential to bring up issues that impact my community. Both Chinese and Indian diasporic communities discuss these issues through a lens that focuses on community reactions or a lens that focuses on

¹² Rawal, Vikas, and Madhura Swaminathan. "Income Inequality and Caste in Village India." *Review of Agrarian Studies*, n.d., 118. Accessed April 10, 2020 <https://doi.org/file:///Users/ruchiwankhede/Downloads/Income%20Inequality%20and%20Caste%20in%20Village%20India.pdf>.

government actions. There is a lack of scholarship focusing on the intersection of these spheres of influence, so this thesis hopes to contribute to the existing body of work. Further, as an upper-caste Indian American woman from North America, it is important to diversify the narrative perpetuated by other upper-caste academics and authors who provide the rest of the world with only an upper-caste perspective on India and its issues. As Arun Mukherjee once said, “High-caste Indian writers, both Hindu and non-Hindu (caste has infected all religions in India) who are published both in India and abroad as ‘representers’ of Indian life, seldom deal with caste and caste oppression in their works.”¹³ Overall, representing multiple facets of life outside of the typical image of Asian countries is important.

Further, this thesis combines three areas of study I am passionate about: governmental relations, ethnic studies, and language. Growing up in a predominantly white town, I lived through my parents’ experiences with India as well as my grandmothers’ attempts to teach me Hindi and Marathi. When I started middle school, my view of Asia became more complicated when I took Japanese as my language elective instead. Finally, my time learning Chinese at the University of Michigan and in Nanjing, China showed me the application of language in different instances such as reading government documents, listening to officials, and more. This thesis is an amalgamation of the different cultures I was exposed to and looks at issues that were rarely discussed in my household.

Finally, the decision to compare India and China together complicates the jargon of head-on authenticity. Comparing the two groups allows for a greater understanding of the issues at hand in Asia, especially the intersection between perception and treatment. The key reason I

¹³ Mukherjee, Arun Prabha. “Foreword.” *Joothan: A Dalit's Life*, (Columbia University Press, 2003), xx

wanted to focus on India and China when it comes to sociopolitical context is because most socio-political comparisons that feature China and India often compare each country to a Western nation. Additionally, most scholarship compares India and China together in an economic context. Using a sociopolitical lens allows for a greater understanding of Asia and its issues. Further, the difference in accessibility to information from the central Chinese government versus the central Indian government as well as from individual accounts makes for an interesting comparison in understanding the continent as a whole.

Overall, this thesis will encompass five parts. The first part will provide background for the groups discussed and define some commonly used terminology. Then, there will be a chapter discussing terminology and the way it shapes perceptions and ultimately policy. The next section will encompass preferential policies such as exemptions to the one child policy and the quota system and how these have positive and negative effects on government perception. Next, the thesis will provide evidence for the way perception shapes education through education policy and experience. Finally, the fifth section will focus on the concluding remarks.

History

Through dynastic rule, China had a complicated relationship with the minorities who were not part of these various empires at the time¹⁴. Minorities were part of the periphery while the Han or ethnic groups of the ruling empire at the time considered these minority groups as not part of their empire, naming them barbarians. A notable exception to this Han dominance was the Yuan dynasty in the 13th century and the Qing dynasty from the 16th century to 1911. During the

¹⁴ Wu, 58

Qing period, there was an attempt to incorporate these different groups into Chinese territory, yet Qing policies aimed to keep local leaders in power while still working with the Qing empire¹⁵.

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, there was general unrest and the ethnic minority groups were widely left alone for some time until leaders like Chiang Kai-shek increased assimilationist policy of ethnic minorities to Han traditions and culture¹⁶. These policies were the result of an idea known as Han chauvinism, or the belief that the Han were the caretakers for other ethnic minorities. It included the stipulation that due to the “insignificant number of minorities, the Chinese state was essentially composed of one nationality,”¹⁷. The concept of Han-ism has been debated by scholars recently since the idea of nationality or Pan-Han-ism was promoted by revolutionaries during the early 1900s before the Qing collapse. This was because the Qing dynasty was not ethnically Han (they were Manchu) and by categorizing the Qing as foreign occupiers and emphasizing that the majority of Chinese people were Han, ordinary citizens needed to work to rid China of the foreign threat¹⁸. This ideology remained an important force and peaked in the 1960s during the Cultural Revolution, as Han chauvinism (Wilcox, 3/20/2020).

During 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) promised ethnic minorities special recognition and benefits if they supported the CCP in their quest to unite China under communist

¹⁵ Northrop, Douglas, “Chinese Empire in Central Asia”. *Asian Studies* 340. 12 February. 2020.

¹⁶ Wu, 61

¹⁷ Wu, 61

¹⁸ Maurer-Fazio, Margaret, and Reza Hasmath. “The Contemporary Ethnic Minority in China: an Introduction.” *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 56, no. 1 (2015). Accessed April 8, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2015.1059290>.

rule¹⁹. After the 1949 Chinese Civil War, where the CCP won control of the country, policies regarding ethnic minorities relaxed as Mao Zedong wanted to create a unitary multinational country that emphasized the importance of accepting ethnic minority culture while also instilling Communist ideologies and ways of life²⁰. The policy was similar to Soviet policy at the time, which emphasized national identity building that celebrated diversity (Suny, Lecture 2/18/2021). Multiple attempts to define the ethnic minority groups by hundreds of anthropologists immediately following the Chinese Civil War (around the early 1950s) demonstrated the Soviet cultural policy. While the CCP portrayed this image to the public, their treatment of ethnic minorities was negative. The decision and recognition of these different ethnic minorities often led to the portrayal of ethnic minorities as backward. An example of this was with Chinese films where filmmakers portrayed these groups as living in “harsh, primitive conditions, before their liberation by the Chinese government”²¹.

However, this changed during the Cultural Revolution where “programs were brought into minority areas to accelerate the forced socialist transformation of minority societies” (Wu, p. 67). There was this need for the CCP to have the ethnic minority groups become civilized on their terms. Oftentimes, the concepts surrounding the word, civilized did not align with the CCP's view of these ethnic minorities. The CCP purged those who expressed their ethnic identity for the “sin of local nationalism”²². The CCP and civilians undermined ethnic minority rights due

¹⁹ Maurer-Fazio and Hasmath, 2015

²⁰ Wu, 63

²¹ Tuttle, Gray. “China's Race Problem: How Beijing Represses Minorities.” *Foreign Affairs* 94, no. 3 (2015): 43. Accessed March 28, 2020 <https://doi.org/www.jstor.org/stable/24483662>.

²² Wu, 67

to the need to legitimize the CCP and Chinese socialist ideology. There was also the belief that due to the primitive nature of ethnic minorities perpetuated by the media, ethnic minorities were unfit for local leadership, which led to the placement of Han officials in regions and cultures they did not know much about²³.

After Mao Zedong's death, Deng Xiaoping took office. Most of Xiaoping's focus was on revitalizing the Chinese economy. The emphasis on economic revitalization led to decreased attention toward social issues, which led to increased autonomy for ethnic minorities²⁴. The autonomy was exciting, but it came with a price. There was greater exploitation of the ethnic minority lands by Han workers and businesses. In turn, Han business did not provide ethnic minorities a significant chance to work and become upwardly mobile on their land²⁵.

Recent developments under Xi Jinping's administration, show an increase in national assimilation to strengthen the national unity of China. There is also a return to the notion that China has one nationality²⁶. It appears to be thinly veiled Han chauvinism that is evolving to homogenizing nationalism. Homogenizing nationalism has led to lower access to official positions by ethnic minorities, lack of access to economic reforms, and lack of access to higher education²⁷. Additionally, the idea of Chinese nationalism has led to the idea of any discourse against the Chinese government as problematic and something that will not help the government

²³ Tim, 9

²⁴ Wu, 68

²⁵ Wilcox, Emily. I had a conversation with this professor on March 20th, 2020 that greatly improved the section on Han chauvinism and current state of ethnic minority affairs

²⁶ Gallagher, Mary. "China as a Rising Power: Border Politics, Ethnicity, and Nationalism." *Political Science* 339. 8 Apr. 2019.

²⁷ Wilcox, 3/20/2020

and nation succeed. This leads to the government labeling ethnic minority issues and resentment as terrorism in certain instances²⁸.

India's relationship with its Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is a discriminatory story that takes place over 2,000 years. Historically, Hindu society was divided into several sub-categories known as *Varnas* or occupations. There were four main varnas: Brahmins (religious leaders and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and heads of state), Vaishyas (merchants), and Sudras (laborers)²⁹. Often untouchables (later known as Scheduled Castes) were those who had unsavory jobs such as handling the dead, or waste in any form. According to translator Alok Mukherjee in a foreword for Dalit author Sharankumar Limbale's book *The Aesthetics of Dalit Literature*, "Limbale establishes the Dalit's subalternity not in a colonial structure, but in the caste-based social, culture and economic structure of Hindu society. Here the village becomes the metropolis and Dalits exist literally on the periphery. Dalit settlements are not only apart from the upper caste Hindu settlements, they are actually outside the boundary of the village"³⁰. In a similar vein, the Scheduled Tribes or Adivasis were not considered part of society. The peripheral location of these groups led to ostracization and discrimination from higher caste individuals³¹.

Looking at the Indian government's treatment of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes compared to China's treatment of ethnic minorities, one of the largest differences in policy im-

²⁸ Hoshino, Masahiro. "Preferential Policies for China's Ethnic Minorities at a Crossroads." *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 8, no. 1 (2019): 6. Accessed March 23, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1080/24761028.2019.1625178>.

²⁹ Pruthi, R.K. "The Caste System" *Indian Caste System* (New Delhi; Discovery Publishing House, 2004). 5-26

³⁰ Mukherjee, Alok. "Reading Sharankumar Limbale's Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature From Erasure to Assertion." *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*, (New Delhi; Orient Longman, 2004), 2

³¹ Jaffrelot, 95

plementation is the British colonial legacy that affected Indian policy. While upper-caste Hindus and the British government considered Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes backward Hindus or Depressed Classes, the British acknowledgment of “backwardness” was an attempt to uplift these groups. According to Christophe Jaffrelot, “the criteria defining the Depressed Classes had much to do with ritual impurity”³². This attempt to uplift these groups also came with the approach that there was a problem with Indian culture and to solve these problems, there needed to be an adoption of European secularism or a British imperial-backed conversion to Christianity³³.

According to British officials, “ ‘The only chance for these [tribal] people,’ said Wedgwood, “is to protect them from a civilization which will destroy them, and for that purpose, I believe, direct British control is the best. Unless you have our experience of the last fifty or even one hundred and fifty years in dealing with this problem, it is impossible to say that any other race on earth can look after them so well”³⁴. In this case, a direct rule meant creating policies that would help the socio-economic standing of these groups. They believed that self-rule was not viable because the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes were so disadvantaged (Mandair, 3/30/2020). This direct rule resulted in resentment from other Indian groups because the British were applying European ideologies toward Indian groups (Mandair, 3/30/2020). Some of the policies created by the British included educational affirmative action programs in the realm of education (Jaffrelot, p. 97).

³² Jaffrelot, 96

³³ Mandair, Arvind Pal-Singh. I had a conversation with him on March 30th, 2020 that greatly improved the section on the impact of British colonialism, and the Indian Separatist movement.

³⁴ Corbridge, Stuart. “Competing Inequalities: The Scheduled Tribes and the Reservations System in India's Jharkhand.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 1 (2000): 68. Accessed April 10, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2658584>.

Before India's 1947 Partition, there was a movement by B.R. Ambedkar, an untouchable (Dalit) or lower caste lawyer. The movement prioritized Dalits, Adivasis, and other lower caste groups. Overall, the movement known as the Ambedkarite movement was a response to the work done by actors in the Indian National Congress (INC) such as Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi and other actors created performative campaigns that did little to change the actual status of these groups, instead of upholding the status quo. The Ambedkarite movement wanted these groups to have a notion of self-rule, but Ambedkar believed that this was unrealistic because these groups were socioeconomically underprivileged³⁵. The Indian National Congress (INC), a left-leaning political party that ruled the country after independence, absorbed the movement³⁶. After the Partition of 1947 as Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi were creating India's policies, they decided to change the British idea of a direct rule into village or self-rule³⁷. Self-rule was an act of desperation by caste and tribal groups since little was done to support them at this point. There was a political element to this because Indian Maoists, who were part of an extreme communist movement encouraged Scheduled Tribes to partake in a separatist movement.

This led to the acceptance of self-rule after a fierce debate between the INC and its opponents³⁸. After this debate, the Indian National Congress reluctantly agreed to make Dr. Ambedkar the chair of the drafting committee for the Indian Constitution³⁹. While this movement led to the implication of tribal self-rule, this was problematic because it further marginalized these tribal

³⁵ Mandair 3/31/2020

³⁶ Mandair 3/31/2020

³⁷ Corbridge, 68

³⁸ Mandair 3/31/2020

³⁹ S. M. Gaikwad. "Ambedkar and Indian Nationalism." *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 10 (1998), 517. Accessed April 20, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4406493>.

and caste groups and conveyed to the government that they were terrorists who wanted independence⁴⁰. This meant that they would receive certain benefits such as representation and guidance from the central government. But outside of this, the government left groups to fend for themselves and provided little socio-economic development for Scheduled Tribes and Castes ⁴¹. In addition to self-rule, Dr. Ambedkar and the constitutional committee abolished the concept of untouchability and created reservation systems that worked similarly to the way of American affirmative action.

Additionally, during the formation of the Constitution, nationalist anthropologists argued that the Scheduled Tribes were aboriginal and emphasized the difference between these groups and the rest of India⁴². These anthropologists ended up homogenizing these groups in the eyes of the rest of India and led to having national and state policy viewing these groups as, “as unified and internally egalitarian”⁴³. The criteria for Scheduled Tribes has been in place since the 1950s. According to a 2017 statement from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, criteria for Scheduled Tribe Status included “(i) indications of primitive traits, (ii) distinctive culture, (iii) geographical isolation, (iv) shyness of contact with the community at large, and (v) backwardness”⁴⁴. This led to the government ignoring Scheduled Tribes unless other civilians committed violent acts against them. Even then, it was hardly guaranteed that those affected by violence would receive the jus-

⁴⁰ Mandair 3/31/2020

⁴¹ Mandair 3/31/2020

⁴² Amita Baviskar. "Adivasi Encounters with Hindu Nationalism in MP." *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no. 48 (2005): 5107. Accessed March 26, 2020 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4417462>.

⁴³ Oskarsson, Patrik, and Siddharth Sareen. “Adivasiness as Caste Expression and Land Rights Claim-Making in Central-Eastern India.” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 50, no. 5 (September 16, 2019): 5. Accessed April 24, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2019.1656277>.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Tribal Affairs. “Change in Criteria for Inclusion in ST List.” Press Information Bureau, December 28, 2017. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1514486>.

tice they deserve due to administrative overreach⁴⁵. This categorization enforces the idea that every tribe was poor and backward. Due to these factors, assimilating these groups into modern Indian culture would be too complicated. In reality, the thousands of tribal and caste groups exist at varying levels of wealth and assimilation to modern Indian ideals.

Even if they had enough resources to supply themselves, people outside of the Scheduled Tribes exploit resources on tribal land and take away livelihood from these groups of people. Land rights have been a long fight for Adivasis since the 1830s and have only become worse since India started to industrialize. These groups living in scheduled areas often have their land exploited by non-tribal farmers and moneylenders⁴⁶. The Indian state also plays a role in the Adivasi fight for land by creating policies that allow the state to acquire land, while providing compensation and also offering significant protection against dispossession and usurious money-lending practices⁴⁷. This leads to these groups being pushed onto land that is hard to cultivate profit off of for the tribe. The forced movement is part of the reason for disparities between Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and the rest of the Indian population.

Additionally, the inclusion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes into a capitalist society where they do not have the tools provided for them leaves them at a significant political, economic, and social disadvantage. The idea of leaving these groups to their own devices and later expecting them to be at the same level as the rest of the country is a hypocritical order from the Indian government. When the idea of self-rule was proposed in 1950, there was a backlash

⁴⁵ Human Rights Watch. "X. Failure To Meet Domestic And International: Legal Obligations To Protect Dalits." Human Rights Watch . Human Rights Watch , 1999. https://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/india/India994-13.htm#P2220_472705.

⁴⁶ Oskarsson and Sareen, 7

⁴⁷ Oskarsson and Sareen, 7

from both the Scheduled Caste and Tribe community. Dalit leader, Dr. Ambedkar, “ardently supported machine technology which would provide leisure, cultural advancement, and finally equality. To the same end, he rejected Gandhi's ideal of trusteeship by the rich in favor of a kind of state socialism which would promote rapid industrialization”⁴⁸. The Indian government has still largely left most of these laws intact for these groups which leads to the explanation for the disparities between these groups and the rest of the country.

Policies

After 1947, India and China both created policies to help uplift minority groups. This is an important time to note because this was the start for both nations as they are currently known. During this time, the Chinese Civil War occurred between the Guomindang government and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), who won in 1949. In 1947, the Partition of India and Pakistan occurred and the drafting of the Constitution began.

China created policies to uplift and further legitimize ethnic minorities. China's 1984 policy, the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law guarantees rights to minorities such as self-government within designated areas, and proportional representation in government (China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law). In 1982, Article 4 of the Chinese constitution states that all ethnic groups are equal and are not allowed to face discrimination. The article also states that areas that have a concentration of minorities have autonomy and the control to financially administer their area⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Corbridge, p. 67

⁴⁹ Gustafsson and Li Shi, 807

Additionally, the Chinese Communist Party created an exception to laws such as the One-Child Policy and allowed ethnic minorities to have up to four children in certain areas⁵⁰.

After China adopted the principle of ren (人), ethnic minorities received certain benefits such as, "right to self-autonomy; a higher proportion of representatives in the government; right to bear more children and entitlement to direct economic subsidies from the government." (Tim, p. 4). Additionally, the Permanent Mission of the PRC states emphasizes a policy of ronghe (融合) or assimilation while still intermingling to protect the rights and interests of ethnic groups⁵¹. This has been most notable in the introduction of preferential policies or policies that aim to uplift ethnic minorities and elevate them to the same socioeconomic status as the Han. An example of this is the relaxation of the one-child policy for ethnic minorities compared to the Han Chinese⁵².

Meanwhile, India created the Twelve Schedules of India, an agenda of social, political, and economic problems that the Indian government planned on fixing in the country while defining ambiguous groups and territories. The Schedules are comparable to American constitutional amendments. The Fifth and Sixth schedules pertain to tribal rights. Schedule V works to create a support system for Scheduled Tribes. This included the creation of a Tribal Advisory Council for each state, or a group of people who serve to "advise on such matters pertaining to the welfare

⁵⁰ Hao, Yan. "Tibetan Population in China: Myths and Facts Re-Examined." *Asian Ethnicity* 1, no. 1 (2000): 27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/146313600115054>.

⁵¹ Tim, 9

⁵² Sautman, Barry. "Preferential Policies for Ethnic Minorities in China: The Case of Xinjiang." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 4, no. 1-2 (December 24, 2007): 88. Accessed March 28, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537119808428530>.

and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes”⁵³. It also determines that state governors can decide to allow Scheduled Tribes to be an exception for the law⁵⁴. It finally states that the president can determine Scheduled Areas or areas where Scheduled Tribes reside⁵⁵.

Schedule VI focuses on tribal administration in four northeastern Indian states, including Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. This Schedule determines the tribal areas of these four states and their relationship with the local and national government⁵⁶. In addition to these two schedules, there was also a law created called, “The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act (1989)”. This law determines punishable offenses against Scheduled Tribe members and the punishment provided against those who commit these offenses⁵⁷. These laws and policies were created to make these groups equal or just as socially mobile compared to dominant ethnic groups ⁵⁸.

In terms of caste, there are multiple amendments in the Indian constitution that promote equality for the Scheduled Castes. Article 17 of the Constitution under Fundamental Rights states, “ ‘Untouchability’ is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of —Untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.”⁵⁹. In addition to this, there are several sections promoting the economic, educational,

⁵³ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 244

⁵⁴The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 244

⁵⁵ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 244

⁵⁶ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 244A

⁵⁷ Shukla, Nigamendra. The Scheduled Castes And Scheduled Tribes (Prevention Of Atrocities Act). (New Delhi, 1989), 2

⁵⁸ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 244

⁵⁹ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 17

and political interests of both Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. Another important provision is the creation of a National Commission on Scheduled Caste that investigates matters relating to the safeguards provided, advises socio-economic development, makes report recommendations for measures taken by the central government or any state, and is in charge of all functions related to the “protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes”⁶⁰.

Terminology

Identity and terminology are important parts of the government's response to multiple groups. It serves as a way of understanding a group's place in society. In the early phases of post-colonial nation-building, terminology led to the creation of national identity. Terminology or the terms the government/dominant groups coin for marginalized groups provide insight into how these actors view these groups. This chapter focuses on using historical documents and accounts from ethnic minorities and marginalized groups to understand the question of, "How does terminology provide insights into how the government views marginalized groups and affects the later policy surrounding these groups?".

Chinese and Indian political actors use terminology to identify, subjugate, and create competition for their groups. For China, the chapter will discuss individual sentiments and how they affect government perceptions of ethnic minorities in an interesting loop where both the local government and individuals feed into each other's biases. The Chinese timeframe will focus on imperial China to the present day. For India, there will be an emphasis on the pre-independence groups such as the Indian National Congress at the time instead of the central Indian gov-

⁶⁰ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, The Constitution of India, 1950, Art. 338

ernment. A bulk of the Indian story takes place in the 1910s-1930s and the British Empire controlled the central government at the time. One notable difference between India and China's interpretations is the Indian co-option of group terminologies to further government policy or political movements compared to China's use of stereotypes associated with the terminology to justify their treatment of these groups.

A notable feature of Chinese political actors' treatment of ethnic minorities comes from its adoption of derogatory terminology when writing about ethnic minorities. Throughout history, Han dynasties called those who did not fit into their culture barbarians⁶¹. More often than not, these groups currently fall under the category of ethnic minorities. They were initially outside of the Han metropole so empires at the time did not incorporate the groups into Chinese empires. Instead, they viewed these groups with negative connotations because of the threat they held for multiple Chinese dynasties⁶². They were groups that Han dynasties needed to subdue before they attacked the dynasties.

When these groups fell under Han jurisdiction, empires converted original names into Mandarin names. One notable aspect of these names is that they contained characters with derogatory characteristics. These included the use of radicals that referenced animals or unsavory traits. Scholars call characters with these negative connotations graphic pejoratives because they provide context outside of the initial meaning of certain terms. A pejorative is a word or grammatical form that expresses negative connotations⁶³. A graphic pejorative applies to pictographic

⁶¹ Wu, 2014

⁶² Wu, 2014

⁶³ "Pejorative." Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster. Accessed April 2, 2021. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pejorative>.

languages such as Chinese, where the negative connotation comes from the way an individual or group writes the word out instead of the word itself⁶⁴. The negative terms were not coined by the government. Instead, local actors such as newspapers, other groups, and individuals named them and the government at the time co-opted when addressing these groups⁶⁵.

Anthropologist Erik Mueggler discusses this in his book *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, published in 2002. Overall, the book discusses his time observing the relationship between the state (Chinese government) and the Yi, a group in the southwest region of China in a province named Yunnan. Actors like the Dayao Gazette initially called the Yi the Luoluo (猓猓). This was problematic due to the use of the dog radical in writing the name out, which equated the group on the same level of dogs (Benedict, p. 188) One notable passage describes the new Chinese CCP government's attempt to change the terminology during the 1950s. Here, Mueggler states, "Chinese ethnographers have divided Central dialect speakers into Lipo and Luoluopo (omitting the offensive 'dog' radical from the first two characters), according to dialect differences and reported self-appellations (Yang H. 1990, 117)."⁶⁶. Analyzing this passage is important because it establishes a timeline for the name change being relatively recent. In turn, this demonstrates that the ideas surrounding identity viewed the Yi (Luoluo) in the periphery rather than the metropole with the addition of an animal radical. The decision to identify and categorize ethnic minorities came with the responsibility to name these groups. While this example is about the Yi and their termi-

⁶⁴ Ugoretz, Kaitlyn. "Distinguishing the 'Barbarian': Chinese Exonyms and Characterizations of the Other Across Eurasia," 2016, 1. Accessed March 30, 2021 https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kaitlyn-Ugoretz-2/publication/312189990_Distinguishing_the_%27Barbarian%27_Chinese_Exonyms_and_Characterizations_of_the_Other_Across_Eurasia/links/58750b4008aebf17d3b3f210/Distinguishing-the-Barbarian-Chinese-Exonyms-an.

⁶⁵ Mueggler, Erik. *The Age of Wild Ghosts : Memory, Violence, and Place in Southwest China* (University of California Press, 2001), 9

⁶⁶ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, 14

nology change, graphic pejoratives were not exclusive to this group. Several groups had names with graphic pejoratives including the Xiongnu (匈奴), which had radicals for unrest and slavery and the Jie (羯), which has the radical for sheep (羊)⁶⁷. Despite this terminology change, individuals and government actors associated the negative connotations from the graphic pejorative era with the groups, which led to later negative perceptions as central and local officials attempted to navigate later policy surrounding these groups.

An example of this negative connotation comes from Mueggler's introduction in the book where he describes, "When officials from higher levels of government visited, I watched his antics through their eyes. Filthy, alcoholic, crazy as a loon, he seemed to shamefully confirm their complaints about the local 'minority population': they drank too much; they were unsanitary and superstitious; they were enamored of their own poverty; they had no education and no culture."⁶⁸ The scene painted here is one echoed by Han people throughout the region and emphasizes how backward the group appears to be instead of acknowledging other behaviors. A notable term used, "crazy as a loon" demonstrates how the current central government appears to apply their understanding of the previous animal connotations from individuals in their new interpretation of the Yi. Even if the government does not outright call these groups with the graphic pejorative names or refer to them as animals, the sentiment remains. It exists on multiple levels from individual biases to local government interpretations of a group's actions.

Another example that stands out from the Mueggler book states, "Nevertheless, most were agreed, the proper appellation for non-Han in the Zhizuo ts'ici (or huotou) was not Líp'ò

⁶⁷ Ugoretz, 18

⁶⁸ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, 2

but Lòlop'ò or, more formally, Lòlop'ò Lòlomo, Lòlo men and women. And the language spoken in this region should be called Lòlongo, Lòlo language. These terms, Zhizuo residents insisted, were unrelated to the contemptuous Chinese appellation Luoluo.⁶⁹ Even while understanding the perspective of the residents and their sentiments toward Lòlo versus Yi, it is difficult to endorse this perspective. The passage is important because it demonstrates the debate that occurred surrounding the terminology used for understanding ethnic minority groups. In addition to this greater understanding of the debate in minority groups, the passage demonstrates how civilians view ethnic minorities and their place in society. Even though Luoluo and Lolo aren't related, they have similar word structures and the pronunciations are similar. It demonstrates the idea that the terms have ties to both the government and surrounding communities. Individuals and actors insist that the terms are not related, but looking deeper into the word structure weakens this argument.

Further, the fact that Zhizuo residents insist that the terms Lolo and Luoluo have no relation demonstrates that non-Yi residents were unwilling to make a change to terms like Yi. They insisted that Lolo was an easier term to use and was something that they felt comfortable using. This contributes to the understanding that groups outside the Yi viewed the group as people they could control. Throughout this name change, it appears that local populations never consulted the Yi on their feelings toward the various name changes, and these groups expected them to go along with the change.

According to Katherine Dimmery in her work with the Naxi (another minority group in southwest China), minority groups also use these terms to refer to one another. She states that

⁶⁹ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, 14

graphic pejoratives are a part of Chinese culture and minority and non-minority individuals use these terms to discuss a range of attributes ranging from skin tone to attitudes. An example of this is how the Naxi refer to the Yi as Luoluo instead of their government-assigned name. In addition to using the term Luoluo, they still use state terms to justify the discussion of backwardness of the Yi in comparison to the Naxi⁷⁰.

Scholars James Matisoff, Stephen Baron, and John Lowe discuss the use of pejoratives in inter-ethnic minority discourse stating, “Sometimes the same pejorative exonym is applied to different peoples, providing clues to the inter-ethnic pecking-order in a certain region”⁷¹. The inter-ethnic pecking-order is perpetuated by the Naxi and several groups to demonstrate the relationship between groups and how later terminology can be adapted and weaponized against these groups⁷². The idea that the Naxi use this derogatory term as an attempt to maintain the status quo on their dominance or challenge the pecking order Matisoff, Baron, and Lowe discuss. Tying this back to the previous passage demonstrates how even if the central government attempts to take groups away from these negative connotations, it is harder to take away hundreds of years of representation and attitudes that have existed since the beginning. It is hard to change public perception but even harder to sway government perception since individuals make government up.

Overall, Chinese terminology was used by multiple groups to subdue each other. Ethnic minority groups used graphic pejoratives and negative connotations to understand the pecking

⁷⁰ Dimmery, Katherine. I had a conversation with her on March 11th, 2021 that greatly improved the section on inter-ethnic pecking order, graphic pejoratives, education and preferential policy. She is a graduate student at the university of Michigan

⁷¹ Matisoff, James A., Stephen P. Baron, and John B. Lowe. *Languages and dialects of Tibeto-Burman. Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus Project*, Center for Southeast Asia Studies (University of California, Berkeley, 1996), xi

⁷² Dimmery, Katherine, 3/11/2021

order between various groups. People outside of ethnic minority groups used this type of terminology to enforce the status quo where the Han remained a dominant group and the ethnic minorities remained in the periphery. Finally, both the central and local government uses the terminology and its connotations to inform their opinion and justify the backwardness of these groups. These terminologies and their associated negative connotations lead to government officials ultimately viewing these groups in this way and this has the potential to impact government policy. Individuals are the ones who make the government up. Being surrounded by negative connotations about ethnic minority groups, once individuals come into positions of power, these biases affect how they view interactions with minority groups. By viewing groups with animalistic and later negative traits, when groups show that they are struggling or need help from local or central government, then officials might feel less inclined to assist these groups. Further, it justifies the backwardness these groups have, and later struggles might be seen as justice for historical actions current groups had no control over.

On the other hand, India's relationship with terminology and its marginalized groups echoes China's treatment of ethnic minorities. Yet, there is a distinct politicization of the marginalized groups that occurs. In pre-Independence India, there was initial coalition-building that occurred within the Indian National Congress (INC). Around the 1930s, several INC members including Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mahadev Govind Ranade urged for reforms centering around abolishing caste. But these requests fell deaf against Mahatma Gandhi and other upper-caste INC members' ears. Gandhi and other members shot the caste abolition movement down in favor of the Harijan campaign and the Temple Entry Movement⁷³. The Harijan campaign promoted

⁷³Rao, Parimala V. "Gandhi, Untouchability and the Postcolonial Predicament: A Note." *Social Scientist* 37, no. 1/2 (2009): 64. Accessed Feb 27, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27644310>.

changing the terminology surrounding caste from *ashpriya* (untouchable) to *Harijan*, or “child of God”. Similarly, the Temple Entry movement featured Gandhi leading untouchable individuals into areas they were historically restricted from entering such as Hindu temples, schools, and other upper-caste areas⁷⁴.

While reading Gandhi's ideas, it is easy to understand how he believed these ideas were positive and progressive initiatives. Changing the term *ashpriya* to *Harijan* and associating the group with divinity (i.e. child of God) demonstrated that Gandhi wanted these groups to have more positive connotations outside of touchability. Further, the Temple Entry Movement demonstrated the destruction of visible barriers that held untouchables back for so long. If an upper-caste individual led the lower-caste individuals in, then other upper-caste individuals felt obligated to let them through. Additionally, they seemed low-effort, high reward, and promoted unity while the INC worked on securing independence from Britain. However, the initiatives taken to ensure lower caste equality were performative, lacked substance and were used as a political weapon to appease different groups.

Around the time of these movements (during the 1930s), the fight for Indian independence was in full throttle. It was essential to demonstrate how every group on the subcontinent wanted independence. The INC wanted to create a united image for groups to rally around and used different groups to appeal to the idea that the organization had the progressive interests of every Indian at its core⁷⁵. This translated into performative work and two notable examples of this happen to be the Temple Entry Movement and the Harijan movement. The movements were

⁷⁴ Rao, 65

⁷⁵ ⁷⁵ Gaikwad, 516

flashy and drew public attention. Creating these movements demonstrates that the INC cares about multiple groups of people compared to Hindu nationalist groups who also vied for power. However, not much work outside of telling people about the name change or leading people into typically upper-caste areas had to happen. Therefore, members like Gandhi and Nehru can push what they wanted to implement while still showing the outside world that they cared about other groups. While these movements had their merits, ultimately, they used untouchables as pawns to further an agenda of INC monopoly in the Indian political sphere. Gandhi and the INC used their apparent support of these marginalized groups to garner further support for their cause.

Further, these movements fail to acknowledge the root causes of the issues that marginalized groups faced. The problems won't go away with a name change or guiding people into restricted buildings. These movements centered upper caste activists at the forefront of the movement instead of getting opinions from the affected groups. A notable example of this is how Mahatma Gandhi was part of the Bania caste, an upper-caste group⁷⁶. Yet centered himself in these movements as a champion of the people by creating the terms to call untouchables and physically leading these groups instead of asking these groups their opinions about what they wanted for their liberation.

Dalit lawyer, activist, and future head of the Constitutional drafting committee Dr. B. R. Ambedkar noticed similar issues during these movements. He later addressed them in his speech, "A Plea to the Foreigner", which was part of a larger book called *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*. Dr. Ambedkar published the book in 1945 near the end of the Indian struggle for independence. As the British left the new country, the next pressing issue

⁷⁶ Ambedkar, Bhimao Ramji. "A Plea to the Foreigner." *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables*, (Bombay: Thacker, 1945), 208

would be who was in charge. Since 1885, the INC poised itself to accept the role of ruling over the new country of India (Indian National Congress). Continuing with the summary, the speech itself is a plea to “foreigners” (Western individuals) to pay attention to what the Indian National Congress discusses in its conversations about Indian liberation. Ambedkar states what the INC publicly says is not accurate due to inherited upper-caste biases and how deeply ingrained the Varna system is. He questions why the foreigner is willing to side with the Indian National Congress with zero hesitations⁷⁷. Further, he fears that upper-caste groups will only tackle issues that resonate with their groups such as sati. He argues that even with many movements about reformation and caste, the individuals at the forefront of the movement (like Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru) uphold the oppressive systems.

In the speech, Dr. Ambedkar states, “Not only are they conscious of the fact that they belong to the governing class but some of them hold that the servile classes are contemptible people who must remain servile and who must never aspire to rule”⁷⁸. In this case, the servile classes mean people who are part of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Classes. This passage is notable because it examines how much the governing class acts following their afforded privileges. In this passage, the governing class refers to upper-caste Hindus who were often found in positions of power before and after Indian independence due to imperial decisions.

Refusing to acknowledge and pass caste abolition acts such as the ones brought up by Dr. Ambedkar and Mahadev Govind Ranade, the INC continued to negatively view the servile classes. By creating these performative campaigns, upper-caste individuals in the party acknowledged

⁷⁷ Ambedkar, 202

⁷⁸ Ambedkar, 209

that they did not view the marginalized groups as equals to the government and upper-caste Hindus in general. This is why the activism in the party surrounding untouchables and Adivasis was lackluster compared to activism surrounding high caste issues such as sati.

In his speech towards upper-caste Hindus in positions of power after a Mandir discussed hesitancy surrounding his discussion of caste called, “Annihilation of Caste”, Dr. Ambedkar notes that the Congress, “It consisted mostly of enlightened high caste Hindus who did not feel the necessity for agitating for the abolition of caste or had not the courage to agitate for it. They felt quite naturally a greater urge to remove such evils as enforced widowhood, child marriages, etc., evils which prevailed among them and which were personally felt by them. They did not stand up for the reform of the Hindu society.”⁷⁹. Adding onto Dr. Ambedkar's analysis, the idea that the governing class had to stand up for the servile class was to be below their goals. Overall, it would be better for society to maintain the status quo where the servile classes remained oppressed and in a position where they were barely acknowledged by the government. This also helps the governing class acknowledge their positions of power and their privilege if people like Gandhi believed that their words and actions would spur a nationwide attitude change that would undo thousands of years of oppression.

Another notable passage from “Plea to a Foreigner” states, “The governing class in India does not merely refuse to surrender its power and authority; it never loses an opportunity to pour ridicule on the political demands of the servile classes.” (Ambedkar, p. 226)”. Analyzing this passage against the background of perceptions, the Harijan name campaign is an example of this ridicule because ultimately the name change from *ashpriya* (untouchable) to *Harijan* did nothing

⁷⁹ Ambedkar, Bhimao Ramji. “Annihilation of Caste.” *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, (New Delhi: Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, 1979), 42

to alleviate existing issues. Even with the name change, lower-caste Indians still faced discrimination, now upper-caste Indians discriminated against lower caste Indians using the terms Gandhi coined.

A notable example of this comes from Kausalya Baisantry's autobiography *Doubly Cursed*. The story takes place in the 1930s in the aftermath of Gandhi's Harijan terminology change. Here she describes the harassment she faced while riding to school on her bicycle. She explains, "Outside the basti too the boys from upper-caste families would burn for us: 'There's a Harijan bai riding along! Just look at that brain, her baba is a beggar, and she's riding a bicycle!',"⁸⁰. The decision to choose this passage came from the fact that it provides the clearest example of some of the lighter discrimination lower-caste Indians faced in the aftermath of Gandhi. The contrast between Harijan bai and beggar in the boys' associations of Baisantry is striking when the word Harijan itself means "child of God". Despite the intended plan to equalize lower-caste groups, the term does nothing except add ammunition for upper-caste Indians to use to ridicule the servile classes. In a way, this negative connotation surrounding the meaning of Harijan could become a precursor to a later term used after there was an increase in Dalit legislation. Upper-caste individuals use the term government's favourite son-in-laws to denote their negative feelings toward marginalized groups and their provisions towards equality. Furthermore, the Temple Entry movement did little to help India's marginalized groups since the people leading the servile classes into these temples were often the governing classes.

⁸⁰ Baisantry, Kausalya. "From 'Doubly Cursed.'" Translated by Christi Merrill. Words Without Borders, October 1, 2018. <https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/october-2018-dalit-writing-doubly-cursed-kausalya-baisantry-christi-merr>.

In the aftermath of independence, the Indian constitution swapped terms like Harijan, untouchable, and Adivasi in favor of the terms Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Still, scholars and activists debate on whether the terms are empowering to these groups or not. Through my analysis, the concept of terminologies like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes appear neutral and acknowledge that the groups need physical, economic, and political help. Yet, the problem with the terms is that even if the terminologies do not have negative connotations due to widely regulated language, the fact that there is an attempt to actively separate these groups creates room for questions such as, “why do these groups need to be separated from the general population?” and “will they be treated differently due to these terms?”. Ultimately, this could lead to increased negative connotations for the groups implicated instead of the intended effect.

Additionally, little occurred in terms of policy implementation, or the creation of new policy to handle the effects of caste and tribal status. This confirms Dr. Ambedkar’s point when he states that the governing classes do whatever in their power to ridicule the servile classes, ensuring they will never be able to govern. Citizens observe this from the pre-independence campaigns of the Harijan movement and the Temple Entry movement and their later effects in the daily lives of lower-caste individuals such as Kausalya Baisantry and Omprakash Valmiki, an author who grew up in the post-Ambedkarite era and faced the direct repercussions of the Temple Entry movement in his education, which the education chapter focuses on.

When discussing terminology and understanding a marginalized group's place in society, China and India have a lot in common. The use of terminology influencing a dominant group and the government is an interesting feedback loop. In China’s perspective, their opinion of marginalized groups came from other groups existing in the area. This affected how the central govern-

ment and local government treated these groups, often comparing them to animals or associating them with backward traits. Additionally, historical biases of otherness that come from previous Chinese dynasties and their perspective on who was part of the periphery and who was part of the metropole affect both individual and governmental biases, creating a problematic view of ethnic minorities.

India follows a similar perspective, where they did not think about their marginalized groups until they had no choice but to cater to their needs. Further, those in the “governing classes” used terminology that worked to further the “servile classes” from the metropole instead of abolishing the opportunity gap between the groups. Observing the efforts Gandhi and the Indian National Congress took to recognize the status of groups like untouchables and the Adivasis confirms this.

Additionally, both China and India used individual/other group perceptions to further their understanding of these negative conceptions of the groups. In China, the graphic pejoratives surrounding ethnic minorities in southwest China came from names from groups that already existed in the area. Further, the terms such as untouchable and other terms came from upper-caste Hindus to distinguish themselves from different groups and occupations. As these groups influenced the central government and governing classes or grew into these positions, these negative connotations translated into policy and treatment that held these groups in contempt and worked to make decisions on behalf of the groups instead of giving them a stake in policy that affected them.

On the other hand, the way the Chinese government and the Indian government differ is in how they used the groups for political gain. The Chinese government used the negative pejora-

tives surrounding ethnic minorities to justify the treatment of these groups. Even if these terms originated from outside of the central or local government, the traits associated with this terminology were negative and later impacted government officials' perspective that the groups were backward and needed help since they could not help themselves. Another interesting difference is the way that ethnic minority groups in China use graphic pejoratives to talk about one another. The Naxi example discussed in the chapter demonstrates this in the way the Naxi use the original Luoluo name instead of the Yi term to either assert dominance or test the waters for intergroup dynamics between the Naxi and the Yi.

On the other hand, India's governing class used the terminology surrounding groups like the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes to push their political agenda. Creating activism campaigns surrounding terminology changes and increased representation (the Harijan Campaign and Temple Entry Movement), there was an active attempt to ensure that these groups remained oppressed compared to the relative freedom and stability of the other classes, castes, and groups. The main reason the INC created the campaign was to garner support for the Indian National Congress's power grab. By demonstrating that the party was "for the people", the governing class would be able to appeal to more groups by demonstrating the vast array of groups and issues they cared about.

Preferential Policies

Due to the acknowledgment of China and India's marginalized groups and their backwardness, there is scholarly, governmental, and individual conversation surrounding how the Chinese and Indian governments treat them. One important form of policy for both countries is

the implementation of preferential policies. Preferential policies are policies aiming to lift marginalized groups to the same socio-political and economic as dominant groups by relaxing standards that other groups uphold⁸¹. China's preferential policies usually center on child-bearing, education, and development. India's version of preferential policies are known as reservations or the quota system. This chapter seeks to answer the questions, "how much do preferential policies help the groups they are supposed to affect?" and, "how does government perception of these groups affect the way these groups are treated in regards to preferential policy?" Both China and India use preferential policy in its various forms to justify the backwardness of the groups, and individual resentments lead to a lack of policy implementation for these concepts.

When it comes to China, preferential policies stem from a commitment by the Chinese government to further ethnic minority equality. According to memos listed on multiple websites that highlight China's minority policy, the government states, "The state protects the lawful rights and interests of the ethnic minorities and upholds and develops a relationship of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all of China's ethnic groups. Discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic group are prohibited." Citizens of all ethnic groups in China enjoy all equal rights accorded to citizens by the Constitution and law⁸². This policy came from previous promises from the CCP that they would treat ethnic minority groups (notably the Miao, Yi, Ti-

⁸¹ Campbell, John, Joshua Kurlantzick, Alyssa Ayres, Zachary Laub, and James M. Lindsay. "Preferential Policies: An International Perspective." *Foreign Affairs*, January 28, 2009. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/1991-06-01/preferential-policies-international-perspective#:~:text=By%20%22preferential%20policies%22%20Sowell%20means,from%20the%20rest%20of%20society.p.91>.

⁸² Information Office of the State Council of the Peoples Republic of China. "National Minorities Policy and Its Practice in China." Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Other International Organizations in Switzerland, September 1999. http://www.china-un.ch/eng/bjzl_t176942.htm#:~:text=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20People's,all%20of%20China's%20ethnic%20groups.

betans, Mongols, and Hui) with special treatment and recognition in exchange for support for the party in their quest to rule China⁸³. Continuing with the analysis, this demonstrates that the central government expected the Han to view minority groups as equals. The notable addition of protecting the “lawful rights and interests of ethnic minorities” creates a way for the government to condone preferential policies as a way of protecting cultural interests. These ways of protecting cultural interests can take the form of relaxing regulations for ethnic minorities or providing increased aid for the groups and their autonomous regions.

The most notable example of Chinese preferential policy is the exemption from the one-child policy during its implementation. The original one-child policy originated in the 1980s, regulating that Han women could only have one child, yet ethnic minority families did not face this regulation. This happened because the central government never translated the one-child policy into national law. Instead, “...each locality is expected to devise its own regulations that accord with central policy but also conform to local conditions.”⁸⁴. According to China’s State Family Planning Commission, “Under these policies, an ethnic minority family generally may have two or three children; in frontier areas and areas with adverse geographical conditions, families of ethnic minorities with very small populations may have more than three children each; and Tibetan farmers and herdsmen in the Tibet Autonomous Region may have as many children as they like,”⁸⁵. This is important because to the reader of the policy, these specific passages demonstrate the way that the central government allowed leniency when it comes to ethnic minorities in this form.

⁸³ Maurer-Fazio and Hasmath, 2015

⁸⁴ Hao, 27

⁸⁵ Hao, 27

Additionally, the government created additional preferential policies in terms of development and education. These policies were explicitly stated in 1999 under the leadership of Jiang Zemin. The development policy states, “The state has shown great concern for infrastructure facilities construction and basic industries development in minority areas, giving priority to the arrangement of water conservancy, power, communications, environmental protection and natural resource development projects in central and western China where ethnic minorities are comparatively concentrated. A preferential policy on investment has been adopted so as to guide more foreign investments to those areas,”⁸⁶. Education policy focuses on emphasizing cultural education in conjunction with standard Chinese education as well as providing money to the region. The policy itself states, “For instance, it respects the autonomous areas' right to develop ethnic education on their own, attaches importance to teaching in minority languages and bilingual teaching, strengthens the building of the ranks of minority teachers, offers special care in terms of funds, runs ethnic institutes, schools, and classes that enroll students for future service in specific areas or units, actively starts counterpart educational support between inland provinces and municipalities and minority areas, and mobilizes the whole nation to support education in Tibet.” (Information of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, 1999).

How do these sentiments and preferential policies work with individual perceptions that ethnic minorities are considered backward and should remain developmentally backward compared to the Han? Further, do these perceptions that groups exist on a scale of superiority or inferiority affect how local government officials treat ethnic minority groups?

⁸⁶ Information of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, 1999

With these preferential policies comes a variety of negative feelings from the dominant groups. A notable example of this comes with university entry. Part of university entry is the entrance exam known as the National College Entrance Exam or *gaokao* (高考). Within *gaokao* scoring, there are policies that allow students in ethnic minority and rural regions to receive more points on their test or still be allowed to enter into a university despite a lower score. Further, certain ethnic minority groups are entitled to educational benefits including, “sitting exams in their own language, special minority language classes in college or university, and access to some dedicated minority-serving education institutions”⁸⁷.

A study done by Muthanna, Abdulghani, and Guoyuan interviewed students about problems with the *gaokao* and what the central Chinese government needed to reform. In this study, a participant from the Hebei province stated, “The minority students are also beneficial; although they might get an average score in the test; they are still allowed to join the universities they prefer. While it is impossible for us, the non-minority students, to be accepted to those high-ranking universities with such average scores.”⁸⁸. The decision to choose this passage from the study was because it helps explain some of the common sentiments surrounding ethnic minorities and the university entry system. These sentiments from the students in the study demonstrate that ethnic minorities appear to be less qualified compared to their Han counterparts or other minority

⁸⁷ Hannum, Emily, Xuehui An, and Hua–Yu Sebastian Cherng. “Examinations and Educational Opportunity in China: Mobility and Bottlenecks for the Rural Poor.” *Oxford Review of Education* 37, no. 2 (March 23, 2011): 267–305. Accessed April 7, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2011.559387>.

⁸⁸ Muthanna, Abdulghani, and Guoyuan Sang. “Undergraduate Chinese Students' Perspectives on Gaokao Examination: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Implications.” *International Journal of Research Studies in Education* 4, no. 5 (2015): 5. Accessed April 7, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrse.2015.1224>.

groups and still get into more prestigious universities. This is something echoed on countless social media websites such as Weibo⁸⁹.

Additionally, negative sentiments about the relaxation of the one-child policy for ethnic minorities created sterilization campaigns that infringed on the CCP's initial promise to respect the interests of ethnic minorities. Non-minority populations often described the ethnic minorities as, "...plagued by inbreeding that led to genetic inferiority. They were represented as beset by health problems, including high rates of mental illness and retardation. Their inferior maternal and infant health care was thought to produce children of low quality, with high rates of defects and deficient intelligence,"⁹⁰. Notably, former Premier Li Peng stated, "idiots breed idiots" in response to questions regarding sterilization⁹¹. Continuing the summary, even Li Peng aimed toward the "poor, uneducated, undernourished, and medically underprivileged", a large percentage of ethnic minorities part of remote and economically backward regions and this led to the belief that these backward regions and the people in them have the least developed cognitive skills compared to other regions⁹².

Erik Mueggler's book, *The Age of Wild Ghosts* explores this with a look into the Yi sterilization campaign. The book observes research taken in the 1990s, right after the implementation of the one-child policy. The local Zhizuo government (a city in the Yunnan province) determined that "every woman under the age of forty who had two or more children must be sterilized"⁹³.

⁸⁹ Brown, Miranda. A conversation between Professor Brown and I on March 22nd, 2021 greatly contributed to the section regarding minority tensions when it comes to school.

⁹⁰ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, p. 290

⁹¹ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, p. 299

⁹² Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, p. 301

⁹³ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, p. 24

Analyzing this passage demonstrates a direct opposition to the leniency granted at the beginning of the one-child policy implementation. Additionally, local government officials interact with the groups often, allowing them to dispel stereotypes about the perceptions the non-minority officials viewed. Local officials creating sterilization campaigns went against the interests and rights of minority groups. Sterilization directly impacted the energy of Yi women. The Yi believed that female sterilization would, “injure their capacities for life and labour, in addition to reproduction, by halting the flow of sexual energy through their bodies” ultimately leaving them ill and weak after stagnating with sexual energy⁹⁴. The sterilization campaigns that limited the exemptions from the one-child policy demonstrate how preferential policy is easily limited or reversed in favor of curbing the negative traits of ethnic minorities that the Chinese Communist party initially held in high regard.

With developmental policy, there is a question of whether the policy is in good faith towards improving the overall condition for ethnic minorities and the notable disparities between western China (where most ethnic minority regions are) and eastern China, or whether exploitation is coming into play. Resources used to benefit China often existed on ethnic minority lands⁹⁵. In the 17th century, this led to the gradual movement of Han people to the regions that ethnic minorities occupied and the gradual push of ethnic minorities out to more mountainous areas where the land was harder to live off of. Recently it happened in Tibet and Xinjiang. Björn Gustaffson notes that Chinese provinces located in Eastern China and areas such as the Yellow River are better suited to agricultural activities compared to western China. There, the population

⁹⁴ Mueggler, *The Age of Wild Ghosts*, 24

⁹⁵ Vox. “China's Secret Internment Camps.” YouTube. YouTube, May 7, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMkHcZ5IwjU&t=143s>.

density is high, yet there is a noticeable lack of ethnic minorities in these areas⁹⁶. Therefore, there is a possibility that these plans for water conservancy, natural resource development, and industrial development lead to a campaign to encourage the Han to continue moving west, pushing more ethnic minority groups in areas that cannot effectively sustain them. From the ethnic minority perspective, the main issue is that there is a general sense of frustration at displacement and the fact that little of the money made from development goes to ethnic minorities, instead it goes to the Han⁹⁷. Then the resources that the ethnic minority groups used for years could be used by the central government to further China's development in the country.

Overall, this look into Chinese preferential policy demonstrates that ultimately individual interpretations affect the overall implementation of policy. When it comes to the education policy and overall education status of ethnic minorities, resentments towards some of the liberties afforded to ethnic minorities create tensions between Han and non-Han students. Further, the limitations on the exemption on the one-child policy demonstrate how easy it is to revoke preferential policies when it comes down to it. Finally, the developmental preferential policies demonstrate how positive policies can turn into policies that negatively affect a group of people. While preferential policies are ultimately a positive thing for many groups, individual perceptions of groups being backward lead to negative assumptions about the groups under these policies, leading to a lackluster implementation or a shift away from these policies, furthering the apparent backwardness of these communities.

⁹⁶ Gustafsson and Li Shi, 808

⁹⁷ Brown, Miranda. A conversation between Professor Brown and I on April 18, 2021 greatly contributed to the section on ethnic minorities and development policy

In the case of India, the preferential policies translate into a system known as the reservation or quota system. As chairman of the Indian Constitutional drafting committee, Dr. Ambedkar added Article 15 under a section titled, *Right to Equality*, where the article states, “Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.”⁹⁸. Analyzing this section demonstrates the importance of advancing the rights of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The creation of this provision acknowledges the possibility that despite laid out plans for elevating these groups, loopholes and individual liberties that government officials and local administrators might take advantage of to oppress the marginalized groups. Article 15 adds a clause stating, “ Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30.”⁹⁹. Furthermore, the constitution states that the government needs to reserve a certain amount of seats for members of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in every municipality in proportion to the seats won in a direct election¹⁰⁰. These constitutional provisions are important because they provide explicit instructions to ensure that marginalized groups such as Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes will have a chance to fight in a world that historically discriminated

⁹⁸ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 15

⁹⁹ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 15

¹⁰⁰ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 243T

against them. Additionally, the constitution provides a solid demonstration of what the central Indian government will and will not tolerate to better the status of these groups.

These all led to the creation of the reservation system where Dr. Ambedkar states, “any special provision for the advancement of any economically weaker sections of citizens other than the classes mentioned in clauses (4) and (5) in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30, which in the case of reservation would be in addition to the existing reservations and subject to a maximum of ten percent. of the total seats in each category.”¹⁰¹. The passage demonstrates that the reservations were part of Indian culture from British attempts to uplift the Depressed Classes (British terminology for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes). The provisions described in Article 15 ultimately became the framework for an official reservation or quota system. This specific system allocated a certain percentage of employment opportunities, government seats, and university spots to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Because of court cases like the public litigation case, *Indra Sawhney Etc. Etc vs. Union Of India And Others*, there are limitations to the power of the quota system when it comes to promotions based on caste status¹⁰².

It is one thing to create an uplifting policy for marginalized groups, yet it is another thing to implement these types of policies. Often, there is a top-down effort to create legislation for

¹⁰¹ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 15

¹⁰² Reddy, B J. “*Indra Sawhney Etc. Etc vs Union Of India And Others, Etc.*” *Indian Kanoon*, November 16, 1992. https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1363234/?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=d345fb83b563fce67a7d-b5045fc891322a23c381-1618973915-0-AbLBYmnHDpmIWpftud2xkH5dYMWi-RwNT58IxVQN-2cO5AQPojr72593JiGEWaXKONkT5LDA2voLhrJWBa8EaIngukg-007JR4yZd-EFlc0yzve4-WildQPsBHiL_to2jl6FCDxFY3_LxGpd.

marginalized groups, but problems emerge at the mid-level where local officials and administrators refuse to implement these policies the way the central government expected the implementation. A notable example of this policy oversight comes from the 1980s with the Scheduled Caste and Tribe Atrocities Prevention Act. This law determines punishable offenses against Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste members and the punishment provided against those who commit these offenses¹⁰³. In contrast with a seemingly airtight law, there is an overall failure to implement the act for those affected through multiple channels. This includes the non-registration of cases, police biases, underreporting cases, and not providing people affected with special courts or prosecutors, and even attempts to appeal the act in certain regions (Human Rights Watch). The way minority policy is viewed in the eyes of local government, there is reason to believe that a similar situation happened with the implementation of the quota system, contributing to some of the disparities observed today.

While these policies were a step in the right direction, upper-caste Hindus often looked down on the policy. A quick internet search shows the question “does India need reservations”. The answers range from, “there is more than enough Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste representation” to “no” and the debate surrounding the question echoes one heard with preferential policies all around the world¹⁰⁴. Even with the addition of internet input, the debate remains contentious since the 1950s at the conception of the official reservation system. Upper-caste individuals found themselves believing that the reservation system was outside of meritocracy and that standards were being lowered in favor of increased representation.

¹⁰³ Shukla, 2

¹⁰⁴ Katju, Markandey. “OPINION: All Caste-Based Reservations Must Be Abolished.” *The Week*. *The Week*, July 14, 2020. <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2020/07/14/opinion-all-caste-based-reservations-must-be-abolished.html>.

A notable example of this comes from Mahar (lower-caste) lecturer Kumud Pawde (née Somkuwar). She went to school after Ambedkar-era reforms for education and describes her time when she was completing her M.A. in Sanskrit. The decision to study Sanskrit as a lower caste woman is an interesting dichotomy because Sanskrit is often considered the language used in Hindu texts and was a language taught to usually upper caste groups in India, especially Brahmin males (Sanskrit). In her time at university, she noted that upper-caste Hindu students taunted her. She explained how they said, “Even these wretched outcastes are giving themselves airs these days - studying in colleges”¹⁰⁵. Another notable example states, “One thing along irked me- the ironic comments about the scholarship I got, ‘She’s having fun and games at the expense of a scholarship. Just bloated with government money!’”¹⁰⁶. Continuing the analysis of the passage, this demonstrates how upper-caste Hindus view those in the lower castes as undeserving of the same privileges afforded to upper caste groups, using the backdrop of the university to confirm this. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the upper-castes viewed lower-caste individuals such as Pawde as playing around with scholarship money simply because she was studying a language historically considered an upper-caste language. Pawde implies that if she studied math or science, the ridicule from her upper-caste peers would not be as intense as it was during her time studying Sanskrit.

Another note is that Pawde is the writer who publishes under Kumud Pawde’s married name, and her maiden name was Somkuwar. She took her husband’s surname, which was an up-

¹⁰⁵ Pawde, Kumud. “Story of My Sanskrit.” *Poisoned Bread: Translations from Modern Marathi Literature*, edited by Arjun Dangle, (Orient Longman Limited, 1992), 103. Accessed January 27, 2020 Hathi-Trust, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015046455294>. Accessed through the University of Michigan Library

¹⁰⁶ Pawde, 103

per-caste surname after marriage. Throughout her account of these experiences, she implies that if Pawde had this surname when she studied for her M.A. in Sanskrit instead of Somkuwar, she would not have faced outright discrimination from her upper-caste peers. They would have thought it was a respectable field of study instead of a waste of time or “fun and games”. The assumption demonstrates that even though there were laws in place that helped those in Scheduled Castes and Tribes with gaining equality compared to upper caste or non-backward groups, negative connotations around these groups and their new status remained in place and people were still discriminatory towards these groups.

In the employment sphere, similar occurrences happened. Dalit author Urmila Pawar is an example of this. Her book, *Weave of my Life*, discusses life as a Mahar woman in Maharashtra and her experiences as a Dalit feminist. The book, published in 2009 focuses on her life from the 1950s to the 1990s. This was when both the Indian feminist movement and the Ambedkarite movement were in full swing. One notable passage discusses her experiences in the workplace. Here she states, “During the ten years after that, that is, up to, it was rare to hear people say, ‘Oh these low castes! No less than the sons-in-law of the government!’ or ‘They are such a pampered lot!’ or they would refer to low castes as ‘the arrogant,’ ‘the bigheaded!’ But in the roster system was introduced in government jobs, and it became mandatory to appoint Dalit and tribal candidates. The resentment against the Dalits and other reserved category people began to rise. This was the period during which such expressions began to be increasingly used against the Dalits!”¹⁰⁷. This passage is important because it demonstrates the evolution of attitudes toward caste. Pawar describes this encounter around a decade or more after the official abolishment of

¹⁰⁷ Pawar, Urmila, *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs*, (Columbia University Press, 2009), 197

the caste system and the official implementation of the quota system, demonstrating that government implementation did not immediately change individual perceptions of India's marginalized groups.

The passage demonstrates the idea of upper-caste Hindus believing the government unfairly prioritizes lower-caste Indians. This is observed in the passage, the increased resentment against the castes, and the term "government's favorite sons-in-laws". The term is akin to the term "Harijan", or "child of God" where it ironically describes lower-caste Indians' place in society. Or it negatively acknowledges the recent privileges afforded to these groups. Additionally, using the term "government's favourite sons-in-laws" as a catch-all for unfairly accusing lower caste Indians of receiving benefits they do not deserve ignores the thousands of years of oppression that both the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes faced. This belief of injustice translates into individuals who become local government officials, or members of society in power, leading to lackluster or antagonistic policy implementation of systems like the reservation system.

It is important to note that both Pawde and Pawar are authors who do not use neutral assessments of their situations to speak about their experiences. They are women who face oppression from the caste system and the patriarchy. Both write about their experiences from a place of anger at the accusations launched against them, and writing the experience out is their reprieve.

A close reading of the passage showcases an upper-caste Hindu fear that they will become part of the minority after increased representation. In a hypothetical, the fear that marginalized groups such as the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes will oppress upper-caste Hindus in similar ways that the former dominant group treated the former subordinate group. The audi-

ence observes this in the language used to describe the perception of Dalit attitudes “becoming an arrogant and big-headed lot”. Additionally, there is an element that demonstrates how upper-caste Hindus believed that marginalized groups should remain oppressed. The reader observes this in the contempt in the tone used when saying, “they are becoming a pampered lot”.

When it comes to similarities between preferential policy and China and India, the central government perspective varies from the local government adaptation. While the central government creates the plans to further marginalized group development, the local governments and individuals at a local level appear to be against implementing these policies. For China, a notable example of this is how an exemption to the one-child policy changed to a sterilization policy within a matter of years due to negative perceptions of ethnic minority groups. In India’s case, the negative perceptions of caste in its less governable forms led to resentments and negative terms such as “government’s favourite son-in-laws”. These resentments often took form in job discrimination and an overall lack of implementation on essential policies such as the Scheduled Caste and Tribe Prevention of Atrocities Act.

Another notable similarity is how preferential policies are resented by the non-marginalized groups. In China’s case, the preferential policies that come into education, standardized testing, and university entry lead to negative stereotypes about minority groups that fail to account for the notable disparities between Han/non-Han and inter-ethnic education. For India’s case, marginal status and caste come into play for the way educational systems treat their marginalized students. Kumud Pawde and her experiences working on her M.A. in Sanskrit is a notable example of this as students mocked her simply for her last name. This became a problem as she searched for a job and the search was futile until she married and adopted an upper-caste sur-

name. Overall, these behaviors and perceptions surrounding preferential policy for both countries demonstrate the way that a commitment to furthering equality between groups and preserving the interests of marginalized groups can quickly be thrown out the window in favor of maintaining the status quo.

Despite similarities in the way the government views marginalized groups and preferential policy, China and India diverge in the way they implement preferential policy to impact their marginalized groups. The Chinese government takes a more interventionist standpoint which is observed in the way central and local governments communicate. The Chinese central government will communicate what results they want to achieve and then the local government will work to implement this. Additionally, there are established tensions between minority groups that also perpetuate negative perceptions of how these groups should act. According to Katherine Dimmery, there were complaints from multiple groups in southwest China on how Tibetians in the area received unfair advantages in university entry (Dimmery, 4/8/2021). These perceptions lead to a perception that it is okay for non-Han individuals to perpetuate the narrative that these groups are undeserving of their spots in university classrooms, which further perpetuates negative stereotypes that become internalized.

On the other hand, India's policy implementation remains fundamentally at the local level implementation. Since India is a country of one billion people, the central government cannot effectively govern as a democracy unless it takes on autocratic tendencies (Varshney, 2014). Therefore, the central government leaves all of the implementations to state and local administrators. Realistically, who would check their power? As observed by the Human Rights Watch, there are active attempts by local-level officials to deter the use of important Caste and Tribal policy.

Additionally, the tension appears to mainly exist between upper-caste groups and marginalized instead of intra-group tensions. This is observed in the way both upper-caste university students and employees interacted with lower-caste individuals.

Education

Even with the promotion of private schools, and other institutions, education remains an aspect of government oversight. This is because governments decide on the school curriculum, funding, and resources. But what happens when there are disparities between the quality of education and the education levels of the group receiving education? More importantly, how do the central and local governments' views of these groups impact the quality of education they receive compared to less marginalized groups? In the context of this chapter, the central government includes along with national-level ruling political parties. Local governments refer to local government officials, civil servants, and administrators like teachers. This chapter focuses on the intersection between education policy, local administrative perceptions, and marginalized communities like the Scheduled Castes and ethnic minorities. China and India utilize education as a double-edged sword. It is a tool for progress, but also a way to subordinate marginalized groups. This occurs through multiple methods such as administrative overreach, education that promotes the values of the dominant group and reinforcement of disparities in resources.

China's treatment of ethnic minorities within schools widely varies. Despite central government concessions planned out for ethnic minorities that favored regional languages and cultures, the central and local Chinese government still emphasizes a Han-centric education. With earlier noticeable educational and socioeconomic disparities between the Han and ethnic minori-

ties, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) wrote a report about the effects of regional autonomy for ethnic minorities in 2005 called *Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in 2005*. China's minority policy assumes the backwardness of the country's ethnic minorities, outlines several methods toward advancing rights for ethnic minorities, and explains the work the central government put in to ensure that ethnic minorities became socially mobile.

A notable passage in the 2005 memo called, *Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China* states, "The regions inhabited by ethnic minorities in compact communities are large and rich in natural resources. But compared with other regions, particularly with developed regions, the level of economic and social development in these regions is relatively backward"¹⁰⁸. Analyzing the passage illuminates how the central Chinese government fails to acknowledge the history surrounding these groups and the Han issues that led to this disparity. Furthermore, the concept that groups are socially backward held ethnic minorities to a Han standard that minority groups do not perceive within themselves. Education serves as a way to impose the values of the dominant group in the area. There is a possibility that the government is stating its concern over the perceived backwardness of minorities. But the line between concern and patronization blurs as the central government views ethnic minorities through a predominantly Han lens.

According to the central government, "Schools (classes) and other educational institutions whose students are predominantly from ethnic minority families should, if possible, use textbooks printed in their own languages, and lessons should be taught in those languages. Chinese language courses shall be offered at different times of the primary school period depending on

¹⁰⁸ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. *Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China (2005)*. People's Republic of China, 2005. http://english1.english.gov.cn/official/2005-07/28/content_18127.htm.

the particular situation, to propagate the use of putonghua (standard speech)”¹⁰⁹. Overall, the central government recommendation’s suggestion demonstrates a commitment toward emphasizing minority education. Yet, the ideas surrounding this fail to account for at least thirty years of disparities and history between the Han and ethnic minorities after the CCP incorporated ethnic minorities into the People’s Republic of China.

An example of the previous suggestion comes from the parallel school system. According to Anwei Feng, the parallel school system is when there are two types of schools in an autonomous region, with one school being primarily taught in Mandarin, and then another school being taught in the local language such as Uyghur, Mongolian, or Tibetan¹¹⁰. The conception of the school system was in response to a statement in the 1952 People’s Republic of China, stating, “every nationality has the freedom to use and develop its own language”¹¹¹. While this was centrally stated, the concept of bilingual schools varied across provinces. This is due in part to the emphasis on local implementation of central government policy. Goals for parallel systems varied between provinces, yet the CCP talked about how they wanted to protect ethnic minorities while also allowing those in autonomous regions to begin to assimilate into Han culture.

However, there are problems with this method since there is more weight placed on Mandarin schools. Often, Mandarin schools were considered ordinary or modern schools compared to minority language schools. Further, there is still an effort to emphasize the use of standard Chi-

¹⁰⁹ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. *Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China*, 2005

¹¹⁰ Feng, Anwei. “Bilingualism for the Minor or the Major? An Evaluative Analysis of Parallel Conceptions in China.” *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 8, no. 6 (2005): 531. Accessed March 12, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050508669067>.

¹¹¹ Feng, 531

nese in autonomous regions instead of local languages. The emphasis pushes a narrative that Mandarin (*Hanyu putonghua*), is the standard for civility, sophistication, and universality. This comes in many forms including failing to provide the same level of education in minority languages, underqualified teachers, and resources that do not fit central standards of education¹¹². Essentially, good teachers are unwilling to go into areas hit by these disparities, leading to several problems. Refusal to promote the importance of minority language education and physically prioritizing Han-centric education, the local government sends a message to ethnic minorities that their culture is backward and should not be promoted in a school system.

Even in ethnic minority education, the central government has strict expectations that become part of the curriculum. Both the local and central governments believe that ethnic minorities remain culturally and socially backward. Katherine Dimmery's observations in Yunnan, a southwestern Chinese province that is a hub for ethnic minorities contribute to an understanding of policy implementation on the ground. Due to tourist development, there is a sense that the government values minority culture, and to emphasize this the government monetizes the culture, opening it to tourists while giving ethnic minorities strict definitions about how they are supposed to act. The act of defining occurs in training classes where government officials retrain ethnic minority peasants to act in the way expected of them. If these groups behave outside of government perceptions, both local and central officials view them as ungrateful or confused. While this is not part of typical K-12 education, this is education that public education often does not reach¹¹³.

¹¹² Rong, Ma. "Bilingual Education for China's Ethnic Minorities." *Chinese Education & Society* 40, no. 2 (2007): 9–25. <https://doi.org/10.2753/ced1061-1932400201>.

¹¹³ Dimmery, Katherine 3/11/2021

While transitioning this type of system, there was a pattern observed in public schools in ethnic minority areas. According to Dimmery, students born in the 1980-the 1990s often faced terrible school conditions. On top of that, teachers taught in a local language, yet there was a heavy emphasis on Chinese. She describes an experience where one of her contacts happened to be part of this education system. He explained that he went through primary school, but he could not retain a large amount of knowledge from this because his teachers spoke in Mandarin instead of the local languages he was familiar with¹¹⁴. This experience reinforces the idea that even local administrators, such as teachers, perpetuate this mindset that the Han are the superior group. This idea is known as the Great Han mentality and features individuals perceiving minority groups as “primitive, intellectually underdeveloped, and economically dependent,” often leading to attempts that marginalize students who seek education¹¹⁵. Connecting the Great Han mentality to the student and his experiences demonstrates how the school marginalized the student, and his teachers viewed his language as primitive. The marginalization occurs because the teacher refused to acknowledge that the students might have different levels of fluency in standard Mandarin and taught them in a way that worked best for the teacher.

In addition to this, Chinese history textbooks still attribute mythologized and backward perceptions of ethnic minorities. An example of this comes from a textbook where the central government describes ethnic minorities as, “You must be very curious about their unique languages and want to know their customs and habits and understand their history and life. Let’s enter the big family of minzu to discover the amazing charm of different minzu with wise eyes,

¹¹⁴ Dimmery, Katherine. I had a conversation with her on April 8th, 2021 that greatly improved the section on inter-ethnic pecking order, graphic pejoratives, education and preferential policy. She is a graduate student at the university of Michigan

¹¹⁵ Feng, 533

hear their attractive songs with smart ears, and feel the good emotions of loving the motherland shared by all minzu brothers and sisters with pure hearts,”¹¹⁶.

Analyzing this passage, the perception of ethnic minorities by the Chinese textbooks treats them like they are quaint, childlike groups who need the support of the Han to integrate themselves into society, reflecting the promotion of Han chauvinism. Han chauvinism is the idea that China is becoming a Han-centric society and that the Han are supposed to act as stewards toward the country’s ethnic minorities¹¹⁷. Overall, this mindset reinforces negative ideas about ethnic minorities and creates negative implications for these groups as administrators such as local officials and teachers navigate educational content. Further, the idea of a big family of *minzu* (民族) (ethnicities) treats the groups as if they are all on the same level and have mutualistic relationships. In reality, the relationship between the Han and ethnic minorities portrays itself as a relatively hierarchical relationship. In addition to that, the relationships between ethnic minorities vary. The loving motherland appears as a caretaker instead of a group of government officials looking down on these minority groups. Furthermore, the active mythologization (ex. “You must be very curious about their unique languages and want to know their customs and habits and understand their history and life”) of these groups perpetuates stereotypes that the government uses to infantilize these groups in multiple settings.

Another notable feature of Chinese education policy with ethnic minorities is the ability of autonomous regional governments to determine their academic policies. According to the *Re-*

¹¹⁶ Chu, Yiting. “Constructing Minzu: the Representation of Minzu and Zhonghua Minzu in Chinese Elementary Textbooks.” *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 39, no. 6 (April 3, 2017): 945. Accessed March 12, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2017.1310715>.

¹¹⁷ Friend, John M., and Bradley A. Thayer. “The Rise of Han-Centrism and What It Means for International Politics.” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 17, no. 1 (2017): 94. Accessed April 17, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.12223>.

gional Autonomy of Ethnic Minorities page, the government notes, “Organs of self-government of autonomous areas determine the educational plan, the establishment of schools, school system, the forms by which schools are run, curricula, language of teaching and method of enrollment, in accordance with principles concerning education and legal provisions of the state.”¹¹⁸. The passage is important because the language used to shift all of the responsibility on the local governments rather than the central government. Instead of creating a standard learning curriculum, the central government urges local governments to adopt policies that reflect the demographics of the region. There are some positives to this policy including the fact that it accounts for the educational disparities in different areas. Despite the perceived positive aspects of the policy, it creates room for multiple errors to occur.

The idea that autonomous areas should determine their educational plan shows how the central government both places their ideals of how ethnic minorities should be taught while also allowing autonomous regions to implement education plans. Yet within minority-dense regions, there are multiple problems with the school systems in place there. Textbooks for ethnic minorities are often outdated. Further, schools within autonomous and ethnic minority regions did not open when schools in Han majority areas did. An example of this is the fact that Tibet’s first modern school did not come into existence until 1951. Additionally, teaching materials did not come into Tibet until the 1960s¹¹⁹. Additionally, there were issues with finding ethnic minority teachers for a certain period due to the previously mentioned issues.

¹¹⁸ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. *Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China*, 2005

¹¹⁹ Rong, 17

This led to large education disparities between ethnic minorities and the Han. Local education impacts minorities and if they face the conditions discussed above when they become local officials, they may find themselves at a loss for handling educational minority policy, causing schools to fall behind. When schools fail to meet the national standards of education, the central government can easily blame local governments rather than acknowledge the historical issues that the Han government brought to the area and the initial educational development problems faced.

On the other side of the spectrum, if local government officials are Han rather than ethnic minorities, Han officials could hold ethnic minorities in contempt or within the mental image created from various culture education campaigns, and negative stereotypes that portray these groups as backward. Leading to policy implementation where the Han government keeps ethnic minorities at an educational disadvantage for the sake of keeping ethnic minorities socially and economically backward. Ethnic minority government officials easily contribute to this when the central government educates them through ethnic minority culture classes. This plays into the idea of Han Chauvinism and the translation of these ideas into government policy.

On the other hand, the Indian government's relationship with ethnic minorities maintains multiple discriminatory practices to fight against perceived injustices against upper-caste Hindus. There is a perception by the central government, local government officials, and civil administrators such as teachers that Indian marginalized groups do not need education. This affects their treatment of these marginalized groups. For the last 2,000 years, education was often limited to the upper castes such as Brahmin, Ksatriya, and Vaishya men, leaving Dalits out of the conversation for years. After work done by the Dalit Panthers, Dr. Ambedkar, and other activists, the

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were allowed in schools with upper-caste Indians. Articles 46 and 30 codify this change with Article 46 stating, “The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation”¹²⁰. Analyzing this article, the idea of promoting the special care and economic interests of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes appears to acknowledge the perceived backwardness of the groups and demonstrates that the central government is willing to do whatever it takes to bring these groups up to level.

As with China, scholars and activists suggest inherent biases towards these groups because of the perception that they are weaker than the rest of society. While there are fewer instances of outright exploitation of these groups compared to present-day ethnic minorities, I believe that there are still perceptions of Scheduled Castes and Tribes that infantilize them. If they do not fit into the perceived image that the Indian government, administrators, and local government officials view, then these actors will feel less inclined to help these students out in educational settings, which leads to a large amount of the disparities society observes.

Further, the constitution adds, “The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.”¹²¹. The passage demonstrates a government commitment toward ensuring discrimination against Scheduled Castes and Tribes does not occur as a way to account for the years of discrimination the groups faced by ensuring that

¹²⁰ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 46

¹²¹ The Constitutional Drafting Committee of India, *The Constitution of India*, 1950, Art. 30

the Central government cannot discriminate against minority institutions. Even though it explicitly states religion or language, Dalits are included in this group because they are occasionally part of the religious minority as a proportion who converted to Buddhism exist. However, the central and local governments can turn a blind eye against the minority concept due to roots in Hindu nationalism that still consider these groups to be Hindu instead of religions outside of the majority. Taking these factors into consideration, what happens to students who are minorities in individual schools as they navigate an upper-caste world?

Overall, the government appears to keep its promise to the Scheduled Castes and tribes toward economic development. India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment created fellowships, free coaching, and pre-matric scholarships for caste and tribal families¹²². There are also several economic initiatives created that provide Indian marginalized groups with 100% funding if they exhibit relative backwardness. The problem with this is, the idea of backwardness is the idea that the dominant group projects onto the subaltern group. What one group might consider progress might be considered backwardness to another group. Further, the idea of backwardness is ultimately a concept that is used to subjugate other groups by othering these groups and leads to the question of what constitutes backwardness? Additionally, as we observed historically with the Scheduled Tribe Atrocity Prevention Act and its implementation (or lack thereof), even if there are laws to help against caste discrimination, administrators or local officials do not feel obligated to implement these policies.

¹²² Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. "About the Division ." Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment . Government of India. Accessed March 12, 2021. <http://socialjustice.nic.in/UserView/index?mid=19536>.

Within an individual school level, there is plenty of grounds for discrimination. An example of this comes from the autobiography written by Omprakash Valmiki called *Joothan*. Valmiki is part of the generation that grew up in the aftermath of the Ambedkarite movement and the Constitution's drafting. Valmiki published *Joothan* in 1997, eight years after the Scheduled Caste and Tribe Atrocity Prevention act. The timeline is important because it demonstrates the disconnect between government policy and its implementation. A significant section of the autobiography centers on his experiences as a student in an integrated upper-caste and lower-caste school. One passage stands out where he states, "Gandhiji's uplifting of the untouchables was having ramifications everywhere. Although the doors of the government schools had begun to open for untouchables, the mentality of the ordinary people had not changed much. I had to sit away from the others in the class, and even that wasn't enough. I was not allowed to sit on a chair or a bench. I had to sit on the bare floor; I was not allowed even to sit on the mat. Sometimes I would have to sit way behind everybody, right near the door. From there, the letters on the board seemed faded."¹²³ Analyzing the passage helps the reader understand how Valmiki is treated poorly because of caste, highlighting the direct effects of using a marginalized group for political gain while highlighting the disparities Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes face in schools.

As discussed in the Terminology chapter, Gandhi and other members of the Indian National Congress (INC) worked together to create a visibility campaign for untouchables through terminology changes and entry movements where Gandhi led the untouchables through temples, schools, and other institutions¹²⁴. However, these attempts were ultimately performative to

¹²³ Valmiki, Omprakash. "One." Translated by Arun Mukherjee. *Joothan: A Dalit's Life*, (Columbia University Press, 1997), 45

¹²⁴ Rao, 65

demonstrate to the rest of the world how the Indian National Congress was the face of India. The one behind the scenes who made the dream of integrated schools a reality was Dr. Ambedkar in his role as the head of the Constitutional Drafting Committee. Nehru and Gandhi offered the role because Dr. Ambedkar spoke out against Gandhi's Temple Entry movement and they feared Dr. Ambedkar would separate the untouchables and Adivasis from the rest of India in a move similar to Mohammed Ali Jinnah and the creation of Pakistan¹²⁵. These movements led to increased visibility of the marginalized groups, but Dr. Ambedkar's work on the constitution cemented a place for marginalized groups in India and secured the rights. However, most of the education needs focused on upper-caste students and paid little attention to the needs of the marginalized groups. This was because most of the Indian education system was inspired by the British and had upper-caste Hindus determine the overall education system¹²⁶.

In a way, the relationship between an upper-caste teacher and their lower caste student echoes the *Mahabharata* story of Eklavya and Dronacharya. The 4th century C.E. *Mahabharata* is a Hindu epic with multiple stories¹²⁷. This story features Eklavya, son of a lower caste king, Dronacharya, a Brahmin (upper-caste) teacher, and Arjun, an upper-caste student. Dronacharya encourages Eklavya to cut his thumb off to become a perfect disciple. Continuing with the summary, when higher caste individuals tell the story, they discuss Eklavya's sacrifice and praise Dronacharya for his actions, while lower caste people feel that Eklavya's treatment parallels their

¹²⁵ Gaikwad, 517

¹²⁶ Viswanathan, Gauri. "The Beginnings of English Literary Study in British India." *Oxford Literary Review* 9, no. 1/2 (1987):10. Accessed April 18, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43973679>.

¹²⁷ Basu, Anindita. "Mahabharata." *World History Encyclopedia*. World History Encyclopedia, April 25, 2021. <https://www.worldhistory.org/Mahabharata/>.

own¹²⁸. Analyzing the text is significant in upper-caste Hindu circles because people often use this relationship to define the relationship between teacher and student. In Valmiki's life, the teacher discusses the story when talking about how Dronacharya fed his son flour and water (mar) instead of milk because of poverty. The passage describes how the upper-caste students responded with, "great emotion of this story of Dronacharya's dire poverty,"¹²⁹. In response to this Valmiki asked, "...but what about us who had to drink mar, rice water? How come we were never mentioned in any epic?"¹³⁰. The teacher was furious and forced him to squat in a rooster position before beating Valmiki instead of continuing with the lesson¹³¹. Here, the teacher forces Valmiki to sit on the floor away from others and hinders his education. The teacher appears to believe that they are fulfilling their duty to place lower caste students in the periphery while prioritizing upper-caste students and their feelings.

Analyzing the passage, the teacher's decision to treat Valmiki as less than human demonstrates how both the central and local governments treat Indian marginalized groups as political tools. The teacher in the story could allow Valmiki to share a desk with someone or take him off the floor. Yet the teacher refused to do this and instead treated him as subhuman. Two layers surround this passage. On one hand, the teacher's treatment of Valmiki demonstrates sentiments that those in the Scheduled Castes should not be on the same level as upper-caste Hindus (in Valmiki's case, it is physical).

¹²⁸ Mukherjee, XLII

¹²⁹ Valmiki, 26

¹³⁰ Valmiki, 26

¹³¹ Valmiki, 26-27

In contrast, refusing to treat Valmiki in the same way as his other students, the teacher demonstrates how he does not believe that lower-caste students should be afforded the same opportunities as upper-caste students. This confirms the tension between the legal implications versus the cultural implications of marginalized group reform. While the central government made schools accept lower-caste students, local officials and administrators did not have to treat them properly. That way, if the student drops out of school, the local government will not blame the teacher for being antagonistic, instead, the teacher could blame the work ethnic and negative perceptions of the lower-caste student. The teacher's treatment of Valmiki could be seen as a protest against the government's sudden movements towards equality that went against thousands of years of caste oppression.

Overall, this treatment in education demonstrates how the religious narrative affects sentiments toward these groups. Even as a secular country, local government officials use religious texts like the Mahabharata to justify their poor treatment of lower-caste students. Teachers and local officials use religion in education to treat lower-caste students poorly. On one hand, the central government uses education as a political tool to create progress in typically underserved demographics. Yet it also has potential for figures in the system to initiate rebellion, while centering marginalized groups in favor of upper caste narratives. Further, if marginalized groups do not act in the way they are expected to, then the teachers and administration will look at these groups with disdain and do whatever is in their power to keep the groups disadvantaged.

The way both China and India treat their marginalized groups share many similarities. To begin, both governments use their perceptions of each group to fuel their policy. In China's case, the government perpetuates and maintains the idea that ethnic minorities (especially in South-

west China and the autonomous regions) are backward. Whereas in India's case, the upper-caste government often uses its marginalized groups to further a political agenda. The perceptions lead to policy that appears progressive (such as China's laws on education in autonomous regions, and India's non-discriminatory education policies). But the law's ambiguity leads to large-scale interpretations by the dominant groups that hurt these groups instead of helping them.

Further, both central governments believe coddling their marginalized groups is essential, yet provide little incentive to help these groups. Both governments acknowledge the relative backwardness of ethnic minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes. The Chinese government describes the dismal state these groups were in before the Chinese Communist Party helped them develop. Throughout the Indian Constitution, there are several references in multiple articles that call the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes "weaker groups." Despite this and despite the amount of government policy that focuses on these groups, disparities between the groups exist. This is because of problems on an individual level with actors such as teachers or local government officials who use education to rebel against central government policy. Local officials who negatively perceive marginalized groups rebel, taking measures such as providing low-quality resources, or withholding funding from students who demonstrate financial hardship because they do not seem "backward enough". Another component of rebellion is with the teachers on the ground who may not have the level of education to effectively teach or actively discriminate against marginalized students in mixed classrooms.

While there are overarching similarities between the Chinese government's treatment of ethnic minorities and the Indian government's treatment of its marginalized groups in the educa-

tion sphere. Both groups have areas that they focus on and areas that they take a step back from. However, these areas vary for both governments.

In China's case, the emphasis on education for the ethnic minority groups comes from both the central government and the local governments. The reader observes this in the education campaigns the central government created towards creating perceptions of ethnic minorities, the use of tourism to perpetuate the idea of minority backwardness, and the parallel education system. Further observations in the idea of local governments determining educational policy in autonomous regions instead of the central government, determining which schools to prioritize, what resources to use, and what is considered the standard for Han and ethnic minority groups confirm the Han domination of minority education. The reader assumes that local government officials are the teachers holding the culture education classes that are an aspect of education outside of public education.

On the other hand, the central Indian government appears to be the group pushing for change while the local government officials and actors drag their feet against policy implementation. However, note that the central government's push for change comes out of fear of secession and disunity rather than benevolent intentions. The attitude of Omprakash Valmiki's teacher during Valmiki's school days confirms the lack of policy implementation on the local level when it pertains to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Conclusion

This thesis seeks to answer the question, "how does the government perception of marginalized groups affect the overall treatment of groups?". When researching this question in the

context of China and India, understanding this question requires a search that encompasses history, general attitudes, and current policies. I conclude that historical and individual biases are the most important factors for understanding this question. Overall, historical and individual biases create negative perceptions that both central and local governments follow while pursuing equality for their marginalized groups. These perceptions lead to common stereotypes individuals internalize. When individuals become central or local government officials, the biases come out when implementing policy or justifying continual oppression. I argue that the Chinese and Indian central and local governments ethnic minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes as backward, lazy, and undeveloped. To combat this, the governments infantilize these groups and their needs and fail to provide resources to help with adjustment to a changing world through sensitive preferential policy and performative activist campaigns.

Historical factors create stereotypes that remain relevant in the eyes of the dominant group. Examples of this include the fact that Han individuals or ethnic minority individuals believe that certain groups are considered backward or exacerbate backwardness in China. In India, the idea rears its head in upper-caste conceptions that Scheduled Tribes or Scheduled Castes receive the special treatment they do not deserve, or these groups are “unclean” and are not part of society. Overall, these historical biases live on through narratives perpetuated by the dominant groups and spread through media and education.

Once these biases are ingrained into culture, they are everywhere. Anyone has access to them no matter if they are from the marginalized or dominant group. It becomes problematic when people with these inherent biases come into spaces where they are in a position of power. When they grow up with negative connotations about marginalized groups, they internalize

them, and this will color the interactions they have for the rest of their lives if the perceptions go unchecked.

In terms of terminology and activism movements, the intersection between history and individual biases comes in full force. When it comes to China, negative terminology associated with ethnic minority groups later affects perceptions of these groups that remain with them in the present. In India, the negative connotations surrounding Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes led to reforms that remained politicized and performative. The individual biases of actors like Gandhi placed these groups at the periphery of their policy, ensuring they remain servile instead of creating a path for them to become equals.

With preferential policies, the negative connotations associated with the groups emerged as central and local governments easily created, failed to implement, or revoked the status that came with these preferential policies. In China's case, preferential policies created resentment over ethnic minority treatment, led to an infringement on liberties afforded to groups, and opened the door for both cultural and economic exploitation over the fact that the groups were seen as backward compared to the rest of China. For India, preferential policies led to upper-caste frustration that translated to a lack of implementation and increasingly antagonistic attempts to ensure that the marginalized groups did not receive the benefits they needed.

The similarities between the Chinese and Indian government perceptions of their marginalized groups manifest in their treatment of the groups, local discrimination from dominant groups to marginalized groups, and overall negative perspective that the groups are backward. However, there are two notable differences. Within Chinese perceptions, the idea of inter-group discontent is available as seen between the Yi and Naxi, within Indian perceptions tend to focus

more on the divide between upper and lower caste groups. Additionally, there was an active politicization of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe struggles over the last 2,000 years, which was not part of Chinese history.

While these historical, political, and social reasons provide clarity to minority rights in both nations, there are nuances in each group's situation partly based on the factors stated above. Both countries have positives and negatives in their policy implementation for ethnic minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes. But a lot of the policy implementation or lack thereof stems from individual biases or holding the dominant group accountable with threats. At the end of the day, both nations have a long way to go to implement policies that positively uphold the rights of ethnic minorities. These positive implementations will not be able to happen once each country acknowledges the problems with perceptions and biases that affect the way central level officials, local level, and administrators implement policy or treat the groups directly affected by the policy.