



Nandanar's Children: The Paraiyans' Tryst with Destiny, Tamil Nadu 1850 - 1956 (SAGE Series in Modern Indian History)

Raj Sekhar Basu

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The narrative of this book is built around the historical experiences of the Paraiyars of Tamil Nadu. The author traces the transformation of the Paraiyars from an 'untouchable' and socially despised community to one that came to acquire prominence in the political scene of Tamil Nadu, especially in early 20th century. Through this framework, the book studies a number of issues: subaltern history, colonial ethnography, agrarian systems, agrarian bondage, land legislations, and the interventions by missionaries and social and political organizations.

While delving into the Paraiyar community's own understanding of history, the book presents the conflicting versions of Adi Dravida politicians and nationalist politics. It establishes that nationalism still serves as the overarching framework under which caste, class and other forms of competing identities operate in the Indian state. It presents a rare amalgamation of government, private and vernacular sources, which adds to its distinctive quality.



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