The word “Dalit” is derived from the Sanskrit for ‘broken.’ It signifies ‘oppressed’ and is used synonymously with ‘Untouchables’ who were considered the ‘impure’ caste. Although the Indian constitution bans ‘untouchability’ and discrimination on the basis of caste, the phenomenon still continues in complex and myriad ways.

**Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015**

**SYMPOSIUM**

**Location:** Heller School, Room G02

12 noon to 2 pm

The symposium will explore various issues surrounding the caste system and its impact on Indian society, culture, politics, the state and law and current strategies for resistance and liberation from its more adverse effects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Introduction and Welcome</td>
<td>Nilambar Nayak, MA student in Sustainable International Development and Research Assistant, Brandeis Center for Global Development and Sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:05-12:15</td>
<td>Framing the Contemporary Discourse on the Caste System in India: Toward an Ethics of a Civil Debate</td>
<td>Rajesh Sampath, Assistant Professor of Philosophy of Justice, Rights and Social Change, and core member of the Brandeis Center for Global Development and Sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15</td>
<td>The Caste System and Ancient Indian Society</td>
<td>Tanoj Meshram, Civil Rights Activist, PhD student in Social Policy, and Researcher, Brandeis Center for Global Development and Sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20</td>
<td>Excerpts from “Untouchability &amp; Casteism (Castes) Still EXISTS even Today in India- 2014</td>
<td>Nilambar Nayak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12:50 Panel discussion
- Laurence Simon, Professor of International Development and Director, Brandeis Center for Global Development and Sustainability
- Rajesh Sampath, Assistant Professor
- Others to be announced

1:55 Closing Remarks
Rajesh Sampath, Assistant Professor

FILM on the LIFE AND LEGACY of the DALIT LEADER: DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR

Friday, February 6, 2015
Location: Heller School, Room G02
12 noon to 2 pm

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956) was born into the lowest stratum of Indian Hindu Society as an “Untouchable” or Dalit. Untouchables were considered the ‘impure’ caste; they were systematically deprived of basic rights including freedom from discrimination; equal opportunities in education, health and high-skilled labor. They continue to suffer forms of marginalization such as segregation in many public and social spaces.

From this group arose B.R. Ambedkar. Despite his caste background as an “untouchable” he graduated from Columbia University and the London School of Economics with two doctorates and was admitted to the bar in the U.K.

As a multifaceted polymath, who was proficient in law, economics and social reform, Ambedkar served as the Member of British Government of India’s cabinet before independence. Subsequently he joined the national government as independent India’s first Law Minister. Commonly regarded as the main author of the Indian Constitution, he was Chairman of the Constitutional Drafting Committee for what would shape the nation’s judicial and legal structures.

AFTER THE FILM, THERE WILL BE A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUDIENCE LED BY:

- Heller PhD student, Tanoj Meshram
- MA/SID student Nilambar Nayak
- Professor Rajesh Sampath
- Professor Laurence Simon

For more information please contact: Nilambar Nayak, nilambar@brandeis.edu

1 The word “Dalit” is derived from the Sanskrit word which means ‘broken’ but signifying ‘oppressed and is used synonymously for Untouchables. The Constitutional name for Untouchables is Scheduled Castes (SCs).