

DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR AND DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of the study is to analyze and evaluate critically the idea of B.R.Ambedkar, the great Indian constitution maker, regarding Indian democracy and to capture the position of Ambedkar on issues whose relevance is even felt at present. Analyzing the idea of democracy of Ambedkar in details, it can be found out that Ambedkar had unshakeable faith in democracy. In his conception of exploitation less society, democracy has an extra-ordinary role which he defined as 'one person, one vote'; and 'one vote, one value'. Democracy means empowerment of any person for participating in the process of decision-making relating to her/him, democracy means liberty, equality and fraternity - Ambedkar's definition of democracy had such a tone. This research gives closer and analytical insight into the thoughts of Ambedkar and provides an answer to the question of whether we, the Indian, achieve religious tolerance, human equality and freedom, true democracy, gender respect in the society, justice and peace in the light of political philosophy of Ambedkar whose memory will ever guide the nation on the path of justice, liberty and equality.

KEYWORDS: Educational endowments , Agrahars, mathas.

INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956), 'a symbol of revolt' (as mentioned by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India), was one of the front-ranking nation-builders of modern India. He is popularly known as the 'pioneer' who initiated the 'liberation movement' of roughly sixty-five million untouchables of India. Yet, Dr. Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian Constitution, notwithstanding all handicaps of birth, has made, by pursuit of knowledge in the humanities, social sciences, politics and law, an indelible imprint on the body politic of the country. A glance of his copious writings would evidently show that despite his preoccupations with the problems of the *dalits* (Untouchables),

Ambedkar has in his own way, made significant contributions to the contemporary political ideas. B.R.Ambedkar stood apart from his well-known famous contemporaries of India in three respects. First, being a great scholar, social revolutionary and statesman, he had in himself a combination of these attributes that one rarely possesses which made him distinguished from other intellectual personalities of that time. As an intellectual, gigantic personality and creative writer, he had imbibed knowledge that was truly encyclopedic. The range of topics, width of vision, depth and sophistication of analysis, rationality of outlook and essential humanity of the arguments that he came-up with made him different from his illustrious contemporaries.

Secondly, Ambedkar never wrote merely for literary purpose. In his scholarly pursuit as in his political activities, he was driven by a desire to comprehend the vital issues of his time and to find solutions to the problems of Indian society. With this motivation, he intervened, at times decisively in shaping the social, economic and political development of the nation during its formative stage. There was hardly any issue that arose between the early 1920s and the mid-1950s in India to which Ambedkar did not apply his razor-sharp analysis, whether it was the question of minorities, reorganization of states, partition, constitution or the political and economic framework for an independent India.

The third unique aspect of Ambedkar lies with the nature and kind of questions he delved into. What is probably most important in a thinker and intellectual is not so much the answer they provide but the question they raised. Ambedkar raised the questions that were simultaneously relevant and uncomfortable. Relevant as they were critical for the nation-in the making and uncomfortable as very few were willing to acknowledge the existence of those issues. Ambedkar raised certain pressing issues in his characteristic style that no one was willing to take up or deal with. In course of his public life over three decades, Ambedkar was fully convinced that politics should be the instrument to fight for justice in adorning all sections of the Indian people with freedom.

2. GENERAL CONNOTATION OF DEMOCRACY:

Democracy is the most valued and also the indistinct political terms in the modern world. The ancient Greek word 'democracy' means rule by the *dem*, which can be translated as either 'the people; or 'the mole' depending on one's ideological preference. By itself, democracy means little more than that, in some undefined sense, political power is ultimately in the hands of the whole adult population and that no smaller group has the right to rule. Democracy can only take on a more useful meaning when qualified by one of the other word with which it is associated, for example, liberal democracy, representative democracy, participatory democracy or direct democracy. Although all free societies are democratic, democracies can fail to protect individual freedom. Countries are generally considered democratic to the extent that they have fair and frequent elections in which nearly all adults have the right to vote, citizens have the right to vote, citizens have the right to form and join organizations and to express themselves in alternative sources of information existed. Architects of democracy must determine the constitutional structure that best suits the needs of a particular country, alternative forms of constitutional democracy include parliamentary versus presidential forms of government, plurality versus proportional representation system and federal versus unitary systems.

3. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S IDEA OF DEMOCRACY IN INDIAN CONTEXT:

According to Ambedkar, democracy means fundamental changes in the social and economic life of the people and the acceptance of those changes by the people without resorting to disputes and bloodshed. He wanted to establish the principle of one man, one vote and one value not only in the political life of India but also in social and economic life.

According to Ambedkar, the aim of democracy is essentially need for the interest of society as a whole, and not for any class, group or community. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar, while speaking on "conditions precedent for the successful working of Democracy", in Poona, emphasized that, "The first condition which I think is a condition precedent for the successful working of democracy is that there must be no glaring inequities in the society. There must not be an oppressed class. There must not be a suppressed class. There must not be a class which has got the entire privileges ad a class which has got all the burdens to carry. Such a thing, such a division, such an organization of society has within itself the germs of a bloody revolution and perhaps it would be impossible for democracy to cure them." To him, real democracy is opposed to the suppression of minorities. The suppression and exploitation of minorities in any form is the negation of democracy and humanism. If suppression is not stopped, then democracy degenerates into tyranny. Ambedkar holds that the individual in society is an end in him and he has certain inalienable right in social relationship, which must be guaranteed to him by the consumption on certain reasonable conditions and be protected by the state.

He attaches importance to human well being and human rights. The essence of democracy, to Ambedkar, is that as many members of a society as far as possible should share in the exercise of human rights. It means that there should be equal opportunities for all citizens and harmony among the claims of each person. Discrimination in human rights is the very negation of social and political democracy. Thus, Ambedkar puts emphasis on equality, and liberty of human rights. According to Ambedkar, parliamentary democracy has all the marks of a popular Government, a government of the people, by the people and for the people. In parliamentary democracy, there is the executive who is subordinate to the limitative and

bound to obey the legislative. The Judiciary can control both the executive and legislative and keep them both within prescribed bounds. Ambedkar says, parliamentary democracy has not been at a standstill. It was progressed in three directions. It began with equality of political rights by expanding in the form of equal suffrage. Secondly, it has recognized the principle of equality of social and economic opportunities. Thirdly, it has recognized that the state cannot be held at bay by corporation which is anti-social in their purpose. Parliamentary democracy produces the Journal of Education and Practice best result in the long run, because it assigns great significance to virtues like ability and cooperation, mutual respect and self help, discipline and devotion to work, for the happiness of the millions of people. The system of parliamentary democracy, thus, embodies the principle of change and continuity to which Ambedkar attaches great importance. To him, only the spirit of the people can help parliamentary democracy to function well. People and democracy are closely related to each other. Ambedkar says, democracy is another name for equality. It is, therefore, a matter of some surprise that there has been a revolt against parliamentary democracy although not even a century has elapsed since its universal acceptance and inauguration. There is revolt against it in Italy, in Germany, in Russia and in Spain, and there are very few countries in which there has not been discontent against parliamentary democracy. Why should be this discontent and dissatisfaction against parliamentary democracy ? There is no country in which the urgency of considering this question is greater than it is in India. India is negotiating to have parliamentary democracy of the erroneous ideologies which have been responsible for the failure of parliamentary democracy. I have no doubt that the idea id freedom of contract is one of them. The idea became sanctioned and was uphold in the name of liberty. Parliamentary democracy took no notice of economic inequalities and did not care to examine the result of freedom of contract on the parties to the contract, in spite of the fact that they were unequal in their bargaining power. It did not mind if the freedom of contract gave the strong opportunity to defraud the weak. The result is the parliamentary democracy in standing out as a protagonist of liberty has continuously out as a protagonist of liberty has continuously added to the economic wrongs of the poor, the downtrodden and the disinherited class. Ambedkar says, the second wrong ideology which has initiated parliamentary democracy is the failure to realize that political democracy cannot succeed where there is no social and economic democracy.

Some way question this proposition. To those who are disposed to question it, I will ask a counter question.

4.SUMMARY & CONCLUSION:

The main goal of the study is to analyze and evaluate critically the idea of Ambedkar regarding Indian democracy and to capture the position of Ambedkar on issues whose relevance is even felt at present. A detailed analysis of his life and mission reveals that Ambedkar held the basic and fundamental norm, to be equality- social, economic and political, from which he proceeded to lay down a collection of 'ought' propositions; in this hierarchy of 'ought', the initial fundamental 'ought' on which the validity of all the other ultimately rests, the fundamental norm seems to be the social equality, the justification for the rest of the legal reforms and changes he persistently fought for. It was a society full of social inequalities in which Ambedkar was born. The humiliation he experienced in such an in egalitarian society bore on imprint in all thought his life.

Democratic socialism is the key note of his political thought and constitutionalism is the only way to achieve it. In conclusion, it can be said that this research gives closer and analytical insight into the thoughts of Ambedkar and provides an answer to the question of whether we, the Indians, achieve religious tolerance, human equality and freedom, true democracy, gender respect in the society, justice and peace in the light of political philosophy of Ambedkar whose memory will ever guide the nation on the path of justice, liberty and equality.

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