



The Conscience Maker of India Politics and Exterminating the Untouchability: A Study in the Light of Dr. B.R Ambedkar

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Abstract:

In the post-independence period, Indian politics echoed with many literary streams. After India's independence, the spirit of nationalism gained strength in the society and in the hearts of the people. A fundamental transformation occurred in the lives of the people as a result of five-year plans, decentralization of power, public welfare schemes and spread of education. Common people began to understand the language of entitlements and rights due to the emergence of a democratic form of government. They felt that independence had set them free. Independence brought hope that all the issues facing the Indian people would be resolved. However, with time, the problems increased. Unemployment, poverty, growing population, communal conflicts, corruption in public life, the din of the Hindutva forces, and the ever-threatening spectre of famine led to a loss of popular faith in independence and saw the beginning of mass movements to seek redress for the various injustices. In this context, Babasaheb Ambedkar is a well known name who made Indian constitution and attempted to Exterminate Untouchability in India. This paper is an attempt to analyse how Ambedkar makes Indian Politics and Exterminates the Untouchability.

Keywords: Indian Politics, Fundamental Transformation, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Exterminate, Untouchability

Acceptance of the Ambedkar as a source of motivation and applicability of his ideology in movements, and literature made a positive impact on Dalit community. B. R. Ambedkar led a movement for the upliftment of untouchables. He dedicated a long period for the upliftment of Dalits and their human rights. Since his death in 1956, he is truly all India icon for Dalits. He is a source of inspiration. He is remembered for his radical steps for liberating Dalits from age old slavery. Two of them are burning of Manusmriti and Mahad Satyagrah. The credit of the progress of Dalits in numerous fields undoubtedly goes to the first law Minister of India B. R. Ambedkar. All such efforts of Ambedkar are alive in the works of Dalit writers. In the memory of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mangal Rathod has written a poem that describes the vision, Ambedkar has dreamed of:

O, Babasaheb!

The first sip of water you drank Quenched out thirst of ages. We learned the taste of life! We can never forget you

For your memory lingers In each steps we ascend.

(qtd in Zelliott, Dalit Literature, Language, and Identity 465)

The thoughts and ideas of B. R. Ambedkar are considered to be the driving force of Dalit literature. His opinions are accepted as wisdom and followed with enthusiasm. For instance, his message “educate, agitate and organise” was delivered to Dalit masses to fight for a dignified human life. He campaigned against the discriminatory nature and dared to challenge the religious and social institution and advocated credence in humanism and human dignity. B. R. Ambedkar, fondly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, heartened the lives of millions of Dalits. He gave a call to give up the occupation and practice that ascribes them a lower status. Dalit literature resounds his revolutionary thoughts of transformation of the consciousness of Dalits.

Many social reforms and various constitutional measures and governmental policies have led to certain improvement and change among Dalits. British Indian Empire provided some reforms to these historically disabled castes. After independence Government of India introduced reservation and five year plan for the welfare and improvement of the socioeconomic status of ‘broken people’. These opportunities helped to discover a space in politics, education, and employment in decision making bodies. Though very lesser in

number such opportunities become a very significant device in the mobilisation of Dalits in modern India. Even in twenty first century Dalits are not supported wholeheartedly. The problem of untouchability, discrimination and human rights violation of Dalits are present in excess in our society. Such wrong practices are always impediments in forming a casteless, non hierarchal society and getting desired results. It is also an obstacle in the progress of the nation and danger to the integration of the nation as well.

One aspect of Indian constitution is that it is based on the principle of growth with equality and social justice. Indian constitution has incorporated a number of provisions for Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes. Government of India has prescribed several legislations, ordinances and policies time to time to increase the income level as well the socioeconomic condition of the weaker sections. But in practice, due to a number of reasons as corruption, inappropriate implementation of government policies, caste biased mind set of regulating authorities, these policies and legislations hardly reach these weaker people to elevate them from social and economic disabilities.

Indian constitution was prepared with the hope that it would provide equality, liberty, fraternity and justice to every citizen of India. Democratic Indian Constitution abolished every sort of discrimination to help the backward section to come up. Certain temporary measures and permanent safeguards are provided for the protection of Dalits and backward section of society. In the form of reservation, constitution provides a mechanism for the upliftment of downtrodden as well as the removal of the institutionalised inequalities in social, political and economic conditions, which are deep rooted from past years.

Main intention of the reservation policy was to assure empowerment of Dalits, who constitute around 16 percent of Indian population, were disempowered from times immemorial. Thus, the policy can be considered just as an inclusive one that ensures social representation in education and employment. In the case of employment, both the sectors, public and private were essential in securing empowerment of Dalits.

The international covenants are enacted in Indian constitution that significantly benefited the Dalits and other venerable sections. Some special provisions were also made for the protection of Dalits and tribes. Article 14 of Indian constitution guarantees the equality before law. It is an extension of the principle which is ensured in the preamble. According to this article the state shall not deny to any person equality before the law

or the equal protection of the law within the territory of India. Further Article 15 denies discrimination against “any Citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them” (qtd. in Arora 61). It provides right to state for making any special provision for the upliftment of the weaker or disabled class of citizens. It provides equal rights to access shops, hotels and public places such as wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads etc.

Article 16 provides the equality of opportunity in government employment. This Article specifies the reservation for Dalits. It provides that state can make any provision for “the reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state...Nothing in this Article shall prevent the state from making any provision for reservation in matters of promotion to any classes of posts in the services under the state in favour of scheduled castes and the Scheduled Tribes” (qtd. in Syed 176).

Article 17 is about the abolition of ‘untouchability’ and forbids the practice of untouchability in any form. According to this article 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. Article 29 of Indian Constitution provides certain cultural and educational rights to every section of Indian society who are residing in the territory of India “or any part thereof, having a distinctive language, script or culture of its own, shall have the right to conserve the same. This article provides ‘Unity within diversity’ prime cultural feature of India. This article permits special provisions for the backward classes to protect their interests. Every citizen has right to education and cannot be denied “admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds on grounds only of caste, religion, race, language or any of them.

Article 23 prohibits forced labour, beggar, any type of exploitation and trafficking of the citizens. This article is connected to describe the poor socio economic condition of a group of society at that time. The purpose of legislating this article is to bring socioeconomic security and justice to the people who have been exploited previously. It helps in the formation of egalitarian society.

After the above discourse, it is quite clear to us that Ambedkar became the source of inspiration for the writers of the time. Under his influence, writers began to write about the trauma and the wretched condition of Dalits, targeting to do away with the root cause of their deprivation. In this series Kamal Singh, Gopal Walangkar, Kondiram, Kisan Fago Bansode, Gurram Joshua and Jashuva are popular names. In their poems the importance of education was recognised. Ambedkar's teachings of education found the central position in their writings.

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