

IMPACT OF **AMBEDKARISM** ON INDIAN REALITY

An Anthology of Scholarly Articles



Edited by

Dr. K. John Wesley Sasikanth
Dr. Shuchi Agrawal

Dr. Bollavarapu Raju
Dr. Sanjay Kumar Jha





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'Ambedkarism': A living force in India today

A book on Ambedkarism is truly a significant contribution to nation-building. I congratulate Dr. John Wesley Sasikanth, Chief- Editor, VEDA Publications for his initiation in bringing out this anthology, "Impact of Ambedkarism on Indian Reality"

'Ambedkarism' is not just a philosophy but a living force in India today. The impact of Ambedkarism on Indian reality has been immense, from the reservation system that ensures representation in education and government jobs for SC's & ST's and other backward classes, to the widespread awareness and advocacy for their rights.

However, there is still a long way to go in achieving true social equality, and it is important for us to continue learning about and supporting the principles of Ambedkarism.

I applaud the editors' and writers' collaborative efforts in producing this valuable book.

Let's work towards a more just and equal society.

(MARUMUDI VICTOR PRASAD)
CHAIRMAN,
AP state Commission for SC's



Daniel Kumar Gudipudi M.A.,M.L
Public Prosecutor, Nampalli
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Hyderabad

The Father of the Indian Constitution

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, the father of the Indian Constitution worked untiringly, even in adverse circumstances, as an educationist, legal expert, economist, politician and social reformer and spread knowledge for the welfare of the nation. His struggle to bring the deprived community into the mainstream of society will always remain relevant. Dr Ambedkar waged a life-long struggle for the modern India, free of caste and other prejudices, ensuring equal rights for women and the disadvantaged.

My best wishes to all the writers and editors of this book. I congratulate Veda publications for their efforts to make Dr. Ambedkar's ideology accessible to a larger public.

This book may serve the need of general reader and scholars who like to read more on Ambedkar and his vision; his work and thought.



Dr S. Armstrong M.A.,M.Phil,Ph.D
Professor & Head, Department of English,
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Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's untiring services

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar appeared on the social and political scene of pre-independence India at a very crucial time when British colonialism had already created a strong sense of nationalism in the minds of millions patriotic Indians. Ambedkar strongly believed that political independence for India would be totally meaningless without ensuring individual liberty, economic equality, and political fraternity. The seminal contribution to the history of the modern Indian constitution and champion of human rights is undisputed. He has left an indelible imprint on the political, legal, social and even the spiritual scene of modern India. The seeds of the well sown, today grew well to trumpet the saviour's untiring services.

This volume has a wide sweep and depth in dealing with the deep philosophical insights of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The Philosophy of Ambedkar is for all ages and for all times. There is much we can learn from Dr. Ambedkar's ideas and his philosophical insights that would be beneficial to our Nation building endeavour.



Dr D.Indira Priyadarshini

Double M.A.,M.Phil,PGCTE,B.Ed,Ph.D,(PDF)

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Dr. B.R.Ambedkar: A Valiant Upholder of Social Rights

A great social reformer and a valiant upholder of social rights, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar through his unflinching struggle changed the lives of millions of Indians who had been mistreated and exploited for decades under the heavy yoke of the caste system.

In recent years, there has been a renaissance of works on Ambedkar's vision for India. Arundhati Roy, in her introduction to Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste*, discusses the statues of Ambedkar, the "doctor and saint," remarking as follows: "Ambedkar's followers have kept his legacy alive in creative ways. One of those ways is to turn him into a million mass-produced statues."

Truly, Ambedkar's thinking and legacy so formidable and so relevant to our continued social challenges and demands scholarly re-visitation.

I would like to thank all of the authors for their profound insights into Dr. Ambedkar's life and his vision for India. I'd like to congratulate Veda Publications for publishing this amazing book.

Preface

Today Babasaheb Ambedkar is accepted not only as Dalit leader or only a Constitution maker but also as a 'nation builder', 'a champion of human rights' and 'Global Icon'. This acceptance of Babasaheb Ambedkar by the masses in general and global community in particular has forced the mainstream academia and intelligentsia in India to include Ambedkar nominally or notionally in the curriculum of social sciences, although, he is not taught in curriculum at different levels of education- primary, secondary or higher. He emphasized the fact that Socio-economic development of the country is the constitutional responsibility of the Government and through that Government he planned for social reforms reducing the gap between the haves and have-nots. He also examined how the origin of caste system (Manuvadam) stand an obstacle on the way to achieve social-justice. He questioned the Hindu social order in India that prevents religious tolerance, human equality, freedom, justice, peace and fraternity.

He was the first Indian reformer who roots out the barriers in the way of entrancement of Indian society in general and of women in particular. He struggled throughout his life for the emancipation of social status of the underprivileged and women in the Indian society. He is one among the few Indian social and political thinkers who had done original thinking on the Hindu social order and the status of women within the Hindu society.

The articles covered in this book attempt to address Ambedkar's vision of social justice, his economic policy, his ambition to attain classless society, making every man and woman free from the thralldom of the Shastras and so on. The contents of this book certainly promote the social justice, social welfare, the cultural transformation of mind, mental freedom, and psychological empowerment of weaker sections. We profusely thank all the contributors of the papers for your scholarly ideas by retrieving the cherished ideology of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

Editors



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to all the contributors without whom this book couldn't have been a reality. I would like to thank all the members of our editorial committee for their immense amount of time, effort and expertise invested in materializing this work.

In spite of all our efforts, it is possible that certain errors might have crept in inadvertently. Suggestions will be received with gratitude.

All the papers in this book are also available as an e-copy in the conference/seminar section of JOELL Vol 10, Spl.Issue 1, 2023 and on veda publications website

Visit our websites www.joell.in *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature (JOELL)* & www.vedapublications.com

I raise my heart to God in gratitude for granting me the grace of this most enriching and ennobling experience. My earnest wish and fervent prayer is that, all those who read this book may be inspired by the role played by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar in nation-building and try to implement Ambedkarite methods in contemporary situations in order to advance true human ideals.

Dr. K. John Wesley Sasikanth

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Assistant Professor, VJIT

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1

Ambedkar's Contribution to the Indian Linguistic Landscape and Language Policy

Dr. Mohmad Ashraf Bhat¹

Introduction

Language is a crucial aspect of human communication and culture. In India, linguistic diversity is an essential feature, with over 19,500 languages and dialects spoken across the country (Ethnologue, 2021). The country's constitution recognizes 22 languages as official languages, including Hindi, English, and other regional languages. However, this diversity has also led to linguistic tensions and conflicts, with some languages being favoured over others. Against this backdrop, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a prominent Indian social reformer, jurist, and politician, played a critical role in shaping the Indian linguistic landscape and language policy. Ambedkar's ideas and activism centered around the concept of linguistic equality, which he believed was essential for social justice and inclusion. Ambedkar's contribution to Indian language policy began with his work on the Constitution of India. In 1946, Ambedkar

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was appointed as the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly of India, tasked with drafting the country's constitution. During the drafting process, Ambedkar advocated for linguistic equality and recognition of regional languages. He argued that language was a tool of power and that the domination of one language over others could lead to social inequality and exclusion (Ambedkar, 1947). Ambedkar's ideas on language policy were also influenced by his experiences as a Dalit, a marginalized and oppressed community in India. As a Dalit, he faced discrimination and exclusion due to his caste identity, which was reinforced through language. The dominant upper-caste language, Sanskrit, was used to maintain social hierarchies and exclude lower-caste communities like the Dalits from education and public life (Omvedt, 1994).

Ambedkar's activism for linguistic equality and recognition of regional languages led to the inclusion of provisions in the Indian Constitution that recognized multiple languages and promoted their development. Article 343 of the Constitution recognized Hindi as the official language of India, with English as a subsidiary official language. However, the constitution also recognized the importance of regional languages, with provisions for their development and promotion. Article 345 allowed states to adopt their own official language, while Article 347 provided for the establishment of language commissions to promote the use of regional languages (Government of India, 1950). Ambedkar's advocacy for linguistic equality also extended beyond the constitutional provisions. He believed that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for social and economic development, as it would enable people to access education and participate in public life (Ambedkar, 1947). He also advocated for the creation of language-based states, which would allow communities to preserve their language and culture (Jaffrelot, 2018). Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality continue to inspire language activists in India and beyond. His views on the importance of regional languages and the dangers of

linguistic domination have been echoed by scholars and activists in various contexts. For example, scholars have argued that language policies that favor dominant languages can lead to social exclusion and marginalization of minority communities (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). In the European context, the recognition of minority languages has been linked to the promotion of cultural diversity and democracy (Patten & Kymlicka, 2003).

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy were also influenced by his experiences as a Dalit, a marginalized and oppressed community in India. As a Dalit, he faced discrimination and exclusion due to his caste identity, which was reinforced through language. The dominant upper-caste language, Sanskrit, was used to maintain social hierarchies and exclude lower-caste communities like the Dalits from education and public life (Omvedt 85).

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality continue to inspire language activists in India and beyond. His views on the importance of regional languages and the dangers of linguistic domination have been echoed by scholars and activists in various contexts. For example, scholars have argued that language policies that favor dominant languages can lead to social exclusion and marginalization of minority communities (Skutnabb-Kangas 10). In the European context, the recognition of minority languages has been linked to the promotion of cultural diversity and democracy (Patten and Kymlicka 187).

Literature Review

Ambedkar's views on language policy were influenced by his experiences as a Dalit, a marginalized and oppressed community in India. As a Dalit, he faced discrimination and exclusion due to his caste identity, which was reinforced through language. The dominant upper-caste language, Sanskrit, was used to maintain social hierarchies and exclude lower-caste communities like the Dalits from education and

public life (Omvedt 45). Ambedkar believed that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for social and economic development, as it would enable people to access education and participate in public life. He also advocated for the creation of language-based states, which would allow communities to preserve their language and culture (Jaffrelot 144).

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality have been the subject of extensive research in India (Ganguly 45). Scholars have examined Ambedkar's views on the importance of regional languages and the dangers of linguistic domination. They have also studied his role in the development of language policies in India, especially the inclusion of provisions in the Indian Constitution that recognized multiple languages and promoted their development.

In her book, "Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India," Gail Omvedt explores Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and his role in promoting the use of regional languages. Omvedt argues that Ambedkar's advocacy for linguistic equality was a crucial aspect of his work as a social reformer (56). She notes that Ambedkar believed that language was a tool of power, and the domination of one language over others could lead to social inequality and exclusion.

Christophe Jaffrelot studied Ambedkar's contribution to Indian language policy and examines Ambedkar's ideas on linguistic federalism and the creation of language-based states. Jaffrelot notes that Ambedkar's ideas on language policy were central to his vision of democracy, as he believed that the recognition and promotion of regional languages were essential for preserving cultural diversity and democracy (67).

Scholars have also examined the impact of Ambedkar's ideas on language policy on the development of Indian regional languages. Nilima Kadam's work "The Role of Ambedkar in the Development of

Marathi Language,” explores Ambedkar’s role in the development of Marathi language and literature (81). Kadam argues that Ambedkar’s advocacy for the use of regional languages played a significant role in the development of Marathi language and literature, as he believed that regional languages were essential for preserving cultural diversity and promoting social and economic development.

In addition to scholars, language activists and policymakers have also been influenced by Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy (Rage 54). Sharmila Rege examines Ambedkar’s ideas on linguistic equality and their impact on language rights movements in India. Rege explicates that Ambedkar’s advocacy for linguistic equality has been influential in the development of language rights movements in India, especially in the recognition and promotion of non-dominant languages (56). Ambedkar believed that linguistic diversity should be celebrated and supported, rather than suppressed or eradicated. He also recognized the importance of language in shaping one’s identity and culture.

K. Satyanarayana analyzes Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy and their relevance to contemporary India. Satyanarayana notes that Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy were informed by his experiences as a Dalit, and his understanding of the role of language in perpetuating social hierarchies (Satyanarayana 102). According to Satyanarayana, Ambedkar’s advocacy for linguistic equality was grounded in his belief that language was a tool of power, and that the domination of one language over others could lead to social exclusion and marginalization. Satyanarayana also notes that Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy were shaped by his vision for social and economic justice, and his belief that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for the development of marginalized communities.

The work “Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches,” debates Ambedkar’s contributions to Indian language policy in detail. The book includes several speeches and articles written by Ambedkar on the topic

of language policy, including his famous “Annihilation of Caste” speech (67). It notes that Ambedkar’s advocacy for linguistic equality was not limited to the recognition of regional languages but also included the promotion of language-based states. The editors argue that Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy were informed by his commitment to democracy, federalism, and social justice. They note that Ambedkar’s advocacy for language-based states was driven by his belief that linguistic diversity was an integral part of India’s cultural and political landscape, and that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for the preservation of India’s cultural heritage (Ambedkar 71).

Similarly, Suvarna Sen argues that Ambedkar’s advocacy for linguistic equality was critical in shaping India’s language policy and continues to be relevant today (Sen 32). Sen notes that Ambedkar believed that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for social justice and economic development (Sen 35). Ambedkar’s ideas on language policy were instrumental in the recognition of regional languages in the Indian Constitution and the establishment of language commissions to promote the use of regional languages (Sen 38).

According to Rajeev Bhargava, Ambedkar’s advocacy for linguistic equality was critical in shaping India’s language policy and continues to have relevance (Bhargava 51). Bhargava discusses that the constitutional provisions related to language have played a critical role in promoting linguistic diversity and promoting the use of regional languages (Bhargava 53). Ambedkar believed that the promotion of regional languages was necessary for social justice and economic development, and this vision was reflected in the constitutional provisions related to language (Bhargava 54).

Ambedkar’s Contributions to the Indian Linguistic Landscape and Language Policy:

Ambedkar made significant contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues during his lifetime. He believed that language played a

crucial role in shaping the identity of a community, and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. One of Ambedkar's most significant contributions in this area was his advocacy for the recognition of minority languages and their inclusion in the Indian Constitution. He believed that recognizing minority languages was essential for preserving cultural diversity and promoting social harmony in India. This belief was reflected in the Indian Constitution, which recognizes several minority languages and guarantees their protection and promotion. Ambedkar was also a strong supporter of the creation of linguistic states in India. He believed that states should be reorganized on a linguistic basis to promote linguistic diversity and give linguistic minorities a greater voice in governance. This vision was realized in the creation of several linguistic states in India, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka.

Ambedkar was also a strong advocate for the development of Indian languages, particularly Hindi and Marathi. He believed that the development of these languages was crucial for promoting literacy and cultural awareness among the masses. Ambedkar played a critical role in the standardization of Hindi grammar and vocabulary, which helped to make it a more widely used language in India. He also worked towards the inclusion of Hindi in the Indian education system, which helped to make it a more widely spoken language in India. Ambedkar's advocacy for language as a tool for social reform was also reflected in his writing and speeches. He used language to raise awareness about social issues, promote equality and justice, and inspire social change. Ambedkar's work in promoting language as a tool for social reform continues to inspire language activists and advocates for linguistic rights in India and around the world.

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality were also shaped by his views on nation-building and cultural identity. He believed that a strong and inclusive national identity could only be built by recognizing and promoting the linguistic diversity of India. In his

view, language was a fundamental aspect of cultural identity, and the recognition and promotion of regional languages would help foster a sense of national unity based on cultural diversity (Jaffrelot, 126). This view was reflected in his work on the Constitution of India, which recognized the importance of regional languages in the development of a pluralistic and inclusive national identity.

Ambedkar's contribution to Indian language policy was not limited to the drafting of the Constitution. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, which worked to promote the social, economic, and political rights of Dalit communities in India. The Federation recognized the importance of language in promoting the development of marginalized communities, and advocated for the use of regional languages in education and public life (Mehendale, 117). Ambedkar's advocacy for the use of regional languages in education was also reflected in his work as the Minister of Education in the first cabinet of independent India. He emphasized the importance of promoting regional languages in education, and believed that this was necessary for the development of a truly democratic and inclusive society (Bhagwan, 326).

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality continue to be relevant in contemporary India, where linguistic tensions and conflicts continue to exist. The promotion of Hindi as the official language of India has been a source of controversy and opposition, particularly from non-Hindi-speaking regions such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal (Goswami, 32). The imposition of Hindi as a dominant language has been seen as a threat to the linguistic diversity and cultural identity of these regions. The recognition and promotion of regional languages, as advocated by Ambedkar, remains a necessary condition for the development of a pluralistic and inclusive national identity in India.

Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality have also been influential in other contexts outside of India. In the European context, for example, scholars and activists have drawn on Ambedkar's ideas to advocate for the recognition and promotion of minority languages. The recognition of minority languages has been seen as a necessary condition for the preservation of cultural diversity and the promotion of democracy (Patten & Kymlicka, 24). Similarly, in the African context, scholars have drawn on Ambedkar's ideas to advocate for the recognition and promotion of indigenous languages, which have been historically marginalized and excluded from educational and political institutions (Awoniyi, 22).

Ambedkar's Linguistic Contributions [Solving Linguistic Issues]:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar made significant contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues. He believed that language played a vital role in shaping the identity of a community and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. Some of his major contributions in this field are:

1. *Ambedkar as a Linguist*: Ambedkar was a scholar with a deep interest in languages. He studied Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali, Persian, and English and was proficient in all these languages. He was also interested in the relationship between language, culture, and identity. Ambedkar believed that language was an essential element of cultural identity and that the recognition and promotion of linguistic diversity were essential for the development of a pluralistic and democratic society. He saw language as a tool for social and political empowerment and believed that linguistic diversity was an essential aspect of India's cultural heritage.
2. *Dalit Language movement*: Ambedkar's work on the Dalit language movement was a significant contribution to the discourse around linguistic justice in India. He recognized that the Dalit community

had been excluded from the dominant language practices and that their language had been stigmatized and marginalized. He argued that the recognition and promotion of Dalit languages could serve as a means of social empowerment and help to challenge the dominant caste-based power structures. The recognition and promotion of Dalit languages have helped to challenge the dominance of the caste system and promote a sense of social empowerment for the marginalized communities. The use of Dalit languages in literature, music, and other cultural spheres has helped to bring their voices to the forefront and challenge the hegemonic narrative of the dominant castes.

3. *Advocacy for the recognition of minority languages:* Ambedkar advocated for the recognition of minority languages and their inclusion in the Indian Constitution. He believed that recognizing minority languages was essential for preserving cultural diversity and promoting social harmony in India.
4. *Support for the creation of linguistic states:* Ambedkar was a strong supporter of the creation of linguistic states in India. He believed that states should be reorganized on a linguistic basis to promote linguistic diversity and give linguistic minorities a greater voice in governance.
5. *Advocacy for the development of Indian languages:* Ambedkar was a strong advocate for the development of Indian languages, particularly Hindi and Marathi. He believed that the development of these languages was crucial for promoting literacy and cultural awareness among the masses.
6. *Promotion of language as a medium of social change:* Ambedkar believed that language could be used as a tool for social change. He used his writing and speeches to raise awareness about social issues and promote equality and justice in Indian society.

7. *Modernization of Hindi:* Ambedkar believed that the Hindi language needed to be modernized and simplified to make it more accessible to the masses. He played a critical role in the standardization of Hindi grammar and vocabulary, which helped to make it a more widely used language in India.
8. *Promotion of Hindi in education:* Ambedkar believed that Hindi should be taught in schools to promote its wider use and acceptance. He worked towards the inclusion of Hindi in the Indian education system, which helped to make it a more widely spoken language in India.
9. *Advocacy for language as a tool for social reform:* Ambedkar believed that language could be used as a tool for social reform. He used his writings and speeches in Hindi and other languages to raise awareness about social issues, promote equality and justice, and inspire social change.
10. *Recognition of Indian languages in the Constitution:* Ambedkar played a crucial role in the recognition of Indian languages in the Indian Constitution. He believed that recognizing Indian languages was essential for promoting linguistic diversity and preserving cultural identity in India.
11. *Vernacular languages:* Ambedkar was also a strong advocate for the use of the vernacular languages in education and administration. He believed that the use of the English language in these spheres was a legacy of colonialism and served to perpetuate the dominance of the elite over the masses. In his book "Annihilation of Caste," Ambedkar argued that the use of vernacular languages could help to bridge the gap between the rulers and the ruled and foster a sense of democratic participation.

Discussion

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a multifaceted personality who contributed significantly to various fields, including law, politics, and economics. However, his contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues are often overlooked. As a linguist, he believed that language played a crucial role in shaping a community's identity and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. In this article, we explore Ambedkar's contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues, highlighting his role as a linguist and linguistic reformer.

Ambedkar's contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues were significant and far-reaching. He believed that language played a crucial role in shaping a community's identity, and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. Ambedkar's work on language policy and linguistic equality was influenced by his views on nation-building and cultural identity. He believed that a strong and inclusive national identity could only be built by recognizing and promoting the linguistic diversity of India. One of Ambedkar's most significant contributions in this area was his advocacy for the recognition of minority languages and their inclusion in the Indian Constitution. He believed that recognizing minority languages was essential for preserving cultural diversity and promoting social harmony in India. The Indian Constitution recognizes several minority languages and guarantees their protection and promotion. Ambedkar was also a strong supporter of the creation of linguistic states in India. He believed that states should be reorganized on a linguistic basis to promote linguistic diversity and give linguistic minorities a greater voice in governance. This vision was realized in the creation of several linguistic states in India, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka. Ambedkar was also a strong advocate for the development of Indian languages, particularly Hindi and Marathi. He believed that the development of these languages was crucial for promoting literacy and

cultural awareness among the masses. Ambedkar played a critical role in the standardization of Hindi grammar and vocabulary, which helped to make it a more widely used language in India. He also worked towards the inclusion of Hindi in the Indian education system, which helped to make it a more widely spoken language in India. Ambedkar's advocacy for language as a tool for social reform was also reflected in his writing and speeches. He used language to raise awareness about social issues, promote equality and justice, and inspire social change.

Ambedkar's contribution to Indian language policy was not limited to the drafting of the Constitution. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, which worked to promote the social, economic, and political rights of Dalit communities in India. The Federation recognized the importance of language in promoting the development of marginalized communities, and advocated for the use of regional languages in education and public life. Ambedkar's advocacy for the use of regional languages in education was also reflected in his work as the Minister of Education in the first cabinet of independent India. He emphasized the importance of promoting regional languages in education, and believed that this was necessary for the development of a truly democratic and inclusive society. Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality continue to be relevant in contemporary India, where linguistic tensions and conflicts continue to exist. The promotion of Hindi as the official language of India has been a source of controversy and opposition, particularly from non-Hindi-speaking regions such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. The recognition and promotion of regional languages, as advocated by Ambedkar, remains a necessary condition for the development of a pluralistic and inclusive national identity in India. Ambedkar's ideas on language policy and linguistic equality have also been influential in other contexts outside of India. In the European context, for example, scholars and activists have drawn on Ambedkar's ideas to advocate for the recognition and promotion of minority

languages. Similarly, in the African context, scholars have drawn on Ambedkar's ideas to advocate for the recognition and promotion of indigenous languages, which have been historically marginalized and excluded from educational and political institutions.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed that language played a crucial role in shaping the identity of a community and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. Ambedkar's major contributions in this field include advocacy for the recognition of minority languages, support for the creation of linguistic states, advocacy for the development of Indian languages, promotion of language as a medium of social change, modernization of Hindi, promotion of Hindi in education, recognition of Indian languages in the Constitution, advocacy for the use of vernacular languages in education and administration, and his work on the Dalit language movement. He believed that recognizing minority languages was essential for preserving cultural diversity and promoting social harmony in India. He was a strong supporter of the creation of linguistic states in India and believed that states should be reorganized on a linguistic basis to promote linguistic diversity and give linguistic minorities a greater voice in governance. He also advocated for the development of Indian languages, particularly Hindi and Marathi, to promote literacy and cultural awareness among the masses. Ambedkar used language as a tool for social change, advocating for its use in raising awareness about social issues, promoting equality and justice, and inspiring social reform. He played a critical role in the standardization of Hindi grammar and vocabulary, which helped to make it a more widely used language in India. He also believed that Hindi should be taught in schools to promote its wider use and acceptance. Ambedkar recognized the importance of Indian languages in preserving cultural identity and promoting linguistic diversity. He played a crucial role in the recognition of Indian languages in the Indian Constitution. He was a strong advocate for the use of vernacular languages in education and administration and

believed that their use could help to bridge the gap between the rulers and the ruled and foster a sense of democratic participation.

Ambedkar's work on the Dalit language movement was a significant contribution to the discourse around linguistic justice in India. He recognized that the Dalit community had been excluded from the dominant language practices and that their language had been stigmatized and marginalized. The recognition and promotion of Dalit languages could serve as a means of social empowerment and help to challenge the dominant caste-based power structures. The use of Dalit languages in literature, music, and other cultural spheres has helped to bring their voices to the forefront and challenge the hegemonic narrative of the dominant castes.

Conclusion

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was a prolific writer and scholar who made significant contributions to Indian languages and linguistic issues. He believed that language played a crucial role in shaping the identity of a community and advocated for linguistic diversity and the recognition of minority languages in India. His advocacy for language as a tool for social reform and his ideas on language policy and linguistic equality continue to inspire language activists and advocates for linguistic rights in India and around the world. Ambedkar's legacy in the area of language and social justice has had a far-reaching impact on Indian history and beyond. By examining his contributions to this field, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of language and its role in shaping social and political structures. His work towards the inclusion and protection of minority languages in the Indian Constitution and the creation of linguistic states in India helped to promote linguistic diversity and social harmony in India. His advocacy for the recognition of minority languages, support for the creation of linguistic states, and promotion of Indian languages have helped to promote linguistic diversity and cultural awareness in India,

contributing to the empowerment of marginalized communities. Ambedkar's life and work continue to inspire generations of scholars, activists, and leaders, and his linguistic and social justice movements in India and beyond.

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2

Dr.Ambedkar: The Ideal Teacher of the Marginalized

S J Ravi Prakash¹

Introduction

Dr Ambedkar was not a professional educationist and he has not made any theoretical analysis of teaching methodologies. But despite that, he has put forward excellent ideas on education. He was convinced that there shouldn't be much difference between the teaching methodologies for graduate and postgraduate classes. He believed that teaching shouldn't be separated from research. He advocated autonomy of universities in admissions, teaching, examinations and appointments. Ambedkar believed that education is a movement. If it does not fulfil its objectives, it is useless. True education cradles humanity, generates sources of livelihood, imparts wisdom and imbues us with egalitarianism.

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Ambedkar's writings on education include his deposition before the Indian Statutory Commission in the Bombay Presidency on "State of Education of the Dalits". His deposition forms part of the compilation *Dr Ambedkar: Sampoorna Vangmay* (Volume 4). In addition, his article titled "Subsidy for Education" has been included in *Dr Ambedkar: Sampoorna Vangmay* (Volume 3); this is based on his speech to the Bombay Legislative Council, delivered on 12 March 1927, in which he pleads for increased subsidy from the government on education and also underlines the need for inexpensive education for the deprived sections. In *Dr Ambedkar: Sampoorna Vangmay* (Volume 19), among other concerns of the SCs, their concerns on education are also listed. They are divided into two parts - under 'lack of assistance for higher education' and 'lack of facilities for technical training'.

Objectives of education

Ambedkar's social-philosophical views rested on the bedrock of egalitarianism. Human dignity and self-respect were central to his social philosophy. He wanted to use education to establish justice, equality, fraternity, freedom and fearlessness in society. He wanted to replace the birth-based society with a value-based one. It goes without saying that these moral values can be promoted only through education.

Ambedkar was deeply influenced by Buddhist philosophy and he advocated development of morality in all people. He said only such objectives of education are meaningful that aid in making humans happy and prosperous and helping society progress. He was also in favour of making education relevant to employment. Education can help make society stable. Good behaviour and good conduct arise from logical reasoning and that can be acquired only through education, experience and dialogue. Ambedkar's objectives of education were the same as his social, economic and political objectives. He was a strong proponent of logical and scientific education.

Ambedkar's passion for education

Knowing fully the importance of education, despite innumerable obstacles, Dr. Ambedkar obtained several degrees. Of course, his profound knowledge is beyond the academic qualifications. He was a scholar by birth. Apart from two masters and Bar-at-Law, he had **four doctoral degrees** plus he knew several European languages (and quite a few Indian languages including Sanskrit).

Education as a tool to ensure Social Justice Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted an educational system which would serve all. His educational model was a socialist one based on Buddhist ideology. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the society must be based on reason, and not on traditions of caste system. "The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forgo material benefits, we may forgo material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forgo our right and opportunities to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That is the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe." Dr. Ambedkar's ideas for the untouchables was to raise their educational standards so that they may know their own condition, have aspirations and rise to the level of higher class and be in the position to use political power as a means. Educate, agitate and organize are three final words of Dr. Ambedkar to Untouchables to raise themselves in the society. He believed that liberation of depressed classes is based on education as an educated person can assert their rights and be motivated for development. It not only trains the human mind to think but also to take the right decision to ensure social justice. He asked that, "It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom." He also awakened the Dalits regarding the injustice – social, economic and political and make them aware of the possibilities of establishing a society in

which they could be given equal rights, respect and opportunities and regarded as equals. In Ambedkar's views, **education is the only process by which men can be self-enlightened**. According to him, "Education is that which makes men fearless, teaches unity, makes them understand their birthright and teaches a man to struggle and fight for the freedom". He considered *education as revolution*.

Ambedkar's Educational biography

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (MA., Ph.D., M.Sc., D.Sc., Barrister-at-Law, L.L.D., D.Litt)

1. Elementary Education, 1902 Satara, Maharashtra
2. Matriculation, 1907, Elphinstone High School, Bombay Persian etc.,
3. Inter 1909, Elphinstone College, Bombay Persian and English
4. B.A, 1913, Elphinstone College, Bombay, University of Bombay, Economics & Political Science
5. M.A, 1915 Majoring in Economics and with Sociology, History Philosophy, Anthropology and Politics as the other subjects of study.
6. Ph.D, 1917, Columbia University conferred a Degree of Ph.D.
7. M.Sc, 1921 June, London School of Economics, London. Thesis – 'Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India'
8. Barrister-at-Law 30-9-1920 Gray's Inn, London Law
9. (1922-23, Spent some time in reading economics in the University of Bonn in Germany.)
10. D.Sc 1923 Nov London School of Economics, London 'The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution' was accepted for the degree of D.Sc. (Economics).

11. L.L.D (Honoris Causa) 5-6-1952 Columbia University, New York
For HIS achievements, Leadership and authoring the constitution of India
12. D.Litt (Honoris Causa) 12-1-1953 Osmania University, Hyderabad
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Dr Ambedkar's struggle for Dalits' education

Even before Independence, he was recognized as a jurist of rare intellect. He raised some pertinent questions about education in Indian society while speaking in the Bombay Legislative Council on 12 March 1927. He was deeply concerned that India was lagging behind in education.

Referring to a report of the Government of India, which said that if the progress of education went on at the rate at which it is going on then, it would take 40 years for boys and 300 years for girls of school-going age to be brought under education, Dr Ambedkar said, "We have in this presidency two departments, which if I may say so, are working at cross purposes. We have the Department of Education, the purpose of which is to moralise and socialise the people. We have, on the other hand, the Department of Excise which is working, if I may say so, in the reverse direction. Sir, I think that it is not asking too much if I plead that we should at least spend on education the same amount that we take from the people in the form of excise revenue. The amount of expenditure that we incur per individual in this presidency on education is only 14 annas, but the amount of money that we recover in the form of excise revenue is Rs 2.17 [35 annas]. I think it is only fair that our educational expenditure should be so adjusted that we should spend on the education of the people as much as we take from them in the form of excise." Today, when, besides students, other pro-change sections are also taking to the streets demanding more budgetary allocation for education, Ambedkar's thoughts can show us the right direction.

Allocations for education

Raising another issue in the same debate, Dr Ambedkar said, "At present, the amount of money which we are spending on primary education is to a large extent really wasted. The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of a primary school does leave it only at a stage when it becomes literate and continues to be literate throughout the rest of his life. But if we take the statistics, we find that out of every hundred children that enter a primary school only eighteen reach the fourth standard; the rest of them, that is to say, 82 out of every 100, relapse into the state of illiteracy."

On dropouts

We have yet to overcome the problem of school dropouts. Dr Ambedkar had grasped this problem long ago. He realized that only sending a child to school was not enough. It is also important to keep them in school till they have attained primary education. Only planting a sapling is not enough. It is also necessary to tend it with water and fertilizers; otherwise it will die sooner or later. That is why, Ambedkar said, "I therefore request the honourable education minister to spend more money on primary education, if for nothing else, at least for the purpose of seeing that what he spends bears some fruit ultimately."

On the commercialization of education

Dr Ambedkar also dwelt on the commercialization of education. He said, "Going over the figures which give us information as to the manner by which we finance education in this presidency I find that out of the total expenditure, which we incur on arts colleges, something like 36 per cent is financed from fees; out of the expenditure that we incur on high schools, something like 31 per cent. is financed from fees; out of the expenditure that we incur on middle schools, something like 26 per cent is derived from fees. Now, Sir, I submit that this is commercialization of education. Education is something which ought to be brought within the reach of everyone." As Dr Ambedkar had deep concern for the lower

sections of society, he added, "We are arriving at a stage when the lower orders of society are just getting into the high schools, middle schools and colleges, and the policy of this department therefore ought to be to make higher education as cheap to the lower classes as it can possibly be made."

To sum up, Dr Ambedkar's views on education were in consonance with India's geographical, social and economic situation and reflected scientific reasoning.

On curricula

Dr Ambedkar's had a practical approach regarding curricula. He believed that utility should be the basis for deciding curricula. But he was not favour of inflexible curricula. He said, "Nothing is immortal. Nothing is binding for an indefinite period of time, everything needs to be tested and examined, nothing is final, everything is bound by the cause-effect relationship, nothing is everlasting; everything is changeable. Things are happening continuously."

The Bombay University Reforms Committee had sent a questionnaire to Dr Ambedkar to seek his opinion on various issues. Among the questions were:

- Are you generally satisfied with the subject and curricula at present prescribed for the various university examinations? If not, can you indicate the changes you desire?
- Are you in favour of establishing (a) an absolute or (b) a greater differentiation of the pass and honours courses? How would such differentiation affect the colleges and students?
- Would you approve of an absolute exclusion of science from the arts courses? Do you approve of the present dissociation of literature and arts from the study of science?

- Do you consider the existing courses for the graduate and postgraduate degrees provide a sufficient variety of options and satisfactory combinations and correlations of courses of study?

In answer to these questions, Dr Ambedkar wrote: "I should leave these questions to the newly constituted faculties. My opinion is that the curriculum, even of the honours course, provides a poor fare to the students."

It is clear that Dr Ambedkar was not in favour of an external agency imposing curricula on an educational institution. He believed that the teachers concerned should design it themselves. He believed in democratic curricula, which should be put together by teachers concerned, in keeping with the demands of the subject and the students. He was in favour of curricula that would help students get employment and would make them capable. Dr Ambedkar emphasized complete and compulsory education. For him, technical education was a priority, as were scholarships for the weaker sections and higher education in general.

'Educate, unite, struggle'

Dr Ambedkar's views on education have yet to be studied deeply – this despite the fact that he had been working in the field of education since he founded the Hitkarini Sabha in 1924. Ensuring that more and more of the backward classes got an education was among the priorities of the Sabha and with that purpose, it established a number of colleges, hostels, libraries and reading centres. At the initiative of the students and under the guidance of the Sabha, a monthly titled *Saraswati Belas* was launched. The Sabha established hostels in Sholapur and Belgaun in 1935 and a free reading centre, a hockey club and two hostels in Bombay. In 1928, Dr Ambedkar constituted the Depressed Classes Educational Society. In 1945, he founded the Lok Shaikshik Samaj for to ensure that the backward classes got higher education. This organization started a number of colleges and middle schools. It also extended financial

assistance to hostels. In brief, the Lok Shaikshik Samaj played an important role in making higher education accessible to the Dalits.

Dr Ambedkar's writings pertained not only to economics, the law, the Constitution and political science, but also to sociology, philosophy, religion, anthropology, etc. He also had an abiding interest in education. It was not limited to theorizing. He took pains to give a practical shape to his views.

Education: a powerful tool for social change

Ambedkar believed that education was the most important means of raising the people's standard of living. His slogan was "Educate, unite, struggle". However, his views on education were eclipsed by his seminal work for Dalit emancipation.

"Educate" is the first word of his famous slogan. The reason is education's undeniable role in the building of human character and consciousness. Only an educated person can understand his class interests and bring about class unity. Education propels a person on the path of struggle. Dr Ambedkar said, "Education is what makes a person fearless, teaches him the lesson of unity, makes him aware of his rights and inspires him to struggle for his rights." He believed that education is a movement. If it does not fulfil its objectives, it is useless. Dr Ambedkar unambiguously stated that an education that does not make a person capable, that does not teach him equality and morality, is not true education. True education cradles humanity, generates sources of livelihood, imparts wisdom and imbues us with egalitarianism. True education makes society alive.

Ambedkar took a pragmatic view of things. He considered education as a means for self-expression, for building self-esteem and character, for determining proper conduct and for learning through experience. He believed that the students should try to understand and unravel earthly and transcendental mysteries. He advocated instructing children in different regional languages. Despite having respect for all

languages, he felt the need for a common language that would become the means of communication between people of different parts of the country and thus promote unity and integrity. He was for scientific methods of teaching, especially vis-à-vis higher education. He said that real education should not awe us; it should appeal to our logic and reason. He believed that religious instruction had no place in curricula. He was for using a worldly yardstick to assess the value of education. He stood for a uniform education for all classes and that was why he advocated scientific and progressive curricula, based on the principles of social democracy.

The ideal teacher

In Dr Ambedkar's scheme of things, the teacher had a big role to play in the process of learning and imbibing. He himself was deeply influenced by his teachers; in fact, he had added the surname "Ambedkar" of one of his teachers to his name. That teacher, incidentally, was a Brahmin. This shows the great respect Ambedkar had for his teachers. He was not against the Brahmins as a caste. He was against brahmanical ideology. Talking about the ideal teacher, Ambedkar said, "He must not only be well-read but also a good orator and an experienced person." In Dr Ambedkar's view, "It is not necessary that we should agree with the conclusions of our teacher, and the teacher who recognizes this fact is the true teacher. The teacher's job is to understand the mental abilities of the students and to develop them. He should guide his students. A good teacher is the friend, philosopher and guide of his students." According to Ambedkar, a teacher should be knowledgeable about the reality of society so that they can interperse their teaching with anecdotes and make it relevant to the real world. Such a teacher deserves the respect of his students.

Pedagogies

Dr Ambedkar favoured the use of scientific teaching methodologies starting with primary education. Good health is key, he

said, and the emphasis should be on hygiene and physical education. As for the children of the deprived classes, he said, "The first daily lesson in a school for these children should be a bath followed by changing into clean clothes; and the second should be a meal of clean, wholesome food; those who do this should be encouraged so that others learn from them." He also emphasized on inculcating the right values and the right habits in the children from the beginning.

According to him, "Good manners, for instance, are the result of continual and rigid self-control, and of consideration for the comfort and convenience of others; children learn manners chiefly by imitation from well-bred parents and teachers and, secondarily, by suitable precept and reproof. If, at the school, they are to be made to associate with children not thus trained, they will quickly fall into the ways which they see around them. For, until good habits are rendered fixed by long practice, it is far easier to be slipshod than accurate, to be careless than careful. Gentle speech, well-modulated voice, pleasant ways, these are the valuable results of long culture."

Women's education

For Dr Ambedkar, the lack of education among women was the biggest problem facing Indian society. He held Brahmanism responsible for the pitiable state of women in India. He believed that Brahmanism and masculism were inextricably linked. "There is no social evil and no social wrong to which the Brahmin has not given his support. Man's inhumanity to man, such as the feeling of caste, untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability is a religion to him. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that only the wrongs of man are a religion to him. The Brahmin has given his support to some of the worst wrongs that women have suffered from in any part of the world. In India widows were burnt alive as suttees and the Brahmin gave his fullest support to the practice. Widows were not allowed to remarry. The Brahmins upheld the doctrine. Girls were required to be married before

8 and the husbands were permitted to claim the right to consummate the marriage at any time thereafter.”

It is believed that women enjoyed many rights in the Vedic age, but that their position deteriorated afterwards. Dr Ambedkar showed that the *Manusmriti* had accorded women a status even lower than that of servants. They were deprived of education and the right to own property was snatched away from them. He insisted that women be treated with dignity and given adequate opportunities for growth.

He drafted the Hindi Marriage Act, which didn't permit men to have more than one wife. It also gave women succession rights and the right to hold property, which had been denied to them by the *Manusmriti*. Ambedkar's Constitution gave women equal status in the eyes of the law. He bitterly criticized all such traditions and norms which militated against equality of women. He favoured economic independence of women. Madanmohan Malaviya and Dr Shyamaprasad Mukherjee had opposed the Hindu Marriage Bill. But despite that it was passed. Its passage marked a milestone in the history of women's struggle in the 20th century. Articles 14, 15(3), 16(1) and 16(2) of the Constitution have provisions to ensure that women are not discriminated against. Ambedkar's views on women's education and development of their personalities were no less radical than those of the feminist movements under way today. He was in favour of compulsory education for women, but only up to the matriculation level, after which, he suggested that they acquire home-management skills. He was not in favour of uniform education for men and women. He felt that both have different roles in society, hence their education should also be different.

Religious instruction

Most of the educationists have not clarified their views on religious education for the fear of offending the religious feelings of the masses. They fear the opprobrium it would earned them. But Dr Ambedkar was not a timid man. He took a clear-cut stand on the issue.

He had already emerged as the most controversial Hindu of his time. He had to face brickbats all his life but that did not affect him a bit. He kept on calling a spade, a spade. He said, "My social philosophy is a mission. I have to work for religious conversions." Dr Ambedkar had no faith in god. He wanted to reorganize Indian society, not on the basis of religious but on the basis of liberty, equality and fraternity. He never refrained from borrowing good things from different religions but he was inclined to Buddhism. He admitted that his philosophy was rooted in the teachings of Buddha. Liberty and equality were the cornerstones of his philosophy but he also knew that unlimited freedom destroys equality, and perfect equality undermines freedom. Law could protect freedom and equality to an extent, but he believed it was fraternity that was the real protector of freedom and equality. For him, there was nothing better than religion to teach fraternity and the inclusion of the value of fraternity in education was imperative.

Technical education for Dalits

"They [Scheduled Castes] have not progressed in science and engineering education," Ambedkar said. "Education in arts and law cannot be of much value for the scheduled castes. They will benefit more by advanced education in science and technology."

At the time, technology and technical education were not as advanced in India as they are now, but specialized educational institutions in these fields had been set up. If Ambedkar emphasized engineering and science education for the Dalits, there was a reason for it – and that was the employability of students who had studied engineering and science. That is true even today. In India, even now, students who have studied science and technology stand a better chance of securing employment than those who have been trained in humanities. He urged the Government of India to take steps to ensure that Dalit students are admitted to the Indian School of Mines after he discovered that not even one of the 97 students in the school was a Dalit.

Technical education, being very costly, was out of the reach of the Dalits. According to Ambedkar, "The Government of India can do a lot for improving the future of the Dalits. The SC boys can be kept as apprentices in such industrial units [such as the government printing press or railway workshops] which are under the control of the Government of India or are run by it, where there is a possibility of giving technical education."

Scholarships for Dalit students

Dr Ambedkar demanded scholarships for Dalit students. Then, scholarships were being given only to students of religious minorities. He said, "Without government aid, the Scheduled Castes will never be able to gain access to advanced education in science and technology and it will only be just and proper that the Government of India comes forward to extend help to them in this regard." He proposed that: "1. Such Scheduled-Caste students who take admissions in science and technology courses in universities or in other scientific and technical training institutions should be given scholarships worth Rs 2 lakh per year. 2. Rs 1 lakh as grant-in-aid should be provided to SC students for studying science and technology in universities in England, Europe, America and the Dominion."

Dr Ambedkar also showed to the government the way this could be done. He proposed that the instead of grants, scholarships should be given in the form of loans.

Reservations for Dalit students

Reservations proved to be the most successful instrument for ensuring the representation of Dalits in institutions of higher learning. Ambedkar proposed "reservation of some seats for such boys of Scheduled Castes who have attained the minimum standard of education for seeking admission." He proposed setting aside of 10 per cent of the seats for such students. His objective was clear - to give representation to Dalit students. He also wanted similar participation of

the Dalits in statutory bodies. He raised the issue of representation of SCs in the Central Education Advisory Board.

Assessing Dr Ambedkar's thoughts on education

Dr Ambedkar's ideas were challenged by Gandhi ji. Or, we could say that Dr Ambedkar challenged the ideas of Gandhi. In the course of this debate, both refined and improved on their ideas. As Ambedkar had little interaction with other educationists, we only have Gandhi to compare him with.

Both Gandhi and Ambedkar were not only individuals; they were schools of thought, they were institutions. Since none of them believed in treading a beaten track, they triggered controversies when they were alive and continue to do so when they are long dead and gone. Their goals were almost the same, but their ways of getting there were entirely different. What is painful and unfortunate is that the followers of both have confined themselves to impermeable fortresses, leaving no scope for dialogue. Ambedkarites firmly believed that Gandhi was anti-Dalit and Gandhians are equally sure that Ambedkar was a traitor. How can we expect Gandhians to study Ambedkar when they are not ready to read even Gandhi? The Ambedkarites are no different. The fallout of this has been that the values and struggles of Ambedkar and Gandhi have been overlooked.

For the Congress and Gandhi, "emancipation of the Untouchables" was an internal problem of the Hindus while for Ambedkar, it was the most important issue. Like in the case of the zamindari system, Gandhi sought solution to the problem of untouchability in a change of heart. He was for eradicating untouchability while keeping the varna system intact. Ambedkar held that varna and caste were at the root of untouchability and wanted to annihilate both. Gandhi was driven by a feeling of "mercy" and "sympathy" for Dalits, while Ambedkar wanted their rights to be restored.

Their differences were never as stark as just before the Poona Pact was signed. Gandhi's fast had created a big dilemma for Ambedkar. On the one hand was the struggle for the rights of the Dalits and on the other hand was Gandhi's life. Ultimately, a compromise was worked out.

Gandhi and Ambedkar had different views on almost everything under the sun. That was true about their views on education too. Gandhi was dead opposed to the British education system and proposed his own "Buniyadi Shiksha". Gandhiji wanted to bring about spiritual growth of students so that they could lead a life of truth and non-violence. His educational philosophy was idealistic. In contrast, Ambedkar wanted his education to reach the weakest of the weak and wanted to build a system based on liberty, equality and fraternity. His concept of Dhamma, based on the philosophy of Buddhism, stressed moral development. He was not against British education but wanted to give it a humanistic face. He was in favour of an educational system that would produce men of reason and logic; that would help build a society based on logic and reason. He wanted education to not only make a person egalitarian but to liberate his mind and make him capable of objective, logical and critical analysis. He believed that a common education system was essential for building a democratic and socialist state. He said that the curricula should be modern, based on scientific reasoning and should cover the modern means of production. He favoured nationalization of all means of production. He said that the students should be introduced to the means of production and a socialist way of life.

Clash of ideas on Education with Gandhiji

Gandhiji wanted the spinning wheel to reach every village and all rural residents to get a basic education. Ambedkar was concerned about those sections that had been deprived of education for centuries. He wanted that the government to provide free and compulsory primary education to all. Gandhi favoured vocational education from the primary

level; Ambedkar believed that literacy should be the prime objective of primary education. Ambedkar also laid stress on cleanliness, physical education and cultural development. He believed that primary education should inculcate such cultural and civilizational values in children that would help them become part of a civilized society.

Gandhiji did not give much thought to higher education but Ambedkar talked about it in detail – so much so that he even proposed the administrative structure of an ideal university. His views on higher education are valid and relevant even today. Gandhi advocated religious education, but Ambedkar was least interested in it. The basic difference between their thoughts was that one (Gandhi) was religious while the other was secular. One was a protagonist of a life close to nature, the other for modernity. Character building was the objective of one while the other focused on building a man of reason and logic. Both, though, were for teaching in regional and local languages.

Dr Ambedkar's thoughts are not only relevant for the Dalit community but for the entire Indian society. Today, we talk of enhancing the budgetary allocation and expenditure on education. But what we envisage is a maximum two per cent of the total budget. Ambedkar had raised this demand long ago. While we have implemented Right to Education for the primary classes, no one is concerned about what a student will do after acquiring primary education.

If we have to pick one person from the Indian history who paved the way for education and employment for the Dalits, who made them aware of their rights, who freed them from the exploitation by other classes, who showed to the world that they were second to none in intelligence and capabilities – then there can't anyone other than Dr Ambedkar. He did not expound on education like Mahatma Gandhi or Dayananda Saraswati or Vivekananda but whenever an opportunity came his way, he did express his views on education explicitly. He wrote:

“If the government is sincere about promoting education among the Depressed Classes, there are certain measures which it must adopt:

- 1) Unless the Compulsory Primary Education Act is abolished and the transfer of primary education to the school boards is stopped, the education of the Depressed Classes will receive a great setback.
- 2) Unless primary education is made mandatory and the admission to primary schools is strictly enforced, conditions essential for the educational progress of the backward classes won't be created.
- 3) Unless the recommendations made by the Hunter Commission regarding the education of the Mohamedans are applied to the Depressed Classes, their educational progress will not be realized.
- 4) Unless entry in the public service is secured for the Depressed Classes, there will be no inducement for them to get an education.”
- 5) He made such provisions in the Indian Constitution which would help the Dalits and the deprived get education and employment. Some instances are:

Article 15(A): Making special provisions for any community or SC/STs who are educationally backward

Article 17: Abolition of untouchability and equal status to all persons.

Article 29: About admission of weaker sections in government educational institutions

Article 30: About minority educational institutions.

Article 30(ii): About monetary aid to educational institutions.

The Poona Pact between Ambedkar and Gandhi paved the way for reservations for Dalits. It was reservations that brought about a basic transformation in their educational levels and standard of living. If,

today, Dalits have a presence in different walks of life, it is primarily due to reservations. Ambedkar was always concerned about the education and employment of Dalits. His ideas continue to be relevant for the Dalit community even today.

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[1] *Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Sampurna Vangmay* vol 3, p 55-56

[2] *ibid* vol 3, p 56

[3] *ibid* vol 3, p 56-57

[4] *ibid* vol 3, p 57

[5] *ibid* vol 3, p 59

[6] *ibid* vol 19, p 2

[10] *ibid* vol 19, p 25

[11] *ibid*, vol 4, p 146

3

**PROFOUND THOUGHTS AND ACTS OF DR. BABASAHEB
AMBEDKAR AND THEIR RELEVANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

Dr. John Wesley Sasikanth¹

Introduction

Babasaheb Dr.B.R. Ambedkar was not merely a Dalit leader or an emotional voice in the politics of social justice; he was far more. He is a 'National Hero' and an Ambassador of noble virtues. He must be freed from the confines of the 'Dalit ghetto,' and to be placed in the upper echelons of great minds or in the domain of philosophy. He was humble and practical.

In one of his articles to the readers of *jai bheem*, we wrote:

“Personally, I do not like the celebration of my birthday. I am too much of a democrat to relish man-worship which I regard as perversion of democracy. Admiration, love, regard and respect for a leader, if he deserves them, are permissible and should be enough for both, the leader and the followers. But worship of the leader is certainly not permissible. It is demoralising to both.” (Jai Bheem, April 13, 1947.)

Ambedkar was devoted to resolving the inhumane facts of caste society and significantly transforming it into a more human world. He was a staunch supporter of modernity. He thought that the current public sphere would be secular, and that former social categories would cease to exist on a regular basis. It was expected that Dalits, armed with constitutional directives and safeguarded by modern institutions, would develop as modern citizens capable of reaping the fruits of a liberal democracy free of social fears and prejudices.

He has shown admirable leadership on important issues affecting the working class, and his critical engagement with Marxist-Socialist principles is critical. As a labour minister in the Viceroy's Council, he advocated for the labour classes to have eight-hour work days, equal wages, and maternity leave.

Ambedkar, as a constitutionalist, had remarkable charisma and political vision in establishing India as a modern democratic republic. As an organic intellectual, his ideas are critical for understanding essential political notions such as citizenship, liberty, equality, and justice. Furthermore, his contributions to the fight for women's liberation in India are highly valued.

Ambedkarite Thoughts

Social thoughts

In his own words, "A great man must be motivated by the dynamics of social purpose and must act as a scourge and scavenger of the society." Ambedkar advocated for a social structure in which a person's rank is determined by his or her accomplishments and merit rather than by the circumstances of their birth. He supported a policy of preferential treatment for the nation's economically and socially disadvantaged citizens. "Educate, Agitate, and Organise; have faith in yourself," he said in his concluding comments to the audience at the All India Conference of the Depressed Classes on July 18 and 19, 1942. He further said, "Justice is on our side, so I don't see how we can lose this

war. In my opinion, the conflict is a joyful one. To put it positively, the three phrases "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" might be considered to sum up my social philosophy. "

Religious Thoughts

Ambedkar's effort to free Dalits from the chains of untouchability, as well as his campaign against the repressive Brahmanical caste system, shaped his political or intellectual persona. Even now, caste is a harsh fact of Indian social and political life. Caste, a traditional religious principle, forbids formal equality between people and instead governs family and civic relationships and permanently divides into hierarchical compartments. Ambedkar remarked, "Ostracism or casting out man from Society is the weapon fashioned by the Devil himself." Ambedkar felt the necessity for effective legislation against superstitious practices prevalent among the masses. In one of his speeches, he mentioned an instance published in a Parsis newspaper: A man who could hardly afford an aluminium tumbler while living. But when he died the priest insisted that a silver goblet should be employed in his funeral ceremony. (*The Bombay Chronicle*, dated November 8, 1929).

He believed that conversion to another religion was essential for the elevation of the Dalits. " I was born a Hindu, but I shall not die a Hindu," said Dr. Ambedkar, sparking the quest for a new faith in order to uplift Dalits. Buddhist philosophy, in Ambedkar's opinion, has stronger ethical credentials and may strengthen modern society's ethical foundations. He became a Buddhist on October 14, 1956, joining thousands of other converts, and he began a new chapter to talk about the necessity for rapid social and religious change. The rejection of the caste system was the main requirement for religious conversion. He proposed "fraternity" as the tenet of the new social and religious order.

In his speech delivered to Indian Christians of Sholapur. Ambedkar said,

"From the available religions and personalities in the world, I consider only two- Budha and Christ for conversion. We want a

religion for me and my followers which will teach equality freedom among men, and how man must behave with men and God, how child should behave with father etc. ('Janata' of 5.2.1938)

He considered religion and culture as essentials to education. There is no doubt however he was against social injustice and rituals in the name of religion. He highlighted the importance of religion as 'what good things I have in me or whatever have been the benefits of my education to society, I owe them to the religious feelings in me, I want religion but I do not want hypocrisy in the name of religion.'

Thoughts on the Reform of Legal Education

According to Ambedkar, the study of Law requires a study of certain other auxiliary subjects without which the study of Law alone would be incomplete equipment for the practice of the Profession. A lawyer must have a legal mind. The business of a lawyer is to argue. So important a part does argument play in a lawyer's business that argument is the summum bonum of a lawyer's being. The essential requisites for the development of the argumentative ability are :

- a. A knowledge of the individual and how he functions in society.
- b. A knowledge of the working of the human mind.
- c. A mind trained to drawing logical inferences.

In addition to those fundamental requirements of argumentative ability, there are other requisites, purely ornamental but none-the-less necessary, of grace of language and of orderly presentment. To put it in concrete terms, a lawyer's training apart from the study of law must include the study of the following subjects: (1) Sociology, (2) Psychology, (3) Logic, (4) Rhetoric and the art of public speaking, and (5) Command over language. He wanted the curriculum to be reformed and to see that these subjects are included in it.

Ambedkar's Message to the downtrodden

No downtrodden individual can achieve greatness, according to Ambedkar, unless he is willing to struggle and endure pain. He needs to be willing to give up the conveniences and even the necessities of the present in order to build up his future.

He illustrated it through a tale from Greek Mythology and pointed out the moral.

“The tale is contained in a Homeric Hymn addressed to the Greek Goddess Demeter. This Hymn to Demeter relates how the great Goddess, in the course of her wanderings in search of her daughter, came to the court of Keleos. No one recognised the Goddess under the borrowed form of a humble wet-nurse ; and Queen Metoneira entrusted to her care her latest born child the infant Demophoon, afterwards known as Tripltolemos. Every evening, behind closed doors, while the household was asleep, Demeter took little Demophoon out of his comfortable cradle and with apparent cruelty, though moved in reality by a great love and desires of bringing him eventually to the state of Godhood, laid the naked child on a glowing bed of embers. The child, Demophoon endures the fiery charcoal, he gathers strength from the ordeal. Something Superhuman is fostered in him, something robust, something beyond all hope glorious. But Metoneira becoming anxious, says the legend, burst suddenly one evening into the room where the experiment was being carried on and guided by her mistaken fears, thrust aside the goddess at her work of foregoing the superman, pushed away the embers and took away the child with the result that she saved the child but lost the Superman and eventual God”.

Ambedkar attempted to demonstrate through this story that greatness can only be attained by hardship and sacrifice. Without going through the test of fire, one cannot become a man or a God. Struggle and pain

strengthen us, and fire purifies. In the race of life, everyone are called, but only a select few are chosen, to use biblical terminology. Why? The cause is clear. Because they lack the bravery and commitment to forgo the joys of the now in favour of their future requirements, the majority of downtrodden men fail to attain greatness in this race of life.

The Rise and fall of the Hindu Woman

Ambedkar wrote, "There is no denying that the status of women in India has drastically declined from its former state. The *Atharva Veda* makes it very obvious that women once had the right to *upanayana* when it describes a girl as being ready for marriage after completing her *Brahmacharya*. It is evident from the *Shrauta Sutras* that women were educated to read the Vedas and could repeat the Vedic mantras. Women studied at *Gurukuls* (Colleges), were experts in *Mimansa*, and were well-versed in the various *Shakhas* (Sections) of the Veda, according to Panini's *Ashtadhyay*. The stories of women entering into public discussions with men on most abstruse subjects of religion, philosophy and metaphysics are by no means few." (Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : *Writings and Speeches.*, 122)

Raising the question, "Who was responsible for their fall"? Ambedkar answers, "It was Manu, the Law Giver of the Hindus. There can be no other answer. To leave no room for doubt."

Ambedkar worked tirelessly alongside women to achieve the goal of gender equality, not just to fight for women's rights. He spoke out against the casteist roots of sex work and fought for the rights of those who engage in it. He tried to make sure that women were covered by labour rules as well. He played a crucial role in lowering the number of working hours and enhancing the working environment. As a member of Bombay's Legislative Council in 1928, he supported a Bill granting paid maternity leave for women working in factories.

Babasaheb Ambedkar said, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved". He

further said, "Unity is meaningless without the accompaniment of women. Education is fruitless without educated women and agitation is incomplete without the strength of women." In his essay, "Castes in India" Babasaheb outlines how endogamy was the essence of the caste system. He details how the focus on maintaining caste exclusivity leads to the rise of Sati and child marriage.

The Hindu Code Bill

The Hindu Code Bill was one of Ambedkar's most significant feminist achievements. The task of writing the Hindu Code Bill fell to Ambedkar. Among other things, this Bill was intended to standardise property practises for men and women, design legislation of maintenance, marriage, divorce, and adoption. Ambedkar took advantage of the situation to make sure women had full access to all of the system's rights. Abolishing the birthright to property, property by survivorship, half-shares for daughters, converting the limited estate of women into an absolute estate, abolishing caste in terms of marriage and adoption, and the monogamy and divorce principles were among the issues he raised. Despite fierce opposition from conservative Hindu men in the parliament, Ambedkar stood up for these causes.

Women always walked side by side with men in the movements Ambedkar led. 10,000 men and women marched together during the Mahad Satyagraha to violate the rule prohibiting the Mahars from drinking water. Unlike Gandhi's Salt Satyagrah, in which women were not permitted to join, this one did. One of the ladies who responded to Babasaheb's plea was Radhabai Vadale, who declared, "It is better to die a hundred times than to live a life of humiliation." This served as evidence that Ambedkar had inspired confidence in women to fight for their rights.

His Thoughts on Education

“The education that makes us neither competent nor teaches us lessons of equality and morality is no more education.” – Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

In his Message to *The Marhatha First Annual Journal*, he wrote, I have always held that Knowledge is Power in every field of life. “Give education to your children. Instill ambition in them... Don't be in a hurry to marry; marriage is a liability. You should not impose it upon children unless financially they are able to meet the liabilities arising from them. Above all let each girl who marries stand up to her husband, claim to be her husband's friend ad equal, and refuse to be his slave. “

A democratic nation should provide everyone in its society the opportunity to receive an education, regardless of background. Education's primary goal is to change a person's social, economic, and political circumstances. He held the view that ‘Education is not only the birth right of every human being but also a weapon of social change.’

Emphasis on moral education and character building. He promoted education that was skill-based and job-oriented. While Dr. Ambedkar supported mother tongue instruction, he also mandated that every student know at least one foreign language. so that he can be aware of the worldwide developments occurring in his field and comprehend what is going on in the entire world. Many people are also unaware of Dr. Ambedkar's proposal to declare Sanskrit the official language of the nation during the Constituent Assembly meeting.

Conclusion

There are, however, many lesser-known attributes of B. R. Ambedkar that contributed to the formation of the country and continues to have a prominent impact on present Indian socio-economic-political setup. Unfortunately, Babasaheb Ambedkar's true ideas are not reaching the masses in the way that is desired. If the future generation is

not educated about Ambedkar and Ambedkarism, then Ambedkarism will remain restricted to the stacks of libraries. We must work to pass Ambedkarism on to the generation after us. To transfer political power to the majority, which would be eradicating the caste by virtue of the socio-educational-economic uplift of the majority, Ambedkarite methods must be adapted to contemporary situations. Every effort must be made to establish the twenty-first century as the "Century of Ambedkarianism" in order to advance true human ideals.

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4

SOCIAL IDEAS OF DR B.R. AMBEDKAR: NEW INSIGHTS

Dr. N.Thyaga Raju¹

Better known by his nickname Babasaheb, was a leading figure in education, a brilliant economist, a skilled administrator, and a radical, social and political thinkers of his time. His writings covered a wide range of topics, including anthropology, sociology, economics, philosophy, religion, law, history, and politics. He was a versatile individual. He is also referred to as the Indian Constitution's Father. Bhimrao Ambedkar was born in the Mahars community in the current state of Madhya Pradesh. Ambedkar endured caste prejudice throughout his early years. His family was considered "untouchable" by the upper classes because they belonged to the Hindu Mahar caste. Ambedkar was haunted by the prejudice and humiliation he experienced at the Army School. Fearing a backlash from the public, educators would segregate the students of the lower class from that of Brahmins and other upper classes.

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The untouchable students were often asked by the teacher to sit outside the class. Discrimination followed wherever he went. After coming back from the USA, Ambedkar was appointed as the Defence Secretary to the King of Baroda but there also he had to face the humiliation of being an 'untouchable'. According to Ambedkar, Indian social and political history is nothing but a 'glorification of upper castes and degradation of lower castes and the lower strata of society'.

He fought against the two principal inhuman social evils prevalent in Hindu society: Untouchability and Casteism. Dr. Ambedkar's social thinking was the outcome of their total dissatisfaction with the humiliating treatment meted out to the members of his community by the so-called higher caste Hindus. Therefore, his philosophy enshrined the principles of the attainment of social amelioration, political enlightenment, and spiritual awakening for his community. He asserted that political democracy cannot be assured unless social democracy lies at its base. This implies a way of life that recognizes liberty, equality, and fraternity as the principles of life forming a union of the Trinity. Ambedkar sought to eliminate the contradictions resulting from equality in politics and inequality in social and economic life.

Ambedkar started newspapers such as the Mooknayak, Bahishkrit Bharat, and Samata which acted as the authentic voices of the Depressed Classes. Institutions set up by him became vehicles of change such as Hitakarini Sabha and the Independent Labour Party of India. He emphasized constitutional methods to achieve social objectives. He described the methods of civil disobedience, non-cooperation, and satyagraha as the "grammar of anarchy". He opposed the adoption of the path of violence to solve any problem. Instead, he took recourse to the path of peace and non-violence. He had absolute faith in the efficacy of law and constitution to preserve society. His plea for the adoption of non-violent means is an important component of not only his political philosophy but his ethical view. The attainment of political

independence was not a sufficient condition for the regeneration of society. He asserted the need for the economic emancipation of underprivileged people. He floated the Bahishkrit Hitkarni Sabha (Council for the Welfare of the Outcastes) in July 1924. He became the founder of Samaj Samta Sangh which was based on the principle of social equality.

Dr Ambedkar laid the foundation stone of two political organizations, namely the Independent Labour Party of India, 1936, and the Scheduled Castes Federation, 1942 which became the Republican Party of India. While drafting the Constitution, he incorporated the principles of socio-economic justice along with political and civil rights. He sought to make the Indian Constitution an effective means of social change. He gave immense importance to the fundamental rights for ensuring justice. To make the fundamental rights effective, it was essential that every citizen is in a position to claim those rights. He wanted the fundamental rights to be binding on every authority created by the law. He considered fundamental rights to be of paramount importance for the development of an individual's personality. He argued that these rights, though fundamental in nature, cannot be absolute. Therefore, they are attended to by corresponding duties and reasonable restrictions.

Ambedkar was appointed as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly. As a social revolutionary, Babasaheb Ambedkar championed the cause of the 'untouchables' who were oppressed for centuries. He noted that untouchability has been perpetuated throughout the centuries through Sanskritisation whereby persons belonging to other castes followed the rituals observed by Brahmins to get a respectable place in society. Dr. Ambedkar sought to create a new social order in which no person should be discriminated against on the grounds of caste, religion, creed, etc. The castes, for Ambedkar, were anti-national because they brought about separation in social life. Further, they generated antipathy and jealousy between caste

and caste. He believed that the only way of securing equality for the so-called lower castes would be to discard the orthodox Hindu religion and embrace Buddhism which was rational and treated all human beings on an equal level.

He laid the foundation stone of the All India Depressed Classes Federation. He encouraged the oppressed 'untouchables' to shed their differences and asked them to "Organize, Educate, and Agitate". Dr. Ambedkar believed that unless political power is not secured in the hands of socially oppressed sections of Indian society, it was not possible to completely wipe out all social, legal, and cultural disabilities, from which the oppressed sections were suffering. Education, radical reforms in the land system, and the acquisition of political power by the Scheduled Castes were seen by him as the methods of bringing about the required social change in India. Dr. Ambedkar was of the firm belief that Hinduism can be saved only by annihilating the caste system. That is why in our Constitution, there is a special provision against untouchability. Several safeguards introduced in the Constitution by Dr. Ambedkar were instrumental in the all-around development of the weaker sections of society.

Article 14 of the Indian Constitution prescribes equality before, and equal protection of the laws; Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the ground of caste; Article 16 prohibits discrimination on the ground of caste in public employment. Article 17 abolishes untouchability itself. Article 46 provides for special facilities for the promotion of education of the Scheduled Castes. Reservation of seats in Parliament, State Legislatures, and in public appointments for them has been secured through articles 330, 332, and 335. Dr. Ambedkar gave the highest priority to education in his struggle for the liberation of the Dalits from the oppressive caste-ridden Indian society. He believed that it is only education through which various kinds of disabilities afflicting Dalits could be overcome. Education provides valor and opportunity to fight poverty, disease, and backwardness.

Dhananjay Keer opines that the contribution of Ambedkar towards the upliftment of the downtrodden sections has been over and above Mahatma Gandhi. For his personal gains, he never sacrificed the interests of his nation. The British Government in pursuance of their policy of Divide and Rule wanted to introduce separate electorates for several minorities and Depressed Classes which would have paved the way for another nation like Pakistan. As a protest against the Ramsay McDonald Communal Award, Gandhiji went on “fast unto death” on 20 September 1932. Ambedkar had differences with Gandhiji on many matters, but he saved his life by agreeing to the Poona Pact on 24 September 1932 when he finally accepted Gandhiji’s suggestion and gave up his firm stand on the separate electorate for ‘untouchables’ in the larger interest of the nation.

This fast created a nationwide sensation, and eminent persons of India and leaders of various castes and classes met and signed an agreement that came to be known as Poona Pact. According to the Pact, the separate electorate demand was replaced with special concessions like reserved seats in the regional legislative assemblies and Central Council of States. Eleanor Zelliott remarks that “the demands of the Untouchables for equal rights in religious matters, political power, and full participation in social and economic life were not met”. This Pact could not have been signed but for the cooperation of Dr. Ambedkar. This was one of the greatest sacrifices of Dr. Ambedkar for the freedom of the country and the people.

Gandhi used the word “Harijan” to bring the untouchables closer to God, and thereby to those who believed in God, which was the rest of Hindu society. Gandhi is also known to have said that the use of the term “Depressed Classes” reminded people of slavery and was offensive to them, so he preferred the more benign term, “Harijans”. Ambedkar objected to this stating that it was condescending and obscurantist in nature. He stated that it was an attempt to side-step the real issue. His approach to the caste problem in India was the most radical. It was

forcefully and rationally expressed in his monumental work, 'Annihilation of Caste'. Further, he wanted to make it a politico-legal agenda and use a legal instrument for it. Gandhi, on the contrary, supported the caste system not as a vertical system of hierarchy of castes but as a horizontal system of equality of castes.

He only wanted to end the untouchability, not the caste system. Moreover, he never used political means to achieve his aim. He relied on the "good" in human nature and appealed to everyone's conscience to eradicate the inhuman practice of untouchability. This difference in the idea of social justice has been beautifully summarized by Arundhati Roy as 'one was upper caste Hindu's struggle for purification of religion (Gandhi) and other was outcaste's struggle for self-respect by any means' (Ambedkar).

The measures suggested by Dr. Ambedkar for uprooting the practice of untouchability can be divided into social, political, and constitutional categories. These social measures included: the abolition of the caste system, encouraging inter-castes marriages and inter-dining, creating social awareness among the people about the irrationality of the caste system, etc. The political measures included creating opportunities for the Depressed Classes to effective participation in the political process and granting them a fair share in the political power of the country through the reservation of seats, the separate electorate, and protective discrimination. He maintained that there cannot be an economic and political revolution unless the caste system was totally abolished.

Dr. Ambedkar's social philosophy may be said to have two aspects: the negative and the positive. In its negative aspect, he wanted to destroy the existing unjust social order by denouncing the irrational division of society into four varnas or classes, namely the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The positive aspect of Ambedkar's social philosophy was his concern for justice for the 'untouchables' in

particular and for all the people of India in general. Dr. Ambedkar's main concern was the secularization and democratization of Indian society and polity. Self-help, self-elevation, and self-respect were the trident with which he aroused people to action. A historic and momentous event in the life of B R. Ambedkar was when he led a march to the Mahad Tank in 1927 to preach to his people the universal law that liberty was never received as a gift, but had to be fought for. At the same time, Ambedkar never wanted his people to indulge in hero worship.

Dr. Ambedkar was a strong believer in the concept of equality in general and between men and women in particular. He took a leading part in introducing the Hindu Code Bill which included equality in marriage rights and property rights for women. But he could not succeed as the traditionalists got the upper hand and the bill was practically truncated. He asserted that the progress of a society can be measured by the degree of progress which women have achieved. He introduced the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament and highlighted the issues about women's property rights. Ambedkar created awareness among poor, illiterate women and inspired them to fight against unjust social practices such as child marriage and the devadasi system. He quoted the famous thought of an Irish Patriot Daniel O'Connell "No man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity, and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty."

As an educationist, he realized the importance of education in alleviating the sufferings of the poor and the deprived. He was against the commercialization of education. He did not visualize education merely as a means of livelihood but as a powerful weapon to liberate the Dalits from ignorance and strengthen their fight against injustice. He considered education as a prerequisite for any kind of organization and movement of Dalits. He believed that no democratic process could be complete unless the masses were properly educated. He was of the firm view that "education is something which ought to be brought within the reach of everyone". For him, the surest way for the salvation of the

oppressed and 'untouchables' lies in higher education, higher employment, and better ways of earning a living.

Dr. Ambedkar did not visualize education simply as a means of personality development and a source of earning a livelihood. He considered education as the most powerful agent for bringing about desired changes in society and a prerequisite for organized effort for launching any social movement. Education, for him, was an instrument to liberate the Dalits from illiteracy, ignorance, and superstitions and thus enable them to fight against all forms of injustice, exploitation, and oppression.

Ambedkar considered education to be essential for both men and women irrespective of their social and economic status. Dr. Ambedkar founded the People's Education Society on 8 July 1945 with a view to advancing the educational interest of the downtrodden sections of Indian society in general and the Scheduled Castes in particular. Under the auspices of the People's Education Society, he started Siddharth College, Bombay on 20 June 1946. The College was named after Buddha, who was the liberator of the masses from the serfdom of the Shastras and a symbol of equality.

Dr. Ambedkar had an intense love for learning. Through his hard work and diligence, he was able to achieve such higher academic distinctions as M.A., M.Sc, Ph.D., D.Sc, and Barrister-at-Law from prestigious universities in the USA and UK. He completed his Master's degree in June 1915 after successfully completing his thesis titled 'Ancient Indian Commerce'. In May 1916, he presented a paper on "The Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development", at the Anthropology Seminar sponsored by Dr. Goldenweiser. In June 1916, he submitted his Ph.D. thesis entitled "National Dividend for India: A Historic and Analytical Study", which was published eight years later under the title: The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India. In 1916, he enrolled in the London School of Economics and started

working on his doctoral thesis titled “The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and its Solution”. Ambedkar also spent a few months at the University of Bonn, Germany where he wrote *The History of Indian Currency and Banking*. He received his Ph.D. degree in Economics in 1927. On 8 June 1927, he was awarded a Doctorate by the University of Columbia.

Dr. Ambedkar’s social and political philosophy is very much influenced by the philosophy of his inspiring teacher Professor John Dewey of Columbia University, the American Constitution, particularly the Fourteenth Amendment, the English Economists like J. M. Keynes, R. A. Selghman, and great English Parliamentarian Edmund Burke. Ambedkar was a liberal democrat and a great parliamentarian. The influence of Western Liberalism has been evident in his thinking. These influences on him helped to build up a philosophy based on a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism, idealism and realism, naturalism and humanism, materialism and spiritualism, individualism and socialism, and nationalism and internationalism. His philosophy was guided by a kind of social dynamism. To Ambedkar, politics was a mission rather than a leadership game for personal gain and aggrandizement. He argued that traditionalism and parochialism are the major obstacles to democracy. Democracy was a more comprehensive system encompassing the social, political, and economic organization of the society.

Ambedkar derived much of his intellectual influence from John Dewey who argued that “society is the process of associating in such ways that experiences, ideas, emotions, values are transmitted and made common”. He concurs with John Locke when he says that the purpose of government is to protect life, liberty, and property, i.e., natural rights, and a government that fails to do it forfeits its claim to legitimate authority. These natural rights have to be recognized by the fundamental law of the land and upheld and protected by it. It is not only the responsibility of the state but also that of the individuals to uphold these

rights through a sense of constitutional morality. He strongly suggested democracy as the 'governing principle of human relationship'. He stressed that principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity which are the foundations of democracy should not be interpreted narrowly in terms of political rights alone. He gave an expression to the objective of economic democracy by incorporating the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution. These were: rights relating to the provision of adequate means of livelihood to all citizens, proper distribution of the material resources of the community for the common good, prevention of concentration of wealth to the common detriment, equal pay for equal work for both men and women, right to work, right to education, uniform civil code, etc. These rights related to the social and economic transformation of our society

The political philosophy of Ambedkar may help in renegotiating the predicament of Western political theory in particular and leading the fights of the masses in general. Ambedkar's ideology can be associated with liberal, radical, or conservative thoughts. At the same time, he distinguishes himself from these dominant political traditions.

Ambedkar's philosophy is primarily ethical and religious. According to him, the social precedes the political. Social morality is central to his political philosophy. His idea of democracy internalizes the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity in their true spirit. The core of his political thinking of Ambedkar is contained in two of his statements- that rights are protected not by law but by the social and moral conscience of society, and a democratic form of government presupposes a democratic form of society.

His political thought has emerged from three grand traditions of political thought, i.e., liberal, conservative, and radical. The unique feature about him is that he has transcended all these traditions. He developed political concepts like democracy, justice, state, and rights from his understanding of Indian society and the functioning of its

institutions on moral grounds. He endorsed the parliamentary system but was apprehensive about the parliamentary system in India. India, according to him was dominated by a communal majority instead of a political majority. He was a defender of democratic socialism. He believed that political democracy without social and economic democracy is a paradox. Ambedkar has been criticized for imitating the good elements of the Constitutions of other countries. But Ambedkar did not merely copy those provisions and incorporated them into the Constitution but adopted them after making suitable modifications so that they might suit the Indian conditions. The Indian Constitution, according to him, would stand the test of time.

Ramchandra Guha considers Ambedkar a unique example of success and inspiration. His journey from being an “untouchable” to India’s first law minister was no mean achievement. Dr. Ambedkar was an ardent nationalist who exhorted that “we must be determined to defend our independence to the last drop of our blood”. Ambedkar’s birth in an untouchable community and in a system based on graded inequality was responsible for giving a purpose and mission to his life. Ambedkar truly personifies his view, “Life should be great rather than long.” Gail Omvedt rightly calls ‘Ambedkarism’ a living force in India. He would be long remembered as a militant reformer, a compassionate social rebel and as a liberator of the downtrodden masses.”

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5

Dr B. R Ambedkar's Philosophy, Ideology and its Relevance to the Empowerment of Women Education System in India - A Study

Dr. Saloman Raju Yarlagadda¹

1.1 Introduction

Human life needs education in order to solve any challenges. It enables the development of a child's maturity and sense of responsibility in accordance with his needs and the demands of the constantly evolving society of which he is a member. By this process, he eventually develops his physical, mental, emotional, and social selves. It also gives him the ability to successfully deal with life's challenges. A person with a good education is well-liked and esteemed by his peers.

According to Nelson Mandela *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”*. It implies that the only way for human society and life to change is via education. Humans can grasp civilization and human rights via education, which also contributes to

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the abolition of slavery in human society. It affects a person's entire lifetime. Education is a process of growth and development in this way. Such education is not restricted by space, time, or persons. According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar *“Education is only weapon that cut slavery chains of thousands years and makes independent human existence”*. It follows that education is the most important component of life and that it helps people understand what it is to be free and equal. Men become self-assured, skilled, and socioeconomically sound through education. Only in societies where there is adequate access to education can human life progress.

A progressive country is built on education. Education is the single factor that makes science, technology, art, research, and medicine possible. It is the culmination of every process by which a person acquires skills, interests, and other types of behavior that have socially beneficial effects.

1.2 Women Education

In a society where men predominate, women's education refers to the provision of education for girls and women. The foundation of women's education is girl education. It included eradicating poverty and promoting gender equality as well as access to education. Also, the right sex education was involved. The relevance of female education is the advancement of the feminist movement. It involves a system of universal education for women, preparing them for a confident, capable existence. They learn about their constitutional rights and other legal matters related to being an Indian citizen.

India is a country that is rich in development. Modern women are encouraged to maximize their potential in various capacities due to the quick development of science and technology, constitutional requirements, and specific emphasis on women's education. Instead of staying at home, kids are now pursuing education and employment. In a culture dominated by men, women experienced discrimination and were

consistently seen as being inferior and powerless. Every woman is equal to men and shares many traits in common with them, but men have never given women the freedom or equality they deserve in society since they upheld male dominance.

Unquestionably, the majority of Indian women accept their traditional roles of dependency on males and their families, but many of them have entered the mainstream of society and are competing with men in many spheres of life. A well-educated woman has the same potential as a man; she is competitive with men in all fields, including acting, teaching, and the trades, business, and politics. This research article focuses salient features of women education below;

1.2.1 Enhancement of life

The history of Indian women is a history of prejudice, from the kitchen to society, and centuries of servitude. Religious and ritualistic beliefs were the foundation of ancient civilization, which fixed and mindlessly followed these beliefs. Illiteracy or a lack of knowledge was the foundation for the entire narrative of backwardness and the subjugation of women. That made their lives miserable and hopeless. A woman may live a wonderful life with the aid of education since it opens up new opportunities for her and increases the variety of her activities.

It provides women a boost of independence and strength that makes them stronger and more powerful. In the past, women's identities were shaped by males, which mean that without men, women had no significance. Every person received a new identity via education, an identity that would never be lost.

1.2.2 Growth in the Economy and Prosperity

Economic stability is the key to prosperity, and education helps to create it. Several sorts of talents that education offers enable women to find sources of appropriate and consistent income. Economic structure fosters economic growth, which empowers women to stand up for their

independence and human rights. Women were undoubtedly given more power by education, and as a result, they took initiative to help their families and country grow. We have frequently observed in our culture that uneducated and illiterate women are impoverished and defenseless, working as servants in other people's homes and depending on others for their basic necessities.

An educated woman is more self-assured and successful in life since she can easily sustain her demands and is autonomous.

1.2.3 Good Health

Girls and women who have an education are more aware of the value of hygiene and good health. They receive all the knowledge they need about cleanliness and health concerns through health education, and she leads a healthy lifestyle. Mothers who are well-educated may teach their children and their family all applicable safeguards and precautions.

1.2.4 Justice/ Redemption

In today's world, there must be a need for justice. Women who have education are more aware about their human rights to justice. Women who have received an education are more likely to engage in social welfare activity, such as campaigns against dowry, forced prostitution, child marriage, female foeticide, etc. If they are educated, aware of the constitution, and aware of the legal provisions for women's protection, they may fight for their rights and the rights of others and for justice.

1.2.5 Opportunity to pursue a career of her desire

Education fosters a feeling of future direction and career awareness. Women with education may achieve great success in many aspects of their lives. For a female to have equal opportunities in all spheres of life, she must have an education. She can make plans for the

future, choose a career path, and pick a profession like doctor, teacher, leader, or scientist, among others.

2. Review of Literature

The researcher was directed by the evaluation of pertinent literature in determining the scope of the work that has been done in the field as well as the areas where further study is needed. The researcher's analysis and examination of prior insightful research serve as a catalyst that forces the researcher to go further into the subject matter and consider it from a wider range of perspectives in order to develop new theories, hypotheses, and objectives for the study.

MV Chandra (1990) He researched Ambedkar and wrote the book *B.R. Ambedkar Man and His Mission*. He explains the fundamental goal of B.R. Ambedkar, which was to improve the lives of Indians who are economically or socially backward. He referred to Ambedkar as the saviour or deity of Indian women and the downtrodden.

Ahluwalia edited B.R. Ambedkar and Human Rights in 1981. He underlined how Ambedkar's work on behalf of human rights is still important today. Moreover, he noted that Ambedkar's democratic worldview included liberty, equality, and brotherhood. Ambedkar's philosophy is reflected in the Indian Constitution's Basic Rights. Every Indian was granted equal rights and privileges under the Indian Constitution.

In order to ensure Indian women's freedom, education, and empowerment, he also emphasized the need for particular safety measures. Without equality, freedom has no purpose, and freedom has no value. Dr. Ambedkar sought to create a society based on everyone's access to freedom, equality, and opportunity. In India, his concepts and way of thinking revolutionized society. Women and untouchables entered mainstream society as a result of his efforts and constitutional protections.

Ahir, D.C. (1997) *The Legacy of Dr. Ambedkar* is a book that he edited. Ambedkar's experiences with British colonial power in India are briefly described in his book. Dr. Ambedkar confronted the British authorities with concerns about the freedom and rights of untouchables, people of colour, and women. He brought up concerns including women, the underprivileged, untouchable, and the backward in an effort to find a solution. He was collaborating with the British administration and chastised them for their inhumane treatment of the people of India in order to further their own financial interests.

In 1993, Chalam published a paper titled "*Relevance of Ambedkarism in India.*" He discovered that Ambedkar's sociological and pedagogical theories are still relevant in today's society. The position of women and shudra (untouchables) was nearly the same; both groups were restricted by the social structure. Reservations in admittance and government positions enhance these populations and give them a true sense of independence. Women and untouchables have the same rights to education and equal opportunities for growth. Citizens of India now possess the sway over politics and power, and they decide the course of their country through general elections. They voted for the candidate who would improve their social and economic situation. Schools, colleges, and universities help a country become independent and autonomous.

3. Methodology for the Study

The plan of the current research project is included in this section since everything should be stated methodically and in steps. Each research project's methodology choice is based on the type of problem chosen and the type of data required to achieve its goals.

For the current investigation, the researcher used the historical technique. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's historical facts, events, and activities on women's education, gender equality, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes are examined and presented using reason. Ambedkar has written

extensively and on topics that are pertinent to society, analyzing both the historical context and the current state of women's education.

3.1 Sources of Data

The current study is based on Dr. Ambedkar's writings, speeches, and other contributions to women's education, gender equality for SCs and STs, social reform, and constitutional design, as well as other writings about him that are related to women's education, women's empowerment, and gender equality. On the issue of this study, the information was gathered from both primary and secondary sources.

3.2 Organization and Sources of Data

The data was structured systematically to serve the analysis's goals once it was gathered from diverse sources. The gathered information was organized into two groups: Dr. Ambedkar's ideas on education and social issues as well as his activities.

The objectives of the present study are:

1. Life and education of Dr B.R Ambedkar
2. Dr. Ambedkar's struggle and social demonstrations, activities, and acts.
3. Publications by Dr. B.R Ambedkar in newspapers and periodicals
4. Power, politics, and education for the benefit of society's underprivileged.

3.2.1 B.R Ambedkar and Women Education

The majority of people in society are women, who make up 50% of all human society. They were crucial to the expansion and improvement of the family and society. The main component that changed a weak traditional Indian lady into an empowered woman is education. As we've discovered in the past, Indian women are prohibited from attending school and have been given less rights in the

house for generations, which has caused a decline in their social and economic position and placed them at the bottom of Indian society.

Women have historically been seen as untouchables by society and kept separate from the general stream. Several rules were imposed on them without their consent, leaving women in a society controlled by males defenseless and without hope. These feeble, helpless women eventually became unrecognized slaves in a society where men predominated. Manusmriti, a code of behaviour in ancient India, was closely adhered to, and there was penalty for breaking the regulations. Child marriage, Devdasi, Casteism, Dowry, and polygamy all developed as a result of cruel social laws that were connected to religion. The Sati method was cruel to widows; it involved bundling a widow with her husband's dead body. It was unorthodox and unreasonable for a man to be remarried after his wife passed away but for a woman to be burned alive with her husband. It continued throughout the 19th century. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwarchand Vidyasagar were the first to speak out against the sati system; Vidyasagar was also involved in the remarriage of a widow. He began widow remarriage following her husband's passing.

The road to social changes for women has been a lengthy one, but ultimately every attempt at reform failed due to a lack of education. Dr. B.R Ambedkar is another well-known figure who spent his entire life working to improve society for women. He was aware of how similar untouchable women's situations were to that of genuine Indian women. In 1944, Dr.B.R. Ambedkar established the *People's Education Society*. In 1946, he established *Siddharth College of Arts and Commerce* to provide women from SC and ST with an education.

3.2.2 Contributions of Dr. B.R Ambedkar to the emancipation of Women

In 1920, Dr. Ambedkar launched his movement. He said, "If male education is persuaded side by side with female education, we shall see

brighter days soon and our progress will be substantially expedited." He began ferocious oppositional propaganda against the Hindu social structure, launching the journals *Mook Nayak* in 1920 and *Bahiskrit Bharat* in 1927.

He highlighted the importance of gender equality, the value of education, and the obstacles that women and depressed people face via its concerns. Ambedkar shared the demands made by feminists across the world, emphasizing women's rights to education, equality with men, property rights, and participation in politics. A women's organization was established in Bombay in January 1928, and *Mata Ramabai Ambedkar*, Babasahab's wife, served as the organization's president. Five hundred women engaged in the Kalaram Temple Entrance Satyagraha in Nasik in 1930; many of them were detained in the same arrests as males and subjected to harsh treatment while detained.

Dr B.R Ambedkar served as an inspiration for numerous women writers who wrote on a variety of subjects. Also, Tulsibai Bansode launched the publication "*Chokhamela*". This demonstrates how Dr B.R Ambedkar raised awareness among uneducated, underprivileged women and motivated them to fight against societal injustices like child marriage and the devdasi system.

3.2.3 The Hindu Code Bill proposed by Dr.B.R Ambedkar and constitutional protections for women

Dr. B.R Ambedkar was conscious of the status of women in society. Women's development is restricted by a culture that is controlled by men and by religious ignorance. He presented the Hindu Code Bill before the assembly as a solution to these issues. It was the most imposing piece of legislation passed in contemporary India, and among other changes, it attempted to outlaw all other types of marital arrangements and only allow monogamous unions. The Code also aimed to grant women the property and adoption rights that Manu had previously denied them. In all legal aspects, it equalised the playing field

for men and women. In a nutshell, the Hindu Code Bill was a solution to India's problems with women.

In order to adequately include women's rights into Indian political discourse and the constitution, Dr. Ambedkar made the following efforts:

3.2.3.1 Article 14: Right of Equality

In terms of equality, this piece served as a weapon for women after centuries of enslavement. Equal rights and opportunities for growth and development in a society dominated by males are what equality entails. It has been revolutionary for women since they have left their homes and joined society. They are now active members of society and provide equivalent services to males in the fields of education and technology. Rural women are now more conscious of education and human rights thanks to constitutional provisions for reservation in the service sector and specific panchayat election provisions.

3.2.3.2 Article 15: Discrimination of Women

Since a long time in the past, women have experienced discrimination based on their gender or sexual orientation. This law forbids sex-based discrimination in order to protect women from it. It offers equal opportunities for women to succeed in society, just as it does for males, while also protecting women against discrimination.

According to Title VII, sexual harassment is also a form of sex discrimination. When an employee is subjected to offensive, undesired behavior that is pervasive or severe enough to impair the terms and circumstances of her employment, it is considered harassment.

Positive discrimination in favour of women is permitted by article 15.3 of the constitution. The state has the authority to provide for women in any way that is unique. In other words, the state is permitted to practise positive discrimination in favour of women under this rule.

3.2.3.3 Article 39: Equal pay for Work

It refers to equal labour and remuneration for equivalent job. For the first time in Indian history, it made women economically comparable to and equal to men. Women receive the same wage as men for the same work. There shouldn't be any sex-based discrimination in the compensation of female employees. Its breach is illegal, and penalties must exist to safeguard women's rights to equal pay and equal labour.

3.2.3.4 Article 42: Human factors at work and benefits for Women

For working women who undertake tasks away from their homes, this legislation is a huge relief. No organization or corporation should require a woman to work while pregnant because she needs to relax and have tranquilly. The business or employer must offer a minimum of six months of child care leave following a woman's delivery and six months of leave before delivery. This is a fundamental right of women under Indian constitutional law.

Women should be allowed to take maternity absences while still employed without having their pay affected. If a corporation or institution commits any violations of the article, the employer must be disciplined with the protection of women's jobs.

3.2.3.5 Article 46: Right to protect rights and economic interest of weaker section of Women

It is the government's obligation to defend the rights and economic interests of women who belong to the weaker portion of society under this unique constitutional clause. No social injustice should be tolerated in the face of a breach of this act without their exploitation being stopped. Here, there are particular provisions for women from the less privileged and disadvantaged sections, such as SC and ST women. The state must advance and safeguard their interests.

4. Findings, Applicability of Dr B.R Ambedkar's Philosophy to the system of Women's Education and Suggestions

The main conclusions in relation to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's philosophy towards women's education:

1. Dr. B.R Ambedkar assessed the socioeconomic standing of women and concentrated on their emancipation. He began his campaign in 1920 by raising awareness of women's rights and education through gatherings, seminars, and movements.
2. He began a crusading campaign of propaganda against Hindu social structure and women's tremendous misery. Via his 1920 periodical "Mook Nayak" and 1927 Bahiskrit Bharat, he brought up concerns pertaining to women. He began an ardent fight for women's rights against tradition and society.
3. In January 1928, he established a women's organisation in Bombay, with Mata Ramabai Ambedkar serving as its president. It aided in achieving social equality for women.
4. Another woman who was influenced by Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy was Radhabai Vadale. When she spoke at a news conference in 1931, she served as an example of female empowerment. "It is better to die a hundred times than to live a life filled with disgrace," she added. Radhabai Vadale's strong statement made her a role model for other women.
5. Over 300 women joined their male counterparts at the Satyagraha at Mahad Tank. He stated, "I assess the growth of community by the degree of advancement which women had accomplished," in front of another gathering of roughly 3000 women.
6. In July 1944, Dr. Ambedkar established the "*People's Education Society*". In April 1946, he also founded "*Siddharth College of Arts and Science in Bombay*" and made sure that women could attend. He declared, "Educating a woman involves teaching two families, whereas educating a man means educating one individual." "Empowerment of women is actual empowerment of the

Country," he asserted. These statements described his contribution to the emancipation of women.

The Key Results Concerning Different Educationists' Views on Dr. B.R Ambedkar's Philosophy

1. For Indian citizens, liberty, equality, and justice are all based on their fundamental rights.
2. The Indian Constitution's Article 51 and Article 21 A both allow for the education of girls, women, SC/STs, and other individuals. For all Indian youngsters, education is free and required.
3. Dr. Ambedkar promotes gender equality in the Indian Constitution's Articles 14 to 18.
4. Working women get a specific benefit known as the Maternity Bill and Amedment in Maternity Bills.
5. The inclusion of women and SC/ST students in the modern educational system is one of the latest improvements to the conventional educational system. It wasn't present in the early educational systems.

6. Conclusion

Due to the fact that women make up half of society, it is impossible to deny them access to education, which is a fundamental human right and a requirement of contemporary society. It helps women to grow in their feeling of responsibility and maturity as they adapt to the requirements and expectations of the rapidly changing society in which they live. In this way, she gradually develops his physical, mental, and emotional self, as well as his social sentiments. She is also able to successfully deal with life's challenges because to it.

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A Review Reading on the Relentless System and Vanquish Outlooks of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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Introduction

*“Depressed by the Govt.; Oppressed by Hindus; Disregarded by
Muslims, we left in a most intolerable position of utter helplessness”*

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. Ambedkar was one among the notable modern authors include Mahatma Phule in Maharashtra, who focused on the issues of Dalits through their works and writings. This started a new trend in Dalit writing and inspired many Dalits to offer work in Marathi, Hindi, Tamil and Punjabi.

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The word 'Dalit'

Dalit, meaning "oppressed" in South Asia, is the self-chosen political name of castes in the SAARC region which formerly were considered "untouchable," according to the Hindu varna system. Though the name Dalit has been in existence since the nineteenth century, the economist and reformer B. R. Ambedkar (1891–1956) popularized the term. Dalits were excluded from the four-fold Varna system and formed the unmentioned fifth varna; they were also called Panchama. While "scheduled castes" (SC) is the legal name for those who were formerly considered "untouchable," the term Dalit also encompasses scheduled tribes (ST) and other historically disadvantaged communities who were traditionally excluded from society.

Subjugation in life

Dr. Ambedkar born and brought up as a Hindu, educated by a Hindu potentate, he has become so disgusted with the so called Savarna Hindus for the treatment that he and his people have received at their hands that he proposes to leave not only them but the very religion that is his and their common heritage. But this is not to be wondered at. After all, one can only judge a system or an institution by the conduct of its representatives. What is more? Dr. Ambedkar found that the vast majority of Savarna Hindus had not only conducted themselves inhumanly against those of their fellow religionists, whom they classed as untouchables, but they had based their conduct on the authority of their scriptures, and when he began to search them he had found ample warrant for their beliefs in untouchability and all its implications. Inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the perpetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures.

Opposition to untouchability

Ambedkar was born into a poor low Mahar (dalit) caste, who were treated as untouchables and subjected to socio-economic discrimination. Ambedkar's ancestors had long worked for the army of the British East India Company, and his father served in the British Indian Army at the Mhow cantonment. Although they attended school, Ambedkar and other untouchable children were segregated and given little attention or help by teachers. They were not allowed to sit inside the class. When they needed to drink water, someone from a higher caste had to pour that water from a height as they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. This task was usually performed for the young Ambedkar by the school peon, and if the peon was not available then he had to go without water; the situation he later in his writings described as "*No peon, No Water*". He was required to sit on a gunny sack which he had to take home with him. Ambedkar worked as a private tutor, as an accountant, and established an investment consulting business, but it failed when his clients learned that he was an untouchable. In 1918, he became Professor of Political Economy in the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Mumbai. Although he was successful with the students, other professors objected to his sharing a drinking-water jug with them.

Religious System (Savarnas)

No Hindu who prizes his faith above life itself can afford to underrate the importance of this indictment. Dr Ambedkar is not alone in his disgust he is its most uncompromising exponent and one of the ablest among them. He is certainly the most irreconcilable among them. He is in the front rank of the leaders, he is singularly alone and as yet but a representative of a very small minority. But what he says is voiced with more or less vehemence by many leaders belonging to the depressed classes. What Dr. Ambedkar has to say the Savarnas have to correct their belief and their conduct. Above all those who are by their

learning and influence among the Savarnas have to give an authoritative interpretation of the scriptures. The questions that Dr. Ambedkar's indictment suggests are:

- What are the scriptures?
- Are all the printed texts to be regarded as an integral part of them or is any part of them to be rejected as unauthorised interpolation?
- What is the answer of such accepted and expurgated scriptures on the question of untouchability, caste, equality of status, inter-dining and intermarriages?

These have been all examined by Dr. Ambedkar in his writings.

Many of the texts that Dr. Ambedkar quotes from the Smritis cannot be accepted as authentic. The scriptures, properly so called, can only be concerned with eternal varieties and must appeal to any conscience i.e. any heart whose eyes of understanding are opened. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or be capable of being spiritually experienced. And even when you have an expurgated edition of the scriptures, you will need their interpretation. Who is the best interpreter? Not learned men surely. Learning there must be. But religion does not live it. It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers, in their lives and sayings. When all the most learned commentators of the scriptures are utterly forgotten, the accumulated experience of the sages and saints will abide and be an inspiration for ages to come.

Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth.

Reflection of his annoyances in writings

Before going to talk about his displeasure in his writings I feel it would be reasonable to state about the law of Varna that which teaches us we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling. It defines not our rights but our duties. It necessarily has reference to callings that are conducive to the welfare of humanity and to no other. It also follows that there is no calling too low and none too high. Ail are good, lawful and absolutely equal in status. The callings of a Brahmin, spiritual teacher and a scavenger are equal, and their due performance carries equal merit before God and at one time seems to have carried identical reward before man. Both were entitled to their livelihood and no more. The following verse from Rig Veda states this point very clear

"That some may go in pursuit of power, some in pursuit of fame, some in pursuit of wealth, some in pursuit of work, Ushas has awakened people so that each may go in pursuit of his special and different way of earning his livelihood."

- Rig Veda, i.113.6

A Reply to the Mahatma

"There have been many Mahatmas in India whose whole objective was to remove untouchability; every one of them have failed in the mission; Mahatmas have come, Mahatmas have gone but the untouchables have remained untouchables"

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

As a reply to the Mahatma Ambedkar prepared a speech entitled 'Annihilation of Caste' for the annual conference of the *Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal*. The speech is undelivered but it clarified and out cried a polite opposition to the Mahatma. Ambedkar in his own words:

"What has the Mahatma to say on the question raised by me in the speech? First of all, anyone who reads my speech will realize that the

Mahatma has entirely missed the issues raised by me, and that the issues he has raised are not the issues that arise out of what he is pleased to call my indictment of the Hindus. The principle points which I have tried to make out in my speech may be catalogued as follows:

1. That Caste has ruined the Hindus;

2. That the reorganization of the Hindu Society on the basis of Chaturvarnya is impossible because the Varnavyavastha is like a leaky pot or like a man running at the nose. It is incapable of sustaining itself by its own virtue, and has an inherent tendency to degenerate into a Caste System unless there is a legal sanction behind it which can be enforced against everyone transgressing his Varna;

3. That the reorganization of the Hindu Society on the basis of Chaturvarnya would be harmful, because the effect of the Varnavyavastha would be to degrade the masses by denying them opportunity to acquire knowledge, and to emasculate them by denying them the right to be armed;

4. That the Hindu Society must be reorganized on a religious basis which would recognize the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity;

5. That in order to achieve this objective the sense of religious sanctity behind Caste and Varna must be destroyed;”

A religion has to be judged not by it's worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon.

- (Harijan, July 18, 1936)

Interpretation of Sastras

In reply to the Mahatma Ambedkar details his view on the Hindu Shastras. The Shastras should be interpreted not by the learned but the saints and that, as the saints have understood them, the Shastras do not support Caste and Untouchability. As regards the first point what Ambedkar likes to ask the Mahatma is what does it avail to any one if

the texts are interpolations and if they have been differently interpreted by the saints? The masses do not make any distinction between texts which are genuine and texts which are interpolations. The masses do not know what the texts are. They are too illiterate to know the contents of the Shastras. They have believed what they have been told and what they have been told is that the Shastras do enjoin as a religious duty the observance of Caste and Untouchability. With regard to the saints, one must admit that howsoever different and elevating their teachings may have been as compared to those of the merely learned they have been lamentably ineffective. They have been ineffective for two reasons. Firstly, none of the saints ever attacked the Caste System. On the contrary, they were staunch believers in the System of Castes. Most of them lived and died. As members of the castes which they respectively belonged, so passionately attached was Jnyandeo to his status as a Brahmin that when the Brahmins of Paithan would not admit him to their fold he moved heaven and earth to get his status as a Brahmin recognized by the Brahmin fraternity. And even the saint Eknath who now figures in the film *|| Dharmatma ||* as a hero for having shown courage to touch the untouchables and dine with them, did so not because he was opposed to Caste and Untouchability but because he felt that the pollution caused thereby could be washed away by a bath in the sacred waters of the river Ganges.

The saints have never according to his study carried on a campaign against, Caste and Untouchability. They were not concerned with the struggle between men. They were concerned with the relation between man and God. They did not preach that all men were equal. They preached that all men were equal, in the eyes of God a very different and a very innocuous proposition which nobody can find difficult to preach or dangerous to believe in. The second reason why the teachings of the saints proved ineffective was because the masses have been taught that a saint might break Caste but the common man must not. A saint therefore never became an example to follow. He always

remained a pious man to be honoured. That the masses have remained staunch believers in Caste and Untouchability shows that the pious lives and noble sermons of the saints have had no effect on their life and conduct as against the teachings of the Shastras. Thus it can be a matter of no consolation that there were saints or that there is a Mahatma who understands the Shastras differently from the learned few or ignorant many.

Waiting for a Visa

Waiting for a Visa is a 20-page autobiographical life story of B. R. Ambedkar written in the period of 1935–36. It consists of reminiscences drawn by Ambedkar, related to his experiences with untouchability, in his own handwriting. The book consists of a very brief introductory passage followed by six sections, relating Ambedkar's experiences with untouchability, starting from his childhood. Sections 1,2,3 and 4 consist of Ambedkar's own experiences, while Sections 5 and 6 consist of other people's experiences with untouchability.

In a section titled *Pride, awkwardness and a dangerous accident in Chalisgaon*. Ambedkar recounts an embarrassing accident that occurred directly to him in the village of Chalisgaon (Maharashtra) in 1929. He had been appointed as a member to a committee instituted by the Bombay government, to investigate allegations of oppression and grievances of untouchables. After carrying out investigations in the district of Khandesh, en route to Bombay, he disembarked at Chalisgaon to investigate a case of social boycott by Hindus against untouchables of that village. The untouchables of the village requested him to spend the night with them, but as the Tonga walas considered it below their dignity to cart an untouchable (Ambedkar), the villagers had to hire a tonga (horse-driven carriage) and ride it on their own. They did so, however the untouchable riding the carriage was a novice, and had an accident as they were crossing the river on a culvert. Ambedkar was thrown off the carriage as a wheel got stuck between the stones of the

culvert. This resulted in multiple injuries to Ambedkar and a fracture. The horse and carriage fell into the river. Ambedkar feels that the pride and dignity of the village untouchables (they did not want their visitor to have to walk to the village) made them take undue risks with the safety of their visitor. He also realized that even lowly menial tonga walas felt that a highly educated barrister at law untouchable was below them.

In another section titled *A doctor refuses to give proper care and a woman dies* Ambedkar recalls the experience of the other untouchables who were victimized due to oppressing attitude of a learned doctor from higher cast.

This section consists of a letter which was published in *Young India*, a journal published by M.K.Gandhi in its issue of 12 December 1929. It recounts the sad experience of a harijan in Kathiawar, whose wife fell sick soon after giving birth to a child. The Hindu (Brahmin) doctor refused to treat her directly, or see them in the house. The doctor finally agreed to see the sick lady if she were brought outside the harijan colony, and treated here without touching her, by passing the thermometer indirectly through a Muslim. Some medicine was given to her, and when her condition aggravated, the doctor refused to see her. She died subsequently.

Another section of the book entitled '*A young clerk is abused and threatened and threatened until he gives up his job*' recounts the narrated experience of a Bhangi boy, (untouchable) recounted on 6 March 1938 at a Bhangi meeting in Dadar, Bombay. The educated boy got employment as a Talati (accountant) in the government district offices of Borsad, Kheda, in what is now Gujarat. However, he was refused accommodation there, being an untouchable. Neither did the untouchables of the village accommodate him, fearing the wrath of Hindus who felt that the Bhangi boy was aiming for a job which was beyond him. At the government office, his colleagues discriminated against him, treated him badly and did not allow him to drink water

when thirsty for fear of the water getting polluted by his touch. Ultimately, matters only got worse, with a large crowd of locals threatening to kill him. He left this job and returned home.

Who were the Shudras?

In his work *'Who Were the Shudras?'*, Ambedkar tried to explain the formation of untouchables. He saw Shudras and Ati Shudras who form the lowest caste in the ritual hierarchy of the caste system, as separate from Untouchables.

Ambedkar argues that the Shudras were originally Aryans belonging to the Kshatriya class. Ambedkar further argues that the Brahmins brought about the degradation of the Shudras. Relations have also been drawn between the wide acceptance of Mahars in Hinduism as outcasts and untouchables due to their affirmation to Buddhist practices. Ambedkar strongly argues saying:

- 1) The Shudras were one of the Aryan communities of the Solar race.
- 2) The Shudras ranked as the Kshatriya Varna in the Indo-Aryan Society.
- 3) There was a time when the Aryan Society recognized only three Varnas, namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Shudras were not a separate Varna but a part of the Kshatriya Varna.
- 4) There was a continuous dispute between the Shudra kings and the Brahmins, in which the Brahmins were subjected to many tyrannies and indignities.
- 5) As a result of the hatred towards the Shudras due to their tyrannies and oppressions, the Brahmins refused to invest the Shudras with the sacred thread.
- 6) Owing to the loss of the sacred thread the Shudras became socially degraded, fell below the rank of the Vaishyas and came to form the fourth Varna.

The argument of Ambedkar to the above view in the book *who were the Shudras?* is logical the thesis rests upon a single statement from the Mahabharata in which Paijavana is described as a Shudra; that identification of Paijavana with Sudas is not proved beyond the shadow of doubt; that the description of Paijavana as a Shudra does not occur in any other place except in a single place in the Mahabharata. How can a theory built on such weak foundations be acceptable? They are bound to invoke the usual agreement that a chain is not stronger than its weakest link. He is sure that it cannot be discredited and demolished in such an easy manner.

In the first place, a thesis cannot be built up on a single piece of evidence. It is a well-known principle of the law of evidence that witness must be weighed and not numbered. The number of witnesses is a less important consideration than the weight to be attached to the individual testimony of each or to the sum of the testimonies of all taken together. There is no reason to doubt the truth of the statement that Paijavana was a Shudra. The author of the Mahabharata has no reason to give a false description. Writing after such a long time, no motive, no partiality could be attributed to him. The only conclusion one can draw is that the author was recording a true tradition.

The fact that Paijavana is not described as a Shudra in the Rig Veda does not militate against the truth of the statement which occurs in the Mahabharata. Many explanations can be given for the absence of the word Shudra from the description of Paijavana in the Rig Veda. The first explanation is that it is wrong to expect such a description in the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda is a book of religion. A description such as Shudra could not be expected in a book of religion. It would be irrelevant. But such a description may well be expected to occur in a book of history such as the Mahabharata wherein as a matter of fact it does.

Conclusion

The caste system was undemocratic and authentarian in the extreme. The castes constituting the series were hierarchically graded, each caste being considered inferior to those above it and superior to those below it. The status of a man born in a particular caste was determined by the rank of that caste in the hierarchy. Once born in that caste, his status was pre-determined and immutable. Thus birth decided his status, which could not be altered by any talent he might show or wealth he might accumulate. Similarly, the caste in which a man was born predetermined what vocation he would pursue. He had no choice. Thus birth decided the occupation of a man. The rule of endogamy governed every caste or sub-caste. A person belonging to one caste could not marry a person of other caste. Thus birth restricted the zone of selection in the matter of matrimony.

Dr. B. R Ambedkar passionately believed in individual freedom and criticized caste society. His accusations of Hinduism as being the foundation of the caste system made him controversial and unpopular among Hindus. His conversion to Buddhism sparked a revival in interest in Buddhist philosophy in India and abroad.

Osho, a spiritual teacher, remarked "*I have seen people who are born in the lowest category of Hindu law, the sudras, the untouchables, so intelligent: when India became independent, the man who made the constitution of India, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, was a sudra. There was no equal to his intelligence as far as law is concerned – he was a world-famous authority.*"

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7

Annihilation of Caste by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar : A Social Perspective

Dr Srinivasa Rao Songa¹ , Dr Raju Bollavarapu²

“Ask yourself the question; why is it that a large majority of Hindus do not inter-dine and do not inter-marry? Why is it that your cause is not popular? There can be only one answer to this question and it is that inter-dining and inter-marriage are repugnant to the beliefs and dogmas which the Hindus regard and consider as caste. Caste is not a physical object like a wall of bricks or a line of a barbed wire which prevents the Hindus from co-mingling and which has, therefore, to be pulled down. Caste is a notion, it is a state of mind. The destruction of caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It means a notional change”

Annihilation of caste by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar openly and shrewdly talks about atrocities faced by the Dalits and the untouchables and criticizes the Hindu social structure and there by he demands that the caste system should be abolished, should be destructed and should be annihilated. In the initial part of his speech he acknowledged that he

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prepared specially for 1936 annual conference of 'Jaat path todok mandal' of Lahore which is now in Pakistan as we all know. But before he could deliver this speech he wrote it as an essay form under the title 'ANNIHILATION OF CASTE' and sent it in advance to the organisers in Lahore for printing and distribution. The organisers at their end had found some portions of the content objective toward the orthodox Hindu religion. Then, they requested Dr. B.R.Ambedkar to remove certain sections in the text that they were unbearable. In response to their suggestion, Ambedkar confidently and explicitly said that he would not change even a comma of this text because of which the committee members or organisers decided to cancel the conference as they feared violence by orthodox Hindus at the venue. The conference was, however, not in favour of Hindus because the conference in itself was 'Jaat path todok mandal' which is in Hindi 'Caste destruction society', but all they wish was for peaceful execution of the conference. Therefore, Ambedkar subsequently published 1500 copies of this speech as a book on 15th of May 1936 at his own very expensive and even today this text is widely published and whenever it is published the books are sold in no time.

'Annihilation of Caste' explicitly mentions the three steps to annihilate- 'to destroy', 'to wipe out', or 'to eliminate' the caste system. And he also suggested the way to reform Hinduism of its discrimination. Several attempts have been made to place this text in a move understandable form. It is necessary to situate how the caste system emerged at the first place. It is much needed at this juncture to look into the division of caste structure. It is pertinent fact that from Vedic culture onwards, the society was divided into four different *Varnas* or *Chaturvarnas*. The Varnas were the 'brahmanic' ideology which was meant to have a hierarchy in the society. It was established on the basis of classes that was purely based on birth of an individual. This Chaturvarna had Brahmins at the top followed by Kshatriyas then Vaishyas and then at the last the Sudras where Brahmins were

associated with priestly and scholarly works ; Kshatriyas dealt with warrior-ship and protecting the other Varnas; Vaishyas looked over trade and commerce and last Shudras were meant the service of the upper three Varnas. Ambedkar, at this juncture viewed that this division was purely based upon the division of labour and for a long nobody denied to come together to do away with it and that's how it got culminated into the rigid caste system. And through this text, Ambedkar then tried showing us how the caste system had brought out destructure the Indian society.

The text of the *Annihilation of the Caste* has 26 major ideas yet our paper will go on to mention only the important ones that will help us to understand and the text holistically. At first, the major debate that Dr B.R.Ambedkar highlights is social reform versus political reforms. It's seen social reform was not in a state of efficiency and ceaseless efforts were made to eradicate these evils so to work and have some progress in this path, the birth of national congress was accompanied by the foundation of the social conference where congress focused on the political reorganization of India while social conference struggled for social reformation of the society means political ones wanted freedom from Britishers while the social reforms wished for freedom from capitalism.

Gradually, these two bodies could not sustain long and became hostile bodies could not sustain long and became hostile camps because this was in the process of reforms who would proceed the political reform or the social reform? However, after equally balancing of two decades against each other the social conference started to discriminate itself and to this Ambedkar gives two reasons; first, there were more critics than the supports for the socialist and secondly, they stood for the social reform to reconstruct the Hindu society. Here, Ambedkar goes on to discuss this point in detail. The Hindu families need to reform ; he means to focus upon issues such as 'widow marriage', 'child marriage', etc while by social reform he meant to abolish the caste

system. So the problem was the social conference limited itself with the reform of the high caste Hindu family who did not agitate for the abolition of caste nor did they had courage to do so because they were only concerned to remove evil such as widowhood or child marriage and there were the evils that provided among them and they personally felt it and they did not stand up for the reform of the Hindu society as a whole that was meant to break up of the caste system.

Therefore, this is the reason why social reform conference last. Further, Ambedkar also draws his attention to political minded Hindus and the manner in which they heated the dalits. Then he cited various contemporary examples that time and again exposes the inhuman treatment to untouchables by the upper caste Hindus. So, here he questions the politically powerful persons. He questions,

“Are you fit for political power, where a large number of the untouchables are unable to use public school? Public wells? Or Use of public streets. Are you fit for political power even though you do not allow them to wear what ornaments they like? Or eat food they like? Our country is not fit to rule another country? “

Like wise, Ambedkar has many such examples but says this would be suffice that is sufficient to make this argument. So, here is questioning the elites who are sitting at the power who have the power to rule over the public of India and doubts the politicians and leaders by questioning. *The Annihilation of the Caste* is one of the most incisive critiques of Brahmanism and the Hindu Religion. It is useful tool to understand all hierarchies and social injustices that persist even today. According to Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, political reform world mean nothing if there was no reconstruction or reorganization of the Hindu society.He is thus deeply philosophical, politically subversive, logical in its critique of the caste system.

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Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Jeevan Charit (meri kahani meri zubani)

8

Ambedkarism' in Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We broke*

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Overview of Indian English Literature

Indian English literature originated because of the introduction of English education in India under colonial rule. Indian writers have chosen English as a medium of have been using English to represent the Indian ethos. In this context the remarks of K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar is right:

What makes Indo-Anglian literature an Indian literature and not just a ramshackle outhouse of English literature is the quality of its 'Indianness' in the choice of its subjects, in the texture of thought and play of sentiment, in the organization of material and in the creative use of language.

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The Contribution of Women Novelists

Women writings particularly novel occupies a prime position in contemporary Literature. By attempting to focus on women's issues and concerns, women authors attempted to project the honest picture of women's dilemma encountered by modern Indian women in their everyday life. Dr. A. V. Krishna Rao rightly remarks about the novel of post-independence era:

The post-independence novel clearly marks out a new phase of emotional and intellectual growth in Indian literature. The dislocation, the distemper and disenchantment of the post war and the post-independence have had their impact on the Indo-Anglian novel too (12).

The last few decades have seen remarkable changes in Indian women's Literature and a new image of women has been created.

Dalit Literature

Human rights have become a burning issue of debate in the globalization era. The focal point of literary expression, Dalit Literature deals with expression of socially backward, marginalized, and oppressed classes of women. Dalit writers like Bama and Baby Kamble have expressed their own stories of pain and suffering, thus narrating the agonies of Dalit women. Taking motivation and inspiration from B.R. Ambedkar, women authors have sought to centralize the injustices meted out to them. Ambedkar was right when he expressed in one of his orations:

I am conscious of the fact that if women are conscientized the untouchable community will progress. I believe that women should organize, and this will play a major role in bringing an end to social evils ... The progress of the Dalit community should be measured in terms of the progress made by its women folk. Every woman should stand by her husband, not as his slave but as his

contemporary, as his friend. (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, speech to the Dalit Mahila Federation in 1942)

Baby Kamble, a Dalit activist and writer, wrote *Jina Amacha (The Prisons We Broke)*. Her book rooted in Ambedkar ideology, continues to inspire Dalit activists to this day, urging the individual and the community to seek for freedom and equality. Baby Kamble begins her story with a very personal account of her love for her grandparents. Her father was a local contractor, and he squandered all his money on food, clothes and tea. He would never give any money to maintain the house and as consequence Kamble's mother had to experience the pangs of poverty. Her mother had to begin working to look after the family and these throws light the predicament of women being subjected to harsh labour. Kamble's mother had to face the evils of caste oppression. She writes,

Our women offer their entire lives to the service of the earth. But when they themselves become mothers, what do they get? In those days there would be no food in the house, not even the water leftover from boiling rice, to satiate the fire of hunger raging inside the belly of the new mother (57).

Adding fuel to the fire, Mahar women inflicted humiliation on other Mahar women. Baby Kamble narrates,

“...it was the essence of the Mahar woman's life that was found sticking to the wood. Yet the Brahmin woman objected to what they found sticking there!” (56).

Kamble draws attention to the truth that she has been motivated by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's ideologies. Baby. Baby Kamble professes:

I have described in this book the details of the life of our community as I have experienced it during the last fifty years. The readers should not feel ashamed of this history. I have tried to sketch a portrait of the actual life of the Mahars and the indignities, they were subjected to. I am writing this history for

my sons, daughters-in-law, and my grandchildren to show them how the community suffered because of the chains of slavery and so that they realize what ordeals of fire the Mahars have passed through. I also want to show them what the great soul Dr. Ambedkar single-handedly achieved which no one else had achieved in ages (13-14).

Baby Kamble then goes on describe how the Mahar women were prohibited from wearing saree with visible pleats as it was considered as offensive by the upper castes. Baby Kamble writes:

The condition of Mahars was no better than that of bullocks, these beasts of burden, who slogged all their life for a handful of dry grass.

She writes, how in the community spaces, Ambedkar's inspiring orations acquired a climatic issue of discussion. Kamble believed firmly that Ambedkar's teachings paid a great impact for men for the freedom of the women. In the book, the concept of individual freedom is considered to be an instrument of emancipation from oppression. The movements founded by Ambedkar movements took a central stance in the quest and struggle for women's liberty. And helped them find a way to freedom from the oppressive ideologies of caste system and patriarchy. Ambedkar had said,

When your children begin to be educated, your condition will start improving. We, too, have the right to live as human beings. Your children will make you aware of this". And in reference to the impact of these ideas on her life, Baby Kamble finally writes, "I followed Baba's words verbatim, to the best of my abilities (Kamble 64-65, 135).

The book is a memoir like Wangari Maatai's *Unbowed* which narrates the life of women in Africa and in the Kamble's village, Veergaon respectively. Being highly influenced by the ideologies of

Ambedkar whose speeches reverberated in the village, Kamble writes about subjects pertaining to Dalit women. Kamble was inspired by the life of Dr B.R. Ambedkar and the contributions he made to the Dalit community. Taking his beliefs and morals forward, Kamble not only became a torchbearer of Ambedkar's values and motives but also created her legacy by paving the way for Dalit women in the realms of activism and literature.

Kamble's book laid a tremendous impact in the literary realm. It is a way of reclaiming her identity as a Dalit woman. The book is a landmark in Indian literature because it specifically helps women carve space for themselves. The mere process of 'writing' like Jaya in Sashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* is an act of resistance from the atrocities done to women. By documenting the lived experiences and narratives of her community and individual self, Kamble creates a new history in Dalit history as it primarily focuses on the teachings of Ambedkar and the emancipation and empowerment of the Mahar Community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, one can certainly be assured that *The Prisons We Broke* is a path-breaking book as it chronicles life of Dalit women. Babytai makes a trumpet call to the women of Mahar community and all women in general to remember the preaching of Ambedkar to fight for women's and human rights, to be strong in their endeavors to attain justice from the hegemonies of caste and sex. His teaching of morality is fundamental to achieve intellectual freedom and helps women to ponder over the issues and concerns and affirm them positively.

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9

REVISITING VARNA VYAVASTA: AN AMBEDKARIAN PERSPECTIVEDr Ande Balashowri¹

Ambedkar saw the caste gadget as an unequal mode of corporation of social family members, with the natural and the impure at both severe. He argued that this device was sanctified via spiritual codes that forbade inter-mixture of castes and confined social interplay to a regulated structure. Dr Ambedkar, in his argument with Mahatma Gandhi (Annihilation of Caste), points out that the varna machine isn't only exclusive from caste gadget however is inherently against it: "The precept underlying caste is basically unique from the principle underlying varna." Dr Ambedkar first articulated caste inequality in Indian society. He became of the opinion that nothing can build on the muse of caste. Then again, he laboured for the 'annihilation of caste' due to the fact he believed that whatever that is constructed on caste goes to create inequality within. Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar is regularly thought of as a jurist, economist, and social reformer. It is clearly tough to locate many figures who may be stated to have had a similar have an

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impact on in cutting-edge Indian records. However, particularly, Ambedkar become an arch-critic of the Hindu caste device and a leader inside the combat for Dalit liberation. Modern India cannot be understood without an appreciation of Ambedkar's lifestyles and work.

The word "caste" become carried out to the Hindu gadget of social stratification through the Portuguese within the 16th century. Derived from the Latin *castus*, in Portuguese, *casta* approach "lineage", "pure", or "chaste". For well over one thousand years, South Asia has been governed by using caste family members - additionally called the Jati system truly placed. Caste - or Jati refers to a gadget of vocational guilds that through the years, have come to be organized in terms of standards of purity and impurity. Every Jati -of which there are actually hundreds - has its personal norms of behavior (guidelines around marriage, social interaction, permissible meals, career, and many others.), and from each Jati follows a sequence of sub-castes.

The caste gadget actually works at the ground is known as Jati. but, each Jati also suits into the overarching hierarchy of the four-fold Varna system. The authority of Varna is derived from its codification within the Vedic-Brahmin Manusmriti (laws of Manu)- one among Hinduism's maximum holy books. The Varna system outlines four castes, or savarna: Brahmins (clergymen; intellectuals); Kshatriyas (warriors; administrators); Vaishyas (farmers; traders); and Shudras (people; worker's). Outcastes from the Hindu fold are folks that do not belong to any varna (avarna). These people represent the Adivasi tribes of the subcontinent, and the Untouchables or, Dalits ("depressed" or "damaged" people) who are visible to pollute Hindu society. As the bottom of the low, Dalits are assigned the most "unclean" obligations; the removal of waste; tending of funeral pyres; butchery, etc. Therefore, the Hindu caste machine has principal elements. On the one hand, men, ladies, and youngsters are divided into separate groups.

Nevertheless, those groups are located in graded order, one above the opposite in social rank consistent with their Varna. The Annihilation of Caste apart, the Nineteen Thirties changed into a controversial decade for Ambedkar. He was attacked with the aid of nationalists as a traitor and discovered himself regularly at odds with the Indian National Congress mainly with Mahatma Gandhi himself. Gandhi objected to the Annihilation of Caste. All the same, he profoundly disagreed with Ambedkar's role on the problem of separate electorates and reserved seats for the Untouchables.

The Untouchables consistent with Gandhi were "Harijans" (children of God) and they have been to be introduced closer into the Hindu fold, in preference to liberated from their chains. Taken collectively, each Ambedkar and Gandhi seemed in the direction of a better destiny for the Untouchables where they differed, is that while Ambedkar believed in political strength and self-determination. Gandhi advocated for the Hinduization of the Untouchables and recognize for his or her position inside Hindu society. For Gandhi, the varna device become a just device of same responsibilities: the duties of a Brahmin and a Dalit carried "identical merit before God".

Caste is a device wherein the willpower of function, rights and duties of an individual is achieved on the idea of the delivery of such individual in a selected institution. In different phrases, we can say that the status of an individual is determined by means of start. As we've got proof of the Varna machine in Hinduism which divides its society into 4 instructions or castes the higher is Brahmins along with monks and intellectuals. They themselves declare to have all excellent qualities like honesty, integrity, cleanliness, purity, austerity, expertise, and knowledge. They are assigned to religious responsibilities like coaching and studying Vedas, appearing sacrifices and religious ceremonies and so on. Then after Brahmins, Kshatriyas had been the soldiers, police, and administrators essentially protectors of society. They're predicted to expose sizable power of body and character. Then Vaishyas, were

farmers, merchants, and business people. Their responsibility is to protect animals and the land, to create wealth and prosperity and to present taxes to the Kshatriyas. The lowest magnificence are the Shudras, including artisans and workers. They have to render service to the other upper class above them. Under the caste gadget a man or woman isn't allowed to trade its fame. For instance, in November 1935 a few untouchable girls of village Zanu in Ahmedabad started out fetching water in metal pots which was taken into consideration as one of the luxury items. This enraged the upper caste Hindus and they assaulted the untouchable girls. It means untouchables can't have permission to use any luxurious objects even if he/she can afford to shop for them.

Because of the caste system, several evil prevails within the society and the untouchables had been subjected to oppression for example oppressed untouchables in Maratha beneath Peshwas. Reflecting this, several literary stories came into existence. The presentation of female characters by Prem Chand's short stories surpassed the living subaltern identities. Indian societal values and Hindu Patriarchal family structure badly oppressed the female characters and they are compelled to live in a subaltern position. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar visualized this kind of adverse consequences and opposed the structure and the evil spirit behind this system. They had been being made to connect brooms on their waists in order that used paths by means of them can be easy with the aid of the broom that allows you to forestall Hindus from being polluted. They needed to deliver an earthen pot hung in their neck in order that they may spit in.

The caste system has condemned large corporations of humans to an existence of decay with none desire of redemption. It has created untouchables, an evil that has been sapping the very vitals of society. Bakha is a young man of eighteen, strong and able bodied, the son of Lakha. His father is the Jamadar of all the sweepers in the town and the cantonment, and officially in charge of three rows of public latrines. Sohini is his sister. The novel is an epic of suffering and humiliation.

Bakha is not simply an individual out-caste rather he represents the entire community of the out-caste treated as untouchables and subjected to live most miserably. This untouchability is reduced to the kingdom of natural slavery and hindered the growth of brotherhood; keeping off the national unity as it disallowed any form of social intercourse. As B.R Ambedkar rightly said, 'untouchability of Hindus is an unprecedented phenomenon, humanity in another part of the earth has by no means skilled it. There's no such factor in every other society.

It restricts the increase of brotherhood among humans and also it holds off country wide team spirit and creates obstacles to social development. According to Mahatma Gandhi, untouchability is the hate fullest expression of caste. There's an anti-social spirit in Hindus due to the caste device. This anti-social spirit isn't restricted to caste on my own however may be visible in sub-castes as well. For example, Brahmin's major issue is to keep away from interaction with other organizations as the ones of non-Brahmins and non- Brahmins' principal interest is to keep any from any interactions or social gatherings with Brahmins. This caused a lack of brotherhood among Hindus. Till the caste machine prevails Sanghathan(solidarity) could be impossible among Hindus. For instance, a Hindu could by no means come to rescue a Hindu as they lack fellow feeling and also the motive in distinction because of caste. Then again, a Muslim and a Sikh could come to rescue their brothers respectively due to the fact they have got fellow emotions in them. The caste gadget denies identical rights of people, that's why it is taken into consideration as undemocratic. As Ambedkar himself stated, "If I find the charter being misused, I shall be the first one to burn it". Democracy is based on the principle of equality, fraternity, and liberty. Then again, the caste machine is based on inequality of status and opportunities, which regularly creates battle and anxiety in society. It acts as an impediment within the everyday and smooth functioning of democracy. No doubt India has given political freedom but it should be the concern of every character that actual freedom can't be cherished without the

attainment of social and economic democracy. It is unfortunate that the Indian society is sharply divided into diverse castes and sub-castes which acts as a barrier due to rigidity and division of society based totally on caste consideration.

Caste is a gadget in which the willpower of position, rights and responsibilities of a person is achieved on the basis of the start of such character in a selected group. In other phrases, we are able to say that the repute of a person is decided by means of birth. As we've evidence of the Varna system in Hinduism which divides its society into 4 training or castes the top is Brahmins inclusive of priests and intellectuals. They themselves declare to have all excellent qualities like honesty, integrity, cleanliness, purity, austerity, know-how, and information. They're assigned to religious tasks like coaching and analysing Vedas, performing sacrifices and non-secular ceremonies etc. Then after Brahmins, Kshatriyas have been the warriors, police, and administrators essentially protectors of society. They're anticipated to expose sizeable energy of frame and person. Then Vaishyas, had been farmers, traders, and commercial enterprise human beings. Their duty is to shield animals and the land, to create wealth and prosperity and to present taxes to the Kshatriyas. the bottom magnificence are the Shudras, which includes artisans and employees. They ought to render service to the other higher class above them.

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10

Caste and Gender Oppression in Shashi Deshpande's 'That Long Silence'

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For many centuries, the caste system has prevailed in the Indian society. It leads to the hierarchical division of all the members of society into four categories, called varnas. The membership to one's caste may be ascribed by birth or progeny. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar presented a paper titled *Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development* in the anthropology seminar of Dr. Goldenweizer, and this was during his stay at Columbia University. In his research, he highlighted that the caste system in India has been identified as an important institution. He elaborated upon the idea of caste as a complex subject that needed comprehensive elaboration. Ambedkar argued that no other civilized society other than Indian, practices rituals of the remote past even today. Despite of advancement of time as well as the civilization, such practices operate with all its pristine vigor even today.

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Dr. B.R Ambedkar's efforts for the emancipation of the underprivileged are not just limited to the lower caste people but also the subjugated and oppressed women in the male-dominant patriarchal society. He highlighted the inferior and subjugated status of women and advocated for the notion of gender equality. He wanted women to get the rights and freedom they deserved. Under Dr. Ambedkar, the movement for women took place in three stages. It began during the 1920s with women participating with male individuals in several movements, like the temple entry movement. Then during the 1930s autonomous organizations were created for females and the third phase witnessed females getting organized under the All India Depressed Classes Mahila Federation during the 1940s.

Dr. Ambedkar once said: "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women had achieved. Let every girl who marries stand by her husband, claim to be her husband's friend and equal, and refuse to be his slave. I am sure if you follow this advice, you will bring honour and glory to your shelves." (Singariya, 2014, p.2)

Many great scholars have tried to explicitly identify the origin of caste, but dr. Ambedkar did not endorse many of them. For an instance, Nesfield's theory highlights the absence of messing with those outside the caste. Ambedkar argued that his theory was particularly mistaking the effect for the cause. He felt that caste was a self-enclosed unit that naturally prevents social intercourse, including messing.

Though, he agreed with Ketkar who views castes as a system and talked extensively about only those characteristics which proved the necessity of the existence of the caste system in India. But, Dr. Ambedkar critiqued Ketkar, for taking 'prohibition of intermarriage' and 'membership by autogeny' as the two characteristics of caste. He felt that if intermarriage will be prohibited then automatically the membership of those individuals born within the group will get limited.

A similar idea has been highlighted in Shashi Deshpande's novel 'The Dark Holds No Terrors'. Shashi Deshpande explores the social

taboo of women as well as their perception of the people belonging to the lower strata of society. Saru is the main protagonist of the novel who fights back brother fixation which has been haunting her since childhood. She initially breaks the monotony by becoming a medical practitioner while going against the wishes of her orthodox parents who felt that daughters were only meant to be homemakers and were not meant for the external sphere. Later on she married Manu(Manohar) who belonged to lower caste with whom she met in college. Saru's parents were against her marital alliance with Manu as they were upper-caste Brahmins. In this way Saru also promoted inter-caste marriage. It depicts the unfortunate reality of the Indian society wherein an individual may survive without food but not his or her pride which is associated with their class consciousness. Shashi Deshpande thus highlights the idea that ever since the Britishers left, Indians gained independence from them but not from the caste system and it is the caste system that gives birth to more issues among the human species. Saru becomes a victim of gender discrimination as well because, in her childhood, her mother gave more importance to her male sibling and even considered her responsible for his demise, whereas after marriage Saru's married life got impacted due to the class disparity and gender oppression as in the economic front Saru became a tree in front of a mere sapling, Manu.

Uma Chakravarti, in her book 'Gendering the Caste Through a Feminist Lens' considers the Brahmanical patriarchy as the root cause of the subordination and subjugation of female species in the male-dominant patriarchal society.

In 'Annihilation of Caste', Dr. Ambedkar says that, the annihilation of caste is "more difficult than the other national cause, namely swaraj. In the fight for swaraj you fight with the whole nation on your side. In this, you have to fight against the whole nation and that too, your own. But it is more important than Swaraj. There is no use of having swaraj, if you cannot defend it. More important than the question

of defending Swaraj is the question of defending the Hindus under the Swaraj. In my opinion only when the Hindu society becomes a casteless society that it can hope to have strength enough to defend itself. Without such internal strength, Swaraj for Hindus may turn out to be only a step towards slavery." (Ambedkar,2013,p.81)

Dr. Ambedkar also criticized those Indian socialists who ignored the genuine problems which were arising due to such social order and for whom humans were only mere economic beings. Such socialists advocated that an individual's aspirations and deeds must be bound by their economic conditions and thus, the property becomes the only source of power. Shashi Deshpande in her novel 'That Long Silence' while talking about female emancipation also proposes a similar idea to that of Dr. Ambedkar. She criticizes the notion of giving freedom of expression and action on the basis of an individual's economic well-being. She portrays the condition of lower-caste women as a realist and highlights the importance of equal opportunities for all, which generally the poor lower-caste people are deprived of. Jeeja is a woman belonging to a lower caste who works as a maid for Jaya. The fact that most of the people who belong to the lower caste are mostly serving the people who belong to the upper caste evidently highlights the idea of caste-based discrimination. Jeeja, who is already subjugated by her lower social status, her situation further becomes worse when she is unable to give birth to children and is considered to be infertile. The ability to give birth to a child is a boon for the female species. It is their best gift, but just the act of childbirth does not hold the entire identity of a woman. Another female protagonist in the novel is Nayana. By profession, Nayana is a mere sweeper. She is another example of a subjugated woman belonging to the lower strata of society in the Indian social hierarchy. Jeeja's husband ends up bringing another woman in their house and keeps her as his mistress. Again the fact that most of the grey-shade jobs such as becoming a mistress or a prostitute were assumed to be performed mainly by poor, lower-caste women. This was because it was assumed

that since such women were illiterate and thereby unable to acquire respectable jobs, were only left with such options to earn their bread. Manda, is Jeeja's grand-daughter, who acquired education and meanwhile also delivered milk. Manda is forced to share her agony with her mother and her grandmother because despite making all sorts of efforts, she still remained an unwanted lower-caste girl.

In 'Annihilation of Caste', Dr. Ambedkar tells that many people defend caste in the name of division of labor. They believe that since, the division of labor is important for the proper functioning of a civilized society thereby, there is nothing wrong with the caste system. But Dr. Ambedkar critiqued such views. He felt that the caste system was not just the division of labors but also led to the division of laborers. This can be seen in the characters of Manda, Jeeja and even Nayana in 'That Long Silence' who are considered inferior due to their lower social status. Further, such division is not very spontaneous because it was not as per the natural aptitudes. Individuals are appointed tasks not on the basis of their capabilities but rather their social status. Again for an instance, in 'The Dark Holds No Terror', despite Manohar being a well-educated and a financially independent man, Saru's parents view him merely as a non-Brahmin. Dr. Ambedkar felt that such stratification of occupations was pernicious because the industries are non-static and continuously evolving as well, thereby all individuals should be free to acquire jobs as per their capabilities and should also be free to change their occupations.

"Men constitute a society because they have things which they possess in common. To have similar things is totally different from possessing things in common. And the only way by which men can come to possess things in common with one another is by being in communication with one another. This is merely another way of saying that Society continues to exist by communication indeed in communication. To make it concrete, it is not enough if men act in a way which agrees with the acts of others. Parallel activity, even if similar, is not sufficient to bind

men into a society. For that purpose what is necessary is for a man to share and participate in a common activity so that the same emotions are aroused in him that animate the others. Making the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure is the real thing that binds men and makes a society of them. Therefore, caste system prevents common activity and by preventing common activity it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and consciousness of its own being.”(Ambedkar,2013,p.50-51)

Ambedkar did not only discuss the problems but also the solutions to those problems. He gave various ways to abolish the caste system. At first, he came up with the idea of abolishing the sub-castes. But he discontinued this idea because he realized that there is no assurance that the abolition of sub-castes will lead to the abolition of the caste system. Further, it may even happen that the process may stop in the midway after the abolition of sub-castes and then it would further strengthen the castes and that would then be very harmful.

Ambedkar felt that probably inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriages may help. But then he felt that already many inter-caste dining were happening but they did not destroy the consciousness associated with caste. In case of the inter-caste marriages, things won't work unless the feeling of kinship would become paramount.

Further in 'Annihilation of Caste' Dr. Ambedkar called the Chaturvarna system absurd because it was meant to safeguard the people but it continued to deprive the people belonging to lower strata of the society of their moral, political as well as physical rights. He felt that the upper-caste Hindus particularly condemned the practice of inter-caste marriages to prevent their blood from becoming impure and to preserve its sacredness. But the reality was that they feared that they might lose their political power and social status, thereby he argued that the shastras including the Puranas and the Shastras should be destroyed

as they promoted social inequality and injustices. Shashi Deshpande highlighted a similar idea in her novel, 'The Dark Holds No Terrors' through the example of Saru's traditional parents who went against her inter-caste marriage with Manu, belonging to the lower strata of society.

Dr. Ambedkar was highly critical of the Hindu religion due to its varna system and also due the religious texts associated with the same. This was specifically because they were male-dominant and thereby suppressed women and their interests. For example, in 'That Long Silence' Jeeja fails to give birth, thereby her husband decides to remarry. Its surprising and unfortunate at the same time, when Jeeja quietly accepts her husband's decision to remarry because the society made her feel unwanted due to her being barren. Similarly, even Nayana was threatened to be thrown out of the house if she would give birth to a female infant. Shashi Deshpande as a writer is known for creating bona fide flesh-and-bone characters with recognizable aptitude. She comes up with a feasible storyline, unlike any shadowy abstractions. They are contemporary middle-class women with rare proficiency who mutineer against the male figures but also find themselves standing facing, the well-entrenched social inertia. For an instance in 'The Dark Holds No Terrors', Manu's identity is a mere non-Brahmin who belongs to the lower strata of the society for Saru's traditional parents. Thus, the impact of Dr. Ambedkar's views on Hinduism leading to the subjugation of lower caste people becomes clearly evident in the works of Shashi Deshpande, who through her narration talks about ending the caste-based discrimination and emancipation of underprivileged women, just like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Conclusion

Through this research, the aim was to highlight how the views of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar can be seen in the works of writer Shashi Deshpande. They both share akin views on the issues of caste-based discrimination and women emancipation. Dr. Ambedkar had pointed out that the loyalty of an individual in Hinduism is specifically restricted to their

caste. This means that the deserving and meritorious individuals remain stripped off opportunities and appreciation. Mostly an individual's identity and their capabilities are associated either with their caste or gender. Just like Dr. Ambedkar, even Shashi Deshpande, through her narration condemns such categorical practices. Both of them felt that an individual's identity should be determined on the basis of their merits and not on the basis of either their caste or gender. Both of them talked about the double marginalization of underprivileged women who belonged to the lower strata of society.

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Indian Women's Rights Mattered to Dr. B.R.Amedkar with Reference to the Lives of Rural down trodden Women in India: A Feministic Perspective

Dr. Venkateswarlu Yesapogu¹

Introduction

Empowerment is a multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women's empowerment is a process in which scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women gain greater share of education, occupation of control over resources – material, human and intellectual like education, knowledge, information, white colour job and financial resources like money access to money and control over decision making in the home, community, society and nation and to gain power.

Disadvantages against the pathetic and miserable lives of both scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women are commonly behind in the opportunities of educational and economic development, participation in different activities, availing educational facilities and

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various other development programmes associated with improving the life style and the quality of life, because of several social and cultural backwardness. Besides this, scheduled caste women are also denied the rights in the decision making process in their family affairs on account of social and cultural constraints imposed by their family and the continuation of traditional system of civilization. Restriction are also imposed in the participation of scheduled caste women in certain education and economic programmers and to move outside house holds for certain purpose. Due to these underlined problems imposed by our traditional society against Dalit women their participation in different activities, education, occupation, employment and political system etc. Has been very poor even after sixty seven years independent of the nation.

The pathetic lives of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women in rural areas are far behind and more dis-satisfactory than in urban areas on account of greater backwardness and the prevalence of traditional social and economic system of society. The traditional form of society is keeping open different types of opportunities for their male dominated family members only while the women are marginalized. In fact the women are seriously exploited by men for certain purposes although most house hold related activities are performed by scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women in rural area.

Constitutional Provisions and Protection for Scheduled Castes scheduled tribes Women

The constitution of India not only grants equality to scheduled caste women but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women for neutralizing the cumulative socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them. Article 14 confers on men and women equal rights and opportunities in the education, socio-economic and political spheres. While the Article-15 prohibits discrimination against

any citizen on the grounds of religion caste, sex etc. Article 15(3) makes a special provision enabling the state make affirmative discrimination in favour of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women. Similarly, article-16 provides for equality of opportunities in matter of public appointments for all citizens. Article 39(A) further mentions that the state shall direct its policy towards securing to all citizens' men and women, equally, the right of means of livelihood, while article 39(C) ensures equal pay for equal work. Article-42 directs the state to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Above all, the conditions impose a fundamental duty on every citizen through Articles -51(A), (e) to renounce practices derogatory to dignity of scheduled caste women.

Lack of schemes and opportunities for Scheduled Caste and scheduled tribes Women

Post-independent of India, there are so many provisions were made in the Indian constitution to provide equal rights and opportunities of socio-educational and economic development and betterment of living for men and women, including different disadvantaged segment of population to establish on egalitarian and prosperous society. In view of bringing improvement in the educational and economic conditions of women efforts were made to economic conditions of women efforts were made to maximize the participation of women in different educational levels, with the nation that education is the most important instrument to bring awareness about their right, social status, as a prime element to maximize participation in different categories of remunerative employment etc.

During the Independence so called leaders promised to these women for decades together were promised that various development schemes reforms would be introduced at the policy level to provide more respectable status to Dalit women in Indian society. Most Important laws and remedial steps for status of scheduled caste and

scheduled tribes women were equal status in terms of act of Marriage law and amendment act, and The child marriage restrain (Amendment act). Amendment to the criminal law which made crime against scheduled caste women a punishable offence. Initiatives were also carried out in different fifth five year plans to maximize the participation of Dalit women in different development programme.

Introducing depressed caste women specific and related programmes which can bring improvement in the Socio-economic and educational condition of scheduled caste women. Further the eight five year plan introduced a variety of development programmes specially for Untouchable women and the present five year plan main objective in increase skill in youth, and agriculture GDP rate 4-6 per year to ensure a broader spread of benefits raise to sex ratio for age group 0-6 to 935 by 2011-12 and to 950 by 2016-17, lower gender gap in literacy to 10 percent points reduce anemia among women and child girls by 50% end of the plan. Under the national perspective plan for depressed women provision is made to maximize the participation of Dalit women in ongoing national employment rojgar guarantee programmes at provide to self-employment opportunities.

Review of the Relevant Literature:

Before Preceding through my research paper, it is always penitent to thoroughly review the relevant literature on the topic. This exercise improves and upgrades the research standards, good findings & result etc. As an author I have conducted the study of survey on various aspects of empowerment of scheduled caste women and their role in education and occupation changes and development. The main findings of some of these studies have been discussed in this study.

Vagiswari (1973):

Studied 800 household Dalit's and 197 non household Dalit's from ten villages of Tamil Nadu. The result showed that there still existed a great deal of latent and over discrimination against Dalit's; but when

constructed with the discrimination embodied in social and religious belief of the war past, the trend towards social equality is definite through very slow moving.

Savitha Mehra (1982):

Studied 'social mobility in Rural Haryana' this study made it clear that educated respondents have enhanced their occupational status respondents have enhanced their occupational status through education by shifting towards urban occupation. The study concluded that higher the education of the respondents, higher was their father's and grandfather's education, and lower the education of the respondents, lower was their father's and grandfather's education. The advanced regions provide more occupational opportunities to the respondents in enhancing their occupational status.

Inter and Inter-generational occupational mobility showed that persons were occupationally mobile in two ways; firstly they adopt the occupation which exists in the village itself, secondly they turn to urban market for getting better employment. The study pointed out that the high occupational mobility among untouchables may be due to various governmental welfare measures and special job provisions.

Soran Singh (1987):

Studied about the changing socio- economic conditions of scheduled castes with special reference to Jaunpur dist, in eastern Uttar Pradesh. The sample size was 400 scheduled castes respondents. The findings of this study broadly point out the position of scheduled caste in social hierarchy has considerably improved. Similarly, there was change in areas like social contact, proximity and social outlook, occupation, economic condition, education, health and sanitation and housing. Among the respondents, aspiration of children's jobs is quite high and points to an urge for social climbing.

Usha Mehra(1998): who had studied the real life style of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women and their life style in the regions of both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states. She examined the lives of Dalit women, in the united of Andhra Pradesh that the house hold work of the Dalit women of both states of schedule caste and schedule tribe women like their social condition, the status of their literacy, occupation, economical back ground, educational status, their health and sanitation etc. Then she also an elaborated report on the issue to government of India and came to one conclusion that these women are very weak in all aspects of the current society.

Methodology and objective:

All the down trodden women were mentioned through this paper who belongs to all the selected states in India right from the Tamil Nadu, U.P., Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and newly formed state of Telangana that the economy of all these scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women which is mainly based on their illiteracy and innocence. When other women who have been actively participating in different social, political movements organized in the past.

The data for this study collected from 225 respondents for the required fulfillment of the information. The data will be collected by using the interview schedule and observation methods. The respondents selected by using the purposive. I collected the information from scheduled caste and scheduled tribes' women. Data analyzed by using the chi square test of statistical method.

Objective:

The main objective of this study are following as.

1. To find out whether there is the educational empowerment of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women.
2. To identify improve socio- economic status among scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women.

3. To assess the areas where empowerment is clearly pronounced.
4. If there is empowerment to identify, factor responsible for it.

Tool of Data Collection:

Data for the empirical study is collected mainly through interview schedules. The schedules are prepared for scheduled caste and scheduled tribes' women of young generations. The schedule elicited information on empowerment in society and family education, occupation, political participation, caste status, and change of life. Most of the questions are pre-coded for easy tabulation and analysis. The interview schedule consisted mostly of open-ended questions, and very few questions are closed.

Literacy level of Scheduled Caste men and women in India:

In India every state government took special steps in extending free education to all scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women's at primary to college level. The sociological studies revealed that every state has relatively more facilities for education, as a result of effect, scheduled caste and also scheduled tribes got no equal rights for educational opportunities. In India educational facilities are so many as compared to many regions especially in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Through considerable progress has been achieved in educational field among certain sections of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the progress is very better than past. These sections which have achieved remarkable progress are those which were in the lowest rank of the social system in the past. It may take a longer time for these sections to be free from the disabilities and handicaps to which they were subjected to and to become equal to higher. The Table No.- 1 shows the literacy level in Tamil Nadu.

Table No.-1**Literacy Level of Depressed Caste Parsons in A.P:**

| Persons | Education Level in Rural Urban Both | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Rural | Urban | Total |
| Males | 127,188 (81.2%) | 104,828 (82.0%) | 232,016 (81.6%) |
| Females | 78,010 (57.2%) | 71,921 (64.3%) | 149,931 (60.4%) |
| Total Persons | 205,198 (70.0%) | 176,749 (73.7%) | 381,947 (71.7%) |

Census = 2011, Telangana & Andhra Pradesh at a glance.

According to census 2011, the percentage of male literacy was 81.6% of total population of schedule caste and tribe people, but female literacy was 60.4%. It was found that rate of progress for males was higher than the level of progress of female in India.

Traditional occupation of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes:

An occupational classification of Scheduled caste and tribe would be necessary to know the changes in all caste's occupational pattern. The present study we had nine down trodden caste's viz. Madiga, Mala, Relli, Dakkali, Maastini, Yerukula, Yanadi, Chenchu, and Lambadi. Traditionally all these women were engaged in following occupations: it made clear table No -2

Table No. - 2

| Sr. No. | Ca ste | Traditional Occupation |
|---------|---------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Madiga | Labour, Leather work, Agriculture, shoe making |
| 2. | Mala | Scavanger, Sweeping, begging and Drum beating |
| 3. | Relli | Traditional sanitation as scavengers |

| | | |
|----|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. | Dakkali | Hunting, and begging |
| 5. | Maastini | Labour and carpentering |
| 6. | Yerukula | Bow and arrow making, Hand Fan Making |
| 7. | Yaanadi | Tattoos printing and traditional Medical treatment for snake bites |
| 8. | Chenchu | Labour work, hunting and meat seller |
| 9. | Lambadi | Agriculture and labour |

It can be assumed that there is scope for occupational change only in a society where new occupations and modern job emerge. The occupational changes are due to the impact of industrialization, format education and specialized nature of skills on occupation etc. It can be regarded as measure of social change, if the scheduled castes have been able to gain a change of occupations.

In this study, the classification of occupation has been made under following categories:

- (i) White collar (ii) Professional (iii) Traditional (iv) Agricultural labour (v) Other labour work.

A word of explanation about each one of these categories will be very relevant. In over study. White collar include: bureaucrats leader's Honor of industries, Business persons professional occupation includes - Professor's, Doctor's, Engineer's, Nurses.

Traditional occupations refer to the polluted or defiling occupations such as that of scavenger's cobblers, skinning, drum beating, etc, with which the scheduled caste have been traditionally associated. These occupations are ranked the lowest in status. Agricultural labourers are persons who are engaged in operation connected with cultivation. Their working includes ploughing, tilling transplantation, weeding,

harvesting, manuring, carrying manures and any other work connected with agriculture other labourers include persons working on daily wages in work other than agriculture i.e., collie, loading labourers, construction worker etc.

Role of Education in empowerment of social status of down trodden women:

These down trodden castes of women are most of which had been subjected to various social disabilities of extreme nature were exploited and kept subservient mainly because they were illiterates. Their mass illiteracy was in turn, due to religious and social sections imposed on them by caste Hindus. Education is a dynamic agent of social change and social mobility. Education has a major role in enabling a person to acquire modern occupation leading to higher economic status, and thus socio- economic empowerment. **" The role of education as a catalyst or agent of social empowerment has been well recognized. Education is said to determine the level of aspiration, technology, productivity, efficiency etc"**. Which constitute some of the basic factors in the process of empowerment. **Oommen** has argued in favour of 'Education' being the strategic point for initiating social change. According to him it enables members of the society to play new roles.

The significance of formal education in social mobility had been pointed out by **M.S.A.Rao**, **"Education helps in promoting values and achieving new goals. It is widely recognized that formal education plays a vital role in social mobility, both horizontal and vertical. If formal education is seen as a socializing agency preparing individuals for a style of life associated with a stratum, it is at the same time an agency helping individuals to overcome prejudices, and promoting values and behavior of a more universalistic nature."**

Both the government of India and the state, have been convinced of the crucial role of education and have placed great emphasis on it so as to improve the conditions of the depressed castes. Accordingly, they

have used education as the prime mover in the welfare policies and programmes intended for the scheduled castes. This is reflected in the concessions and facilities being provided for the education of scheduled castes.

The advantage of Education:

When the asked about their opinion about the advantages of education, they expressed three advantage viz. education helps to get a job, helps to improve status, helps to get a good alliance in marriage.

The opinion in this regard is seen to be influenced by age and education. As age increased the desire to achieve status improvement also increased. Both X^2 (chi square) value and contingency co-efficient showed-significant relationship. The table No.-3 will be make it clear:

Table No. - 3

Scheduled caste women and advantage of Education:

| Women's | Advantages of Education | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Helps to get a job | Helps to improve status | Helps to get a good marriage alliance | Total |
| Below-20 | 40 (70.18%) | 10 (17.54%) | 7 (12.28%) | 57 (25.33%) |
| 20 - 29 | 47 (61.84%) | 20 (26.32%) | 9 (11.84%) | 76 (33.78%) |
| 30 - 39 | 22 (48.89%) | 17 (37.78%) | 6 (13.33%) | 45 (20.00%) |

| | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 40 - 49 | 13 (43.33%) | 15 (50.00%) | 2 (6.67%) | 30 (13.33%) |
| 50 + | 3 (17.65%) | 11 (64.70%) | 3 (17.65%) | 17 (7.55%) |
| Total | 125 (55.56%) | 73 (32.44%) | 27 (12.30%) | 225 |

$$X^2 = 41.68$$

Degree of freedom = 8

Table value at 0.01 level = 20.090

$$C = 0.395$$

From the above table it is found that the majority of the young women below -20 age group, (70.18%) said that the most important advantage of education is that it helped them to get a modern job. At the same time, majority of the elder women above 50 age group. (64.70%) expressed the advantage of education as a status raising factor. It can be noted that the younger age group is having a clear idea about the advantage of education for getting nontraditional jobs. But the elder age group felt that the factor which is responsible for their backwardness is lack of education, so they thought that education could rise their status in society.

Table No-4

Scheduled Caste and scheduled tribes Women's Occupation and opinion on Education and Acceptance from other castes:

| Women's occupation | Whether education contributes to acceptance from other castes | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| | Yes | No | Total |
| Professionals | 18 (85.7%) | 3 (14.29%) | 21 (9.33%) |
| White collars | 5 (35.71%) | 9 (64.29%) | 14 (6.22%) |
| Agriculture | 22 (56.41%) | 17 (43.59%) | 39 (17.33%) |
| Other Labourers | 36 (48.65%) | 38 (51.35%) | 74 (32.89%) |
| Traditional | 2 (100%) | – | 2 (0.88%) |
| Unemployed | 52 (69.33%) | 23 (30.67%) | 75 (63.33%) |
| Total | 135 (60.00%) | 90 (40.00%) | 225 |

The above Table no-4 illustrates the association between occupation and the response that education helps to get more acceptance from the members of higher castes. 85.7% of professional works and

35.71% of the white collars agreed that education helped them to get more acceptance from the other castes. In the case of traditional workers only cent percent thought so; It seemed that the white collars and the professionals had higher status in society and are getting acceptance from the other caste.

Scheduled Caste and scheduled tribes Women: Occupational Preference

After the Analysis, it is found that traditional are in hands of the older generation, and non-traditional or modern occupations are in the hands of the younger generation.

While asking the old women about their preference occupation, it is found that 64.89% preferred modern occupation to traditional occupation. Only 35.11% preferred traditional occupation. In the case of young women, it is found that 90.67% of them preferred modern occupation to traditional ones. This might be because, the younger generation preferred to do modern jobs that bring higher status and higher remuneration to them. But traditional work is causal and low paid and it offered only a low status. Here we observed the difference in the preference for modern occupation between two generations. The table No-5 made dear the direction of change in the preference of occupation.

Table No-5

Old and young women's preference for occupation

| Occupation | Preference in occupation | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Old women | Young women | Total |
| Modern occupation | 73 (64.89%) | 102 (90.67%) | 175 (77.78%) |
| Traditional occupation | 39 | 11 | 50 |

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | (35.11%) | (9.33%) | (22.22%) |
| Total | 112 (100%) | 113 (100%) | 225 (100%) |

Many Sociologists have used occupation as a major indicator of empowerment of a caste. They had pointed out that the occupational desire of the old women determined the occupational desire of the young women.

This true in the present study also 64.89% of old women preferred to do modern occupation while 90.67% of young women preferred to do same. While 35.11% of the old women preferred to do traditional occupation, only 9.33% of their young women liked to do the same. It is clear here that those old women who are worried about low socio-economic are anxious about their children’s future and hence tried their maximum to provide education for them. As a result young women deviated from the old women’s opinion of preference for occupation. It is seen that more young women desired to modern occupation than traditional occupation.

Role of Governmental welfare programmes and Schemes in empowerment of down trodden women

- **Awareness about welfare Measures :**

There are many effort taken by the State government of the upliftment of Scheduled Castes. The major efforts are educational scheme and programmes for Scheduled castes, programme for removing untouchability, housing etc. The educational programmes include fee concessions or return, Scholarship, stipends free books, payment of examination fees, grant in aid maintenance of schools, hostels boarding houses orphanage, reading rooms, libraries intended for backward

communities. Education consumed the lion's Share of the expenditure incurred on Scheduled caste welfare.

When we required about the awareness of educational facilities provided to scheduled castes by government during their student days, it was found that majority (66.67%) of mothers were not aware of these facilities. Old age women age has some influence on the awareness of these facilities young age women's group more aware about the welfare measures than old age women's group.

It may be noted that the young women is influenced by modern education. The mass media also have significant role in making them aware of these facilities. Now -a-days even, illiterate old women are aware of these facilities. This may be due to modern means of communication like FM, radio, Television, Internet etc., and from other sources like local friends or neighbors giving publicity about the welfare measures specially made for scheduled casted.

In the case of young women they got information from the same sources. The change between two generations is that in the young women even the illiterates are well informed about the welfare measures when compared to old women. Cent percent of young women of our study are aware of welfare measures. Those who are educated got information from mass media and communication. It is found that cent percent of young women are in higher income group, i.e. Rs. 8000 and above.

Old women's level of education also have influence on the awareness of welfare measures. Our study made clear that the highly educated groups are more aware of educational welfare measures. Among the illiterate old women nobody is aware of the facilities. But as education increased, the number of persons who are aware of the welfare measures also increased. The literate respondent become aware of government's welfare measures though reading newspapers or from other mass media of communications and correspondence with others.

Utilization of welfare Measures:

The government of India Act-1935, which first identified scheduled caste and scheduled tribes stressed the need for special attention to the welfare and uplift of these classes. But paper and adequate utilization of the welfare measures can bring about the desired effect. **Shantha Kumari** in her study on '**scheduled caste and welfare measures**' made clear that- scheduled caste are eager to make full use of the facilities given by the government. But because the children fail continuously, they find it difficult to meet their expenses in the absence of lump sum grant and exception from fees at secondary school and higher education level, and then they are forced to stop their studies. This prevents them from availing the facilities any further. One of the reasons for the inadequate utilization of educational facilities by the scheduled caste is the ignorance about the potential which education holds for improving their life chances.

Conclusion

In the present study empowerment of financial freedom for scheduled caste and scheduled tribes women, the major responsible factors is education. The educational mobility are parental pressure, self-motivation, and higher level of aspiration of the person, awareness of the advantages of education and government and welfare measures. Education of the old women's seemed to be significantly related to educational level of the young women i.e. the higher the old women education, the higher is the educational level of their daughters, and it is known fact that the educated parents are in a better position to provide their children with right guidance and advice and they motivation them for higher education.

The trend in occupational changed showed that there is intergenerational vertical occupational mobility. Analyzing these cases, we could identify certain factors contributing to scheduled caste women's empowerment namely, education, and change in attitudes and

in the level of aspiration. Education, modern occupation and the welfare schemes of government are contributing a lot towards changing the socio- cultural attitudes and life – style of scheduled caste women.

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12

Babasaheb Ambedkar's Vision of Social Justice and Women Empowerment

Dr.Merlin Kumari.k¹

Social Justice is a modern concept which has a philosophical foundation. The idea of social justice is imbedded in all aspects of life whether it is politics, economics, sociology, social or philosophy, jurisprudence and other allied studies. Social justice is the mirror image of the norms and values of society. These values absorb the various changes and transformations occurred during different phases of life. The root of social justice lies in concept of justice. There are number of practices which were earlier in accordance with the concept of justice and later on were turned to be a stigma of slave system, caste system and patriarchy. According to Raphael (1979) justice has been understood as the foundation of social morality which directs the general order of the society.

The idea of social justice is quite modern as it is the outcome of recent socio-economic developments and transformation (i.e.

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modernization, globalization and digitalization) of life. The traditional concept of justice is more close to the individual attribute of justice. Thus incorporation of welfare and inclusive approach to the concept of justice becomes the seed for social justice.

Social justice demands equality in society, equal opportunities in all walks of life, leading to a dignified life with full personality development that promotes the welfare of all the people in the society. It also assures development for all individuals in society, without discrimination on the basis of caste, gender or race, etc. The focus of social justice is mainstreaming of marginalized section of society and providing equal opportunities to the victims of socio-economic discrimination and gender discrimination.

Social Justice seeks to fulfil three distinct urges of people i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity. These three words depict the discriminatory nature of society and contribute to raise awareness of French revolution and freedom movements started for getting human rights. Dr.B.R. Ambedkar was also impressed by these three postulates of human rights and raised voice against the political slavery and the Self-imposed slavery of depressed classes and protected rights of women in Indian Society. Ambedkar's vision of social justice emanates from the quest for social justice and just social order, which are based on the idea of non-discrimination in free society. Ambedkar was a logical sociologist who found the root cause of major social problems, outdated customs and practices prevailed in society. The society should not blindly follow the old traditions. It should be based on logic and reason and not on baseless traditions of caste system and discrimination. Society should be reconstructed only on the lines of democratic modern ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. It is also believed that unless and until the existing inequalities in society are removed, society may not be just.

Women remained the main victims of this discriminatory social structure and patriarchy. Upliftment and mainstreaming of women is

important for inclusive development of society. Social elevation of depressed classes and protecting women from slavery, exploitation and atrocities were major areas of Ambedkar's vision. Social justice is an inclusive approach of justice and stands for welfare. It is a primary constituent of the national growth for inclusive development. Even after seventy five years of independence and advent of new challenges after globalization, women remain the victims of various forms of discrimination, biased social structure and patriarchy. Social justice provides access to women for basic rights in the society. Ambedkar's vision for social democracy can be achieved with the eradication of all forms of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, colour and gender.

Women Empowerment

The word empowerment includes two words "power" and its prefix "em". Empower is to make or cause power. It means to give power , to give authority and to give ability. It can be defined as a process in which power is gained, developed, seized, facilitated or given to a relatively powerless person who elevates him or her from a relatively powerless state to a state of more power through some definite strategies. Empowerment is generally used as a synonym for participation, for speaking out or for meeting some basic needs. It is a process of gaining understanding of and control over the social, political and economic forces around one as a means of improving one's standing in society. In this sense, empowerment also implies questioning the monopoly of the dominant paradigm or to keep alive the populations resentment against the most visible aspects of social and political discriminations.

Empowerment is a process of capacity building which permits to enjoy basic rights of liberty and equality. It facilitated to realize women's true identity and potential so that they can completely participate in the personal growth and social development. Women empowerment is defined as participation: investing in women's capabilities and

empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's Vision on Social Justice and Women Empowerment

Women empowerment and social justice constitutes major element of an ideal society that is perceived by B.R.Ambedkar. The idea of ideal society aimed to replace the all forms of discrimination and formation of better socio- economic order. Ambedkar incorporated various provisions for the upliftment and empowerment of women in the form of fundamental rights and Directive principles of state policy etc. Ambedkar's perspective of women rights resembles with the global feminist demands which stressed on right to education, equal treatment with men, right to property and involvement in the political process. The individual would be the ultimate objective of society, and that personal progress is the most fundamental pre-requisite of a free social order that can guarantee inclusive growth of all human beings. Ambedkar's vision is broad based, incorporates the principles of social justice, inclusive development and women empowerment to resolve the issues exclusion, marginalization, caste and gender discrimination.

Ambedkar had tried to break down the barriers in the way of advancement of women in India. He laid down the foundation of concrete and sincere efforts by codifying the Common Civil-code for the Hindu community and the principle is capable of extension to other sections of the Indian society. Prior to these efforts of Ambedkar, the destiny of the Indian women depended upon the wrong notions and perceptions chalked out by the proprietors of orthodoxy. The chaotic conditions of the Hindu law were reduced in the form of judicial pronouncements and codification was the legislative recognition of the judge made law. Ambedkar himself had explained lucidly the reasons for the consolidation and codification. He tried to change the perspectives of women empowerment in Independent India. Ambedkar

as a product of his time responded powerfully to the needs of the downtrodden people of India. The contemporary Indian society provided for his revolutionary thoughts a resourceful setting eliciting his strong reactions to age-old religious and social practices. The status of women is equally degraded like that of the depressed classes.

The philosophy of Ambedkar on women empowerment was based upon several fundamental issues like property right, marriage and adoption, and the liberation of women in the light of religion. Ambedkar criticized Hindu social order as it neglected the worth dignity of human dignity and women became the worst victim of this discrimination and subhuman treatment. Ambedkar sought to strike and remove the backbone of the problem that was caste system, rather than making superficial reforms and addressing subsidiary concerns like child marriage and the sati system. Ambedkar's vision of social justice encompasses all human beings' unity and equality, as well as equal merit and respect for men and women. His social concept aimed to eliminate all forms of man-made disparities through legislation, morality, and public conscience. Ambedkar conceived the vision of ideal society based on the principle of equality, justice and human dignity. Ambedkar wanted legislative intervention for the revival of Women in the Hindu society and active role of state for the welfare of women. Ambedkar expressed the concern for education of masses without discrimination in the deference before Simon commission. Ambedkar stressed on the legal measures to lay the foundation of Just Social Order. Ambedkar's vision considered law as most effective and functional tool of women empowerment and social Justice but not the only measures. The legal tool helps to fight against the graded inequality imposed through social norms and biased legal framework and also contributes effectively for the social change. In order to take optimum use of law for eliminating the plight of women it should be supported by social morality.

As social and moral scruples get represented in human rights. This process of social change is a gradual process which can be

confronted with various socio-psychological restraints. In this situation education contribute to resolve these socio- psychological issues. The people who were mentally incarcerated for generations together by deep rooted social values would not accept radical changes in laws that challenge the extremely biased nature of social and customary values. Ambedkar's legal approach of social change and women empowerment aimed at equality and social Justice for women with the help of education. When defining the meaning of liberty, Ambedkar stated that it should encompass social equality, economic equality, and knowledge (education) for all. All of these social factors were once restricted to a specific social class, but they now play a significant role in the new social order. This form the basis of inclusive growth and development of society.

Ambedkar advocated that the participation of victims in the struggle against discrimination is a must for real empowerment and effective results. Two superstructures for improvement of society's structure proposed: the economy and the polity, although the economy assigned more weight than the polity. Liberal ideas acknowledged and effort must be modified to fit a society's evolutionary stage. Baba Sahib saw that women's status could not be transformed without good education and economic security. As a result, he called for the State to offer equal economic rights to women, including adequate source of livelihood, equal compensation for equal work, and equal right to work for women. Ambedkar emphasized the importance of women's capacity building as the first step toward women's empowerment through various approaches. A multifaceted contribution to women's empowerment by fighting for girl's education and the elimination of negative social attitudes about women. Women's education was just as important as men's since children tend to imitate both parents. Mothers counselled to raise their children to live virtuous lives. Women motivated to be as courageous and fearless as males. History has shown that Indian women can fight on the battlefield if the situation calls for it.

Ambedkar wanted active, direct and effective intervention of state for women empowerment. He also demanded the restructuring of society so that women get recognition not only in family but also in society as a dignified member. Ambedkar, with the help of the state introduced the Hindu code bill which intended to give women the right to property and adoption. Despite the fact that he attempted to equalize men and women in all legal proceedings with this bill, he stated that "this is in no way of a revolutionary step; this is not even a radical measure." A legislative step is an attempt to formalize and institutionalize this vision into actions. It's also worth noting that, despite the limits of the step, Ambedkar regarded it as the fundamental foundation of social justice for women. The reforms established by Ambedkar through the "Hindu Code-bill" have mostly been followed and accepted. This bill aimed at rationalizing and restoring the dignity of women by codifying Hindu law in respect of marriage, divorce, and succession; prior to the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and Hindu Succession Act, 1956, the Hindu law was largely un-codified, though the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937, and the Sharda Act could be seen as an attempts at legislative intervention. The Hindu Code Bill might be seen as a legal attempt at social engineering. It was a ground-breaking measure that marked the beginning of India's acknowledgement and empowerment of women.

A woman will have her own property and will be allowed to dispose of it under these revolutionary rules. On the 26th of December 1950, the *Times of India* published a statement by Ambedkar in which he stated that the bill aims to remove legal barriers to women's social advancement. The efforts of Ambedkar in getting the bill enacted were lauded by many. Justice P.B. Gajendragadkar (1951) while congratulating Ambedkar for the role he had played in drafting and piloting the bill said, "If Ambedkar gives us Hindus our Code, his achievement would go down in history as a very eloquent piece of poetic justice indeed." It is significant to note that Jana (1979) categorically

stated that of all the reformists aimed at empowerment of Indian women, Ambedkar was most progressive as regards the issues of women are concerned.

In order to realize the dream of social justice and true empowerment of women in post globalization period a strong political will is required to implement these provisions rigorously. Our constitutional and legal provisions are based on the vision of B.R Ambedkar, but true implementation is still a far cry. To bring this vision to a reality: a consistent, coordinated, and committed efforts in a cohesive manner are required on every front either it's social, political or economic.

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13

An Analysis of the Characters: Identity Crisis in the Lives of Dr.Ambedkar and *The Rain Child*

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Introduction

Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar is known as the father of Indian constitution. On 29 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly set up a Drafting Committee. This Drafting Committee was headed by Ambedkar. His concept of social justice means a mode of life. He meant,

“To give every man his right place in society. Its precepts may be to live honorably, to give respect to all, to injure no one and to give every man his due without any artificial discrimination in mind and unnatural classification in society”.

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Connecting Ambedkar's concept of 'dalit' (derived from Marathi language) connotation of the state of being 'depressed' to Canadian Short Story *The Rain Child* which was written by Manorama Trikha. The characters are analyzed through their conversations in the story: who lived honourably in the story; do the characters respect each other? is there any physical or mental discrimination? is there any unnatural classification in the story?

Manorama Trikha who edited the short stories under the title Canadian Short Stories, highlights the salient features of the Canadian short story. She praises the Canadian short story is like any other short story of the world of literature. She acclaims that these stories are 'highly organized and deftly executed short narratives. 'These short stories put together in the anthology reflected on varied angles of vision lodged in the lived life and crafted fiction of Canada'.

Literature Review

New Historicism is a form of literary theory whose goal is to understand intellectual history through literature and literature through its cultural context, which follows the 1950s field of history of ideas and refers to itself as a form of "cultural Poetics" American historicism is an approach to studying anthropology and culture dating back to the mid-19th and early 20th century and encompassing two forms of historicism, diffusion, and history in particular.

Debjani Ganguly opines that, 'narratives reveal the multiple nodes that link the political as a worldly response to the vicissitudes of history'.

Narullah Mambrol in Analysis of Margaret Laurence opines that 'Margaret Laurence's *The Rain Child* set in Ghana during the approach of independence in 1957, exposes a host of issues of identity complicated by historical, national, racial, psychological, and linguistic issues'.

Method

The method is using the primary source and also secondary sources such as article and Websites.

Instruments

Characters in the story 'The Rain Child' and Dr. Ambedkar's fight for dalits.

Procedure

The researchers use both descriptive and analytical methods.

Discussion

One of the short story writers is Margaret Laurence who is highly acclaimed as a fictional writer and penned the short story 'The Rain Child'. 'The Rain Child' has narrative techniques, expressions of attitudes, and cultural differences. The short story 'The Rain Child' plays an important role in English literature as it portrays the alienation of persons in a foreign land. But some literature lovers sometimes tend towards novels that are more expressive than short stories. On the contrary, this short story is heart-touching and sends a universal message. This short story is 'shaped by the twin troops of brevity and craft'.

The Rain Child setting is in Africa and was influenced by Laurence's experience as a minority there. Moreover, the writer acknowledged the 'division between their [Africans'] traditional ancestral past and their contemporary partly Westernized present'. The paper focuses on analyzing the characters and how the theme is interwoven among the characters heightening the Indian 'dalit' society in India to African society. The cultural mosaic in the story 'draws the attention to include problematization of the plight of Native Canadians'. The characters in the story do not enjoy the existence of the environments except the narrator, Nedden. The main motif in *The Rain Child* is "identity" because every character struggles with identity

problems. In India also 'dalits' suffer from their exclusion in the caste system.

Margaret Laurence named the main character Ruth Quansah, who was born in the United Kingdom and spent her childhood there. The story *The Rain Child* revolves around the theme that if an individual leaves a particular place and relocates herself to another place, then the psychological element of personal identity comes to a state of self-introspection, which happened in the case of Ruth also. Here the author portrays the 'existential anxieties of the diaspora and ethnic communities struggles. The same scenario exists for 'dalits' in India also. But with the rise of the Mahar leader Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the 1930s, the setting was changed. In the words of Debjani Ganguly,

---and his (Ambedkar) strident political-cultural denunciation of the caste system, coupled with his lifelong battle to generate a new identity for the oppressed castes that gave the term 'dalit' a force and currency that it carries to this day.

It is also a sad story about a black teenager, Ruth Quansah, whose identity crisis was caused due to getting uprooted from her place of birth and culture into another place of her actual place where her race exists. The main problem of this short story is to find one's identity when one is uprooted - turning out of the place where one belongs to. Even though a person is in a foreign or alien land, their thought is around their own homeland where she belongs to. This is evident in the case of Ruth's father. Ruth's father Quansha feels that,

And now, Ruth- you know, when she was born, my wife called her by an African the name which means "The Child of the Rain".

'Also, the title of the short story is connected to African culture because when Ruth was born her mother called her an African name that means 'Child of the rain'.

The story progresses with Quansah's narration by saying that when Ruth's mother died, he brings Ruth back to Africa which is Quansah's actual birthplace. She is brought there at the age of fifteen. Ruth's father says,

Both of them were uprooted. It was my fault, I guess, and yet-

Ruth is brought from the United Kingdom to Africa as an adolescent, where the uprooting takes place. And Dr. Quansah is also uprooted twice as he goes to the United Kingdom from Africa and once his wife dies, he comes back to Africa along with his daughter Ruth.

Laurence as a writer of the then society wants to reflect in the narration of the story to 'tell problems with which a whole nation and generation faced at that time Ruth's story to'. In those days people felt the themes of 'identity, migration, alienation, integration, race, sense of belonging - she puts in *The Rain Child* which shows a great sense of understanding towards these people'. Laurence's effort to connect people to ordinary experiences is fruitful in this story.

Though by roots Ruth is seen as an African, she considers herself to be English because of the culture that she was brought up in. All her friends were English and everything connected her to the United Kingdom. She is not predicted about African culture. So in the initial stages, Ruth says, 'I 'am sure, I shall, --it's a great fun, Miss. Nedden, coming to Africa like this. As she comes back from the United Kingdom to Africa, she gets quite confused when she is taken to Eburaso, a girls' school. She does not understand Africans because she is not acquainted with their culture and is not even interested in it. But in the later part Ruth says, 'I did not know it would be like this, here, she said at last' and she also says 'I did not know at all'. It is evident in her words when she

could not reply in the Twi language, the narrator tries to convince her by saying that

----but I never imagined---my dear child, it's your own language after all.

Ruth very boldly replies,

"They don't know anything outside this place. I don't understand what they're saying to each other. I'm not interested, anyway."

Under such conditions, it is extremely hard for her to make friends as she does not know how to get along with these children and gets lonely. Everyone is a stranger in her eyes and she is a stranger to them. Ruth the protagonist in the story can't see all the humans through the same lens as desired by Ambedkar. And Ambedkar's precept of 'to give respect to all' is not applicable in the case of Ruth.

She can't speak Twi which is the mother tongue of all the other African girls at her school. Her father hasn't taught it to her, he has always talked to her in English because he didn't want her to face the same language problems as he had had to face. In Dr.Quansah 's words,

"I was brought up in a small village. English came hard to me. When I went to secondary school, I experienced great difficulty at first in understanding even the gist of the lectures. I was determined that the same thing should not happen to Ruth".

It is evident in her words when the narrator Miss. Nedden asked her to wear the same dress as other African girls. Miss Violet Nedden is the English teacher. Her integration, identity problems, and behavioral changes are told by Miss Nedden. Ruth's frowned reply was,

"I've got one- it was my mother's. I don't know how to put it on properly. They-they'd only laugh if I asked them."

Ruth cannot adapt to African garments and her dislike of African food is expressed in the way,

“I’m starving. But I can’t eat this food. Miss Nedden. I’m sorry, but I just can’t. That awful mashed stuff, sort of greyish yellow, like some funny kind of potatoes-it makes me sick.”

The words such as “mashed stuff” and “funny kind of potatoes” show her belittling nature of African food. When she goes to David to find consolation after an incident, David who is a European says to Ruth,

“-----look here, Ruth, I’m sorry, but when she gets an idea there is nothing that anyone can do. I know it’s a lot of rot. I know that you are not an ordinary kind of African girl. You’re almost-almost a-like us.”

When he tells her that she is almost like a European. In fact, it is at this point that she realizes that she neither belongs to England, nor to Africa. The present situation in *The Rain Child* reminds that,

“Ambedkar’s dramatic yet poignant declaration, Gandhiji, I have no homeland.”

Ruth’s character is portrayed in such a way that she cannot adjust to the environment and finally she runs away from the situation. In the words of Ruth’s father,

“I am taking her away. She wants to go. What else can I do? There is a school in the town where a cousin of my lives.”

It means there is nothing that remains for her father but to take her away from the country to the town. But is it really a good solution? The story does not give a solution to the citizens who are undergoing the same physical and psychological problems on foreign soil. The new may not have the same problems but some other types of problems may arise. So, it is the need of the hour that the students have to be trained to grow in an adverse situation.

Another character in the story, Dr. Quansah, is born in Africa and goes to the United Kingdom marries there also feel alienated on foreign soil. Dr. Quansah went to England to study medicine. He got a project

on malaria research and he was in charge of it. Miss Nedden narrates the interaction between her and Dr. Quansah in the story. Being the teacher of Ruth, Miss Nedden has got the chance to talk to Dr. Quansah quite often. Their conversations are mainly about Ruth. Dr. Quansah confronted racial discrimination when he was in Europe, but after he comes back to his native country, he still has problems communicating with the young generation. He is lonely.

Being a foreigner in Africa, Miss Violet Nedden has a sense of loneliness too. That's why she can understand Dr. Quansah's solitude and this brings them even closer. "He broke off. 'I really should not bother you with all this.' "Oh, but you're not. 'The words came out with an unthinking swiftness that mortified me later when I recalled it. 'I haven't so many people I can talk with, either, you know. 'You told me as much, once,' Dr. Quansah said gently. 'I had not forgotten'. This paragraph shows that their relationship has become more than just one of "a teacher and a student's father."

Miss Violet Nedden, could not be with the true English woman attributes after spending so many years in Africa. Neddan being English did not encourage students to learn William Wordsworth's Daffodils but 'turns to Akan's poetry'. She says at the end of the short story: 'I think of that island of grey rain where I must go as a stranger when the time comes'.

Miss Hilda Povey, another typical character, the headmistress of Ruth's new school, has a problem similar to what our main character struggles with. Despite the long time she has spent in Africa, that is twenty-seven years, she remains English-centred. In her eyes African parents are unenlightened, her feelings are expressed by the narrator who says, Parents would fail to comprehend the importance of sending their little girls to school with the proper clothing. She might have felt that the 'dress is the language of the thought.' she simply cannot get used to their culture, this is expressed when she felt in the

narrator's words, Miss Povey would have liked to keep the girls away from the local festivals, which she regarded as dangerously heathen.

Conclusion

Nikhil Meshram's review of Ambedkar's books. He shared his review on Facebook.

"Ambedkar will find it hard not to admire him for his huge contribution in making our society less hierarchical and more equitable for Indians, especially for the people who were historically denied respect and subjected to intense humiliation in day-to-day life."

In fine, the short story 'The Rain Child' shows how difficult it is that an individual adapting to a new culture both physically and psychologically. But there are no borders for humans' existence irrespective of color, race beliefs, customs, and traditions.

Only after Ambedkar's discursive attempts to frame in terms of reference could Gangadhar Pantawane, the founder -editor of *Asmitadarsh*, the main journal devoted to dalit literature, write:

"He(dalit) belies in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution."

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14

**Queering the Quest: A Comparative Analysis of Hegemony
through the Lens of Ambedkarism in Selected Works of
Arundhati Roy and Sachin Kundalkar**

Harshit Bhatt¹

B.R. Ambedkar, in addition to being the father of the constitution of India, also was one of the first few people in South Asia who talked about the Indian versions of segregation and marginalization. But that was the mid-twentieth century, and as India inches towards almost a century-long freedom mark of its independence, it is important to assess how far the Ambedkarite philosophy has changed the outlook of this country. It is, therefore, the objective of this paper to probe into the representation of the Caste and Gender Marginalized groups in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and Sachin Kundalkar's *Cobalt Blue* and analyse the power dynamics of the structure and society.

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According to Ambedkar, society is always composed of classes but which class was the first to transform into a caste, that is the question where he started most of his theses, but especially his 1946 work *Who were the Shudras?* Class and caste are, in a sense, next-door neighbours,² separated only by a cleft, the difference lies in that caste is a completely closed social group. A close look at any religious text would also present a complicated point of view regarding the representations of the 'alternative- sexualities/gender'. Ambedkar's entire career was spent analysing the roots of the world he had inherited from the so-called Hindu state he found himself a citizen of, to find some explanation of why the people of a certain social group were marginalized and the rest enjoyed every single privilege. In the contemporary world, things may look different but they still resemble the same structure that was there before the independence of this great nation.

Hindu texts, whether it be the Vedas with their *Varna* systems or as demonstrated in Vanaja Dhruvrajan's *Gender, Race and Nation*, reveal the root cause of the marginalization to be primarily associated with societal conventions. When Bible and Quran interpreters named the Transgender and Homosexuals sinners and sexual deviants, the Hindu texts, even with the acceptance and tolerance that was there in history and the one that came along in modern times, still struggled with the true representation of homo/bi-sexuality, and the rejection of gender identity as a self-determined right. One can not argue that the marginalization of caste and gender resembles the same struggle, but one must find the point of intersections within that struggle, a place where the Dalits and the Kinnars can see and respect each other's respective traumas. That is where Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* comes in.

² Moon, Vasant (Comp). *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches*. Bombay: The Education Department, Government of Maharashtra. 1979. Vol. 1, p. 15. Print.

Roy's text presents a frank and very open dialogue between the people of two marginalized communities, one a Dalit and another an Intersex-Transgender woman, also known as a Kinnar woman, in the first half of its narrative. The conversation is brutally honest and pain-inflicting, especially for readers of similar backgrounds. And those who can not relate to the context due to their lack of similar upbringing can most definitely recognize the weaving of social hierarchies that people have, consciously and unconsciously, participated in.

"You're a *Chamar*³ like all those other boys you worked with in the mortuary. You weren't lying to that Sangeeta Madam *Haramzaadi* Bitch about your name, you were lying to me and I don't know why, because I don't care what you are... Muslim, Hindu, man, woman, this caste, that caste, or a camel's arsehole. But why call yourself Saddam Hussain? He was a bastard, you know." (Roy, 85).

The discussion here is between a Kinnar Muslim Woman named Anjum and a Dalit Hindu Man named Saddam Hussain, who changed his name from Dayachand. There are these labels of religion and gender that somehow these characters or at least their interactions are affected. Anjum is agitated because her friend whom she trusts more than anyone on the planet chose to disguise himself under the name of a fanatic politician because of who many innocent lives were lost. As a Muslim person she does not want to place a claim to that name, more than that, she feels offended that a person would choose to take this name. So what could have prompted the change of Dayachand to Saddam Hussain?

³ Chamar, According to Encyclopedia Britannica, is a word used to refer to a Scheduled Caste in India. Members of this caste are more appropriately referred to as Scheduled Castes (also called Dalits); because their hereditary work that obliged them to handle dead animals, the Chamars were among those formerly called "untouchables." Their settlements were forced to be and have often been outside higher-caste Hindu villages.

Gramsci defines hegemony as a condition in which a fundamental class chooses or takes it to be their right to exercise a political, intellectual, and moral role of leadership within a hegemonic system cemented by a common worldview. The exercise of this role on the ethical-political as well as on the economic plane involves the execution of a process of intellectual and moral reform, through which there is a change of the previous ideological thoughts and a reformation of hegemonic structures and institutions into a new form. (Gramsci 56). What Saddam sees in acquiring a new name is the power that is associated. He does not see a political fanatic, or rather he chooses to see something different. His idea behind adopting a new name is that he wants a future that is different from his current present, the present that was decided for him by society and patriarchy, to some extent, at his birth. This time he chooses to be a person who is different from what he has been his entire life. It should be noted here, that Anjum is a transgender woman who is questioning his choice. As a transwoman, Anjum had made the same choice to transition from Aftaab to Anjum, a choice that she was now questioning in Saddam Hussain. This is the intersection this paper aims to highlight. A Dalit person's choice is just as valid as a Transgender person's, to do with their identity as they wish. If gender as an identity could be read as performative, as Judith Butler so eloquently highlights in her *Gender Trouble*, then so could a person's identity as a Dalit person. They must retain a right to enact or change as much as they want with their life as they'd like. He goes on explain further when he says,

"'This was what our people did,' Saddam said. 'When cows died, upper-caste farmers would call us to collect the carcasses - because they couldn't pollute themselves by touching them.'

'Yes, yes, I know,' Anjum said, in a tone that sounded suspiciously like admiration. (sic) 'Some of them are very neat and clean. They don't eat onions, garlic, meat...'

Saddam ignored that intervention." (Roy, 86).

The condition of Saddam as Dayachand brings to the foreground the contemporary conditions of the Dalit and Scheduled Castes People. One sees how the character in discourse here chooses to change and alter his entire life. Becoming a Muslim person, which is another minority in India, somehow seems to be a better choice for him than retaining what was given to this character. The constitution of his identity seems to have been affected more by the ideas of others than his own, which eventually ends up resulting in the inhibition of his expression- this expression was supposed to be rightfully only his own or something that could have been a cultural thing ends up becoming a place of trauma and discrimination, yet it is constructed socially before his self-awareness comes to the surface. One could see the echoes of a similar struggle in the interpretation of Shikandi in Kisari Mohan Ganguli's *The Mahabharata*. It serves as the best example of how even the reincarnation of a woman as a man still doesn't avail him of the privilege of killing his enemy on the battleground. The reason is simply cited as the civil duty of a man (Bhishma), as he refuses to recognise him (Shikandi) as a man and still sees him as a woman, therefore not taking up a weapon against 'her'. (Ganguli 107).

Kundalkar's *Cobalt Blue* presents an entirely different narrative than Roy's. Firstly, no visible or main character comes from an Oppressed Caste. One does, however, encounter quite an informative discussion while reading the initial pages of the text. The main story concerns a brother and sister duo, Tanay and Anuja, who fall in love with the same man who has come to live in their family's home as a Paying Guest. The guest is never actually given a name and is always referred to in the second or third person. In Tanay's narrative, the discussion starts with a very privileged upper-caste quote, "We didn't bother much about caste and such matters at home." The line sets the tone of what is about to follow, but the readers are taken aback by the further turns of the conversation, as the narrator goes,

“But when we sat down to dinner and you asked Aai for a poli, I could see her perk up. Brahmins say 'poli' while other castes make do with the humble 'chapatti'- same bread, different brand name. Baba took the bull by the horns.

May I ask who is your family god?' he asked. You said, 'You don't have to be so formal, Uncle.'" (Kundalkar, 38).

The father (Baba) of the narrator is not ready to let it go that a person who has entered his house and is eating with his family is somehow refusing to label himself. While on the other hand the narrator here, Tanay seems convinced that the guest is a brahmin based only on the fact of his vocabulary. There is that idea of associating caste with a person's identity and then, therefore, relegating every single aspect of their future action to that one part of their identity. The guest keeps dodging the questions as the conversation moves ahead,

“No, no, who does the family worship?"

You sat back and quietly finished the mouthful you had begun to eat. Then you said, 'I begin from myself. I have no home, no caste, no clan. I have kept my relatives at arm's length. I do not know who I believe in. I am a seeker.'" (Kundalkar, 39).

The way the guest chooses to answer the intrusive question of the family patriarch also makes the reader wonder if the guest might be trying to hide something. One saw how Saddam Hussain in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* chose to do away with the identity people kept thrusting on him. But *Cobalt Blue's* guest is an educated and more aware person. He presents himself very cautiously and carefully, perhaps because of his identity as a Queer man as well a Dalit or an Oppressed Class person. He stands to face a double degree of discrimination if he reveals his status of being Bisexual and Dalit, so he calmly chooses to disassociate from the idea of class and caste altogether, something that Saddam wasn't able to do. One can hear the subtle echoes of the Navyana interpretation of Ambedkar's Buddhism. It is no

secret that Ambedkar chose to leave Hinduism for its many faults when it came to class and caste division to understand Buddha's teaching that everything is characterized by *Dukkha*, or unsatisfactoriness, relating to interpersonal relations.⁴ As A. Blackburn writes, "In one instance Ambedkar presents a dialogue in which the Buddha teaches that the root of dukkha is class conflict and asserts elsewhere that 'the Buddha's conception of Dukkha is material,'⁵ one can relate this with the carefree attitude of the guest where he simply revels in the joys of the present and does away with the past, especially when the interrogation persist,

"Perhaps Aai made sense of this because she stopped the interrogation in its tracks. I could see that Baba didn't understand what you had said. So he tried another tack: 'Where does your family come from?'

'Where I am, that's where I come from.'" (Kundalkar, 39).

Like Butler's analysis, Roy and Kundalkar in their respective texts very simply question the basis of the rigid binary of accepted behaviour tropes associated with one's genitalia, skin colour, or family background that society has created for the people living in it; the terms such as 'masculine' or 'feminine,' or the question of one's caste being upper or lower, being the only two choices. Anything other than what is 'wanted' or tolerable is simply either discarded or discriminated against. With the onset of the modern era, post-1920, the binary kept growing, the concepts of straight/gay came into the existence, and the independence movement ushered in the voice of the long subjugated Dalit people

⁴ Ambedkar, Bhimrao Ramji. *The Buddha and His Dhamma: A Critical Edition*. Edited by Aakash Singh Rathore and Ajay Verma. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.

⁵ Blackburn, Anne M. "Religion, Kinship and Buddhism: Ambedkar's vision of a moral community," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*. 1993. 16 (1): 1–22. Print.

getting some reservation in the places of education and administration, which in turn, also grew the discrimination towards the marginalised groups of people.

The Dalit people got referred to as the SC/ST, Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes, and the LGBTQ people got the civilised term 'alternative-lifestyles,' a bougie attempt at hiding behind the civility of subtle casteism and homophobia. The authors can be praised for their little yet brave attempts at highlighting the contemporary conditions of the marginalized groups of various communities, but one can hardly accept their conception of hegemony and revolution combined with a reductionist interpretation of ideology arguing that ideologies necessarily lack a class character. The ideologies in these specific texts are driven by the class and caste conflict along with the conflicts of gender and sex-based violence. Conclusively, the power dynamics of the structure and society in Roy and Kundalkar's texts are very much aware of the respective division of the people based on authority and dominance, far, far away from what Ambedkar had imagined for the newly independent India.

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15

Study of Class and Caste in Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* in Contrast with William Shakespeare's "Othello"Tishya Luthra¹

This chapter examines Kiran Desai's *The Legacy of Misfortune* regarding a character emergency. Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* and Shakespeare's *Othello* are two literary works that explore the themes of caste and class. While both works address these themes, they differ in their treatment of the issues. Each man living on the planet will undoubtedly have a character. Everybody has a conflict with themselves. He or she struggles a lot as they remain caught between two identities. An identity crisis can be used as a lens to examine the inheritance of loss.

The *Inheritance of Loss*, essentially a diasporic² novel that addresses the same concerns and issues, is one of these postcolonial works. The chapter looks at how Desai approaches current issues like immigration, displacement, identity loss, emotional complexes, cultural

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² Diaspora- The dispersal, migration, or movement of a people away from their ancestral or established homeland. the black emigration to cities in the north.

clashes, human relations, hybridity, and in-between, globalization, and multiculturalism, among other things, with great insight. The connection between class and diaspora is investigated and dissected which is the point of convergence of this paper. Additionally, an effort has been made to investigate the significant impact that class has on migration-related marginalization and discrimination.

Shakespeare's *Othello* explores the theme of class and race through the story of a black man who rises to the rank of a general in the Venetian army. *Othello's* marriage to Desdemona, a white woman, leads to his downfall when he is manipulated by his subordinate, Iago. The play highlights the power dynamics between different classes and races in a society dominated by white Europeans. In *Inheritance of Loss*, Desai portrays the issues of caste and class as deeply entrenched in Indian society, and difficult to overcome. The characters struggle with their identities and social standing, and the novel suggests that the barriers to upward social mobility are difficult to surmount. In contrast, *Othello* suggests that race and class can be overcome through individual merit, as *Othello* rises to the rank of a general despite his race.

Overall, while both *Inheritance of Loss* and *Othello* explore the themes of caste and class, they differ in their treatment of the issues. Desai portrays caste and class as deeply ingrained in Indian society, while Shakespeare suggests that class and race can be overcome through individual merit.

Class and Caste in *Inheritance of Loss*

Class discrimination³ is the subject of *The Inheritance of Loss*. Biju moves to the United States. He suffers greatly in that nation. Americans show their class separation in it. This book describes the Indian class system. *The Inheritance of Loss* is a book about Indians' stifling class

³ Class Discrimination- Differential treatment, prejudice, or discrimination based on social class or perceived social class is class discrimination, also known as classism.

systems at home and abroad and the struggles they face within these classes following colonialism. The book takes place in the town of Kalimpong, which is close to Darjeeling and is on India's northernmost point. In Kalimpong, it begins in the high northeastern Himalayas. Sai, a girl of seventeen years old. Her relationships with a judge⁴, his dog, and his chef. It is a fierce time, loaded up with disappointment among the number of inhabitants in Indian Nepalese, who need to isolate and have their own country separated from India. In theory, new borders that will bring peace are the goal of an insurgency. They are denied by individuals from the Gorkhland Public Freedom Front, who take their food, alcohol, and firearms.

Talking of Sai, Gyan, Sai's tutor, falls in love with her, and they struggle to accept the natural love they have created. He is of Nepali descent, and she is an upper-class, Western-educated Indian girl, so their love is doomed from the start., where Biju (son of a cook) is a run-of-the-mill Indian settler who gets a visa to the U.S., furthermore, stays unlawfully, working for slave compensation in the kitchen cellars of New York City. There he is utilized and mishandled by his managers and is tired out by one specifically, who likewise is an Indian. He decides to leave the United States because he is dissatisfied with his life's circumstances and realizes how much he misses his father. utilizing his earnings, he returns to his residence and his father. The political situation deteriorates throughout the book, and each character approaches it uniquely. They all want to alter their existence and are consumed with guilt for how they have lived their lives up to this point. The novel's central theme is the stifling class structures in India. The characters' social class influences every aspect of their lives. Biju cannot escape his class even if he moves to the United States. In terms of his experience as a foreigner, Biju's story is comparable to that of the judges. He moves to the United States without a valid visa. He needs to battle

⁴ Judge- Judge here is Sai's maternal grandfather.

hard to settle down there due to his dad's desire that his child will procure a dollar and will be a major man. The concept is aptly referred to as the "socio-cultural baggage"⁵ carried by an immigrant by sociologist N. Jayaram. When a person migrates from the society of his or her birth, most of beliefs that society follow the migrant to the country of migration. Biju brought with him his prejudices regarding Pakistanis and African Americans. Biju, a Pakistani cook, exemplifies the age-old rivalry between India and Pakistan by constantly throwing cabbage at one another. Consequently, the restaurant's proprietor redirected them. Biju had carried this habit of hatred with him, and he found that he revered white people, who arguably had done India a great deal of harm, and was unkind to almost everyone else, who had never done anything bad to India.

In some parts of India, people who belong to a lower social class are treated as second-class citizens. The two classes lack mutual trust; the high society generally thinks the lower class, of taking. They additionally accept that the lower classes don't encounter feelings that are capable by the "cultivated".

Class and Caste in Othello

Othello by William Shakespeare is a play about relationships and human nature. Differences in race, gender, and class in these relationships show that Venetian society, like all other societies, is made up of both empowered and constrained groups. Words and actions reveal these relationships, which are discussed about Othello, Desdemona, Iago, Emilia, Cassio, Bianca, and Lodovico, among other characters. Iago and Emilia's relationship is a wonderful illustration of

⁵ socio-cultural baggage- The tendency for one's culture to permeate one's thinking, speech, and behavior without one being aware of it is referred to as cultural baggage. Darrett and Anita Rutman, historians, argue that without our conscious awareness, our cultural baggage permeates our thinking, speech, and behavior. How we interact with people of other cultures is profoundly influenced by our baggage, which includes our implicit assumptions.

power in Renaissance society's prescribed gender roles. Emilia can be described, defined, and ultimately destroyed by the masculine in the relationship, Iago, the persona of a woman. Women's behavior toward one another exemplifies the idea that they are subservient to men. Emilia solidified to negativity about male-female connections by long stretches of marriage, has the view that ladies are 'nourishment' for men who are 'all stomachs' and 'burp' ladies when full. Iago constantly depicts ladies as 'prostitutes' and 'vixens', just great for providing the longings of men, for this situation, the hanky. When Emilia ignores Iago's warning to "be wise and get home," this subservience is temporarily thrown off. Instead, she describes how he "begged of me to steal (the handkerchief)," which led to the unraveling of Iago's ruse. She is immediately degraded verbally to the level of a "villainous whore" by Iago, who is furious and proceeds to physically destroy her to reassert the masculine state that was required in Jacobean drama.

Starting from the start of humankind, people have pined for power and the advantages that accompany having it. Social classes have been used to classify people's power and influence throughout history. Upper class, middle class, and lower class have typically been the three most prevalent social classes. When Shakespeare wrote Othello, the Elizabethan era, social class played a significant role. At that point, individuals' social classes still up in the air by their riches, abilities, and birth (into a family). Albeit the idea of social class had been acknowledged by most, not every person concurred with it. Marxism's founder, Karl Marx, believed that social class was connected to numerous issues. He believed that the world was divided and that the upper class used the lower class to their advantage. He was certain that this division would eventually lead to disagreements between members of the upper and lower classes. The character of Iago in William Shakespeare's Othello addresses these issues.

Numerous experts, including philologists, dramatists, and others, have tried to "de-code" Othello's genetic identity. However, there is a school of thought that maintains that Shakespeare combined the numerous descriptions of Africa to create a character who was not a member of any society but rather a composite "African," a synthesis of Leo Africanus' description of both "tawny" and "black" Moors, thereby escaping a widespread negative stereotype⁶. Furthermore, given Shakespeare's mindset, the chance of such a "stunt" ought not be precluded.

"Othello" by William Shakespeare in the opening scene of "The Moor of Venice," Iago and Rodrigo warn Brabantio about the "old black ram" who has taken his daughter and eloped with her and has "thick lips." Othello is depicted as a "black devil" in Venice's eyes by racial references at the beginning of the scene.

The Untouchable question “Class Struggle”

Ambedkar demonstrated close ties to various class organizations beginning in 1936. He held long exchanges with the communists and communists. In addition to his political speeches and activities, he debated the socialists vigorously in his brilliant work, *Annihilation of Caste* (Ambedkar, 1936b). He anticipated that they would comprehend the materiality of caste. His push was to give a reasonable image of class upset in India, which wouldn't be a reality without demolishing the station framework. It was an attempt to bring communist groups closer to the anti-caste tradition in history. Ambedkar went beyond a materialist explanation to demonstrate the significant role that culture plays in the appropriation of surplus and exploitation, which was the fundamental difference between Ambedkar and the communist

⁶ Negative stereotype- A social group's and its members' negative traits and characteristics are referred to as negative stereotypes.

ideology. It is important to note that Ambedkar offered them an alliance against "Brah-minism"⁷ and "capitalism"⁸ in history.

Ambedkar defined untouchability as an economic system that allows for economic exploitation without supervision. That is because there is neither an impartial public opinion to condemn it nor an impartial administrative apparatus to constrain it. There is no appeal to public opinion because whatever opinion there is that of caste Hindus, members of the exploiting class, who favor exploitation as a result (Ambedkar, 1990: 197). Ambedkar was the first to highlight and deplore the divisions among the untouchables, who, in his opinion, were "a disunited body"⁹ plagued by the caste system in which they believed just as much as the high caste Hindus did. Untouchables' rivalry and jealousy are a constant result of this caste system, making cooperative action impossible.

Although progressive and tolerant, Venetian society raises or lowers barriers based on race, religion, ethnicity, etc., just like our current society does. always based on the circumstances. The Republic of Venice, which is multicultural by necessity, is primarily known as the Christian bulwark and defender of the Christian faith on a sea and in a region where the imminent and persistent Ottoman threat threatens religious adherence and "civility." Christians were generally regarded as the civilized part of the world and the elite of the cosmopolitan Venetian society. They are compared to any non-Christian and/or dark-skinned person because they are white in color, fair (with all intended meanings), and just.

⁷ Brah-minism- The social and religious system that is based on the writings, rituals, and social power of the Hindu priestly caste. An ancient religion that is a precursor to classical Hinduism. It is based on the Vedas and other priestly writings.

⁸ Capitalism- A political and economic system in which private owners profit from controlling a nation's trade and industry.

⁹ Disunited body- There is disagreement and division among a group of individuals.... an increasingly fractured group

Conclusion

A caste is a social category whose members are restricted in their social contacts and given permanent status in a particular social hierarchy. It is the social stratification that is the most rigid and categorized. It has also been called the extreme form of a closed class system on numerous occasions. The open class system could be placed at the other end of a continuum, which stands in stark contrast to the caste system. An abstract category of people arranged in levels according to their social status has been defined as a social class. There are no clear distinctions between categories.

The Hindu belief system of karma and reincarnation is at the heart of the caste system. The caste system, which has been in use for more than 3,000 years, divides Hindus into four main groups based on their past lives, karma, and family lineage. These groups are the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras.

We can conclude that caste and class are inseparable and intimately connected. The caste lifestyle and class-based distinctions within the caste are ingrained in the society's members. Empirical, interactional, and hierarchical, caste, and class are real concepts.

Untouchability was the worst aspect of the caste system. The social, economic, political, and religious disadvantages of the untouchable varied. They were completely and inhumanly exploited in the name of religion.

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Dalit Trauma and Consciousness: A Critical Study of Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchables* and *Coolie*

Tanya Wahi¹

Introduction

In ancient history, the Indian society or so to say the Hindu society has been segmented into various groups, these groups primarily being the caste groups, starting from the upper class like that of Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the last one that is the bottom most, the Shudras, having all castes of Dalits, or Untouchables or even as the Subalterns- who were again treated as the voiceless souls, the marginalized section who were oblivion of their own identity and rights. (Spivak, Can The Subaltern Speak?) These groups were defined by their hereditary and patriarchal occupation. In other words, the occupation of a person was divided in the basis of his or her caste system.

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As the quintessential Dalit writer and a powerful leader, Dr. B.R Ambedkar once said “some closed the door”. Others found it closed against them”, speaks volume of the plight of the Dalit community and the tussle to attain the identity and the recognition that any other Indian citizen would have had, by birth. Dalits had and till date, in some parts of the country see closed doors in regard to opportunities and having a better life style.

Tracing back the origin of the class distinction, it can primarily be observed that caste distinction originated way back in the 1950-1960s as a new literary movement, especially commencing in the Marathi literature by the name of Dalit Literature. In this movement, the writers and poets initiated in changing the previously used names for the lower class that is ‘untouchables’ and ‘harijans’ given by Mahatma Gandhi, to that of Dalits.

Etymologically, the word ‘Dalit’ gained or rather derived its origin from the Sanskrit language, wherein Dalit is Sanskrit word which significantly means ‘oppressed’, as mentioned above, in the Indian socio-cultural context, they were below the other castes which were prevailing at that particular point of time. Dalit is a term which till date has its standing in the world of literature, be it Indian literature, Greek or simple English literature. The movement which ushered in 1958 in lay man’s language, was termed as the suppressed class movement which gained recognition after the Black movement of the contemporary America, after the death of great writer, leader and the first to voice out for the lower class, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar.

This form of writing echoes the agony, suffering and the atrocities faced by the Dalits, starting from their experience to being rejected on their caste basis to treating like non- humans, basically, dehumanizing them by the discrimination perpetrated by the upper-class society people. This discrimination was not only on the basis of their class, but also on the basis of gender and race, therefore the term Dalit does not

have a limited periphery to caste, but is rather a broad spectrum or so to say an umbrella term which elucidates on the type of domination that the Dalits faced.

The prominent question that arises is that- where did Dalit literature gained its inspiration? Dalit literature voice outs the same concerns through its narratives as it is important for people to be aware of the suffering that Dalits faced, Dalit literature was written in regional languages, therefore gaining relevance with maximum reach. Dalit literature, can now be also termed as the recent form of resistance literature in India as the spurt in this form of literature raises the anger- the anger of resistance from the side of the Dalits, as the readings have first account narratives also, where Dalits have expressed like that of Shantani Kamble, Omprakash Valmiki and Narendra Jhadev and the collective consciousness from the readers point of view, also having a feeling of sympathy and bring amelioration in the Indian caste system and in Indian society in general.

Literature review

The research seeks to explore the various realms and binaries of class distinction, poverty, exploitation, victimization, double marginalization, the cruelty and hypocrisy that is prevailing in India in the lives of Dalit in novels *Untouchables* and *Coolie* by Mulk Raj Anand. The characters will be taken into consideration to depict the actual lives of the Dalit people, the difficulties they had to go through and are still dealing with and also the discrimination they had to face, be it on the grounds of gender, caste or religion. The lives of the people will be scrutinized by showing and critically analyzing the family life of the characters in the novel, the patriarchal control, the male dominated society and the practice of untouchability and facing acute violence.

Ambedkar's Philosophy

While talking about Dalit Literature, a very eminent figure that comes into existence is that of Dr. B.R Ambedkar, who was not only a freedom fighter, but also a critical and a progressive thinker who had a nag of putting forward his ideas in a manner that were understood by everyone. Ambedkar alongside being a writer, an economist and a political leader, was also responsible for revival of Buddhism in India. India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru said, Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of the Hindu society". With the due course of time, Ambedkar emerged as the leader of the oppressed. Having being had a first-hand experience of discrimination and the caste segregation, he could acknowledge the act of barbarity, brutality and the act of wickedness that the Indian society constituted of. Ambedkar's ideology works on the pretext of having the equal recognition for the Dalits, like that of any caste in the Indian society. His ideas worked as defense for the untouchables. The aim of Ambedkar, through his powerful words- was to revolutionize the Indian society in a such a way that there is mere acceptance for the Dalits. Dalits have always been on a quest for identity, in a way, where their own caste and identity can be terminated as to be equals. Ambedkar, wanted the Dalit community to raise voice for themselves.

Ambedkar draws attention upon various reform ideas- one of which was the importance of education. For Ambedkar once said "It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom." In order to attain awareness and be able to raise voice, learn about their rights as the citizens of India, Ambedkar made the Dalit community realize the important of education. According to him, it is through education that the people could learn the importance of establishing their own identity.

Having said that, many writers of the then contemporary world, started romanticizing Ambedkar's philosophy and therefore started implementing in their narratives. Ambedkar wanted a complete eradication of the caste system, he wanted a perfect separate identity for the Dalits, which was apart from Hinduism. In the novel *Untouchables*, the story of Bakha is a complete portrayal of untouchability and casteism, which Ambedkar wants to eradicate.

Ambedkar and Anand both believed in reforming the Indian society- having different mediums and strategies to make the masses aware of their ideas- while one was a writer, thinker, philosopher and a social reformer, while the latter being a progressive writer and thinker. Being liberal thinkers and reformists, they did not believe in just any one community, caste or religion, but rather wanted India whose ideology was India (Article-Where's that India?)- by this they are primarily trying to simulate the fact that the emergence of political scenarios and evolving changes, leading to India having an ideology that is patriotic, rather than giving primal importance to India's culture and heritage. The same has been expressed by Anand and Ambedkar during a conversation-

Mulk Raj said: Namaskar, Dr Ambedkar.

Ambedkar: I prefer the Buddhist greeting, Om Mani Padme Hum. May the lotuses awake.

Mulk Raj: I agree. We inherit words without questioning their meaning. Of course, Namaskar means I bow before you. (article- Where's that India).

Anand and Ambedkar has similar concerns regarding the Indian society. Just like how Ambedkar highlights the prevailing system of untouchability, castism and the constant oppression on Dalits through his speeches and conferences, on the other hand, Anand highlights the same ideologies and concerns with the help of building up a narrative,

like that of *Untouchables* and *Coolie*. *Untouchable* speaks in length about the lives of untouchables with the help of protagonist- Bakha, by depicting an entire day in his life. In this one single day, Bakha, a toilet cleaner who faces oppression being a lower caste by the hands of the upper caste society as they see him as a mere servant- which according to them is his forbidden job, being born in the family of a lower caste, therefore devoid of common facilities like any other class has access to. Whereas on the other hand the novel *Coolie* is a complete depiction of a poor Dalit who have a constant feeling of hunger. Munoo, the protagonist of the novel faces cruel treatment and it abused ample number of times by the upper class society.

Another aspect that both Anand and Ambedkar focus on is the importance of education, Ambedkar in his speeches and ideologies conveys that education is the primary source for gaining enlightenment. He feels that it is important for people to voice out their pinions, fight their own battles and are fully aware of their rights. In the novels *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, both the protagonists are denied the right to attain education, leading a life full of misery and hardships. Ambedkar being ahead of his time, recognised the imbedded caste differentiation decades ago, this caste system is even prevailing in the twenty-first century. The reform for which remains the same as suggested by Ambedkar- education and completely eradicate the caste system.

What is trauma?

In order to understand the various trauma theories in Dalit literature, it is important to understand the meaning of 'trauma', with the help of various motifs, elements and elements, which constitutes the meaning of trauma.

According to a famous critic, Cathy Caruth who has primarily constructed her theory on the Freud' *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*- an event is said to be traumatic when it

is beyond usual day to day human experience, therefore it becomes overwhelming for an individual and can further lead to numbness or a short period of latency. It forms a compulsive repetition, like that in the case of the above-mentioned novels, *Coolie*, *Untouchables*. The novel, through its critical lens describes the historically developed caste-segregation in India that is practice in India that is 'untouchability', therefore it simultaneously becomes an elaborated account on the Dalit community and to even see if the trauma associated with the Dalit literature fits with the classical Eurocentric notions of trauma or the other way around is that it can be seen as the analysis of the Dalit texts.

In the novel, *Untouchables*, Mulk Raj Anand narrates an account of an entire day in the life of a Dalit teenager, a day which is full of violence, hardships on account of both inter and intra- caste abuse, atrocities faced and the hierarchy, since Hindu caste system. The day in the life of the protagonist depicts the ramifications in the caste system caused to social inequalities which further leads to verbal abuse when Bakha is being mentally tortured when he accidentally touches a high caste man while walking on the road, the man deliberately shouts on the maximum pitch so that others could hear and it could cause social embarrassment for Bakha. It cannot be neglected here that Bakha, was socially humiliated just on the basis of his caste, which further serves as a motif when it comes to elaborating various templates of trauma. The novel narrates a full day experience filled with trauma. One day, Bakha is doing his duty of cleaning the latrines in the British cantonment area and after which he walks down to the temples to do the same. Every day, Bakha is expected to announce his arrival by saying "posh keep away, posh, sweeper coming!", (pg. 41) but somehow, he forgets to do the same and therefore he accidentally touches a high caste Hindu, the man out of being furious, slaps Bakha for his negligence and irresponsibility. Being slapped on the street, in front of everyone, is in itself a traumatic experience to have. *Untouchables* serves as a social

emancipation. Anand, just like Ambedkar speaks volume about the Dalit women and how they are triply marginalized.

Triple marginalization comes into existence by the fact that-women are inferior on the bases of their gender, followed by on the bases of caste and then their economic status, as they are not given any recognition, especially in the economic society as they are not the one earning for their family. This sick mentality was even seen in the novel, due to which Sohini, Bakha's sister as to face exploitation. Sohini, goes to fetch water, where she finds a priest who finds her attractive, he asks her to come to the temple and then at his place to clean the both. When Sohini is working at the priest's house, he tries to exploit and molest her, by touching her inappropriately. Sohini, being a woman is a voiceless soul who could not stand up for herself and instead decide to escape by running away. Having no social, cultural and economic standing, women are treated an inferior due to her low social status- being triply marginalized. Even in the panoramic novel *Coolie*, there is a clear delineation of victimization, oppression inexorable social order. Mulk Raj Anand being a postcolonial writer who exhibits the real scenarios when there was extensive caste discrimination, social problems, people groaning under the harsh level of poverty. This binary of rich- poor was created on the solitary reason of the mindset of having seeing themselves as upper class like Brahmins according to the Hindu caste system and the lower class like that of Shudra and even the lower most that are the schedules caste, who were expected to work for the upper class, leading to social stratification according to which the born unequal and one's status in the society was determined by an inherited profession which was the historical dominance of the higher class over the lower caste. This in itself is the first stage of having a traumatic experience as they were denied rights from the very beginning of their lives, on the pretext of their family background. Even being from the caste of a kshatriya, he is still treated as a marginalized due to his poverty, therefore

discriminated on the basis of a wealth less class. For Munoo it all started when Munoo's father was exploited by a landlord who had seized his father's five acres of land. Further he lost his mother due to poverty. The mental trauma for Munoo started early in his childhood, primarily when he was oblivious of the fact how to negotiate in the given situation. Munoo is forcefully indebted to his aunts Gujri's shrieking voice as she is the only support system he has, Munoo is dependent a lot on the people in his life due to the mere reason of poverty, which coerces him into being a servant at the age of fourteen, when he should be focusing on getting educated.

As the novel proceeds, it is even more evident that Munoo has been subject to deprivation and rigidity according to the rich people. Munoo worked as a servant at Nathoo's house. One day, Nathoo's daughter Sheila and her friends Munoo were playing, Munoo started his monkey dance. Sheila asked him to get away but he instead bit her, because of this Munoo was beaten mercilessly by Nathoo and cursed verbally- "Your place is here in the kitchen! You must not enter the sports of the Chota Babu and the children. You must get on quickly with work in the house! There is no time to lose." (Pg. 23) Therefore he is a symbol of the down trodden and the exploited section of the society who has faced nothing but trauma all his life.

Ageless bondage of oppression

When we talk about Dalit literature, the metaphors of untouchability are very prominent like that of trauma, suffering and violence, degradation, poverty, victimhood and class consciousness. This trauma and suffering are not just of the previous decades but a modern concern too. The tyranny of the caste system has divided the entire nation and therefore the society where the feudal society is transformed into a capitalist one just for the upper class to benefit. While we talk about the trauma that was caused on the Dalits, it was by this capitalist

economy and the already existing caste system, that too in British India that led to both social and spiritual evil.

Even before the discourse of Dalit literature gained prominence, there were many philosophers and thinkers who had written and spoken about the Dalit diaspora. western thinkers like Karl Marx, Derrida, Paul de Man and Hillis Miller, even Indian philosophers Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi also spoke and worked about the trauma of Dalit by speaking on the issues like discrimination. However, Bhim Rao Ambedkar has spoken in lengths about the above mentioned and is one of the prominent personality due to his mammoth contributions. What gives their writing gravity is their first-hand experience being the 'other' in various circumstances- Ambedkar faced it in his own country while Gandhi faced it in South Africa, the only dissimilarity between the two is the Ambedkar faced it due to his caste whereas on the other hand Gandhi faced it due to his color.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is a novel which is written on the above pretext. The novels describe one day in the life of a Dalit- Bakha who is an adult and is a sweeper by occupation, through whom, Anand tries to portray the life of untouchables in India implied in 1930s. The novel, through its critical lens describes the historically developed caste-segregation e in India that is practice in India that is 'untouchability'.

Binary of Self and Other

Under the theory of structuralism, Michael Foucault introduced the concept of binary opposition wherein he fondly talks about the human tendency to think and analyze scenarios and situations in terms of opposition. This opposition can primarily be for man/woman, inside/outside or self/other. While taking Dalit narrative into consideration, the concept of self/other is used to be define one own 'self' with the help of the 'other'. For instance, in the novel, *Untouchables* and coolie, the rich are able to identify themselves as rich due to the existence of poor,

otherwise there would not have been any comparison between the two. The poor, indirectly and metaphorically give rise to the rich- because the poor exist, the rich are able to define myself as rich. This can also be applied for caste, since the lower caste is there, the upper-class people are able to recognize themselves as upper class.

Conclusion

Therefore, in both the novels, Anand portrays the negation of humanity and portraying the feudalism in the society with the help of Ambedkar's philosophy. Anand linked perfectly the humanist ideology with that of trauma to show the hardships of the Dalit community. The harsh reality in an enigma on the community that has been prevalent since decades. The fight from decade is if they gained acceptance or they are still fighting for it. The realism portrayed by Anand speaks volume about untouchability- being a curse of untouchability. Discrimination on the basis of caste, class, gender and race, which further leads to discrimination, female subjugation and oppression. Thus, M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, in *A Handbook of Literary Terms*, rightly commented that: "Realistic fiction is written to give the effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common reader, evoking the sense that its characters might exist, and that such things might well happen" (197).

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17

**Displacement and Identity with Reference to Ambedkar's
View in Manoranjan Byapari' *Interrogating My Chandal
Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit* and Dinaw Mengestu's
*The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears***

Vanshika Bharadwaj¹

Introduction

The displacement threatens the agency as it often involves external powerful force. The prominent literary theorist Homi K. Bhabha talks on displacement and identity, according to him "Displacement can result in a fundamental reconstitution of identity and community, as well as the emergence of new cultural and political formations" and "it is not just a physical reality; it is also a psychological and emotional one. It can lead to a profound sense of alienation and a loss of identity." Bhabha also talks on cultural hybridity and the "third space" between cultures has been influential in discussions of displacement and identity in literature.

Displacement and Identity are also interconnected in a way that it results in the formation of new identities like hybrid, migration and

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diasporic identities. People come together in new context to form groups in terms of new social and cultural connection to find some stability again. Displacement also paves the way for a new revolution as it brings new challenges and opportunities to human identity but nonetheless comes with traumatic experiences. Nonetheless, the relation between displacement and identity is multifaceted depending on range of factors which are dynamic in themselves. The duration, cause, cultural and political background, the way it takes place are some factors which shapes it. The kind of help, resources and support available after the displacement also decides how the identity is formed.

Ambedkar's view on the Displacement and Identity

B.R. Ambedkar has always been a prominent figure in the Indian history. In this work we assess his role as a social reformer who has put forward his views in his seminal work *The Annihilation of Caste* mainly. His views on displacement and identity is closely linked with his understanding about the caste system prevalent in Indian society. He has experienced the discrimination and oppression of the minorities or the unprivileged ones firsthand being a Dalit himself. According to him the caste system was the fundamental source of inequality which led to the displacement and the identity of marginalized communities in India. Its main consequence was the social and economic inequality in the society which in turn helped to marginalise and suppress the voice of the subalterns. The loss of land, livelihood and community effects the marginalised the most, it leads to the devastating results like destruction of self- esteem and social status. The displacement is not only physical but also psychological which had profound impact on the identity and dignity of an individual. Ambedkar always advocated the rights of marginalized communities, mainly the Dalits, who were historically subjected to discrimination and oppression based on their caste identity. Ambedkar's views on displacement and identity were shaped by his own experiences as a Dalit and his understanding of the social and political realities of India. He believed that displacement in a society is a

result of social and economic inequality which according to him was the root cause of the oppression of the marginalised community.

Ambedkar sees identity in Indian society closely associated to the prevalent caste system which effects the social, economic and political status of an individual and communities. For him the caste system was a form of institutionalised discrimination that perpetuated inequality and created hindrance in the marginalised community to achieve any kind of social and economic progress. In his writings Ambedkar emphasises the importance of empowerment of Dalits mainly as marginalised community in terms of social, economic and politics. They need to reclaim their identity and agency back in the society. Education, political representation and economic development as one of the main tools to uplift the marginalised and would address the root cause of displacement and the identity. Overall, Ambedkar's views on displacement and identity were shaped by his understanding of the social and political realities of India and his commitment to social justice and equality. His work continues to inspire movements for social and political empowerment in India and around the world, and his ideas remain relevant to the struggle for equality and justice for marginalized communities today.

Dynamics of Displacement and Identity

Displacement refers to the involuntary movement of people from their homes or places of habitual residence due to a variety of reasons, including conflict, natural disasters, development projects, or persecution. Displacement can take various forms, including forced migration, refugee flows, internal displacement, or eviction. The people displaced faces several challenges ranging from property, means of living, social networks and cultural identity as well psychological trauma. It is a humanitarian crisis which violates the human right issues and the fundamental right to freedom of movement and makes the individual feel caged in the foreign atmosphere. The sense of loss and

lack of belongingness takes its roots in an individual's identity. The global displacement crisis is one of the defining challenges of our time, with millions of people around the world affected by displacement and in need of protection and support. Whereas, identity refers to the systematised characteristics, traits, beliefs and values that defines an individual or a group. Identity can be shaped by several factors that includes gender, religion, race, ethnicity, language, culture, sexual orientation, marriages and life experiences. Identity is a complex and multifaceted concept that can have a profound impact on an individual's sense of self, relationships, and behaviour. Identity is not static but can evolve and change over time, as individuals encounter new experiences and challenges that shape their worldview and self-perception. Identity can be both a source of strength and a source of conflict, as it can create a sense of belonging and community while also leading to stereotypes, discrimination, and social exclusion. Recognizing and valuing diverse identities is important for building inclusive and equitable societies that promote social justice and respect for human rights. Overall, identity is a fundamental aspect of human experience, shaping our relationships, values, and beliefs and influencing how we interact with the world around us.

Manoranjan Byapari is a Dalit writer who has contributed into Dalit narrative. One of them is his memoir *Interrogating My Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit*. He is an activist from West Bengal. The book explores the themes of displacement and identity in the context of Byapari's own life and experiences as a member of a marginalized community. Byapari's book talks about the ways in which displacement can have a deep effect on the identity and sense of belonging of marginalized Dalit communities. He recounts his own experiences of being forced to leave his village and become a migrant worker in the city, where he faced discrimination and exploitation. Byapari describes how this displacement disrupted his sense of self and left him struggling to find a place in the world. His memoir is also exploring the role of

identity in shaping the experiences of marginalized communities residing in India. He writes about the different ways in which caste identity has shaped his own life and the lives of those around him. He points out the ways in which caste based discrimination has affected his ability to access education and employment. He mentions "I was born into a family of refugees, and the trauma of Partition runs deep in my blood. I have always felt like an outsider, like I don't belong anywhere." In the book, he explores and questions his own identity and the ways in which it has been shaped through displacement and marginalization. He ponders on the complexity of identity and the ways in which it intersects with other forms of oppression as well as the trauma which follows. Byapari is displaced at a young age to escape poverty, "I came to Kolkata with nothing but the clothes on my back. I had to work as a child labourer just to survive. I felt like a stranger in this city of strangers", but always felt estranged in a foreign place. The discourse on his Identity is one of the main themes in the book, he mentions how he was "born into a caste that was considered 'untouchable.' This label has followed me my entire life, like a shadow that I can never escape." He struggles to reconcile his Dalit identity through his writings and to raise his voice through it which would in turn represent his community at large. He finds that writing for him was one of the ways to empowering his identity which changed due to him being from a weaker section of the society. He mentions how he realised "that my life was not something to be ashamed of, but something to be proud of. By writing my memoir, I am asserting my right to exist, to be seen, to be heard." One of the main issues he has raised in his early chapter in the books are on the displacement which the Dalit marginalised community faced during the partition of India in 1947. He says, "Nobody has borne the brunt of Partition as we have". He gives a real detailed account of the Namasudra or Chandal Dalit community which was a large part of the mass exodus during the partition which faced the brunt like no other. They were displaced and their identity was compromised as they moved to East

Bengal region in India but never got accepted. Instead, they were relocated to the uninhabitable atmosphere which were in distant lands under the government schemes for refugee and others failed to readjust into their displaced identity due to the lack of support and the resources. Overall, *Interrogating My Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit* provides a powerful exploration of the themes of displacement and identity in the context of marginalized communities in India. Byapari's memoir offers a deeply personal and insightful perspective on these issues and highlights the importance of understanding and confronting the ways in which social and economic inequality continue to shape the lives of millions of people around the world.

In *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*, Dinaw Mengestu explores the themes of displacement and identity in the context of Ethiopian immigrants in Washington D.C. The novel tells the story of Sepha Stephanos, a refugee from Ethiopia who has been living in the United States for many years. As Sepha struggles to reconcile his Ethiopian past with his American present, the novel explores into the experiences of other Ethiopian immigrants who are also faced with issues of displacement and identity. Displacement is a recurring theme throughout the novel. Sepha has been living in the United States for seventeen years but is unable to feel like home in that place. He is traumatised by the memories of the violence and his experience in Ethiopia. He struggles to find a sense of belonging in his new homeland as he is displaced. Moreover, the novel explores the experiences of other Ethiopian immigrants who have been a part of forced displacement. Almost everyone belonging to Ethiopian community in the novel has a story of displacement, of leaving behind the old world for a new one. Identity is another major theme in *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*. He feels torn between two identities, and he wonders if he will ever be able to truly belong in either one. He misses Ethiopia, but he no longer knows whether he misses the country itself or simply the idea of it. He avoids interacting with other Ethiopians in Washington D.C. because he

feels like he doesn't belong in his own community. Other example is of Sepha's friends, Joseph who adopted an American identity to the point where he no longer speaks Amharic, the language of his homeland. This decision has caused a rift between Joseph and his family, who still identify strongly with their Ethiopian heritage. Throughout the novel, Mengestu portrays the complex and often painful experiences of displacement and identity that displaced face. However, the novel also suggests that there is hope for those who are struggling with these issues. Through his friendship with a young white girl named Judith, Sepha finds a sense of connection and belonging that he has been missing. Moreover, by telling their stories and sharing their experiences with others, the Ethiopian displaced who belongs to a marginalised section of the society in the novel are able to assert their identities and lay claim to their place in the world narrative. "The immigrant knows that he's left one world behind, and it's true, he'll never belong to that world again." - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Salman Rushdie interrogates the same question "Exile is a dream of a glorious return. It's a 'what if' question. What if I went back? What would happen?".

Conclusion

This paper explores the problem of displacement and identity in the marginalised section of the society and further tries to search for its scope. According to Hegel, identity is not a fixed and stable concept, but rather an evolving and dynamic process that is shaped by our interactions with the world around us. He believed that our sense of self and identity is constantly changing and evolving in response to our experiences, relationships, and social context. Hegel believed that the development of human consciousness and identity was similarly driven by the process of opposite forces clashing in which individuals and communities are constantly confronted with new challenges and opportunities that force them to rethink and reevaluate their sense of self and identity. Hegel believed that our sense of identity is closely tied to our relationships and interactions with others, and that we can only

achieve a sense of wholeness and completeness through mutual recognition and respect. This paper would like to align the ideas given by Ambedkar as a social reformer along with Hegel's views as a literary critic in the form of the scope of this thesis. Both *Interrogating My Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit* by Manoranjan Byapari and *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* by Dinaw Mengestu explore the themes of displacement and identity in the context of displaced marginalised who have left their homes to start new lives in foreign countries. The novel explores Byapari's struggles with displacement and identity as he moves from the countryside to the city and from poverty to literary success. Both novels illustrate how displacement and identity are inextricably linked for the marginalised giving a rise to a hybrid identity. The experience of leaving one's homeland and starting a new life in a foreign country often leads to a sense of dislocation and disorientation. As Byapari and Mengestu show, this displacement can be especially pronounced for those who are marginalized within their own societies, such as Dalits in India or refugees from war-torn countries like Ethiopia. Both novels also suggest that there is a way to reconcile displacement and identity. Byapari and Mengestu both depict their protagonists as finding a sense of purpose and belonging through their writing. Both novels suggest that through art and human connection, individuals can assert their identities and find a sense of belonging even in the face of displacement and marginalization.

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18

Triple Marginalization of Dalit Women: A Case Study of Urmila Pawar's Women Characters in *Motherwit* and *The Weave of My Life*

Shivali Anand¹

Introduction

The caste system is the ruling philosophy of Hinduism and it directly links power and social order. It is the oldest surviving social phenomenon in the world and it holds that some castes are inherently superior to others. When a person is born into a particular caste, they cannot change it. The "untouchables" are subject to discrimination based on their caste, work, and descent. The social orders of the "touchables" are violating the fundamental goal of society to provide security and happiness for Dalit people.

Gender discrimination against women is prevalent in society, but the discrimination faced by Dalit women is even more severe due to caste-based discrimination and untouchability. Compared to high-caste women, Dalit women are forced to live in vulnerable conditions. Despite making up one-fourth of the total women population, they face triple

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marginalization based on class, caste, and gender. The entire Dalit community struggles for survival, and high-caste individuals, including women, perpetrate discrimination and untouchability against Dalit women.

The perspective of upper caste women emphasizes individual liberalism and self-improvement, with their family being the focus of their world. In contrast, Dalit women prioritize the upliftment of their community and view their community as their family, emphasizing communitarianism. Unfortunately, Dalit women are often seen as "Other" due to their historical marginalization and the ongoing impact of patriarchal values that lead to exclusion, violence, and vulnerability throughout their lives. This social status places them at the lowest rung of society, affecting their social, physical, economic, and political conditions.

Who are Dalits?

The term "Dalit" comes from the Sanskrit word "Dalita," meaning "oppressed." They are considered the lower castes of Indian society, including the untouchables, and were known as "Chandala" or "Avarna" in ancient times. During the 20th century, the terms "Untouchable" and "Harijan" were used by figures such as Narasimha Mehta and Mahatma Gandhi. Historian J.H. Hutton referred to them as "Exterior Castes" on a global scale. The term "Harijan" means "people of God." They are officially designated as Scheduled Castes. The term "Shudras" has also been used to refer to Dalits for several decades. The word "Dalit" translates to "ground" and encompasses a wide range of marginalized communities. It is a self-coined term taken from the Sanskrit and Marathi words for "broken," "oppressed," and "ground down" and is used to indicate that untouchability is imposed by others rather than caused by pollution. It is also used to refer to all of India's poor and oppressed people.

Dalit literature in India

Dalit literature is a literary genre that reflects the experiences and struggles of the Dalit community in India, who have been subjected to centuries of oppression and marginalization under the caste system. This literature serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness about the plight of Dalits and their fight for equality and justice. Despite the progress made by social reformers, there are still many challenges facing the Dalit community today.

Dalit literature emerged in the 1960s as a movement led by a specific ethnic group, starting with conferences in the Marathi language and spreading to various languages across India. Many Dalit Marathi writers have made significant contributions to this genre, including names such as Bandhu Madhav, Annabhau Sathe, Daya Pawar, P.I. Sonkamble, Shantabai Kamble, Raja Dhale, Namdev Dhasal, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gayakwad, Hari Narake, Sharankumar Limbale, Arun Kamble, Waman Nibalkar, Bhimsen Dethe, and Bhau Panchbhai.

Dalit literature emerged in the 1960s, originating in the Marathi language and spreading throughout India. It was presented by a specific ethnic group and many Dalit Marathi writers have made significant contributions to this literary genre, including names such as Bandhu Madhav, Annabhau Sathe, Daya Pawar, and others. Other writers such as Munshi Premchand, Amrita Nagar, Mannu Bhandari, Mulk Raj Anand, Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie, and more, used their works to express societal commentary rather than just for entertainment. They were followed by other writers such as Mahaswetha Devi, Basudev Sunani, Bama, Sivakami, Poomani, Marku, Paul Chirakkarode, and Arundhati Roy. It should be viewed in the context of its time as it is not intended for leisure or entertainment, but rather to promote Dalit rights and fight against injustice.

Dalit literature is widely recognized as a powerful reflection of the experiences and struggles faced by the Dalit community, who have been subject to caste oppression and exploitation. These works are considered to be a documentation of the difficulties faced by Dalits, and are often drawn from real-life experiences. Many writers, scholars, and critics believe that Dalit literature is not just for entertainment, but serves a significant purpose in raising awareness of the issues faced by the Dalit community, and has played a role in shaping the political landscape in India. This is exemplified by the impact of leaders such as Mayawati, who has been an influential figure in the Dalit community and a Chief Minister of the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Literary Review

***'The Weave of my Life'* by Urmila Pawar**

Urmila Pawar is an Indian feminist, Dalit activist, and writer who was born on October 25, 1945, in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. She is well-known for her contributions to Marathi literature, especially for her writings on caste and gender issues faced by Dalit women. Pawar began her career as a teacher, but she later became involved in Dalit activism and began writing. She has also been involved in various social and political movements, advocating for the rights of Dalit women and other marginalized groups.

The Weave of my Life is a memoir by Urmila Pawar that narrates her experiences as a Dalit woman growing up in a small Maharashtrian village and later migrating to Mumbai. The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, Pawar describes her childhood, her struggles with poverty and caste-based discrimination, and her difficult relationship with her mother. She also writes about the ways in which she and other Dalit women in her village were subjected to sexual violence by upper caste men. In the second part, Pawar reflects on her experiences as a Dalit woman living in Mumbai, where she became involved in Dalit

feminist activism. She writes about the ways in which Dalit women were doubly marginalized, both by their caste and their gender, and about the challenges of organizing in a patriarchal and casteist society.

The book emphasizes the intersectional nature of discrimination, highlighting how caste, class, gender, and religion intersect to create a complex matrix of oppression for Dalit women. Motherhood is a significant theme in the book, as the author describes the various challenges faced by Dalit women as mothers. The book also emphasizes the ways in which motherhood is valued in Dalit communities and how it is seen as a source of strength. Despite the challenges they face, Dalit women are not passive victims of oppression. The book emphasizes the ways in which Dalit women resist and challenge the status quo, often through collective action and solidarity. The author describes her own journey towards education, as well as the challenges faced by Dalit women in accessing education.

***Motherwit* by Urmila Pawar**

The stories in *Motherwit* reflect on Pawar's experiences growing up in a Dalit community in rural Maharashtra, India. The book explores the complexities of caste, class, and gender in Pawar's life and in Indian society more broadly. The essays also touch on themes of motherhood, family, and the relationships between women.

Pawar's writing is deeply personal and emotional, but also political and analytical. She critiques the ways in which Dalit women are oppressed and marginalized, but also celebrates their resilience and strength. The stories in *Motherwit* are a powerful testament to the experiences of Dalit women in India and a call to action for social and political change. *Motherwit* has been praised for its frankness, authenticity, and its contribution to Dalit feminist literature. The book has been translated into several other languages and has been widely read and studied both in India and internationally.

Triple Marginalization of Dalit Women

Triple marginalization refers to the social, economic, and political marginalization faced by individuals or communities who are discriminated against multiple intersecting identities such as gender, caste, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. For example, Dalit women in India experience triple marginalization due to their gender, caste, and economic status, which often results in extreme levels of poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and political underrepresentation. Triple marginalization highlights how discrimination is not limited to a single factor or identity, but rather is a complex and intersectional issue that requires a multifaceted approach to address.

Dalit women face gender-based violence in different forms, such as domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, and honor killings. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) of India, Dalit women are more likely to be victims of rape and sexual assault compared to women from other castes. Additionally, they have limited opportunities for education, employment, and political representation. Pawar fondly recalls the first salary she received after getting married, which made her happy initially. However, she was also aware that she had to give it to her husband, Harishchandra, which made her realize that despite the change in her role from daughter to wife, her dependency on a male figure remained unchanged.

“When I got my first salary, I could not believe that all that money was mine; that I could spend it the way I liked. Before my marriage, I used to hand over my salary to my mother; now I started handling it over to my husband. If this is not like deliberately offering head for the butcher’s knife, what else is it? (Writing as Resistance: An Interview with Urmila Pawar p.208)

Despite being a working woman, Urmila is still unable to enjoy her rights fully. She recalls an incident where she was admitted to an M.A. course, but her husband Harishchandra strongly objected. He had traditional expectations that she should prioritize household duties like other women in the community. He believed that she should focus on nurturing the children's health, education, and taking care of the household as a typical wife. Pawar realizes that her husband's ego was hurt, and he could not tolerate having a more highly qualified wife than himself. His traditional patriarchal views started to show, and he immediately denied her permission to pursue the M.A. course. There was no encouragement from her family either.

Dalit women face social exclusion and discrimination based on their caste, which limits their access to resources and opportunities. They experience discrimination from individuals and institutions in different spheres, including education, healthcare, and employment. They are also vulnerable to caste-based violence, including honor killings, atrocities, and discrimination in public and private spheres. Discrimination based on caste intersects with gender discrimination, making Dalit women more vulnerable to violence and discrimination.

Pawar shares her personal experience of facing caste discrimination in her childhood and adulthood as a Dalit woman. She explains that she and other Dalit girls were discriminated against because of their caste and gender. Her teacher and classmates treated her in a dehumanizing manner, asking her to throw her notebook from a distance, forcing her to sit in the last row, sweeping the floor, and cleaning dung from the courtyard. Her mother wanted her children to be educated to escape the humiliations of being Dalit, and her father, inspired by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, wanted all his children to be educated and self-sufficient. One day, her teacher beat her for not cleaning the dung and her mother angrily confronted him. Even her classmates harassed her, as she was asked to bring only money instead

of ingredients to cook food in school. This type of caste discrimination is common for Dalit women and affects them in their daily lives.

Dalit women face discrimination based on their social class, which is considered the lowest in the caste system. They are subject to a variety of forms of exclusion, marginalization, and violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and forced labor. Compared to high-caste women, Dalit women are often forced to live in vulnerable conditions.

The short-story "Kavach" ("Armour") in *Motherwit* depicts how Gaurya tries to protect his mother Indira from the sexual harassment she faces while selling mangoes in the market. He is embarrassed by the way she dresses and lets the customers misbehave with her. However, he is pleasantly surprised when his mother finally stands up to the men and talks back to them. This experience changes his perception of his mother from being weak and vulnerable to strong and resilient. The story also highlights how the meaning of words can change quickly, and even in translation, some important nuances may be lost, making a metaphor in the original Marathi text sound plain in English. The mother in the story is focused on supporting her family through basket weaving and ensuring that all of her children receive an education, a promise she made to her husband before his death. Despite her worn-out appearance and thin stature, she works tirelessly on her weaving. She must also fight against her in-laws, who want to bring the family back to their village, in order to stay where they are and keep her children in school. In contrast to her autobiography, the story lacks any explicit similarities.

In *Weave of My Life*, Pawar describes how she and other Dalit women were treated differently than upper-caste women in the workplace. The author worked in a factory where upper-caste women were employed as well. The upper-caste women were given jobs in the administration department, while the Dalit women were given jobs on the factory floor. The author notes that the upper-caste women had a more comfortable and cleaner work environment, while the Dalit

women had to work in difficult and dirty conditions. Additionally, the author mentions how the upper-caste women received more respect and better treatment from their superiors, while the Dalit women were subjected to insults and abuse. This example shows how class discrimination affects the opportunities and treatment of Dalit women in the workplace.

Conclusion

For a long time, Dalits have faced suppression and oppression, being treated as if they were slaves. As a result, their mentality has been conditioned to that of a slave without them even realizing it. Therefore, it is crucial to raise awareness and speak out against the social injustices they experience. Dr. Ambedkar emphasizes that we must make the enslaved individual aware of their condition so that they can understand their subjugation and take a stand against it. Most of the times Dalits not aware that they are treated like slaves, “You must abolish your slavery yourself. Do not depend for its abolition upon God, or superman” (Ambedkar Thoughts 70).

The triple marginalization of Dalit women is a complex and deeply ingrained issue that affects their social, economic, and political status in contemporary India. This paper sheds light on the multiple forms of discrimination faced by Dalit women and the ways in which these intersecting forms of oppression work together to limit their agency and opportunities. It is important to recognize and address the systemic discrimination faced by Dalit women to ensure that they are not left behind in the development and progress of the nation.

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Ambedkar as a Social ZealotGollapalli Venkataratnam¹

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, who endured the twin evils of poverty and ostracism rose to the heights of glory and eminence through his struggle and suffering. He agonized in the agony of the Dalits. He made his people raise their heads in the esteem of upper castes by fighting for their social and political rights. He is the Moses of Indian Dalits through emancipating them from the yoke of centuries of humiliation and oppression. Even though Ambedkar was born among the untouchables and maltreated category, he became the great leader, Redeemer, Pioneer, Master and Messiah of these enslaved people of India. His virtues looked like the vices in the eyes of oppressors, but his well-intended ideas or thoughts became prophesies for the development of our country and his idealistic plans and moves recorded as a branded knacks of our politics which helped for the progress of our nation.

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His Ideas on Education

He was the role-model for the students and his range is wide and encyclopedic. When he was a student in the USA, his roommate found Ambedkar always was absorbed in reading books and writings; at this time, his roommate worried about Ambedkar's health and used to advise him- Man, are you trying to read yourself to death, all work no play makes one a dull boy. Let's go for sightseeing!

Ambedkar answered 'I have come to the USA to study and not to make merry. I have no time or money for anything other than studies'. These words show his grit and determination towards the studies. If Ambedkar stirs out of his room, it would be only for hunting hand books at second hand book-shops in the USA. As a student, he determined to utilize his time for his studies and lined laboriously to change the fate of dumb millions of his suppressed people. On the recruitment of Ambedkar as a professor in Sidenheim College of Bombay, Professor Edvin recommended him with the words of 'The college and students will find a treasure of knowledge in him'. His testimony speaks eloquently about the stupendous knowledge of Ambedkar and his worthiness to be the professor of the college. These are the indications to prove him as a student of hard work and role model for the present era.

Ambedkar, in his assessment of educational system, critically commented his contemporary education system as faulty and it was at the bottom of degradation of Indian civilization. Now these words became foundation stone to build up a new education system in our India and the decisions taken by the government about education have the roots in his thoughts and education philosophy. He expressed his idea that India needed the Act of Education with effective implementation and held the view that the poor should be exempt from payment of fees. His views ultimately paved the way for the present fee reimbursement in our Higher Education and certainly the students owe their gratitude to him.

Ambedkar strongly advocated that – one of the fundamental functions of the universities should be to provide facilities for bringing the highest education to the doors of the needy and the poor but now unfortunately the universities became a hot bed of murky politics and crimes. In recent times we are aware of the tragic suicides of many Dalit students on the university Campus; the silence of our political leaders seems to be enigmatic and those who quote Ambedkar on these occasions are like devil quoting scriptures. Despite all disparaging remarks and nagging treatment, Ambedkar stood like a rock in the face of such adversities. He taught the Dalits to fight like a lion but not surrender like a lamb to be sacrificed before the local deity.

His Concern for Women’s Education

He was the prophet who foresaw the importance of women’s education in our society. So, he wrote a letter to one of his father’s friends when he was in America to pursue both male and female education in order to live a life of dignity. He wrote in that letter: “We shall soon see better days and our progress will be greatly accelerated if male education is pursued side by side with female education.”

He deliberately expressed his views on ‘Education was an important instrument for bringing social change and to help woman to elevate their position. Ambedkar seems to carry forward the legacy of Mahatma Phule on the issue of education for girls and one day Ambedkar addressed a gathering of women during Mahad Satyagraha, he advised them like send your children to school, education is as necessary for female as it is for male.

His Advocacy of Human Rights

He used his language as a potent weapon for the argument, retaliation and ultimate triumph in obtaining a fair justice for the

depressed classes through 1932 Communal Awards, the well-known Poona Pact, 1932.

He wanted to reform and gave memorandum of demands including reforms in education system, reserved seats in the state council and in ministries etc. without caring for the criticism he signed the Simon Report. But later, his memorandum was praised by his critics for its patriotic content.

Conclusion

His message is not a sectarian but universal one. His philosophy is an antidote for tyranny and mockery of the oppression. He is the modern Manu for the annihilation of caste and a beacon light for the oppressed classes groping in darkness and depression

All the above facts abundantly illustrate that Ambedkar can be hailed as the Messiah of the depressed class and hope of our Indian youth. He is not to be branded as sectarian, caste minded leader. He fought on all issues where injustice prevailed. Hence he can be called a crusader for social justice and for establishing an egalitarian society.

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Dr. Ambedkar's Efforts to Eradicate Caste System in India

Dr. Ramesh Baburao Ghegadmal ¹

Introduction

“Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men.”

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has been a pioneering leader and emancipator and his writings have inspired many Indian Dalit writers. He believed that a democracy is way of life and had a clear vision to bring changes in the rigid norms imposed over Dalit community. He had a sagacious

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leadership, and excellent qualities of head and heart. His remarkable life and achievement awakened the downtrodden to struggle for their rights, privilege, human dignity and social equality. And his short span of 65 years of life, made a remarkable imprint in Indian history.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted a change in the social structure of free India. He thought that when depressed classes are considered part of the Hindu religion, they should be given equal treatment and equal opportunities in all respects. But the 'Orthodox Hindu Society' didn't agree with him. On the pretext that the 'Caste System' of the Hindus is a divine creation and should continue to oppress and suppress them even after the independence of India. The egalitarian nature of the Constitution of India and the hordes of legislation have not brought any desirable transformation in the mind set of Hindus.

Babasaheb Ambedkar, throughout his life, tried to bring about reform in Hindu Society. He led many agitations to prove that his community is Hindu, but Hindus always rejected him. For example, the Ambadevi Temple agitation of 1925, the Mahad Water agitation of 1927, Nashik Kalaram Mandir agitation of 1930 are prominent instances of his crusades. Therefore, finally, he decided to quit the Hindu religion and declared his intention of quitting Hinduism in a conference of Depressed Classes held in Yeola, Nashik, in 1935, and accomplished it at Nagpur, on October, 14, 1956, converting himself along with 5 Millions of people to Buddhism. According to him the religion of Buddhism is most egalitarian, claiming no divinity, luring for no existence of either 'God' and 'Soul'. It strives only for the welfare of people. Dr. Ambedkar found this religion the most suitable for his people and also for the people at large. (Rattu)

Dr. Ambedkar's Contribution to the Constitution of India

In the preamble of the Indian Constitution, he enriched social justice, equality and fraternity for all citizens, irrespective of caste,

religion, sex or creed. In Article, 17, he provided for the abolition of untouchability and its practice in any form is made offence punishable under Law. He provided fundamental rights under Article 14-35 to be exercised by all citizens of India, and Directive Principles of State policy, under Article, 38-51 commanding the states to strive for these principles and to enforce to make India as a stronger United Nation. India has divided into 500 princely states and was never united. It is the Constitution that created a unified and a strong nation. And it was only Dr. Ambedkar who, gave scientific temper to Indians. He introduced the concept of secularism, which was not known to Indian before. Under the provision of secularism, the government has to give equal treatment to all religions and that, there shall be no state religion. The Indian parliament will not be competent to impose any particular religion upon the rest of the people.

The most important part of Dr. Ambedkar's contribution to the Indian Constitution is to provide Democracy. Under this provision, government will be formed by the elected representatives. In other words, government will be by the people, for the people and of the people. Dr. Ambedkar, was the champion of human rights and he made provision in the Constitution of India for the human rights of all citizens.

'Annihilation of Caste' is a speech prepared by Dr. Ambedkar in 1936 for the Annual Conference of Jat Pat Todak Mandal, an anti- caste organization in Lahore. When Dr. Ambedkar sent his speech to the organizer, they found some of the views 'unbearable' and deleted certain sections. Of course Dr. Ambedkar disagreed with the views of the organizers and his speech remained underlived and he afterwards published it himself. He had argued in this speech that "Caste has no scientific origin. He insisted that it is essentially to entirely annihilate caste in order to unite India. He said that it is necessary *"to destroy the religious notions upon which caste is founded."* (Ambedkar)

There are two major makers of modern India named M.K. Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Both of them started their social and political carrier in 19th century. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar offered specific goals for the betterment of the society. These two great stalwarts offered and addressed a number of crucial social and political issues. Dalits were not allowed to take water from the wells and in the public places. That is why, Mahad Water Agitation, under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar, a conference of all Depressed classes was held, on 20th Mach,1927. The conference resolved to drink water of this tank and marched to this tank. This was to symbolically establish the right to drink water denied by Hindus. Dr. Ambedkar first took the water followed by others. The Depressed classes were happy that they could assert their right. But this happiness did not last long. The touchable Hindus did not tolerate it and assaulted the satyagrahis, brutally. Dr. Ambedkar consoled every agitator and fought the case in the court. The court gave judgment in favor of Dr. Ambedkar and his people.

And according to Mahatma, “the caste system is hindrance, not sin. But untouchability is a sin, a great crime, and if Hinduism does not destroy this serpent while there is time, it will be devoured by it.” He firmly believed that ultimately the removal of untouchability depended on the change of heart of millions of caste Hindus. On the contrary Dr. Ambedkar waited up to one decade and hoping to gain a place of religious and social equality with caste Hindus and finally he said:

When I started on my public career and long thereafter I considered that for good or for evil we were part of Hindu society... I thought for long that we could rid the Hindu Society of its evils and get the depressed classes incorporated into it on terms of equality.... Experience has taught me better. I stand today absolutely convinced that for the Depressed Classes there can be no equality among the Hindus because on inequality rest the foundations of Hinduism. (Kapur)

Dr. Ambedkar's Contribution to the Education

Dr. Ambedkar's viewed that poverty is the result of lack of education. Therefore, he emphasised on education for the Depressed classes. He founded the People's Education Society, in Bombay, in 1945. Under this education society, he started higher education for Depressed classes. He founded Siddharth College in Aurangabad. Later there has been expansion of these colleges. Dr. Ambedkar advised the depressed classes to go for technical education; mere formal education will not help them.

Ambedkar as a Champion of Women's Rights

Dr. Ambedkar struggled for the women's liberation in the male dominated society. Further he argued that the Manu Smritis holy scripture of Hindus i.e. Laws of Manu) is system which oppressed the Dalits and women for several past many centuries. Dr. Ambedkar's opined that Manusmriti is an anti-dalits and anti-women law. Dr. Ambedkar used to raise the issues and question of women's empowerment through the newspapers such as *Mooknayak* and *Bahiskrit Bharat*. In addition, Dr. Ambedkar appealed and has made awareness among the illiterate women against social evils like child marriages and Devadasi system. Dr. Ambedkar also took an initiative and fought for the women's education and believed that education is the most powerful weapon to bring desirable and positive change in the lives of women. Hence, he advised men and women to educate, agitate and organize for the social change. (Kumar) For example: The writer Baburao Bagul in the novel of '*Sood*' has portrayed the protagonist female character named 'Janki'. He has not only described her agony bur the entire Dalit woman folk. He agrees with Dr. Ambedkar, who wanted to establish equality of gender and devoted all his life for this. (Misktta)

According to the Dr. Ambedkar Caste is one of the major sources of exploitation of untouchables in India and further raised a question

about "Gandhi and Congress, "What does Gandhi and Congress have done for the untouchables?" Because the congress party is one of the mighty. But this particular party did not resolve the basic requirements of Dalits i.e. poverty and untouchability. That is why Dr. Ambedkar said that, "Gandhiji is not an emancipator of untouchables. And why did not he go for hunger strike for the rights of untouchables."

Conclusion

The untouchables have been denied access to public life for thousands of years. Their sufferings are worse than blacks. Ambedkar's passion for the eradication of caste system is still relevant and caste system is the serious problem in India. Of course, Dr. Ambedkar is the original thinker, leader and a Messiah for the downtrodden people. His ideals are significant to achieve a casteless Indian society and society is based on Liberty, and Equality.

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**Issues and Challenges in Drafting Indian Constitution:
An Outlook**Maj.Dr. Naveen Kumar Chukka¹

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was tasked with the immense responsibility of drafting the Constitution of India, an undertaking that was both challenging and marked with issues. Ambedkar had to navigate through various obstacles that ranged from socio-political to constitutional ones. This essay will delve into the issues and challenges faced by Ambedkar in writing the constitution, analyzing their implications and how he overcame them. The Indian Constitution is considered as a living document because: From time to time, the Indian Constitution must be amended to accommodate necessary changes. A living document is one

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that is updated and modified on a regular basis. Just like a living human being, the Indian constitution grows and changes over time.

The Indian Constitution is known as a living report. The Indian Constitution is known as a living record since it very well may be changed or revised. As individuals of the country develop, their requirements and goals change. Individuals embrace a more moderate methodology as time passes. To fulfill and acknowledge these progressions from the point of view of the residents of the country, our Constitution should be changed ideal. It is really important for a non-industrial country to make these alterations as the world is changing at a quick speed. For individuals to develop, the public authority needs to push forward with the entire world. The Constitution is the major archive by which the general public runs, which the general public has made for itself. Consequently, both the political practice and legal decisions have shown development and flexibility in carrying out the Constitution. There are three classifications of these alterations: The Constitution of India came into power, and India proclaimed itself a Republic on 26 January 1950 which we celebrate as republic day. In any case, November 26 is commended as the Constitution Day of India or Samvidhan Divas starting around 2015 to check the day when our Constituent Assembly officially embraced the Constitution of India.

The weighty sounding word 'Constitution' is in many cases named either as simple 'legal counselor's heaven' with confounded language not effortlessly perceived by nitwits or as a section in our civics course reading we momentarily scrutinized through. It is utilized as a safeguard or a blade in boards or discussions and as of late irregular articles cited by lawmakers, nonconformists or normal people have transformed it into a device of the scholarly showcase. In this worthless activity of naming and painting our Constitution into our very own shade getting it, we frequently miss and neglect to regard the virtuoso of our progenitors and designers who gave us an instrument that guarantees that with changing times and soul, our country also

doesn't stay static, outdated and continues towards the way of headway and progress.

To comprehend what the Constitution truly is, we should return to the age when the recently procured freedom presented difficulties to our country; Challenges which not just made us exuberantly pleased with trust for a superior future yet additionally suggested a conversation starter regarding what implies we should use to accomplish the closures of a prosperous country. It was then that our Constituent gathering outlined the Constitution in a manner that planned to change the pioneer structure into a vote-based republic. At the hour of the outlining of the Indian Constitution, we had recently emerged from the pioneer system, where Indians were simple unheard, took advantage of subjects, and the reverberations of the revulsions of the Holocaust in Germany were plain. This made the errand, even more, trying for our progenitors since they needed to guarantee that the Constitution changes the slip-ups of the past as well as makes a safeguard that recovery and keeps us from any misfortune later on. Consequently, a Constitution isn't just a record but an exemplification of individuals' confidence and goals. It is a way to not just express the power held by the public authority yet in addition put forth a few lines on them.

Constitution was outlined to bring the idea of a vote-based system, balance, and freedom, in the greater political space as well as to our own reality vide arrangements like Article 15: Prohibition of separation on grounds of religion, race, station, sex, or spot of the birth, Article 17: Abolition of Untouchability, Article 24: Prohibition of work of kids in plants, Article 45: Provision free of charge and mandatory training for youngsters and so on. This must be finished to guarantee that Constitution plays a balancing and democratizing job.

The way that our Constitution is a harmony among unbending nature and adaptability which empowers us to support the center

fundamental design while correcting the remainder of the construction as per the progressions in the general public, is confirmation that Our Constitution isn't just a living report yet, in addition, a way to guide towards the way of headway. The arrangements connected with the Right To Education, Amending Article 370, GST, NCBC, or the decisions connected with the right to security, segment 377, triple talaq, or the NOTA judgment, show that very much like Darwin called attention to that 'not the most grounded of the species make due, nor the smartest, however the one generally receptive to change', comparably just with change and transformation could our majority rules government at any point get by.

As individuals of the country develop, their necessities and yearnings change. Individuals take on a more moderate methodology as time passes. The Constitution isn't simply an extended authoritative report yet a contract of values and standards; a fantasy of a free, just, and equivalent society. A fantasy that isn't static and undeviating however is dependent upon steady recharging as every age finds once more, the establishing standards of our Republic. In this manner, the onus is on us, to comprehend, reflect and esteem the foundation of our majority rules system i.e our Constitution in light of the fact that "Notwithstanding how great a Constitution might be, it makes certain to turn out terrible on the grounds that the people who are called to work it, end up being an awful parcel. Despite how terrible a Constitution might be, it might end up being great in the event that the people who are called to work it, end up being a decent part.

One challenge that Ambedkar faced in writing the constitution was the existence of deep-rooted socio-economic inequalities. This task of drafting a constitution involved ensuring equal representation of marginalized groups such as the Dalits, women, and other minority communities. Ambedkar had already established himself as a civil rights activist and a fearless advocate of the untouchables, whom he himself belonged to. He recognized that the Indian society was characterized by

caste oppression and hierarchical structures. Therefore, he envisioned a constitution that would provide for a level playing field for all individuals regardless of their caste, gender or any other status.

Another challenge that Ambedkar faced was the task of reconciling the different factions within the Constituent Assembly. The assembly was composed of individuals with different worldviews, backgrounds and interests. There were also differing opinions on the fundamental issues such as the role of the state, the status of minorities, and the distribution of power between the central and state governments. Ambedkar was tasked with bringing together these disparate groups and reconciling their differences. He was able to do this by maintaining his impartiality and negotiating with the different factions. He listened carefully to their demands and concerns and was able to achieve a consensus that eventually led to the adoption of the constitution.

Additionally, Ambedkar was acutely aware of the need to create a constitution that would stand the test of time. India was a young nation with a rich and diverse history. Ambedkar, therefore, had to ensure that the constitution would be relevant to future generations, while also reflecting the aspirations of the present ones. The constitution had to be a living document, one that could be modified as and when necessary. By incorporating this flexibility into the constitution, he ensured that it would remain relevant regardless of changing times.

Finally, Ambedkar also faced the challenge of time constraints. The Constituent Assembly was given a limited period of two years to complete the task of drafting the constitution. This was a daunting task considering the time constraints and the vastness of the Indian society. Despite this, Ambedkar persevered, working tirelessly to ensure that the constitution was completed within the stipulated time.

In conclusion, Ambedkar faced numerous challenges in writing the constitution. He had to navigate through socio-economic inequalities,

reconcile different factions, create a constitution that was relevant to future generations, and meet strict timelines. However, he was able to overcome these challenges by remaining impartial, negotiating with different factions, and working tirelessly. The constitution of India remains a testament to his resilience and his unwavering commitment to creating a society that is just and equal for all.

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Ambedkar's Analytical Methods of Finding Solutions to Establish Equal Rights for Women and his Contribution towards the Upliftment of Dalit Women

Dr. Rajamanikyam, Katikathala¹

“I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved”

- Dr. B.R.Ambedkar

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar belongs to the most prominent men who sacrificed their whole life for the upliftment of the lower castes. Besides being an ambassador of social resolution, Ambedkar was the architect of free India's constitution. Ambedkar is truly considered to be one of the makers of modern India and a prophet of the future.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was born on 14th April, 1891 in the Hindu untouchable caste 'Mahars' at Mhow in ex-Indore state. His father was a military subedar and was a Kabir panth devotee. Being born in a lower

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caste, Ambedkar experienced all kinds of ups & downs & humiliations in the society and he then firmly decided to bring in a revolution in this caste ridden society. Since then he always stood for the welfare of Dalit's in all the possible ways that he can do. Since 400 years, the existence of Dalit consciousness could be traced out. There is no doubt that the dalit consciousness is still in vogue. Dr. Ambedkar had always the perception that the Dalits would get rid of the fetters of degradation only when the caste system is uprooted in every form in the society. Lots of efforts are required to help the Dalits to get rid of their backwardness.

Before the onset of the Ambedkar era, there were the untouchables existing in Hindus who due to the Hindu society remained socially degraded, economically underprivileged politically curbed and omitted from educational opportunities. These people were deprived of all human rights. Ambedkar was also much concerned about the status of women in the society.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, at one time woman was entitled to *Upanayan* is clear from the *Atharva Veda* where the girl is spoken of as being eligible for marriage after finishing her Brahmacharya. From the *Shraut Sutras* it is clear that women could repeat the Mantras of the Veda and that woman were taught to read the Vedas. *Panini's Ashtadhyayi* bears testimony to the fact that women attended Gurukul (College) and studied the various *Shakhas* (Sections) of the Veda and became expert in *Mimansa*.

“The problem of untouchability and harijans again can be approached in a different way. For a socialist it presents no difficulty, for under socialism there can be no differentiation or victimization. Economically the harijans have constituted the landless proletariat and the economic solution removes the societal barriers that customs and traditions have raised”.

The social history of our holy land is replete with Godly inhumanity. Large number have been condemned to near slave situation and to unspeakable chores. They had no social legitimacy, they could not cover their bodies with decent clothes specially their women folk. They had no right to walk along public streets, own land or worship in public shrines. Segregated into ghettos, earing carcasses and doing menial labour, slaving for their masters, illiterate, feudal sub-culture and condemned to untouchability even un approachability, this derelict bunch of communities was banished from the civilized belt and the blessing of dignity and decency in life. These abominable communal atrocities were realities even as late as the early decades of our century and still do play hide and seek with democratic values in the feudal villages of many states

India with its ancient caste system and rural feudal organization is such a society. The first decade of the 20th century saw the community in its old dormant conditions to take things lying down and weekly submitting to the social disabilities. They also had a religious reformation, removed pollution with reference to lower castes, and opened temples where even the lower caste could come.

In this widen view, Dalit welfare, anti-untouchability, land distribution, zamindari abolition, and land to the tiller and worker movement became part of the whole a politicization of social justice and a socialization of politics and economics. The constitution was born under the stars of conscience and consciousness with a clean eyed gaze on cultural liberation and legal humanization. The law of the constitution in its majestic diction has laid down fundamental national directives and set out fundamental personal rights. The constitution is not a self-working mechanism but has to be interpreted and operated by men. Thus the sociological vision and democratic passion of legislative, judicial and executive branches of the state together with the progressive stance of the personnel manning them must be dynamically oriented on

the dharma of the constitution and spurred into positive action if a favourable result based on social justice report is to be made possible.

Ambedkar and the Indian Women Rights

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar had been the emancipator of the millions including Indian women, it is a matter of fact that the Indian custom for the past centuries, denied the women rights equal to men be it social, proprietary, political and economic. Many Indian laws and personal laws enforced and enacted by the colonial legislature women were considered a chattel, under the guardianship of father before marriage, under husband after marriage, and under son in her old age. The main motive of Ambedkar for his whole life had been to bring equality in the society and to end all discrimination based on grounds of caste, race, religion, or sex. He could not remain silent on the issue of equal status for women. He has very progressive thoughts for bringing equality for equality among all humans including women. During his tenure as a member of the executive council of the governor-general, he had praised the equal paper, equal work, and for bringing necessary changes in the labour laws.

The reforms introduced by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar

“Hindu code bill has been adhered to and has been accepted by and large. In the Hindu code bill the principles of codification covered : right to property, order of succession to property, marriage, adoption, maintenance, divorce, minority, and guardianship. It was real a first step towards the recognition on empowerment of women in India. Under these revolutionary measures a women will have property in her own right and be able to dispose her property. Due to his differences with the then government lead by Jawaharlal Nehru, whom Ambedkar felt was not eager to clear the Hindu code bill, tendered his resignation as a law minister but continued to participate in the parliamentary debates on the request of the prime minister. The credit completely goes to Ambedkar

for equal status provided to women in the constitution, be it in matters of equality before the law (article 14), public educational institutes (article 15), public employment (article 16), right to be elected to legislature (for parliament as well as states), right to vote (article 325). Due to the untiring efforts of Ambedkar, India is among the list of progressive countries with equal franchise based on universal suffrage as early as 1950, when the constitution of India came into force.

Dr. Ambedkar being a kind and generous philanthropic, social reformer was much moved with the pitiable and pathetic condition and low status of women in the society and he was a torch bearer in the direction of social upliftment of women in general and Hindu women specially. He chose his social reform approach only after understanding the reality of the status of women.

According to Ambedkar, the Hindu women are tied up with bondage of superstitions. They are also responsible for inculcating these wrong notions learnt by them through baseless traditions and preaching of the sastras in the budding mind of their offspring. Otherwise also the women in India have remained a matter of joy, and a source of amusement at such she was used and misused by men just to serve their evil ends. She has been used like a machine for procreation. It has also been mentioned in Hindu shastras that women is the bond slave of her father when she is young, to her husband when she is middle aged, and to her son when she is a mother. It is needless to say the Hindu code bill was a part of social engineering via law, sharp criticism of this bill in and outside the parliament led many to believe that it might inflict heavy damages on the Hindu society. Justice P.B. Gajendragadkar while congratulating Dr. Ambedkar for the role he had played in drafting and piloting the Hindu code bill said: "if Ambedkar gives us Hindu code bill, his achievement would go down in history as a very eloquent piece of poetic justice in deed".

The whole story of Hindu code bill presents the determination of DR. B.R.Ambedkar to bring about the changes in the society. He was the one who just not talked on things; but really worked on them. His concern for women is unquestionable. It is not wrong to say he was a great feminist of his day because women's rights form a part of human rights and he can rightly be termed as the champion of it.

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Ambedkar: The Messiah of the Downtrodden Masses

G Victor Emmanuel Raju¹

“Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic”

- Dr. B.R.Ambedkar

Ambedkar has been a voice for the downtrodden people in this country, and for their cause, he has dedicated his whole life and work. Dalits have placed Ambedkar at the top of the world, and he is no less than a god for them.

Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1891, at Mhow, a small town in the then-princely state of Indore. He was the fourteenth child of father Ramji Sakpal and mother Bhima Bai, belonging to the Mahar caste, which was considered a low untouchable caste by the caste Hindus. The Mahars were, however, among the untouchables and were

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considered to be a sort of martial race. They were considered an important army strength in the Maratha army from the time of Shivaji. B.R.Ambedkar's grandfather, father, and six uncles were in the army; all of them held the rank of Subedar Major, which was an achievement in the Indian Army under the British. The father of B. R. Ambedkar was a subedar major in the army and a teacher at the Army School. He was a great nationalist, a democrat, and a firm believer in social justice. He was a vociferous writer, thinker, and social reformer. During his lifetime, he wrote many books and left behind a massive collection of notes, essays, and other unfinished works on various subject matters. He wrote extensively on the problems of caste.

Ambedkar fought for the rights of the downtrodden and played a major role in mobilising them. Because of him, many people belonging to the 'lower caste' began demanding their rights. He always tried to ensure that the historically unprivileged sections of the country got representation at various institutions. Due to caste discrimination and untouchability, Dalits had been kept away from the source of knowledge, wealth, and power. However, there has been some change, though very small, since the independence of India. There is also a considerable change educationally, economically, and politically among Dalits in India; therefore, a political and middle class is emerging out of the benefits of state policy. On the other hand, most of the Dalits who still live in rural areas continue to face the worst form of discrimination.

The relationship of the Dalits with the state also, most importantly, depends on which political party has control over the state; therefore, the relationship between the state and Dalits changes from party to party. At times, the promises that are there in the Constitution are not fulfilled by the majority of political parties towards Dalits, mostly in the form of tokenism, while the rest of the population remains marginalised economically and educationally. However, Dalit development was rhetorically mentioned in the manifestos of the political party, and lip service was provided. It is experienced that

during election times, questions of political representation dominated the economic and educational progress of the community. On the other hand, each faction of Dalits tried to gain the poor population of Dalits, and divisive politics played out among the dominant political parties. However, the role of the state is an important factor in understanding the problems and issues of the Dalits, as they mostly depend on its assistance and benefits. He also worked for their education as well as economic development. He ensured there were safeguards for people belonging to the downtrodden sections of society.

Ambedkar played a key role in ensuring that people were granted many civil liberties, including the right against exploitation as well as the freedom of religion. The Hindu Code Bill became a reality only because of his persistent efforts. Ambedkar's legacy can be seen in the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP), the Right to Equality, reservations for historically marginalised communities, as well as the National Commissions for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and Scheduled Tribes (NCST). One of the greatest contributions of Dr. Ambedkar was in respect of the fundamental rights and directive principles of state policy enshrined in the Constitution of India. The fundamental rights provide for freedom, equality, the abolition of untouchability, and remedies to ensure the evolution of rights. The directive principles mentioned fair distribution of wealth and better living conditions for all. It was he who forsook his high pedestal, sat down at their level, gave them a helping hand, and raised them to human stature. For Indians, Ambedkar is no longer a historical personality named Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. He is already metamorphosed into a symbol—a symbol for their collective aspiration and an icon for the thesis of their emancipation. Human history is replete with such icons; rather, it is largely made of them.

He is a social reformer, chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution, and the first law minister of the country. He was an educationist, economist, jurist, politician, journalist, sociologist, and social reformer who worked in the fields of culture, religion, and

spirituality. He could never get elected to the Lok Sabha, despite the fact that lakhs of untouchables all over the country had come to regard him as their messiah. Because of his revolutionary ideas to overturn the caste system, Gandhi said, "He was the greatest challenge to Hinduism." What went into the making of Ambedkar and how, in his lifetime, he went on to conquer peaks of excellence despite hurdles, roadblocks, and the apathy of the caste leaders is the story of this book, the reading of which can make one's flesh creep even today. Just when he was trying to settle down as law minister in free India's first Cabinet and was grabbing headlines with his brilliant speeches in Parliament, he was eased out. Caste leaders could never reconcile themselves to the fact that an untouchable Ambedkar could be so brilliant as to have the better of them in debate or repartee. At a very tender age, he had to face humiliation and disgrace at the hands of upper-caste Hindus when he started school. He was made to sit outside of the classroom so that his presence did not pollute others. He and his brother were not allowed to drink water from the school well, and they often remained thirsty the whole day.

The caste system that subjugated more than one-fifth of the population to levels worse than animals for more than two thousand years of inequality became the prime target of his life. He tried to remove untouchability in order to establish a new social order based on the principle of equality. His entire life has been a saga of relentless crusades for social justice. According to Ambedkar, the Hindu scheme of social structure based on the four Varnas, or Chaturvarna, breeds inequality and has been the parent of the caste system and untouchability, which are merely forms of inequality. In Hinduism, everything is caste-oriented and caste-bound. Caste determines one's station and status in society. One is doomed if he is born into a lower caste or into an outcast family. Indian society is a gradation of castes forming an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt, a system that gives no scope for the growth of the sentiment of equality and fraternity so essential for a democratic form of

government. The caste system is not just a division of labour but a hierarchical division of labourers that is not based on natural aptitude or spontaneity but on the caste of the parents.

Gandhiji believed that for the abolition of untouchability, there was a need for a change of heart on the part of general caste people. He stressed penance on the part of the upper castes. But Ambedkar wanted to demolish the Hindu Varna system totally and wanted political power as well as legal protection for the untouchables. In 1927, Ambedkar started Satyagraha at Mahad, a place in Kolaba district of present-day Maharashtra, to secure for the untouchables the right to access the Chavdar Tank. In 1930, he also began Satyagraha at Kalram Temple in Nasik to secure the right of untouchables to enter the temple. In 1937, he organised the Independent Labour Party. This party was committed to education, industrialization and social equality. This party became the second biggest opposition party in Bombay. Out of the total of 15 reserved seats, 11 went to the Independent Labour Party. As a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council from July 1942 on, he was instrumental in bringing about several legislative measures to protect the rights of labourers and workers. Ambedkar appeared in all three Round Table Conferences held in London during 1930-32. In these conferences, he emphasised the separate identity of 'untouchables' in India and demanded the status of a separate electorate for them. On this question, he had a confrontation with Gandhiji at the Second Round Table Conference held from September to December 1931.

The British Government accepted Ambedkar's demand and granted "Communal Award" in 1932 providing for separate electorate for the Depressed Classes. In protest, Gandhi resorted to fasting unto death. and pressure was put on Ambedkar to withdraw this demand for the status of separate electorate for 'untouchables'. Ambedkar was unperturbed and said "The Mahatma is not an immortal person, nor the Congress. Mahatmas have come and Mahatmas have gone. But untouchables have remained as untouchables". But ultimately he

relented and signed the well-known Poona Pact on September 24, 1932 on behalf of the depressed classes ensuring 'reserved seats' for 'untouchables'. The Pact was later embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935. These led to several clashes between the two. But a consensus was reached with the Poona Pact that sought to provide representation for the Dalits in civil services, while also providing them with educational grants.

His freedom struggle was based on the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, Seeing brutal, heartless, vicious and exploitative caste system and unwillingness on the part of Hindus to correct this he stated " I was born a Hindu and have suffered the consequences of untouchability. I will not die as a Hindu." In 1940 he republished Laxmi Narasu's 'The Essence of Buddhism' and subsequently wrote a book 'The Buddha and His Dhamma' explaining the meaning and significance of Buddhism. He along with his wife and 0.4 million followers took Diksha and administered the vow to his followers. The followers in their collectively vow committed themselves to new life free from the system of high and low and never ending violence sustained under Hinduism.

Ambedkar was a great supporter of emancipation of women. He inspired them to attend more to the cultivation of the mind and the spirit of self- help. According to him the progress of a community is measured by the degree of progress which women have achieved. Dr. Ambedkar was not only the champion of the cause of untouchables and depressed classes but that of the women also. He was convinced that for social justice and progress of the nation it was essential that conditions of women should be improved a lot. He stood for the economic equality of women and vehemently pleaded for the spread of women education.. He inspired them to attend more to the cultivation of the mind and the spirit of self- help. According to him the progress of a community is measured by the degree of progress which women have achieved.

Dr BR Ambedkar, during his days of struggle for the freedom of the country, also opened the ground for women's advancement and their release from long-standing social bonds. Dr Ambedkar was of the opinion, "Unity is meaningless without the accompaniment of women. Education is fruitless without educated women, and agitation is incomplete without the strength of women." Dr Ambedkar proposed a number of ideas through the Hindu Code Bill to improve the Hindu system, one of which was the idea of civil marriages. He hoped that in the event of a civil marriage, caste and sub-caste would be abolished. He favoured the idea of outlawing polygamy and pushed for the legalisation of monogamy.

Ambedkar's contribution to women's emancipation is reflected in his works and writings, including *Revolution and Counter Revolution in Ancient India* and *Riddles of Hinduism*. The question of social justice was central to his writings, which talked about women's rights at a time when social structures were still traditional and deeply caste-driven. Dalit and other oppressed caste women were doubly marginalized in this social structure.

Ambedkar argued that the debauched status of women came from the laws of *Manusmriti* that denied them access to education. His work *The Rise and Fall of Hindu Woman* quotes the law of *Manusmriti* (IX.18): "Women have no right to study the *Vedas*. That is why their *sanskaars* (rites) are performed without *Veda* mantras. Women have no knowledge of religion because they have no right to know the *Vedas*. The uttering of *Veda* mantras is useful for removing sin. As women cannot utter the *Veda* mantras; they are as untruth is." [BAWS, Volume 17 (2), page no. 119]

According to Ambedkar, before *Manusmriti*, women enjoyed a respectable position in society. They had access to education as is mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* and the *Shrauta-sutras* (Volume 17(2), page 122). He even acknowledged female figures of ancient India like Rishi

Gargi, Vidhyadhari, and Sulabha Maitreyi who were great intellectuals of their time and are mentioned in pre-Manu literature.

With the Right to Property granted to Hindu women, Ambedkar wanted to ensure that women have agency and control over material resources. Thus, his approach towards female emancipation wasn't simply rhetorical but a realist vision to ensure equal bargaining power in the socio-legal framework.

It has been proved beyond doubt that, Ambedkar's was a versatile personality. He did work hard, not only for the upliftment of downtrodden masses of Indian society, but he also contributed immensely toward the Indian women's cause. He expressed his views freely on social and political democracy, communism, partition of India, Indian economy etc. He has been considered a liberator of the Indian women. He was a great scholar of law. He was bold and straightforward in expressing himself about Hindu religion, about which he once said it was beyond his control to be born in a Hindu family; but he will not die a Hindu. Due to this, he, along with the lakhs of his followers, converted to Buddhism. Therefore, keeping in mind all these facts; it would not be justifiable on our part, to limit an all-round personality, like Ambedkar only to the cause of Dalits.

Dr Ambedkar was suffering from diabetes and weak eyesight. Day by day, his health deteriorated. On December 6, 1956 he breathed his last. He was cremated as per Buddhist rituals. The ceremony was attended by of thousands of supporters and admirers. Ambedkar was survived by his second wife, who died in 2003 and his son Yashwant (known as Bhaiyasaheb Ambedkar). Ambedkar's grandson, Ambedkar Prakash Yashwant, is the chief-adviser of the Buddhist Society of India, leads the Bharipa Bahujan Mahasangh and has served in both houses of the Indian Parliament.

Even after his death, the principle of equality rings on in commemorations of Ambedkar's life. In the United States, the states of

Colorado and Michigan in the US declared a 'Dr B.R. Ambedkar Equity Day', echoed in India by the state of Tamil Nadu calling his birthday a 'Day of Equality'. When he was awarded the Bharat Ratna, President R. Venkataraman wrote in his introduction to Ambedkar: *The Man and his Message* (1991): 'There can be no doubt that the day is not far off when Babasaheb Ambedkar's Dream of 'samata' [equality] will become a reality.' We are still waiting, but his contributions to the struggle for equality remain unrivalled.

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Dr. B R Ambedkar: Casteism and conversion into Buddhism

G Shailaja¹

*"If I find the constitution being misused,
I shall be the first one to burn it"*

- Dr. B.R.Ambedkar

Father of India constitution and Dalit rights activist Dr BR Ambedkar may be long gone, but the relevance and weightage of his thought-provoking words never diminished. In 2004, Columbia University released a list of the world's best top 100 scholars, and the list was topped by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He made enormous efforts to make sure that society follows a path of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. The same can be witnessed from his various writings and speeches.

The concept of caste is so deep-rooted in Indian society that whenever the name of Dr. Ambedkar comes up, the first image of him is that of a messiah of Dalits. Caste is a system in which determination of

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position, rights and duties of an individual is done on the basis of the birth of such individual in a particular group. In other words we can say that, the status of an individual is determined by birth. Under caste system an individual is not allowed to change its status. We can say that it is a rigid form of stratification system, which restrict the mobility and distinctness of status. Due to the caste system several evil prevails in the society. Under a caste system and individual is compel to follow the caste occupation. Caste system leads to untouchability. It restricts the growth of brotherhood among people and also it holds off national unity and creates obstacles to social progress.

Caste system denies equal rights of individual, that why it is considered as undemocratic. For eradicating the problems of caste system many steps were taken by various leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule and the most significant role was played by Dr. B R Ambedkar. According to him for eradication of caste, it is necessary to break the religious notion on which caste system is laid down. He is of the view that caste system is not merely division of labour perhaps; it is also a division of labourers. Equality should be for all and though the success shared by all. Instead of thinking about one single community there should be a deep cultural unity of all community. The relevance of this research is to indicate that what Dr. B R Ambedkar regarded as the right path of investigation, to achieve some serviceable truth. Sentiments must be outlawed from the domain of science and things should be judge from objective standpoint.

Caste system is an example of rigid social inequality from the perspective of social organization and system of values. So far as social organization of caste is concerned, there is division of society into groups ranking in a different hierarchy and in a system of values, caste provide legitimacy to the concept of social inequality among the masses as well as give importance to the idea of purity and pollution.

The origin of caste

The root of caste is the Latin *castus*, which means "chaste" or "pure, separated." The word arrived in English through the Portuguese *casta*, which means "race" or "lineage," and was first used in the 1700s in reference to Hinduism's system of social stratification.

Although, it is difficult to establish as to when the caste system originated, but there is no doubt that the institution of caste for the convenience of the ruling class leading to successful administration by them. There are different theories about the establishment of the caste system. These are Religious mystical, Biological, Socio-historical, Occupational Theory, Traditional Theory and Evolutionary theories.

Occupational Theory

According to this theory, the origin of caste system can be found in the nature and quality of social work performed by the various groups of people. Those professions which were regarded as better and respectable made the persons who performed them superior to those who were engaged in dirty professions.

Traditional Theory

According to this theory, the caste system is of divine origin. There are some references in Vedic literature wherein it is said that castes were created by Brahma the supreme creator, so that human beings may harmoniously perform the various social functions essential for the maintenance of society. According to Dr. Mazumdar, "if, however we take the divine origin of the Varna's as an allegorical explanation of the functional division of society, the theory assumes practical significance."

Religious Theory

According to Hocart, social stratification originated on account of religious principles and customs. In ancient India religion had a prominent place. The king was considered the image of God. The priest kings accorded different positions to different functional groups. Senart has tried to explain the origin of caste system on the basis of prohibitions regarding sacramental food.

He holds that on account of different family duties there grew up certain prohibitions regarding sacramental food. The followers of one particular deity considered themselves the descendants of the same ancestor and offered a particular kind of food as offering to their deity. Those who believed in the same deity considered themselves as different from those who believed in some other deity.

Evolutionary Theory

According to this theory, the caste system did not come into existence all of a sudden or at a particular date. It is the result of a long process of social evolution. A number of factors played their part in the development of the present caste system.

Among these factors we may enumerate the following ones:

- Hereditary occupations;
- The desire of the Brahmins to keep themselves pure;
- The lack of rigid unitary control of the state;
- The unwillingness of rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom and their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid;
- Beliefs in re-incarnation and the doctrine of Karma;
- Ideas of exclusive family, ancestor worship, and the sacramental meal;
- Clash of antagonistic cultures particularly of the patriarchal and the matriarchal systems;

- Clash of races, colour prejudices and conquest;
- Deliberate economic and administrative policies followed by the various conquerors particularly by the British;
- Geographical isolation of the Indian peninsula;
- Static nature of Hindu society;
- Foreign invasions;
- Rural social structure.

All the above factors conspired to encourage the formation of small groups based on petty distinctions from time to time. The lack of rigid unitary control of the state, the unwillingness of the rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom, their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid, and their usual practice of allowing things somehow to adjust themselves led to the growth of groups and promoted the spirit of solidarity and community feeling in every group.

Biological Theory

The biological theories claims that all existing things, animated and in animated, inherent three qualities in different apportionment. Sattva attributes includes wisdom, intelligence, honesty, goodness, and other positive qualities. Rajas attributes includes velour, passion, pride and other passionate qualities. Tamas attributes includes dullness, stupidity. Lack of creativity and other negative qualities. According to these attributes Brahmans inherent Sattva qualities. Kshatriyas and Vaishyas inherent Rajas qualities and Shudras inherent Tamas qualities. In ancient India the religion had a prominent place; the king was considered the image of God. The Priest King accorded different position to different functional groups. According to Senart, like human beings food also inherent different dosage of these qualities but he explained the origin of caste system on the basis of prohibition regarding sacramental food. He holds that the followers of a particular deity considered themselves the descendants of the same ancestors and

offered a particular kind of food as offering to their deity. Those who believed in the same deity considered themselves as different from those who believed in some other deity.

Socio Historical Theory

The socio historical theory explains the creation of the Varna, Jaats and untouchables. According to this theory the caste system begins with the arrival of Aryans in India. Before the Aryans there were other communities in India of other origins among them Negrito, Mongoloid, Austroloid and Dravidian. When the Aryans arrived in India their main contact was with the Dravidians and Austroloids. The Aryans disregarded the local culture, they begin conquering and taken control over regions in north India and at the same time pushed the local people towards the south, jungles and mountains in north India.

The Aryans organized among themselves in three groups. The first was of a warrior called Rajayana later they changed their name to kshatriya. The second group was of priest called Brahmans. The third group was of farmers and craftsmen and they were called as Vaishyas. In order to secure their status the Aryans resolved some social and religious rules which allowed only them to be the priest, warrior and the businessmen of the society. For instance: Maharashtra in West India, many think that the meaning of the name Maharashtra is great land but some claim that the name Maharashtra is derived from the Jaats called Mahar who were considered to be the original people of this region. In the caste hierarchy the dark-skinned Mahar were outcastes. The skin color was an important factor in the caste system.

The meaning of the word Varna is not class or status but skin color. In Hindu religious stories there were many wars between the good Aryans and a dark skinned demons and devils, but the real fact was that the dark skinned slaves were in fact the original residence of India, whom the Aryans coined as monsters, devils, demons and slaves.

But Ambedkar saw the caste system as an unequal mode of organization of social relations, with the pure and the impure at either extreme. He argued that this system was sanctified through religious codes that forbade intermixture of castes and confined social interaction to a regulated structure.

In India Caste System consists of two different concepts that is Varna and Jati, the real concept of Varna has almost disappeared in the present context and has changed into Jati. The former was based on color of the skin and later on birth. It is the religious and social institution of Hindu peoples who comprised about 80% of India's population. The rest of India is Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Jain or Buddhist. Caste is such a deep rooted and pervasive concept, it is a rigid form of stratification system, in which mobility of rank and status is not allowed. However, that it has also influenced Muslims, Christians and Sikhs, for instance, they have separate churches for dalits and non dalits Christians. The 50 million Indians who live in tribal community predate the Aryan and Dravidian civilization. They are members of backward classes, they are not the part of Hindu society even then, they have started observing untouchability towards Dalits- who themselves have a caste hierarchy.

While Ambedkar saw the caste issue as a political problem, Gandhi considered it a social issue. Ambedkar sought political solutions to the problem, while on the other hand, Gandhi believed it could be solved only if the minds of people were changed. Ambedkar wished to abolish the caste system altogether since he believed that it could just not be modified since it was too deeply ingrained in society. Gandhi however, tried to bring about change in the mindset of the people instead. These led to several clashes between the two. But a consensus was reached with the Poona Pact that sought to provide representation for the Dalits in civil services, while also providing them with educational grants.

Just two months after his official conversion, however, he died 'due to illness.' In one of his speeches, he had said: "Though I was born a Hindu untouchable, I shall not die as a Hindu."

On 14 October 1946, Dr. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism along with 365000 of his Dalit followers. The major reason behind why he converted was his belief that Hinduism has a very rigid caste structure, which attempts to assert the hegemony of the 'upper castes' and has failed to bestow upon its followers many basic human rights. While Ambedkar announced his plans to convert in 1936, he took 20 years studying various world religions and then decided upon converting to Buddhism. But why did Ambedkar not convert to Christianity or Islam? He answered this question in his essay *Buddha and Future of his Religion*.

No doubt India has got political freedom but it must be the concern of every individual that real freedom cannot be cherished without attainment of the social and the economic democracy. It is unfortunate that the Indian society is sharply divided into various caste and sub caste which acts as a barrier due to rigidity and division of the society based on caste consideration. Democracy is based on principle of equality, fraternity and liberty. On the other hand the caste system is based on inequality of status and opportunities, which often creates conflict and tension in the society. It acts as an obstacle in the normal and smooth functioning of democracy.

Baba Saheb's conversion not only marked the beginning of Ambedkar(ite) Buddhism that continues to gather more followers every year but also gave lakhs of Dalits suffering under India's oppressive caste system a new lens to view their identity from and redefine their place in the country.

Ambedkar spent these two decades to study other prominent religions and chose one he found to be the best among all. His quest for a morally sound religion that looked at the welfare of every human being

took him to Buddhism. And that is how he and his followers converted to Buddhism.

On October 14, 1956, the leader adopted Buddhism, along with lakhs of his followers in a simple, traditional ceremony at Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur.

The event was as historic as it was unique. Episodes of mass conversion are well known through time, yet this was probably the only one in India's recent history where lakhs of people, decided to convert from Hinduism to Buddhism not facing threat or for material gain, but because of their unswerving faith in a leader.

Declaring that he was born a Hindu, but would not die as one, at a small conference held in Yeola, Nashik, Ambedkar had already quit Hinduism in 1935. Highlighting reasons for the decision, the leader told his followers, "So long as we remain in a religion, which teaches a man to treat another man like a leper, the sense of discrimination on account of caste, which is deeply rooted in our minds, can not go. For annihilating caste and untouchables, change of religion is the only antidote."

The leader also added how Hinduism had failed to secure basic human rights for his people, perpetuating caste injustices instead. He decided to convert to Buddhism in 1956, convinced that "Buddha's dhamma is the best" and that Buddhism was the "most scientific religion". Ambedkar starts by stating that what separates Buddha from the rest of the other is his self-abnegation. "All throughout the Bible, Jesus insist(s) that he is the Son of God and that those who wish to enter the kingdom of God will fail, if they do not recognise him as the Son of God. Mohammed went a step further. Like Jesus he also claimed that he was the messenger of God. But he further insisted that he was the last messenger. Krishna went a step beyond both Jesus and Mohammed. He refused to be satisfied with merely being the Son of the God or being the messenger of God; he was not content even with being the last

messenger of God. He was not even satisfied with calling himself a God. He claimed that he was 'Parameswhar' or as his followers describe him "Devadhideva," God of Gods," Ambedkar writes about them. But Buddha, he wrote, "never arrogated to himself any such status. He was born as a son of man and was content to remain a common man and preached his gospel as a common man. He never claimed any supernatural origin or supernatural powers nor did he perform miracles to prove his supernatural powers. The Buddha made a clear distinction between a Margadata and a Mokshadata. Jesus, Mahommed and Krishna claimed for themselves the Mokshadata. The Buddha was satisfied with playing the role of a Margadata."

Ambedkar compares the four religious teachers to find another distinction between Buddha and the rest. He says that both Jesus and Mohammed claimed that what they taught was the word of God and (thus) was beyond question. Krishna was, according to his own assumption, a God of Gods and therefore the question of infallibility did not even arise. The Buddha claimed no such infallibility for what he taught. In the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, he told Ananda that his followers should not accept his teaching as correct and binding merely because they emanated from Him. Being based on reason and experience, the followers were free to modify or even to abandon any of his teachings if it was found that at a given time and in given circumstances they do not apply.

"Buddha wanted his religion to remain evergreen and serviceable at all times. That is why he gave liberty to his followers to chip and chop as the necessities of the case required. No other religious teacher has shown such courage. They were afraid of permitting repair, because the liberty to repair may be used to demolish the structure they had reared. Buddha had no such fear. He was sure of his foundation. He knew that even the most violent iconoclast will not be able to destroy the core of His religion."

Comparing Buddhism with Hinduism, Ambedkar writes,

“Hinduism is a religion which is not founded on morality. Morality is a separate force which is sustained by social necessities and not by injunction of Hindu religion. The religion of Buddha is morality. It is imbedded in religion. It is true that in Buddhism there is no God. In place of God there is morality. What God is to other religions, morality is to Buddhism.”

Ambedkar then differentiates between ‘Dharma’ (Hinduism) and ‘Dhamma’ (Buddhism). “The Vedic meaning of the word “Dharma” did not connote morality in any sense of the word. The Dharma as enunciated by the Brahmins meant nothing more than the performances of certain karmas or observances, i.e. Yagans, Yagas and sacrifices to Gods. The word Dhamma, as used by the Buddha, had nothing to do with ritual or observances. In place of Karma, Buddha substituted morality as the essence of Dhamma.”

Taking his comparison of Hinduism and Buddhism further, Ambedkar writes about the second point of difference thus: “The second point of contrast lies in the fact that the official gospel of Hinduism is inequality. On the other hand, Buddha stood for equality. He was the greatest opponent of Chaturvarna, which is the parent of the caste system — apparently a perpetual loss of life. He not only preached against it, fought against it, but did everything to uproot it. According to Hinduism neither a Shudra nor a woman could become a teacher of religion nor could they take Sannyasa and reach God.

He was also convinced that Buddhism could improve the social status of the country’s oppressed classes. Within two months after the conversion ceremony, Dr Ambedkar passed away. But, the religious movement that he set in motion has thrived, and it now includes around four million Buddhists.

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The great valiant march for a progressive India, Dr Ambedkar visioned better than the rest of the freedom fighters of the century past. The seeds of the well sown today grew well to trumpet the saviour's untiring services.

The book, "**Impact of Ambedkarism on Indian Reality**" published by VEDA Publications, examines the influence and impact of Ambedkar's ideals on Contemporary Society. The book focuses on the work of Bharat Ratna Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his monumental efforts towards nation-building and his analytical methods of finding solutions to various issues, right from reservation for backward classes, reorganisation of the States, equal rights for women and his contribution towards the upliftment of Dalits and his work for framing the constitution of India. The book offers rich insights on Ambedkarism through comparative Studies. This will inspire the readers to work towards a more just and equal society.

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