B. R. AMBEDKAR INGRAINED OF ANTI CASTISAM

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ABSTRACT

A critical negotiation with the concept of caste seems to be at the heart of B.R. Ambedkar's political philosophy. Ambedkar's clear and incisive political vision saw through the structural phenomenon of caste inequality in India. He not only explores in his writings the mechanism, genesis, and development of the caste system but also made it an inalienable part of his political praxis. His approach to the caste issue was thoroughly radical, and this sets him apart from his political peers. This article seeks to accomplish two things. First, it explores Ambedkar's writings on the caste issue vis-à-vis his political activism. Secondly, the article contextualizes Ambedkar's understanding of the caste system through a comparative study with ideas about the caste system in his contemporary political parlance, particularly M.K. Gandhi's approach to it.

KEYWORDS: B.R. Ambedkar, Hinduism, Dalits, caste, M.K. Gandhi, religion, oppression.

INTRODUCTION

Among the Indian free thinkers, B. R Ambedkar was the first who had rightly identified caste as the root cause of social inequality in Indian society. He saw through the elaborate discourse of caste bolstered up by myth, mysticism and religion, and recognized it for what it was—a thoroughly unjust and unequal mode of social organization. By addressing the issue of caste politically, Ambedkar had caught the bull by its horns, as it were. Throughout his life, Ambedkar could never come to terms with Hinduism in which he was born. He despised Hinduism solely because it advocates a stagnant and decadent system like casteism. "In a changing society, there must be a constant revolution of old values and the Hindus must realize that if there must be standards to measure the acts of men there must also be a readiness to revise those standards" (Annihilation of Caste 79).

He reviewed the system of casteism from different angles and proved how inadequate and decaying the whole system was. First of all, he argues that the Hindu identity, on which the pride of casteism rests, is a myth in itself. The name Hindu was given by the Muslim invaders to the inhabitants of India as they lived by the river Indus. Hindu is derived from the word 'Sindhu'. "It does not occur in any Sanskrit work prior to the Mohammedan invasion. They did not feel the necessity of a common name because they had no conception of their having constituted a community" (Annihilation of Caste 40).

Ambedkar saw Hinduism as an omnibus of caste where each caste comfortably resides in its pit hole, avoiding the air of others. Such a community, where fraternity is alien, cannot form a nation according to him. "There are however many Indians whose patriotism does not permit them to admit that Indians are not a nation, that they are only an amorphous mass of people" (Annihilation of Caste 41).

Let alone nation, it is quite difficult for Hindus to constitute a unified society. A society is formed not by people living in close proximity or by people who share similar things. Ambedkar explains – "Men constitute a society because they have things which they possess in common" (Annihilation of Caste 41). Possessing things in common is possible only when people communicate and interact with each other. By mingling with each other, they form a unity that gives them the feeling of being one. Even if people within a society are living apart, they don't lose the sense of oneness. Hinduism has the potential for such unity, but caste is the impediment that needs to be removed. Casteism segregated the society into different sects and sub-sects and prohibits their interaction with each other, thus creating a socio-cultural breach, which shatters the Hindu society into pieces.

Casteism, as Ambedkar sees it, has caused selfishness among the followers of Hindus. Every single caste is concerned about its own interest, at the expense of other castes: "The Hindus, therefore, are not merely an assortment of castes but they are so many warring groups each living for itself and for its selfish ideal" (Annihilation of Caste 43). The animosity among these castes is so intense that they often cannot forgive each other for a crime committed in the historical past. Ambedkar while placing this argument, compared the non-Brahmins' hatred for Brahmins for their past treatment with Shivaji with the war of the Roses, concluding that in the latter, the bitterness of the feud was later forgotten by the succeeding generations.

Ambedkar was under the influence of Western liberal ideas. He spent three years in America (1913-16), and two years in England (1920-22) and by this time he came into direct contact with the ideals of liberal thinkers. He wished to reconstruct the society based on rationality and equality and to do that, he had to wage war against casteism which, according to him, was the source of "graded inequality". Ambedkar was essentially a modernist in thought and deeds and he exhibited the most vital characteristics of modernism, i.e., rationality. In order to establish reason, he had to deny the authorities of myths, customs and religious ideologies. This tendency was a completely modern one as in medieval Europe myths were aided by reason.

Famous scholar Eleanor Zelliot divided the socio-political engagement of Ambedkar into three phases. The first phase sought reformation in Hinduism. It was the direct result of the atrocities he had to suffer as a lower caste Hindu. He declared that Hinduism is rotten from the inside, and it needs to be reviewed and reinstated. In the second phase, he realized that only religious reformation wouldn't give the Dalits their dues. Political equality can save the way for social and religious harmony. Therefore, in this phase, he sought a separate political constituency for the Dalits, which stood him face to face with his most potent adversary, M. K. Gandhi. When this attempt was

shunned by Gandhi, Ambedkar was slightly disillusioned with his political plight and attempted to redraw the political actions by founding The Republican Party of India. In this phase, he turned towards Buddhism as he found in Buddhism the equality and harmony which Hinduism failed to offer. He wrote in an essay –

Hinduism had to make many changes in its doctrines. It gave up Himsa. It was prepared to give up the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas. On the point of the Chaturvarna, neither side was prepared to yield. Buddha was not prepared to give up his opposition to the doctrine of Chaturvarna. That is the reason why Brahmanism has so much more hatred and antagonism against Buddhism than it has against Jainism. (Annihilation of Caste 57).

Ambedkar viewed casteism not just as a division of labour, but also as a division of labourers. Besides, the division is not made on the aptitude, but on the social status of someone's parent. This completely ruins the chance of appointing the right person for the right job. Suppose, a businessman's son wishes to become a scholar leaving their ancestral trade and he has the aptitude for the same too. In such a situation, the caste system will be a great impediment for him to pursue his chosen career. If one is not allowed to do what he loves and is forced to do what he does not, the economy, in general, will suffer. Ambedkar further said that our economy is not static and with economy, the society should also be in constant flux. If one is not allowed to change his occupation, the economic system will collapse.

By not permitting readjustment of occupations, caste becomes a direct cause of much of the unemployment we see in the country. Individual sentiment, individual preference has no place in it. It is based on the dogma of predestination. (Annihilation of Caste 37).

In order to secure the rights of the weaker economic sections, especially the Dalits, Ambedkar emphasized the role of the state. In States and Minorities, he propounded that the key industries, insurance, agriculture etc. should be directly under the control of the state.

Privatization of the economy, according to Ambedkar, would ruin political democracy. The economy should not become the puppet of a few industrialists who work for their benefits. In his last speech in the Constituent Assembly, he stated –

In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall by reason of our social and economic structure, continues to deny the principle of one man one value…If we continue to deny it for long, we shall do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. (Constituent Assembly Debates 979).

According to Ambedkar, only an economic structure based on democratic socialism can ensure social justice and the state should take the responsibility of creating the scenario of such democratic socialism.

Ambedkar held the opinion that the caste system is a pro to Hinduism itself. Hinduism was once a missionary religion which was the sole cause of its popularity, over the wide land of India. But over time it ceased to be a missionary religion and Ambedkar blamed this on the system of caste: "Caste is inconsistent with conversion" (Annihilation of Caste 46). Caste is a system of social stratification. If someone gets converted into Hinduism, it becomes utterly difficult to place them in a certain stratum or caste. A Hindu cannot be casteless. As the caste system originated in the division of labour, it would be difficult too to create a new caste for the converts as they would have different occupations. This problem had resisted people from getting converted into Hindus.

Unlike the club the membership of a caste is not open to all and sundry. The law of caste confines its membership to person born in the caste. Castes are autonomous and there is no authority anywhere to compel a caste to admit a newcomer to its social life. (Annihilation of Caste 46)

Suppose, a Christian potter wishes to get converted to Hinduism and is allowed to do so. Then he is placed into the caste of kumbhakara which is a separate community in itself. The kumbhakara community, comfortable in the social interaction within their own caste, will deny accommodating the converts. The convert will still be an alien to them as they are accustomed to the rigidity of casteism. Ambedkar regretted: "Hindu religion cannot be made a missionary religion and shudhi will be both a folly and a futility" (Annihilation of Caste 46).

Ambedkar despised idolization and held the opinion that any society where such purposed idolization is cultured, is destined to be doomed. Other Dalit leaders could not view Ambedkar as a divine figure sent for the emancipation of the downtrodden. Sainthood was not Ambedkar's cup of tea. He even criticized Mahatma for silently enjoying the tag of sainthood bestowed upon him: "I hate all the mahatmas and firmly believe that they should be done away with. I am of the opinion that their existence is a curse to the nation in which they are born. They try to perpetuate blind faith in place of intelligence and reason" (Ambedkar, "Is Gandhi a Mahatma?").

On the other hand, the prejudice that Mr. Gehlot was talking about, was not just for Ambedkar, but the whole Dalit community. Although the Indian intellectuals supported Dalit upliftment, but being brought up in a society that followed Manu's codes of conduct, it was difficult for them to get over their prejudices against the whole Dalit community. Other reasons turned them against Ambedkar. First of all, Ambedkar's complete denouncement of Hinduism and his gesture of publicly burning Manusmriti offended many Hindus, even the radical ones. His clash with Mahatma was another significant factor that led the mass to misunderstand him. He was always unapologetic about his criticism of Gandhi –

It is very easy for anybody to become a Mahatma in India by merely changing his dress. If you are wearing an ordinary dress and leading an ordinary life even if you perform extraordinary noble deeds, nobody takes, any notice

of you. But a person who does not behave in normal manner and shows some peculiar trends and abnormalities in his character he becomes a saint or a Mahatma. If you put on a suit or ordinary dress and do something, people would not even like to look at you. But if the same person discards his clothes, runs about naked, grows long hair, abuses people and drinks dirty water from the gutters, people fall at his feet and begin to worship him. In these circumstances if Gandhi becomes Mahatma in India there is nothing surprising. (Ambedkar, "Is Gandhi a Mahatma?")

He denied giving credit to Gandhi for his Satya and Ahimsa doctrines as Gautam Buddha said the very same things years ago. While Ambedkar demanded a separate electorate for the untouchables, Gandhi opposed it. When finally, he got it sanctioned, Gandhiji started fasting to resist and revoke it. Ambedkar lost public sympathy because of this and was marked as a narrow-minded, separatist person. He had to bend before Gandhiji's tactics and his dream of a separate electorate never actualized. This embittered him all the more against Gandhi. Ambedkar's nationalism was tinged with his demand for equality. He believed that true upliftment for all is necessary for a country aiming to be independent. But this view was not welcome to all. Thus, Ambedkar's full role in the shaping of modern India was never fully realized.

Ambedkar was criticized as a stooge of the British Empire when he strategically tried to use the British government against Hindu orthodoxy. He said that a society can never progress unless those who are at the bottom are given their dues. And the untouchables will never be delivered by the upper caste Hindus as the Hindu codified laws will hinder them in establishing equality. Therefore, help can come only from the third party, that is the British government. To use them for their aid, Ambedkar even cooperated with the Simon Commission and the First Round Table Conference, both of which was boycotted by Congress. When he demanded a separate electorate for the untouchables, he was regarded as an anti-national, one who wished to divide the country. When Gandhi started fasting to stop this, Ambedkar went to meet him and said (according to Gandhi's secretary Mahadev Desai), "I want political power for my community. That is indispensable for our survival".

The Poona Pact clashed on two issues – on caste and citizenship. Historian Prabodhan Pol regarded the issue as more political than social and said:

The Gandhi Ambedkar conflict was over how to understand caste. Ambedkar insisted, for the first time in India's modern history, that caste was a political question, and couldn't be addressed by social reforms only

Ambedkar's concept of democracy involved the depressed classes having the right to choose their representatives and having an electorate free of the influences of the upper caste Hindus.

Gandhiji wanted the country to stand together at any cost, while Ambedkar realized that there is no point in ideological unanimity when at heart you believe in the social hierarchy. Later in his life, this bitterness that arose in the pretext of the Poona Pact made Ambedkar calls the whole affair a 'huge whim' of a politician.

Although Poona Pact was not what Ambedkar dreamt of, still it produced a few positive outcomes. First of all, India, especially the upper caste India realized the political power of the Dalits. When Mahatma himself was ready to sacrifice his life to resist the untouchables from going separate ways, the nation realized that the downtrodden are not apolitical, they have a political voice that better not be ignored. Besides, it sealed his leadership among the Dalits of India. Ambedkar became the representative of the modern, educated and underprivileged Dalits who were evolving day by day as politically sentient masses. Ambedkar held the opinion that for the proper functioning of a society, it is of dire importance to turn the economy into a piece of state-driven machinery. In the 'State and Minorities' he said that the key industries should be run by the state. Both insurance and agriculture should be under the direct control of the state. He believed that equitable distribution of wealth would only be possible when the state would take the responsibility of planning the economic structure. Private enterprises would lead only to money-making and the wealth would be clustered within a few affluent groups. This would undermine the political democracy that was the pronounced aim of our constitution. In his last speech in the Constituent Assembly he stated

In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value …If we continue to deny it for long, we shall do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. (Constituent Assembly Debates 979).

Ambedkar stressed on the principles of democratic socialism as the necessary pattern of the Indian economy.

The theory of State socialism in India has been developed by the contributions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. He submitted a memorandum entitled "State and Minorities" to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation in the year 1946. In the memorandum, he stated that no natural citizen of India should face any discrimination on behalf of their caste, creed, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or other such discriminatory paradigms. Every citizen will have the right to vote along with other fundamental rights which are justifiable by the court of law. Supreme Court is designated as the protector of the Fundamental Rights of the citizens. Dr. Ambedkar prized Parliamentary Democracy as he thought it could strike a balance between two extremes, i.e. dictatorship and communism. In an article, he wrote: "If Parliamentary Democracy fails in this country, the only result will be rebellion, anarchy and communism" (Ambedkar, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches 149).

It is the sacred duty of the state machinery to safeguard Parliamentary Democracy and in doing so it might need to destroy the Shastras which instigate social discrimination. Besides, the state should take initiatives to eradicate poverty. The Scheduled Caste people suffer the most from poverty as they are chained into their situation by the cruel shackles of casteism. For this reason, he pointed out in his memorandum States and Minorities that the Scheduled Castes people shall enjoy the reserved seats in legislatures, executives, local bodies, in the Union Services and the Municipal and local Board Services, in the States and group Services for their upliftment of the Depressed Classes. Ambedkar did not deny the differences among people, but he demanded that differences should not arise in terms of opportunities. And this is, in his words, social justice. Ambedkar suggested the trinity of liberty, equality and fraternity as the foundations of social justice. In another of his essay titled "The Hindu Social Order: Its Essential Principle", he defined fraternity as "the name for the disposition of an individual to treat as the object of reference and love and the desire to be is unity with the fellow beings" (Ambedkar, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches 149).

Ambedkar, in Annihilation of Caste, discussed several ways through which the caste system can be abolished. First of all, he raised the argument that caste can be abolished by first abolishing sub-castes. But he refuted the argument himself as there are huge differences between the people of the same caste residing in different geographical locations.

The Brahmins of Northern and Central India are socially of lower grade, as compared with the Brahmins of the Deccan and Southern India. The former are only cooks and water-carriers while the latter occupy a high social position. (Annihilation of Caste 62).

Abolition of sub-castes, thus, may not lead to the abolition of castes and may even strengthen casteism. Another possible remedy proposed by many and evoked by Ambedkar is inter-dinning among castes. But Ambedkar refused that as an effective method too, as many castes already allow inter-dining, but that does not touch even the tip of the hair of casteism. According to Babasaheb, the only plausible remedy is inter-marriage.

Ambedkar congratulated the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal for taking this line of action. He also said that inter-marriages should be given political protection so that honourkillings, in the name of caste, can be prevented. When he delved deeper into the issue, he realized that what was resisting the Hindus from inter-dining and inter-marrying, was the age-old reverence to the Shastras. He added

Caste is not physical object like a wall of bricks or a line of 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 the mind. The destruction of caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It means a notional change. (Annihilation of Caste 64).

According to Babasaheb, what stood between religious reformation and Hinduism was the Brahmin class. It was the class that enjoyed the fruits of casteism mostly and therefore they strived a lot to maintain the sanctity of casteism in the social subconscious. Ambedkar divided Brahminism into two sub-sects, that is secular Brahminism and priestly Brahminism. As the names suggest, we may well understand that the priestly Brahminism would take much less pains to eradicate casteism. But there might be hopes with secular Brahminism. Ambedkar observed that even secular Brahminism would choose not to mess with casteism as once the system is gone, their community would be the most to lose:

In my judgment, it is useless to make a distinction between the secular Brahmins and the priestly Brahmins. Both are kith and kin. They are two arms of the same body and one bound to fight for the existence of the other. (Annihilation of Caste 67)

Ambedkar, in this context, quoted Professor Dicey in his Annihilation of Caste.

The Sultan could not, if he would, change the religion of the Mahommedan world, but even if he could do so, it is in the very highest degree improbable that the head of Mahommedanism should wish to overthrow the religion of Mahomet; the internal check on the exercise of the Sultan's power is at least as strong as the external limitation. People sometimes ask the idle question, why the Pope does not introduce this or that reform? The true answer is that a revolutionist is not the kind of man who becomes a Pope, and that the man who becomes a Pope has no wish to be a revolutionist.

As it is impossible for the Pope to become a revolutionist, it is equally impossible for a Brahmin, whether secular orthodox, to become a reformist. In every country, as we see, the intellectual class plays a vital role ideologically, if not politically. The intellectual class, endowed with an enlightened vision, can think out of the box and can dare to overthrow customs and beliefs that are needed to be disposed of. Thus, they play a decisive role in the law-making process, albeit indirectly. But it would be utterly wrong to mark an intellectual man to be a good person. Intellect is just a quality, not a virtue, and an intellectual man can be both selfish and mischief-monger or a heart of gold. The problem is that, in India, the intellectual class and Brahmins are almost synonymous. As the Brahmins are the most academically privileged (they are allowed to read the Vedas and other holy Shastras), they crowd the intellectual lot in India. Therefore, it is quite obvious that they would prefer not to reform the system of casteism. Brahmins in India, are given unquestionable interpretative authority, as Manu said in his smriti that we should take the word of the Brahmins as legal force regarding the points of Dharma that are not elaborated in Shastras. Ambedkar grieved-

A Hindu is not free to interpret his/her scriptures; thus, bhakti will be synonymous with blind faith. But when the three authorities prescribed by Manu are not unanimous on a particular issue, the question inevitably arises as to which scripture needs to be followed. Here one is not allowed to compare the two scriptures in the light of

rationality. Rather one authority is declared superior over others, without explaining why. Manu gave more importance to Shruti than Smriti. When conflict arises between two Smritis, the Manusmriti should be obeyed. Besides, Ambedkar explains how the notion of prayaschitta makes the otherwise impossible phenomenon of casteism possible. The Hindus cannot maintain the laws of casteism always, but whenever they fail to observe it, they are allowed to move ahead after performing a prayaschitta, which means penance. All these customs point out the absurdity and irrationality of Hinduism which perturbed rational minds like Ambedkar's.

But whether the doing of the deed takes time or whether it can be done quickly, you must not forget that if you wish to bring about a breach in the system, then you have got to apply the dynamite to the Vedas and the Shastras, which deny any part to reason; to the Vedas and Shastras, which deny any part to morality. You must destroy the religion of the Shrutis and the Smritis. Nothing else will avail. (Annihilation of Caste 73)

Although Ambedkar was disillusioned about Hinduism, he was not a crusader against all religions. He compared the existing religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and others and concluded that Buddhism is a more moralistic and humanitarian religion.

The religion of Buddha is morality. It is imbedded in religion. Buddhist religion is nothing if no morality. 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, "Buddha and the Future of His Religion")

Buddha gave an altogether different interpretation of the word Dhamma which is derived from the Sanskrit word Dharma. Dharma for the Hindus is the code of conduct that needs to be followed without giving them much thought. But Buddha introduced a dhamma that has morality as its core principle. Besides, Buddhism aimed to establish equality which was otherwise destroyed by the Chaturvarna system. To ensure equality Buddha allowed Bhikkhu from every caste and creed. He even prepared a separate sangha for women disciples. Ahimsa, which was championed by Gandhi, was also a key doctrine of Buddhism. But Ambedkar argued that Buddha taught many things other than Ahimsa and so it is silly to tag it as the pivotal concept of Buddhism.

What I wish to emphasize is that Buddha taught many other things besides Ahimsa. He taught as part of his religion, social freedom, intellectual freedom, economic freedom and political freedom. He taught equality, equality not between man and man only, but between man and woman. It would be difficult to find a religious teacher to compare with Buddha, whose teachings embrace so many aspects of the social life of people, whose doctrines are so modern and with main concern to give salvation to man in his life on earth and not to promise it in heaven after he is dead! (Ambedkar, "Buddha and the Future of His Religion")

Ambedkar elaborated on the contrasting characters of Hindu and Buddhist ascetics. While the Hindu monks denounced the society, and segregated themselves from the outside world, Buddhist monks lived as a part of the

society. Samgha was formed to maintain the ideal lifestyle of the bhikkhus, which will exhibit the dos and don'ts of an ideal Buddhist monk. Ambedkar realized that the time has passed when people followed their inherited religion blindly. This is an age of reason and religion is also scrutinized under the microscope of rationality.

The doctor was infamous as an atheist, especially after his public burning of Manusmriti (which is controversial till date). But as we have found out, he was neither a non-believer in religions nor he was a non-spiritual person. Where he differed from Gandhi and other atheists was that he refused to take anything at its face value. His rational mind realized that religion should be humanitarian, should exhibit equality and non-violence. He shunned those religions that failed to achieve those standards. Being a victim of religious discrimination, he had no sympathy for upholding a religious structure that had lost its sincerity long ego. Ambedkar might seem too harsh at times, but neither he nor the Dalits of India had the luxury of being pliable.

B.R.AMBEDKAR'S SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION ACTIONS

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar fought for democratic rights to representation in his grand scheme of Indian society reconstruction. Based on population strata, he reasoned that all sections of society, including women, should have representation rights in areas such as education, employment, agriculture, industry, bureaucracy, and government. He wanted to usher in a democratic society based on the Culture of Representations by branding the Brahmanical society as one based on Reservations, with education, rule, and economy reserved entirely for the Brahmanical castes and the Bahujans relegated to service. His memos to the Southborough Committee, the Montague-Chems fled committee, and the Muddiman Committee, as well as his arguments in Round Table Conferences, are based on the rights to representation as democratic rights.This event was significant because it helped members of society realise the importance of understanding that religion should no longer be inherited but should be rationally examined by everyone. It is also a deliberate attempt to degrade the Brahminical culture, which uses religion as a tool of oppression. Dr.B.R.Ambedkar observed that if the bottom-most stone in a structure is shifted, those above it are bound to be shaken out of their position. From 1936, the movement entered a new phase aimed at achieving "economic equality" in addition to social, legal, civil, and religious equality through the abolition of caste and class, viewing both Brahmanism and capitalism as necessary evils.The formation of the "Independent Labour Party" was a new experiment in forming the government of the "labouring classes," who are also the exploited castes in the Indian social system.

SAVIOR OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

To all of us, the name B.R.Ambedkar represents a fighter for both social justice and human rights. B.R.Ambedkar had been a victim of religious fanaticism and inhuman treatment at the hands of Hindu fundamentalists. He realised the perils of being untouchable and discovered that only social justice and human rights could transform the oppressed into respectable citizens in this country. Prof, A.M. Rajasekhariah has righty said: "B.R.Ambedkar strive his utmost to incorporate into the Constitution of India such provisions as would help establish a new social order

based on the lofty principle of political, economic and social justice for one and all.He attempted to effect all necessary changes in Hindu society in order to make it more democratic." B.R.Ambedkar's struggle for freedom during India's national movement is widely regarded as the noblest of all fights against oppression and injustice in human history. His unwavering struggle is exemplified by the sacrifice, courage, and endurance of a messianic figure. Why should his struggle be regarded as the noblest? Because he overcame the material hegemony of the tyrannical social system through spiritual strength derived from his love and affection for his people.India still has a long way to go in emancipating the oppressed, but we should not be afraid to acknowledge the benefit that has accrued to millions as a result of B.R.Ambedkar's noble struggle, which he demonstrated to them during his lifetime. It was difficult to understand the psychology of Hindus at the beginning of the twenty-first century when they decried B.R.Ambedkar's demands for equal status and human rights for the oppressed with caste Hindus. He was condemned for his speeches and utterances in which he advocated and firmly stood for freedom and equality for the dalits in India.It meant equality between inferiors and superiors to the diehards back then. Today, the same Hindus have realised that dalits remain far behind in terms of equal status and humane treatment in their society. Hindu freedom fighters such as Gandhi and Jinnah attempted to single out men such as B.R.Ambedkar who fought not only for political freedom but also for the social liberation of oppressed people.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Because of its emphasis on fraternity, B.R.Ambekar's concept of social justice can be interpreted as an expression of moral and religious fellow feeling. It could be true, because his concept arose from the social situation in India, where the poor, despite their worth, merit, education, wealth, higher positions in government, and so on, are victims of social injustice and discrimination. It is simply because they were born into families of lower castes. This is primarily a matter of social justice. 60 In fact, B.R.Ambedkar's concept of social justice is an expression of his "Social Humanism," which is inherent in his fundamental approach to human problems.His policies and actions have also demonstrated that his philosophy vision of social justice is achievable through man's purity of mind and righteous conduct. B.R.Ambedkar saw it in Buddhism because it is based on human values such as secular and moral justice, liberal republican relationships, equality of all men and women, respect for wives and children, and universal brotherhood. As a result, B.R.Ambedkar's concept of social justice emerged as a problem of respectful social life for all Indian citizens.

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