



Ambedkar's perception of Nationalism

Mohsina Khatoon

Phd Scholar, Jamia Millia Islamia University

Introduction

Ambedkar is always remembered as the liberator of the oppressed class in society. He influenced the political nationalism frame in India, he curtailed the important liberties and rights for the underprivileged in the country and also a compact combination of political rights and liberties for the Shudras who were oppressed population. He was known for his many achievements and also led the nation for freedom with others, but despite his achievements, the disgrace of untouchability was attached to him. Ambedkar had an unmistakable effect on identity and patriotism. As per him, identity is worried about awareness while patriotism is an inclination. He remained against the individuals who spread collective inclination for the sake of patriotism. He was additionally not a visually impaired adherent of enthusiasm, since daze nationalism represents an incredible peril to the ethos of vote based system. Simultaneously he started his work as a social reformer for Dalits. He faced various discrimination being a Dalit background but he raised his voice against the caste system that fragmented the nation. He developed his ideal of nation and nationalism. However few groups had incorrect thought that Ambedkar didn't take an interest in public development. They likewise committed an error that Ambedkar was a well-wisher of the British Government. Every one of the individuals who reprimanded him for not taking an interest in the public development had neglected to comprehend that independence from the British is of no significance, for Ambedkar, if there is a presence of the arrangement of subjugation and abuse. Ambedkar said that "if the opportunity of a nation can't be recognized from the opportunity of its kin, the genuine opportunity would be a deceiving idea".¹

¹ . Ishita Aditya Ra, An Insight into B.R Ambedkar's Idea of Nationalism in the context of India's Freedom Movement, Online available at: www.iiste.org, Vol. 1, No.1, 2011.

Ambedkar's all through his entire life was occupied in his battle against the matchless quality of the higher caste. Lower caste individuals, since the old occasions, were denied the base rights. They were not permitted to live with higher caste individuals. They reserved no privilege to take water from the town's wells, tanks, and so forth. They couldn't enter the sanctuary of God and their condition is socially and financially most exceedingly awful in the general public. Canines and felines were in preferable condition over discouraged classes. Ambedkar put forth hard attempts to inspire the state of the discouraged classes. In this specific situation, S. M. Gaikwad said that "Ambedkar's battle was a piece of the inside battle in the creation of a nation".²

Strengthen and Broaden the Social Base of Indian Nationalism

Ambedkar was against any development which was begun by Congress or the Communist Party of India. All pioneers were addressing themselves as Hindu public pioneers and Hindu patriotism had a bad situation for denied classes. The primary goal of these pioneers was to determine out the British, while Ambedkar said that Swaraj without the annihilation of caste had no significance. While giving a discourse in 1927 in Lahore, Ambedkar said that "there is no utilization of Swaraj on the off chance that it can't safeguard the interest of discouraged classes". He composed on 29 July 1927 "If Tilak had been brought into the world among the untouchables, he would not have raised the motto "Swaraj is my inheritance", yet he would raise the trademark "Destruction of untouchability is my inheritance". Indeed, even Gandhi showed his advantage and talked commonly in regards to the expulsion of untouchability from the general public yet it was distinctly in his addresses, not on the ground. After the 1932 Poona Pact, Gandhi showed interest to eliminate untouchability however he was unable to comprehend the way that taking food together or making an appeal to higher caste individuals to have a thoughtful disposition towards untouchables isn't sufficient. He undermined higher caste Hindus that "he would quick again if the change of untouchability was not persistently sought after and accomplished inside a quantifiable period"³.

By naming the untouchables as Harijans, Gandhi attempted to convince caste Hindus to shed their biases against the achchutas for example untouchables. The reason to embrace this new phrasing of Harijans instead of untouchables was to incite change in the heart and conduct of the Hindus towards untouchables. In any case, Gandhi fizzled in his main goal since he never needed to destroy the caste framework from the general public; while Ambedkar accepted that assuming we need to eliminate untouchability from the general public, the primary thing to be done is the destruction of caste. After some time Gandhi failed to

² . SM Gaikwad, Ambedkar and Indian Nationalism in Economic & Political Weekly, Vol. 33, No. 10, (March7-13, 1998), 515.

³ . Nanda B.R, Mahatma Gandhi: A Biography Complete and Unabridged, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2006. 350

remember words what he had said after the Poona Pact. In this unique circumstance, Ram Joshi assessed the Maharashtrian metropolitan intellectual elite's demeanour toward Gandhian change which depicts the milieu where Ambedkar worked, "They scorn Gandhi's conventional standpoint and methods of conduct. They considered his way of thinking obsolete and dismissed his program, which depended fundamentally on a worry for the provincial masses.....In any case, they had no interest boring change program which could neither animate their mind nor energize them to progressive action ".⁴ It was evident that Congress Party needed to prepare discouraged classes for their political reason. Their objective was not to acquire changes in India, and this was the explanation that Ambedkar joined the governmental issues to bring the changes for the oppressed.

Ambedkar's Vision of Nationalism through Caste Perspective

He revolted against the cruel practices of Hinduism which is supreme of the caste system. His method of removal of untouchability in India is also connected to repairing the institution of castism. He revolted against the cruel practice of Hinduism. His way to any problem was inclusive and aim to examine and repair the institution in question. Ambedkar's struggle for the annihilation of caste by proliferating a motion against the evils of sophisticated discrimination. Nationalism and patriotism are similar insofar as both words emphasize strong feelings for one's country. The country and identity are a wide issue and numerous researchers have given numerous definitions. Renan observed:— "that race must not be confounded with the nation. Ernest Renan characterized nation as " a huge assemblage of individuals, related with a specific region, that is adequately aware of its solidarity to see or to have an administration exceptionally its own⁵.

Ambedkar's self-generated idea of nationalism is also related to the Indian perspective. According to him, the nation can not form without society rather than that of the state. He was a bit philosophical because the nation can be formed as a unit but sociologically not possible because society is consists of many classes and if any nation's freedom will happen in real then there must be the freedom of different classes comprised in it, particularly of those who are treated as the servile classes⁶.

Ambedkar believed that nationalism is not simple and caste or race is not played an important role in the formation of the nation, others believe that caste and race are the most of the nation. He also emphasized a common area where people live together and are connected through common descent, history, culture and

⁴ . Chandra Ramesh, Dalit Identity in the New Millennium: The Ambedkar Era, Vol.4, Commonwealth Publishers, Delhi, 2003, 133

⁵ . Renan Ernest, "What is Nation?," Global Policy Forum (online), www.globalpolicy.org, com, 1882.

⁶ . Bharthi, K.S., Encyclopedia of Eminent Thinker, Vol 9, Concept Publishing Company, Delhi, 2008, 28

language. Therefore, he said that " feeling of oneness, the consciousness of a common heritage, consent desire and desire to live together, as the most important element of a nation " ⁷.

Ambedkar said that a country comprises of at any rate two things; initial a country incorporates the entire society. While Ambedkar discusses the general public, his attention was primarily on sociological viewpoint, and after, that on political and topographical points of view. Ambedkar attempted to interface the interest of the discouraged classes with patriotism. He commented, "It is just in a Swaraj Constitution, that you have any possibility of getting the political force into your hand without which you can't carry salvation to your kin." He realizes that without changes in the constitution, discouraged classes would not be patriots⁸. As per Ambedkar, "annulling untouchability was bound-up with that of an essential financial remaking of the Indian culture. The counter untouchability development was an articulation of the development of bigger public and human cognizance among the Indian public. It's anything but a fundamental piece of the public and popularity-based development of the Indian people.

That's the reason he needed government assistance from the discouraged classes. He needed equity and municipal ideal for those individuals who had been denied since old occasions. However analysis of Ambedkar's vision on the issue of nationalism is another matter, a sacred preserve of dominant few that issue is also important for dominant, therefore, an allowance of public intellectuals of Ambedkar would have anysay in the matter. Although academia was almost predication dominant, instead Ambedkar can never hope for entering the Indian Nationalist issue, but some wrote him as anti-nationalist even as an assistant of the British. On the other hand, Ambedkarities thought that he did not have to say or do anything on issues relating to nationalism.

Although, Ambedkar on nationalism profoundly gave the significance of freedom, but also gave clearly importance of human rights in the caste system. His leadership for the emancipation of untouchables who for years remained enslaved by Varna Hindus. He believed that a nation is composed of a society where classes and assorted sort of life are on one hand and the other. Therefore, a critic of that ideology by some congress leaders related to his activism against the Brahmanic system. However, in a true sense, it was nothing but a demand for equality in caste order and also national unity.

Therefore, the role of Ambedkar in the freedom struggle and national movement is a matter of criticism and Dalits' reaction against his criticism. So Ambedkar's thought in general and particular is not merely the ideas or opinions of a thinker. He attempted to elaborate a fully-fledged theory of nationalism tried to apply it critically to the Indian situation. In Ambedkar Nationalism handle internal tyranny as well as external

⁷. Mathew Thomas, Ambedkar: Reform or Revolution, 91. Kuber W.N, Builder of Modern India: B.R. Ambedkar, 115

⁸. Ibid, 115

ascendancy. He wanted equality and rights for the untouchables. He said that Indian society was nothing but a gradation of caste which comprise upper order and descending scale of contempt. The situation was different instead of removing the social evils, the British's attitude was different because intervention would be the rise of resistance⁹. Thus Ambedkar's perception of nationalism related to social tyranny within the caste system.

Struggle for Emancipation from Untouchability

Many criticized him for his opposition to the freedom struggle led by congress, but could not understand that internal freedom was really important from caste Skelton other than external freedom. Alternately, Ambedkar thought that country freedom is necessary without ignoring freedom among people¹⁰.

He was anxious about casteism being more prevalent at the local and provincial levels during national movement and his protest against Brahmanism and he assumed that the government at this level might not guard the rights of lower caste underneath the pressure of caste because the national government is less prejudiced by these pressures, they will ensure protection to lower caste. Varna and caste were evil ideas according to him.

He was not only a political leader but also a social reformer for the cause of untouchability. During colonial rule, Britishers introduced some representative's institutions in India. Nevertheless, Ambedkar remonstrated that predicament of the untouchables did not change under British rule. British rulers were not interested to remove untouchability due to fairness that would save them from the upper caste's anger. Thus British rulers did not embolden the social reforms. On Top of that upper castes and untouchables were opposed to each other. Ambedkar wanted support from British rule for the benefit of untouchables but they ignored it. Ambedkar wanted equality within the caste order with the hope of reforms on economic, political and elevated society. However, he struggled to prevail over untouchability throw out Hinduism orthodoxy rules.

Once he said " I thought Hindu society folded with good or bad evil...I thought for a long to discard evils and get Depressed Classes in subsuming of equality. Experience has taught me better and persuaded me to the Depressed Classes. There can be no equality among Hindus because inequality rest on the foundations of Hinduism¹¹.The untouchability system was favourable for the upper order as there was a master class and a

⁹ . Dr Ambedkar, Writing and speeches, vol. 2, 1982, pp 504-505

¹⁰ . Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p247

¹¹ . B. G. Kunte, comp. Source Material on Dr Babasheb Ambedkar and the Movement of Untouchables (Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1982), vol. 1: 250-51. Also see Ibid., 135and368-69

servile class. It was also a worse economic system than slavery. He thought that untouchables would have no privileges in Swaraj and only perpetuation in slavery¹².

Ambedkar demanded the life of untouchables should be improved on every level. He presumed that political reform without social reform is just like a farce. He sought freedom of untouchable on the social, economic, political levels. He said that caste is not only limited to a social level, it is also a division of labourers that's why he fought against caste-based occupations. He organized many farmers' protests and labour strikes and for labour unity, he formed the Independent Labour Party. In his all economic struggles, khoti and Mahar Vatan were especially powerful. The period from 1936 to 1942 were radical years in Ambedkar's movement. In this period we can see the fusion of class and caste in his ideology. Ambedkar had been so much concerned about the issues of the down-trodden, that he founded an independent labour party in August 1936, and drew up a comprehensive program that answered all the immediate needs and grievances of the landless, poor tenants, agriculture and industrial workers. Ambedkar also attended all the three Round table conferences (1930-32) in London and each time, forcefully projected his views in the interest of the 'untouchable'. According to Ambedkar, the 'Caste system is not merely a division of labour, It is also a division of labourers'¹³. Another very important remedy that Ambedkar upheld was that the untouchables should free themselves of the village community and its economic bondage. In the traditional setup, the untouchables were bound to specific occupations. They were dependent upon the caste Hindus for their sustenance. Even for meagre returns, they had to submit themselves to the domination of caste Hindus. He was aware of the economic dimension of their servitude and he always insisted that the untouchables should stop doing their traditional work. Instead, they should acquire new skills and start new professions¹⁴.

Ambedkar needed the profound solidarity of individuals. He said that we ought to join politically as well as there should be a genuine association of substance, for example, social solidarity. He accepted that without social solidarity, political solidarity is of no utilization. As per him, the solidarity of the nation isn't just political and social, yet in addition profound; and the otherworldly perspective is the preeminent worry of the opportunity development. Considering Ambedkar, "patriotism implies articulation of internal solidarity of a group and it's anything but a cycle of social osmosis. Consequently, regardless of caste, shading and doctrine, patriotism gets wonderful agreement if the social fellowship of men wins wherever inside a country. To Ambedkar, "patriotism is a refutation of caste soul and caste soul is only profound established communalism. He accentuated to battle against caste issues, communalism and nonconformity since he was of the assessment that these social wrongs partition individuals into little social units which are against the

¹² . W.N.Kuber, Dr Ambedkar –A critical study.p169

¹³ . Ibid, Vol-1, p.47.

¹⁴ . Keer, Dhananjay, 'Ambedkar - Life and Mission', Bombay, 1961

soul of nationalism¹⁵. Ambedkar affected ethnicity and patriotism. Both are distinctive mental conditions of the human psyche. Ambedkar says that "identity cognizance's of a kind, the consciousness of the presence of that family relationship"¹⁶.

He further said that "the sensation of ethnicity might be available yet the sensation of patriotism may not." Ambedkar was against Hindu patriotism because, as far as he might be concerned, Hindu patriotism needs to set up Brahmanism. Ambedkar's patriotism was unique to Raja Ram Mohan Roy, M. K. Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's patriotism. In the perspective of Ambedkar, Hindu patriotism was distinctly for higher classes wherein there was a bad situation for lower caste and no portrayal of lower-caste individuals. That is the reason Ambedkar was against Indian social construction because Indian social design was a part of society was out of patriotism. Ambedkar felt that patriotism which has been established in the Hindu religion can't take care of the issues of the discouraged class. The caste framework is against the soul of patriotism. It has not just obliterated all obliging relationships of individuals yet additionally, it has debilitated India. Ambedkar accepted that caste has finished public soul as well as annihilated the feeling of public cause. He said that caste is the mother of communalism.

Social Integration

According to B. R. Ambedkar, "Society is always composed of Classes. Their basis may differ. They may be economic or intellectual or social, but an individual in a society is always a member of a class"¹⁷. He believed that the caste system is only related to the upper caste level, he stood and struggled for not only social cohesiveness but also for the upliftment of untouchables. According to Ambedkar, caste was not only a social hierarchy but also associate with issues of sovereignty¹⁸. He also assumed that caste is a hurdle in economic progress because it is connected with surplus based inequality and exploitation. Ambedkar takes the example of an imaginary group that desires to make itself into a caste and analyses what means it will have to adapt to make itself endogamous. Therefore he said that the caste system is not merely division of labour but also division of labourers¹⁹.

¹⁵ . Ishita Aditya Ra, An Insight into B.R Ambedkar's Idea of Nationalism in the Context of India's Freedom Movement, Online available at: www.iiste.org, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2011

¹⁶ . Kuber W. N, Builder of Modern India, 115

¹⁷ . Social Philosophy of Dr B. R. Ambedkar, http://wikieducator.org/SOCIAL_PHILOSOPHY_OF_DR_B_R_AMBEDKAR2-10-2016, 3.10.

¹⁸ . Rege Sharmila, (Introduction and Selection), (2013), Against the Madness of Manu: B. R. Ambedkar's Writings on Brahmanical Patriarchy, Navayana Publications, New Delhi, p. 72.

¹⁹ . Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari (ed.), (1987), Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, Second Edition, (2008), Education Department, Govt. of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 67.

He called it ludicrous of the idea of racial purity and said the annihilation would not be removed through inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriages. He said "The real method of breaking up the Caste System was not to bring about inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which Caste was founded,"²⁰.

Conclusion

Ambedkar said that a nation also requires an area because without an area that consisted of rivers, mountains, forests, etc. a nation cannot be formed. Everyone requires a territory which they called their own country. Ambedkar emphasized the consciousness of a common area in which they lived together and people can be united by common descent, history, culture and language. He said that "feeling of oneness, the consciousness of a common heritage, consent and desire to live together, as the most important element of a nation.

Ambedkar needed the total government assistance of the oppressed and poor and was supportive of equality. He was against outside control and interior abuse that is the reason he needed opportunity for all and not for a little part of the general public. Ambedkar's thought of patriotism results fundamentally from the division between the political and the social. He saw that the patriot chiefs like Gandhi and other Hindu patriots laid exorbitant accentuation on the political opportunity and nearly disregarded the social part of patriotism. However, Ambedkar needed to accomplish social opportunity first and after that political opportunity. It is the case

that Ambedkar never took an interest in the opportunity battle; in any case, it's anything but a reality that he gave for what seems like forever in setting up obvious opportunity in the country where there is no misuse of the discouraged and underestimated areas. Ambedkar is hailed as the liberator of the oppressed class in the country. He influenced the Indian political spot when India was undergoing a series of political calamities. He curtailed the important liberties and rights for the underprivileged in the country and also a compact combination of political rights and liberties for the Shudras who were oppressed populations. Ambedkar dismissed the association of society based on Chaturvarna and gave a call for revamping of society on the upsides of Fraternity, Liberty and Equality.

To Ambedkar, a few angles, thoughts or beliefs of the past were revolting. Ambedkar appropriately rebelled against the shifty practice of the Hindus an unfair caste framework. He went to some length to follow the beginning of the Shudras and their position in the Hindu society. A few of his reactions had the earmarks of being severe and inadmissible to the antiquated and traditionalist Hindus. A portion of his striking assertions

²⁰. Vasant Moon (Ed)...Vol.1, p.21

excited contentions and discussions. His book on the 'Annihilation of Caste' is a reasonable illustration of his strong mentality and theory. At the point when the coordinators of the Jat Pat Todak Mandal of Punjab needed him to restrain a portion of the perceptions of his location to be conveyed before the social occasion of the Mandal, Ambedkar wouldn't permit any adjustment and proceeded with the distribution of the location which was not conveyed because of the distinctions. Thus Ambedkar's perception of nationalism was different from the main mode of nationalism and the question of untouchability was a major struggle.

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