



RELEVANCE OF AMBEDKAR'S PHILOSOPHY IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

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Abstract

The independence of a nation does not equate always to the freedom of the people living in that nation. There could be a subset of the population that holds a disproportionate share of the influence and authority of the state. Prior to the implementation of the Indian Constitution, the idea of the status of a certain group of people was predicated on the fact that they were born into that group, rather than on the talents and qualities of the individuals themselves. The basic foundations of Indian society were built on a foundation of graded inequity because religious dogmas had eaten away at the country's social fabric. Dr. Ambedkar served as Chairman of the Drafting Committee that was established in 1947 by the Constituent Assembly to write a constitution for an independent India. The committee was entrusted with a task to write a constitution for India. Dr. Ambedkar could not find satisfaction in either Walter Bagehot's or Abraham Lincoln's notions of democracy. Bagehot describes democracy as a government by debate but Abraham Lincoln referred to it as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Ambedkar meant to refer to democracy as substantial changes in the social and economic lives of the people, as well as the acceptance of such changes by the people without resorting to disagreements or violence. He wished to eliminate the paradox that was brought about by the economic and social disparities. He desired to see the idea of one man, one vote, and one value established not just in the political life of India, but also in the social and economic life of the country. He said that we need to make our political democracy a social democracy as well. If social democracy is not as its foundation, political democracy will not survive for very long. Dr. Ambedkar's whole life may be summed up as a brave fight against social injustice, cruel treatment, and uneven treatment at every turn. This fight was nonstop, unceasing, and required him to be courageous at all times. He was the consummate speaker for the voiceless members of society, including women, landless labourers, small peasant farmers, and working-class employees. As a result, it is important to bring up certain questions in order to contemplate his legacy. Have his projects developed in the manner that he had hoped for them to? Is India heading in the path that he considered to be the best option? Have his inheritors enshrined his views as orthodoxy or expanded upon them while tackling new challenges?

Key words: Constitution, Constituent Assembly, Democracy, Reforms.

INTRODUCTION

Ambedkar was quoted as saying, "A great man is distinct from an outstanding one in that he is willing to be the servant of the community. The goal of human society should be to provide



conditions in which every individual is able to have a full and satisfying life, one that focuses equally on the development of the mind and the gratification of fundamental bodily needs. It entails the removal of any and all social barriers that exist between individual humans. The value of a man, not his origin, is the standard by which he must be judged. He encourage to treat each other with respect and equality. This is the way of life that is founded on the principles of liberty, equality, and brotherhood.

Ambedkar was the first Indian political theorist to grasp that the Western model of democracy can't be applied to India, but he was certainly the most influential. Ambedkar did not find sufficient the concepts of democracy offered by Walter Bagehot or Abraham Lincoln. Bagehot describes democracy as government by discussion, whereas Lincoln defines it as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. When Ambedkar speaks about the democracy, he is referring to a system of governance that is run by the people for the people.

Changes of a fundamental nature in the social and economic lives of the people, as well as an acceptance of such changes on the part of the people, without a resumption of fighting and carnage. He had the goal of eliminating the inconsistencies that were brought about by the economic and social disparities. He desired to see the idea of one man, one vote, and one value established not just in the political life of India, but also in the social and economic life of the country. In other words, he desired for both political democracy and social democracy simultaneously. He was aware of the social and economic inequities that the Indian people face, which contribute to the erosion of their sense of national identity. He said that We need to make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Without social democracy as its foundation, political democracy will not survive for very long.

His ideas on collectivism and state socialism are quite close to one another. The following is a list of the primary characteristics that define Dr. Ambedkar's brand of socialism:

- Criticism of the current social, political, and economic system, which is blamed for creating an unfair society.
- An advocate for a new system based on the principle that each individual has one man, one value, and one vote.
- A conviction that this goal may be accomplished through the combination of parliamentary democracy and state socialism.
- The idea that the mentality of Hindus and corrupt social institutions are to blame for the immorality of the established order as it exists now.



- A plan of activities that will lead to the ideal, which can only be accomplished through the use of constitutional means; and
- A revolutionary desire to create social democracy in order to carry out the agenda of social solidarity.

AMBEDKAR AS AN ARCHITECT OF THE MODERN INDIA

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar is, without a doubt, one of the many outstanding persons who have been of service to India from the very beginning. His contribution to the making of contemporary India is not confined to drafting the constitution or advocating for the rights of dalits and socio-religious changes. He also played a significant role in the Indian independence movement. As a result, it is essential to keep in mind the role he played in the other arenas throughout the pivotal time period in which modern India was taking form. Before India gained its independence, Dr. Ambedkar established the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in order to advocate for the rights of workers at a time when Congress was on the fence on the subject. His party advocated stricter labour regulations, remunerative salaries, to set maximum hours of work, paid leave, and hygienic housing at a price that was affordable. It urged the abolition of methods and a mentality that were rooted in feudalism and called for the implementation of a comprehensive programme to enhance educational facilities in technical colleges. It was largely due to his efforts that the manufacturing shift was shortened from 14 to 8 hours. He is also recognised for drafting several laws for the welfare of women workers. Some of the legislation that he drafted that deserve special notice include the Women and Child Labor Protection Act, the Maternity benefit for women, and the Women Labour Welfare. In addition to that, the Indian Factory Act was drafted when he was in charge. His tireless efforts were largely responsible for the establishment of the National Employment Agency (Employment Exchange). Dr. Ambedkar was also responsible for the establishment of the Employees State Insurance (ESI) programme, which was designed to provide employees access to medical care, compensation for accidents, insurance, and other benefits. On January 31, 1944, Dr. Ambedkar was also crucial in the enactment of the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Amendment Bill for the benefit of mine employees. This bill was passed because of Dr. Ambedkar's efforts. On April 8, 1946, he established the Mica Mines Labor Welfare Fund, which provided financial assistance to the employees in the form of assistance with housing, water supply, education, entertainment, and cooperative arrangements. In addition to this, it is widely believed that he was the driving force behind the establishment of a number of assistance programmes for



employees, such as the Dearness Allowance (DA), the Leave Benefit to Piece Workers, and the Labour Welfare Funds. In 1943, he introduced the Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill, which would have made it mandatory for businesses to recognise labour unions. The Health Insurance Scheme, the Factory Amendment Act, the Labour Disputes Act, and the establishment of minimum wages are some of the other key steps taken by him to safeguard the welfare of the employees. These initiatives are in addition to the ones that have been discussed above.

INDIA'S CURRENCY PROBLEM

The Administration and Finance of the East India Company, The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, and The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution are three fundamental books on the Indian economy that were authored by Dr. Ambedkar, who was trained as an economist. The concepts that Dr. Ambedkar provided to the Hilton Young Commission served as the foundation for the establishment of the Reserve Bank of India, often known as the RBI. The fact that he was also the creator of the Finance Commission of India, which is now one of the most significant constitutional bodies, is of equal importance (it is appointed every 5 years and defines the financial relation between the centre and the states).

AGRICULTURE AND LAND REFORMS

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has spearheaded the farmer's movement in addition to doing an in-depth study of Indian agriculture, and organised seminars and conferences in an effort to find solutions to the challenges faced by farmers and agriculture, and more. His ideas about farming can be seen in the articles Small Holdings in Indian and their Remedies and Status and Minorities, both of which he authored (1947). He mentioned that the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a small number of people is a critical issue facing Indian agriculture. This issue causes a number of problems, including challenges in cultivation and utilisation of resources, rising prices, insufficient production, inadequate income, and a lower standard of living. According to Dr. Ambedkar, agricultural productivity is tied not just to the amount of holdings of land but also to other elements such as capital, labour, and other inputs. This is the case even if land size is a component in agricultural productivity. Therefore, even a vast plot of land may become unproductive if the necessary resources, such as cash, labour, etc., are not accessible in sufficient quantities and of sufficient quality. On the other hand, a smaller amount of land may become productive if sufficient amounts of these resources are accessible. After the country gained its independence, a law called the Land Ceiling Act was enacted. He also



discussed how the enslavement and exploitation of labour that was bound by the caste system was immensely detrimental to the development of the economy, and he advocated for the eradication of this practise. Collective farming, economic holding of land or equal distribution of land, large-scale industrialization, provision of money, water, seeds, and fertilisers by the government, cultivation of waste land by allotting waste land to landless labour, minimum wages to labourers, and control and regulation of private lenders of loan to farmers are his other suggestions for solving the problem of agriculture.

NATIONALISATION OF INDUSTRIES

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was of the opinion that rapid industrialization in India was necessary for India to achieve its full potential. According to him, the production of vital items for widespread consumption is contingent upon the creation of massive job opportunities. The use of raw resources, a reduction in dependency on other countries, and an increase in the safety of working conditions all contribute to the country's total economic growth as a result of this. Due to a lack of large-scale investments, industries in the private sector are unable to grow to become major economic players. Therefore, the government need to take the initiative to launch large-scale enterprises. The private sector ought to be the primary home for smaller businesses. It is necessary to nationalise both the insurance and transportation industries.

The right to go on strike need to be extended to workers. Following the country's independence, the government of India has adopted an industrial strategy that is consistent with Dr. Ambedkar's anticipations.

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has provided the constitution committee with his proposal for a democratic state socialist system. The primary aspects of it are as follows:

- The state ought to be the only owner of and operator in all primary industries.
- The state needs to take over management of both the insurance industry and the agricultural sector.
- State responsibility for the upkeep of productive resources.
- Fair and balanced distribution of the common produce.
- Bonds are offered as a method of provision for remuneration in the event of the purchase of land or industry.
- The division of a village's land and resources among the families living there as part of a system of communal farming.



- There is no discrimination in any capacity, including that of landlord, renter, or agricultural labourer.
- Collective farming would get support from the government in the form of all agricultural inputs, including money, seeds, fertiliser, and so on.
- Only once the land revenue tax has been paid can the profits from agriculture be distributed.
- Those who do not adhere to the regulations will face the appropriate punishment.

FREE ENTERPRISES ECONOMY

Surprisingly, Dr. Ambedkar had previously proposed a free market economy, globalisation, liberalisation, and privatisation as early as in 1923. The Indian government has only recently implemented this approach. In this regard, Dr. Ambedkar was ahead of his time by a century. It was emphasised by him that the value of a rupee, also known as its price, must be maintained in order for the policy of free economy to be effective.

POPULATION CONTROL – FAMILY PLANNING

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was quoted as saying that it is hard to maintain control over the country's economy if there is no control over the people. As a result, he presented an impassioned case for population control and family planning in India. Later on, the government of India made the decision to implement family planning as a national policy, which was consistent with his views at the time.

ECONOMIC UPLIFTMENT OF INDIAN WOMEN

It is impossible to overstate the importance of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's contribution to the advancement of women and the economy. According to him, the inclusion of women in the process of economic growth is impossible without first elevating their social position and ensuring that they are treated equally. In spite of this, India's economic development is being held back by the precarious financial situation of the country's women. Therefore, it is necessary to work toward bettering the economic conditions of women and to provide them equal rights and the ability to pursue whatever vocation they want.

CONCEPT OF HUMAN CAPITAL

Dr. Ambedkar claimed that the notion of human capital in India is pointless if the poorer and more oppressed untouchable dalits are not acknowledged by other classes as human beings with equal social status and religious grounding. Ambedkar used the term untouchability. As a result, India's human capital cannot be put to use in the country's economic growth at this time.



An Appraisal

There are a large number of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) in India and other countries that bear the name Babasaheb Ambedkar. The genuine ideas that Babasaheb Ambedkar had are, however, not getting through to the general public in the way that would be ideal. The non-governmental organisations are more concerned with making money off of the government's coffers than they are with disseminating the actual message that Ambedkar wanted to get out. There is a significant challenge to the idea which Ambedkar propagated towards the upliftment of the dalits and the same is posed by the existence of a neo-pseudo-rich culture among dalits who have prospered much as. This class within the caste in reality had the potential to contribute toward the propagation of Ambedkar's ideas, but instead they are preoccupied with enjoying a seemingly rich culture and passing on the same values to their offspring. They do not put their children in situations where they will have to fight in life; rather, they make life easier for their children. In point of fact, they are unaware of the long-term repercussions that may result from the rapidly developing problem of affluent culture.

Ambedkar is being worshipped as a divinity whereas he predicted that the day when people begin to worship him and adorn his monuments and photographs with flowers would be the day that he has really passed away. It would be in direct opposition to Babasaheb Ambedkar's ideology for us to place Babasaheb in the same pantheon as the Hindu gods if we did this. What is required, rather than worshipping, is that people follow Ambedkar's thinking.

His ideology is not being passed on to the subsequent generation there is a lack or gap as the there are fewer people who adhere to his social philosophy in true sense. Because of commercialization and economic expansion in a more competitive market, our people can only think along such lines. There are very few people that subscribe to the social philosophy. There are very few committed people who are able to step up and move our goal forward on a daily basis. Ideology on its own in the context of social life is not connected with religious and spiritual ideology, the followers of which are far more numerous than followers of social ideology. It has been observed that religious and spiritual ideology is coming to dominate social ideology. The reality that more and more Dalits in India are embracing some kind of spiritual-religious philosophy including the philosophy of our own saints and revolutionaries, is something that is occurring throughout India. There is no room for doubt in the idea that unadulterated spiritual philosophy is detrimental to the human psyche. A mentality that is not strong cannot even comprehend the concept of social revolution. The contribution of



Babasaheb to the development of contemporary India has been largely ignored by Indian media, politicians, intellectuals, and historians.

CONCLUSION

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who was instrumental in drafting of our constitution. He made the observation that democracy is a type of governance that makes it possible to bring about revolutionary changes in the economic and social lives of peoples without the use of violence. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was adamant in his belief that the two fundamental shortcomings in Indian society—namely, the absence of equality in its entirety and a failure to recognise the principle of fraternity—would be the greatest obstacle for achieving justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity as a means of preserving the integrity of the Indian Union. Specifically, he believed that these shortcomings would prevent the country from achieving unity and integrity. Therefore, he issued a warning inside the Constituent Assembly itself, On the 26th day of January in the year 1950, we are going to start living a life full with contrasts. In matters pertaining to politics, we are going to acknowledge the concept of one man, one vote, as well as one vote, one value. Because of the way that our society and economy are structured, we will never be able to accept the concept of one man, one value in our everyday social and economic interactions. How much longer are we going to continue living a life full with contradictions? How much longer do you think we can go on denying equality in our social and economic life? If we persist in denying its existence for an extended period of time, we will put our democratic system in jeopardy. This paradox has to be resolved as soon as humanly feasible; otherwise, people who are oppressed by inequality will destabilise the framework of democracy that this Assembly has worked so hard to build. We are able to fully portray the picture the importance of the aforementioned words made by this great intellectual giant in the context of the actions of the Naxalites, the crisis in Kashmir, and other turmoil that is developing with each passing day in India. To sum up, it is emphasised that what we want to say while discussing Ambedkar and his philosophy, we should make an effort to provide the general public with a perspective that is realistic and rationalistic of the principles and ideas that Babasaheb Ambedkar had. We also have a responsibility to make an effort to transmit the Ambedkar’s philosophy to subsequent generations by developing strategies and techniques for doing so. It is imperative that his techniques be adapted to the circumstances of the current day in order to place political power in the hands of the majority, which will result in the eradication



of caste through the socio-educational and economic advancement of the majority. Ambedkar was a valiant fighter for human freedom and dignity, an erudite scholar and thinker of international repute, and one of the adherents of the twentieth century renaissance. The life and work of Ambedkar will continue to serve as a source of motivation for men and women all over the world for a considerable amount of time in the future.

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