



ROLE OF CASTE AND RELIGION IN INDIA AMBEDKAR'S OWN CONCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, more often known as B.R. Ambedkar, was a major figure in the development of modern India as a social reformer, jurist, and political leader. This abstract delves into the profound influence of Ambedkar's worldview on the development of modern India. Social equity, political freedom, and economic progress in India are only a few of the areas where Ambedkar's ideas and values live on. This abstract first examines Ambedkar's dogged pursuit of equality and social justice. Ambedkar campaigned against caste inequality and advocated for the Dalits (previously known as untouchables) and other oppressed and underprivileged people. As a result of his work to end untouchability and elevate society's underdogs, India's constitution now includes affirmative action rules that guarantee reserved seats in educational institutions, places of employment, and political participation. Second, the important role Ambedkar had in laying the groundwork for India's democracy is discussed here. Ambedkar, as the primary author of India's founding document, laid the groundwork for a free and fair society by guaranteeing citizens' basic freedoms and the democratic principles and institutions of India are still influenced by his focus on social democracy with an inclusive approach.

KEYWORDS: Caste and Religion, Ambedkar's Own Conception, caste inequality, democratic principles, social democracy, constitutional protections.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Ambedkar shone as a great constitutional lawyer, a prominent social reformer, a pioneering anthropology and sociologist, an unrelenting campaigner for social justice, and the crown jewel of contemporary India. On April 14th, 1891, he was born into the untouchable Mahars caste in the Indian state of Maharashtra. Bhim's hometown was the little village of Ambevade, located in the Hatnagiri District in the state of Maharashtra. The Mahars are a people that farm, tend to their villages, and fight for their land. The Bhakti faith of Kabir was followed at home. The family has always maintained staunch anti-caste, anti-untouchability, and

anti-varna views. Maloji Sakpal was his grandfather, and Ramji Sakpal was his great-grandfather on his father's side. The late Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's dad taught at a military academy. Ramji Sakpal, a subedar in the Indian Army, settled in the Ratnagiri District. When Dr. Ambedkar was just two years old, his father, Ramji Sakpal, resigned from the military and the family relocated to Dapoli, where Bhim enrolled in the local primary school.

Dr. Ambedkar and his brother Balram attended primary and secondary school at Satara. Dr. Ambedkar's struggles with social acceptance stemmed from his Mahar caste. While traveling by bullock wagon to see his father at his cashier job in



Goregaon, he was thrown to the ground. After being confronted by higher caste Hindus who knew Dr. Ambedkar was there illegally taking water, he was compelled to leave a public watering hole. Before he realized he belonged to an untouchable caste, he was beaten until he was black and blue. Both the barbershop and the laundry said they couldn't cut his hair because of the risk of infection. After experiencing such humiliation, he likely developed a strong dislike for those who were classified as varna, caste, or untouchable.

Dr. Ambedkar's teachers at the time had mixed feelings about him due to his intelligence and charisma. Ambedkar, a Brahmin teacher, worked at the high school. According to Bhim's Brahmin guide, he should drop the "Ambedkar" suffix and go by "Ambedkar" instead of his given name, Bhimrao Ramji. The following is a brief history of how "Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar" became his well-known moniker. When Ramji Sakpal enrolled his sons in Maratha High School and later moved them to Elphinstone High School, his sisters Manjula and Tulsi were already married and settling down in Bombay. The atmosphere of the government building. High schools were also a place where untouchability and casteism were practiced.

However, Dr. Ambedkar's Brahmin teachers discouraged him from studying Sanskrit. That's an insult to Dr. Ambedkar! He put forth a lot of time and effort and passed the 1907 Matriculation Exam. Sri. The influential educator and reformer S. gave him a copy of the latest book, "Life of Goutam Buddha." Keluskar, K.

Dr. Ambedkar was a brilliant constitutional lawyer, a leading social

reformer, a leading anthropologist and sociologist, a renowned economist, a prominent political leader, a tireless anthropologist and sociologist, a profound thinker like Martin Luther to protestant Christians, and the crowning glory and crown jewel of modern India. On April 14, 1891, he joined the millions of other untouchable members of the Mahars caste in Maharastra. Ambevade, a tiny hamlet in the Hatnagiri District of Maharastra State, was Bhim's ancestral village. The Mahars work as farmers, domestics, and warriors. Kabir's Bhakti religion was practiced in the household. Ramji Sakpal, Bhimabai, and Maloji Sakpal, three generations back, were staunch opponents of the caste system. Dr. B. Ambedkar's father was a military school educator. Former army subedar Ramji Sakpal made his home in Ratnagiri District. Dr. Ambedkar's father, Ramji Sakpal, resigned from the military when Bhim was just two years old, and the family moved to Dapoli, where Bhim attended a local primary school.

Dr. Ambedkar finished elementary school in Satara, and he and his brother Balram also enrolled in high school there. Dr. Ambedkar was bullied for being a member of the Mahar caste while he was in school. He was traveling with his father, a cashier in Goregaon, when the bullock cart he was riding in overturned.

Dr. Ambedkar was caught by upper caste Hindus while sipping water from a public water stream. He was thrashed till he was black and blue before he understood that he was a member of an untouchable caste. After barbers stopped cutting his hair because he contaminated their razors, laundromats stopped cleaning his garments. All those cruel denials and mistreatments must have made him hate



varna, caste, and untouchable with a passion.

AMBEDKAR'S INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION

The notion of Brahma, the ultimate reality, is central to Hinduism. The Hindu faith teaches that all people are created equal. Manusmriti proposes Varna as the basis for the Hindu caste system. Dr. Ambedkar converted to a different faith. He despised hypocrisy and saw no truth in Hinduism. Harijan Sevak Sangha is a Congress faction in his mind. Initially, he chose to accept J.U.UAJLOU.L. Sikhism is not a foreign religion, but an offspring of Hinduism, according to the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha. Sikhs were authorized to join the Hindu Mahasabha and were allowed to communicate with Hindus. Dr. Ambedkar met with De Moonje in Rajgriha on July 18th, 1936 to discuss converting to Hinduism.

Hinduism is the most recent school of social thinking to emerge in India, as stated by Dr. Ambedkar. 1 . He reasoned that as under caused Buddhism to die out in India.

1. The rise of V aishnavaitism and Saivaism.
2. The Muslim invasion in India.

Over five thousand Bhikkus were slaughtered when Sultan Allauddin invaded Bihar. The Bhikkus, or Buddhist monks, escaped to neighboring nations like as China, Nepal, and Tibet. Because of this, 90% of the Buddhist population had abandoned their faith and converted to Hinduism. He thinks Buddhism is more challenging to follow than other faiths. Dr. Ambedkar once said, "I believe that religion is necessary for the mankind. If religion were to go out, civilization would vanish with it. In the end, no government

can protect and punish its people as effectively as niti or dharma.

On January 24, 1954, the first All India Sai Devotees Convention took place at Bombay's Zeviyar College. In the opening ceremony, Dr. Ambedkar gave a speech. As the author of an essay titled "It is criminal to collect money in the name of religion and waste it" explains, in the beginning religion was about a man's own salvation. In Hinduism, there are a lot of different types of Religious Gun1. God is worshiped by men because he provides for all their needs. The majority of Hindus worship idols because it gives them what they desire, whether it be children, wealth, or protection from natural disasters. Idols, Sadhus, Saints, and those who perform miracles are integral parts of every major religion in India. He thinks Hinduism is completely devoid of morals. Making money from religion is a full-time job. In the name of God, it commits a heinous crime. That's just a waste of cash.

The Buddhist practice of Dana Paramita is central to Buddhist belief. The following are topics that Dr. Ambedkar advised his disciples address via Dana on:

1. Dana for hospitals.
2. Dana for education.
3. Dana for establishing small scale industries.
4. Dana for helpless and the widows.
5. Dana for trade or industries.

Above all else, he told his people, these Danas are what make the name Baba meaningful. According to him, "wasting money collected in the name of religion is a crime." Gautam Buddha, Kabir, and Mahatma Jatiba Phule were all important to Dr. Ambedkar, and he also revered knowledge, dignity, and moral strength. He thinks that education is crucial for



everyone's personal development. He has always wanted to provide his people with better government services. Only Buddhism, in his view, has a chance against communism.

Ambedkar evaluated the essential aspects of world religions like Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity from the perspective of the socioeconomic structure of India. Buddhism, Sikhism, and the Jain faiths. He did not see religion as a means to the redemption of human beings' spirits. Religion, in his view, is a "social doctrine" that helps people live in peace with one another. Neither "theology" nor "religion" are synonymous with his philosophy of religion notion. Theology is the study of God, his characteristics, and his roles in the universe. The divine is the focus of the religion. Belief in a God who will exist forever and will take care of the world's problems on his own sums up the meaning of this religion. Punishment, according to religious doctrine, is determined by a person's karmic debts. Religion is defined as "belief in God, belief in soul, worship of God, curing of the erring soul, propitiating God by prayers, ceremonies, sacrifices, etc"⁴

Religion is not synonymous with the word "theology." The word "theology" is short for "doctrine concerning divine things." Mythical theology, civic theology, natural theology, and revealed theology are only a few examples of the many types of theology. Ambedkar identifies three key concepts within theology.

1. "The existence of God;
2. God's providential government of the universe; and
3. God's moral government mankind".

Ambedkar argues that religious philosophy is just as descriptive as scientific

philosophy. The theory in question deals with conceptualization. Once upon a time, religion was the only foundation for a king's authority over his realm, even if scholars of the time had covered fields as diverse as biology, psychology, and geology. The Copernican Revolution liberated astronomy from religious control, and the Darwinian Revolution did the same for biology and geology.

AMBEDKAR'S INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION AND DHARMA

According to Dr. Ambedkar, religion is essential for both individuals and society in order to govern the moral and secular problems of human beings. The foundational component of religion is God. Theistic and metaphysical in character, the majority of faiths are still in existence. All AU faiths are genuine and admirable. The salvation of the soul (Mokksha) is the only purpose of a person's life. The unknowable and invisible everlasting soul. There is no liberty, equality, or brotherhood amongst men in Hinduism. India's caste system is hierarchical because of the Hindu faith. The secular well-being of humanity is the primary focus of religion. Hindu ceremonies, prayers, pilgrimages, and rituals. Dr. Ambedkar demonstrated how Hinduism has strong roots in social and religious discrimination.

There is no clear-cut definition of what is meant by "religion." It is an ambiguous term. Due to the many phases that the word "religion" has through, it has a wide range of connotations. Each level indicates a different significance from the one before it. From time to time, it changes. The tragedies caused by nature, like lightning, rain, floods, etc., were beyond the comprehension of the early man. The



concept of "religion" gradually expanded to include beliefs, rituals, ceremonies, prayers, and sacrifices. The word "religion" first appeared in the following stage of societal evolution along with the idea of divine power. According to the Hindu faith, God created the universe.

Buddha compares Dhamma to religion, whereas European theologians refer to it as Dhamma. The Buddhist Dhamma was not acknowledged as a religion by theologians in Europe. The Dhamma is communal, basic, personal, and indispensable. The Dhamma is justice, which refers to the inter-relationship of men in all facets of life. Without Dhamma, society cannot function. Without Dhamma, society would descend into chaos and autocracy. Liberty, equality, and fraternity are no longer values in modern society. The Dhamma, according to Buddha, is comprised of Prajna and Karuna. 'Prajna' means 'understanding,' and 'F.a....._ma' means 'love,' 13. Therefore, the Dhamma of the Buddha is not a borrowed teaching. It's accurate. The rites, ceremonies, prayers, worship, and sacrifices of the religion are in harmony with God and the soul. Morality enters religion in order to preserve peace and order. Morality is a central theme in all major religions, although it is not the basis of belief. Morality in religion is practiced in a professional, casual, and inefficient manner. Religion exists to provide light on how the world came to be. Rebuilding the world is the aim of the Dhamma.

Dhamma is morality, and morality is Dhamma. Morality, in actuality, has no place in religion. God, prayers, pilgrimages, rituals, ceremonies, or sacrifices have no place in the Dhamma. But the core of the Dhamma is morality. In

the Dhamma, morality springs directly from the need for man to love man.

Religion was primarily founded by Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, and Krishna. Jesus identified himself as the Son of God in the Bible. Mohammed said that he was God's earthly representative, just as Jesus had done. Krishna referred to himself as "Parameshwar" and "God," much as Jesus and Mohammed did. Buddha identified himself as a human being. He never insisted on having any magical origins or abilities. The Mokshadata was claimed by Jesus, Mohammed, and Krishna. In his job as a Margadata, the Lord Buddha was content. The Buddha himself said in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta that his religion is founded on reason and experience.

EMANCIPATION OF UNTOUCHABILITY THROUGH RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

He said in his piece titled "What way Emancipation" that "I solemnly assure you that I will not die a Hindu" and that it was written on October 13, 1935, in Yeola, District of Nasik, Maharashtra. Dr. Arnbedkar held a meeting at Dadar, Bombay, on May 30 and May 31, 1936. The conference's focus was on converting to Buddhism and gauging the support of the underprivileged classes for such a movement. There were close to 35,000 Untouchable Mahars present during the convention. The pandal had a few slogans. Which are:

1. Religion does not exist for man; rather, man exists for religion.
2. In order to become human, convert yourself.
3. In order to become organized, convert yourselves.
4. In order to gain power, you must transform yourself.



5. If you want equality, you have to transform yourself.
6. In order to obtain your freedom, you must convert.
7. Make the effort to change yourself in order to bring joy into your family life.
8. Why do you, as human beings, continue to practice a religion that does not recognize you in that capacity?
9. If you are not allowed to join temples because of your religion, why do you continue to practice it?
10. If you follow a religion that forbids you to drink water, why do you continue to follow that faith?
11. If you are unable to get an education because of your religion, why do you continue to practice it?
12. If you feel so insulted by your religious practice, why do you continue to do it?
13. I "Why do you continue to practice a religion that prevents you from finding gainful employment?"
14. A religion that forbids moral interactions between members of the same species is not a religion; rather, it is a show of power.
15. A religion that views the awareness of humanity as irreligion rather than as a component of religious is not a religion but rather an illness.
16. A religion that permits the touching of unclean animals but forbids the touching of human beings is not a religion; rather, it is an act of folly.
17. A religion that prohibits one social group from acquiring an education, from amassing riches, or from possessing weaponry is not a

religion; rather, it is a satire on the value of human life.

18. A religion that forces the uneducated to stay uneducated and the impoverished to remain poor is not a religion; rather, it is a kind of corporal punishment.

AMBEDKAR AND BUDDHISM

Among other things, Dr. Ambedkar favored Buddhism because:

1. Buddhism promotes knowledge over superstition and extreme naturalism, or prana.
2. Karuna (Love), a principle of Buddhism.
3. Samata (equality) is a core concept in Buddhism.
4. Buddhism promotes socialism.

On May 12, 1956, a letter asking all branches of the Indian Buddhist Council to observe the 2500th Buddha Jayanti was published in Prabuddha Bharat. On May 24, 1956, a conference was planned for "Nare Park" in Bombay.

There were around 75,000 attendees at this gathering.

Dr. Ambedkar said that he will adopt Buddhism in October 1956 at this meeting. He distinguished between Buddhism and Hinduism as follows:



Hinduism	Buddhism
1. Hinduism believes in God.	1. Buddhism has no God.
2. Hinduism believes in Soul.	2. In Buddhism there is no Soul.
3. Hinduism believes in Chaturvarna Caste System.	3. Buddhism has no place for Caste System and Chaturvarna.
4. There is no equality.	4. Buddhism believes in equality.
5. Hinduism believes in supernatural and superstition.	5. Buddhism believes in Prajna (understanding as against supernatural and superstition).
6. In Hinduism there is no equality, liberty and fraternity.	6. The motto of Buddhism is equality liberty and fraternity.
7. In Hinduism there are no ideas of communism.	7. Establishment of communism is the main ideas of Buddhism.

Buddhists reject the concept of private property. Buddhist social welfare is a central tenet. The author of the essay "The Tide of Buddhism would never Recede in India" noted that Hinduism has the concept of the soul. Buddhism holds that "there is no soul. Hinduism embraces the Caste System and Chaturvarna. Chaturvarna and the Caste System have no place in Buddhism.

He noted that compared to other religions, Buddhism is more logical. His primary qualm was with Hinduism. Hinduism rejects men's inherent rights to equality, fraternity, and liberty in favor of the Chaturvama social structure. Buddhism is built on moral principles. Buddhism teaches Prajna, Karuna, and Samata in his view. Dr. Ambedkar rejected the idea of a soul and a deity. Buddhism, in accordance with Dr. Ambedkar, upholds the notions of reincarnation, Karma, and Moksha.

The Untouchables of the East and South of Thane District organized a meeting on May 17, 1936, at Kalyan, under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. Several

leaders from Kalyan Railway Station welcomed him. His supporters sang "Ambedkar Jindabad, thode din me Bhimraj" at the railroad station.¹⁹ Some attendees of the meeting asked Dr. Ambedkar, "Why should we change our religion?" He said, "Why shouldn't we not change our religion?" Dr. Ambedkar described some of the times in his life when Hindus treated him cruelly. He made the decision to give up his own faith as a result. His essay "Conversion is necessary for your Emancipation and Advancement" explains these instances.

Hinduism, according to Dr. Ambedkar, does not recognize human relationships. The Hindu faith supports the use of slavery. His father and ancestors were forbidden from attending school to learn the traditional Hindu faith. It was very forbidden for Untouchables to study the Vedas. According to Chaturvarnas, the Hindu religion acknowledges the social deterioration. He believed that social justice, freedom, and brotherhood could not be provided by the Hindu faith. In this light, he saw that conversion is essential for the freedom and progress of the underprivileged groups.

The Archbishop, Bishop of PQonaat the Examiner Printing Press, Dalat Street, Fort, Bombay, prints and publishes the Marathi novel Niropya. The book was released by the press on November 1st, 1937. The article "Dr. Ambedkar Ani Dharmantarchi Avashy kata," which discussed Dr. Ambedkar and the need of conversion, was published in Vol. XXII, No. 6, November 1937. An editorial comment translated it.

CONCLUSION

Ambedkar's views on equality and justice may be used to bolster the arguments



made. It's hardly an exaggeration to suggest that his main objective was to make the formerly "apolitical" masses into a game-changing force in politics. Indian philosophies supplied him with the fundamental basis of 'soul-force,' while his western liberal education gave him the weapon to extend the support base for the cause of the downtrodden. Ambedkar believed that religion in India should be considered from three angles: a) as a social force; b) as a source of information for the ideal scheme; and c) as a benchmark against which the worth of the perfect scheme may be evaluated. Ambedkar's concept of equality and social justice had a particular point of reference — the orthodox Hindu social order — and this must be kept in mind while analyzing his ideas on society, economics, and governance in broader terms. It's important to remember that he wasn't a philosopher or theorist in the strict sense. As a self-taught pragmatist, he proposed thoughts on equality and justice that differ significantly from the conventional Indian and Western understandings of these concepts. To others, this seems like a 'difficult' area where his reasoning breaks down when constructing arguments for social justice and equality. The fact that Ambedkar does not fit neatly into any of the aforementioned 'issue' categories—Fabian, Gandhian, or Maxian—appears to be the root of the whole mess. Though influenced by the established political, economic, and social order, his views were fundamentally his own. An excellent example of 'praxis' •- a combination of policies and actions, his approach pinpoints the causes of societal ills and suggests means to eradicate them. The 'self-respect' model of man, which Ambedkar advocated for,

places a premium on individuals' capacity for self-improvement and autonomy. Despite their fundamental disagreements on many matters, it seems that they were rather similar on this one.

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