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Ambedkar Dalit Philosophy and Humanism

Piyali Ghosh

State Aided College Teacher, Mahadevananda Mahavidyalaya, Barrackpore, West Bengal, India

Abstract:

India is a mega diversity nation. It also presents the hierarchical structure of Indian caste system. Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in India which divide caste system into 4 categories - Brahmin, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Apart from that outcastes are also identified by society for being suppression – that is the untouchable Dalits. Distance between upper and lower caste, is just a practice which keeps lower caste people at a state of denial of social equality - that is the untouchability and also being a dalit our Indian constitutional founder Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had faced lots of suppression, humiliation and torture by upper classes. After being part of this unfortunate inhumanity can we call Dr. B.R. Ambedkar a humanist? Whatever he had done for ST, SC and lower caste, can we take his action towards humanitarian. If yes or no then why and which aspect we can call him a Humanist.

Key Words: Multiculturalism, Hinduism, Jati, Outcaste, Untouchability, Dalit, Humanism

Introduction: India is one of the most isolated nations in world both religiously and ethically. India's physical structure and geographical landmark had a great influence on its culture – which we call the Multiculturalism. There are many religions cohabitant in India such as Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrians, Judaism and many more. The aggregated presence of diverse culture has been shown in our society. A life is a relationship between man and society - that is not only a human race but also unity in diversity. Diversity comprises of variant features. Human get a new "Form of Life" and each of our scripture comes from this new 'Form of Life". According to me diversity is not only a range of different things but also a state of contradiction and where is the contradiction?-it simply reminds us hierarchical structure of Indian caste system. In India caste is also known as 'Jati'.

According to many scholars and historian, Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in India and across the world. Hinduism is basically defined by their religious way of traditions and beliefs. The caste system of hindus had divided them into 4 categories - 1.Brahmins that is priests, 2.Kshatriyas that is warriors and rulers, 3.Vaishyas that is farmers, traders and merchants and 4.Shudras that is labours. In Hinduism these four

categories are known as “Chaturvarna Vyavastha”. Out of these four castes of society are known as outcastes (Dalit) that is sweepers, latrine cleaners etc.

Brahmin is the highest varna in vedic Hinduism. Brahmin became an influential varna in India and discriminated against the other lower caste. They took the advantage of being Brahmin and considered themselves as a superior and other lower caste was deprived and humiliated by them. According to the Manusmriti, dalit men and women have no right to education, independence, or wealth. It not only justifies the treatment of dalit women as a sex object and promotes child marriage also. But also justifies a number of violent atrocities on women as can be seen in following verses- A Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaishya Man can sexually exploit any shudra women. (Manusmriti IX.25) The humiliation was silently tolerated by the lower class people. These lower class people are subsequently known as ‘Dalit’. They were untouchable to the upper class Brahmin. Now the question arises why did Hindus practice untouchability..? This question automatically emphasizes on olden days Hinduism more than Humanism. When people are divided into castes based upon their work, some castes considered themselves as superior and call others inferior which make a distance between them. This distance is a practice which keeps lower caste people at a state of denial of social equality - that is the untouchability. The untouchability is nothing but a superstition.

The famous Indian jurist, economist, politician and social reformer Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (14th April - 6th December, 1956) popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar is also a victim of this untouchability. He fought against social discrimination and untouchability. Ambedkar was also a dalit that’s why he was not permitted to seat at classes and also not allowed to drink water by his own hand. The peon of his school gave him water to drink. That’s why he stated this situation ‘No Peon, No Water’. For that reason he said he was born in womb of superstition of Hinduism but he did not desire to die again in this womb. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar understood that something should be done legally for the lower class of the society, so that they could not be deprived by the upper classes of the society and how does he get, that historical context is a very important part of journey. Which is described below in details?

Dalit movement remains incomplete without Bhimrao Ambedkar. The Ambedkar era saw a radical change in the social, economic and moral conditions of Dalits. Baba sahib Ambedkar organized Dalits in political form to alleviate their suffering. On March 20, 1927, Ambedkar began preparing for the Mahad Satyagraha. The Mahad movement was organized in Mahad, Raigad district of Maharashtra state, for the right of Dalits to drink and use water from ponds universally. This special day is observed as Social Empowerment Day. On September 24, 1932, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar reached an understanding with Gandhiji in Yerwada Central Jail, which later came to be known as the Poona Pact.

Due to Gandhiji’s diplomatic politics, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had to give up the privilege of communal award separate elections and accept the combined electoral system. The number

of reserved seats in Poona Pack has been increased to 148 instead of 78 reserved seats in communal Award.

At the same time, Dalits in government jobs without any discrimination were guaranteed. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded adequate representation of Dalits in legislative and administrative capacity. According to Articles 330 and 332 of the constitution of India, the Scheduled Castes and Dalits are empowered to empower themselves in the reserved seats in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also made laws for women, because the status of women in contemporary society was not better than that of Dalits.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar himself advised Dalit women to wear sarees in a normal way like Brahmin women because Dalit women used to wear sarees very high. He later converted to Buddhism and strongly protested the orthodoxy of Hinduism, and it was during the Ambedkar era that the long overlooked Scheduled Castes began to question their empowerment. In this way the Dalit and other lower castes of the society joined Ambedkar's throat and marched against Hinduism. He spoke out of intense hatred for Hinduism "Though I Was Born a Hindu, I Solemnly Assure You That I Will Not Die as A Hindu."¹ Different popes of different religions came to him to introduce all noble qualities of their religions. In the meanwhile Buddha dharma was on the verge of extinction for the renaissance of brahminyavada and Islamic approach. But when Ambedkar converted himself into Bouddha dharma, it had shown a renaissance of Bouddha dharma which was called as a modern Buddhist movement. Three lakh eighty thousand followers converted themselves into bouddha dharma which was regenerated bouddha dharma as a movement.

At last in 1956 Ambedkar converted himself into bouddha dharma from hindu and took an oath with 22nd conditions which was degraded to Hinduism and prioritised Bouddha dharma. Now the question has arisen, is there any need to take a spiritual shelter to live in? Or any dharmas? It is said that men are introduced in society through their religions or dharma or varna then the question is how can we detect the religion to see a newly born? The main thing is that all this religion or dharma or varna are made by men for their advantage specially by Brahmins. One part of society has created this discrimination for their advantage and authority. So human civilization has to emphasize on humanism and see the broad way of humanity. Humanity is the biggest religion. In this aspect the conversion of Ambedkar into Buddhist religion has to face severe condemnations.

In the context of humanism we have to first discuss what is the source of humanism? And which context it has been arisen? In the year of 1808 Friedrich Niethammer proposed an ancient lesson for German primary education which was known as "Humanismus". Next until the year of 1836 historic and linguistic George Voigt used the word 'Humanism' for renaissance of humanity. After that the word was acknowledged globally.

What is humanism? And what are their characteristics? Humanism is an ethical and philosophical state of human value and authority. It's a love towards humanity which has been prioritized on logical thoughts and experienced data rather than superstitious thought.

It does not believe in unnatural religious being. It has been believed by the doctrine man which is the main reason for the development and progress.

In recent time humanitarian movement is simply a non-religious movement which is related with secularism. Humanitarian was denying the existence of God rather than human authority. They were giving impotance to scientific way of life. Buddhist Humanism and Social Survey is an important subject in the present world context. Because there is unrest and madness everywhere in the country, the society and the world. The more people run for peace. Two and a half thousand years ago, Gautama Buddha was born and attained Buddhahood, and such a human religion was established on earth. The message of that religion is completely non-violent and humanistic and calls for the welfare of the world's biodiversity and all human groups of the world.

In this context the world famous poet and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore's humanism is worth mentioning. According to Rabindra philosophy, humanism is the ultimate ideal of human life. This humanism is a particular philosophy whose sole focus is man. Because human qualities such as kindness, love, affection and love are present in the personality of human beings, it is called humanity or humanity. And the doctrine related to humanity is humanity.

Rabindranath's main statement about humanity is - There is one in our hearts, who is human, yet who transcends the individual human being, a universal human being of all time. Through whose attraction universality emerges in human thought, thought and action. We can give life to him by loving him. Therefore, Rabindranath thinks that through this understanding of humanity, man reaches beyond his narrow limits and reaches the premises of world friendship. So we can discuss how many features of humanism from the above humanism:-

1. Humanism reveals the real truth of people.
2. Correct humanism destroys the pride of people and leads people to the world of humanity.
3. Humanism is the ideal religion of people. According to Rabindranath Tagore, humanism should be the main religion of people.
4. Humanism is the idea that raises the spiritual side of people. At present humanism is the only way to overcome the limited capacity of man and reach the infinite capacity.

Now my question is, in the light of this humanism, can we call Ambedkar a humanist? Can his action be included in humanism? The reason behind his action was said to be the torture, that was not a counter blow? If yes then which kind of humanist he was? Social or political or religious humanism? And what was its consequence?

After conversion to Buddhist, can we call this apostasy practise of Dr. Ambedkar as a humanist act towards religion??? Can we call him religious humanist? The conversion of Dr. Ambedkar into Buddhist was a very controversial issue during that time. We can divide his thought in two parts. 1st is the rejection of buddha dharma and 2nd one is side by side converting himself into Buddhist. In the 1st way he refused Hindu dharma for its rigidity, superstitious faith, annihilation of social and moral values and untouchability. Ambedkar rejected the Aryan race or invasion theory. He rejected and criticised the Vedas. In 1936, Ambedkar wrote,

“The Hindu Religion As Contained In The Vedas And The Smritis, Is Nothing But A Mass Of Sacrificial, Social, Political And Sanitary Rules And Regulation, All Mixed Up. What Is Called Religion By The Hindus Is Nothing But A Multitude Of Commands And Prohibitions.”²

He also wrote, “The Hindu Religion Is Nothing but a Horde of Ideals and Constraints.”³ In 2nd way of his thought he converted himself into bouddhist. We all bouddha dharma is comparatively modern and scientific rather than others. Buddha dharma deals with intelligence, social awareness, freedom, amity, democracy and modern thought. Bouddha dharma is not only a pathfinder of self-moksha but also for social moksha. Bouddha dharma was denied to believe in unnatural events. They believe in the side of natural thing. Natural events were more prioritised than unnatural. Because it decreases human pain and sorrow. As a Bouddhist Dr. Ambedkar took 22 vows I shall have no faith in Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh nor shall I worship them. I shall have no faith in Rama and Krishna who are believed to be incarnation of God nor shall I worship them. I shall have no faith in ‘Gauri’ Ganapati and other Gods and Goddesses of hindus or shall I worship them.

Despite the fact of being separated from Hinduism, Dr. Ambedkar was being a good follower of boudda dharma. For being a good religious humanist He also believed whatever a Bouddhist soft power strategy was. He also believed, thing should be logical, humanitarian, scientific and natural way of presentation and free from superstitious belief. In this respect we can call him a religious humanist.

Research Question: But Now The Question Is Can We Call Dr. Ambedkar As A Social Humanist?

For the particular reason he converted himself into a bouddhist, after getting converted as a constitutional founder he was taken various actions for the independence of lower deprived classes of our society. He introduced lots of parliamentary act. Such as the parliament of India enacted an act to prevent atrocities against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes that are The Scheduled Castes And Tribes (Prevention Of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

The deep concern of framers of the constitution for the uplift of the SC and ST and other backward classes is reflected in constitutional mechanism set-up such as 1. Article 17 abolishes untouchability. 2. Article 46 promotes with social care the educational and

economic interests of the weaker sections and protects them from social injustice and exploitation and there are more articles like article 335, article 15(4), article 16(4A), article 338, article 330 and 332.

Government has taken some initiatives for SC educational, economic and social empowerment. Scholarships are also provided at both pre-matric and post-matric levels to SC students for obtaining higher education in India and abroad. Through this act the lower deprived classes were given priority compared to others classes. Focusing on social discrimination he took efforts to solve it out but the discrimination still remains same both in mentally and constitutionally.

But now the general category is suffering because of caste reservation. We all know history repeats itself but in different form. The ghost of reservation has again raised its ugly head. Many political parties harvested its advantages for their advantage and not for whom it was intended. From 1000 of years their ancestors were discriminated so the reservation is for their upliftment. It's really became an unethical part of society. In present scenario General category is a real sufferer. Now a days really it is became a crucial issue of our society. He solved only the problem whatever he faced in his life. He never thought about the future of his decision. What will be the results? What will be the blessings and curses. In this aspect we cannot say that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is a social humanist. He should be more humanitarian towards others and as well as future. He should think the matter as a futurist. This act to me is just like taking revenge. In old days people were categorised on the basis of their karma and now people are also categorised on the basis of karma but in different form. Eligibility should be more prioritised. Even the upper class people of the society i.e. those who can live without taking those benefits, they are also taking the benefits of reservation because of that, those who basically need this scholarship or reservation are being deprived. For this reason our social values are being lost and money is also being wasted which is weakening our country fundamentally. So our moral value should be to use as much as is necessary. That is the only solution as a research scholar I have drawn my conclusion.

Objective and Significance of the Study: To provide a platform to ensure the eligibility and to establish harmonised of classification in society.

Footnote:

1. B.R.Ambedkar, Writings And Speeches: Aready Reference Manual.
2. B.R.Ambedkar, Writings And Speeches, Vol.1
3. B.R.Ambedkar, Annihilation Of Caste.

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