

A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE VIEW OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR AND GANDHIJI ON THE ISSUE OF UNTOUCHABLES

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Abstract

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi both of them fought against the untouchability. Very differently both of them tried their best to resolve the problems of untouchability. Mahatma Gandhi supposed that untouchability was the internal problems of Hindu Community. According to him Untouchables did not have the separate identity as like Muslims, Shikhs, and Christianity was having. Where as, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar view was, if untouchables are the part of Hindu then untouchables must get equal rights as like Hindu peoples are enjoying. But for that orthodoxy Hindu people were not ready to accept them on equal level. Besides that even Mahatma Gandhi was also in fever of varnashram system where untouchables were not granted the equal status in society. Therefore Dr. B. R. Ambedkar very strongly opposed Mahatma Gandhi on the views of untouchables. He was very unsatisfied the work which have done by congress and Mahatma Gandhi. He further concluded that untouchables do not want to live on sympathy of Hindu. But all untouchables want to live with honor and respect. Untouchables should free from the gold chain of Hinduism. In this paper I want to study the different way of struggle of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi against untouchability.

Keywords: 1. *RTC:* Round table conference, *Fascism:* a political system based on a very powerful leader, state control, and being extremely proud of country and race and which political opposition is not allowed. *Fascist:* - A person who believes in or sympathizes with fascism. *Congress:-* From its foundation on 28 December, 1885 by A. O. Hume, a retired British Officer, until the time of independence of India on 15 August, 1947, the Indian National Congress was considered to be the largest and most prominent Indian public organization.

1. Representation of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in RTC as a Leader of Untouchable.

I. On 20th November, 1930 'Plenary Session' of 1st RTC, rising to represent the point of view of the Depressed Classes, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar describe them as "a group by themselves which is distinct and separate from the Muhammadans and, and although they are included among the Hindus, they in no sense form an integral part of that community." He describe the problem of 1/5th population of Indian Untouchables as large as the population of England or of France, as a "midway between that of the serf and the slave", and that what is worse is that the "enforced servility and bar to human intercourse, due to their untouchability, involves, not merely the possibility of discrimination in public life, but actually works out as a positive denial of all equality of opportunity and the denial of those most elementary of civic rights on which all human existence depends."¹

II. In the meeting of Minorities of RTC (13-11-1931) Gandhiji said that he do not mind if untouchable want to separate from Hindu and wanted to converted in Islam or Christianity. But he will strongly opposed to divided Hindu religion by giving a separate constituency to the Untouchables.²

III. Gandhiji suggested to Minorities like Muslims and Shikhas that they could decide their demands among their self but they should not support to the demands of the untouchables. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar proved that how congress was against to the political demands of the untouchables.

In the Round table conference Gandhiji further argued that he is the only leader of Untouchable and no other else. It was the insult not only Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar but it was the

insult of million of untouchables who willingly accepted the leadership of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. No one can imposed his leadership on any group of people, it must be accepted and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was accepted leader of millions of untouchle.³ Gandhiji and Congress party was not much interested to remove the untouchability from the society. But all the congress leaders were wants their hold on untouchables. They supposed that congress is the only party who is taking care of depressed class people. But in reality, Congress just want to use politically to the depressed class people.

2. Fascist Congress: - Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar stated that it was the trumpet of Congress that she is the only political party who is struggling for the freedom movement. But in reality is that, she want to hide her political fascism, behind her freedom movement of India. He further stated that Congress supposed that she is the only political party, who representing the whole India and other political party should not emerged in India. On the other hand she is ambitious about all other political parties should merged quietly in the Congress party. He further stated that if Congress does not want the slavery of British, the same way we do not want slavery of Congress.⁴ this statement of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had given clear idea that downtrodden people should not depend on Congress for their emancipation.

3. Proposal of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to Congress:- He had been fighting since last twenty years against congress but then also he had been presented one good proposal in front of congress that is, if congress is ready to give the explanation about what congress will do for untouchable in free India then he will ready to fight against British rule with congress, otherwise he will take the stand against both Congress as well as British rule.⁵ Here, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar thought was, untouchables are under the slavery of both British rule as well as the social system of India. Even after the independence of India, untouchables would be force to live under the rule of upper caste. Therefore he wanted surety from congress about the security of downtrodden people of India. If congress is ready to give the security about the untouchables then he will be ready to fight against British rule, otherwise he is free to fight against both congress as well as British rule.

4. Failure of Congress to end of untouchability: - According the Ambedkar, the congress failed to remove the untouchability from the society, because she has taken much care of law and customs of orthodoxy Hinduism rather than untouchables. The system of untouchability was a gold mine to the Hindus. In this society there was a master class and a servile class. The untouchable class was the servile class. According to Ambedkar, swaraj instead of putting an end to untouchability might extended its life.⁶ Congress did not shown courage to stand against the orthodoxy thoughts of people whos wish was to remain untouchability in the society. Even Gandhiji belived the Varna system. Therefore Dr. B. R. Ambedkar did not believed that Congress will do better for untouchables.

5. Conversion of religion is the solution to remove the Untouchability: - Dr. Ambedkar came to the conclusion that only conversion of Religion is the solution to remove the untouchability from the society. He stated that, the religion which keeps untouchables away from the knowledge, and gives the opportunity to touchables to become a knowledgeable is not the true religion. He further stated that, law and customs of Hindu religion is, one kind of tricks which keeps arm in the hands of touchables and makes armless to untouchables. For the human development there is requirement of freedom, equality and sympathy. For the untouchable not a single thing is available out of these

three. He explained that, to free from the exploitation by touchables, conversion of religion is very essential for untouchables. Conversion of people who called as untouchables, with Hindu religion, is responsible for untouchability. So it is better to break the contact with Hindu religion which keeps you untouchables.⁷ Conversion in another religion can give you a better opportunity for the upliftment. Not only that but because of Conversion we untouchable people will get new identity. In new religion we do not find untouchability. Therefore he decided to leave the Hinduism and he will accept new religion with his followers, in which he gets equality, sympathy and freedom of living. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar challenged the orthodox people of Hindu religion to abolish the untouchability otherwise most of untouchables' Hindu people will get converted into another religion.

6. Safeguard for the untouchables in the future constitution of India:- In the sixth sitting of RTC, which was held on 16-12-1931, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, and Rao Bahadur R. Srinivasan had presented the scheme of political safeguards for the protection of depressed classes in the future constitution of a self-governing India. In sixth sitting of RTC he had presented several points of safeguard for the untouchables of India. Under the safeguard of **Equal citizenship**, it was mentioned that the depressed classes cannot consent to subject themselves to majority rule in their present state of hereditary bondsmen. Before majority rule is established their emancipation from the system of untouchability must be an accomplished fact. It must not be left to the will of the majority. The Depressed Classes must be made free citizens entitled to all the rights of citizenship in common with other citizens of the State. To secure the abolition of untouchability and to create the equality of citizenship, it is proposed that fundamental rights shall be made part of the constitution of India.⁸

7. Gandhism and untouchability:- According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Gandhism is not useful to resolve the problems of untouchability. Hindu religion is one kind of custody. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar refused the thoughts of Gandhiji which were in favor of the Varnashram system. He said that there is no hope in Gandhism to get the equality, freedom and abolishment of Untouchability.⁹

8. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's view about role of Saints to remove the untouchability: - Saints were not concerned with the struggle between men. They were concerned with the relation between man and God. They did not preach that all men were equal. They preached that all men were equal in the eyes of God. Why the teaching of the saints proved ineffective was because the masses have been taught that a saint might break Caste but the common man must not. A saint therefore never an example to follow. He always remained pious man to be honoured. That the masses have remained staunch believers in caste and untouchability shows that the pious lives and noble sermons of the saints have had no effects on their life and conduct as against the teaching against Shastras.¹⁰

10. "Be aware from the political party how is not having the fervour to remove the Untouchability":- On 5th October 1953 at Merat in one public meeting Dr. B. R. Ambedkar said that you people must be aware from the such political party who does not have fervor to remove the untouchability.¹¹ Here he warn the untouchables that they must be careful about their rights. Congress and such other political party only wants the vote of untouchables but these party are not serious about to abolish the untouchability.

Conclusion: - Dr. B. R. Ambedkar believed that there is no use of free India unless and until Indian society is free from untouchability. For the emancipation of untouchables, has to fight themselves only. Untouchables should not depend on any other political party rather than Scheduled Caste Federation, the political party of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Even saints also have not done any constructive work to remove the untouchability. Therefore he said that removal of untouchability is the responsibility of untouchable's people only. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had given the motivation of the untouchable people of 'Aat Dip Bhav' means self enlightenment. Mahatma Gandhi and the other leaders of Congress have not done any constructive work to remove the untouchability of the Indian society. Congress itself used untouchables as a vote bank and nothing else. He strongly objected the thoughts of Class system of Gandhiji. He strongly recommended that Conversion of Hindu religion is the best solution to throw out the untouchability. He studied various religion and at last he converted in Buddhist with five lacs of people from Hindu religion who were early treated as the untouchables. In this religion, he finds the liberty, equality and fraternity. He abolished the untouchability which was presented in the Indian society from long period.

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