

Ambedkar's Ethics The doctrine behind the politics

—Dr. Saraswati Kumari

Department of History, MMV, BHU, Varanasi

Abstract

Ambedkar led stress on self improvement and organization as the path's to a better life for the untouchable. In all his integrity to politics the focal point was amelioration to the Dalits as the most suppressed and oppressed classes of Indian history. Since the very beginning, the restricting of Indian society has been an active agenda on the policies and programmes of the various movements launched by him. Such a restricting is being sought by transformation of the in-egalitarian traditional social order into a more egalitarian system of social relations. The focus in this paper is towards Ambedkar's integrity of politics.

Keywords – Politics, Ethics, Integrity, Democracy, Change, Nature.

In Reading Ambedkar recently I have been struck by the ethics of his doctrine. I don't mean simply that he was a man of notions in the sense that he tried to make his actions live upto his ideals, though perhaps in fact he tried more than most to do so. I mean something more conceptual than his thought. He himself highly integrated his ideas about very specific political strategies in specific circumstances flowed. They flowed from the most knowing and methodological commitments. This quality of his thought sometimes gets lost because on the one hand he is being predicted as a messiah of dalits and on the other the social scientist and historian interested in him has sought out a nationalist leader with the strikingly effected method of non violent political action. This paper is not so much inspired by the plausibility of the philosophy that emerges as by the stunning intellectual ambition and originality that this ethics displays.

Social reform should priced a political reform is a right question where mind starts thinking about Dr. Ambedkar. Before joining back to his over concerns and doctrine about the matter I would like to quto, K.T. Telang (1853-93) a judge of the Bombay High Court, In an address to the student's literacy and scientific society, Bombay in 1886, he argued that the political and social questions were so intertwined one with the other that a hard and fast line could be given to social reform over political, it would not be feasible to enforce it in practice. Two grounds have been put forward by him which the undivided attention to social reform over political reform rests on a) slavery in the home was incompatible with a belief in the freedom of the individual to think, express himself and act on his own way unfettered by tradition and custom and b) social customs which were unjust to certain groups, in society could impede the development of social institutions for political expression.

Telang's thought are also best explained when he compares the opposing forces in the field of social reform and in the field of political reform and applying the principle to the circumstances in India. He says at a one side we have a government by a progressive nation, which by its constituted authorities, has solemnly and repeatedly declared and in some

measure practically shown the sincerity of its declaration that it is ready to admit us to full political rights, when we show that we deserve them and shall use them well. On the other hand we have an ancient nation subject to strong prejudices, not in anything like full sympathy with the new conditions, now existing in the country, attached perhaps, 'not wisely but too well to its own religious notions with which the proposed social reforms are closely intimately, and at numberless points intervened.'

B.R. Ambedkar (1893-1956), well known leader of the socially depressed classes and law minister in the first cabinet in the independent India (and who piloted by Indian constitution bill through the constituent assembly). According to his views the conflict between the social reformers and the political are one between two opposing points of view and its centered round the question which is more important for the survivor, of a nation, political freedom or strong moral fibre?, He himself supported Ranade's view that moral stamina was more important than political freedom without the will, the energy and the courage, to try to modify or change those social custom that hinder the implementation of new policies there could be no attainment of national political freedom based upon the idol of social equality .Ambedkar's thought surmounted towards the attitude of mine. An attitude of respect and equality, towards one fellow before, the experience of democracy. Democracy is incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness resulting in the distinction between the privileged and the unprivileged.

The thoughts of Ambedkar revolves round the caste and in his thoughts on linguistics states (1955), follows Panikkar in his denunciation of caste and adds that the caste system results in the perpetuation of a communal majority as distinct from the formation of flexible political majorities. The whole philosophy of Ambedkar rest on his sufferings, and in all his thoughts the word revolution is involved in particular with the Dalits. Equality, dignity and freedom were the key words in Ambedkar's thought. He did not wanted the amelioration of the Dalit's problem by the elite Indian men he almost single handedly transformed a movement conceived and promoted along the lines of socialism and justice.

Ambedkar's political thoughts and ideas revolve round the struggle for the freedom of the servile humanity. He acted as a rebel against caste system which oppressed and exploited millions of untouchables, Ambedkar himself had painful experiences of the inequalities of the caste system while talking about caste, he also talks about the existence of God and was of the view that nobody can prove that God has created the world. The world has evolved and is not created.

Ambedkar centered his thoughts towards religion, which according to him are of four characteristic of a true religion, these are that society must have either the sanction of law or the sanction of morality to hold it together. Without either society is sure to go to pieces. Religion must be in accordance with science. Religion must recognize the fundamental tenants of liberty, equality and fraternity. His religious attitude opposed superstition, idolatry, dogmatism, hypocrisy, sectarianism, fanaticism, individualism, mysticism and conventionalism, poverty and ignorance in religion. He stands for religion which is democratic out and out.

Ambedkar while putting his views on Hinduism clearly convey that he is not against Hinduism but against its beliefs in social separation on social disunity. He predicts that Hinduism cannot treat the longing to belong which is the basis of social unity Dr. Ambedkar.

There exists a gap between premodern and modern in context to the society of India. The premodern society is not vanishing but it is on the way of being vanished, as we see there are customs and practices which are still continuing. Descartes one of the prominent thinkers talked about reason, individualism and certainty which inspired Ambedkar also. Descartes through the methods of his idea established the logic of exclusion. Descartes says that everything is based on the way you perceive the things so he says, "I think therefore I am."

Descartes shaped the ideas of Ambedkar. He also like him talks about the two parts to his struggle one is to create ideas and then apply those ideas through methods, self assertion is also one of the way to fight against the injustices. For Ambedkar, changing the premodern to purely modern was not the aim, but to transform it he never rejected the premodern idioms.

Very few had faced the problem of inequality as these two did. Both decided to dealing the analogies of the past and give reasons for the same. Both were of the view that tradition was full of unacceptable in equality and rejected everything from the past by following a formula that better explained with a concept of exclusions. Ambedkar reasons for parting from the past is also the same as Descartes. He blames Hindu society by pointing out it as devoid of humanity. Ambedkar always worked for the cause in order to add more correctness.

Ambedkar was very much influence by Dewey's (1859-1952) philosophy of instrumentalism which different from the traditional philosophies. Dewey's primary interest as a social and political philosopher was in helping to resolve the problems that plague mankind. These problems are the common place once of bad sanitation, poor working conditions, inequitable distribution of income and the exclusion of the mass of man from the material and cultural values produced by the technological revolution. He called his philosophy, instrumentalism, because he thought of it as a tool for dealing with concrete problems, in contrast to traditional philosophies. To the instrumentalists is then, the purpose of thinking is to solve problems to the basis of Dewey's philosophy stands on the point that the real evils that beset us cannot be cure until philosophy begins to ask questions, not about the 'absolute', but about whatever is disturbing or painful whether one likes it or not.

Inquiry, as Dewey's saw it is the highest development of man's native equipment for dealing with painful situations. Man, he said finds himself part of the physical and social environment not a mere spectator. Dewey's interest in education is also professed by Ambedkar, as a field in which Dewey produced a revolution in the United States- stemmed from the fact that since he regarded intelligence as instrument for solving concrete problems.

Dewey's approach to politics was quite different from that of traditional theorists. He dismissed as irrelevant and confusing all discussion of the state, he was interested in the problems that exists in actual states. He did not believe that these problems could be tackle with any hope of success if we begin by looking for the essence of the state, or its nature, its ends, or any of the other matters where most philosophers had concerned themselves. He was of the belief that the nature of scientific enquiry and experimentation must be like that, so that men may learn from their errors and profit by their successes. The belief in political fixity, of

the sanctity of some form of state consecrated by the efforts of our fathers and hallowed by tradition, is one of the stumbling blocks in the way of the orderly and directed change. It is an invitation to revolved and revolution. Ambedkar views if seen through the various revolutionary movements which he initiated between (1919-1939) also etymologically defines his slogan, educate, organize and agitate.

Whether one likes it or not the last three centuries or so the entire world has been undergoing a process of change which fully deserves to be captioned as westernization, the term west did not invent knowledge nor it can claim a monopoly of wisdom, it may even be possible to trace the development of its thought-streams to the influence or confluence of other ancient as well as medieval tributaries but the fact, nevertheless, remains that in the last two or three centuries the ideas radiating from the west have enveloped the minds of people all over the world.

An intended treatment of India's cultural traditions throughout the long history of the India's is clearly beyond the scope . I would nevertheless like to emphasize that the extraordinary persistence of a number of cultural beliefs, ritual patterns and behavioral norms over a score of centuries, or even more, makes the task of analyzing mass political culture, exceedingly complex. This is so because, the political culture of Indian masses is more impregnated with culture than politics. The political beliefs and behavior of the vast majority of Indian citizen are conditioned not by political impulses of the modernistic political system, structured by the 1950, constitute but by cultural syndromes.

Since men have always lived in some kind of political order-whether that order be describe as the state or in less pretentious terms-some of the questions they have asked have been political-who should rule? Why should men obey? What are the proper objects of curiosity? Fundamentally the answer to these enquiries is for a good life and a political orders consist of those processes so to know what the competent thinkers have said about it is necessary. Our own judgment is better founded if we have this kind of knowledge, for as was said by the late lord Keynes, "A study of the history of opinion is a necessary preliminary the emancipation of the mind. truth is not static."

Ambedkar was interested in truth, being reality and the other staples of the older speculation what did interest them? The answer is that they were interested in process, in change and in life including political and social as something own going. In social matters contact with western thought help to give rise to movements against the undemocratic institutions of caste which in the past had been criticize by Indian religious reformers.

The political ethics involved in Ambedkar's political analysis is some what similar to the 'Thesis of Feuerbach in which Marx says-

- A. The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question.
 - B. In practice man must prove the truth example reality and power, the, this-sidedness of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.
 - C. The materialistic doctrine that men are products of the circumstances and a bringing and that therefore, changed men are products of others circumstances and changed a bringing,
-

forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educated must himself be educated...

D. The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point however is to change it.

Social change was the focal point when the Marxist ideology is summed or analyzed and a relentless necessity is required for that change. In the eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, for example Marx wrote that, man makes his own history but he does not make it out of whole cloth, he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself but out of such as he finds close at hand. With this sayings he tries to explain that the direction of change or the destination of society they can hasten the process by an intelligent use of the materials produced by history. The whole Marxist conception can be seen into the various political agendas of Ambedkar whether under the banner of Bahiskrit Hitkarni Sabha or the formation of all India depressed class or the various anti Brahmanism struggle throughout his career from 1920 onwards.

Conclusion

At the last I can conclude by saying that Ambedkar prophesied the emphasis of reason and form as the basis of the universally valid elements of our knowledge. So he strived for attaining a rational knowledge independent of experience, was naturally accompanied by the attempt to discover for his ethics politically and thought his struggle for the specific dalit classes, he laid chief stress on a practical idealism, on the idealism of reason, of wisdom. Ambedkar's all rational knowledge is the inner activity of thought by which also he connected perception and understanding of the social problems. Ambedkar was of the view that the past is to be explained through causes which we know from the experience of the present, and the principle of the accumulation of small effect into great and remote results. While analyzing the concepts with which Ambedkar fought against the inherent abuses being prevalent in Indian society, it seems, he was very much with par of Kant's philosophy on ethics which talks about man as a person is of inestimable value. Humility towards other is no duty, on the contrary, it many become pharisaism or baseness, if by means of it favour advantage are sought, never therefore be any man's servant ,let not your rights be trampled underfoot, accept number no benefit, which you can do without bear yourself bravely and shun unworthy complaining over suffering ! Kneel to no one, for the ideal is within yourself and that which appears to you without may be only and idol.

References :

1. Ramaiah Avatthi, *Contemporary Relevance of Ambedkar's Thought*, Rawat Publication, 2017.
2. Lancaster. Lane.w, *Masters of Political Thought from Hegel to Dewey*, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1959.
3. Mishra. S. N., *Socio-Economic and Political Vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2010.
4. Raghuramaraju. A, *Debating Gandhi*, Oxford University Press, 2006.
5. Bharathi. K.S, *Foundations of Ambedkar Thought*, Dattsons Publishers, Delhi, 1990.
6. Appadorai. A, *Political Thoughts in India*, Khama Publishers, Delhi, 1993.
7. Kumar Raj, *Ambedkar and Constitution*, Commonwealth Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2011.
8. McCord William, *The Springtime of Freedom*, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., 1969.
9. Hoffding Herald, *A Sketch of History of Philosophy, From The Close of The Renaissance to Our Own Day*, Dover Publication, 1967.