

Philosophy and Scope of Democracy: In Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Thoughts and Philosophy.

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Abstract:

The main objective of this research paper is to critically analyze the idea of democracy in the view of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, the great Indian constitution maker; and emancipator of depressed class. Analyzing the idea of democracy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in detail, it can be found out that Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar had unshakeable faith in democracy. In his conception of exploitation less society, democracy has an extra-ordinary role which he defined as 'one person, one vote'; and 'one vote, one value'. Democracy means empowerment of any person for participating in the process of decision-making relating to her/him democracy means liberty, equality and fraternity. In true democracy, gender respect in the society, justice and peace in the light of political philosophy of Dr B.R. Ambedka, whose memory will ever guide to the nation on the path of justice, liberty and equality. The present study is a humble attempt to make a comprehensive and objective analysis of philosophy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar regarding Indian democracy keeping in minds the gaps and lapses in the existing literature on Ambedkar.

Key words: Democracy, Exploitation, Equality, Justice, Political philosophy.

Introduction:

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956), 'a symbol of revolt' (as mentioned by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India), was one of the front-ranking nation-builders of modern India. He is popularly known as the 'pioneer' who initiated the 'liberation movement' of roughly sixty-five million untouchables of India. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar stood apart from his well-known famous contemporaries of India in three respects. First, being a great scholar, social revolutionary and statesman, he had in himself a combination of these attributes that one rarely possesses which made him distinguished from other intellectual personalities of that time. As an intellectual, gigantic personality and creative writer, he had imbibed knowledge that was truly encyclopedic. The range of topics, width of vision, depth and sophistication of analysis, rationality of outlook and essential humanity of the arguments that he came-up with made him different from his illustrious contemporaries.

Unique aspect of Ambedkar lies with the nature and kind of questions he delved into. What is probably most important in a thinker and intellectual is not so much the answer they provide but the question they raised. Ambedkar raised the questions that were simultaneously relevant and uncomfortable. Relevant as they were critical for the nation-in the making and uncomfortable as very few were willing to acknowledge the existence of those issues. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar raised certain pressing issues in his characteristic style that no one was willing to take up or deal with.

In course of his public life over three decades, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was fully convinced that politics should be the instrument to fight for justice in adorning all sections of the Indian people with freedom. As such, he tirelessly worked towards the goal of justice for the untouchables in an unjust society, mainly through political means. In the course of these activities, Ambedkar developed his own ideas about society and politics of the contemporary India. Viewed from the subject of political science, those ideas obviously merit attention. But, scholars who have worked on Ambedkar's different ideas fail to bestow due importance on these aspects of his thinking.

In this article, an attempt has been made to provide an insight into B.R. Ambedkar's idea on democracy. He was a true democrat and advocated a democratic society based on the principles of natural justice, equity and classification according to aptitude, ability and profession. The roots of democracy lie not in the form of Government but in the

social relationships. He considered caste system in India as a serious obstacle in the path of democracy. He said “The first condition precedent for the successful working of democracy is that there must be no glaring inequalities in the society. Secondly, there must be statutory provisions to mitigate the sufferings and to safeguard the interest of the suppressed and oppressed people Thus, according to Dr.B.R, Ambedkar, the failure to recognize that political democracy cannot succeed where there is no social and economic democracy has vitiated parliamentary democracy.

General Conception of Democracy:

When we starting to find out root of democracy, it reach in the ancient Greek, The ancient Greek word ‘democracy’ means rule by the *demos*, which can be translated as either ‘the people; or ‘the mole’ depending on one’s ideological preference. Democracy can only take on a more useful meaning when qualified by one of the other word with which it is associated, for example, liberal democracy, representative democracy, participatory democracy or direct democracy. Although all free societies are democratic, democracies can fail to protect individual freedom. Countries are generally considered democratic to the extent that they have fair and frequent elections in which nearly all adults have the right to vote, citizens have the right to vote, citizens have the right to form and join organizations and to express themselves in alternative sources of information existed. Architects of democracy must determine the constitutional structure that best suits the needs of a particular country, alternative forms of constitutional democracy include parliamentary versus presidential forms of government, plurality versus proportional representation system and federal versus unitary systems.

In a Parliamentary system, the Prime Minister is elected by the parliamentary process and can be removed from office by a vote of no confidence from the Parliament. Executive and legislative powers are fused in a Parliamentary System. In a Presidential system, the President is elected directly by the people and there is a formal separation of powers. In the late 20th Century, a democratic revolution spread around the world as more countries sought to establish democratic governments. There democratic transitions raised hopes for better and more peaceful world. Francis Fukuyama asserted that democracy had triumphed over communism and other competing ideologies. He suggested that democracy would in time become universal.

A important factor that influences the consolidation of democracy is the country’s level of economic development. It produces a more highly educated society and attitudes, such as trust and tolerance that are conducive to a democratic political culture. Greater economic wealth facilitates compromise and accommodation among different groups Democracy follows, to use Samuel Houtington’s phase, “a two step-forward, one-step-backward pattern.” The consolidation of democracy is influenced by prior experience with democracy, the political institutions that are established and the level of economic development among other factor. In a democracy, the government and opposition leaders must work together, which often requires basing from the previous experience of others.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s Ideology of Democracy:

According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, democracy means fundamental changes in the social and economic life of the people and the acceptance of those changes by the people without resorting to disputes and bloodshed. He wanted to establish the principle of one man, one vote and one value not only in the political life of India but also in social and economic life. He wanted political democracy to be accompanied by social democracy. He gave central importance to social aspects of democracy over political aspects, unlike many others whose discourse on democracy is confined to the political and institutional aspects. Ambedkar paid greater attention to social linkage among people than separation of powers and constitutional safeguards for democracy. The concept of power contained in his thinking has a direct relationship between social power.

Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar paid serious attention to religious notions that promote democracy. He says that, religious foundation of caste as the fundamental obstacle to democracy in India. He aspired for having a government of the people, for the people and by the people. According to Ambedkar, democracy means no slavery, no caste, no coercion. He wants free thoughts that choice and capacity to live and let live, which his conscience, would be the right path to democracy. Ambedkar says “Democracy is a mode of associated living. The roots of democracy are to be searched in social relationship, in terms of the associated life between the people who form the society”

The democratic principles of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness are considered to be the essentials of human life in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s concept of democracy. He attaches more importance to human well being and human right. The effective opposition is an important factor in the working of a successful democracy. Democracy means a veto power. Democracy toDr.Babasaheb Ambedkar is “a form and a method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed.” In democracy, there

should be no tyranny of the majority over the minority. The minority must always feel safe that although the majority carrying on the Government, the minority will not be hurt and that the minority will not be imposed upon. Democracy is a dynamic attitude towards human life. It attaches a great importance to virtues like tolerance and peaceful methods. Thus, parliamentary democracy involves non-violent methods of action, peaceful ways of discussion and acceptance of decision with faith and dignity, There are two other pillars on the which parliament system rests. This system needs an opposition and free and fair elections. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar stated that, "Democracy cannot function in the absence of basic civil liberties – which enables the community to vindicate itself against the state furthermore, the right to criticize, if it is to be effective, must include the right to organize opposition through political parties. Representative democracy is essentially procedural. It is characterized by free expression, free parties and free election."

Conclusion:

The main objective of this research paper to analyze and evaluate critically the idea of Ambedkar regarding Indian democracy and to capture the position of Ambedkar on issues whose relevance is even felt at present. Analyzing the idea of democracy of Ambedkar in details, it can be found out that Ambedkar had unshakeable faith in democracy. In his conception of exploitation less society, democracy has an extra-ordinary role which he defined as 'one person, one vote'; and 'one vote, one value'. Democracy means empowerment of any person for participating in the process of decision-making relating to her/him, democracy means liberty, equality and fraternity. He defined parliamentary democracy as "voting by the people in favour of their owners and handing over the rights of ruling over themselves". This provides a glimpse of the span of his ideal, which certainly was much beyond the Indian Constitution or any common place understanding about him. His conception of democracy appears to be purely people oriented. He showed that the bookish concepts of equality are detrimental to the disabled sections of society in the prevailing social setting and proposed a fundamental change in the concept of equality. Democratic socialism is the key note of his political thought and constitutionalism is the only way to achieve it.

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