




Indian Social Reformers




Dr.B.R.AMBEDKAR & JYOTIBA PHULE CASTE SYSTEM

Dr.B.R.AMBEDKAR

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (14 April 1891 – 6 December 1956), popularly known as **Babasaheb Ambedkar**, was an Indian jurist, economist, politician and social reformer who inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement and campaigned against social discrimination towards the untouchables (*Dalit's*), while also supporting the rights of women and labour. He was independent India's first law and justice minister, the architect of the Constitution of India, and a founding father of the Republic of India.

Dr. B.R.AMBEDKAR ON CASTE SYSTEM

CASTE IS A SYSTEM IN WHICH DETERMINATION OF POSITION, RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF AN INDIVIDUAL IS DONE ON THE BASIS OF THE BIRTH OF SUCH INDIVIDUAL IN A PARTICULAR GROUP. IN OTHER WORDS WE CAN SAY THAT, THE STATUS OF AN INDIVIDUAL IS DETERMINED BY BIRTH. UNDER CASTE SYSTEM AN INDIVIDUAL IS NOT ALLOWED TO CHANGE ITS STATUS. WE CAN SAY THAT IT IS A RIGID FORM OF STRATIFICATION SYSTEM, WHICH RESTRICT THE MOBILITY AND DISTINCTNESS OF STATUS. DUE TO THE CASTE SYSTEM SEVERAL EVIL PREVAILS IN THE SOCIETY. UNDER A CASTE SYSTEM AN INDIVIDUAL IS COMPEL TO FOLLOW THE CASTE OCCUPATION. CASTE SYSTEM LEADS TO UNTOUCHABILITY. IT RESTRICTS THE GROWTH OF BROTHERHOOD AMONG PEOPLE AND ALSO IT HOLD OFF NATIONAL UNITY AND CREATE OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL PROGRESS. CASTE SYSTEM DENIES EQUAL RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUAL, THAT WHY IT IS CONSIDERED AS UNDEMOCRATIC. FOR ERADICATING THE PROBLEMS OF CASTE SYSTEM MANY STEPS WERE TAKEN BY VARIOUS LEADERS SUCH AS MAHATMA GANDHI, JYOTIBA PHULE AND THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ROLE WAS PLAYED BY DR. B R AMBEDKAR.



According to him for **Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR** eradication of caste it is necessary to break the religious notion on which caste system is laid down. He is of the view that caste system is not merely division of labour perhaps; it is also a division of labourers. Equality should be for all and though the success shared by all. Instead of thinking about one single community there should be a deep cultural unity of all community. The relevance of this research is to indicate that what Dr. B R Ambedkar regarded as the right path of investigation, to achieve some serviceable truth. Sentiments must be outlawed from the domain of science and things should be judge from objective standpoint.

“IF I FIND THE CONSTITUTION BEING MISUSED,
I SHALL BE THE FIRST ONE TO BURN IT”

– DR. BHIM RAO AMBEDKAR


Socio historical theory

The socio historical theory explains the creation of the Varna, Jaats and untouchables. According to this theory the caste system begins with the arrival of Aryans in India. Before the Aryans there were other communities in India of other origins among them Negrito, Mongoloid, Austroloid and Dravidian. When the Aryans arrived in India their main contact was with the Dravidians and Austroloids. The Aryans disregarded the local culture, they begin conquering and taken control over regions in north India and at the same time pushed the local people towards the south, jungles and mountains in north India.

The Aryans organized among themselves in three groups. The first was of a warrior called Rajayana later they changed their name to kshatriya. The second group was of priest called Brahmans. The third group was of farmers and craftsmen and they were called as Vaishyas. In order to secure their status the Aryans resolved some social and religious rules which allowed only them to be the priest, warrior and the businessmen of the society. For instance: Maharashtra in West India, many think that the meaning of the name Maharashtra is great land but some claim that the name Maharashtra is derived from the Jaats called Mahar who were considered to

Contrary to Democracy

Democracy is based on principle of equality, fraternity and liberty. On the other hand the caste system is based on inequality of status and opportunities, which often creates conflict and tension in the society. It acts as an obstacle in the normal and smooth functioning of democracy. No doubt India has got political freedom but it must be the concerned of every individual that real freedom cannot be cherished without attainment of the social and the economic democracy. It is unfortunate that the Indian society is sharply divided into various caste and sub caste which acts as a barrier due to rigidity and division of the society based on caste consideration.




Caste system was very much stringent and rigid institution of early society which was responsible for the pathetic condition of different groups of the community and they were treated as suppressed and untouchables class. Various successful steps were taken by different social reformers to eradicate this evil from the mind of the people, because every individuals mind were responsible to generate this evils into once mind. This paper emphasized the annihilation of caste system in the light of the views if Dr. B R Ambedkar. He made valuable contribution to the social and political thinking and denounced the outrageous attitude of the Brahmanical Hinduism towards the untouchables and worked for the liberation of oppressed class from the high caste Hindus. Through his writing and speeches he made the people conscious of the political, economic and social problem of the untouchables and impressed the need of paying special attention to the conditions of untouchables.

JYOTIBA PHULE

Jyothirao Govindrao Phule was born in 1827 into a family that belonged to the agricultural Mali caste, traditionally occupied as gardeners and considered to be one of the Shudhra varna in the ritual ranking system of Hinduism.

The original surname of the family had been *Gorhe* and had its origins in the village of Katgun, in present day Satara District, Maharashtra.

- ▶ In 1848, aged 23, Phule visited the first girls' school in Ahmad nagar, run by Christian missionaries. It was also in 1848 that he read Thomas Paine's book Rights of Man and developed a keen sense of social justice. He realised that lower castes and women were at a disadvantage in Indian society, and also that education of these sections was vital to their emancipation.
- ▶ To this end and in the same year, Phule first taught reading and writing to his wife, Savitribai, and then the couple started the first indigenously-run school for girls in Pune. Ostracised for this by their family and community, their friend Usman Sheikh and his sister Fatima Sheikh provided them their home to stay. They also helped to start the school in their premises.



Mahatma Jyotiba Phule formed the Satya Shodak Mandal in 1873 with the aim of liberating non-Brahmins from the clutches of Brahminism. Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur started Satya Shodak Mandal in 1912 and carried forward the movement started by Phule. In the pre-independence period, the Dalit movements comprised of a strong non-Brahman movement against Brahmanism in Maharashtra, Adi Dravidas movement in Tamil Nadu, Shri Narayan Dharma Paripalan movement in Kerala, Adi Andhras movement in Coastal Andhra and the like. Phule tried to formulate a new theistic religion.