



# Dr. Ambedkar International Mission

Jai-Bhim House, 1 – 4 – 34, Sakaechodori,  
Tsurumi–Ku, Yokohama, Japan 230–0038



## PETITION TO AWARD NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO DR. BHIMRAO R. AMBEDKAR

To,

The Nobel Committee  
The Norwegian Nobel Institute  
Henrik Ibsens gate 51  
0255 Oslo, Norway

**Subject:** Request to award Nobel Peace Prize to the emancipator and peace builder of the world, Dr. Bhimrao R. Ambedkar on his 130<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.

### Reference:

- 1) <https://www.nobelpeaceprize.org/Nomination/Nominator-application-form>
- 2) <http://www.ambedkar-nobel-peace.org/>
- 3) [www.ambedkarmission.org](http://www.ambedkarmission.org)

## WHY POSTHUMOUS

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is a revolutionary humanist who changed the lives of millions socially deprived, outcaste human beings to live with the dignity, peace and harmony. When we talk about the work and ideologies of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, there is nothing that can be criticized. He led the foundation of this country in such a way that he left nothing for anyone to say a word against his work or against his ideology. Knowing that, it is hard to believe that the casteist mindsets in India still oppose the work done by such a humanist mainly being that they lose some of their power of ruling the other individual or slave the other human beings. They refuse the equality and intend to be the rulers forever. This proves that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar has been victim of process of reductionism and 'black-out' in India and at thereby at the international level as well.

Dr. Ambedkar, since his childhood until his death was discriminated every day though he was the first Indian having highest education with several degrees and doctorate from the international universities like Columbia and Cambridge university in 19<sup>th</sup> century which was hardly possible for any outcaste (untouchables). The man who vowed to demolish this inequality before owns death struggled and fought till his last breath and brought the revolution to make every individual human being an equal same as the principals of Gautam Buddha. Even after his death, in 21<sup>st</sup> century where equality and humanism are the topmost priority globally, the casteist mindsets are still discriminating such a Nobel human being.

The only way to honor such a unique personality is to award him with the world's most valuable reward, the "**NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**". It is worth for Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to receive this award the posthumous on his 130<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary year.



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### WHY NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 1891 in India, there was a rise of greatest humanitarian revolutionary of modern world, as he was born in the untouchable society of past India, so in his early years, he suffered many atrocities with him. But he made his sufferings as strength and decided to fight peacefully against these all discriminations and brought a marvelous social, economical, political revolution in India. Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chief Architect of Indian Constitution was a scholar par excellence. His statesman qualities can be easily visible in each and every article of Indian Constitution, which declares India to be a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic and a welfare state committed to secure justice, liberty and equality for the people and for promoting fraternity, dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation.

His struggle revolves around the time where unlike different out castes he was also forbidden to take education as he was banned from sitting inside the classroom. He then used to sit outside the classroom and practiced his education. This went for 10 years until he was able to clear his elementary and matriculation. He also went through various mental stress as the upper caste peoples used to dominate the out castes. Upper caste peoples used to torture out castes in a very humiliating way, if taking the example of an incident in elementary school of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, when he used to get thirsty, he would turn his mouth in upward direction, and someone would place a funnel in his mouth and pour the water from the kettle into it.

Dr. Ambedkar was a great patriot, social thinker, political reformer, a true feminist, philosophical writer with progressive ideas. He stood for all political, social and cultural activities which increased the cause of human progress and happiness. He crusaded for the betterment of the oppressed and depressed classes. In this struggle, he stood rare crusading spirit, carving out in this process and playing significant role for himself among the leading architects of modern India.

He is also remembered and admired as the Greatest humanitarian, statesman of the world, a true Nationalist, sociologist, philosopher, Anthropologist, a visionary, an emancipator, historian, economist, jurist, a prolific writer, a powerful orator, the unique political and moral philosopher and the revolutionary who paved way for the reconstruction of the world mental and material. His course work in Columbia University over the span of 3 years included 29 courses in economics, 11 in history, 6 in sociology, 5 in philosophy, 4 in anthropology, 3 in politics and 1 each in elementary French and German.

Ambedkar was voted the "Greatest Indian" in 2012 by a poll organized by History TV18 and CNN IBN. Dr. Ambedkar was "the highest educated Indian economist of all times." Due to his role in economics Amartya Sen, said that Ambedkar is "father of my economics," His contribution in the field of economics is marvelous and will be remembered forever.

In post-Independence India, his socio-political thought is respected across the political spectrum. The initiatives taken by him have influenced various spheres of life and



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transformed the way India today looks at socio-economic policies, education and affirmative action through socio-economic and legal incentives. He passionately believed in individual freedom and criticized caste society.

The ideas which Dr. Ambedkar poured on the oppressed people of India gave them a new courage and a sense of self respect that they had never known before. The Ambedkar statue was an icon for depressed and oppressed classes civil rights.

He strongly supported for federal system. The draft constitution can be both unitary as well as federal according to the requirements of time and circumstances. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar supported the minorities' rights that "It is wrong for the majority to deny the existence of minorities. It is equally wrong for the minorities to perpetuate themselves. A solution must be found which will serve a double purpose. It must recognize the existence of the minorities to start with. It must also be such that it will enable majorities and minorities to merge somebody into one. The solution proposed by the constituent assembly is to be welcomed because it is a solution which serves this two-fold purpose".

As a social reformer, Dr. Ambedkar believed in peaceful methods of social change. He was opposed to the violent methods in social change for it hinders the tranquility and creates chaos. He had no faith in anarchy methods. A welfare state of all cannot be developed on the grounds of terror, force and brutal methods. According to him violent methods to a peaceful society is not only improper but also unscientific and immoral. According to Dr. Ambedkar, social change and social justice are indeed critical to the egalitarianism that any democracy must aspire it. As a social democrat Dr. Ambedkar stressed on a much broader notion of stable reconstruction of India with inclusive growth and cultural integration in the Nation without caste discrimination.

Ambedkar advocated democracy in every field: social, economic and political. For him social justice meant maximum happiness to the maximum number of people. He led a number of social movements to secure human rights to the oppressed and depressed sections of the society. He stands as a symbol of struggle for social justice. Thus, Ambedkar wanted a nation to be built on the democratic method, upholding the trinity of freedom, equality and fraternity in a parliamentary democracy. Wherein majority should rule but not at the cost of minority, thus the proper protection to the marginalized is the essence of an egalitarian nation.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had a short but the most remarkable life one ever could have lived. He rose up from dust, from being treated worse than an animal to becoming the father of the Indian Constitution. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was truly a multi-faceted personality. A veritable emancipator of untouchables, a great National leader and patriot, a great economist, a great author, a great educationalist, a great political philosopher, a great religious guide and above all a great humanist without any parallel among his contemporaries. All these facets of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's personality had strong humanist underpinnings. His life and work guide many oppressed classes of all over the world to pave revolution and make life better. In his entire life he worked for conflict resolutions and brought peace in Indian society and so in world.



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The most revolutionary field that he worked on was to give equal rights to women of India. He was a feminist in true sense. Apart from the numerous speeches which drive home his basic speech of equality of women, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's theorization of the interlinked nature of caste and gender-based oppression in India was a pioneering feat. By codifying Hindu personal law, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar facilitated the legal recognition of women as equal citizen. He granted women the right to divorce, the right to inheritance and he provide for legal recognition of inter caste marriages.

Besides all these things, the thoughts and ideologies of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar faces a lot of criticism. None of those criticism is logical or unbiased, this is done by the people who still believe in the casteist ideology and are unaware of the work that Babasaheb has done towards the society.

In this world full of diversities, he introduced a composite culture in whole world by his great document Indian Constitution. India also consists of many diversities and many conflicts between communities, so for resolving this he made Indian Constitution which talks about Unity in diversity with fraternity among all citizens. He accepted peaceful way of mind (living) and he adopted Buddhism and from this in people's life, for peace building, he worked on people legally, mentally as well as spiritually. While having this much of huge contribution in peace building of world, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar should have been awarded noble peace prize but Ironically till now he has not received the Noble Peace Prize yet.

### **PETITION**

#### **Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: A Case for Nobel**

Professor: Dr. Vivek Kumar

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Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar has been victim of process of reductionism and 'black-out' in India and at thereby at the international level as well. India as a nation recognized his contributions by conferring on him the highest Civilian Award Bhart Ratna in the year 1990, 34 years after his *mahaparinirvan* (his death). However, the world has yet to recognize his larger contributions to Human Rights, peace and amity of the universe. Therefore, this petition is a humble attempt to highlight Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's seminal contributions to the larger humanity from local to global and hence a worthy case for Nobel Peace Prize.

#### **Reductionism & Blackout of Babasaheb Ambedkar**

Let us first understand how has Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has been victim of process of reductionism and blackout in Indian Society? By reductionism we mean that



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Babasaheb has been either understood only from a very narrow perspective of Dalit Messiah or as an intellectual who was only engaged with caste or annihilation of caste. Further, many intellectuals at the most called him as the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. In this context few individuals still have doubt that he is the father of Indian Constitution. Third, reductionism also comes to fore when intellectuals and academia could not recognize different shades of his thoughts and perspectives with which he has tried to understand social realities of Indian and world society. Last but not the least the reductionism of his personality and deeds can be seen in the way various stages and dynamic of his movement have not been noticed by the media, academia and intelligentsia. ‘Blackout’ means his omission from seminal literary, academic texts, visual and artistic works. The blackout sometimes looks by design and sometimes by default.

### **Let us take a few examples to prove the first point of ‘reductionism’.**

1. He has been reduced to a Dalit leader and an intellectual who was only engaged with annihilation of caste. The first example comes from Eleanor Zelliot’s Ph.D. work where she has analysed him and his movement from a particular caste perspective and a leader of Mahar caste not even the leader of whole ex-untouchables communities.
2. In 1990s journalist Arun Shaurie who went on to become cabinet minister in Vajpayee Govt. published a book, ‘Worshiping the False God’ to prove the point that Ambedkar was not the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He was only a draftsman and called him stooge of British.
3. The third example of reductionism comes as late as 2014. This time a literary personality Arundati Roy in her effort to popularise Babasaheb’s writings, could see Ambedkar ‘Annihilation of Caste’ as his most valuable contribution. The reductionism can be further substantiated from the point that her introduction was more voluminous than the Babasaheb’s text ‘Annihilation of Cate’.

### **Understanding Ambedkar’s Blackout**

Having given you a few examples to prove the point how Ambedkar has been the victim of ‘reductionism’, let us take a few examples to prove the point of ‘blackout’.

1. The first literary work is Mulk Raj Anand’s novel ‘Untouchable’ in which Babasaheb Ambedkar has been completely blacked out and Gandhi is hailed as the emancipator of untouchables. It is a fact that by the time Mulk



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- Raj Anand had written his text Ambedkar already arrived on the horizon of emancipation of Dalits.
2. As far as blackout from academic texts is concern there are several examples in this sphere. However, the first text in question is G. S. Ghurey's 'Caste and Race in India' first published in 1932 from Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. The book was published one and a half decades after Ambedkar's 'Caste, Genesis, Mechanism and its Spread' published from USA in Antiquary Journal. Even after its first edition Ghurey published a number of other editions also, however he never to cognizance of Babasaheb writings on Caste. Same case is with Louis Dumont's, Homo Hierarchicous, first published in 1970s with several publications thereafter.
  3. The third example of blackout of Babasaheb Ambedkar can be observed from Richard Attenborough directed film Gandhi in 1982 which is considered to be epic and a historical film. It was nominated for Academy Awards in eleven categories and won in eight categories including Best Picture and Best Director Award. However, in this film Ambedkar was totally blacked out. However, it is a fact that Gandhi had picked up removal of untouchability as one of the agenda of his movement after 1930s because of his conflict with Ambedkar. Gandhi's tug of war with Ambedkar in Round Table Conference in London, his fast unto death against Separate Electorates to Dalits, singing of famous Poona pact in September 1932 and then Gandhi and Ambedkar dialogue on 'Annihilation of Caste' are highly publicised episodes which remain fresh in public memory. These episodes are not easy to be obliterated from public memory. And yet Ambedkar is completely blacked out in Gandhi.

The blackout of Ambedkar in Gandhi is serious because when Jabbar Patel made a feature film on Ambedkar in the year 2000, Gandhi was present everywhere. Therefore a moot question emerges in this context -If Ambedkar had no relevance in Gandhi then how come Gandhi becomes relevant in a film on the life of Ambedkar? Hence, this raises a doubt. Is there a deliberate attempt to blackout Ambedkar in the film Gandhi? Why can't he been shown in the film beside Gandhi? Second, corollary to that is can Ambedkar be analysed independently on his own?

### Decoding Babasaheb's

If these are a few examples to prove the point that there is general pattern of 'Reductionism' and 'Blackout' of Babasaheb then is there any alternative



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perspective to understand the colossal personality of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar? In this context we can highlight at least six perspectives to understand his colossal personality and his contributions to not only to Indian society but to the whole World. These reasons are:

- a. The way Babasaheb Ambedkar has been revered by his followers and supporters
- b. The way he was appreciated by Columbia University while awarding honorary L.L. D. Degree in the year 1952
- c. The way western Social Scientists have tried to analyse his academic and political wisdom
- d. The nobel peace prize winner Dr. Amartya Sen dedicate his Nobel prize to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
- e. The horizons, shades, epistemologies and approaches of his thought.
- f. Nature and dynamics of his movements launched by him
- g. The contributions he has made for nation building
- h. Ambedkar Emerges a Global Icon

### **Babasaheb Ambedkar: As revered by his followers**

Let us briefly take these facts one by one to prove the point. At the outset let us understand the dimensions of Babasaheb's personality which his followers highlight and revere. Babasaheb's followers address him as, '*Vishva Vibhooti*' (Global Icon) '*Bodhisatva*' (Like Buddha), *Bharat Rattan* (Highest Civilian award of the country), '*Samvidhan Nirmata*' (framer of the constitution) Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar'. That means he is revered as, a spiritual leader who has achieved a higher status of '*Bodhisattav*' by treading path of Buddha and practicing the same. Second, this address also highlights his higher civilian achievement in the Indian society where he was conferred country's highest civilian award '*Baharat Rattan*' (gem of India). The supporters deliberately add the epithet in front of his name Dr. to highlight his educational achievement which he had at that point in time without any other being near to him. His followers affectionately call him '*Babasaheb*'. Apart from this he is also revered as the maker of Indian constitution (Bharat ke Samvidhan Nirmata). Last but not the least he is being addressed also as '*Global Icon*'. This is the repertoire of his aura highlighted by his followers which count in millions, yet he is reduced only to a Dalit leader by the mainstream media, academia or intelligentsia. That is why they feel that he is not given the respect which is due to him.

### **Babasaheb Ambedkar as referred by Formal Institutions**

If this is the informal way in which Ambedkar is revered by his followers let us observe how he was referred by the formal institution like University. For



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instance, how did University of Columbia refer him while awarding honorary degree some sixty five years back on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962. The citation letter re as follows,

“ Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar LL.D. ...for three years a graduate student in this university, receiving the doctorate in Political Science; subsequently a student of the Inns of Court and the University of London, obtaining a doctorate in economics; for the past three decades a barrister, university professor ...as a framer of the constitution...one of India’s leading citizens...a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights.”

### **How has he been evaluated by western social scientists?**

In the same vein we should also take into account how a few western social scientists have highlighted Ambedkar’s achievements in the sphere of higher education in comparison to other leaders of that time. Let us see these lines Gandhi did not claim much book learning...Nehru, on the other had enjoyed higher education Gandhi lacked...it would be unfair to compare Nehru to Ambedkar, intellectually head and shoulder above most of the Congress leaders, in part due to far more serious training ...at LSE and Columbia , to read whom is to enter a different world (Anderson 2012: 51-52).

Apart from taking cognizance of his academic credential Anderson also took note of his political foresight. According to Anderson when Gandhi, Nehru, whole Congress and even Muslim League did not have a clue about the outcome of India’s struggle for independence Ambedkar alone has a solution of Hindu-Muslim conflict. In his own words

...Ambedkar...in 1944...published the only serious work...which would determine the outcome of the struggle for independence- Pakistan or Partition of India whose references range from Renan to Acton to Carton; from Canada to Ireland to Switzerland stand a devastating indictment of intellectual poverty of Congress and its leaders. Critical to Muslim introversion, alert to Savarkar’s Hindutva, contemptuous of myth of pan-religious amity, Ambedkar did not advocate separation of two communities, but he proposed referenda to determine popular wishes and in the event that Muslims insisted on it sketched the boundaries he thought might endue...”(Anderson 2012: 89-90).

In the same vein Cosimo Zene’s edited volume, ‘The Political Philosophy of Antonio Gramsci and B.R. Ambedkar’ which includes contributions of at least fourteen social scientists is testimony to the fact that his larger ideas are being recognized and compared with other philosophers of the world. The book has an interdisciplinary approach and published by Routledge London and New York. It has yet to be published in India. Such were the academic, social, political and educational achievements and contributions of Ambedkar accepted by the people in general and the western academia in particular. In spite of these, mainstream



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media, intelligentsia and academia in India have reduced Ambedkar to the status of a Dalit leader. They have wilfully blacked out his aforesaid ideas and qualities.

### **Different shades of thoughts of Ambedkar**

It is in this context, we would also like to highlight Ambedkar's various shades of thoughts present in his writings and speeches. This will help us to decode Ambedkar's larger ideas. We can at least observe ten shades of thoughts in various writings and speeches of Ambedkar. These are, Social, Political, Economic, Religious, Gender, Educational, Legal and Constitutional, Developmental, Human Rights specific to marginalized, This is only a suggestive list and one can find out number of other shades of thought in his writings and speeches published by Maharashtra Government posthumously.

### **Epistemology of Ambedkar's thought**

Ambedkar has produced empirical knowledge and not produced speculative philosophy. His empirical knowledge has at least eight sources of data collection. These were, Archaeological sources, Indological sources, Government reports and other documents, Reports of Commissions and Committees, News paper clippings, Books and Journals, direct observation and people's perception and discussions. Again there are number of permutation and combinations of these sources in production of knowledge by Babasaheb.

### **Perspective and Approaches of Knowledge**

Apart from different shades of thoughts and epistemology of knowledge we can observe that Babasaheb Ambedkar had adopted multiple approaches for producing his knowledge. We can observe at least four approaches in his writings. These are, Civilization, Historical, Evolutionary and Comparative approach for production of knowledge. To take one example to prove the point, for instance while understanding religion in India he began by tracing the origin in different civilization. He then differentiated between religion and theology. He also used Max Muller, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber etc. to understand meaning of religion and tribal society and modern society.

Having discussed the perspective of the lecture, the process of reductionism and blackout of Babasaheb's larger ideas and thought; we have seen four added facts on the basis of which we can argue that there is process reductionism and blackout, of Babasaheb Ambedkar. These were how was he revered by his followers, how have institutions viewed his personality and deeds, how have various social scientists his contributions, the different shades, epistemology, and perspectives of his production of knowledge. Instead of engaging such vast canvas of his methodologically produced knowledge the social scientists of Indian origin have reduced him to an individual who has written only on caste.



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### Different Stages and Phases of Babasheb's Movements

#### The Social Reformer

There is a tendency among scholars and layman alike to reduce Babasaheb Ambedkar's movement as an undifferentiated monolithic whole. However, if we analyse his activities a little bit closely we can easily divide Babasaheb movement in five different yet interrelated stages/phases. These phases were complementary and supplementary to his efforts for achieving equality, liberty, fraternity and justice not only for the Dalits but for the other social groups in general and Indian society in particular. Each phase enriched his experience in fighting against the existing inequalities of the Hindu social order. The periodization of his leadership is also necessary to understand the rational of his changing socio-political stances in his long struggle.

The first phase began in early 1919 when he gave a memorandum to franchise commission asking for self- representation of Dalits and this continued till 1930. During this period he acted more like a social reformer while fighting against the rigid caste system and its draconian practice of untouchability. He was convinced by the knowledge of the world history that “history bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always; been preceded by social and religious revolutions” that is why he launched various types of social movements. To begin with Ambedkar formed a society the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha, society to serve the interests of outcastes on July 20, 1924 which could place their social and political problems before the government. Second in this phase Babasaheb launched Mahar satyagrhas for taking water from a public tank. Another very unique event that took place during the *Mahad Satyagrah* was burning of the ‘*Manusmriti*’ the sacred law book of the Hindus. Justifying his action of burning the ‘*Manusmriti*’, Ambedkar said in the 3 Feb. 1928 issue of his *Bahishkrit Bharat*, that his reading of the Manusmriti “had convinced him that it was abusive and insulting in its treatment of the Shudras and it did not even remotely support the idea of social equality. To burn a thing was to register protest against the idea it represented”. In the same vein in this phase Ambedkar organised the largest and longest Satyagraha on 2<sup>nd</sup> march, 1930 at Nasik for the Dalits, entry to the ‘Kala Ram’ temple. Around 15,000 Mahars and Chambhars had assembled at Nasik. But the temple had to be closed for about a year to keep them away from entering it. The *Parvati* Satyagraha in Poona also met the same fate.

Although Ambedkar was leading a movement for temple entry, but he never wanted to enter in them in real sense of the term. In his own words, “I did not launch the temple entry movement because I wanted the Depressed Classes to become worshippers of idols which they were prevented from worshipping or because I believed that temple entry would make them equal members in and an integral part of Hindu society. So far as this



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aspect of the case is concerned, I would advise the Depressed Classes to insist upon a complete overhauling of Hindu society and Hindu theology before they consent to become an integral part of Hindu society. I started temple entry Satyagraha only because I felt that was the best way of energizing the Depressed Classes and making them conscious of their position. As I believe I have achieved that, therefore, I have no more use for temple entry. I want the Depressed Classes to concentrate their energy and resources on politics and education” (Elinor Zelliott, From Untouchables to Dalits, Manohar Publication 1992:131, India).

### **Ambedkar And his Political Movements**

The second phase started in 1930 and ended with his joining the Constituent assembly. During this period he acted more like a political leader emphasized the need of establishing fundamental rights of the Dalits, acquiring political rights of the Dalits but also establishing a few political parties to realize these political rights. For instance defining the interests and rights of the Dalits, Ambedkar opined that, “The untouchables are usually regarded as objects of pity but they are ignored in any political scheme on the score that they have no interest to protect. And yet their interests are the greatest. Not that they have large property to protect from confiscation. But they have their very persona confiscated. The socio- religious disabilities have dehumanized the untouchables and their interests at stake are therefore the interests of humanity. The interests of property are nothing before such primary interests... The untouchable is not even a citizen. Citizenship is a bundle of rights such as (1) personal liberty, (2) personal security, (3) right to hold private property, (4) equality before law, (5) liberty of conscience, (6) freedom of opinion and speech, (7) right to assembly, (8) right of representation in a country’s Government and (9) right to hold office under the State ... These are the interests of the untouchables” (Ambedkar writing and speeches Vol. I 1979: pp.255-6, Mumbai Government).

Secondly during this phase he also went on to participate in Roundtable Conference in London and won the ‘Separate Electorate’ for the Dalits. The separate electorates gave Dalits the power of two votes. Through one vote they would elect their own caste representatives and through other they could elect the general caste representative. This was unique because it gave them their true representative. However, Gandhi as the representative of the Indian National Congress did not accept the separate electorate for the Dalits and went on to fast on to death. This lead Ambedkar to enter in a pact called ‘Poona Pact’ in September 1932. Responding to fast unto death of Gandhi Ambedkar issued to the press statement on Gandhi’s fast to expose his tactics, “suffice it is to say that although Mr. Gandhi declared a fast unto death, he did not want to die. He wanted very much to live” (Ambedkar Writings and Speeches Vol. 9, 1991 p. 88 Govt. of Maharashtra). Further he argued that the fast created a problem of how to save



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Gandhi's life. All eyes turned on Ambedkar for the same. To this Ambedkar reflected, "As to myself it is no exaggeration to say that no man was placed in a greater and graver dilemma than I was then. It was a baffling situation. I had to make a choice between two different alternatives. There was before me the duty, which I owed as a part of common humanity, to save Gandhi from sure death. There was before me the problem of saving for the untouchables the political rights, which the Prime Minister had given them. I responded to the call of humanity and saved the life of Mr. Gandhi by agreeing to alter the Communal Award in manner satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi" (Ambedkar 1991 Ibid: 88).

After Poona pact 'Separate Electorates' were converted to 'Joint Electorates' which exists even today. In spite of the fact Ambedkar had on the independent political rights for the Dalits because of which they could represent themselves in politics. With this achievement Ambedkar formed Independent Labour party in 1936 and contested Bombay Assembly elections and won number of seats. The in the elections gave him and Dalits a new confidence because of which in 1942 he launched the All Scheduled Federation to broaden his political national base. During this phase he had discussion and letter exchanged words with Ram Manohar Lohia to launch a united political party. However Ambedkar could not do so because of his untimely death on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956. But he was quite successful in laying the foundation of Republican Party of India which was formed in 1957 after his *mahaparinirva* (death).

In his political party Babasaheb Ambedkar also established women wing and used to have regular and simultaneous sessions and used to address women cadres. He groomed many women leasers in his party who later on went on to become Members of Legislative Assembly. Such as Babasaheb's Politics. He never mixed Religion with Politics and tried to mobilise people on secular issues.

### **The Chief Architect of Indian Constitution**

The third phase of Babasaheb's movement started in 1946 when he entered in the Constituent Assembly and became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. Ambedkar's entrance into the 'Constituent Assembly' even against his will is regarded as the third phase of his leadership in the sphere of Dalit amelioration. As the chairman of the 'Drafting Committee' Ambedkar bore the burden of not only drafting the various democratic principles but also of defending them clause by clause in the 'Constituent Assembly' debates. The 'Constituent Assembly' worked for two years, eleven months and seventeen days since it first met on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1946. That means Ambedkar had to be present on all these days. Further, in this regard one can make out amount of labor and time Ambedkar had to put in preparing the Constitution by his following reflection. Ambedkar argued that draft Constitution, as prepared by the constitutional Adviser as a text for the 'Drafting Committee' to work upon, consisted 243 Articles and 13 Schedules. In its final form, the draft Constitution contained 395 Articles and 8 Schedules. The



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total number of Amendments to the draft Constitution tabled was approximately 7635 (seven thousand six hundred and Thirty five). Of them, the total number of amendments actually moved in the house was over 2473 (Two thousand four hundred and seventy three) (Ambedkar Writings and Speeches Vol 13, 1994: P. 1206, Govt. of Maharashtra). That means he read all the 7635 amendments and discarded 5162 (five thousand and one hundred and sixty two) amendments and incorporated 2473 amendments to produce our constitution a herculean task with extraordinary intellect.

The members of the ‘Constituent Assembly’ have accepted the amount of labor, both intellectual and physical, that was put in by Ambedkar in the preparation of final shape of Constitution of India. For instance, parsing Ambedkar’s contribution T.T. Krishnamachari, one of the senior members of the ‘Constituent Assembly’ from the then Madras Presidency opined in the assembly that, “Mr. President Sir, I am one of those in the house who have listened to Dr. Ambedkar very carefully. I am aware of the amount of work and enthusiasm that he has brought to bear on the work of drafting this constitution ...The house is perhaps aware that of the seven members nominated by you, one had resigned from the house and was replaced. One died and was not replaced. One was in America and his place was not filled up and another person was engaged in state affairs and there was a void to that extent. One or two people were away from Delhi and perhaps reasons of health did not permit them to attend. So, it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting this Constitution fell on Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable” (Ambedkar Writings and Speeches Vol.13 1994: P.72 Govt. of Maharashtra). This as the contribution of Babasaheb Ambedkar in the making of the Indian Constitution and yet people are not ready to accept his contributions.

Further during third epoch he also joined to Nehru cabinet and became the first law minister of independent India but resigned in October 1951. In his capacity of Law Minister of the country Babasaheb wanted to bring in Law which he had titled as ‘Hindu Code Bill’ to empower the Hindu women as a whole. The bill was envisaged to secure a dignified and equal status for the Hindu women with number of clauses. There were rights of inheritance and maintenance. There were laws against dowry. Instead of Polygamy Monogamy was made legal. The Hindu marriage became a contract instead of sacrament. The consent of wife was to be made compulsory in the event of adoption. He had also mooted that like son wife and daughter should be given share in the property of husband and father respectively. Ambedkar in his proposed Hindu code Bill attempted to, “Consolidate the different categories of *Srtidhan* into one single category of



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property and laid down the uniform rule of succession” (Ambedkar writings and speeches Vol 14 (I), 1995: p.7, Govt. of Maharashtra.).

### **The Religious Renounce-r**

In the fourth phase of his leadership started (1952-56) Babasahaheb emerged as a renouncer and religious leader. He started mobilizing his supporters to embraced Buddhism and finally returned to its fold on 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1956 before attaining nirvana on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956. Ambedkar’s conversion to Buddhism has been criticized as a political act. Again it is an attempt to belittle his vision. Zelliott has replied very aptly so such critics. She argued, ““What possible political advantage does conversion offer”? Conversion to Buddhism immediately cuts off...deserving governmental benefits ...to Untouchable castes. Ambedkar’s delayed conversion came long after the period of combining the conversion idea with political expediency, and by then reference to conversion as a political threat had lost its significance. Instead, it had reference to the great Asian Buddhist world, the reputation of Buddhism as an important religion both in India and the West and the possibility of Buddhism as a moral force” ( Elinor Zelliott, From Untouchable to Dalits, 1992, P. 195, Manohar, Ne Delhi).

We are aware of the fact that Babasahaheb well aware ‘Sciences of Religion’ and had deep understanding of different religions of the world. He had read Max Muller, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim etc. on religion. He also knew about theology and rituals as two parts of the religion. However, he as convinced about the necessity of religion in the society. According to him religion is the most significant institution which helps in social control. Law cannot have full control in the society. That is why he argued religion is very essential for the Dalits as well. But that religion should be egalitarian religion. That is why he chose Buddhism because he as of the opinion that it was based on egalitarian principles like-equality, liberty, and fraternity. Second, there is no mediator between god and people. People can their own guide. There is no church and no idea of soul and rebirth. Hence Buddha’s gospel will be most effective emancipatory ideology for the Dalits who need psychological and social uplift. That is why Ambedkar choose Buddhism as the religion for the Dalits.

Ambedkar after conversion was called to participate at world Buddhist Conference during 15-16<sup>th</sup> November, 1956 in which he participated. Ambedkar’s last effort to popularise the Buddhist faith in India was a book ‘Buddha and His Dhamma’. He tried to explain the tents of Buddhism, in this book, in most simple language for the common masses and tried to eliminate the Brahmanical interpretation which had intruded in Buddha’s life.

### **Ambedkar the Educator**

Apart from these four shades there is fifth shade of his movement which cut across all the four stages/ phases of his movements is the phase here he is acting



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like an educator. Who can forget his famous slogan, ‘Educate, Agitate and Organize’ which reverberates in every meeting on or about Babasaheb. During this period he brought out at least five newspapers to educate his people. The first newspapers was ‘MOOK NAYAK, (Hero of the Dumb) started in 1920, ‘BAHISKRIT BHARAT, (Ex-Communicated Indians) started in 1927 till 1929, SAMATA (Equality) started in 1928, JANATA (The People) started in 1930 ,and last but not the least PRABUDHA BHARAT, (The Enlightened Indian) started in Feb 1956. Through these he wanted to awaken the downtrodden masses from their age-old lethargy and inaction and unite them. He asked the government to grant concessions, scholarships and other facilities to Dalit students. During this phase he founded the People’s Education Society in Bombay in 1945. In 1946 he established Siddharth College of Arts and Science to provide basic and non-discriminatory and scientific education to Dalits and others. An important lesson which we can infer from this phase of his movement is that he never wanted to propagate vocational education as is being popularised by the present BJP led government.

### **Ambedkar the Nation Builder**

It is in this context his larger ideas of Nation Building are very important. It is so because ‘Nation’ for marginalized sections of South Asian societies is an idea of emancipation from the yolk of colonialism and exploitative social structure of Indian society although he moves towards universalism with the conversion to Buddhism in October 1956.

#### **Is India A Nation?**

At the outset Ambedkar like many others was of the opinion that India was not a nation but nation in the making (Ambedkar 1994: 1217). He made this fact very clear as early as in 1930s during his conflict with Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. According to Ambedkar, “The Anglo-Indians were never tired of proclaiming that India was not a nation” (Ambedkar1990: 29). It is true that the colonial administrators did not view Indian subcontinent as one nation. Strachey (1888:5) wrote, “...there is not and never was an India...no Indian nation, no people of India”. In the same vein Sheeley (1883: 255) commented, ‘India is ... only a geographical expression like Europe or Africa. It does not make the territory of a nation and a language, but the territory of many nations and languages’ (Strachey (1888) and Sheeley (1883) as quoted in Oommen 2000: 1). Ambedkar also opined that even Dr. Rabindra. Tagore, the national poet of Bengal also agreed that India was not a nation (Ambedkar 1990: 29). That is why he emphasized that, “First of all there is no nation of Indians in real sense of the word. The nation does not exist, it is to be created, and I think it will be admitted that the suppression of a distinct and a separate community is not the method of creating a nation” (Ambedkar 1991: 412). Again while speaking on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1949 when the Constituent Assembly was going to pass the Constitution of independent India Ambedkar argued that, “[in the past] politically-minded Indian resented the expression “the people of India.” They preferred the expression “the Indian nation.” I am of opinion that in believing that we are a nation, we are cherishing a great delusion” (Ambedkar 1994: 1217).

#### **Why is India not a Nation?**



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In this context it will be worth mentioning the main reasons because of which Ambedkar refused to accept Indian was not a nation. It would also be worth considering how did he define the nation and what was his scheme for building the Nation?

### **Relationship between Hindus and Dalits; Hindus and Aborigines**

At the outset Ambedkar wondered, “How can people divided into several thousands of castes be a nation?” (Ambedkar 1994: 2017). Arguing at another place Ambedkar had highlighted the fact how castes were hurdle in the process of nation building. In his own words, “There is an utter lack among the Hindus of what the sociologists call “consciousness of kind”. There is no Hindu consciousness of kind. In every Hindu the consciousness that exists is the consciousness of his caste. That is the reason why the Hindus cannot be said to form a society or a nation” (Ambedkar 1979: 50-51). Ambedkar further went on the explain why are castes anti national. In his own words, “The castes are anti-national in the first place because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti-national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste” (Ambedkar 1994: 2017). Not only that Ambedkar also underlined that, “Caste is... the real explanation as to why Hindu has let the” thirteen million aborigines in the midst of civilization as savage without giving him medical aid to reform them and make them good citizens (Ambedkar 1979:53). Therefore he suggested that “...we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation” (Ambedkar 1994: 1216-7).

### **Relationship between Hindus and Muslims**

If that was the case of relationship between Hindus, Dalits and aborigines Ambedkar further analyzed, whether, “...there are enough affinities between Hindus and Muslims to constitute them into a nation...”(Ambedkar 1990:31). Ambedkar wondered, “Are there any common historical antecedents which Hindus and Muslims can be said to share together as matter of pride or as matters of sorrow...so far they have been just two armed battalions warring against each other. There was no common cycle of participation for a common achievement. Their past is a past of mutual destruction- a past of mutual animosity, both in political as well as in religious fields” (Ambedkar 1990: 35). Ambedkar was clear that while Hindus revere Prthiviraj Chauhan, Rana Pratap, Shivaji in history the Muslims revere likes of Mohammed Bin Qasim, Aurenzeb etc. In religious field argued he, “...the Hindus draw their inspiration from the Ramayan, the Mahabharat, and Geeta. The Muslimans...derive their inspiration from Quran and Hadis” (Ambedkar 1990”36).Further, he reiterates that, “In the absence of common historical antecedents, the ... view that Hindus and Musliman form one nation falls to the ground. To maintain it is to keep up a hallucination” (Ambedkar 1990:37).

### **Relationship between Hindu Provinces**

Along with analyzing the nature of relationships between people belonging to various castes and communities Ambedkar also analyzed the relationship between various provinces with Hindu majority. According to him, “The Hindu provinces have no common traditions and no interest to bind them. It cannot be pretended that the Sikhs have any tenderness for the Bengalees are the Rajputs for the Madrasis. The Bengali loves only himself. The Madrasi is bound by his own world. Maratha who set out to destroy the Muslim empire in India became menace to the rest of the Hindus whom they harassed and kept under their Yoke for nearly a century...On the other hand, the differences of language race and the conflicts of the past have been the most powerful forces tending to divide them” (Ambedkar 1990: 12-13). That is why Ambedkar concluded. “It is true that the Hindus are getting together and the spirit moving them to become one united nation is working on them but it must not be forgotten that I have not yet become a nation they are in the process of becoming a nation”(Ambedkar 1990:13). In the same vein Ambedkar had highlighted that, “The Muslims have openly declared that they do



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not want to have any Central Government in India...The Muslims feel that to accept one Central Government for the whole of India is consent to place the Muslims Provincial Government Under a Hindu Central Government and to see the gain secured by the creation of Muslims Provinces by subjecting them to a Hindu Government” (Ambedkar 1990:12). That is why quoting Sir Mohammad Iqbal’s position at Round Table Conference Ambedkar opined that, “The Muslim way of escaping from the tyranny of Hindu Centre is to have no Central Government in India at all” (ibid:12).

### **Ambedkar’s Notion of Nation: Sentimentality as its Basis**

Taking leaf Ambedkar rejected race, language and country as a basis for constituting a nation. He argued, “As a matter of historical experience, neither race, nor language nor country has sufficed to mould a people into a nation” (Ambedkar 1990:34). Quoting Renan he argued, “that race must not be confused with nation...The truth is there is no pure race; ...Racial facts, important as they are in the beginning, have a constant tendency to lose their importance. Human history is essentially different from zoology. Race is not everything, as it is in the sense of rodents and felines” (ibid: 34). As for language, “Language invites re-union; it does not force it The United States and England, Spanish America and Spain speak the same language and do not form single nation. On the contrary, Switzerland which owes her stability to the fact she was founded by the assent of her sever counts three or four languages. In man there is something superior to language,-will. The will of Switzerland to be united in spite of the variety of her language, is a much more important fact than a similarity of language, often obtained by persecution” (ibid: 34). As to common country Ambedkar quoted Renan, “It is no more the land than the race that makes a nation. The land provides a *substratum*, the field of battle and work; man provides the soul; man is everything in the formation of that scared thing which is called a people. Nothing of material nature suffices for it” (ibid: 34).

Having shown that race, language and country do not suffice to create a nation Ambedkar quoted Earnest Renan to point out what is more is necessary to constitute a nation. According to Renan

“A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute the soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other in the present. One is the common possession of a rich heritage of memories; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to preserve worthily the undivided inheritance which has been handed down...The nation, like the individual, is the outcome of a long past of efforts, and sacrifices, and devotion... A heroic past, great men, glory,-these form the social capital, upon which a national idea may be founded. To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present: to have done great things together, to will to do the like again, - such are the essential conditions for the making of a people (Renan quoted in Ambedkar 1990:35).

Further Renan argues that,

“In the past an inheritance of glory and regrets to be shared, in the future a like ideal to be realized; to have suffered, and rejoiced, and hoped together; all these things are worth more than custom houses in common, and frontiers in accordance with strategical ideas; all these can be understood in spite of diversities of race and language... suffering in common is a greater bond of union than joy. As regards national memories, mourning’s are worth more than triumphs; or they impose duties, they demand common effort” (Renan quoted in Ambedkar 1990:35).



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Such are the characteristics of nation according to Ambedkar which is more or less identical definition of Marcel Mauss, as discussed above, which is without any markers of religion, race, language or territory rather based on sentiments or will.

### **Difference between Nationality and Nationalism**

Apart from giving the characteristics of nation Ambedkar went on to differentiate between nationality and nationalism. Accordingly, "...there is a difference between nationality and nationalism. They are two different psychological states of human mind. Nationality means 'Consciousness of kind' awareness of the existence of that tie of Kinship" (Ambedkar 1990:39). Further he has explained that, "Nationality is a social feeling. It is feelings of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin. This national feeling is a double edged feeling. It is at once a feeling of fellowship for one's own kith and kin and an anti-feeling for those who are not one's own kit kin. It is a feeling ...which on the one hand binds together those who have it, so strongly that it over-rides all differences arising out of economic conflict or social gradation and, on the other, severs them from those who are not of their kind. It is a longing not to belong to any other group. This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling" (Ambedkar 1990: 31). On the other Ambedkar elucidated that, "Nationalism means 'the desire for a separate national existence for those who are bound by this tie of kinship...there cannot be nationalism without the feeling of nationality being in existence" (Ambedkar 1990: 39). It is here that Ambedkar Highlighted the relationship between Nationality and Nationalism as well. According to him although nationalism cannot exist without nationality but, "...the converse is not always true. The feeling of nationality may be present and yet the feeling of nationalism may be quite absent...For nationality to flame into nationalism two conditions must exist. First, there must arise the will to live as a nation. Nationalism is the dynamic expression of that desire. Secondly, there must be a territory which nationalism could occupy and make it a state, as well as cultural home of the nation" (Ibid:39).

### **Ambedkar's Scheme of Nation Building: A shift towards Institutionalism**

If we analyze the idea of Indian nation in the light of the characteristics of nation as discussed above, two things become amply clear. On the one hand there is utter lack of national feeling between Dalits, Other Backward Castes, aborigines and the so-called upper caste Hindus. On the other hand, there is no common antecedent between with Muslims and Hindus. Thirdly, Indian women were also subjugated and were excluded from social, political and economic institutions because of caste and patriarchy. In this way we can conclude from the aforesaid analysis that Ambedkar identified lack of nationality hence lack of fraternity within the aforesaid groups. Probably, it is here Ambedkar is moving away from notion of nation based on sentimentality to notion of nation as given by Gellner, who has argued that people become because of genuine, objective, practical necessity, "Nation" may emerge from "shared exclusion" and 'culture, pigmentation, etc' which provides means of identification for the under-privileged class (Gallner quoted in Jaffrelot 2002: 10). Jaffrelot (2002) has used this aforesaid theory to prove the separatism of Muslims in British India, crystallization of Bengali nationalism in Pakistan, and also assertion of Sindhis in Pakistan. Hence, if we have to integrate this separatist tendencies emerging out 'genuine objective and practical necessity' and 'shared exclusion' then we need to provide people those necessary conditions which can subside their separatist assertion for an independent state. We have discussed the case of Hindu women here separately however they should be considered as subsection of Hindu society only. In the light above the writer of this article is of the view that one has to take following steps for nation building.



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### Four characteristics of nation building

#### Realization India is not a nation

The first step in Ambedkar's scheme of nation building is the realization of the fact that India was not a nation. In his words, "The sooner we realize that we are not as yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the word, the better for us. For then only we shall realize the necessity of becoming a nation and seriously think of ways and means of realizing the goal" (Ambedkar 1994: 2017).

#### Forgetfulness

Second step in the process of nation building will be forgetting the turbulent and warring past. In this context taking a clue from Renan, Ambedkar emphasized the importance of forgetfulness as a factor in the creation of a nation can be observed in France where union of Northern and Southern France took place despite a century of conflict. But today very one has forgotten it and they both have become one nation. Therefore, Renan concluded that, "the essence of the nation is, that all its individuals should have things in common; and also that all of them should hold many things in oblivion" (Renan quoted in Ambedkar 1909:37). Perhaps Ambedkar was using this fact for both so-called upper caste Hindus and Dalits on the one hand and for Hindus and Muslim on the other. Although, a very difficult proposition, but Ambedkar proposed expecting that all the sections of the Indian society will forget their past of animosity and hatred to make a positive beginning.

#### Freedom of Servile classes is also a reality

The third aspect of Ambedkar's scheme of nation building was that all the subjugated collectivities should be granted their legitimate rights so that they should be free from subjugation. In his own word, "Philosophically it may be possible to consider a nation as a unit but sociologically it cannot but be regarded as consisting of many classes and the freedom of the nation if it is to be a reality must vouchsafe that the freedom of the different classes comprised in it, particularly those who are treated as servile classes" (Ambedkar 1991: 201-202).

#### Breaking the Monopoly of the governing elite

The fourth characteristics of Ambedkar's scheme of nation building was the process of dismantling the privileges of the governing elite and breaking their monopoly on the 'political power'. He cautioned the Constituent Assembly about the dangers of monopolizing of power by tiny group of people. He had opined that, "political power in this country has too long been the monopoly of a few. This monopoly has not merely deprived them of their chance of betterment; it has sapped them of what may be called the significance of life. These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed. They are impatient to govern themselves" (Ambedkar 1994: 1218). In fact, Ambedkar was trying to draw parallel with ruling elites of French and Japan's society, and their role in the process of nation building after revolution in their respective countries, with ruling elite of Indian society. In Ambedkar's words,

It would be instructive to compare the attitude of the governing class in India with the attitude taken by the governing class in other countries in times of crises...In France, when the Revolution broke out and demanded equality the governing class in France [Clergy and Nobles] voluntarily came forward to give up its powers and its privileges and to merge itself in the mass of the nation...It was impossible...Yet a good part of them agreed to the demands of commons and gave France a constitution based upon liberty, equality and fraternity (Ambedkar 1991: 225).

The attitude of the governing classes in Japan during the period between 1855 to 1870 – a period in which Japanese people were transformed from feudal society into a modern nation-was even more patriotic then the attitude of the governing classes in



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France.... there were four classes in Japanese Society (1) The *Damiyos*, (2) The *Samurai*, (3)The Hemin or the common folk and (4) The Eta or the outcastes standing one above the other in an order of graded inequality... The *Damiyos* and the *Samurai* realized that it was impossible to transform this feudal society with its class composition and class rights into a modern nation with equality of citizenship. Accordingly the *Damiyos* charged with the spirit of nationalism and anxious not to stand in their way of national unity came forward to surrender their privileges and to emerge themselves in the common mass of people (Ambedkar 1991:225-6).

The governing class in India has no such intention of making any sacrifice on the altar of Indian freedom. Instead of surrendering its privileges in the name of nationalism, the governing class in India is using or misusing the slogan of nationalism to maintain their privileges. Whenever the servile classes ask for reservations in the legislatures, in the Executive and in public services, the governing class raises the cry of ‘nationalism in danger. People are told...all questions regarding reservations...are inimical to national unity and therefore...a sin to stand out for such reservation and create dissensions...The governing class in India does not merely refuse to surrender its power and authority; it never loses an opportunity to pour ridicule on the political demands of the servile classes (Ambedkar 1991:226).

Under these circumstances along with the ‘representative government’ for all Indians Ambedkar wanted four different collectivities that were excluded or denied their legitimate rights to be included directly in the institutions of governance and thereby into the mainstream of Indian society so that nation can evolve. In other words the said collectivities should be granted their legitimate rights which were due to them. Though it is a fact that Ambedkar had raised host of other issues which were significant in the process of nation building here we are restricting ourselves with his struggle to establish the rights and representation of the following these four collectivities. The four collectivities that come to my mind, and which form part of Ambedkar’s core ideas of nation and nation building include:

**Representative government for all Indians**

**Dalits (ex-untouchables)**

**Backward Castes/Classes**

**Muslims and other Minorities**

**Women in general and Hindu Women in particular**

### **A representative Government for Indians**

Ambedkar explained that British denied Indians representative government at the pretext of division in the population on the lines of caste and creed. However, Ambedkar contested this argument by giving a counter argument that is if Indian society is not fit for representative government because it is divided on the caste and creed then how American Society be fit for representative government. American population is divided not only divided politically but also on the basis of scientific, industrial, religious aims and attitude. Moreover, US population is also divided on the basis of language, religion, moral codes and traditions. Last but not the least Ambedkar also highlighted that American society also has different population of Poles, Dutch, Swedes, Germans, Russians, etc.. In spite of aforesaid divisions if American society was fit to have a representative government, then why not India (Ambedkar 1979: 248 )?



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Secondly, Ambedkar went on to show that division of Indian society is qualitatively different than division existing in American society. Ambedkar highlighted the fact that unlike American Society Indian population is divided because they do not have common aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge, common understanding or what sociologists call like-mindedness to form a community (Ambedkar 1979 248-49). According to him to be like minded with other is to be in communication with them and to participate in their activity. In this way each group may create its own distinctive type of like-mindedness. But where there are more group than one to be brought into political union, there would be conflict among different like-mindedness. So long as the group remains isolated the conflict is bound to continue and prevent the harmony of action. It is the isolation of the groups that is the chief evil in India. The Evil cease to exist where there is endosmosis because it allows people to re-socialize their attitude. In place of the old it creates a new like-mindedness which is the representatives of the interest, aims and aspirations of all the various group concerned. Hence he concluded that, " Like mindedness is essential for and harmonious life social or political and this depends upon the extent of communication participation or in a word and endosmosis" (Ambedkar 1979: 49). Hence Ambedkar emphasized the legitimate and functional need of representative government with the self representation of various groups comprised in it for nation building.

### **Dalits and their Rights as a Citizen**

At the outset Ambedkar wanted to establish the rights of those who did not have. Ambedkar quoted Jefferson according to whom, "...politics was only affair of policing by the State so that the rights of people were maintained without disturbance...The question is, what is there for the state to police if there are no rights? That is why Ambedkar wanted to establish the rights of the Dalits as they were not treated as citizens. Ambedkar argued, "The untouchables are usually regarded as objects of pity but they are ignored in any political scheme on the score that they have no interest to protect. And yet their interests are the greatest. Not that they have large property to protect from confiscation. But they have their very persona confiscated. The socio- religious disabilities have dehumanized the untouchables and their interests at stake are therefore the interests of humanity. The interests of property are nothing before such primary interests... The untouchable is not even a citizen. Citizenship is a bundle of rights such as (1) personal liberty, (2) personal security, (3) right to hold private property, (4) equality before law, (5) liberty of conscience, (6) freedom of opinion and speech, (7) right to assembly, (8) right of representation in a country's Government and (9) right to hold office under the State" (Ambedkar 1979: 255-6). So it is clear from the above that Ambedkar wanted to establish the rights of the Dalits at the outset so they do not feel excluded. Probably he was of the opinion if the rights of the Dalits are established they will not raise the voice for separate '*Achutistan*' (Separate land for *Achuts* or untouchable) (Kumar 2002 & Juergensmeyer 1982).

### **Democracy, Dalits and the question of their Self-representation**

Ambedkar did not raise the problems related to aforesaid categories in one go. Rather he took their problem as and when the country faced a crisis regarding these groups. But it is certain that Ambedkar started his public life by highlighting the problems and issues of the Dalits (the ex-untouchables). Ambedkar wanted self- representation of the Dalits in the government, cabinet, bureaucracy etc. Explaining its importance Ambedkar argued in his written statement given to the Southborough Committee on franchise in 1919 that, " As the government is the most important field for the exercise of individual capacities, it is in the interest of the people that no person as such should be denied the opportunity of actively participating in the process of government. That is to say popular government is not only government for the people but



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by the people. To express the same in a different way, representation of opinions by itself is not sufficient to constitute popular government. To cover its true meaning it requires personal representation as well. It is because the former is often found without the latter that the Franchise Committee has to see in devising the franchise and constituencies for a popular government in India, it provides for both, i.e., representation of opinions and representation of persons” (Ambedkar 1979:247).

### **Inclusion of Dalits, Backwards, and Muslims in the Institutions of Governance**

Ambedkar did not only ask for the self-representation for every citizen of the country but he also advocated for the self-representation via reserved nominations for Dalits (the ex-untouchables), Backward Classes to whom he referred as non-Brahmins and Muslims. Why was self-representation of Dalits, Backward classes and Muslims necessary? Ambedkar answered this question in a written representation submitted to the Simon Commission also known as Indian Statutory Commission in the year 1928. To begin with, in his representation Ambedkar expressed his concern on over domination of Brahmin and other allied castes in the public services of British bureaucracy in India (Ambedkar 1982: 394). He argued that when the Dalits, Mohammedans and non-Brahmins ask for their representation, the Brahmins and the allied castes argue that the appointment should be done through competition. Ambedkar questioned the very basis of appointment through competition. He declared aforesaid process as unfair. Why was it unfair? It was so because, “Those circumstances presuppose that the educational system of the state is sufficiently democratic and is such that facilities for education are sufficiently widespread and sufficiently used to permit all classes from which good public servants are likely to be forthcoming to compete. Otherwise even with the system of open competition large classes are sure to be left out in the cold. This basic condition is conspicuous by its absence in India, so that to invite Backward Classes to rely upon the results of competitive examination as a means of entry into the public services is to practice delusion upon them” (Ambedkar 1982: 395).

Therefore, the second reason for supporting the self-representation of Dalits and non-Brahmins and Muslims as administrative. Discussing administrative basis for reservation, he argued that, “Those who lay exclusive stress upon efficiency as the basis for recruitment to them administration appears to be nothing more than the process of applying law as enacted by the legislative” (ibid). But according to Ambedkar, “Administration in modern times involves far more than the scrutiny of status for the sake of knowing the regulations of the state. Often under the pressure of time or for convenience a government department is now-a day entrusted with wide power of rule making” (ibid). Further, he argued that, “It must be accepted as beyond dispute that such wide powers of rule-making affecting the welfare of large classes of people cannot be safely left into the hands of the administrators drawn from particular class which as a matter of fact is opposed to the rest of the population in its motives and interests, does not sympathize with the living forces operating in them, is not charged with their wants, pains, cravings and desires and is inimical to their aspirations, simply because it comes out best by the test of education” (ibid). Therefore Ambedkar preferred giving self-representation through nomination.

### **Moral Reason of representation of Dalits**

According to Ambedkar the third reason for self-representation specifically for Dalits was moral. This can be extended to backward-classes and minorities as well. Highlighting the moral evils arising out of the exclusion of a person from the public service Ambedkar quoted Gopal



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Krishna Gokhale. Gokhale had raised the same issue of exclusion of so-called upper caste Indians from British bureaucracy. Emphasizing the exclusion of Indians from public services, Gokhale had opined that,

A kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indians is going on under the present system. We must live all days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority and tallest of us must bend in order that the exigencies of the existing system may be satisfied. The upward impulse...is denied to us. The full height to which our manhood is capable of rising can never be reached by us under the present system. The moral elevation which every self-governing people feel cannot be felt by us. Our administrative and military talent must gradually disappear, owing to sheer disuse, till at last our lot, as hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country is stereotyped” (quoted in Ambedkar 1982: 397).

Drawing an analogy between the Brahmins and allied castes with the foreign agency, i.e., the British, Ambedkar argued that,

Is it not open to the backward classes to allege against Brahmins and allied castes all that was alleged by the late Mr. Gokhale on behalf of Indian people against the foreign agency? Is it not open to the Depressed Classes, the non-Brahmins and the Mohammedans to say that by their exclusion from the Public Service a kind of dwarfing or stunting of their communities is going on? Can they not complain that as a result of their exclusion they are obliged to live all the days of their lives in an atmosphere of inferiority, and the tallest of them has to bend in order that the exigencies of the existing system may be satisfied? Can they not assert that upward impulses which every school-boy of a Brahmanical community feels that he may one day be a Sinha, a Sastri, a Ranade, a Pranjpe, and which may draw forth from him the best efforts of which he is capable is denied to them? Can they not indignantly assert that the full height to which their manhood is capable of rising can never be reached by them under the present system? Can they not lament that the moral elevation which every self-governing people feel cannot be felt by them and that their administrative talents must disappear owing to sheer disgust till at last their lot as hewers of wood and drawers of water in their own country is stereotyped? The answer to these queries cannot but be in the affirmative. If to exclude the advanced communities from entering into public service of the country was a moral wrong, the exclusion of the backward communities from the same field must be a moral wrong and if it is a moral wrong it must be righted (Ambedkar 1982: 395-6).

For inclusion of Dalits and other marginal sections in the public services Ambedkar also highlighted that the demand for Indianization of public services did not rest on consideration of efficient administration; rather, it was condemned as it was found to be wanting in those qualities which make for human administration. It is therefore, he pointed, that those who clamored for Indianization of public services are themselves opposed to inclusion of the Depressed and Backward Classes (Ambedkar 1982: 395-6). That is why he proposed that, “A certain number of vacancies in Superior Services, Class I and Class II, and also in the Subordinate Services should every year be filled by system of nomination with pass examination ... Such nomination shall be reserved to the Depressed Classes, the Mohammedans and the Non-Brahmins in order of preference herein indicated until their numbers in the services reach a certain proportion” (Ambedkar 1982:398). This was possibly for the first time anyone had made a demand for representation of Dalits in the public services, though Ambedkar had already made a demand for political representation as early as 1919. It is a fact that the Indian National Congress did nothing worth mentioning for the self-representation of the Dalits during this period and even after the formation of Government in 1937. The major development of the period is attributed to Ambedkar serving as member for the Viceroys’ Executive Council. It was he who issued an office order in 1943 to reserve 8.33 per cent places in the Central Government Services for the Dalits. In fact this order,



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which reserved the posts for the Dalits, specifically had replaced an earlier general order for general preference for the Dalits in their recruitment in the Services (Ambedkar 1990:475).

### **Necessity of Self Representation**

Why at all self representation was necessary. According to Ambedkar, this was necessary because the aims, beliefs, aspirations, and knowledge of the caste Hindus and the Dalits differ. That means, they do not have like-mindedness. In his own words, “Between two Hindus, caste-like mindedness is more powerful than the like-mindedness due their both being Hindus” (ibid: 249). Therefore, he emphasized that there would be conflict of interest among the Hindus and the Dalits and, hence, caste Hindus could never represent the interest and opinion of Dalits if the latter did not get self-representation.

Ambedkar wanted self representation of the Dalits because he was also convinced that only the Dalits could voice these interests. In his own words, “-as can be easily seen they can be represented by the untouchables alone. They are distinctively their own interests and none can truly voice them...Untouchability constitutes a definite set of interests which the untouchables alone can speak for (ibid: 256)”. Secondly, the personal representation for the Dalits is also important because, “A Government for the people, but not by the people, is sure to educate some into masters and others into subjects...To be specific, it is not enough to be electors only. It is necessary to be law- makers; otherwise who can be law-makers will be masters of those who can only be electors” (ibid: 251). That is why; Ambedkar not only demanded separate electorate but also reservation in the cabinet as well. According to him, “Just as it is necessary that the Depressed Classes should have the power to influence governmental action by seats in the Legislature so also it is desirable that the Depressed Classes should have the opportunity to frame the general policy of the Government. This they can do only if they can find a seat in the cabinet. The Depressed Classes therefore claim that in common with other minorities, their rights to be represented in the Cabinet should be recognized. With this purpose in view the Depressed Classes propose: that in the Instrument of Instructions an obligation shall be placed upon the Governor and the Governor-general to endeavor to secure the representation of the Depressed Classes in the Cabinet”(Ambedkar 1991: 52).

### **Gandhi’s Opposition of Dalits’ Self Representation**

Gandhi opposed the representation of the Dalits by special constituencies. He emphasized that the special representation to the Untouchables (Dalits), “Will create a division in the Hinduism which I (Gandhi) cannot possibly look forward to with any satisfaction whatsoever” (Ambedkar 1991: 69). In fact Gandhi was ready to accept the conversion of the Dalits to any other religion but was not ready to grant representation based exclusively on their votes though the same existed for the other minorities. In the words of Gandhi, “I do not mind Untouchables, if they so desire, being converted to Islam or Christianity. I should tolerate that, but I cannot possibly tolerate what is in store for Hinduism if there are two divisions set forth in the villages. Those who speak of the political right of Untouchables do not know their India, do not know how Indian Society is today constructed, and therefore I want to say with all the emphasis that I can command that if I was the only person to resist this thing I would resist with my life” (quoted in Ambedkar 1991: 69)

### **Inclusion of Muslims in the Constituent Assembly**

Along with the representation of Dalits and Backward castes in the structures of State Ambedkar was strong votary of inclusion of Muslims in the Constituent Assembly. His position came to fore when he vehemently pleaded their inclusion in spite Muslim league has announced their desire for a separate state. Ambedkar emphasized non-violent method for the inclusion of



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the Muslims in the Constituent Assembly. While speaking in the Constituent Assembly, which met for the first time on December 9 1946 to move a resolution for making the Indian Constitution, he along with other members of the Constituent assembly argued that it would not proper for the Assembly to proceed to deal with the resolution of framing the Constitution of free India while Muslim League was absent. In fact he pointed out a particular Para of the resolution which could prevent Muslim League from entering in the Constituent Assembly (Ambedkar 1994: 9-10).

Ambedkar was aware of the diversity and deep divide existing between Hindus and Muslims yet he was of the opinion that every group should be included in the process of taking decisions about the nation. In the constituent assembly he explained that “...Our difficulty is not about the ultimate future. Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have today take a decision in common and march on the way which leads us to unity. Our difficulty is not with regard to the ultimate, our difficulty is with regard to beginning...therefore, I should have thought that in order to make us willing friends, in order to induce every party, every section in this country to take on to road it would be an act of greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of people who are not prepared to march together and it is for that, that I propose to make this appeal. ...Let us even make a concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in, so that they may willingly join us on marching upon that road, which as I said, if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity” (Ambedkar 1994: 10). To include Muslim league in the process of Constitution Ambedkar went on to argue, “...I want all of us to realize that whether we are right or wrong, whether the position that we take is in consonance with our legal rights...This is too big a question to be treated as a matter of legal rights. It is not a legal question at all. We should leave aside all legal considerations and make some attempt, where those who are not prepared to come, will come. Let us make it possible for them to come” (Ambedkar 1994).

Ambedkar was very much charged with the feelings of dignity and destiny of the nation that he advised leaders of members of constituent assembly, “...that another attempt may be made to bring about a solution of the dispute between the Congress and the Muslim League. This subject is so vital, so important that I am sure it could never be decided on the mere basis of dignity of one party or the dignity of another party” (Ambedkar 1994:12). That is why he explained that, “When deciding the destinies of nations, dignities of people, dignities of leaders and dignities of parties ought to for nothing. The destiny of the country ought to count for everything” (Ambedkar 1994: 12).

Ambedkar was very agitated on the Congress and Muslim League impasse. He was very clear that the problem should be solved as soon as possible. For which he played down the violence. He spoke with anguish, “...I do not know what plans the Congress party...has in its mind? ... it seems to me there are only three ways by which the future will be decided. Either there shall have to be surrender by the one party to the wishes of the other... The other way would be ... negotiated peace and the third way would be open war...certain members of the Constituent Assembly...are prepared to go to war (Ambedkar 1994;13). Refuting the option of Ambedkar expressed his anguish saying thst, “I must confess that I am appalled at the idea that anybody in this country should think of solving the political problems of this country by the method of war. I do not know how many people in this country support that idea...I ...know people in this country support that idea ...because most of them...believe that the war ...would be a war on the British...But I have no hesitation ...to place before this house...if that war comes in this country ...it will not be a war on the British. It will be a war on the Muslims. It will be a war on the Muslims or...probably worse, It will a war on a combination of the British and the Muslims” (Ambedkar 1994:13).



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In this conflict between Congress and Muslim league to bring down the temper of the house down Ambedkar quoted from Burke who had rejected the idea of violence applied by the British in conquering the colonies of the United States, and bring them under their subjection, argued that“...the use of force is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again; and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered” (Ibid: 13). Ambedkar further quoted Burke to highlight the fact of uncertainty of terror in overpowering a nation. In the words of Burk, “...Terror is not always the effect of force and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource for, conciliation failing, force remains; but, force failing no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes brought by kindness; but they can never be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence” (Ambedkar 1994:13 -14). Third objection to force was, “...that you impair the object by your very endeavors to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the content” (ibid: 13). Therefore Ambedkar concluded, “If there is anybody who has in his mind the project of solving the Hindu-Muslim problem by force, which is another name of solving it by war, in order that the Muslims may be subjugated and made to surrender to the Constitution that might be prepared without their consent, this country would be involved in perpetually conquering them. The conquest would not be once and for ever” (Ambedkar 1994: 14). And suggested that assembly should exercise the sovereign powers with wisdom because that is the only way by which every section of the country together and that is the way to achieve unity (ibid).

Ambedkar, instead of abrupt partition of the country mooted that , “The issue of Pakistan being one of self-determination must be decided by wishes of the people” (Ambedkar 1994: 392). The structure he proposed was referendum of Muslims and non-Muslims and limitation of districts with Muslim majority and non Muslim majority areas (Ambedkar 1994:393). He argued that Muslims may stop with the delimitation of the boundaries of Pakistan or if dissatisfied may ask for a separate state (ibid). Muslims may also agree to live under common Central Government say for a period of 10 years and put the Hindus on trial. Hindus will have an opportunity to show that the minorities can trust them. The Muslims will learn from their experience how far their fears of Hindu Raj are justified. He further explained that, “There is another possibility also that the Musalman of Pakistan having decided to separate forthwith may after a period become so disgusted with Pakistan that they might desire to come back and be incorporated in the Hindustan and be one people subject to one single constitution”(Ambedkar 1994: 393). Last but not the least Ambedkar, “I personally prefer the... a separation for 10 years and union thereafter” (ibid). He preferred this because in his opinion, “It would be much better that the Musalman should have the experience of Pakistan Union after an experience of Pakistan would be stable and lasting...The scheme takes account of the fact that the Hindu sentiment is against...It also recognizes the fact that the Muslim demand for Pakistan may only be a passing mood” (Ambedkar 1994: 394).

In spite of the division and animosity between Congress and Muslim League Ambedkar was convinced about the unity and development of nation. He told the Assembly optimistically, “...I have got not the slightest doubt in my mind as to the future evolution and the ultimate shape of the social, political and economic structure of this country. I know to-day we are divided politically, socially and economically. We are group of warring camps and I may go even to the extent of confessing that I am probably one of the leaders of such a camp. But, Sir, with all this I am quite convinced that given time and circumstances nothing in the world will prevent this country from becoming one. With all our castes and creed I have not the slightest hesitation that we shall in some form be a united people. I have no hesitation in saying that



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notwithstanding the agitation of the Muslim League for the partition of India someday enough light would dawn upon the Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a United India is better even for them” (Ambedkar 1994: 9). Such was commitment of Ambedkar when it came to the process of nation building.

### Rights of Hindu Women

Apart from securing the rights for the Dalits, Other backward castes and Muslims in the processes of nation building Ambedkar, as the first Law Minister of the independent India, also introduced a Bill to safeguard the rights of Hindu women. Ambedkar had once in 1942 in the Scheduled Caste Federation’s Women Conference argued that, I measure the progress of the community by the degree of progress of women of that community have made. Further Ambedkar had also analyzed the wretched condition of Indian women in his seminal articles like ‘Manu’s Madness’, ‘The change from Paternity to Maternity’ (Ambedkar 1987: 215-232) and ‘The Woman and the Counter Revolution’ (Ambedkar 1987 A: 429-440). That is why he was instrumental in introducing as certain bills for establishing rights of women like equal pay irrespective of sex (991 A: 143), The mines Maternity Benefit Act 1941 (Ambedkar 1991: 264-66), and prohibiting employment of women underground in colas mine in 1946 (Ambedkar 1991 A: 958).

Apart from the aforesaid efforts for analyzing the status of Indian women and establishing rights for them when he became first Law Minister of independent India he introduced the bill which envisaged securing dignified and equal status for the Hindu women. It is interesting to note that there were rights of inheritance and maintenance in the Bill. There were laws against dowry. Instead of Polygamy Ambedkar introduced Monogamy as the sanctioned way of marriage. The Hindu marriage became a contract instead of sacrament. The consent of wife was to be made compulsory in the event of adoption. By all these rights Ambedkar had envisioned to empower Hindu women and hence a strong nation. The Hindu Code bill introduced in the Parliament gives the insight, what and how Ambedkar had thought about empowering Hindu women. He had mooted that, “In the order of succession to a deceased Hindu, the bill seeks to make four changes. One change is that widow, the daughter, widow of a pre-deceased son, all are given the same rank as the son in the matter of inheritance. In addition to that, the daughter also is given share in her father’s property (Ambedkar 1995:6). Ambedkar in his proposed Hindu code Bill attempted to, “Consolidate the different categories of *Srtidhan* into one single category of property and lay down the uniform rule of succession” (Ambedkar 1995:7). In the same vein he was opposed to dowry and conscious of the treatment meted out to girls because of dowry. And therefore while moving the Bill in the Parliament he opined, “All the members of the House know...how girls who bring enormous lot of property...by way of dowry or *Stridhan* or gift are treated...with utter contempt, tyranny and oppression” (Ambedkar 1995: 8). Therefore Ambedkar mooted that, “property which is given as dowry...shall be treated as a trust property, the use of which will censure to woman and...neither her husband nor the relations of her husband will have any interest in that property” (ibid).

Provision of separate maintenance for the woman who lives away from her husband was also made by Ambedkar. The bill recognized that there are circumstances where the wife has lived from the husband, and she can claim separate maintenance from the husband. Following are conditions in which a wife can claim maintenance; 1. Suffering from a loathsome disease, 2. If he keeps a concubine, 3. If he is guilty of cruelty, 4. If he abandoned her for two years, 5. If he has converted to another religion (Ambedkar 1995 8-9).



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As far as the Hindu Marriage is concerned he introduced the idea of civil marriage. He opined that the code will dispense with caste and sub-caste in the event of Civil-Marriage. He argued, “Marriage under this Bill be valid irrespective of the caste or sub-caste of the parties entering to marriage” (Ambedkar1995:9). Further Ambedkar abolished polygamy, which was permissible under the existing Hindu Law. He argued, “Under the new law it is monogamy which is prescribed” (ibid: 10). Ambedkar also introduced the provision to dismantle the sacramental status of the Hindu marriage in which it cannot be dissolved. He made it a contract by introducing the provision of divorce. Ambedkar introduced seven grounds of divorce 1. Desertion, 2. Conversion to another religion, 3.Keeping concubine or becoming a concubine, 4.Incurably unsound mind, 5.Virulent and incurable form of leprosy, 6. Venereal diseases in communicable form,7. Cruelty (ibid: 10). Addressing the question of adoption, “under the code” he made the consent of the women necessary for the husband (ibid).

In this manner Ambedkar envisaged to empower the Hindu women. It is pertinent to note here that Indian parliament did not pass different clauses of Hindu Code Bill tabled by Ambedkar and he had to resign from Nehru cabinet as the first Law Minister of independent India (Ambedkar 1995: 1317-27). This is testimony to the fact how much Ambedkar was committed to the cause of Indian women. It is heartening to note that subsequently most of the clauses proposed by Ambedkar in the Hindu Code were passed one by one by the Indian Parliament.

### **Future of the Indian Nation**

Ambedkar not only highlighted the facts, defined the notion of a nation, gave the scheme of national building but he also gave five principles for keeping Indian Nation safe in the future. In fact Ambedkar was aware of the Indian history and that is why he was also concerned for the future of the nation. Following are the five principles for safeguarding the future Indian nation and society:

Self Introspection by the Indians

Adherence to Constitutional means

Denunciation of Hero worship

Establishment of Social and Economic democracy along with Political Democracy

Changing government by the people to government for the people

### **Self- Introspection as a principal for keeping the future of Nation Safe**

The first and the foremost principle suggested by Ambedkar to guard the future of Indian nation is Self-Introspection by the Indians. On the last day of the Constituent Assembly November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1949 when Constitution of India was to be finally handed over to President of India he told the Constituent Assembly have self introspection. He argued,

... my mind is so full of future of our country... On 26<sup>th</sup> January 1950, India will be an independent country (Cheers). What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again?... It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it second time? It is this thought which makes me most anxious for the future. What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of our own people. In the invasion of Sind by Mahomamed-bin-Kasim, the military commanders of King Dhar accepted bribes from the agents of Mohommed-Bin-Kasim and refused to fight on the side of their King. It was Jaichand who invited to Mahommed Ghori to invade India and fight against Prithvi Raj and promised him the help of himself and the Solanki kings. When Shivaji was fighting for the liberation of Hindus, the other Maratha nobleman and Rajput Kings were fighting the battle on the side of Mogul Emperors. When the British



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were trying to destroy the Sikh Rulers, Gulab Singh, their principal commander sat silent and did not help to save the Sikh kingdom. In 1857, when a large part of India had declared a war of independence against the British, the Sikhs stood and watched the event as silent spectator” (Ambedkar 1994: 1213-14).

Besides reminding the assembly the drawbacks India had suffered in the historical past Ambedkar highlighted the dangers from the new enemies like new political parties with diverse and opposing political interests. Ambedkar cautioned the Assembly “Will history repeat itself?

Will Indians place the country above their creed or will they place creed above country? I do not know. But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever. This we must all resolutely guard against. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood...What would happen to her democratic Constitution? Will she be able to maintain it or will she lose it again...It is not that India did not know what Democracy is. There was a time when India was studded with republics, and even where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited. They were not absolute. It is not that India did not know parliaments or parliamentary Procedure. A study of the Buddhist Bhiku Sanghas discloses that not only there were Parliaments-for the Sanghas were nothing Parliaments- but the Sanghas knew and observed all the rules of Parliamentary Procedures known to modern times...This democratic system India lost. Will she lose it second time? I do not know, but it is quite possible in country like India-where democracy from its long disuse must be regarded as something quite new-there is danger of democracy giving place to dictatorship. It is quite possible for this new born democracy to retain its form but give place to dictatorship becoming actually is much greater” (Ambedkar 1994: 1215).

### **Adherence to Constitutional Means**

Further Ambedkar’s vision for maintaining future of Indian democracy included adherence to constitutional means. He emphasized,

If we wish do maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what we must do? The first thing...we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution. It means that we must abandon the method of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and satyagrah. When there was no way left for constitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives, there was a great deal of justification for unconstitutional methods. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for these unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned, the better for us” (Ambedkar 1994: 1215).

### **Denunciation of Hero worship**

Similarly Ambedkar saw a threat to the future of democracy and thereby the nation because of hero-worship. That is why he emphasized, that “we must ...observe the caution which John Stuart Mill has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not ‘to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with powers which enable him to subvert their institutions’ ” (Ambedkar 1994: 1215).

Further Ambedkar specifically warned hero-worship (*Bhakti*) in politics and also in Journalism

There is nothing wrong in being grateful to great men who have rendered life-long services to the country. But there are limits to gratefulness. As has been well said by the Irish Patriot Daniel O’Connell, ‘no man can be grateful at the cost of his honor, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the



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cost of its liberty'. This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country, for in India, Bhakti or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship, plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other country in the world. Bhakti in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship (Ambedkar 1994: 1215).

### **As for Indian journalism Ambedkar emphasized**

Journalism in India was once a profession. It now has become trade...To accept a hero and worship has become its principal duty...It is written by drum-boys to glorify their heroes. Never has the interest of the country been sacrificed so senselessly for the propagation of hero-worship. Never has hero-worship become so blind as we see in India today (Ambedkar 1979: 227). That is why Ambedkar suggested first or foremost duty of Indian Journalism should be to, “regard itself as the responsible advisor of the public. To give the news uncolored by any motive, to resent a view of public policy which it believes to be for the good of the community, to correct and chastise without fear all those, no matter how high, who have chosen a wrong or a barren path” (Ambedkar 1979: 227). In this context Ambedkar also highlighted the biasness of Congress Press on his criticism of Gandhi and Jinnah and suggested that countrymen should understand that country is greater than the men, that worship of Gandhi or Jinnah and service to India are two very different things and may even be contradictory to each other (Ambedkar 1979: 209).

### **Establishment of Social and Economic democracy along with Political**

For strengthening the Indian nation and democracy, Ambedkar believed that we should not only be content with the establishment of political democracy rather we should stretch it to social and economic as well. Therefore he emphasized that “we must... not...be content with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy” (Ambedkar 1994: 1216). Ambedkar went on to define social democracy, “... a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items of a trinity” (Ambedkar 1994: 1216). In this context Ambedkar’s explanation of nature of this trinity can be considered his another seminal contribution. According to him,

They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without equality liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things...We must begin by acknowledging the fact that there is complete absence of two things in Indian society. One of these is equality. On the social plane, we have in India a society based on the principle of graded inequality which means elevation of some and degradation of others. On the economic plane, we have a society in which there are some who have immense wealth as against many who live in abject poverty (Ambedkar 1994: 1216).

### **Therefore Ambedkar stated that,**

“On the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social economic life we will have inequality. In



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Politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to live this life of contradiction? How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy” (Ambedkar 1994: 1216-17).

Ambedkar for establishing social democracy emphasizes the following

The second thing we are wanting in is recognition of the principle of fraternity. What does fraternity mean? Fraternity means a sense of common brotherhood of Indians-if Indians being one people. It is the principle which gives unity and solidarity to social life...The realization of this goal is going to be very difficult...In India there are castes. The castes are anti-national...because they bring about separation in social life...also...generate jealousy and antipathy...But we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be fact only when there is a nation ((Ambedkar 1994: 1216-17).).

With regard to above discussion on equality, liberty and fraternity it will be worth mentioning the source from where Ambedkar has borrowed these principles of democracy. Ambedkar argues that he has not borrowed them from French revolution rather he has borrowed them from Buddhism. In his own words,

Every man should have a philosophy of life, for everyone must have a standard by which to measure his conduct. And philosophy is nothing but a standard by which to measure ...Positively, my philosophy. May be said to be enshrined in three words: Equality, Liberty and Fraternity. Let no one, however, say that I have borrowed my philosophy from French-Revolution. I have not. My philosophy has roots from religion and not in political science. I have derived them from my Master, the Buddha. In his philosophy liberty and Equality had a place; but he added that unlimited Liberty destroyed equality and absolute equality left no room for liberty. In his philosophy, Law had a place only as a safeguard against the breaches of Liberty and Equality; but he did not believe that law can be a guarantee for breaches of Liberty and Equality. He gave the highest place to fraternity as the only the real safeguard against the denial of liberty or equality or fraternity which was another name for brotherhood or humanity, which was again another name for religion” (Ambedkar 2003:503).

### **Changing Government by the People to Government for the People**

Last but not the least to keep the future of our nation safe the political elite should strive to change the nature of the government from ‘Government by the people’ to ‘Government for the people’. It was important to do so because Ambedkar was of the opinion that political power in this country has too long been the monopoly of the few. This monopolization of political by a minority has deprived the downtrodden of their chances of their betterment; it has sapped them also of the significance of their life (Ambedkar 1994: 2017-18). Therefore he emphasized,

These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed. They are impatient to govern themselves. This urge of self-realization in the down-trodden classes must not be allowed into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would a day of disaster. For, as has been well said by Abraham Lincoln, a house divided against itself cannot stand very long. Therefore the sooner the room is made for the realization of their aspiration, the better for the few, better for the country, the better for the maintenance for its independence and better for the continuance of its



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democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of equality and fraternity in all sphere of life.

Ambedkar cautioned that after independence has thrown great responsibility on citizens of the country. We have to meet aspirations of the people

People are fast changing. People ...are being moved by new ideologies. They are getting tired of government by the people. They are prepared to have Government for the people...If we wish to preserve the Constitution in which we have sought to enshrine in principle of Government of the people, for the people and by the people, let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer Government for the people to Government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country” (Ambedkar 1994:. 1218).

### Ambedkar Emerges as a Global Icon

To conclude because of Dalit movement led by the Dalit themselves Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar has got immense visibility in contemporary times. On the basis of empirical data about association of masses to a particular leader, number of statues built by the individuals on their own expense, types of celebrations on the occasion of his birth, conversion to Buddhism and commemoration on his *Mahapr nibban* day Ambedkar can be termed as the omnipresent organic leader of modern India. On the other hand his visibility has grown at international level as well. This is evident from his bust being installed at Columbia University, London School of Economics, Simon Frazer university, Vancouver, York University, Toronto; Brandies University Boston, Massachusetts Armrest, USA; Queens University and Melbourne University, Australia; Koyasan University, Japan. The visibility has been further highlighted by the institution of Lecture series and memorial lectures, in his name at various universities of the world-like Manchester Metropolitan University, UK; Calgary University, University of British Columbia, Simon Frazer University, and York University in Canada (Data collected during field work). Last but not the least, Ambedkar Chair in Indian Constitutional Law has been established in Columbia University, USA. Apart from his visibility at the international level through the educational institutions the social celebrations and establishment of international organizations in name by Dalit Diaspora all over the world have reinforced his visibility at the international level (Kumar 2013). Dalit Diaspora has forced the international community to recognize his larger contributions to the emancipation of the down trodden and championing their human rights. On the basis of above empirical evidences, one is forced to say that Babasaheb Ambedkar has gradually transcended national boundaries to occupy a status of global icon. On the basis of aforesaid credentials and contributions to the emancipation universe as a whole with the revival of Buddhism; 1.3 billion Indians with introduction of democracy and social justice; imparting equality and dignity to Indian women and restoring human rights of 250 millions of ex-untouchables and indigenous people of India Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar deserves a Nobel Peace Prize.

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