



## A Brief Description of the Educational, Philosophical and Literary thoughts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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### ABSTRACT:

This study briefly examines the literary, philosophical, and educational quest of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar. The meaning of literary quest of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is the literature of purpose that is the welfare of humanity. Through his writings he uncovered the roots of the suffering, slavery, social injustice, untouchability, deprivedness, inequality to the downtrodden, who socially known as out-castes or untouchables in India. In his philosophy, he established some new theories, concepts and viewpoint about religion, dharma, democracy, state, republic, economy, woman's property rights, and law, etc. He not only introduces them but also logically defined and explained them. In the history of thousands of years, upper caste Hindus made deprived a large section of society including woman community from their basic human rights. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar constitutionally made a provision of the right education for these sections of society.

**Key Words:** *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Literary, Education, Philosophy, Democracy, Deprived, Republic, Welfare, etc.*

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, the father of modern India, played a vital role in the construction of India before Independence and after Independence through his contribution. His ideas and philosophy have left their imprint on the social, religious, political, economic, and constitutional tapestry of the country, which shaped all above said contours of current India. If anyone minus his contribution to the establishment of the current India, then we will find a different picture of India, i.e., an unequal and unjust one. He is widely known in the world for his scholarship, genuineness, and innovative ideas, and a man of great academic powers. In his intellectual life, he covered a forbidding range of various subjects and topics, made possible by his intellectual capacities, grooming in liberal education of varied specialized areas such as history, economics, anthropology, and politics. In his public life, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was observed in important roles: as a scholar, professor, lawyer, parliamentarian, administrator, journalist, publicist, negotiator, agitator, leader, and devotee. His statue at Columbia University, America, under the name of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, engraved: "Symbol of Knowledge" is one of the proofs of his genuineness at the universal level. Valerian Rodrigues in the Introduction of the edited book, *The Essential Writings of B.R. Ambedkar*, has a view about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar that "He is the bearer of the modern idiom, the language, and the social sciences." (Rodrigues, 01)

This brief study focuses and revolves around the literary, philosophical, and educational quest of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, but before knowing his quest we must need to know the literal meaning of 'literary', 'philosophy', and 'quest' and the meaning which Dr. B.R. Ambedkar took from these words. According to the eighth edition of the *Advanced Oxford English Dictionary*, the word 'literary' means: "Concerned with or connected with the writing and study, or appreciation of literature, the word 'philosophy' means "the study or creation of theories about basic things such as the nature of existence, knowledge, and the thought, or about how people should live," and the word 'quest' means "a long and difficult search for something, if you go in the quest for something, you try to find it or obtain it"

The meaning of literary quest of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is the literature of purpose that is the welfare of humanity. Through his writings he uncovered the roots of the suffering, slavery, social injustice, untouchability, deprivedness, inequality to the downtrodden, who socially known as out-castes or untouchables in India.

The core of Dr. Ambedkar's whole life struggle is to establish a society and nation based on equality, liberty, fraternity, and justice. To gain this, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar sacrifices all comforts of his life. He believed in the sole philosophy of Lord Budha i.e., the philosophy of "*Bahujan Hitaye Bahujan Sukhaye*," which means a philosophy about the favour and welfare of the masses.

In the *Writings and Speeches* of Dr. Ambedkar, we find his views on literature however it is religious. He has developed several concepts and parameters about the religion. Most of Dr. Ambedkar's literature was published posthumously. *The Riddles of Hinduism* is one of the well-known books written by Dr. Ambedkar. In this book, he raised pin-pointed questions about immorality, illicit-relationships, inequality, injustice, slavery, untouchability, out-castes.

Dr. Ambedkar's literature and his rational comments on the other literature are the documents of liberty, fraternity, and justice. In his writings or even in speeches he has conceived straight-forwardness of revolutionary Saint Kabir and, love and fraternity from Lord Budha. In his two books namely, *Who were the Shudras?* and *The Untouchables Who were They and Why They Became Untouchables?* Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has raised the curtain from their origin and genesis through historical approach. These two books have a socially historical worth and are the documents to search the roots of origin of injustice and inequality with a section of society of India namely in terms of untouchables and shudras.

The literature written by Dr. Ambedkar, today known as *Writings and Speeches* is a collection of his speeches, books, articles, etc. In his writings, if one can read can find that his literature is literature of purpose. Each line and chapter have been written for the emancipation to the suffering humanity of India. He wrote on various topics to clear his point. He raised the issue of morality, rationality, logic, and non-violence purity of character and their importance in human life.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, "Religion is for man, man not for religion." Dr. B.R. Ambedkar discussed the necessity of religion in human life. "Religion is opium of people" It is a dictum of Karl Marx. According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, religion was a necessity for life and he did not agree with those who rejected it (the Marxist thinkers). Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wrote about religion:

Some people think that religion is not essential to the society. I don't hold this view. I consider the foundation of religion to be essential for the practice of society. (Ambedkar, 183)

Some of the youths today do not agree with religion. A study says that in present India, 6% population does not believe in any religion. In Ambedkar's time it happened, that is why he wrote:

It pains me to see youth growing different to religion. Religion is not an opium as it held by some (i.e., the Marxists). What good things I have in me or whatever have been the benefits of my education to society I owe them to the religious feelings in me. I want religion but I don't want hypocrisy in the name of religion. (Keer 304)

In his literature, we find the ways to be human. All Indian society was divided into castes and sub-castes in his time. In his literature, he wants to establish a caste and casteless society which is why his conversion with millions of his followers to Buddhism is a rare example and a milestone in the world. He not only accepted Buddhism but also purified it by writing a book on it that is *Buddha and His Dhamma*-- the Bible of Buddhism. In which he declared what is religion and what is Dhamma. Buddhism is not a religion but a way to live life in dignity. According to his religion and Dhamma are different from each other. He logically and scientifically differentiates the both in this book.

His literature, book entitled *Buddha and Karl Marx* presents his theory of *Ahimsa*. He said that if a time will come to choose between Karl Marx and Buddha, I would choose Buddha. Karl Marx's philosophy is to set communism by any method, which means it even violence is right to gain this goal of communism.

'*Ahimsa* (non-violence) *Parmo Dharma*' is a dictum of Jainism but about non-violence, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has a different opinion, he said:

I am myself a believer in Ahimsa. But I make a distinction between Ahimsa and meekness. Meekness is weakness which is voluntarily imposed upon itself is not a virtue. (BAWS, Vol. 17, 289)

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his literature propagated the theory of the welfare of humanity. Humanity has an abstract meaning; it is not concrete to which we can see and act. But it is a behavior of man towards other human beings. Humanity has a quality of humanness, sympathy, and empathy and is collectively known as mankind but still, it is abstract, probably it means for the whole human race—and in concrete means—who live in human society. According to me service to humanity is nothing, humanity needs no service, but it is human beings the men and women who require help and service who find themselves in the chains of slavery, crisis, and calamity. In the opinion of D.R. Jataw: To Dr. B.R. Ambedkar these men are the Untouchables, the women, Shudra, and converted minorities from these Shudras and Untouchables whose dignity was lost, social status reduced to the dust and ashes; these are the oppressed and depressed human beings who are living in darkness and ignorance, they are the men of Ghetto, the slum areas, where we find poverty, leprosy, disease, sting etc. (Jataw 64)

So, Dr. Ambedkar's literature gives us a way to be humanitarian, rational, scientific, moral, etc. After reading his literature, it may come to mind of anyone that if anybody wants to write literature then it must be written on these parameters which helps human beings to construct a new society and nation based on liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice.

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## Philosophical Quest

Philosophy is one of the oldest sciences of the world, expressed in various ways. To Plato philosophy is then a "synoptic view of things" For Karl Marx its main object is not only "to explain the nature of the world, but also to change it." No doubt philosophy is concerned with the love of knowledge, but that has to be associated with human behavior and conduct. To Dr. Ambedkar, "Philosophy is nothing but a standard to measure the conduct of man." (Keer, 455) His whole life struggle is for the service of the humiliated and downtrodden of the social system. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar mentioned his social philosophy when he said:

Positively, my social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in the three words: Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Let no one however say that I have borrowed my philosophy from the French Revolution. I have not. My philosophy has roots in religion and not in political science; I have derived from the teachings of my master, the Budha. (BAW&S, Vol. 17, 503)

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his life followed the philosophy of Lord Budha which is '*Bahujan Hitaye Bahujan Sukhaye.*' He deployed a large number of concepts and theories. In his book *Budha and His Dhamma*, he rationally distinguished dhamma from the religion. Here he advocated that "Man cannot live only by bread alone. He has a mind which needs food for thought." He rejected hypocrisy in the name of religion. It is the sole aim of religion to establish liberty, equality, opportunity, fraternity, scientific and rational attitude, and morality, etc. in all human beings. So, he finds Buddhism near to this quest. The sole aim of his conversion with millions of his followers was to set up a society based on equality, liberty, fraternity, and justice. In my opinion, it was not only a religious conversion and conversion is not the sole aim but only a medium to set up a classless and casteless society.

His book on the abolishment of the caste system in India namely *Annihilation of Caste* is originally his speech on the stage of *Jat-Pat Todak Mandal* in which he gave the final solution on how we can remove the caste in India. He said that casteism cannot be abolished by the concept of inter-caste dinners among lower castes and the upper caste Hindus, by charity, welfare schemes, removal of the sub-castes which have similarities, and by inter-caste marriage. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar clearly said that it has a dangerous result if anyone has this solution in mind after merging the subcastes in the castes the caste will be in the majority which strengthens the caste system. He said:

But assuming that the fusion of the sub castes is possible, what guarantee is there that the abolition of sub castes will necessarily lead to the abolition of the castes? On the contrary, it may happen that the process may stop with the abolition of sub castes. In that case, the abolition the abolition of the sub castes will only be help to strengthen the castes and make them more powerful and therefore more mischievous. This remedy therefore neither practicable nor effective and may easily prove to be a wrong remedy. (BAWS, Vol. I, 288)

About the inter-caste dinner solution to remove castes, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said:

Another plan of action for the abolition of caste is to begin inter-caste dinners. This also, in my opinion, is an inadequate remedy. There are many castes which allow inter-caste dining. But it is a common experience that inter-caste dining has not succeeded in killing the spirit of caste and consciousness of caste. (BAWS, Vol. I, 288)

Some people in Dr. B.R.'s time and in the present time think that inter-caste marriage is the only solution to finish this dirty caste system and was also the solution given by the *Jat-Pat Todak Mandal*. But Dr. B.R. Ambedkar rationally raised a genuine question what is the reason that prevents the so-called Hindu from inter-caste marriage, to accept this remedy? Why was this remedy not popular? Dr. B.R. said that these questions have only one answer that is this, "Inter caste dining and the inter-caste marriage are repugnant to the beliefs, dogmas which the Hindus regarded as sacred." Further Dr. B.R. talked about the caste:

Caste is not a physical object like the wall of bricks or a line of barbed wire which prevents the Hindus from co-mingling, and which has, therefore, to be pulled down. Caste is a notion; it is state of mind. The destruction of caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It needs a notional change. (BAWS, Vol. I, 289)

So, the roots of the caste system are in religion and religion runs by the scriptures. In the solution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said:

Make every man and woman free from the thralldom of the Shahstras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on the shastras, and he or she will inter dining and inter caste marriage, without you telling him or her to do so. (BAWS, Vol. I, 289)

In the solution of caste, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has the view that no upper caste person will come forward to end this dirty caste system because it is not their problem but the problem of victims of the caste system. He has a view that the first one will never come forward to abolish caste but the latter one. His book *Annihilation of Caste* is very remarkable book in this regard.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a firm believer of the equality of all human beings. He was the first who fought for the constitutional rights of women. He has worked as much as possible in his life for the freedom and equality of all. As we know according to the religious scriptures of the Hindu religion, Shudras have only duties and no rights. But Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a rigorous advocate of the freedom and equality of the woman. So, when he got the chance in Independent India, he constitutionally made provisions for women and he already the knowledge of the main cause of the slavery of the woman sector and that was her dependence physically, economically, and socially on the male category. So, for the removal of slavery, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has presented the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament which is especially about the women sector and about the daughters' share in the property. But the majority of the parliament members opposed this bill because this was the bill of liberty of women sector and it never passed. In ancient times the rules of dividing property were based on the shastras means the religious scriptures of the Hindu religion. According to them, the property was divided only by two rules: Mitakshra and Dayabhag. As we already know according to the Shastras women have no rights, so definitely the question of share in property completely wrong. According to Mitakshra property is not of individual but of coparcenary that consists of father, son grandson, and great son so all have the birthright on the property of the deceased. In this, there was no share of women in the property. Dayabhag leaves her at the mercy of the male category whether they give her or not and if they give her a share in the property, they discriminate against her on the basis of whether she is young or old, child or adult, pregnant or not. So, there was not a single chance that women got property in Mitakshra and Dayabhag. Britishers made the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act in 1937. The whole woman sector always criticizes the Britishers for their cruelty but it is only Britishers according to the documents who gave the Right in Property to Hindu women. But they excluded the daughter from the list. So, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in that Hindu Code Bill included the daughter as well as the other woman heirs in the share of property. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded equal share for women including daughters. He argued:

If a man has twelve sons and one daughter; and if the twelve sons on the day of the of the father immediately decide on partition and obtain a twelfth of the total property of the father, is the partition going to be much more worse, if there was a daughter, the thirteenth, who also demanded a share? Twelve shares or 12 fragments is not better situation than 13 fragments. (Roderigues, 516)

So, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar knew the roots of the suffering and slavery of the women community in India who spent their whole lives like a slave at the mercy of the male category. He wanted to give equal status, and dignity to the female sector of India to make her free from the chains of slavery. In the Succession Act of 1956, the daughter remains excluded from the property right, now in the Amendment of 2005, she is included. So, this right Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted to give her which they got in 2005. He opened the doors of education for women which were closed for a thousand years.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar gave the largest democracy to India. He demanded in the Round Table Conference: Dual Voting, Adult Franchise, Adequate Representation, and a Separate Electorate, and all four demands were accepted by the Britishers, and they announced Communal Award to India in 1932. He is the first person who has the concept that the right to vote should not be based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth every citizen of the country must have the right after completing his 18 years of age. Even England did not have this right, only taxpayers had this right but after the arguments of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar we and Britishers have this right. Second, he gave a new concept in democracy that is adequate representation, of the proportion of the population. it is the representation, the life-essence of democracy.

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### Educational Quest

Before the entry of the Britishers into India the doors of education were closed for women, *Shudras*, and *Atishudras* also known as Untouchables for thousand years. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had also faced untouchability and discrimination during his student life in India in the hands of upper caste Hindus. But Dr. B.R. when got the opportunity to write the constitution made provisions in Article 21A:

The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the state may, by law, determine. (Indian Constitution)

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has a view about education that education is that milk of a lioness, who drink it will roar. About the sole aim of education, he said, "Education, the purpose of which is to moralize and socialize the people." (Baudh, 09) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar opened the doors of education in 1950 by which many from the deprived section of the society got this opportunity to read and write in India.

To conclude anyone can say the literature, philosophical, and educational quest of Dr. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was of *Bahujan Hitaye and Bahujan Sukhaye* means for the benefit of the masses. He wanted to establish a society and nation based on Equality, Liberty, Fraternity, and Justice which he learned from his Master, the Budha and he finally succeeded in his search and quest.

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