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## **Dr. Br Ambedkar's views on Dalit movement**

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### **Abstract**

The paper focuses on Ambedkar's views on untouchable, he is champion of untouchable movement in India. The paper highlights, what is untouchability?, varna system in India, Vernas namely, the *Brahmin*, the *Kshatriya*, the *Vaishya* and the *Shudra*. origin of caste system, and The classes of untouchable. i.e Chamars, Busadh, Dom Halalkor, Hari, Mochi, Mushahar. And also represents the different outcastes, Hinduism, social system and emancipation of the untouchables.

**Keywords:** untouchable, caste, emancipation, varnas, community, outcastes, hindu, and fcastes

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### **Introduction**

Untouchability is one of the major problems of our country. It has its roots in the Indian society that is based on the caste system. The castes are further divided into sub-castes. The people of the lowest caste are treated untouchabilities. They do not belong to the fold of Hinduism. Nobody knows exactly about the origin of untouchability or the caste system itself. Some historians try to trace the origin of the caste system to the Vedas, the ancient religious books of the Hindus. The Purusa Sukta in the Rig Veda describes the creation of four Vernas namely, the *Brahmin*, the *Kshatriya*, the *Vaishya* and the *Shudra*. The indigenous people were outside the Verna system. They continued to fight against the invading Aryans. But they were subjugated in the long run. In order to preserve the purity of blood, social interaction was prohibited with the members of the vanquished group. Those who did not follow the rule or violated it were forced to live away from the dominating group. Such people became outcastes and later untouchables. An attempt is made in this chapter to present Ambedkar's view on untouchability. Ambedkar was one of the most remarkable leaders who played a major role in Indian politics, especially for the upliftment of the downtrodden. He was a distinguished economist, a learned and a brilliant lawyer, an author, a great political leader and a champion of human rights and dignity. But above all, he left the mark as to how one could attain the highest glory through self-help and self-respect. He was born on 14th, April 1891 in an untouchable community known as Mahar at Mhow in Madhya Pradesh. He was the Fourteenth child in the family. His father Ramji Maloji Sakpal was a Subedar Major in the Army. Educated at Satara and Bombay, he took his Name Ambavadekar from his native village. He was awarded a Baroda State scholarship in 1913. Maharaja Sayaji of Baroda sent Bima Rao to Columbia University in 1913 for higher studies. Two years later he took his M.A degree in economics with a dissertation on Ancient Indian Commerce. He obtained doctorate from the same University. In 1916 Ambedkar moved to the London school of Economics. A year later, he had to discontinue his studies owing to financial exigencies. He taught at Sydenham College of Commerce, Bombay. In 1920 he resumed his studies

in London and obtained M.Sc and D.Sc degrees in 1921 and 1923 respectively. Later on, his D.Sc thesis was published under the title *The Problem of the Rupee*. On returning to home in June 1924 Ambedkar started legal practice at the Bombay High Court. This was the beginning of an active public career where he served as social worker, politician writer, and educationalist. The same year he founded Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sadha, (association for the welfare of the depressed Classes) in Bombay for the moral and material progress of the untouchables. In 1927 he started a Marathi fortnightly Bahishkrit Bharat and in December 1930 the Janata a weekly. In December 1927 Ambedkar led a Satyagraha to establish the civic rights of the untouchables to draw water from the public tank Chavdar Talen at Mahar, Kolaba district. Three years later in 1930, he led another Satyagraha to establish the untouchable's right to enter the famous temple of Kalaram at Nasik. Besides his leadership of the Depressed Classes, Ambedkar's eminence as a jurist began to be widely recognized. In 1928 he was appointed professor at Government Law College Bombay and subsequently its principal. Seven years later in 1935 he was offered the coveted Perry Professorship of Jurisprudence. Ambedkar felt that freedom struggle led by the congress party was a movement for power rather than for freedom. The cause of the freedom was not the genuine cause of untouchables. Therefore, he refused to join the freedom movement. But he co-operated and worked for the political rights of the people. He maintained two main principles of equality and the removal of casteism, in order to remove untouchability. All people are born equal and have to continue to remain as equals till death. He dedicated his entire life for the upliftment of the untouchables, the downtrodden, and the oppressed, which were treated by the caste Hindus as sub-humans. He wrote several books, for example *Annihilation of Caste*, *Gandhiji and Emancipation of the Untouchables*, *Who are the Shudras* and his writings and Speeches that are published in several volumes. His main aim was to raise consciousness among the untouchables. These books are great help to know about the practice of untouchability in our country. Ambedkar questioned the traditional social order of the

Hindu society in order to build a just and an egalitarian society. This reflects his deep commitment to humans. Thus his philosophy revolves around the welfare of humans through social and political means. As the architect of constitution, he wanted to arm the untouchables with proper political rights, education, and cultural conditions. He struggled almost forty years to restore their human rights and give them a respectable place in the society. He was looking for an ideal society that could recognize and understand sufferings and miseries of the oppressed. He dreamed to have a society in which common people; especially the untouchables would be free from all social evils. It took this topic for the paper because the life style of Ambedkar made a deep impression on friend, who is untouchable boy. As a student of 3rd standard, he had a similar experience as Ambedkar had. Due to some land dispute in the family, most of the villagers were against my family. The villages segregated my family. As a small boy, he was segregated by the rest of the students. He went to school all alone. My family members encouraged me. This continued for at least four years. He often experienced loneliness and he had bitter feeling in him. It had a bad experience in the village named Karondavera in Jharhkand. I drew water from the bucket and started drinking. A lady came started to scold me. Later on I asked the reason for her scolding. The people of that area told me that my drinking had made the water impure. This experience remains powerful in me even today. There are many people who are going through similar kinds of experiences. For such people the philosophy of Ambedkar brings hope and meaning. This dissertation includes five chapters. The paper deals with the meaning and origin of the untouchability in general. The paper focuses with the revolts of the untouchables against injustice. It consists of Ambedkar's analysis of the origin of the untouchability. The paper explores with some of the problems of the untouchables and the lastly study stress with the means for emancipation of the untouchables. Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reasons of their birth in a particular caste or family. It leads to defilement, pollution and contamination. It is believed that the practice of untouchability is peculiar to the Hindu society. "Untouchability as a social concept has become embodied in customs and as customs differ so does untouchability. The classes, which are commonly regarded, as untouchables are Chamars, Busadh, Dom Halalkor, Hari, Mochi, Mushahar. Although they were outside the pole of Hindu Society, which recognizes only four classes namely, Brahmanas, kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, they were reckoned as part of the Hindu society for political purposes" [1]. before the Indian constitution that abolished untouchability in 1950, the untouchables were divided into three categories namely untouchables, unapproachable and unseeable. The untouchable had different names in different parts of the country. They were called outcaste untouchable namely Pariahs, Panchamas, Artishudras, Avarnas, Antyajas and Namashudras. Their touch and even voice were deemed by the caste Hindus to be polluting. So they had to clear the way at caste Hindus to be polluting. so they had to clear the way at the approach of a caste Hindu. "According to the traditional terminology, the caste Hindu are called Savarnas and the Untouchables are called Avarnas" [2]. There is difference between an untouchable and impure person. An untouchable's only the Brahmins. The touch of the impure causes pollution only on the ceremonial occasion, whereas that of the untouchable

causes pollution at all times. "Ambedkar was brought up in the surrounding of an orthodox and rigid Hindu family that was divided on religious, casteist, communal, and regional lines. He complained that the Hindu society was just like a tower, which had several storeys without a ladder or an entrance. One was to die in the storeys in which one was born" [3]. There are several instances, which would show the kind of humiliation and injustice. Ambedkar, being an untouchable, suffered in his early life. Once he and his nephews were going to meet his father at Goregoan in Satara district on a hot summer day. They had to disembark at Masur railway station and from there they had to go to Goregoan, which was at a far off distance. The two children sat on a bullock cart and started their journey. But as soon as the owner of the cart came to know that they were Mahars, they were ordered to get down from the cart. The children offered double fare. Since they were untouchable, the owner of the bullock cart did not take their money. "In the scorching heat the children were denied food and even water though the cart had all the facilities to get these essentials in the course of the journey" [4] We can imagine what scars might have been left on the sensitive heart of young, intelligent and precious child. Yet another shock was growing in the mind of Ambedkar. "It was indeed a touching scene when he came to know that his hair defiled the purity of the barbar who regarded the shaving of a buffalo a better and hoiler affair than a human being. What a terrible impression these cruel disabilities might have made upon the young mind. But he was quite strong, sensitive and yet very resolute" [5] Under the circumstances were prohibited to learn Sanskrit. Being an untouchable, "Ambedkar also was compelled to take Persian as the second language in the high school, though he was interested in learning Sanskrit. Sanskrit was the key to the study of the Vedas. The Vedas were neither to be heard nor to be read by the Shudras and the untouchables. The teacher never touched the notebooks of the untouchable's students. Some of them did not even ask them to recite poems or put any question to them for fear of being polluted. But at the same time, there was a Brahmin teacher in the high school who loved this boy very much and even dropped daily a part of his meal of boiled rice, bread, and vegetables into the hands of Ambedkar." [6] Students from the socially backward communities especially untouchables were segregated and made to sit separately from the other people in schools. They were given gunny bags as mat to sit upon, unlike the others who were provided with wooden planks. The upper cast students and teacher hardly communicated with the students coming from the depressed classes. A blind and foolish tradition made the high caste students believe that even talking to children of the depressed classes would pollute them. The hardships undergone by Ambedkar in Baroda are well known. The caste Hindus tried their best to prevent him from occupying a rented house. His peons would not hand over files to hi, because he would lose his caste status in human eyes of his colleagues. He would throw official papers on the table of the learned doctor from the distance. He would pour drinking water from the jug without touching him.

### Conclusion

Life became unbearable for a self-respecting, foreign educated man like Ambedkar. It was divine grace, which saved Ambedkar's life, which he was to spend in the emancipation of the untouchables from the thralldom of caste tyranny. Ambedkar

had come to the conclusion that the social problems of the country required a political solution. He decided to fight the evil of untouchability all alone.

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