

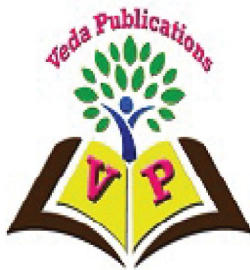
DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S ORIGIN, STRUGGLE AND DYNAMIC LIFE

S. Mubeena Tabassum

(Assistant Professor of English, English Department, Osmania Degree College for Women,

Rayalaseema University, KURNOOL. (A.P)

E-mail : mubeenatabassum64@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

In the name B.R. Ambedkar, B.R. stands for Bhim Rao Ramji. As his father's name was Ramji Maloji Sakpal and his mother's was Bhima Bai, he got the name Bhim Rao Ramji from his parents. 'Ambavadekar' the surname comes from his native village. 'Ambavade' is in Ratnagiri dist. In modern days it is called Maharashtra. His Brahmin teacher Madahev Ambedkar who was so much fond of him, has changed his surname from Ambavadekar to his own surname 'Ambedkar' in school records.

He has born in an untouchable family. His number stands in the 14th place among his siblings. As a leading Indian scholar, Ambedkar had been invited to testify before the south borough committee, which was preparing the Government of India Act 1919. At this hearing, Ambedkar argued for creating separate electorates and reservations for Dalits and other religious communities. By 1927 Dr. B.R. Ambedkar decided to launch active movements against untouchability. In 1935, Ambedkar was appointed principle of the Government Law College, Mumbai, a position he held for 2 years.

In 1936, Ambedkar founded the independent labour party which won 15 seats in the 1937 elections to the central Legislative Assembly. He published his book "The Annihilation of caste" in the same year, based on the thesis he had written in New York. Attaining immense popular success, Ambedkar's work strongly criticized Hindu Orthodox religious leaders and the caste system in general.

On 1947 August 15th Ambedkar became the first Law minister. On August 29th he was appointed the Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee. He has been honoured with the Bharath Rathna, India's highest civilian award. He was also known as Baba Saheb.

Key Words : Ambedkar - Dalit -Community-Untouchability –Reservations – Fought for rights

CONTENT :

1. EARLY LIFE :

Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar was born on 14th April 1891, in the town named Mhow in the central province (Now in Madhya Pradesh). He was the 14th and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhima Bai. His family was of Marathi back ground from the town of Ambavade in the Rathnagiri district of modern - day Maharashtra. They belong to the Hindu, mahar caste, who were treated as untouchables and subjected to intense socio – economic discrimination. His father had a degree of formal education in Marathi and English, so he encouraged his children to learn and work hard at school.

2. DALIT AS AN UNTOUCHABLE:

As Ambedkar was a dalit, he was treated as an untouchable. Though they were treated as untouchables, his father encouraged his children to read the Hindu Classic, as he belonged to the Kabir Panth. He used his position in the army to lobby for his children to study at the government school, as they faced resistance owing to their caste. Although he was able to attend school, Ambedkar and other untouchable children were treated as 'outcast'. They were not allowed to sit inside the class. Even if they needed to drink water somebody from a higher caste would have to pour that water from a height as they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. This task was usually performed for the young Ambedkar by the school peon, and if the peon was not available then he had to go without water, Ambedkar states his situation as 'No peon, No water'.

3. HIS STUDIES :

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar became one of the first 'Outcastes' to obtain a college education in India. Eventually earning Law degrees and multiple doctorates for his study and research in Law, Economics and political science from Columbia University and the London school

of Economics, Ambedkar returned home as a famous scholar and practiced Law for a few years before publishing journals advocating political rights and social freedom for India's untouchable. He further studied at the world famous Columbia University, New York. It was with a condition that he would serve Baroda State for 10 years after finishing his studies. Perhaps he was the first Indian to have a doctorate from this world famous Institution. He is regarded as a Bodhisattva by Indian Buddhists even though he never claimed himself to be a Bodhisattva.

4. DR. AMBEDKAR : A DYNAMIC PERSONALITY :

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was an Indian Jurist, Political Leader, Buddhist Activist, Philosopher, Thinker, Anthropologist, Historian, Orator, Prolific Writer, Economist, Scholar, Editor, Revolutionary and a Revivalist for Buddhism in India. He was also the chief architect of the Indian constitution. He has been honoured with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

5. FIGHT AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY :

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was not only a learned scholar and an eminent jurist but also a revolutionary who fought against social evils like untouchability and caste restrictions. Throughout his life, he battled social discrimination while upholding the rights of the dalits and other socially backward classes. He also fought for the reservation of dalits in the field of government recruitments and the allocation of seats and scholarships in higher education. In the year 1927 D.R. Ambedkar decided to launch active movements against untouchability. He began with public movements and marched to open up and share public drinking water resources. He also began a struggle for the rights to enter Hindu temples. He led Satyagraha in Maharashtra to fight for the right of the untouchable community to draw water from the main water tank of the town. No doubt, Ambedkar has been the undisputed leader of untouchables. But it is

also true and can't be altered that he had received elite education at Columbia University in New York. Belonging to Mahar community, he had never faced any hurdle in his life to get the best education in the world throughout his student career. He achieved a very high social status and attained good positions of power. In this way he was not only a great national leader but also a distinguished scholar of international repute.

6. POLITICAL CAREER :

After a long struggle in dalit community, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar became the leader of the dalit community. In the year 1924 in July month he returned to India from foreign country and he founded the Bahishkrit Hitakarani Sabah (out caste welfare association). The aim of the sabah was to uplift the socially and politically down trodden and bring them to the level of the others in the Indian society.

In 1930, when a round table conference was held by the British Government in London to decide the future of India, Baba Saheb represented the 'untouchables'. He said, "The Depressed class of India also join in the demand for replacing the British Government by a Government of the people and by the people.... Our wrongs have remained as open sores and have not been righted although 150 years of British rule has rolled away of what good is such a Government to anybody?"

Gandhi appreciated the quotes of Dr. Ambedkar.

But later on he made the controversial decision to co-operate with the British Simon commission. The congress decided to boycott the commission and drafted its own version of a constitution for free India. He attended all the three Round Table Conferences in London and forcefully argued for the welfare of the 'untouchables'.

A separate electorate was announced for the depressed classes under Ramsay McDonald

'Communal Award'. The famous Poona pact replaced the separate electorate demand with special concessions like reserved seats in the regional legislative assemblies and central council of states.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar setup the 'Independent Labour Party in August 1936 to contest the elections in the Bombay province. In 1937, a bill was introduced to abolish the 'khoti' system of land tenure in the koncon region, the serfdom of agricultural tenants and the mahar 'Waton' system of working for the government as slaves.

A class of an agrarian bill referred to the depressed class as 'Harijans 'or people of God. Bhimrao strongly opposed this title for the untouchables. But the Indian national congress succeeded in introducing the term 'Harijan'.

The All India schedule caste federation was formed in 1942 to gather all 'Untouchables' into a United Political Party.

In 1947, when India became Independent, Baba Saheb Ambedkar became the first Law Minister of Independent India in Nehru's Cabinet.

In October 1948, Dr. Ambedkar submitted the Hindu code bill to the constituent assembly in an attempt to codify the Hindu Law.

The bill caused great divisions even in the congress party. Consideration for the bill was postponed to September 1951. When the bill was taken up it was truncated. A dejected Ambedkar relinquished his position as Law Minister.

About a month before his death (December 6th 1956), On October 14th 1956 he embraced Buddhism along with many of his followers.

7. AMBEDKAR BROUGHT REFORMS THROUGH HIS IDEOLOGIES:

Delivering a special lecture on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Nationalism, jointly organised

by Ambedkar study and Research Centre, Gulbarga University and the Centre for comprehensive development studies at Gulbarga University, Dr. Patange, who has written on Ambedkar in Marathi and Hindi, said that Ambedkar was devoted to nationalism and equality than any national movements in the country.

Although Ambedkar was criticised for not participating in the freedom movement led by the congress, he said that Ambedkar brought reforms through his own ideology and programmes.

Ambedkar played a pivotal role in eradicating the 'Varnashrama' practice in the society and proved through his actions that any person can perform any duties given to them.

8. AMBEDKAR AS AN ARCHITECT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION:

Due to his seminal role in the framing of the Indian Constitution, Ambedkar is popularly known all over India as the chief architect of the Indian constitution. His efforts to eradicate social evils were remarkable and that is why he is called the "Messiah" of the dalits and downtrodden in India.

As a matter of fact he was appointed the nation's first Law Minister and was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1990.

On August, 1947 Ambedkar was appointed the Chairman of the drafting committee that was constituted by constituent assembly to draft a constitution for Independent India.

The first President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad praised the services rendered by Ambedkar in making of the constitution and said: "I have carefully watched the day-to-day activities from the presidential seat. Therefore, I appreciate more than other with how much dedication and vitality this task has been carried out by the drafting committee and by its chairman Ambedkar, in particular."

The Columbia University at its special convocation on June 5th, 1952 conferred the LL.D degree (Honorius Cause) on Dr. Ambedkar in recognition of his drafting the constitution of India.

The University hailed him as "one of India's leading citizens, a great social reformer and valiant up holder of human rights".

9. THE LAST DAYS OF AMBEDKAR:

Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism as a last resort since he believed that the empowerment of dalits and the downtrodden is not possible within the folds of Hinduism. The birth anniversary of Ambedkar i.e. 14th April is celebrated as Ambedkar Jayanthi, and the death day i.e., on 6th December is celebrated as Dhamma Chakra Parvarthan Din. His message to his followers is "Educate! Agitate! Organise!" (14th April, 1891 – 6th December 1956).

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From the articles of the newspaper and through net sources.