

CHAPTER -IV

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY

Concept of Liberty

A civilized society is based on the principles of liberty and equality, B.R. Ambedkar's concept of the ideal society is most relevant to a civilized society and suited to the needs of modern Indian society. Hence this chapter attempts to bring out his contributions towards the attainment of their two human ideals in the society by democratic process. Knowledge about liberty and equality is essential to analyse the social ideology of B.R. Ambedkar and his services to the society. So this researcher tries to examine them one by one. The concept of 'liberty' or 'freedom' denotes a very important principle of political philosophy. Liberty is sometimes regarded as the distinctive principle of liberalism, but freedom is acclaimed as a universal principle. Freedom is eulogized by liberal, idealist as well as Marxist theory. Nobody quarrels with freedom as an end, but different schools of thought differ on the means and mode of realizing freedom. Even the champions of absolutism, authoritarianism and slavery pay lip service to freedom, claiming that for ordinary men, submission to authority-regarded as the symbol of some sort of excellence-is the best way to realize freedom.¹

The champions of liberty have, however, always challenged the claims to the privileged classes to such excellence. The ideal of liberty has inspired many revolutionary struggles against despotism and foreign regimes. It is significant that the struggle for liberty is always informed by a philosophy of equality. That is, when some oppressed sections rise against their oppressors-as in peasant revolts or national struggles of independence-they challenge the alleged superiority of their oppressors, demanding equality and justice on the universal principle of human equality.²

'The concept of liberty' denotes a very important principle of political philosophy. Liberty is sometimes regarded as the distinctive principle of liberalism. The term 'liberty' means freedom from captivity, imprisonment and slavery or

¹ O.P.Gaubas, *An Introduction to Political Theory*, Macmillan publishers, New Delhi, 1995, p.233.

² *Ibid*, p.234.

despotic control. It is clear from this dictionary meaning, that these two terms are synonyms. However 'freedom' has been widely used as it is acclaimed as a universal principle. Different schools of thoughts differ on the means and mode of realizing freedom. While the privileged classes are challenged to such excellence, the challengers are stamped as the champions of 'liberty'. Liberty has inspired many revolutionary struggles against despotism and foreign regimes. Generally, two opposing sections are involved in the struggle for liberty. They are the oppressed and oppressor. Either peasant revolts or national struggles of independence, the oppressed challenge the alleged superiority of their oppressors over them.

They demand equality on the universal principle of human equality. It reveals that the struggle for liberty is always based on the philosophy of equality. It is also clear that liberty is related to the principle of equality. Man, as distinguished from other living beings evolves institution to secure a happy life on earth. Since he has an aim in his life he has created the whole complex of institution, civilization and cultures in pursuance of his aim. However, the selfish strong and clever men have managed to assume dominant position and acquire special privileges in society.³ This privileged class assumes power over the lives of others. It always stands against change in the society. So the subject class rises in revolt against injustice and oppression of the privileged class. It demands the privileges of the dominant class and raises the slogan of liberty to press its claim of equality. It is evident from this that liberty is a force behind social change. The voice of the oppressed tries to re establish human values lost in the society. In the enjoyment and administration of liberty, the individual, society and state are involved.⁴ The liberty of individuals has to be restricted by a measure of equal liberty to be enjoyed by others. An individual is expected to behave as a 'rational being'. Then each individual shall pursue his happiness in consonance with the happiness of society. As a result, an individual's good will become an integral part of the social good. In the real world as individuals

³ *Ibid*, p.235.

⁴ Gopal Guru, *Understanding Ambedkar's Construction of National Movement, Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-33, No. 4, January, 1998, pp. 156-157.

are not perfect, the regulation of liberty becomes necessary to safeguard liberty itself.⁵ The relative liberty between the individual and society is regulated by the laws of the state, conventions of the society and moral principles of the individuals. The violent revolution such as the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution popularized the term 'liberty' in politics. On the other hand the term 'freedom' has been widely used on various fields. Freedom of expression and freedom of worship are some of the terms for such usages. Another word 'right' is also associated with 'freedom'. The terms 'human rights' and 'civil rights' refer a man's freedom to express, to preach and to live as he desired. Thus, the words 'liberty' 'freedom' and 'rights' are relatively applied in political as well as social contexts.⁶

The preamble declares liberty to be second cardinal objective to be secured by the constitution. The freedom of the country makes it all the more essential to secure the liberty of the peoples, preamble lists liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship as the objective to be secured to all the people. The grant of fundamental right including the right of freedom, is designed to secure this objective liberty is the vital necessity for the fullest development of mind of the individual, It is the condition of worth living, Liberty of faith and worship is designed to strengthen the spirit of secularism, Liberty, as such is another cardinal objective of the constitution, right religious freedom, is a fundamental rights, The constitution grants and guarantees the liberty of thought expression belief, faith and worship.⁷

Idea of Liberty

Liberty is the quality of man. It is man, as distinguished from other living beings who demands freedom and evolves institutions to secure it. Animals, birds and insects are governed by the rule of the 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest'-the fittest is the one physically strongest and cleverest. They have no aim of life beyond mere existence. Man as Homo sapient has distinguished himself from other living beings as he claims to have an aim in his life; he has created the whole complex of institutions-civilization and culture-in pursuance of this aim. Animals are mere

⁵ Liz Wheeler (ed.), *International Encyclopaedia of Social Science*, Vol-5, p.708.

⁶ O.P.Gaubas, *Ibid*, p.235-367.

⁷ S. Palekar, *A Indian polity*, ABD publishers, Jaipur, 2006, p.16.

slaves of nature; man has largely learnt to tame, control and harness nature to serve his purpose of life. Freedom is the distinctive quality of man. Practice, it is mostly the selfish, strong and clever men who have managed to assume dominant positions and acquire special privileges in society. As a result, society was divided into privileged and underprivileged sections the oppressor and oppressed the exploiter and exploited, the dominant and dependent groups because one set of men assumed power over the lives of others. The privileged classes have developed a vested interest in the existing order. They have sought to justify that order by stressing its virtues in order to establish the legitimacy of their dominant position. A typical example of this tendency may be found in Aristotle's defense of slavery. Aristotle argued that men differ from one another in their moral excellence; that the slaves were not full human beings, capable of virtue they were merely 'living tools'. He suggested that slaves receive the benefit of virtue solely by serving their masters. He also argued that the system of slavery provided 'leisure' for the freemen which were essential for the exercise of virtue. Thus, the privileged classes have always stood in defense of the status quo no change in the previous position. It is only when the subject classes rise in revolt against injustice and oppression that they challenge the special privileges of the dominant classes and raises the slogan of liberty to press their claim of equality. Liberty is, therefore, a force behind social change—it is the voice of the oppressed, it is the voice against injustice, it is the voice to reestablish human values as against the rules of the animal kingdom.⁸

Scope of Liberty

The problem of liberty involves the adjustment of claims between individual and society (or community); the state comes into the picture because it is the instrument or agency for regulating their relations. If the claim of the individual is stretched to an extreme in utter disregard of the interest of society, liberty would be rendered into 'license'. On the other hand, if the liberty of the individual is increasingly restricted in the supposed interest of society, the result would be an unconditional submission to authority, hence the loss of liberty. It is, therefore,

⁸ Shabbir (ed.), *B.R.Ambedkar Study in Law and Society*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur.2003, p.386.

essential to draw a distinction between liberty and license on the one hand and to fix the proper frontier between liberty and authority, on the other.⁹

Liberty and License

When liberty is interpreted as the absence or removal of all restraints on the actions of the individual in utter disregard of the interest of other individuals, liberty degenerates into license, As S.I.Benn and R.S.Peters have pointed out “Liberty” is good but to be free to do undesirable things is to enjoy not “Liberty” but “license”.¹⁰ Such a conductible neither with the maintenance of social order nor with the maintenance of liberty itself. In that case, one man’s liberty would become another constraint or oppression; the liberty of the strong would amount to the suppression of the weaker; the large fish will be free to swallow the smaller one, and there would be a still larger fish to swallow the former. A thief liberty to take away anybody property would become a threat to everybody security. A driver’s freedom to drive at any speed in any direction at his own whim would endanger the life and liberty of all users of the road. Such a situation is obviously self contradictory, it cannot be permitted in a civil society, and otherwise it would defeat the very purpose of social organization.¹¹

“The need of liberty for each is necessarily qualified and conditioned by the need of liberty for all, The liberty of the owner of capital to determine the condition of work in the factory which he owns is a relative liberty which must be adjusted to the liberty of the worker to do his work under such conditions as leave him still a free agent and give him also a share in the determination of the conditions of work. Because the liberty of each is thus, relative to that of others, and has to be adjusted to that of others it must always be regulated; and indeed it would not exist unless it were regulated”¹²

Liberty and Authority

It is now evident that the liberty of individuals has to be restricted by a measure of equal liberty to be enjoyed by others. In other words, one man’s liberty should not

⁹ O.P.Gauba, *Ibid*, p.234.

¹⁰ S.I.Benn, *Social Principles and the Democratic State*, NED Publication, New Delhi, p.2023, p.212.

¹¹ O.P.Gauba, *Social Principles and the Democratic State*, Popular Publisher, Delhi, 1995, p.212.

¹² Ernest Barkker, *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, patrika Publisher, New Delhi, p.145.

become an obstruction in the enjoyment of liberty by others. As liberty is demanded for man as 'rational being' it follows that liberty is meant to enable man to pursue 'rational objects or ideal objects; if they do so, each individual shall pursue his happiness in consonance with the happiness of society an individual's good will become an integral part of the since, in the real world, individuals are not perfect they are only capable of perfection the regulation f liberty became necessary to safeguard liberty itself.

“Liberty within the state is thus a relative and regulated liberty it is the greatest common measure of liberty which is possible for all, as determined and defined (i) by the need of each to enjoy similar and equal liberty with others.(ii) by the need of all to enjoy the specific liberty of realizing specific capacities.”¹³

Concept of Equality

Equality, like liberty, is a prominent political ideal of the present-day world. The French Revolution (1789) was fought for 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Liberty and Equality, taken together, can be interpreted as essential ingredients of social justice. They constitute the voice of the oppressed, the voice against injustice and the voice for changing unfair social conditions. Liberty and equality, in this sense, may be interpreted as complementary principles. In some other contexts, they may appear to be mutually contradictory. It is, therefore, essential to understand the nature and essence of equality in order to determine its proper relationship with the principle of liberty. Equality realising fully the importance of equality and the interrelationship between liberty and equality the preamble makes equality the third major objective of the constitution, It has been described in terms of its two variables (I) Equality of status that is naturally equality of all persons as equal and free citizens of India enjoying equality before law.

(ii) Equality of opportunity that is adequate opportunities for all to develop. For securing the equality of status what is needed is equality before law and end of discrimination or restrictions based on grounds of religion, Race, Sex, Colour, Creed, Caste, residence etc, The Indian constitution provides for the sense under its Articles 14 and 15, It also guarantees equality of opportunity under its Article 16, However,

¹³ *Ibid*, pp.145-146.

along with it the constitution provides for special protection to women, children as the weaker sections of society. Thus equality is cherished goal of Indian constitution.¹⁴

(iii) In the context of the social sciences, the concept of equality reforms sometimes to certain properties which men are held to have in common but more often to certain treatments which men either receive or ought to receive. Traditional characterizations of kinds of treatment as wither egalitarian or in an egalitarian often turn out to be disguised value judgments or empty statements. It is possible, however, to find descriptive criterial apt to capture the egalitarian and in egalitarian features of principles which have been advocated at different times.¹⁵

Equality of Characteristics

Equality must be construed here in the sense of similarity, that is, of agreement in certain properties. Those men are equal means that men share some equality; these must be specified. Men are evidently unequal in many characteristics. There are natural differences Sex, Color, to claim that all men are equal in such respects can only mean that the resemblances are in some way more significant than the differences as equal, in the faculties of the body and mind.

Equality of Treatment

Moralists ever since the stoics have claimed that men, in spite of differences of character of intelligence, are of equal dignity worth, or desert. Statements of this kind are to be interpreted in a normative sense, to the effect that all man is entitled to be treated equally. The same applies to allegation that all men have the same moral or natural rights. To say that I have a moral right implies that others should let me exercise it right means that it is conferred by “That men by nature are equal” as referring, not to “All sorts of equality” since a differ as to “age or virtue, the equal right that every man hath to his natural freedom”.¹⁶

Idea of Equality

The problem of equality and inequality has figured in political thought since earliest times. Aristotle, for instance, discovered that 'inequality' was a cause of

¹⁴ S.A.Palekar, *Ibid*, pp.15-17.

¹⁵ Liz Wheeler (ed.), *Ibid.*, Vol,15, p.102

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp.105-110.

rebellion in many a state. He defined justice as treating equals equally and unequally. This was a typical statement in that it insisted on recognition and maintenance of existing inequalities in society between master and slave, between rich and poor, between morally superior and morally inferior, and so on. The modern idea of equality, on the contrary, seeks the correction of the prevailing inequalities insofar as they can be proved to be unjust according to the prevailing social consciousness. According to B.R. Ambedkar, few object to liberty in the sense of a right to free movement, in the sense of a right to life and limb. There is no objection to liberty in the sense of a right to property, tools and materials as being necessary for earning a living to keep the body in due state of health. The supporters of caste who would allow liberty in the sense of a right to life, limb and property and would not readily consent to liberty inasmuch as it involves liberty to choose one's profession. And in the caste system some persons are compelled to carry on certain prescribed things which are not of their choice.¹⁷

Equality as a Statement of Right

At the outset, it is essential to note that the modern idea of equality is derived from the theory of rights. "In proportion to their inequality" Equality is a prescriptive term, not a descriptive one. We claim that men must be treated as equal, not that they are in fact equal. We, of course, advance some logic in support of our claim to human equality. For instance, we postulate that man as such is a rational being; he is endowed with the faculty of 'reason'; all men are created equal by God, or we argue that the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of all men are similar; hence all are entitled to equal rights. We do not say that all men are equal in their physical or mental capacities, beauty and talents, etc. Sometimes we dwell on physical attributes to press our claim, such as, when we argue that men may differ in the color of their skin, but they are all similar in the color of their blood, hence they should be treated equally. In short, we tend to establish some fundamental equality among men equality as a fact to press their claim of equality as a right. Sometimes, it is argued that the idea of equality does not derive its support from nature, as the idea of liberty does; hence it is not

¹⁷ B.R. Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste, Ibid*, p.50.

based on reason. For instance, it is stated that nature has created all things unequal, right from the sun and moon, sky and earth, mountains and oceans, plants and trees, birds and animals to men and women, older and younger, stronger and weaker, wiser and stupid, and so on; hence the principle of equality nowhere holds good; why should it be imposed against the scheme of the nature itself. Such arguments come in very handy to those who wish to preserve their privileged position.¹⁸ They are quite apprehensive of the idea of equality because they believe that liberty enables men to acquire unlimited money, power and prestige while equality seeks to diminish their achievements. They even try to demonstrate that any measure to limit their liberty, in the interest of equality, will rob society of its valuable assets, and that the idea of equality should be thoroughly abandoned in the interest of society. This line of argument is, however, based on a distorted concept of liberty. Freedom in society can serve as a valid rule only when it is interpreted as 'equal freedom' of all, not otherwise. Absolute liberty will only result in the liberty of the strong and clever to oppress the weak and simple. If liberty is not to degenerate into license, it must be qualified by equality. In other words, I can enjoy my freedom only to the extent that it does not infringe on the similar and equal freedom' of others. Now, this principle cannot be restricted to the legal sphere; it must be extended to the political, social and economic spheres also.¹⁹

Liberty Equality and Fraternity

This trinity principle seems to be very simple and apparent, but it is actually complex and comprehensive in its ramifications. It has its own historical background, and new meaning and values emanate from it in new circumstances. Each part of this principle is different from the other, yet all the three are closely related to one another. Each one is dependent on the other, and in the social context, the relevance of all the three parts is universal and perpetual. They have their own limitations, yet their implications are varied and valuable. Therefore, before knowing when and why B.R.Ambedkar had adopted the first trinity principle, it is necessary to understand its

¹⁸ Chamanlal, *Dr.Ambedkar An Ambassador of Humanity*, Mainstream Publication, New Delhi, Vol-14, April 19, 2000, p.235

¹⁹ R.H.Tawney, *The Classic work Equality*, Utkal Publisher, New Delhi, 1995, p.207.

background and circumstances, which made the principle of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity possible as a password of social change.²⁰

It is said that the above principle was the pleasant result of the great French Revolution, which took place in 1789. It was against the despotic administrative system, bureaucracy and prerogatives of the rulers, and also against the corrupt social order prevalent then in France. The revolution left its impact on the people, and in fact, the result was an end to the traditional European system. Consequently, there were far-reaching changes in people's social, political and economic life. To put it in brief, the French Revolution had contributed a lot to the establishment of New Age the world over. It was really a revolution both in thought and action.²¹ It had generated a new insight along with a humane approach towards the solution of various problems.

Before the revolution of 1789, the situation in France was very critical. The indulgence of King in sex and drinks was open, and his despotic policies had plunged the common people in several hardships. The concept, 'I am the State' was always there in King's mind. According to the theory of divine origin, the king was not responsible to anyone. He considered himself to be above all. The result was the oppression of the people. Injustice was prevalent in all walks of life. The legal system was so corrupt that the judiciary posts were sold to the elites. Besides, the tax-system was also unjust, and the entire load of taxes was on the farmers.²² The labor classes were also in trouble, because they did not get due and legitimate wages for their hard work. The owners had stern control over them and they were helpless, if they had any wish to leave the jobs. The laborers were bound and could not go elsewhere. Not only the labour classes, but also the farmers and middle class people had to face numerous problems and difficulties. The political and administrative situation in France was actually corrupt and polluted. It was engulfed in complexities and inequalities. Consequently, social relations among the people were disharmonious; they were depressed and divided, and could not organize themselves for any rational change.

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp.208-210.

²¹ D.K. Mohanty, *Indian political Tradition from Manu to Ambedkar*, Anmol publication, New Delhi, 2004, p.73.

²² *Ibid*, pp.74-78.

It is almost true that in a country, the seeds of any revolution are found in people's social situation and in their mental make-up. The French Revolution was no exception to it. There existed not only the exploited and unsatisfied social classes, but there were also deep and varied contradictions in their social structure. On the one hand, the legal structure of the society was feudalistic, and on the other, the newly emerging middle bourgeois class had control over the financial matters. The 18th century French society was, in fact, largely based on the basic elements of feudalistic order, inequality and prerogatives of the ruling classes. The class was on the top in the social hierarchy. Almost all members of the King's family belonged to this class, because they also used to exercise the prerogatives. Another class, consisting of middle class people, farmers and laborers, was known as the class of common people, which had to face all types of hardships. The real power or authority was in the hands of the oligarchic class. The big churchmen, or the fathers, of this class were also influential, because they had also got various facilities and prerogatives like the ruling classes.²³

On the lowest rung of the ladder was the class consisting of workers, artisans and farmers. Its economic condition was very critical. Most of these people lived like half-slaves. There was utter inequality everywhere in French society. There were wide-spread discriminations in the distribution of posts, prestige and progress among the various classes. Besides, the common people did not have their legitimate rights, not even the religious freedom. There was a lack of freedom of thought and expression. There was a stern control over publications. The people did not have rights to assemble, to organize meetings and lectures, and to form associations and institutions.

There was an utter lack of individual freedom. All people had to live by the grace of God. Anyone could be kept in prison for a long period without any legal procedure. Such was the social situation in France which made the people rise against injustice and oppression. In fact, the French Revolution, as once Napoleon had declared, was against the class enjoying prerogatives for a long period. They did the French Revolution take place? It is a very complicated question. However, it may be

²³ D.R.Jatava, *Ambedkar and Humanism*, ABC Publishers, Jaipur, 1999, p.20

said that during that period so many things jumbled together, which could lead any nation towards revolt and revolution. The absolute but feeble monarchy; corrupt worldly church; dependent, hereditary and unjust oligarchical class; educated, well-off but dissatisfied middle class; oppressed and exploited farmers; empty and loaded with debts-the state treasury; anarchy in administrative and economic system; mal-administration and the divided nation with mutual doubts; the fathers of progressive thought and intellectual movement like those of Montesquieu (1689-1755), Voltaire (1694-1778), Rousseau (1712-1778), and other writers, thinkers and philosophers were the main factors which roused the people for revolution almost in all walks of life in France.²⁴

The French Revolution made its impact in the framing of the Constitution in August 1789, and as a result, first of all efforts was made to put an end to the feudal system. On 27th August, on the basis of Rousseau's 'Social Contract' people's human rights' were declared among which the main rights were - right to equality; state posts according to merits; no confiscation of anyone's property without compensation; equal access to justice for all; no one should be prisoner without due legal process; no exploitation of one by the other; all must have freedom to worship and practice their respective religions; freedom to write, speak and publication; because the Constitution is the manifestation of people's 'General Will', everyone must have participation either through himself or his representatives in the making of the Constitution; the sovereignty must be vested in the people. All these human rights were the expressions of liberty, equality and fraternity.²⁵ Irrespective of the criticism of the process and results of the French Revolution, the contribution it had made not only for France, but also for the entire human society, were those eternal values which it had fostered and made popular among the people. These principles were the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, that is, the first trinity principle which we find in the social philosophy of B.R.Ambedkar. On the one hand, the orthodox elements criticized these principles, and on the contrary, the revolutionaries accepted them as the highest ideals of human life. In the context of French Revolution, these ideals carried the following meanings:

²⁴ R Mukerjee, *Ibid*, p 203

²⁵ D.R.Jatava, *Ibid*, pp.22-25.

(i) At that time, the main aspect of the Liberty was political, i.e., people's sovereignty, and there was a need for the constitutional rule which could safeguard the fundamental rights of all citizens like right to property, to religious freedom, right to thought and expression, and right to limb and life. In brief such a concept of liberty was the declaration of modern political democracy.

(ii) The ideal of Equality was supplementary to the 'political democracy', that is, before law all must be treated as equals; equal opportunities for all to progress, and social or class discrimination and the resultant prerogatives and facilities be put to one end. The right to equality envisaged all such things as could benefit all.

(iii) The principle of Fraternity emerged during the Revolution in the form of nationalism and national power. This principle brought the people of France together and inspired them to die for the defense and glory of their nation. Thus, the feeling of Fraternity turned into an ideal of nationality and patriotism. The people of a country are related to each other. They being together in unity form a nation, and the future of the nation depends upon the fraternal feelings they develop and nourish for themselves. In brief the contribution of the French Revolution was not only democracy or nationalism, but also those human values which B.R. Ambedkar had himself accepted as the first trinity principle of his philosophy of life.²⁶

Undoubtedly, B.R. Ambedkar had studied deeply and widely the backgrounds and circumstances not only of the French Revolution, but also of the radical changes that had taken place in all other countries. The French Revolution had a special appeal to him, because irrespective of the differences in periods and lands, the 18th century Indian Society was much more in bad condition than the French Society. In fact, the entire administration worked under the rigid rules of caste system. In the ruling clique, there were some high castes, particularly the Kshatriyas and Brahmins, who even being in minorities, were very effective. They were enjoying a number of privileges. The common people were in the grip of extreme poverty, blind-beliefs and jejuna customs. The persons belonging to oligarchic castes were virtually the rulers of the day. They had the reins of law and justice in their lands. The whole of India was divided into small states politically, and socially, she was further divided into

²⁶ B.R. Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste, Op, cit*, p.323.

thousands.²⁷ The French thinkers and philosophers questioned the ancient customs and beliefs by way of their critical ideas and articles, and that roused the slumbering people. It is often said that had there have been no intellectual revolution; the state revolution would have never been possible in France. The writers and philosophers through their writings prepared the people for radical changes. Among them, the most influential thinkers were Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau. Although Montesquieu belonged to the oligarchic class, yet he refuted the divine right theory of the King. Most of the ancient institutions and customs were considered to be divine on the basis of certain beliefs like that they were well established and belonged to the ancient period.²⁸

Montesquieu did not spare such beliefs too, and questioned their authenticity. He vehemently attacked the useless customs and usages and brought out several reforms in constitutional matters. He was a staunch supporter of people's freedom. He emphasized the point that for the safeguard of people's liberties, the various powers of the State had to be distributed in three organs - the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. In France, all the powers of the state were vested in one person (King) who was responsible to none. That is why the people did not have any freedom. Being a reformist and renaissance thinker, Montesquieu criticized monarchy, suggested certain limitations, or checks, on the powers of the King in order to safeguard people's liberties, though in that situation, the concept of freedom Montesquieu brought forth, was limited only to the oligarchic class to which he himself belonged.²⁹ Born in a middle-class family, Voltaire was the foremost and more influential among the thinkers. He himself was a victim of unjust social order and was sent to prisons for a number of times. The bad conditions of contemporary society disturbed him painfully, because he saw injustice, oppression, cruelty, monopoly, exploitation, etc. from very close quarters. Voltaire, the brilliant and versatile propagandist of the Enlightenment Movement, vehemently attacked Catholic Church which he considered to be the centre of intolerance, misconduct, blind-beliefs and an enemy, number one, of the freedom of thought, though he himself was not an atheist. He was, however, not a

²⁷ D.R.Jatava, *Ibid*, p.26.

²⁸ Ling, Trevor, *Buddha Marx and God*, Macmillan Publication, London, 1966, p.168.

²⁹ P.L.Narasu, *The Essence of Buddhism*, Popular Frakashan, Publication, Bombay, 1954, p.117.

blind follower and he agreed or disagreed with any idea only after a rationalist analysis. He saw and found that the French political institutions, laws, the manners of the church and other customs could not be justified on any rational basis. Consequently, he stressed the necessity of reforming them to the satisfaction of the common people. In brief, Voltaire was a staunch supporter of individual freedom. He combated oppression of all kinds and fought for intellectual political and religious liberty, for tire freedom of the press, the freedom of elections, of parliaments, and he demanded political rights. He is, in fact, regarded as "the mirror of French ideas." Once addressing to a person, he said, although I do not agree with your opinion, yet for the protection of your right to say like that, I can sacrifice my life.

Rousseau was a different person from Montesquieu and Voltaire. He was not a destructionist, but wanted the establishment of a new society. He gave us a famous theory of 'Social Contract.' He accepted the fact that "Man was born free; but everywhere he is in chains," that is, in society, there are many limitations and pressures which curtail the freedom of man. For Rousseau, when man lived in natural conditions, he had to face a number of discomforts and disturbances, and he used to live in the midst of calamities. It was a situation for everyone.³⁰

Hence for getting rid of such a situation, individuals assembled and made a 'Social Contract', and they agreed to live under some sort of administration in order to safeguard their life and property. But that contract proved unjust because the state power centered in the hands of a single person. Rousseau was not satisfied, and he wanted" that after abolishing the unjust society, let all the people negotiate a new satisfactory social contract in order to reestablish new social order. Politically, in Rousseau's view, the people are all in all; the entire power is vested in their hands; it cannot be vested in one person or a class; all men are free and equal; and the main function of the administration is to protect the rights of every individual, The sovereignty of the state is vested in people's desire which manifests itself in various laws of the state. Individuals think over the laws out of their good will. Although they appear to be in bonds, yet in reality, they are free. Rousseau also gave us the theory of

³⁰ S.Mohan,Justice, *B.R.Ambedkar Social Justice and Indian Constitution*, Deep &Deep Published, New Delhi, 1995, P.75

'General Will'. The General will is always right, and every individual must obey it. Rousseau was opposed to economic inequality. He used to emphasize that "in a state no individual should be so rich that he could buy the other, and nor so poor that he could sell himself to the other." In brief, Rousseau established two great theories, namely, the sovereignty of the people and political equality of all citizens, which left a deep and wide influence during the intellectual movement of France.³¹

An Ideal Society

An ideal society would be a society based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. In an ideal society, there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contacts with other modes of association. In other words, there must be social endosmosis. This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen. To object to liberty to choose one's profession is to perpetuate slavery. Any system that compels some persons to carry on certain prescribed callings which are not of their choice is basically wrong. Equality may be a fiction but nonetheless one must accept it as the governing principle.³² However desirable or reasonable an equitable treatment of men may be, humanity is not capable of assortment and classification. The statesman, therefore, must follow some rough and ready rule and that rough and ready rule is to treat all men alike not because they are alike but because classification and assortment is impossible. Students of social organization have been content with noting the difference between equality and inequality. None have realized that in addition to equality and inequality, there is such a thing as graded inequality. Yet, inequality is not half as dangerous as graded inequality. Inequality carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. The system of graded inequality prevents the rise of general discontent against inequality. It cannot, therefore, become the storm centre of revolution. One of the reasons why there has been no revolution against Brahmanism and its inequalities is entirely due to the principle of graded inequality. It is a system

³¹ *Ibid*, PP. 77-79.

³² Moon Vasant (ed.), *Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol-3*, p.320.

of permitting a share in the spoils with a view to enlist them to support the spoils system. It is nothing else but inviting people to share in inequality in order that they may all be supporters of inequality.³³

Equality, Liberty, Fraternity, morality and reasoning were the guiding principles of B.R.Ambedkar mission devoted to the cause of the suffering humanity. He was not only anti-caste, anti-priest, anti-Brahmin but was also against all kind of injustice and exploitation. Being independent India's first Law Minister, he felt it his duty to improve the condition of women who like Shudras had earned the wrath of Manu, the so-called god of Hindus. Consequently, he attempted to liberalize and codify the Hindu law. However, the reactionary forces foiled his attempt and he resigned from the Nehru Cabinet in 1951. After this event, he decided to devote the rest of his life to the cause of Buddha Dharma. Being essentially a religious man, ever since 1935, he was in search of a new religious order along with his followers. Ultimately, he embraced Buddhism on 14th October 1956 at Nagpur.³⁴

As a courageous leader, B.R.Ambedkar was a great champion of human rights, because he succeeded in turning the depressed classes' movement into a revolutionary movement. India witnessed the oppressed classes walking in the streets demanding human rights. He declared: "lost rights are never regained by begging and by appeals to the conscience of usurpers, but by relentless struggle. Goats are used for sacrificial offerings but not lions". With rare and matchless wisdom, honesty and devotion, he guided the depressed classes. Indeed; he gave life to the lifeless; voice to the voiceless, courage to the weak and meek and raised them from despised individuals to dignified citizens.³⁵

Political Equality

Equality is a prominent political ideal of the present day democratic world. It is an essential ingredient for social justice. It constitutes the voice of the oppressed against injustice for changing unfair social conditions. In this sense it is

³³ S.N.Mandal (ed.), *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar his Thoughts and Observation*, National Publishing Jaipur 2002, p.19.

³⁴ D.R.Jatava, *Social Philosophy of Ambedkar*, Popular Publication, New Dellhi, 1997, p.220.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p.221.

complementary to the principle of liberty. It is essential to understand the nature and essence of equality in order to determine its proper relationship with the principle of liberty. The problem of equality and inequality had figured in political thought since earliest times. Aristotle thought that inequality was the cause of rebellion in many states.³⁶ The modern idea of equality seeks the correction of the prevailing inequalities insofar as they can be proved to be unjust according to the prevailing social consciousness. The modern idea of equality is derived from the theory of rights. The term equality has its root in 'Latin'. It refers the sameness in quantity, quality, size and rank for one thing or a person. It has uniformity in application or effect. In other words a person or thing possesses same rank and status to another. This explanation reveals that equality is a prescriptive term. As man is a rational being, he is endowed with the faculty of 'reason'. By creation all men are equal. Naturally the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of all men are similar. Hence, they are entitled to equal rights and treatment in all institutions. However, it has certain limitation in its applications and enforcements because nature has created all things unequal. Equality makes the content of liberty more relevant and substantive. The principle of equality is invoked to prevent some section of society from acquiring unlimited money, power or prestige. It is only intended to restrict the element of 'exploitation' so that other sections of society are not deprived of their due share in these advantages.³⁷ Further, it aims at widening the base of social benefits lest these benefits are cornered by a small and vocal minority impoverishing the rest of the community. It is evident that liberty and equality are human rights which do not emanate from very different sources. They are based on the same logic and they are intended to serve the same social purpose.

Fraternity

According to B.R.Ambedkar, an ideal society must be based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He holds that a democratic way of life cannot be conceived without an ideal society. These qualities are enumerated below. An ideal society must

³⁶ O.P.Gauba, *Op,Cit.*, p.256.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.257.

be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words, there must be social endosmosis. This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of respect and reverence towards fellow human beings.³⁸

History of social awakening

The struggle for freedom and equality has been continuing even in the civilized societies from ancient time. The rules of ‘struggle for existence’ and ‘survival of the fittest’ divided the society into two sections namely stronger and weaker. The fittest is the one physically strongest and mentally clever. The Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar in his work ‘Thirukkural’ put forth the truth that all men are equal even in the first century of B.C. Further, he emphasized that specialty and greatness would not be given to a person for doing a particular profession or trade according to its grade.³⁹ It reveals that the ancient Tamil society was lack of equality. Similarly in ancient Greece ‘slavery’ system was practiced by the society. However, the struggle was tame and dormant for the rest of the centuries. ‘What we must do is not to content ourselves with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there is at the base of it, a social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means 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.⁴⁰ They form a union in the sense that, to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. In this sense B.R.Ambedkar Social Workers are democrats in

³⁸ B.R.Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste, Ibid*, pp.48-50.

³⁹ Thiruvalluvar, *Thirukkural*, Saratha Pathippakam, Kural, Chennai, 2004, p. 972.

⁴⁰ Ambedkar Babasaheb, *Dr. Ambedkar in the Bombay Legislature*, with the Simon Commission and at the Round Table Conferences Vol-2, 1979, p.129.

belief and in practice, unshakable in their struggle through democratic means to achieve equality, liberty and fraternity. B.R.Ambedkar reminds us ‘What are we having this liberty for? We are having this liberty in order to reform our social system, which is full of inequality, discrimination and other things, which conflict with our fundamental rights’. B.R.Ambedkar Social Works believe ‘Political tyranny is nothing compared to the social tyranny and a reformer who defies society is a more courageous man than a politician who defies Government’.⁴¹

Revolutionary movement

French philosopher Rousseau was a Naturalist. As a protagonist of freedom he proclaimed the three terms ‘Equality, Liberty and Fraternity’ which had revolution in France in 1789. This trinity principle seems to be very simple and apparent. But it is actually complex and comprehensive in its ramifications. Though it has its own historical background new meaning and values emanate from it in new circumstances. Each part of this principle is different from the other. Yet all the three are closely related to one another. Each one is dependent on the other, and in the social context, the relevance of all the three parts is universal and perpetual. They have their own limitations, yet their implications are varied and valuable. Therefore, before knowing when and why B.R. Ambedkar had adopted the first trinity principle, it is necessary to understand its background and circumstances, which made the principle of liberty, equality and fraternity possible as a password of social change.⁴²

The Impact of Revolutionary Movements

The French Revolution had made an impact on the people of the world. It also had fostered the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity and made them popular among the people. The revolutionaries accepted these principles as the highest ideals of human life. The ideals Liberty, Equality and Fraternity carried the following means:

⁴¹ B.R.Ambedkar, *Riddles in Hinduism*, Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra, Vol-4, 1982, p.77.

⁴² D.Chandrakant, Shivakakori, *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Political Philosophy*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2004, p.49-55.

- i) The main aspect of liberty is political. Its concept is the declaration of modern political democracy.
- ii) Equality is supplementary to the political democracy. Before law all must be treated as equals. There is no discrimination in any form.
- iii) The feeling of Fraternity turns into an ideal of nationality and patriotism. The people of a country are related to each other. They being together in unity form a nation and the future of the nation depends upon the fraternal feelings they develop and nourish for themselves.⁴³

Philosopher

Man constitutes the focal point of B.R.Ambedkar's philosophy and man in the chief subject and object of his study. He developed an unfailing faith in man demonstrated fullest sympathy towards society. He declared that every man should have an opportunity to live a dignified life. According to him life without self respect is disgraceful. It is so vital to honorable life. Merely survival without culture is not worthwhile. To him it is useless for man to be satisfied with the fact that he and his society have survived. What he (the man) must consider, Is the quality of his survival. If he does that, I am sure he will cease to take pride in the mere fact of survival.

“A democratic form of Government presupposes a democratic form of a society; the formal framework of democracy is of no value and would indeed be a misfit if there was no social democracy. It may not be necessary for a democratic society to be marked by unity, by community of purpose, by loyalty to public ends and by mutuality of sympathy. But it does unmistakably involve two things. The first is an attitude of mind, and attitude of respect and equality towards their fellows. The second is a social organization free from rigid social barriers. Democracy is incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness resulting in the distinction between the privileged and the unprivileged”.⁴⁴

⁴³ O.P.Gauba, *Op,cit*, p.259..

⁴⁴ B.R.Ambedkar, *Philosophy of Hinduism, India and the pre-requisites of Communism*, Education Department, Bombay 1979, Vol-3, pp.49-52.

It is evident from this that an ideal life needs self respect, justice and equality. B.R. Ambedkar holds a dynamic view of life. According to him 'man is what his mind makes him'.¹⁴ In other words every man has mind of his own and that should be allowed to act and react without any servility. He established through his studies that the classification of man into different classes has not been profitable to human society. Hence he denounced and rejected the *chaturvarna* system of social organization of the Hindus by Manu as totally irrational, unscientific and inhuman.⁴⁵

Social Reformer

B.R. Ambedkar was the only reformer intellectual who not only saw from close quarters the pitiable social condition, poor economic position, unjust judiciary system, orthodox religious discrimination towards the untouchables, but also experienced himself the hurdles and hardships caused by caste and untouchability. As he was always a staunch supporter of freedom of thought, he became a mirror of new ideas of Indians in general and the untouchables in particular. He designed and executed the programmes to highlight the grievances of the untouchables and to restore their lost rights. He used his skill in establishing organizations, positions conducting agitations and occupying government positions.⁴⁶

His Writings

B.R. Ambedkar was an able critic and powerful advocate not to be cowed by the Hindu propagandists. He produced a type of literature which expressed the real situation and truth before people. He emphasized in his writings that the mission of man's life should be one of fighting all forms of tyranny, injustice, superstition, falsehood and tradition which are against the mankind. As a result he was a messiah of social revolution. His books became the instruments of change and revolt. It is to be noted here that he had burnt the 'Manusmriti'.¹⁶ His teachings were well-versed in constrictive approach. He provided an ideological frame work to the Dalits. It is

⁴⁵ D'Chandrakant, *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's political philosophy*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2004 p.86.

⁴⁶ Sanjay Prakash Sharma, *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Arusader of Social Justice*, RBSA Publishers, Jaipur, 2003, p.225.

evident from the above discussion that man is the most important component of society and focal point of his social and political philosophy.⁴⁷

B.R. Ambedkar began to write against caste system even as he was a research scholar in USA. In May 1916, he read paper on 'The castes in India, their Mechanism, Genesis and Development' at the Anthropology seminar sponsored by Dr. Goldon Weiser. As a against the caste Hindus he founded a weekly Newspaper *Mooch Nayak* in 1920, another Half-Monthly Newspaper called *Bashiskrit Bharat* in 1924, and a weekly magazine known as *Jana* in 1930 and he attempted to highlight the evils of caste system and demanded equal social, economic religious political rights for the downtrodden and the oppressed section of the society.⁴⁸

B.R.Ambedkar published a book entitled 'Annihilation of Caste' in 1936, He described at length the caste system and condemned the evils of the system in it. In this book, he expressed the following:

The organization of Hindu society on
The basis of four classes is harmful,
Because It is the result of a
System, wherein people are de
Moralized by not all allowing
Them equal opportunity and they
Become mentally disturbed by
Not allowing than to hold arms.

It is inferred the facts mentioned above that his writings brought out to light the just causes of the untouchables. With rare and matchless wisdom, honesty and devotion he guided the depressed classes.⁴⁹

Organizations

B.R.Ambekar prioritized a society which is a self-conscious dignified social identity, a commitment to end the oppressive social order and a hope for the

⁴⁷ B.R.Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste, Op.cit*, p.129.

⁴⁸ D.K.Mohanty, *Indian Political Tradition from to Manu to Ambedkar*, Anmol publications, New Delhi, 2001, p.413.

⁴⁹ D.R.Jatava, *Op.cit*, p.186

establishment of an equal and libertarian society, become the basic tenets of the social movement in India¹⁹. He planned to start organizations to achieve freedom for the depressed classes. His great organizing ability was clearly demonstrated by the 'Associations' founded by him. In July 1924, he started an organization in Mumbai named the 'Bahishkrit Hitkarini Saba' for the moral and material progress of the untouchables in September 1927.⁵⁰

He formed the 'Samaj Sameta Sangh' for preaching social equality among the depressed classes and the caste Hindus. He founded the Independent Labour Party of India in October 1936. In April 1942, he formed the Scheduled Castes Federation as an all India Political party. B.R.Ambedkar had dedicated his life to unite the cores of untouchables, her established organizations. The key words or catch words for these organizations were 'educate, agitate and organize' and 'be ready for social reform'. B.R. Ambekar inspired the depressed castes to fight for their human rights through these organizations. He made them to agitate.⁵¹

B.R.Ambedkar as a Social Worker

'Democracy in India is only a top dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic' yet B.R.Ambedkar as a Social Workers while conceiving 'Democracy not as a form of Government, but a form of social organization' it sees the same as a 'a form and a method of Government whereby revolutionary changes in the social life are brought about without bloodshed'. Within this framework however 'What we must do is not to content ourselves with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there is at the base of it, a social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles are not to be treated as separate items. They form a union in the sense that, to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. In this sense B.R.Ambedkar Social Workers are democrats in

⁵⁰ S.R.Bakshi (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp.120-124.

⁵¹ S'Harish. Wankhede, *The Political and the Social in the Dalit Movement Today*, Economic and Political Weekly, *Mumbai*, February, May, 9, 2008, p.54

belief and in practice, unshakable in their struggle through democratic means to achieve equality, liberty and fraternity. B.R.Ambedkar reminds us ‘What are we having this liberty for? We are having this liberty in order to reform our social system, which is full of inequality, discrimination and other things, which conflict with our fundamental rights. B.R.Ambedkar Social Workers believe ‘Political tyranny is nothing compared to the social tyranny and a reformer who defies society is a more courageous man than a politician who defies Government’.⁵²

Agitations

B.R.Ambedkar did not content with mere preaching and writing to secure justice for the untouchables. So he took to the path of fighting in the form of agitation. In December 1927, he had an agitation to establish the civic rights of untouchables to draw water from a public tank “*Chavdar Talen*” at Mahad, District Kolaba. In connection with this *Satyagraha* a conference was convened in which B.R.Ambedkar moved a resolution to burn the *Manusmriti*. The resolution was passed Accordingly B.R.Ambedkar and his followers publicly burnt *Manusmriti* on 25th December 1927.⁵³ It was a very land mark in Ambedkar’s career as well as in the social reform movement of India. B.R. Ambekar started a satgagrata to vindicate the rights of the depressed classes for offering worship at public temples. Struggles were launched by depressed class people to enter the temples at Pune, Amaravati and Nasik in 1930. He led the temple entry movement first at Nasik to establish the right of the untouchables to enter the famous. Temple of Kalaram at Nasik. The caste Hindus prevented the agitators. The satyagraha had continued for four years. However, it was withdrawn in March 1934. From 1930 to 1936 he organized various movements to uphold the rights of the depressed classes on par with the other Hindus of India. It is clear from these attempts that he had succeeded in attracting the public attention and arising an awakening in the minds of the depressed classes.⁵⁴

Government Positions

⁵² Ambedkar Babasaheb , Untouchables or the Children of India's Ghetto, Education Department Maharashtra, Bombay, Vol-5, 1989, p.325.

⁵³ D. Chandrakant Shivakakeri, *Op.cit*, pp.50-53.

⁵⁴ S.R.Bakshi (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp.125.-127.

B.R.Ambedkar entered in the public life in 1920. He devoted his life to the service of the depressed classes in India. He wanted India's freedom from the British. The Indian National Congress party was leading a mass movement to free India. Not agreeing with the principles of the Indian National Congress party B.R.Ambedkar did not join in it. However, he thought that friendly with the government he could achieve the rights of the depressed classes. So, he was not hesitant to accept the positions and posts awarded by the government 1920. B.R.Ambedkar accepted the invitation of Maharaja of Kollaur and participated in two conferences. In 1927, he became member of the Bombay legislative council by nomination.⁵⁵ He met the Simon Commission on 29 May 1928 and submitted a statement requesting the government to protect the rights of the depressed classes. He also demanded to treat them as minority and provide separate electorates for them in the elections. In 1930 he entered the arena of national politics. He wanted foreign rule to continue to safeguard the interests of the lower classes of the Indian society.⁵⁶ B.R.Ambedkar attended the Third Round Table conference convened by the British government in London as the leader of the untouchables from 1930-1932. He presented the inhuman conditions of the untouchables in India and lambasted the British government for its failure to protect them. His demand for separate electorates for the depressed classes which resulted in signing the Poona Pact. This Pact ensured a fair and equitable deal for Dalits in any future set up of India.⁵⁷

B.R.Ambedkar had served as the Labour Member of viceroy's Executive council for four years from 1942 to 1947. During his tenure he had taken unique measures to safeguard the interests of the unique *measures to safeguard the interests* working class. He became a member of the Indian constituent Assembly in 1947. The draft prepared by the drafting committee headed by him was appreciated, applauded and approved by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949. It is to be observed here that the noble ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity are enshrined in it by the

⁵⁵ D.R.Jatava, *Op.cit.*, p.121.

⁵⁶ D.Chandrakant, *Op.cit.*, p.55.

⁵⁷ Chamanlal, Dr.Ambedkar, *An Ambassador of Humanity'* Mainstream, Vol-12, April 19, 2008, p.15.

efforts of him. He also served a Law Minister in Nehru's Cabinet. He softened his attitude towards the congress and Gandhiji to build up a new India where the people of the depressed classes would really be free. Thus, B.R. Ambedkar attempted all the possible methods and strategies to awaken the untouchables towards liberty and equality.⁵⁸

Concept of State

B.R. Ambedkar held a functional theory of state, though he did not indulge in any large scale theorization on political questions. By and large, he accepted the notion of the state as legal and constitutional; creature. From a liberal perspective, he held the general view that the state is not only a source of law but that it is also a creature of law. As a constitutional lawyer, it is not surprising that he assumed that the state as a legal and constitutional system represented the principle of equality and the presupposed assumption of neutrality. But this is an important; this was the case in democratically ordered polities. But B.R. Ambedkar political theory contains confusion, if not an outright contradiction. As a liberal, he had to accept the individuals as the units of political process, but his own view was that the significant unity in any society is not the individual, but the group, whatever be its nature and basis. For instance, his advocacy of communal representation and reservation was principle a negation of the notion of the individual as the basic unit of political system.⁵⁹

Economic Equality

B.R. Ambedkar correctly grasped that "There will be outcasts as long as there are castes. Nothing can emancipate the outcast expect the destruction of caste system".⁶⁰ Economic equality is the only sure and certain means to destroy castes and outcasts. It alone makes political and social equality meaningful. Political equality by itself is an empty shell. Laski rightly reasoned that "Political equality is never real

⁵⁸ D.K. Mohanty, *Indian political Tradition from Manu to Ambedkar*, Anmol Publication New Delhi, 2004, p.417.

⁵⁹ B.R. Ambedkar, *Annihilation*, Section, 22, pp.80-83.

⁶⁰ H.J. Laski, *A Grammar of Politics*, Unwin Publishing, London, 1950, p.165.

unless it is accompanied by virtual economic equality”.⁶¹ Economic equality eliminates strife by elimination privileges and special advantages on one side and disabilities on the other. It guarantees freedom because freedom exists only in a society of equals. In a society of unequal, law supports the claims of the privileged. In a society based upon inequality, ideas of justice and freedom are invariably reflection of the vested interests. Equality must be factual and not formal.”Formal Equality of rights becomes the decorous drapery for a practical relationship of mastery and subordination.⁶² Even that apostle of individual liberty, John Stuart Mill frankly admitted that equality is one of the ends of good social arrangements and that a system of institution which does not make the scale turns in favor of equality is essentially a bad governor and a government for the few, to injury of the many.⁶³ “But equality before law without economic equality is exercise in hypocrisy. Anatole France exposed it when he quipped majestic equality of law forbids rich and poor alike to steal bread and to sleep under the bridges”. Similarly, there cannot be equality of opportunity without economic equality. Tawney pointed out that “If the rules of game give a permanent advantage to some of the players, it does not become fair merely because they are scrupulously observed by all who take part in it.”⁶⁴

B.R.Ambedkar knew the importance of economic equality. In 1937, he pointed out that the Indian National Congress lacked courage to proclaim the ideal of social and economic equality, enabling the common man to get leisure and liberty to develop him. In 1948, in the Constituent Assembly, B.R.Ambedkar noted that “there was complete absence of two things in India society, equality in social life and equality in economic life going further, he said on 26th January, 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man

⁶¹ R.H.Tawney, *Equality*, Unwin Books, Publication, New Delhi, 1971, p.111.

⁶² *Ibid*, pp.113-115.

⁶³ R.H.Tawney, *Op,cit*, p.116.

⁶⁴ G.S.Lokhande, *B.R.Ambedkar A Study in Social Democracy*, ABD Publishing, New Delhi, 1982, p.37.

one vote and on vote one value. In our social and economic life we shall continue to deny the principle of one man one value.⁶⁵

In the constituent Assembly, none was better qualified and more competent than B.R.Ambedkar to press for economic equality. It was unfortunately that he allowed himself to be lost in the rhetoric of rights. The scheme of Fundamental Rights drafted by B.R.Ambedkar has networked to the advantage of the underdogs of Indian nation of constitution has not at all abolished inequalities that existed before it has created more inequalities. The Directive principles of state policy which could have improved the lot of miserables are honored more in breach than in observance. After our decades democracy in Indian as B.R.Ambedkar thought, is only top dressing on an Indian soil.⁶⁶

B. R.Ambedkar Quest for Gender Equality

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar not only championed the cause of social justice for the downtrodden and underprivileged sections of Indian society but also worked tirelessly throughout his life to challenge the legitimacy of orthodox Hindu social order that upheld iniquitous gender relations in an institutionalized manner. His mission in life was to reconstruct Hindu society along the modern democratic ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. The contribution of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a thinker and social reformer in the emancipation of social status of women in the Hindu society.⁶⁷ They also analyzed the relevance of his ideas in the contemporary feminist discourse on gender equality under Indian social conditions. His main argument is that gender relations are artificially constructed under Hindu social order which not only moulds attitude of Hindus towards their women, but also conditions women to conform to a stereotype feminine behavior. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian Constitution may be regarded as one of greatest intellectual and social reformer of modern India for his pioneering contribution in reforming Hindu social order.⁶⁸ He not

⁶⁵ A.M.Rajasekhariah. *B.R.Ambedkar The Politics of Emancipation*, Sindhu Publication, New Delhi, 1971, p.317.

⁶⁶ Brmbawall, *The Foundations of Indian Federalism*, Asia Publishing, Bombay, 1967, pp.66-69..

⁶⁷ Dr.Baba Saheb Ambedkar: *Writings and Speeches*, Department of Education, Government of Maharashtra. 1987. Vol-3, p.104.

⁶⁸ B.R.Ambedkar, *Women and Counter Revolution*, ADC Publication, New Delhi, 2003, p.177.

only struggled throughout his life for the emancipation of social status of the underprivileged and women in the Indian society, he was one amongst the few Indian social and political thinker, who has done original thinking on the Hindu social order and the status of women within the Hindu society. Exposed to the Western ideas of humanism and rational thinking, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar was appalled at the low status of women in the Hindu society.⁶⁹ He not only worked hard at the grassroots level to raise awareness about the degraded status of women in India but also wrote extensively to counter the views on gender relations sanctioned by *Shastras* and upheld by tradition. Through his writings, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar unravels the inequality and injustice inherent in Hindu social order that perpetuates inequality and subordination of women in a systematic manner.⁷⁰ In his treatises, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar has analyzed the manner in which gender relations are artificially constructed under Hindu social order which not only moulds attitude of Hindus towards their women but also conditions women to confirm to a stereotype feminine behavior. He worked hard to challenge the iniquitous gender relations under the Hindu social order so that Hindu society could be reconstructed along the modern democratic ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity.⁷¹

. 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 which this assembly has so laboriously built up.⁷²

B.R.Ambedkar Social Revolutionary

French philosopher, Rousseau has written that man is born free but every where he is in chain, Rousseau was a naturalist. The three words of Rousseau, Equality, Liberty and Fraternity had revolutionized at France in 1789. B.R.Ambedkar was very much influenced by Rousseau three words. He followed Renssean's and ahead of Rousseau decided to bring justice based on equality. B.R.Ambedkar was not only man hates with man but keeps himself away from the shadows of these about

⁶⁹ Keer, Dhanjay, *Ibid*, p.109.

⁷⁰ Speech of *Dr.B.R.Ambedkar on 25.11.1949, in the Constituent Assembly, Debates, Vol-9, p.972.*

⁷¹ G.Vijay, *Dr. B.R.Ambedkar's Contribution for Women's Rights Variorum*, e-Research Journal, Vol.02, Issue I, August,1998, p.352.

⁷² Speech of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, *Ibid*, p.935.

traditions indicate the fearfulness of the then society. All these bad traditions are gift of social class equality and caste system.⁷³

B.R.Ambedkar was dead against that society in which not only man, hates with man but keeps himself away from the shadows of Harijans and down-trodden people. Their paths, residences, wells and temples were separate. One side had he a great desire to talk but the other side discarded them. The way of keeping relations was strange. Somewhere news were relayed by putting the papers on stones and somewhere by pasting the papers on walls; The down-trodden had not the courage, to come before or raising their eyes up or standing beside to talk with people of higher classes. To study while sitting together with students of higher classes cannot be imagined. The doors of temples like the doors of schools were not opened for them. All above had been bad traditions indicate the fear fullness of the society. All these bad traditions are gift of social class and caste systems.⁷⁴ The foregoing aspects are of paramount importance from the viewpoint of estimating B.R.Ambedkar's perception of justice and its inclusion in the Constitution. Equality, along with liberty and fraternity, constitutes a very significant aspect of the armory of his social and political thought. His unflinching stress on, and advocacy of liberty, equality and fraternity as absolutely essential for the construction of the democratic State and society and his stand on liberty, equality and fraternity remind us of the Stoics who emphasised these ideas on the basis of the construction of polity and society.⁷⁵

His absolute faith in the necessity of this socio-political and ideological trinity of liberty, equality and fraternity was apparent in the face of the havoc caused by the formidable forces of social heterogeneity and primordialism. As one who was greatly ill-treated insulted and humiliated by the negative and undemocratic aspects of the caste-ridden society of India. B.R.Ambedkar swore to remove this illiberal and retarding aspect and stood for creating a new social and political order based on equality. His perception of equality was comprehensive and progressive enough to

⁷³ *Ibid*, p.949.

⁷⁴ S.R. Bakshi(ed.), *Op.cit*, p.136.

⁷⁵ A.S. Anand, *Dr.Ambedkar and the Indian Constitution*, Asia Law House, Publication, 2009, p.27

include within its ambit all the three dimensions social, economic and political.⁷⁶ All these three aspects were equally important for paving the way for creating a democratic order. But the prevailing harsh realities of life convinced him that it would be no easy task to insist simultaneously on the economic aspect of equality as well. So he had to satisfy himself by concentrating on the socio-legal aspects of equality. How much he strove hard in getting his perception of equality crystallized and percolated into the text of the Constitution may palpably be seen in Articles 14-18 that have secured the right to equality. This right concerning equality envisages, emphasizes and stands for social and legal equality, and it is devoid of socialist implications. Notwithstanding this deficiency, the socio-legal equality sought to be secured through Articles 14-18 is of profound significance for getting an insight into B.R.Ambedkar's perception of equality.⁷⁷

In terms of Article 14, which was synthesised of the basic principles of the British and American constitutional laws, the State is explicitly forbidden from denying to any person equality before the law or equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. It is needless to emphasize the far-reaching implications of this aspect of the equality right vis-a-vis the hierarchical, caste-ridden, unequal and undemocratic society of India. Through this he sought to mitigate the illiberal and undemocratic aspects of Indian society. Democracy in polity and heterogeneity and primordially in society could hardly go together. So, this right to equality, in spite of its emphasis on the legal aspect, is of revolutionary importance from the viewpoint of mitigating the enervating affects of social heterogeneity and primordially. B.R.Ambedkar's perception of equality is to be properly assessed and understood, it is necessary to emphasize that the legal aspect of the right to equality is of very great importance in the context of Indian society where until recently individual's status was determined by his birth and not by his accomplishments.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ K.L. Bhatia, *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: Social Justice and the Indian Constitution*, SPCK Publication, 2014, p.32

⁷⁷ S.R. Bakshi(ed.), *Op.cit*, pp.137- 140.

⁷⁸ V.R.Krishnan Iyer, *Op,cit*, pp.25-30.

Article 15, prohibits the State from discriminating against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them; and that no citizen shall, on any of these grounds, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to shops, restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment; or the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats maintained out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public, in spite of this explicit constitutional embargo against any such discrimination, a State is not prevented from making special provisions for women and children or for the advancement.⁷⁹

Revolutionary Democracy Equality

Dr.B.R. Ambedkar's vision of democracy was closely related to his ideal of a "good society". He did not leave room for any ambiguity regarding the nature of this ideal. On many occasions, he stated that he envisaged a good society as one based on "liberty, equality and fraternity". Democracy, as he saw it, was both the end and the means of this ideal. It was the end because he ultimately considered democracy as coterminous with the realisation of liberty, equality and fraternity.⁸⁰ At the same time, democracy was also the means through which this idea was to be attained. Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's notion of "democratic government" went back to the fundamental idea of "government of the people, by the people and for the people". But "democracy" meant much more to him than democratic government. It was a way of life: "Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen."⁸¹

Another crucial feature of Dr.B.R. Ambedkar's conception of democracy is that it was geared to social transformation and human progress. Conservative notions of democracy, such as the idea that it is mainly a device to prevent bad people from seizing power, did not satisfy him. In one of the most inspiring definitions of the term, he defined democracy as "a form and a method of government whereby revolutionary

⁷⁹ Rajkumar (ed.), *The History and Cultural series Essays on Dalits*, Discovery Publications, New Delhi, 2003, pp.24 -30.

⁸⁰ C.A.Debates, *Ambedkar on the Constitution*, B.R.Publishing, New Delhi 1991, p.946

⁸¹ B.R.Ambedkar, *States and Minorities, Memorandum Submitted to the Constituent Assembly*, Government of Maharashtra,1979-80, Vol- I, pp.239-242.

changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed". For this to happen, it was essential to link political democracy with economic and social democracy. Indeed, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's vision of democracy was inseparable from his commitment to socialism. Sometimes he referred to this combined ideal as "social democracy", in a much wider sense than that in which the term is understood today. The neglect of economic democracy was, in his view, one of the chief causes of "the failure of democracy in Western Europe". As he put it: "The second wrong ideology that has vitiated parliamentary democracy is the failure to realize that political democracy cannot succeed where there is no social or economic democracy Social and economic democracy are the tissues and the fibre of a political democracy. ⁸² The tougher the tissue and the fibre, the greater the strength of the body. Democracy is another name for equality. Parliamentary democracy developed a passion for liberty. It never made a nodding acquaintance with equality. It failed to realize the significance of equality and did not even endeavour to strike a balance between liberty and equality, with the result that liberty swallowed equality and has made democracy a name and a farce." In this and other respects, his analysis of the fate of democracy in Western Europe largely applies to the Indian situation today. ⁸³

⁸² Sanjay Prakash, *Ambedkar A Crusader of Social Justice*, RBSA Publishers Jaipur, 2003, p.227

⁸³ B .R.Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste*, pp.169-175.