



DR. BHIMRAO R AMBEDKAR AND NELSON R MANDELA-THE SIMILARITIES AND CONTRAST IN THE MOVEMENT OF TWO ICONS OF 20TH CENTURY FOUGHT FOR SUPPRESSED

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ABSTRACT

Caste is inner and hidden discrimination whereas race is outer and open discrimination. Inner and hidden discrimination is more dangerous than the open one. Discrimination of gender is the experience of all families. Every person has concern for and together all people can take a firm stand against the cases of gender discrimination happens in any part of the country and the world. But, caste discrimination is the problem of particular groups of people and it can't be the experience of all. Therefore, only the victimized and marginal groups of people come together to fight against caste discrimination happens. People belonging to non SC/ST do not standby the sufferer. On the contrary, many educated stupid believe in caste system.

Starting from M.K. Gandhi to every Indian, we, the Indians have open heartedly supported the mission of Dr.Nelson Mandela. Because we are blacks and we knew that Mandela fights for equality so we supported. But, the same higher class black feels proud and happy to exploit other backward class blacks in their own country. Blacks are everywhere throughout the world therefore, almost all the nations representative have supported the mission of Mandela. Caste-system exists in India and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was one man army who fought the battle against established.

In this study, researcher has focused in detailed on all aspects of these two icons of 20th Century from their birth till death. Unfortunately caste discrimination is more and becoming bad to worst day by day from bottom to the top and from village to town. In recent time there is no leader equivalent to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Nelson Mandela who can fight for the rights of suppressed. After 69 years of Independence of India; Dalits and Adivashies are living the life of hell which is very sad, upsetting and disturbing to every one of us. Racial discrimination still exists across the globe. In short, one group of human is giving inhuman treat to other groups of people.



Human history is full of co-incidences. But the latest coincidence is of historical significance inasmuch as Nelson Mandela passed away on December 6, 2013, and on the same day 57 years ago December 6, 1956 Dr. Ambedkar breathed his last.

Perhaps no other two towering personalities of the 20th century had such common mission, common hardship, common struggle, and common legacy for future generations as Mandela and Dr Ambedkar. The lives of both symbolized the relentless and fierce battle against injustice and discrimination as these two icons: the former's struggle was for the abolition of the discrimination originating from colour, i.e. apartheid, and the latter's was for the annihilation of caste.

Since childhood Mandela personally experienced the horrors of apartheid. In his autobiography, Long Walk to Freedom, he says, "I had no epiphany, no singular revelation, no moment of truth, but a steady accumulation of a thousand slights, a thousand indignities, and a thousand un-remembered moments produced in me anger, rebelliousness, and a desire to fight the system that imprisoned my people." This precisely happened in the case of Dr Ambedkar. Born an untouchable, his childhood was full of most bitter incidents that made him a rebellion to fight against the caste system and the horrors of untouchability.

Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC) that was fighting against the apartheid, and in the course of time, due to his bright academic qualifications, and more importantly his rebellious nature, he became its natural and the tallest leader. Dr Ambedkar himself formed several social and political organizations with a single aim of abolition of caste and untouchability and establishing the Indian society on the foundation of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Since Mandela challenged the entire system of apartheid with its all infirmities and started the underground activities, in 1964, he was given the life imprisonment, and spent a quarter of century in prison. But his commitment and fearlessness remained unshaken, as he did not deviate from his mission of ending the apartheid even for a fraction of moment. Since Dr Ambedkar did not have such movement or organisation before he arose on the horizon and he had started from the scratch. From 1920, the year in which he established the BahishkritHitakariniSabha (Organisation for the Welfare of the Outcastes) till his Mahaparinirvana in 1956, Dr Ambedkar spent every moment of his life for the annihilation of the caste and the emancipation of the untouchables.

The most significant fact was that after becoming the first ever non-white president of South Africa, not a thought of discrimination, let alone revenge, against the Whites touched his mind. The same was the case with Dr Ambedkar. When he was made the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution, he thought of nation-building, without



allowing discrimination against anyone. An ex-untouchable was thus, destined to become the architect of the constitution.

Thus, the lives of Nelson Mandela and Dr Ambedkar, the two icons of the 20th century shall be the source of inspirations to all future generations who will want to establish a just and humane social order based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Key Words: Dr. Bhimrao R Ambedkar, Nelson R Mandela, Similarities, Contrast, Movement, Two Icons, 20th Century, Fought, Suppressed

Childhood:

Mandela's origin name is Rolihlahla Mandela born on 18th July 1918. Madiba Tata is his nickname. Dr. Ambedkar's origin name is Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar born on 14th April 1891. Babasaheb was his nickname and people use to call him with honour as Babasaheb. Babasaheb means the greatest and incomparable personality. All the digits in their birth year are same. India is hot country and the Dalits were not allowed to drink from the local well. Dalits were not allowed to use public places and transports. At an early age, Ambedkar was recognized as being highly intelligent and academically gifted. Because of this, he was chosen to be given the opportunity of receiving higher education, paid for by his sponsor, a local king Shahu Maharaj. He studied at two prestigious universities, Columbia in New York and London School of Economics.

Alma mater and Educational Contribution:

Mandela did his Law Graduation by correspondence. Dr. Ambedkar was also a Law Graduate. Dr. Ambedkar was great academician, research scholar, economist, socialist, social reformer, politician, and an architect of Indian Constitution. Mandela studied in University of Fort Hare, UOL External Programme, University of South Africa and University of Witwatersrand. Dr. Ambedkar studied at University of Mumbai, Dr. Ambedkar was awarded a PhD for a thesis which he eventually published in the book form as "The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India". His first book published titled "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development. After his doctorate Dr. Ambedkar went to London for studying law at London School of Economics. In 1923, he completed a thesis on "The Problem of the Rupee" and University of London has awarded him a D.Sc. on completion of his law studies. On his way back to India, Dr. Ambedkar spent three months in Germany, for further studies in Economics at the University of Bonn. Columbia University had formally awarded him a Ph.D. on June 8, 1927. He was appointed as a Principal of the Government Law College. He had more than 50,000 books in his personal library. Government of Maharashtra has published the collection of Dr. Ambedkar's Writings and Speeches in different 21 Volumes in Marathi, Hindi and English language including the



books “The Annihilation of Caste and Who were the Shudras? Dr. Ambedkar also had played a major role in formation of RBI. He wrote three scholarly books on Economics namely Administration and Finance of the East India Company, The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India and The Problem of Rupees: Its Origin and its Solution.

Major Organizations:

Mandela was member of ANC (African National Congress) and (SACP) South African Communist Party. Dr. Ambedkar had formed Independent Labour Party, Scheduled Castes Federation, Republican Party of India and The Buddhist Society of India.

Married Life:

Mandela had got married three times. His first marriage was with Evelyn Ntoko Mase in 1944 and divorced took place in 1957 as his wife put on him the charges of adultery. In 1958, he got marry with Winnie Madikizela and divorced took place in 1996 as his wife put on him the charges of adultery. In 1998 on his 80th Birthday Party Celebration he got marry with Graca Machel and Graca was with him till 2013; his death. From his three wives; he had six children. Dr. Ambedkar got marry at an early stage of life with Ramabai. Rambai died after a long illness. It had been her long-standing wish to go to a pilgrimage to Pandharpur, but Ambedkar had refused to let her go, telling her that he would create a new Pandharpur for her instead of Hinduism’s Pandharpur which treated them as untouchables. After the death of Ramabai he got marry with Sharda Kabir born as a caste Brahmin and later on Sharda Kabir became Savita Ambedkar.

Religion:

Mandela religion is Methodist and Dr. Ambedkar is born Hindu and conversion to Buddhism.

Social Movements:

Mandela’s notable work is Long Walk to Freedom and Dr. Ambedkar’s notable work is Mahad Satyagarh, Nashik Kalaram Temple Entry Satyagrah, and he is known as an architect of Indian Democratic Constitution. Mandela was known for Anti-Apartheid Movement and Dr. Ambedkar was known for Anti Dalit Movement. Both the great leaders were revolutionary, activist, politician, social reformer, philanthropist and lawyer by occupation.

Prison Life:

Mandela started the movement and he was thrown in jail. In different jails altogether he had spent twenty seven years the precious time of his life. He made up his mind to study law



correspondently from some London University and he did it from jail. Dr. Ambedkar was the highest studied and the most knowledgeable personality of his time. He was a great academician and well know lawyer and research scholar. Dr. Ambedkar started his movement of Dalits freedom after achieving the full knowledge which requires marching some movement. Therefore, orthodox people's views were not taking stand in front of Dr. Ambedkar. The government and the system couldn't dare to send him to jail.

Political Life:

Mandela fled to Johannesburg via Queenstown worked as a night watchman at Crown Mines then he was introduced to the realtor and ANC activist Walter Sisulu who offered him a job as an articled clerk at law firm. He became member of ANC and SACP. Mandela stated, "Force is he only language the imperialists can hear, and no country became free without some sort of violence". In year 1994, general election took place in South Africa and Dr. Mandela became the first President of South Africa because of Majority of Blacks. In India from the year 1950 general election started. Dr. Ambedkar was defeated in many elections by the system of caste and Minority votes of Dalits. Then he was nominated for Raja Sabha and he became the first Law and Labour Cabinet Minister of the Independent India. Before that Dr. Ambedkar had delivered a speech to a rally at Yeola, Nashik on 13th October 1935

Influence:

Mandela was influenced by Marxism and Dr. Ambedkar was influenced by Lord Buddha, Saint Kabir and Mahatma Jyotirao Phule.

Economical Status:

Mandela's \$4.1 million estate was left to his widow. Dr. Ambedkar had not made any estate for his family and relatives. Dr. Ambedkar had established Peoples Education Society and that trust estate only was left.

Honours and Awards Received:

Mandela received Sakharov Prize (1988), Bharat Ratna (1990), Nobel Peace Prize (1993), Order of Lenin, Presidential Medal of Freedom. Mandela was called as "founding father of democracy", "a secular saint" and "the father of the nation" Dr. Ambedkar was not only the "founding father of democracy" but also he is an "Architect of Indian Constitution". Then also Indians have not honored him by calling him as "the father of nation". He was posthumously awarded India's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna in 1990. This injustice had happened with Dr. Ambedkar due to his caste.



Discrimination in India due to Caste:

Socio-Eco Status and Responsible Factors for the pathetic Condition of Dalits and Adivashies in India

Educated people are more responsible for retain and maintain of caste:

The educated fools can't accept easily a person from SC/ST community as their boss. It takes much of time for them to digest the reality. After few days pass they accept the reality outwardly but in their mind there is a sense of hatred towards. They don't want the progress of backward from their bottom of heart. Therefore, intensity of caste is increasing day by day instead it is reducing. The caste discrimination is much more poisonous and dangerous than racial and gender discrimination. India is still a developing country from centuries it is because of caste. To make India a developed country, there is a need of removal of caste. Caste removal not only on paper but also it should be removed from the mind and heart of the upper class people. The removal of caste doesn't mean to withdraw the Government facilities, concession, scholarships and reservation allotted to the suppressed. The close and evil minded people have misinterpreted the concept. According to them, removal of caste means removal of Government facilities of the weaker sections of the society.

Every upper class person's points finger at the reservation given to backward classes in India without understanding its other side. Many of them knew and understand the need of reservation then also they speak against it. They take against stand just to create force against it to stop it.

At one side, these people are playing all non-sense activity to exploit backward classes and on the other side they will show that they have concern and compassion for these groups. They sincerely wish to do something for the up-lifting of the lives of behind and back people. So they form NGO'S to take money out from Governments pocket. The many formed NGO'S some percent money is spend to make a show that they are doing something great but in reality NGO's are making money on the name of SC/ST. This controversial kind of situation is made just to grab the funds on the name of backward class development.

Need of caste on paper and removal of caste from the mind:

Caste is needed to be typed on paper for allotting facilities to the people those who are behind and back from centuries. In recent time, upper-class people are trying to get the certificate of backward class to avail the facilities which seems very funny on their part. Many have made fake certificates and have enrolled in various jobs. When it came in notice, Government formed the district-wise caste validity committee to control/stop the malpractices in making caste certificates. To understand the class of people which they belong there is a need to

mention the caste. The people who made a space for caste in their mind and developed hatred for the lower caste groups needed to be washed out once and forever. This definitely will help India to be a developed country as the progress of each and every individual is a progress of country. Believing and following caste is taking India behind and back therefore, India is developing country from seven decades of independence. Removal of colour is not possible at any cost but if decided one can remove the racial discrimination from his mind and heart. In India, some people are to the opinion that there should be a law of equality and on basis of the caste reservation shouldn't be given. These people should see the other side of caste because of it government can do something for them. Only removal of caste from paper won't be the solution to the problem. These people should remove the caste from mind and automatically it will disappear from everywhere. There is a group of people in India, without understanding the reality they make big statements against social reservation. They have economical survey kind of ideas in their mind. These people need to understand those who are socially out they are behind and back in so many things. The economically condition of SC/ST is bad. Any criteria government makes all SC/ST are fitting into that. The saddest thing is all Economical Survey related SC/ST is faulty and beneficiary is that who is economical condition is sound, stable and settled. The names of the family included in BPL list are the families from the upper class. Therefore, Government shouldn't go for any other alternative for giving reservation to the people. Socially backwards are back in all the areas of life and till time they come at par with the upper class there is a need to be given them reservation. Reservation has no time limit given anywhere. It has given different names in different countries. In U.S., U.K., and South Africa people call reservation as an "affirmative action".

Caste is the root and corruption is the top problem Indian facing:

In village and town and from India to abroad everywhere people are carrying their caste. In work place, in government as well as in private organizations SC/ST employees are treated very badly by insulting, humiliating, and by writing their appraisals by giving lower grade. People make their survival difficult in that organization. They even try to demoralize and weaken their confidence by directly or indirectly commenting on them. The end number of cases one can get in all nearby police stations, at the office of SC/ST Commission and several cases one can get on google search.

Developed country changed with time and Majority Indians are not ready to accept the change:

Developed countries have changed with the time whereas Indian mentality is not ready to change so we are still a developing nation and India will be a developing country till date the practice of believing and following caste is there. The Barrack Obama the black has become the President of White Country because of acceptance of change and belief in talent and not



in race. Colour and caste doesn't lies in the talent of the person. Colour and caste shouldn't be the criteria of doing the assessment of the person. The developed country citizens believe in calibre, capacity, and capability and confidence level of the person as they are much and more interested in the progress of their country whereas Indians are much and more interested in the progress of their family, friends, relatives and people belonging their caste, community and religion.

Without reservation or affirmative action:

If government doesn't want to continue the reservation then there is a need to make separate electorate for Dalits and Adivashies for uplifting their life standard which will help them to live the life of human. After 69 years of independence India, the condition of SC/ST is becoming bad to worst. Dr. Ambedkar criticized the Indian National Congress and its leader Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi. Due to Ambedkar's prominence and popular support amongst then so called untouchable community, he was invited to attend the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1932.^[25] Gandhi fiercely opposed a separate electorate for untouchables, saying he feared that such an arrangement would split the Hindu community into two groups.

In 1932, when the British had agreed with Ambedkar and announced a Communal Award of a separate electorate, Gandhi protested by fasting while imprisoned in the Yerwada Central Jail of Poona. The fast provoked huge civil unrest across India and orthodox Hindu leaders, Congress politicians and activists such as Madan Mohan Malaviya and Palwankar Baloo organised joint meetings with Ambedkar and his supporters at Yerwada. Fearing a communal reprisal and genocidal acts against untouchables, Ambedkar was coerced into agreeing with Gandhi. This agreement, which saw Gandhi end his fast and Ambedkar drop his demand for a separate electorate, was called the Poona Pact. Instead, a certain number of seats were reserved specifically for untouchables.

Poona Pact took place between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar with some ray of hope of equality. If condition is likely to remain same in future then there will be a definite need of separate electorate to be formed. Let them live their life the way they like. If given an opportunity SC/ST will do much better progress separately than non-acceptance togetherness.

Caste problem is more poisonous and dangerous than race:

Race is seen whereas caste is unseen. It is very serious and dangerous than any other problem India is facing. Very funny is no politician from upper class is working openly for the removal of caste as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar did. Upper class people want to remove the caste on paper as it is linked with reservation. It means their opposition is not for the caste but it is



only for the reservation given to them. They want to retain and maintain the caste as their survival is caste.

A Group of Indians have got the freedom and backwards are still fighting for the freedom:

Majority of people from the upper caste are much interested in showing their caste and asking others their caste. Upper class and backward classes are having typical surnames from the surname they can easily make out the person's caste. India has got the freedom from last 69 years but this freedom is only for particular group of people and the backward classes are still tied up by the Hindu customs and traditions. They are not free to live their life as the way they like. Upper class people look at them through the lens of prejudice and accordingly they built up or break up the relations with them.

From many Centuries backwards are living the lives of hell:

The orthodox Hindus use to spread the urine of animals to make the place pure the backwards have occupied. The doors of education were close for them forever. Dr. Ambedkar was made to sit outside the classroom. The touch of backward classes were treated as sin and the seeding of untouchables developed at a huge scale and in many corners of India it is in practice as on today. In nutshell, animals were better treated than backward classes especially dalits and adivashies. Backward classes have become the victim of many Hindu rituals, trend, custom and tradition and from many centuries backwards are living the lives of hell. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar tried to pure the mind of upper class groups for more than four decades of time but at the end time Dr. Ambedkar realized that these people are much reluctant, orthodox and are not going to change. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar made a decision to do the conversion of him and his followers into Buddhism and on 14th October 1956 with lots of his follower he did it at Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Conversion to Buddhism: Dr. Ambedkar had tried all the alternative options to change the mind set of orthodox Hindus and he realized that it bringing change into them is not possible. Then he made up his mind to leave Hindu religion and he found the necessity of doing conversion into Buddhism. Hindu religion was the main hurdle in the progress and the base of discrimination was also the religion. Mandela's movement was racial and their religion was no where responsible for their suffering therefore, in living the same religion Dr. Mandela had brought many changes in the life of Blacks through the power of majority black votes.

Preamble of Freedom Charter and Indian Constitution:



“We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know. That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.”

“WE THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizen: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation; IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty sixth day of November, 1949 do, HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.”

Voting rights of Blacks and Backwards:

Backwards in India have got on paper freedom, equality and voting rights earlier, compare to the Blacks in South Africa. Backward Dalits and Adivashies couldn't make changes in their life through politics it is because they are in Minority whereas Blacks are in majority in South Africa. Through their voting rights they have brought many blacks in power and they easily could elect Mandela as the President of South Africa. Majority and united Blacks have brought many changes in their living standard and their life. Dalits and Adivashies are in Minority and also united. The political party Republican Party of India by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is divided into many groups even though they all have a common goal to achieve. Due to Minority, they can't elect their people to form their government and can't bring tremendous change in their life standard and life. Therefore, the condition of Dalit leaders is dependent on Majority Group Party as like the common groups of Dalits and Adivashies whereas they are dependent on upper class people for their livelihood. Blacks came in main streamline of the progress due to the voting rights and their majority but in India Dalits votes are scattered in groups and Minority can't come in power even though they are eligible and talented one. It is need of hour for Dalits and Adivashies to unite for their livelihood and the better future of their children.

Extraordinary and extreme talented people were not accepted by the system of discrimination. Almost all their energy, time and talent had gone wasted in proving them as a human. Even today, after 70 years of Independence Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's follower experience the caste discrimination and the followers of Mandela experience the racial discrimination. It means that the voice of justice is always smothered. The system wants a slave class for assisting them in various forms. Therefore, Blacks and Backwards are not provided equal opportunities. On the contrary, the system uses to prove that how Mandela was Anti-Nation (White) and Dr. Ambedkar was Anti-Hindu? Not a single act of them is



anti-nation and anti-religion. They were simply fighting for their rights of equality and freedom.

Mandela and Dr. Ambedkar's Remarkable Contribution for their country and the world:

Dr. Ambedkar didn't live for self and his family whereas you can see Mandela lived for self and his family. Mandela enjoyed his life the way he wanted. Mandela had got 95 years big life span whereas Dr. Ambedkar lived only for 65 years. Mandela's movement was supported by many leaders of the countries including India but for the movement of Dr. Ambedkar there was a strong opposition from home itself. The problem of racial discrimination was easily understood by the people across the globe but outside India people did not know to the problem of caste discrimination as caste is there only in India. Both the great leaders have contributed for their nation building and for the development of the world. Undoubtedly, Dr. Ambedkar's contribution on all the aspects of life is much higher than any other great leader of his time. Dr. Ambedkar was the most intellectual personality of the world for last three hundred years. Columbia University has established a big statue of Dr. Ambedkar at its entry gate and below to it; it is written "Symbol of Knowledge". There are several movies, plays and other works have been based on the life and thought of Dr. Ambedkar and Mandela in a popular culture.

Mahaparinirwan (Death)

Both the great leaders have breathed last on 6th December as per Indian time and that is also early morning around 3.00am. Mandela died on 6th December 2013 at Johannesburg, South Africa; he lived for 95 years. Dr. Ambedkar died on 6th December 1956 at Delhi, India; he lived for 65 years.

Through the struggle of these two icons one thing becomes very clear that Blacks and Backwards have to spend their whole life for proving human. Undoubtedly, movements of these great personalities have brought many positive changes in the life of Blacks and Backwards but still there is a need to work on this area to improve their life and life-standard. In nearer future, there is nothing wrong in expecting the practice of equality across the globe. There is much and many more similarities between these two great leaders of modern world from their birth to the last breathe of life. Therefore, it will be more worth and appropriate calling Mandela as African Dr. Ambedkar than calling him as African Gandhi.

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