

Dr. Ambedkar: The Micro-Macro Dichotomy of Basic Rights

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ABSTRACT

Ambedkar throughout his life struggled for the basic rights of his community people who were humiliated, neglected and tortured at the hands of the upper caste Hindus. The idea of basic rights at micro level took birth in Ambedkar when he found them missing in the life of every marginalized section of the society and especially the untouchables and women. At micro level he discussed and debated for those basic rights without which the existence of life had no meaning. But when he talked about the notion of rights at macro level, his understanding revolved around those opportunities, equivalent to high caste Hindus, which were inevitable for the economic, social and political growth of the community. The dichotomy of basic rights at micro and macro level which Ambedkar advocated was his categorization of the types of rights which were both moral; right to live, right to basic amenities, right to education, and secondly prudential; right to political participation, right to legal remedy, right against humiliation and exploitation and right to adopt any other religion. Ambedkar analyzed the crux of the problem; the caste system and graded inequality. These he termed the structures of Hindu social system which were very much visible and administered presuming just and ethical. The denial of basic rights to the people of untouchable community became the core element of Ambedkar's research of human race. Keeping the requirement of these rights, Ambedkar first demanded them at micro level and after the conscious construction among the untouchables; his attention diverted to macro level. The dichotomy between micro and macro, Ambedkar comprehended, was the transformation of the idea of basic rights from its understanding to its realization. In other words at micro level he talked about establishing the foundation of societal just for the untouchables and when he explained his idea of macro level he yielded their expansion and ground deepening.

Key Words : Ambedkar, Basic rights, Micro, Macro, Untouchables, Upper caste

INTRODUCTION

Ambedkar, throughout his life, propounded the idea of basic rights. For him these basic rights were the basic needs of every individual. But when he found these basic rights missing in the life of many marginalized groups, he struggled for their realization. In its realization, he came across a variety of rights which were inevitable for the survival of life. For him these were micro and macro level rights. In the present paper, Ambedkar's idea of basic right is discussed at micro-macro level. At micro level he discussed and debated for those basic rights without which the existence of life had no meaning. But when he talked about the notion of rights at macro level, his understanding

revolved around those opportunities, equivalent to high caste Hindus, which were inevitable for the economic, social and political growth of the community. In his scheme of basic rights, he included all the marginalized groups, women and minorities and fought and did work for their upliftment.

Ambedkar's idea of basic rights :

In the process of providing constitutional protection to the downtrodden community, he framed the laws in such a manner that transformed their basic needs into basic rights. Being an untouchable, he was highly concerned for the plights of the then millions of untouchables. The framing of the constitution by Ambedkar was fully engrossed by his intention to anticipate protection for the untouchables from the atrocities of the upper caste Hindus. Ambedkar focused on fundamental requirements of the people. In his approach he not only thought of the Dalits and the disadvantaged groups rather in his policy framing mechanism, he included the entire nation as a whole. This is very much evident from the fact that the inclusion of basic rights were not only enshrined for the Dalits but for every individual of the country. He, while giving his last speech in the Constituent Assembly, had said:

“I came into the Constituent Assembly with no greater aspiration than to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes. I had not the remotest idea that I would be called upon to undertake more responsible functions. I was therefore greatly surprised when the Assembly elected me to the Drafting Committee. I was more than surprised when the Drafting Committee elected me to be its Chairman. There were in the Drafting Committee men bigger, better and more competent than myself such as my friend Sir AlladiKrishnasWamiAyyar. I am grateful to the Constituent Assembly and the Drafting Committee for reposing in me so much trust and confidence and to have chosen me as their instrument and given me this opportunity of serving the country.”¹

Through these words Ambedkar had expressed that though his intention to join the Constituent Assembly was to bring the benefits for his community men but his responsibility as the Chairman of the drafting Committee did not allow him to restrict himself only for the Dalits.

The chapter on basic rights was named as Fundamental Rights in the constitution. In this chapter Ambedkar incorporated variety of rights which were required for every individual to live a better and dignified life. These fundamental rights, Ambedkar stressed, consisted of at micro and macro level.

The notion of rights at Micro Level:

As it is mentioned above that Ambedkar believed in the institution of basic rights and for the same, he fought educationally, ideologically and politically. In his understanding, these rights are the basic needs which is necessary and at the same time required by every individual to live in a social environment. He opined that in absence of them an individual loses his identity. Therefore, he put more stress on their realization.

Ambedkar was born in Mahad community which was considered an untouchable community. Since his childhood he had experienced humiliation and exploitation at the hands of the upper caste Hindus. Exploitation in the form of social boycott of the lower castes by the upper castes was very normal. The untouchables, the lowest rank of the social hierarchy, were the most sufferer community during the reign of the Peshwas. These Peshwas were Brahmin and made the life of untouchables dejected. These untouchables under the Peshwas had to struggle for their social status. They had

1. Constituent Assembly in India Debates, Vol. XI, 25th November, 1949

the most disgracing position under the Peshwa rule.² Untouchables were a socially degraded and economically exploited class. Describing the plight of the untouchables of that period, R. V. Russell says,

“In the Maratha country a Mahar, one of the Untouchables, might not spit on the road lest a pure-caste Hindu should be polluted by touching it with his foot, but had to carry an earthen pot, hung from his neck, in which to spit. Further, he had to drag a thorny branch with him to wipe out his footprints and to lie at a distance prostrate on the ground if a Brahmin passed by, so that his foul shadow might not defile the holy Brahmin.”³

In such a social environment Ambedkar was brought up. In this way he also witnessed and at the same time experienced the same humiliation for himself and for his community since his childhood. He experienced the denial of fundamental requirements like drawing of water from the same pond, lake or well used by the Brahmins, services of the barber, washer man, school teachers, officials, merchants, petty shop owners, temple entry, decent jobs. Be it school or workplace or even after gaining the seat of significant capacity in the Parliament of India, he faced humiliation on every walk of life.

As mentioned above, the community, to which he belonged, was the most humiliated one that even the touch or shadow of an untouchable was considered impious. Such kind of social evils and their practice in daily life made Ambedkar against them. The infusion of this thought compelled Ambedkar to fight for the basic rights of his community people. This led to the beginning of a radical Ambedkar who first focused on attaining education. For him, through education, the untouchables could change their fate. He was of the belief that education would widen their thought processing and would also enable them to fight for their basic rights. Ambedkar stressed that these are the basic rights at micro level, the attainment of which would become the root of the salvation of the marginalized communities.

At this micro level he focused on the fulfillment of those basic requirements which were denied to the untouchables and forced them to be dependent on the upper caste. In this series he laid the foundation of protests and movements to gain self-respect and equal human status in the society. He made the untouchables conscious about their identity equivalent to other human beings and inculcated in them the attitude of dissent against all sorts of injustice and oppressions. This, he viewed, would bring the status of his community people to the mainstream level.

At this stage he, through the protests and movements, demanded the elementary things to develop the consciousness of being human which was snatched from them since time immemorial. Ambedkar was trying his level best in providing untouchables their Hindu status. His active participation in the Bombay Ganapati festival, temple satyagraha at Amraoti, Poona and Nasik, a performance of a wedding in *vedic* ritual style, are all depicting his early initiatives for anticipating recognition to untouchables in Hindu fold.⁴ Not only this, movements like Mahad Satyagraha of 1927, wherein he asserted to draw lake water by the untouchables; in Nasik in 1930 at Kalaram temple he demanded to open the gates of the temple for the untouchables, he asked education for them, he asked proper wages for them, in defense of one's basic rights, he burnt Manusmriti, that denied the untouchables their fundamental dues. These were the demands which he evolved from

2. Zelliott, Eleanor, *Ambedkar's World: The Making of Babasaheb and the Dalit Movement*, Navayana, New Delhi, 2013, pg. 23

3. Quoted in *Caste and Class in India* by G. S. Ghurye, Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 1957, pg. 11

4. Zelliott, Eleanor, *Ambedkar's World: The making of Babasaheb and the Dalit movement, The Religious Conversion Movement 1936-56*, Navayana, New Delhi, 2013, pg. 144

the daily life requirements of the untouchables who were debarred from the social fabric of the society. They were not treated at par with the other three high castes of the Hindu fold and at the same time advantages and opportunities were snatched from them. Ambedkar declared this as dual exploitation and held the same responsible for making the life of millions of untouchables hell.

His tireless efforts had no implication on the caste Hindus. After struggling five long years for untouchables to enter the Kalaram Temple in Nasik, he analysed that it is useless to faith the caste Hindus. He concluded that for the caste Hindus their enclosed social structure was their only strategy to control the untouchables. This understanding compelled him to think something new and rational so that he could defend it at later stage. It cannot be said that he failed in his social movements; Mahad Satyagraha, 1927 and Kalaram Temple entry movement from 1930-35, rather helped Ambedkar in making aware the untouchables of their self-consciousness but the output they generated was not very impressive. Ambedkar who was determined to reform the Hindu social structure was now in a different mood. After applying different strategies to mould it and left with no output he decided to come out from its shackles.

Though Ambedkar did not get concrete success but these incidents brought turning point in his life as he started asserting that all his efforts of providing equal social status to the untouchables in caste ridden society were not the appropriate channels through which he could carry with their miseries to an end. This made him to realise that whatever he was doing for his people is not enough. He, rather, came to the conclusion that entry to the temple is not his only motto. He started analysing that this would not give them their due share and something else was needed to end their misfortune. The same feeling, he expressed in one of his letters written to Bhaurao⁵ on 3rd March 1934. He wrote:

“...It is very kind of you to have asked me for my views on the propriety of the D.C.’s⁶ launching upon a Satyagraha at the Kala Ram Temple in Nasik on the coming Ram Navami day... I did not launch the temple entry movement because I wanted the D.C. to become worshippers of idols which they were prevented from worshipping or because I believed that temple entry would make them equal members in and an integral part of the Hindu society. So far as this case is concerned, I would advise the D.C. to insist upon a complete overhauling of Hindu society and Hindu theology before they consent to become an integral part of Hindu society. I started temple entry Satyagraha only because I felt that that was the best way of energising the D.C. and making them conscious of their position. As I believed I have achieved that purpose, I have no more use temple entry. I want the D.C. to concentrate their energy and resources on politics and education and I hope that they will realise the importance of both.”⁷

The above-mentioned letter intelligibly makes the point that Ambedkar here took a turn. The way he thought initially to make the untouchables the integral part of Hindu social structure where he believed they would get reasonable treatment found unproductive. The Kala Ram temple entry satyagraha was the appropriate feedback to this. By this time Ambedkar had understood that the real freedom for the untouchables could be gained only through education and political power. These two weapons would help them attaining their due share because these two areas were

5. BhauraoKrishnarao Gaikwad was a lieutenant of Dr. Ambedkar. He was the Chief Organizer of Nasik Kala Ram Temple Entry Satyagraha. He took active part in all the social struggles launched by Dr. Ambedkar. He was popularly known as Dadasaheb.
6. DC stands for Depressed Classes. The Scheduled Castes were called Depressed Classes then.
7. Ajant, Surendra, *Letters of Ambedkar*, BheemPatrika Publications, Jalandhar, 1993, pg. 89

dominated by the upper caste Hindus.

Not only this, he challenged religious dogmas and at the same time held them responsible for the deteriorated condition of the low caste people. It was not that he was against the element of religion rather he saw religion not just as a spiritual salvation of individual souls but as a social doctrine for establishing the righteous relation between man and man. For him philosophy was nothing but a standard to measure the conduct of man.⁸ He also realized that ignoring religion was to ignore a live wire but at the same time, he emphasized that religion must not be a multitude of commands and prohibitions because such a religion tends to deprive the moral life of freedom.⁹

The same analysis he derived from the texts of Hindu religion and criticized them on the ground that they had trained few groups of people to administer the affairs of society in an arbitrary manner.¹⁰ The impetuous training led these groups to suppress the rest of the society which consisted majority of untouchables. This elite group was consisted of Brahmins, the first and the upper most caste of the Chaturvarnaya system, who had the command on the religious texts. As these texts had the societal acceptance in the form of sacred and divine entity, the scope of questioning them was non-existing. Therefore, he stressed on gaining education. He was of the firm view that in absence of education on the part of the untouchables, the upper caste had monopolized every field of social administration. He rather advised his community people to attain education and break the chains of societal odds.

Consequently, the way the upper caste Hindus treated the untouchables, turned Ambedkar against Hinduism in general and Brahmanism in particular. Against this background he envisaged equality, liberty and fraternity as his basic tenets of life and they became the fundamental approach of his philosophical insight.

Notion of rights at Macro Level:

For him the establishment of institution of untouchability in its ugliest form was the root cause of the sufferings of the marginalized communities. He further added that untouchability was the by-product of caste system. He understood the notion of untouchability in a unique manner. His way of dealing with the issues of untouchability was not like other Dalit and non-Dalit social reformers. For him it was not just a social ill but a deliberate planning to keep the Dalits under the control of the upper caste Hindus. He termed it as graded inequality. In his deliberation he was far ahead in analyzing the crux of the problem unlike his political and social predecessors. Ambedkar through his social movements attacked the old traditional Hindu social order based on untouchability, socio-economic inequality, casteism, unscientific and irrational religious beliefs and customary servitude. Against all these social odds he stood for a new social order based on equality, liberty, fraternity, justice, scientific and rational religious and moral principles.¹¹

He provided logic against the pertinent issue of graded inequality and demanded the disintegration of the untouchables from the Hindu social hierarchy. This was a massive step for the untouchable

8. Mishra, S. N., *Facets of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar*, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, 2004, pg. 32

9. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pg. 24

10. Ambedkar here talks about the *Manusmriti* that governed the Hindu social system post Rig-Vedic period. By few trained groups he meant the upper caste Hindus who never considered the untouchables a part of their religion.

11. Kshirsagar, R.K., *Dalit Movement in India and its Leaders*, M.D. Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1994, pg. 5

community that for the very first time an untouchable dared to ask for separation from the so-called Hindu religion. This demand was not for any individual rather in this Ambedkar included all the disadvantaged communities. This was his shift from micro level movement for raising demands for basic rights for the untouchables to the macro level. At this juncture he did not ask for the inclusion of the untouchables in the Hindu fold and provide them the basic rights which the upper caste Hindus were enjoying rather his changed spectrum was now in favour of total exclusion and the construction of a new and separate Dalit identity. He questioned that, when the caste Hindus are not allowing untouchables to worship their deities, when they are denied basic services, when they are not permitted to fetch water from natural water tanks, when they are forced to live miserable life outside the society in ghettos, when marriages are not fixed in between untouchables and caste Hindus and when there is no collective dining, so on what ground they must be placed under Hindu religion. They are as whole dissimilar with the caste Hindus. He further said that socially and culturally there is no match in them and therefore he demanded minority status for the untouchables.

His broad understanding of Hindu social order and his analyzing the institutionalization of the caste system compelled him to demand for minority status. The idea of minority status thus became the supreme motto of his life. Behind this deliberation, Ambedkar gave entire credit to Kabir, the saint, John Dewey, his mentor at Columbia University and the Buddha, his spiritual and ideological master. Ambedkar was fortunate enough to gain education from foreign universities. There he experienced a new life full of liberty and human dignity. John Dewey's pragmatic philosophy made him a critical analyst towards concrete problems. It was because of Dewey that Ambedkar learnt the method to enquire the root cause of the sufferings and to resolve them.¹² Ambedkar also pursued Dewey's rational behind the significance of education and it was because of this, he repeatedly counselled his fellow brothers the importance of attaining it. As stated before, he felt, education would make them aware of their humiliation at the hands of caste Hindus and would enable them to come out from centuries old bondage.

Dewey's notion of democracy had a deep impact on Ambedkar. For Dewey, men live in a community by virtue of things have in common or in other words for community to survive like-minded people need to participate in community activities. Taking note of this Ambedkar applied the same phenomenon of democracy to counter caste system. He argued that democracy to flourish needs common participation of all its members on equal footings. He found absence of this element in caste system which was based on graded inequality. Following the path of Dewey's pragmatism, he wanted to reform the Hindu social structure. Dewey's analysis of why individuals must transit from custom based morality to reason-based morality, in his book *Ethics* which he wrote in 1908, impressed Ambedkar and the same thought he used in his essay, 'Annihilation of Caste', in which he argued that to make society progress, the old customary laws and rituals are needed to be abandoned and, in its place, a casteless and classless society must be established on the foundation of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Ambedkar was very clear that country's independence is not the only and final solution to the problems of the untouchables, it was rather the democratic ideals to reach into the roots of the society and thereby extending the basis rights to the downtrodden. At this juncture he tried to bring about the foundational changes in the then existing social and political system predominated in India by converting the non-democratic nature of the social and political system into more actual and radical democratic one. He advocated the rights like equality, liberty and justice to be granted to all

12. Lokhande, G.S. *Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: A study in social democracy*, chapter-1, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1977, pg. 10.

the masses of India irrespective of their caste, religion and birth. Through this, he wanted to expand the essence of democracy throughout the country. His movements for the same basic rights were his weapons with the help of which he visualised a deepened democratic India.

He had utmost clarity about his mission without any doubt. He had all his future plans in his mind which he desired to implement for the benefits of his fellow men. It was the era when these downtrodden had no leader to show them the light of salvation. After the entry of Ambedkar in the mainstream struggle of independence for untouchables not only from the alien rule but also from their own countrymen, it was considered among the untouchables that Ambedkar could spearhead a 'crusade' for them.¹³ In such a milieu the position of Ambedkar was considered as a champion of the rights of the untouchables.

To transform his dreams into reality he applied variety of strategies. But simultaneously it was also observed that throughout his political life Ambedkar could not stick to any one method or strategy to provide a meaningful life to the untouchables. From 1942-1956 his life experienced drastic ideological shifts. These ideological changes evolved due to the political and social circumstances in the national life. 1942 was the year when he drafted the constitution of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation in which he desired to have a separate political identity for his community people. In 1945 the same desire he expressed through one of his masterpieces, *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables?* In July 1947, a month ago the freedom of the nation, from asserting separate political identity parallel to the Congress and the Muslim League he shifted towards the Constituent Assembly and became its chief architect, in same year after India gained independence, he was given Law Ministry in Nehru's cabinet on the advice of Gandhi to Nehru and Patel, to which Ambedkar could not refuse. Few years later in January 1950, Ambedkar in a General Public Meeting of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation held in Bombay, requested the Dalits to cooperate with the Congress and advised them to think for the nation first than their individual interests. In 1951 he broke the alliance with the Congress on the issue of latter's not supporting the Hindu Code Bill. And in 1952 he contested on Congress ticket from Bombay and lost the first Lok Sabha elections.¹⁴

Why did Ambedkar allow these many changes to let happen in his life? What made him to tolerate all these? He allowed and tolerated all these because of his image of the messiah of the millions of the downtrodden who attached hope from him for their salvation. He had already shown them the image of being a distinct people. This shift to macro level from the micro level of identity construction bound him to join hands with the Congress. Independence of the nation had brought a changed political scenario. The British before which he placed his demands was no longer remained a political force and the whole political paradigm was now in the hands of the Congress. With the transfer of power from an alien rule to the natives of India, mostly the upper caste Hindus, Ambedkar left with no other option but to join the Congress. Moreover, in the provincial elections of 1946, Ambedkar's All India Scheduled Castes Federation could only win 2 out of 51 seats it contested.

This proved the political failure of Ambedkar who could not win the hearts of the Indian masses. In other words, Indians could not conceive it as future political platform that could represent India as a whole. Therefore, in the last phase of the colonial rule Ambedkar faced political challenges

13. Rajasekhariah, A.M., *B.R. Ambedkar: The Politics of Emancipation*, chapter-1, Sindhu Publications Private Ltd. Bombay, 1971, pg. 13

14. Gore, M.S., *The Social Context of an Ideology: Ambedkar's Political and Social Thoughts*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1993, pg. 177-195

and these challenges forced him to accept Congress's proposal. Ambedkar by this time concluded that the weakness of his organization as a representative of his fellowmen and the transfer of political powers in the hands of the Congress resulted in bargaining with his principles. By this time, he had understood that in future India if untouchables must survive freely, they ought to attain political power.

At the entry level to the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar got another chance, though from the Congress, to solve the issues of his community men which he found unaffordable to lose. He entered in the same with the hope and expectation that national integration of India is possible in future and his adjustment with the caste Hindus would benefit the Scheduled Castes. He was highly enthusiastic to do work in the Assembly to bring maximum advantages he could achieve by his deliberations.

After India's independence he was appointed the first Law Minister of the nation. But as a minister, he had differences with Nehru and Patel. At many occasions Ambedkar proved himself as an opposite faction for Nehru in the cabinet. He could not remain too long with Nehru. The Congress-Ambedkar coalition which came into picture in 1947 ended in September 1951 on the issue of the Hindu Code Bill. Ambedkar resigned from his post on the ground of no support from Nehru and his government for the adoption of the Hindu Code Bill. The attachment Ambedkar had with the HCB was so intense that he was almost uncompromised on its dilution. He considered the implementation of the HCB a social revolution in the life of millions of women. Ambedkar advocated the key portion for women in his belief system. He wanted women to play role in political sphere. He wanted them to get equal rights to that of men in areas like property and education. He asserted that inequality must take the form of equality and social justice not only in words but in spirit too. With this intention he wanted to get the HCB passed in the Parliament. But due to Nehru's reluctance, the Bill could not witness the dawn and died unsung and unwept.¹⁵ Ambedkar's goal to deliver a quality life after thorough analysis of rights at macro level received a halt due to his resignation on the broad issue of the HCB.

The purpose with which he entered the Constituent Assembly and later to the Parliament of India, did not get much success. After the resignation, he once again was considered parallel to the Congress. Tricks were used to defame him. Campaigning was done by Nehru himself during the elections to prove Ambedkar wrong and concurrently presented Babu Jagjivan Ram as the national face of untouchables.

After thorough deliberation on the issues of the Dalits as a whole on one side and the proper implementation of the constitution of India on the other side, Ambedkar in between tried to place his scheme of rights at macro level. His main aim was to see his people at the mainstream level. This he visualized as a casteless and classless social structure. For its realization, he understood, it was very significant that the untouchables should be placed at political positions. The theory of rights at macro level which he promulgated was in actually his purpose of shifting the attention of the downtrodden sections of the society from identity construction to nation building. He was of the firm view that untouchables, as natives of the land, had too the fullest right to render their contribution in the making of the nation. For this, he asserted, their presence in the politics and administrative sectors was inevitable. Therefore, his ideological fight with Gandhi on the issue of separate electorate and untouchables as minority group outside the fold of the Hindu religion could be evaluated as his idea of rights at macro level. In this direction, the role and position of the political parties he formed

15. Letter of Resignation, Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 14 Part-3, pg. 1323

to give a concrete shape to his ideas, is of much importance. At last, when he analysed that politically he was not gaining what he perceived, he diverted towards the realm of religion. Ambedkar, then, took shelter in Buddhism as a new home for the untouchables where he estimated they would be treated on egalitarian grounds. This was once again his strategy to provide a larger platform to the untouchables and enable them to enjoy a dignified life as in Buddhism he found no evidences of discrimination. Ambedkar's open warning not to die as a Hindu in 1935 culminated into reality in 1956 when he embraced Buddhism. At this juncture Ambedkar used his right at macro level where he was not just struggling for his identity construction but where he was found establishing the foundation of a new India.

His inclination towards Buddhism was established due to his strong attachment with John Dewey. When he, at later stage, wrote the Buddha and His Dhamma, in which he urged to choose principles and not rules and rituals of any religion, he actually referred Dewey's *Ethics* which talked about principles as tools used to bring justice. Dewey's doctrine of principle-based religion helped Ambedkar to understand Buddhism and the same he envisaged to liberate untouchables.¹⁶

Conclusion:

Ambedkar was of firm view and he strongly admitted that untouchables are distinct from the upper caste Hindus and this was his ideological shift from his earlier stand in which he kept untouchables under its domain. This can be hypothetically correct because he had presented his arguments in favour of this. With this argument he established a unique identity of untouchables and urged them to acquire political power as a weapon.

He was of the firm view that without political power the untouchables could not fulfil their aspirations of equal treatment. So, he focused his attention on adult franchise i.e., political freedom. He had a deep faith in fundamental human rights, in equal rights of men and women, in the dignity of individual, in social and economic justice, in promotion of social progress and better standards of life with peace and security in spheres of human life. His study of social facts enriched his political philosophy. It led him to engage in practical politics and at the same time he applied ethical and moral traditions to it. He himself was a highly educated untouchable and was of the firm view that education opens the doors of enlightenment. These protest movements in which he took the issue of temple entry as a mechanism were used by Ambedkar to enlighten the untouchables whose minds were filled with the strong notion that their birth in this caste means exploitation, sacrifices, no education, no share in political power, slavery, no economic development and offering services to the other three castes. They had admitted and agreed that there is no way out of it. They were the strong believers of this because they had seen their forefathers doing utmost things for the upper caste Hindus as the rule of the society instructed by the *Manusmriti*. Ambedkar understood this whole phenomenon and then he derived his own conclusion in the form of a mantra, *Educate, Organise and Agitate*.¹⁷ The journey from temple entry to acquiring education and seizing political power makes it clear that innovative ideas both at micro and macro level were taking shape in

16. *The Like-mindedness of Dewey and Ambedkar*; <https://www.forwardpress.in/.../john-dewey-pragmatism-communication-and-bhimrao>.

17. These were the three golden words spoken by Dr. Ambedkar at the end of his speech at All India Depressed Classes Conference held in Nagpur in 1942. He emphasized on these three words because he was of the firm view that it is only through education the untouchables can attain their social status, by organize he meant the unity among the untouchables so that they can face challenges altogether and by agitate he believed the intellectual attacks rather than physical one.

Ambedkar. The surrounding atmosphere compelled Ambedkar to think from a different angle which could not take birth before him.

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