

Chapter 6

Gandhiji and Ambedkar on the Question of Caste based Economic life

6.1. Introduction

Gandhiji is called the 'Father of the Indian Nation' and Ambedkar is defined as the 'Modern Man' in India. But their attitude towards the question of caste based economic life was totally opposite to each other. The difference of their attitudes relating to the question of caste based economic life was quite fundamental. Gandhiji profoundly believed in the caste based economic activities as he believed in the myth of the Caste Institution of the so-called Brahmanical Hindu society. So, it was quite natural and normal to him to stress on the thoughts and ideas of the Caste System. He stressed on the professions of forefathers in the directions of heredity from generation to generation. Naturally, he advised the people to follow up the professions based on heredity of their forefathers. He forbade the people to take any other occupation independently beyond the norms of the Caste System. He became ultimately a great upholder of the so-called Caste System of the Brahmanical Hindu traditions and Manu's (an ancient law maker) thought-provoking socio-religious, political, economical and administrative norms and principles, which were not based on humanitarian grounds. Gandhiji said that the object of the Varna system (caste system) was to prevent competition, class struggle and class war. He clearly noted the fact that he believed in the caste system because it fixed the duties and occupations of persons. Caste determined the occupation of a man before he is born. There is no liberty to choose his occupation of a person in the constitution of the Caste Institution. Even he profoundly believed in the hereditary birth profession of a person that was determined by their forefathers 'hereditary birth' occupation. Naturally, the occupation of a person was determined by heredity¹. Therefore, it can be pointed out that Gandhiji was very much influenced by the ordinances of the Caste Institution. He also believed in the division of castes and caste based economic professions and activities of different varnas (castes). According to him, each caste (Varna) has its own occupations. According to the occupational tradition of the Caste System, Gandhiji believed in the superior occupational position of the Brahmans, Kshatriyas

and Vaishyas than the Sudras in the Hindu society. But he was not puzzled or astonished by the forcefully dictated inhuman occupational professions of the Sudras prescribed in the so-called Hindu Shastras. He ultimately changed his attitude radically towards the miseries, distress, and occupational questions of the ill-fated Sudras in course of time for political compulsions. He responded to the call of humanity to save the life of the inborn unprivileged sections of the society. He also came forward to uplift the condition of the Harijans in India in the later span of his life. The ideology of trusteeship of Gandhiji did not fulfill his cherish dream in the context of economic relation between the haves and have not. His role was nothing but a repetition of the age-old Brahmanical Hindu traditions and the ordinances made by Manu in the Caste Institution in the spheres of caste based economic life of the fourfold varnas. Gandhiji played a very vital role to protect the forefather's hereditary qualification rather than educational qualification of a person in the spheres of caste based economic life. In fact, Gandhiji profoundly believed in the Caste System. He treated it as the part and parcel of the Hindu religion. He advocated the Caste System as a divine arrangement in respect of punishment and reward for their previous deeds and activities. To him, Caste is a kind of ethical stratification, which is a projection of ethical status of human beings based on their deeds done in their previous life. He explained that the divisions of Varna were based on birth². Gandhiji believed in the Varnashrama Dharma and the Caste System. He had a living faith in God and the facts and events that were described in the Vedic literatures in the context of the caste based economic life. Even he was very much convinced by the Indian so called cultural, social and religious traditional heritage in the context of the caste based economic life. Therefore, the status and position of the Brahmins in the four-fold caste division in the Hindu society is unquestionable in matter of employment, education, occupation and all sorts of mastery over the other caste groups in the so-called Hindu society. The Brahmins are none but the intellectual groups in the Hindu society. They made themselves the most privileged class in the society in matter of socio-religious, political, economic and other spheres of life. Even they made themselves the real source of power behind the thrown by the Shastras of the Brahmanical Hindu religion. The occupations of the Brahmins were mainly confined to the reading and teaching of the Vedas, play the role of a priest to perform the sacrificial rites and duties in socio-religious perspective. Normally, they could not earn money or wealth to establish their economic position. However, they could earn

money only in time emergency to lead their livelihood. Gandhiji strongly emphasized the talent and capacity of the Brahmins that made them the architect and pioneer of the Caste Institution in the Brahmanical Hindu society. Only the Brahmins could change their professions or occupations in their distressed conditions. After all, they were the mastermind behind the caste based hereditary economic life. But Gandhiji did not try to alter the concept of the hereditary occupations or professions of different caste divisions rather he stressed on class-caste coordination of different economic divisions. He propagated the theory of caste coordination and discarded the theory of class struggle. In fact, Gandhiji liked to say that hereditary occupations of different caste groups should be followed up from generation to generation. That is why; he advocated the pre-defined permanent hereditary occupations of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras in the context socio-economic activities to lead their livelihood. Actually, Gandhiji did not distract himself from the so-called pernicious concept of the Caste Institution. As a result of it, the Kshatriyas Vaishyas and Sudras were compelled to join their age-old traditional and hereditary professions to earn money or wealth to run their livelihood. The Kshatriyas adopted the professions of warriors to protect the country and its subjects. They played a vital role to rule the country. Their economic activities were mainly confined within the ruling and protecting scenario of the country. Therefore, Gandhiji did not hesitate to say that every caste group has its own functions or occupations that were based on birth-heredity since the beginning for the welfare of the country and the Kshatriyas even could not discard the ordinance of the Caste Institution. To Gandhiji, it was completely good for the benefit and welfare of the people. But the lawful hereditary economic professions of a Vaishya caste were cultivating, cattle breeding, trading and lending money at interest. Gandhiji pointed out that the Vaishyas played a vital role in cultivating the land assigned to them beyond their common hereditary trade and commerce. Their main economic activities were to produce or cultivate the land to fulfill the necessity of life. They also tilled the land and reared cattle. But everything should be done in connection the policy of trusteeship. Whereas the Sudras were forced to obtain his livelihood by serving the higher-castes and if necessary by practicing mechanical arts. They were advised to serve their superior three caste groups. Otherwise, they were severely given punishment by the so-called norms of the Caste Institution. They were forced to become the menial labours of the upper three castes, i. e., Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. In fact, Gandhiji did not oppose the

caste line of Manu. He accepted it blindly due to implement the essence of it for the livelihood of different castes. He did not come forward to bring radical change in the context of the caste based economic activities of the four fold divisions of Varnas or castes. Gandhiji wrote an article on 'Varna Vayavastha' in Gujarati where he clearly mentioned '...What Varna system enjoins is that a Sudra will not make learning a way of earning a living. Nor will a Kshatriya adopt service as a way of earning a living. Similarly, a Brahmin may learn the art of war or trade. But he must not make them a way of earning his living. On the contrary a Vaishya may acquire learning or may cultivate the art of war. But he must not make them a way of earning his living'³. But Ambedkar vehemently opposed to the theory of forefather's hereditary birth occupational criteria for choosing any professions for any varnas. He clearly pointed out that a person should obtain a job if he would deserve according to the nature of that job. So he fought against the inhuman and unjustified hereditary birth criteria for obtaining a job. He identified various criteria like, educational qualification, efficiency in work and expertise knowledge etc. in the occupational fields for obtaining any kind of jobs. He raised his voice against the caste based economic professions or occupations. He vehemently opposed to the caste based occupational divisions of varnas. But he profoundly believed in the philosophy of liberal thoughts and ideas to open up the occupational sectors to all irrespective of their caste, class, sex, religion etc. He mainly believed in the slogan of 'career open to talent' in respect of the social, economic, cultural, religious, political activities, administrative works or any kind of professions⁴. That is why; Ambedkar expressed his opinions, views and grievances very seriously through his famous writings on "Annihilation of the Caste System" to annihilate permanently the so-called inhuman Caste Institution. He urged for social democracy before political democracy. He also believed in the parliamentary democracy. Even he welcomed the dynamic concept of industrialization to uplift the ill-fated economic conditions of the toiling masses in India. He played a vital role to protect the interest of the workers, peasants, women, untouchables and the Depressed Classes of India through the constitutional safeguards. His role for establishing the concept of 'Social Justice' and 'Human Rights' was completely based on humanitarian approach in the world history. But it was none other but Ambedkar who truly and solely fought against the evil-base of the Caste System. His attitude towards caste and its annihilation was based on the principle of humanity, equality, liberty, fraternity in the context of political, economic

and social democracy. He was in favour of modernization, industrialization and urbanization, which, he found, were indispensable for the overall growth of the nation⁵. Besides, as the first law minister in independent India he always tried to alleviate the lot of those sociologically and economically exploited. Therefore, the glowing effects of the Caste Institution can be seen in the face behind the mask of the Orthodox Hindus in the Indian society. Ambedkar indeed played a vital role in establishing the concept of 'Social Justice' and 'Human Rights' among the 'Depressed Classes'. Even the labour welfare measures and the concept of the empowerment of women introduced by Ambedkar in the true sense of the terms heralded an epoch-making event in the history of India.

6.2. Conceptual frame work of Gandhian Economic Philosophy

Gandhian economic philosophy was entirely based on the principles of trusteeship, idolization of Charka (the spinning wheel), manual work, opposition to machinery of the modern civilization etc. His economic philosophy was based on the principles of 'Trusteeship' and the ideology of 'Ramraj'. Gandhiji said that economics and ethics were not two separate entities. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation were immoral and therefore sinful⁶. Trusteeship was the only principle to maintain status-quo in the society between the landlords and peasants, capitalists and poor and haves and haves not. Therefore, it can be said that Gandhian theory of trusteeship was no makeshift, certainly no camouflage. It had the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. In fact, the idea of trusteeship of Gandhiji was integrally related to the concept of non-possession. Non-possession and equality for him pre-supposed a change of heart, a change of attitude. Besides, he stressed on traditionalism, naturalism, manual work, handicraft, no big industry and trusteeship of wealth to achieve the ideal of Ramraj. Apart from these, he said that 'Truth is God'. He then coined the word 'Ramrajya' to describe the kingdom of God on the earth, i.e., 'the sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority'. He used the word 'Swaraj' to mean 'self-rule and self-restraint'. According to Gandhiji, 'Swaraj was synonymous with the concept of 'Ramraj'. He wanted that the perfect democracy in which inequalities based on possession and non-possession, colour, race or creed or sex would vanish from his Ramrajya. In it, the state had the obligation of realizing the greatest good of all rather than the greatest good of the greatest number. The real

administrative structure of the concept of Ramraj was Panchayat Raj. The vision of Gandhiji was to make decentralization of power to the local Panchayat of the villages. He did not approve of the proletarian dictatorship of the Communists and the parliamentary democracy. He was completely against modernization, urbanization and industrialization⁷ and by the development and progress of which the 'Depressed Classes' could improve their lot at a large. Instead, Gandhiji advocated the call of nature, which ultimately compelled the toiling masses of India to remain in the same distressed condition. He urged for 'Sarvodaya'. But the state of 'Sarvodaya' was a state of moral anarchism. He said that the poor should not be jealous of the rich because this discrimination was mainly due to their own destiny. He said that the poor, workers and peasants would not to proceed for revolution against the ruling trustees but only compromise for reforms⁸. He considered the divine right of the trustees and rulers as permanent and it was the duty of the ruled not to hate the rulers. These types of socio-political and economic thoughts of Gandhiji practically complicated the emancipation process of the 'Depressed Classes' and the 'Harijans' in India.

The fundamental concept of Gandhian economic, social, political, and religious philosophy were based on different ideologies as like 'Ahimsa' (Non-Violence), 'Satyagraha' (Truthfulness), 'Varnashrama Dharma', 'Caste System', 'Trusteeship and Ramraj', 'Socialism', 'Metaphysical Idealism and Impersonal Truth', 'Idolization of Charka' and after all 'Sarvodaya'. But Gandhiji propagated the mechanism of the Caste System and Varnashrama Dharma of the Hindu society in context of the different Varna's economic activities. Even he believed in the theory of Manusmriti, Gita and different Vedic literatures relating to the issue of Caste based economic life of different Varnas or Castes. The principle of Ahimsa and Satyagraha was basically the core concept of the Gandhian economy on which trusteeship between the haves and haves not had been made in course of time. But his economic thoughts were completely based on ethics. He did not differentiate between economics and ethics. His main plan was to implement the ethical Indian cultural and spiritual heritage that was based on religion into his economic philosophy. He pointed out that his economic theory would only can help to imbibe good virtues of life of an individual who will preserve the mantle of the society. He also noted that the total well-being of man could never be wrought by bringing about a change in the material conditions of his

life alone. Only the universal love, trusteeship etc. formed the basis of the foundation of the Gandhian economic theory. His economic thought was all embracing. His economic thoughts cover all the problems that plague our social life. The teaching of the Vaishnava philosophers and other great saints of different religions had stirred the mind set up of Gandhiji. The work of Ruskin, viz. 'Unto This Last' left its deep impressive mark in Gandhi's mind on this issue. Therefore, Gandhiji clearly mentioned in his autobiography that he derived the following ideas from this book of Ruskin; "that the good of the individual is contained in the good of all; that a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work; that a life of labour, i. e. that life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living."⁹ Apart from these ideas of Ruskin, Gandhiji adopted Tolstoy's "theory of bread-labour". According to this theory, no man was free from the obligation of body-labour for the production of the elementary necessities of life. This was a law, which should apply to intellectual workers as well. They too were not to be exempted from its operation¹⁰. Gandhiji pointed out about 'economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore, sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral'. Therefore, it can be said that the entire Gandhian economics was based on ethical or moral values. Even he implemented the political weapon of non-violence in the international field of economics. The introduction of non-violence in international trade and commerce means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. That is why, Gandhian economic philosophy was completely different from that of Marshall, Marx or Keynes. Gandhian economic philosophy highlighted class co-ordination whereas Marx stressed on class struggle. According to Marx, bloody revolution perhaps the only modus operandi of solving the problem of economic inequality. But Gandhiji expressed his views on this issue in a different way. He noted on this issue very clearly that the economics, which disregard moral and sentimental considerations, are like waxworks that being life-like still lack of the living flesh. Even these new fangled economic laws have broken down in practice at every critical movement. Therefore, nations or individuals who accept them as guiding maxims must perish. For 'that economics is untrue which ignores or disgraces moral values'¹¹. Gandhiji did not deny the importance of material development in anyway. According to him, economic progress means material advancement without

limit and by real progress means moral progress. He said that “true economics stands for social justice and moral values”¹². That is why; a society must follow a norm of life where mere material well-being is not the only motivating force. He did not like an economics that enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak and spell death, is a false and dismal science. But true economics works for social justice and promotes the good of all equally, including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life¹³. Gandhiji derived his ethico-economic philosophy of trusteeship and inheritance from the deep feeling of spirituality and divinity of man. According to his version, everything belonged to God and was from God. Therefore, God as a whole would assign everything for the people, not for a particular individual. Even the theory of trusteeship and thorough equality made by him to make fruitful his economic philosophy. Gandhiji pointed out that everybody must have equal opportunity in life. He always said about the equal distribution of national wealth. Not only that but also he pointed out that man is born equal. Therefore, he has a right to equal opportunity. However, men of more intellect generally earn more than the others as everybody do not possess the same capacity or talent. Gandhiji advised to expense the excess earnings of an intellect for the well-being of the state or its subjects, just as the income of all earnings of the father go to the common family fund. Therefore, the people of strong economic background should play a vital role for the welfare of the state only as trustees. To him, everybody should enjoy as per their acute demand to fulfill the necessities of life, otherwise excessive earnings of a people would create socio-economic problems in the society. In fact, Gandhiji wanted to say that nobody should enjoy more than his necessity and advised to become trustees for the betterment of the society. If a person has weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. The entire social order has to be reconstructed if this ideal practically came into being¹⁴. Therefore, this type of sincere approach identified Gandhiji as a true socialist as he believed in the universal ownership of the instruments of production. No one should suffer from want of food and clothing. Everyone should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet and the common people would control the means of production of the elementary necessities of life to establish the universal ideal of socialism. But they should not be treated as a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others¹⁵. Gandhiji advocated man’s freedom of thought that ranks superior in the valuation

scale than his bread alone. He said, "My socialism means 'even unto this last'. His modified socialism based upon the unique philosophical ideas of trusteeship and Panchayat Raj. He established viable alternative to industrialization through the gradual progress of village agriculture and its industries. The motto of which is to establish the concept of Ram Rajya and try to make arrangement to provide a square meal a day to the masses without snatching the personal liberty of an individual. He also pointed out that one could not reach truth by untruthfulness. Only truthful conduct alone can reach truth"¹⁶. Gandhiji said, "True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates mammon-worship, and enable the strong amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equality including the weakest, and it is indispensable for decent life"¹⁷ Gandhiji said, "The political and economic organization of the state shall be based on principles of social justice and economic freedom. While this organization shall conduce to the satisfaction of the national requirements of every member of society, material satisfaction shall not be its sole objective. It shall aim at healthy living and the moral and intellectual development of the individual. To this end to secure social justice, the state shall endeavour to promote small scale production carried on by individual or cooperative effort for the equal benefit of all concerned. All large scale collective production shall be eventually brought under collective ownership and control, and in this behalf the state shall begin by nationalizing heavy transport, shipping, mining and the heavy industries. The textile industry shall be progressively decentralized"¹⁸. Gandhiji pointed out about the state industries that "In all state-owned and state-managed enterprises, the workers shall be represented in the management through their elected representatives and shall have an equal share in it with the representatives of the Government"¹⁹. Gandhiji said, "I am not an economist, but India may become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be an utterly ridiculous proposition and perhaves the best proof that it cannot be true is that England is one of the largest importers in the world."²⁰ His economic programme was completely based upon the ideal of self-sufficiency. Man was the ultimate consideration according to his economic philosophy. Gandhiji did never compromise ethical principles with economic enlistment. He said that spiritual progress should be

done first and last and no economic progress can violate this principle. He even did not sharply differentiate between economics and ethics. But his Khadar economics was completely based upon ethics. Ethics directs one to discuss truth and falsity and to act without attachment in order to achieve good. It is the science of ideals. It formulates laws for both the society and the individual. It is universal. "Another feature of the moral law is that it is eternal and immutable."²¹ "The highest morality is universal"²² "No individual and no nation can ever violate the moral law with impunity."²³ "No action which is not voluntary can be called moral"²⁴. Truth is the highest ideal in Gandhian social philosophy. Gandhiji said that "There should be truth in thought, truth in speech and truth in action."²⁵ Thus, truth should be practiced in all walks of life-social, economic, political and other fields.

But the theory of trusteeship was the most controversial economic philosophy of Gandhiji. He was deadly against the theory of capitalism. His target was to use their genius as managers of industries. However, he was very much softening toward the capitalist class. His non-violent means were all pervasive including the economic field. Therefore, Gandhiji pointed out that "In reality the toiler is the owner of what he produced. If the toilers intelligently combine, they will become an irresistible power. That is how I do not see the necessity of class conflict. If I thought it inevitable I shall not hesitate to preach it and teach it."²⁶ Even Gandhiji replied to a question raised at the Round Table Conference in England and explained the mechanism how to bring about in practice the concept of trusteeship. He said, "Not merely by verbal persuasion, I will concentrate on means. Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false, but I believe myself to be a revolutionary – a non-violent revolutionary. My means are non-cooperation. No person can amass wealth without the cooperation, willing or forced, of the people concerned."²⁷ Everybody doubted and criticized the possibility of Gandhian trusteeship. Gandhiji did a fair trial on this matter in his lifetime. None but only Jamna Lal Bajaj came somewhere near to his ideal. He was against accumulation of wealth by violence but he was also against all mad races after wealth. He was very much alert about the dangers of state capitalism. That is why; he prescribed decentralization of industries. His ideal was equitable distribution if not equal distribution. To him, labour is the master of the means of production and never a slave of it. He said that capital is the servant of labour and not its master. He encouraged the labourers to be united for a

non-violent struggle. He liked a stateless society but this stage has to be achieved through non-violent revolution as anything secured through violence, according to Gandhiji, is bound to fail in the end. In fact, Gandhiji's proposals for the solutions of the problems of social, economic and political arenas were the same, those based upon the principles of cooperation, spiritual evolution, liberty, synthesis etc. and ultimately leading to God realization and the establishment of kingdom of God on earth. Carl Heath explained Gandhiji in his book, namely 'Apostle of Life and Truth Force' as ...the type of the civilized and humanized man. According to Pearelal-ji, Mahatma Gandhi summed up his trusteeship idea in the following formula:

Firstly; Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one, it gives no quarter to capitalism but gives the present owing class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption.

Secondly; it does not recognize any right of private ownership of property except in as much as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.

Thirdly; it does not exclude legislative regulation of ownership and use of wealth.

Fourthly; thus under state-regulated trusteeship, an individual will not be free to hold on disregard of the interest of society.

Fifthly; just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that could be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum income should be reasonable, equitable, and variable from time to time, so much so that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference.

Sixthly; under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not personal whim or greed.

Even Gandhiji confessed straightway that Ruskin's book 'Unto This Last' greatly marked a turning point in his life. He made three decisions from this book, such as; the individual uplift was laid down in the welfare of all. Equal rights deemed necessary to lead the livelihood for all. The value of works either an advocate or a hair-cutters are same. The lives of the labourers are the ideal life as because labour is given the utmost importance in the world. Prof. J.C. Johari pointed out that 'Sarvodaya, literary meaning 'the uplift of all' is the most appropriate name of

Gandhian Socialism. It is a principle of a new philosophical, social, ethical, economic and political order whose aim, in the words of Gandhiji's spiritual disciple, Vinoba Bhave, is 'that all may be happy.' He also pointed out that 'Sarvodaya pleads for villagisation, decentralization and gifts as those of labour (Shramdan), of land (Bhoodan), of wealth (Sampathidan), and of big shares in village property (Gramdan).' Sampurananda pointed out in his book, 'Indian Socialism' that 'It (Sarvodaya) is the name chosen by Mahatmaji for what he considered to be the goal of all effort in the field of public work. It means the Udaya (upliftment) of all, udaya standing not only for material prosperity but for spiritual good.' Sarvodaya means the all round development of every individual. Its aim is the establishment of a society in which every individual, religion, language and literature is to get unhindered opportunity. Prof. V.P. Verma said, If the bhoodan and gramdan are technics of Egrarian revolution based on moral force, sampathidan is a significant path in the transformation of capitalism into the sarvodaya society. It (Sarvodaya) wants to replace party strife, jealousies and competition by sacred law of cooperative mutuality and dominant altruism. Gandhiji advocated to the decentralization of industries and that of all the economic functions including production, consumption and distribution. This ideal can be realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. Everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet²⁸. The basic ideas of Gandhiji in economics lays stressed on minimizing the wants rather than maximizing them. His main approach was to oppose too many desires and advocate only the minimum desires. It was basically against the mode of much production. Indian philosophy established the norms of man's life for spiritual evolution and not for physical satisfaction. He developed an economic theory that was based on Indian spiritualism. In fact, Gandhiji did not want economic progress at the cost of spiritual values. He opposed to mechanization. But he realized the importance of small machines necessary for everyday life. According to him, the production of these machines should be in public sector. In fact; Gandhian ideas have been propagated, or put forward as specific, viz., Khadi, village industries, etc. He noted the causes of economic struggle as exploitation of labourers by capitalists, of the villages by the cities, of agriculture and handicrafts by the mechanized industries, and of man by machines. This economic explanation is very similar to that of Marx, but the solution offered by Gandhiji is diametrically opposite. He sought to resolve the conflict

through a process of harmonization of the interests of the exploited and exploiting class. So long as the owner of capital does not abuse his ownership rights to increase his own prosperity, and so long as the owner, acting as a trustee of the social interest, returns the fruits of social endeavour back to the society, the two classes can live in harmony, and work for each other's prosperity. This is the solution for bringing about economic justice by leveling the inequalities of income, raise and maintain the standard of living of the economically weak working force of the society, and create conditions for full employment²⁹.

Gandhiji said, "I work my own spinning wheel everyday as a religious exercise. But that does not mean that I disapprove of modern machines. The condition, which, I would make, however, is that industry should be distributed throughout country, and not concentrated in large industrial cities, which I regard as evil. A few such cities may be unavoidable evils, but we should do our best to decentralize industry."³⁰ But the core concepts of the Gandhian economic thought were based on self-regulation, trusteeship, mass participation and self-reliance. He pointed out that every individual should regulate and restrain the demands of his self-interest without seeking gains for the greater interest of the society as a whole. The concept of trusteeship can be expressed in the following words, so long as the owner of capital does not abuse his ownership rights to increase his own prosperity by exploiting other classes, and so long as the owner acting as a trustee of the social interest, returns the fruits of social endeavour back to the society, all classes can live in harmony, and work for each other's prosperity. According to Gandhiji, Trusteeship provides means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one. It gives the present owning-class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption. It does not recognize any right of private ownership of property except so far as is permitted by society for its own welfare. Not only that but also it is clearly mentioned in the Gandhian economic order that the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim, or greed. All the capitalists will have the opportunity of becoming statutory trustees ... They cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. If the poor realize it, they would become strong, and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities, that have brought them to the verge of starvation. That is why; Trusteeship, therefore, was not a

mere stopgap arrangement, it had a perennial value and use. Mass participation in every activity is the basis of progress. Gandhi's concept of planning was creation of consciousness among the people to achieve pattern results. Only a self-regulated people can think of participating in the economic development of the country. Self-reliance is the key word of Gandhian approach to economics. It is the basis for maximum economic effort. His concepts dealing with economics are realistic and human. Economics, from the Gandhian point of view is a description of self-regulated mass activity of human beings who make an endeavour to fulfill the needs of all sections of the society with a view to make it self-reliant.

But in the modern age of machinery and industrialization Gandhiji's ideas about these two are peculiar and anti-progressive. He opposes mechanization and industrialization as things destructive to human civilization. He rejects economic progress based on machine. He thinks modern machinery will create a havoc and bring about untold misery to man. To him mechanization spells calamity. Once Gandhiji said regarding the land reforms that land would be owned by the state. He presumes the reins of the Government will be in the hands of those who have faith in this ideal. A majority of Zaminders will give up their land willingly; those who do not do so will have to do so under legislation³¹. Not only that but also Gandhiji pointed out that "Our solution can come through farmer. Neither the lawyer, nor the doctors, nor the rich landlords are going to secure it"³².

From the aforesaid discussions it can be pointed out that Gandhiji was himself the great believer, supporter, propagator and protector of the so-called Hindu Caste Institution in India. Therefore, he did not change his attitude towards issue of Caste and the provision of hereditary occupations for different Caste divisions. He believed that everything was pre-determined according to the caste rules before a man is born and it was highlighted the fact that a particular occupation is assigned to a person as he belonged to particular caste division. Therefore, it can be said that Gandhiji strongly believed in the division of the Varna system or the caste system. He advocated the division of castes made by Manu, an ancient lawmaker. According to him, the people of different castes have to perform their hereditary functions or occupations from one generation to another. Otherwise, they would fall in distressed conditions. But it has multi-dimensional positive sides. It creates full form maturity of

a particular work. The experience of a specific work would enable a people to become a master on that subject. He said that different castes are like different sections of military division. Each division is working for the good of the whole. Each community possesses unique power of organization. It helps to spread primary education. Each community can take the responsibility to improve their lot at a large. Each caste has its privilege to control their caste rules. In fact, the principle of hereditary occupation is the soul of the caste system. According to Gandhiji, hereditary principle of the caste system is the eternal principle. It is a natural order of the society. Its change may create disorder in the society. Each caste must follow the hereditary occupations of his ancestors. Gandhiji strongly pointed out that the motto of the caste division or Varna division is to prevent class struggle, class war and competition as the profession of a person of a particular caste is determined before he is born. That is why; Gandhiji played a vital role to highlight the caste based economic life of different communities according to their status and position in the so-called caste division in the Brahmanical Hindu society. Therefore, Gandhiji conceded all sorts of caste norms based on either heredity or divine origin. The sanctity of the so-called Brahmanical religion also played a vital role for the caste based economic life of different caste groups. He said that caste system is good. It would hasten the developmental process of the country. It would work for the welfare of the state and its subjects. Gandhiji did not raise his voice against the inhuman nature and character of the caste system that wrecked the civil rights and privileges of the lower strata in the Hindu society. According to him, everything is good in the context of caste. But it was the real fact at all in the rule of caste. The Sudra Varna or caste was practically the most exploited community in the so-called Hindu society rather than the other community in the world economy. However, Gandhiji did not mind in it at all. Therefore, it is completely beyond the comprehension of the scholars of different fields to imagine how Gandhiji accepted the theory of the caste system that wrecked the human rights and privileges of the toiling masses in India, as he was the pioneer of the concepts of Ahimsa, Satyagraha, Trusteeship, Ramraj, Socialism, Metaphysical Idealism and Impersonal Truth, and Sarvodaya. After all Gandhiji was a great believer in God. That is why; it can be said that Gandhiji got much propagation in India and abroad than he deserve in the context of the human rights protectionist movement. It is said that he was a great moral man in India. His economic thoughts and beliefs were based on ethics. The main motto of which was to the welfare of the

poor peoples in India. But some scholars opine that it is not correct to entitle a man like Gandhiji or others as a great humanist who believed in the caste system that based on inhuman hereditary birth circle. Even Gandhiji clearly pointed out that 'it will be a chaos if every day a Brahmin is to be changed into a Sudra and a Sudra is to be changed into a Brahmin'³³. Therefore, it can be said that Gandhiji did not like to change a profession that has already pre-defined for a particular caste groups. He strongly advocated the hereditary occupations of the ancestors of each caste groups. Even he opposed to all those who were out to destroy the caste system. He was a strong defender of the caste system. He believed in this system because it had fixed the duties and professions or occupations of the peoples of different caste groups. That is why; the concepts of Ahimsa, Satyagraha, Trusteeship, Ramraj, Socialism, Metaphysical Idealism and Impersonal Truth, and Sarvodaya may be explained in order to understand the truth of the Gandhian economic thoughts and believes at a large. Gandhiji profoundly believed in the doctrine of Ahimsa (Non-Violence) and Satyagraha (practice of truth) as because only these moral forces could help others to arouse their inner soul-forces to do better for the common peoples and the welfare of the state. Only the above noted concepts that are absolute and universal would be able to establish the concept of humanity in the society. Ahimsa is not merely the negative act of refraining from doing offence, injury or harm to others, but really it represents the ancient law of positive self-sacrifice and constructive suffering. Practically, he considered truth and non-violence to be absolutely binding. Explaining the law of Varna in Indian social system Gandhiji said, "The law of Varna means that every one shall follow, as a matter of dharma-duty, the hereditary calling of his forefathers is so far as it is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics. He will earn his livelihood by following that good of the people."³⁴ According to Gandhiji, "Brahmin is not only a teacher, he is predominantly that. But a Brahmin who refuses to labour will be voted down as an idiot, because the rishis of the old who lived in forests cut and fetched wood, tended cattle and even fought, but their pursuit in life was predominantly search after truth. Similarly, a Rajput without learning was good for nothing no matter how well he wields the sword. And Vaishya without divine knowledge sufficient for his own growth will be a veritable monster eating into the vitals of society as many modern Vaishyas whether of the East or the West have become. They are, according to the Gita, incarnations of sin who live only for themselves."³⁵ Gandhiji said, "Varnas and Ashramas are institutions which have nothing to do with castes. The law

of Varna teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling. It defines not our rights but our duties. It necessarily has reference to callings that are conducive to the welfare of humanity and to no other. It also follows that there is no calling too low and none too high"³⁶. Gandhiji said, 'People are the roots, the state is fruit. If the roots are sweet, the fruits are bound to be sweet.' Pyarelal said that Gandhiji was a firm believer in a classless, egalitarian society in which there would be no distinction of rich and poor, high and low.' Gandhiji pointed out that Ramrajya means the realization of universal peace and humanitarian ethics...The realization of the Kingdom of God would depend however, on a sincere faith in the supreme spirit by millions ... this Ramrajya will be more cohesive than the formal bonds of legal organization. He also remarked in the Young India that 'By Ramrajya I do not mean Hinduraj. I mean by Ramrajya divineraj, the kingdom of God... the ancient ideal of Ramrajya is one of true democracy'.

However, Gandhiji was criticized by some scholars in connection with his deep belief in the Caste System. They pointed out the fact that Gandhiji was perhaps wrongly convinced by the norms and tradition of the Caste Institution that was based on inhuman principles, irrational and unscientific social, religious customs and political and administrative affiliation. It created numerous hurdles and difficulties in the way of their day to day living of the toiling masses. But their hardship and distressed failed to change the mind set up of Gandhiji. As a result, he came forward to protect the content of the Caste Institution excluding the case of the Harijan in India. He struggled to establish the socio-economic rights and duties of the Harijans due to uplift their socio-economic conditions. But he did not come forward to accept the content of the Bhagvat Gita. According to the content of the Bhagvat Gita, the Varna system has at least two merits. It does not say that it is based on birth. It highlights the fact that man's Varna is fixed according to his innate qualities and the profession of a son shall not be that of the father. It completely depends upon the innate qualities of a father or a son. But Gandhiji had radically changed his outlook and pointed out that Varna is determined by birth and the profession of a Varna is determined by the principle of heredity so that Varna is merely another name for caste. Even Gandhiji said about the caste based economic life of the Sudras as follows:

“The Shudras who only serves (the higher caste) as a matter of religious duty, and who will never own any property, who indeed has not even the ambition to own anything, is deserving of thousand obeisance...The very Gods will shower down flowers on him”³⁷. Gandhiji said that the main ideal of any economic programme must be human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth³⁸. The wealth of a nation is its people who produce it. Therefore, if economic policy does not provide each according to his need, it is of no value. One of the economic imperatives, for Gandhi, was immediate engagement of the entire population in productive work of any kind. Gandhi advised complete de-centralisation of the productive process. This led to the evolution of constructive programme based on ‘Swadeshi’ and ‘Khaddar’. Through the practice of Swadeshi and Khaddar, Gandhiji evolved a practical remedy for crushing poverty of the millions of village people who lived in India on the border line of starvation. His vows of Swadeshi and Khaddar went deep into his conception of human progress. Swadeshi would mean self-dependence and Khaddar, work for the millions of idle manpower of the country. In advocating the production and use of Khadi, Gandhiji had a humanitarian motive. In fact, manufacture and use of Khadi meant more and more self-dependence and use of leisure time for productive purposes. He basically dedicated to the cause of ‘daridranarayan’ the poor man, who represents God. But he identified machinery as anti-social for it was meant to replace human labour and thus increased unemployment. His supreme consideration was man. In the words of Yusuf Meherally, his protest against the machine was essentially a protest against the enslavement of humanity in the name of technological progress³⁹. Even Gandhiji pointed out in ‘Young India’ that “I would favour the use of most elaborate machinery if thereby India’s pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided”⁴⁰. His utmost aim was to establish a classless society by changing the hearts of the people. Some scholars pointed out that humanism was the basic principle of his economic theory.

6.3. Ambedkar on the question of Caste based Economic Life

Ambedkar is called the ‘Father of Indian Social Unrest’⁴¹ and the leader of the suppressed humanity in India. He represented the poorest of India’s poor who were half-fed, half-nude and dumb. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru pointed out that “Dr. Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of the Hindu

Society”⁴². He was not only a crusader against the caste system but also a valiant fighter for the cause of the downtrodden in India. His fighting zeal for human rights as emancipator of all those enslaved in the world gave him international recognition as a liberator of humanity from injustice, social and economic. But the economic thoughts of Ambedkar were based on the concept of mixed economy, socialism, industrialization, State ownership of industries, worker’s right to strike etc. He fought against the caste based economic life to establish the idea of liberty and equality in the society. The main motto behind it was to create a liberal atmosphere in the field of economic life and activities with a vision to open up the flood gate of different occupations to all irrespective of their caste, class, creed, sex and religion. As an economic thinker, Ambedkar belonged to the group of liberal thinkers. By and large his orientation was that of a socialist but he did not agree with Karl Marx whose ideas and methods were of violent nature to him. He was very much anxious about the exploitative social and economic conditions of the toiling masses in India. He knew well that these people most of whom were Dalits were being severely exploited by land lords and capitalists. That is why Ambedkar struggled for mixed economy or State Socialism to prevent this endless social and economic exploitation. He had understood that the economic equality was very much essential along with political equality to empower the toiling masses in India. The problem of the toiling masses, landless labours relied exclusively on the agricultural problems and more than this on the Indian economy as a whole. These problems should be tackled in the wider spectrum of national economic development. That is why Ambedkar stressed on the nationalization of economy. He said that the production might reach the optimum level and the capitalist might not grab the entire benefits and the hard earned money should be distributed equally⁴³. According to him, the capitalist economy can not in any way remove the economic crisis of the suffering people. In the capitalist economy there are more chances of unemployment, inhuman treatment of labour, long hours of working, vicious working conditions and numerous repressive measures. In fact, he was a great champion of socialism. According to him, “State Socialism is essential for India’s industrialization, private economy cannot do so and it makes an attempt it would give way to economic disparities as it can be visualized in the case of Europe. It is a warning bell for India”⁴⁴. He pointed out that industrial harmony can be established through labour welfare and congenial industrial relations by eradicating exploitation. He fought for economic and social freedom and equality. He clearly

noted the fact that political freedom and equality without economic and social equality is quite insufficient⁴⁵. He advocated state socialism in the field of industry and also ownership in agriculture with a collectivized method of cultivation. He opined that the plight of millions of untouchables who were of landless labourers can not be ameliorated through consolidation of lands or by tenancy legislation, only collective farms can solve the problems of the landless labours; therefore, Ambedkar suggested the plan that has two special features. The first proposes state socialism in important fields of economic life and the second does not leave the establishment of state socialism to the will of the legislature; it establishes state socialism by the law of the constitution and thus, makes it by any act of the legislature and executive⁴⁶. That is why Ambedkar demanded to include the provision of state ownership of agriculture in the fundamental rights as this provision was unalterable by any act of legislature and the executive. The purposal was to protect the liberty of the individual. Naturally, the connection between liberty and the shape and form of economic structure of society becomes real only when state socialism has been established through political democracy. He expressed his views to establish state socialism not through dictatorship but through political democracy. Besides, Ambedkar strongly believed in the fundamental cause of India's backward economy that was the delay in changing the land system. The remedy was democratic collectivism that entailed economic efficiency, productivity and overhauling the village economy. This, he said, would wipe out elements of economic exploitation and social injustice. He did not want landlords, tenants, or landless labour. His idea of economic realism sought both freedom and welfare. The essential feature of his approach to economic problems was the condemnation of such extreme views as laissez-faire and scientific socialism. Mixed economy was the cornerstone of his economic ideas. He advocated an end to the glaring social and economic inequalities produced by the capitalist system. His evidence before the "Hilton-Young Commission"⁴⁷ was an important contribution to the discussion of currency problems in India. He gave expression to his thoughts on such issues as small-holdings, collective farming, land revenue and abolition of landlordism. It covered nearly four important decades 1917 to 1956, and touched on all major political and economic events. He realized that the solution to the problem of the untouchable landless labourers depended upon the solution to Indian agricultural problems or, even more broadly, economic problems. He focused on the injustice based on the assessment of land revenue on income and advocated that land

revenue be brought under the income-tax. His work 'The Problem of the Rupee' was considered an instructive treatise. He wrote that closing of the Mints would prevent inflation and disturbances in the internal price level. He advocated that the standard of value should be gold and the elasticity of currency should come from this source. That great scholarship and hard work in this book is evidenced by the rave reviews Ambedkar received from the British Press. Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat highlighted the fact that Ambedkar descended on the Indian skies like a meteor, lighting up the freedom movement with a viable economic vision and road-map, charted a constitutional democracy which, as he often said, could take us to the revolutionary goal of equality, liberty and fraternity. This assessment is accepted by a large number of people. His economic ideology and mission have been buried in the sands of globalization, privatization and 'reforms' by the ruling elite and even his self-proclaimed followers, who have joined hands in erecting stone and granite statues of the 'Revolutionary' whose thoughts not only sprang from the soil of the country but also its political, economic, and social realities. Ambedkar, through his logic, reasoning and scientific rationale, backed by a deep and real understanding of theoretical and applied economics, charted a path for all Indians, especially for the Dalits who he defined as all those engaged in the 'Struggle' for emancipation from the bondage of the exploitative order, through centuries of feudal and capitalist domination. Ambedkar said that socialism does not only embrace economic equality but also social and political equality. The main features of his socialism are as follows:

- i. "A condemnation of the existing social, political and economic order as unjust.
- ii. An advocacy of a new order based on one man, one value and one vote.
- iii. A belief that this ideal is realizable in state socialism and parliamentary democracy.
- iv. The conviction that immorality of established order is traceable to the attitude of Hindus and to corrupt social institutions.
- v. A programme of actions leading to the ideal to be achieved through constitutional means only and

- vi. A revolutionary will for establishing social democracy to carry out the programme of social solidarity⁴⁸. The key industries shall be owned and run by the state.
- vii. The basic industries which are not the key industries shall be run by the state or by corporation established by the state.
- viii. Insurance shall be a monopoly of the state and that state shall compel every adult citizen to take out a life insurance policy commensurate with his wages as may be prescribed by the legislature.
- ix. Agriculture shall be state industry.
- x. The state shall acquire the subsisting rights in such industries, insurance and agricultural land held by private individuals whether as owners, tenants or mortgages and pay them compensation in the form of debenture equal to the value of his or her right in the land, provided that in reckoning the value of land, plant or security no account shall be taken or any rise therein due to emergencies or any potential or unearned value or a value for compulsory acquisition.
- xi. The state shall determine how and when the debenture holder shall be entitled to claim cash payment.
- xii. But the agricultural industry shall be organized on the following grounds:
 - a. The land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless labourer.
 - b. It shall be the obligation of the state to finance the cultivation or the collective farms by the supply of water, draught, animals, implements, manure, seeds etc.
- xiii. The scheme shall be brought into operation as early as possible but in no case shall the period extend beyond the tenth year from the date of the constitution coming into operation⁴⁹. Ambedkar had added a very relevant point that highlighted the rationale of state socialism. The plan had two special features:
 - a. "One is that it proposes state socialism in important fields of economic life.

- b. The second special features of the plan are that it does not leave the establishment of state socialism to the will of the constitution, and thus, makes it unalterable by the act of the legislature and the executive”⁵⁰.

“Angered by the inability and incompetence of the men in power to provide economic relieve to the weaker sections of the Indian people, he suggested a bonfire of the constitution of which he was the main architect”⁵¹.

But Ambedkar was an economist. His career was characterized by two distinct phases: the first one up to 1921 as a professional economist contributing scholarly books and the second one as a political leader thereafter until his demise in 1956, during which he made path breaking contributions as a champion of human rights for the untouchables. He wrote three scholarly books on economics:

- i. Administration and Finance of the East India Company,
- ii. The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, and
- iii. The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution

The first two represent his contribution to the field of public finance: the first one evaluating finances of the East India Company during the period, 1792 through 1858 and the second one analyzing the evolution of the Centre-State financial relations in British India during the period, 1833 through 1921. The third book, his *magnum opus* in economics, represents a seminal contribution to the field of monetary economics. Here Ambedkar examined the evolution of the Indian currency as a medium of exchange covering the period, 1800 to 1893 and discussed the problem of the choice of an appropriate currency system for India in the early 1920s. He did not write any book on economics *per se*, though several of his other contributions during that period carry a distinctive imprint of the economist in him. As a member of the Bombay Legislative Assembly (since 1926), Ambedkar gave effective expression to the grievances of the rural poor through his mass movements. His successful struggle against the prevailing land tenure system called Khoti⁵² liberated a vast majority of the rural poor from an extreme form of economic exploitation. His successful agitation against Mahar Vatan⁵³ emancipated a large

section of the rural poor from virtual serfdom. He presented a bill in the State Assembly aimed at preventing the malpractices of money-lenders hurting the poor. On the industrial front Ambedkar founded in 1936, the Independent Labour Party. While the prevailing trade unions fought for the rights of workers, they were indifferent to the rights of untouchable workers as human beings. The new political party took up their cause. Subsequently, as the Labour Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council from 1942 to 1946, he was instrumental in bringing about several labour reforms including establishment of employment exchanges⁵⁴, generally laying the foundations of industrial relations in Independent India. His ministry also included irrigation, power and other public works. He played an important role in shaping the irrigation policy, especially the Damodar Valley Project⁵⁵. A distinctive feature of his scholarly contribution is his Perceptive analysis of economic dimension of social maladies, such as, the caste system and untouchability. While Mahatma Gandhi had defended the caste system on the basis of division of labour, Ambedkar came out with a hard-hitting critique in his book 'Annihilation of Castes' (1936), pointing out that what was implicit in the caste system was not merely division of labour but also a division of labourers. Ambedkar's attack on the caste system was not merely aimed at challenging the hegemony of the upper castes but had broader connotation of economic growth and development. He argued that the caste system had reduced the mobility of labour and capital which in turn, impeded economic growth and development in India. In his memorandum submitted to the British Government titled 'States and Minorities' in 1947, Ambedkar laid down a strategy for India's economic development. The strategy placed an obligation on the State to plan the economic life of the people on lines which would lead to highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to private enterprise and also provide for the equitable distribution of wealth. After Independence, Ambedkar became the first Law Minister of India. Even while drafting the Indian Constitution (as the Chairman, Drafting Committee) in 1948-49, the economist in Ambedkar was very much alive. He strongly recommended democracy as the 'governing principle of human relationship' but emphasized that principles of equality, liberty and fraternity which are the cornerstones of democracy should not be interpreted narrowly in terms of the political rights alone. He emphasized the social and economic dimensions of democracy and warned that political democracy cannot succeed when there is no social and economic democracy. He gave an expression to

the objective of economic democracy by incorporating the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution. As the Law Minister, Ambedkar fought vigorously for the passage of the Hindu Code Bill⁵⁶ - the most significant reform for women's rights in respect of the abolition of the doctrine of the rights by birth, right over property to women, share to daughters from the parent's property, provisions for divorce, marriage and inheritance. He resigned in September 1951 when the Bill was not passed in the Parliament. There is a unified theme running through Ambedkar's multifaceted and diverse contributions. The economic philosophy underlying is best captured in his own phrase: *Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Sukhay* (*i.e.*, Greatest Good to the largest number of people). Ambedkar's philosophy is couched in social, religious and moral considerations. The focal point of philosophy is the oppressed and the depressed. The philosophy aims at giving life to those who are disowned, at elevating those who are suppressed, and ennobling those who are downtrodden and granting liberty, equality and justice to all irrespective of their castes. Before his death in 1956, Ambedkar led nearly three quarter of a million untouchables to Buddhism.

Realizing the gravity of the ill-fated economic conditions, Ambedkar was very much shocked and astonished. He expressed grievances against the deplorable economic arrangements of the state. He highlighted the fact that Chanakya who led a revolt of the slaves and helped to install a Shudra dynasty, the Mauryas, which held sway over most of India until it was done out by a regrouping of the wealthy and the propertied, expropriating classes. The people who toiled in the fields to produce food, the bunters who wove clothes and fabrics, the artisans who made tools with their hands, household items and the most exquisite articles with precious stones and alloy metals, the people who built homes, palaces and monuments, the leather workers who made shoes, saddles for the army cavalry and without whose services society would not exist and flourish, were all continuously being cheated, looted through expropriation of the surpluses that they created by their sweat, blood and sacrifices. So the oppression, suppression, tyranny and humiliation in respect of socio-religious customs, economic exploitation, educational and professional torture done by the so-called privileged classes in the society exposed the bare content of the Caste Institution that stirred the mental set up of Ambedkar and boosted up his mind to raise a strong voice to eradicate it. He was very much inspired by the

October Proletarian Revolution in Russia in 1917 that placed the power in the hands of the workers, peasants, toiling and hitherto exploited classes in the world history. Ambedkar had thus laid bare the huge colonial (looting) enterprise on which Britain's industrialization was founded.

Besides, R. C. Dutt and Dadabhai Naoroji exposed the bare economic intention of the British Government through their thought-provoking writings. Dadabhai Naoroji for whom Ambedkar had great respect also spoke and wrote on the rapacious transfer of surplus wealth and money from India to England that shook those little social clubs who were petitioning the British government for some concessions in entry to the British Indian Army through the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and the ICS quota for Indians. Even Gandhi was very much acquainted with the racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa that bound him to re-starting a new policy of transforming the Congress into a mass organization of peasants, workers and all the toiling masses within the limitations of the social set up in the country. But Ambedkar did not remain content with these monumental works. He came forward to complete his writings on 'Small Holdings in India and their Remedies in 1917'. The subjects of Ambedkar's Doctoral thesis were in the disciplines of economics only. It dealt with the problem of agricultural economy of the country. He chose the subject of the size of holdings only as it affects the productivity of agriculture. He noted that the holdings of land in India are not small but they are also scattered which Ambedkar identified as an industry. The problems of these holdings are two-fold: How to consolidate the holdings and after consolidation, how to perpetuate the said consolidation. The heirs of deceased in India desired to secure share from each survey number of the deceased rather than distributing complete holdings amongst themselves. This has resulted into rendering the farming most inefficient and causing several problems. Ambedkar suggested that the remedy lies in not enlarging the holding but in the matter of increasing capital and capital goods. He also pointed out that the evil of small holding is the product of maladjustment of the Indian social economy. A large number of populations of superfluous and idle labour exert high pressure on agriculture. He tried to discuss how to remedy the ills of agriculture and suggests that industrialization of India is the soundest remedy for the agricultural problems of India.

Even he was very much inspired by the concept of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule's 'Kisan Che Kode' that stoked his passion to try and expose, and later struggle, by throwing in his lot with those classes subjected to extreme social, political and economic exploitation. He also consolidated his grasp of Public Finance that was published in 1921. He worked on and published 'Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India, the Problem of the Rupee (the issues of Silver and Gold Standards) in 1923, the Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India 1925. The nectar of Ambedkar's perceptions can be gauged by a better effort at understanding the essence of his writings and speeches, through his life and the stands he took, some necessarily with compromises, underpinned by his deep understanding of how the exploitative chain and the process of accumulation of surplus works and creates an overwhelming majority of serfs and slaves as an economic underclass leading a dehumanizing animal outside the boundaries of the proper village or baste and in slums and ghettos in the cities and towns as outcastes, untouchables and sub-humans or 'untermenschens'. Others, so called born into higher castes have also been forced into this large mass of labour, of unceasing toil, of carrying the load on their backs and pulling the 'thela', since then with the rise of modern capitalism.

Apart from these the Great Depression of 1929 –33 shook the whole world and its epicenter was in the United States and Europe, the foremost capitalist systems, where he had spent his period of study and observation. Capitalism's exploitative chain had broken down and was engulfed by a serious crisis; it was replaced by Fascism, i.e. the rule by private Corporations in partnership with the ruling elite controlling the State apparatus. Ambedkar was perceptive enough to grasp the significance of slave labour being used by the Corporations. While he had preoccupations with the Round Table Conference, the Poona Pact, the Government of India Act 1935, the provincial elections and Separate electorates; he was deeply distressed by the exploitation, impoverishment, daily humiliation and denial of human rights to the exploited classes and the Dalits in the social milieu of the backward, feudal, arch conservative society that had evolved in the country of his birth. This evolution was not an accident. Machiavellian state-craft in combination with parasitical economic production relations and a cruel, ritual order was used as a means to enslave the people who built India. But he was very much anxious about the tragic event in the world economic history, i. e., known as the 'Great Economic Depression (1929)'. It came with its

devastation, hunger and unemployment, which not only burnt the people in the United States but also in Europe. The Capitalist classes across the industrialized countries speedily funded Fascist groups, to further dispossess and divert the working classes. This was spread through fear and propaganda, promising them the mirage of nationalism, discipline, conquests and full employment, at the same time breaking their organizations, enslaving them in factories, mines and plants jointly owned by global 'finance capital' including by American corporations and British capitalists, through the 1930s, as now brought to light through the period of the Second World War, via a commonly owned and set up Banking system, while the soldiers were killed and maimed as cannon fodder on military fronts all over the world in Europe, the Soviet Union, North Africa and Asia. Naturally, its bad impacts felt upon the socio-economic set up in colonial India. Under this unavoidable circumstances, Ambedkar explicitly stated so in his revolutionary call in Manmad in 1938, that was the central idea of his declaration of the three principles at the Workers Conference to express his views, proposals, suggestions and advices to overcome the unwanted situations. He violently opposed the British economic policies that were introduced in colonial India. He expressed his grievances regarding this economic policy and pointed out that the colonial government always tried to suck the wealth and money from the Indian sub-continent to foster the process of their industrialization and economic profit. Ambedkar highlighted the theory of 'drain of wealth' introduced by the colonial government through his different thought-provoking articles. His protestant movement against caste discrimination, economic deprivation, gender inequality and exploitation heralded an epoch making event in the history of India. Ambedkar drafted the constitution of India keeping in mind of these facts to foster the notion of human rights in respect of every sphere of individual as well as national life. He was the chief architect of the Indian constitution. His central mission is spelt out in his drafts to the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution. He was the Chairman of it from 1947-49. Ambedkar finally emerged as the main 'Architect' of this most vital document that lays down the framework of the Republic and its social, political and economic objectives, which is a manifesto of those who struggled for India's freedom against foreign capital, foreign rule and local dominant, economic and caste interests. He decided to carry out the struggle on two tracks, viz., to destroy the oppressive social order and to bring about an equitable, non-capitalist economic restructuring through mass awakening, reform and democratic movements, as he

believed that real economic democracy was a means to transform a nation to a just order. He pointed out that 'the struggle for economic justice was as important as the struggle for social justice'. His core ideas and philosophy based on the struggle for economic justice were very important to eradicate socio-economic, political and religious disparities and inequalities in Indian society. His prime motto was to establish social justice, economic justice, political justice, religious justice etc. keeping in mind the views of the Human Rights in Indian society. That is why; he played a vital role to incorporate the core ideas and thoughts of his life for the betterment of the Indian nation through the final drafting of the Indian Constitution. He made the Directive Principles as the soul of the Indian Constitution. The Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy were his special contribution. If the chapter on Fundamental Rights, particularly its cardinal articles on Equality before the Law, Equality of Opportunity and the Right to Life (and Livelihood) as interpreted by the Apex Court are indeed held sacred, then read with Articles 37, 38 and 39 of the Directive Principles they are the guiding spirit of the Constitution and immutable. The Directive Principles of State Policy were held to be legally unenforceable at the time the Constitution was adopted in the name of "We the People..." However Directive Principles of State Policy have a mandatory character, as the injunction to the State and, therefore, to the Judiciary, Legislative and the Executive is always "SHALL" and not a 'May'. The Directive Principles are mandatory for any Government in office to fulfill the motto of our constitution. Its target is to uplift the condition of the economically, socially and politically exploited classes, establish equality of opportunity in the context of education, right to work, and economic stability that have made the preamble of the Constitution a paper promise in the hands of the exploiting classes and to destroy the privileges and total monopoly of resources of the capitalist classes. Ambedkar came forward particularly to protect and defend the Dalit rights and privileges. He clearly realized it that Dalit emancipation could only be achieved through a broad united front of all the exploited classes. That is why; Ambedkar formed a Dalit united front to launch a ceaseless struggle for the democratic rights of the haves not. His struggle was, therefore, categorically inclusive of all individuals and groups who were naturally bonded, engaged in the common struggle, of the exploited classes.

In fact, Ambedkar played a vital role to liberate the untouchables from the age-old socio-economic exploitations. The untouchables were forced to be used as breed labourer, scavengers and sweepers as the untouchables could be compelled due to their state of complete destitute and helplessness to work on a mere pittance and sometimes on nothing at all. Even they could be kept to lower jobs and prevented them from entering into competition for higher jobs. Apart from these, they could be used as shock absorbers in slums and dead weights in booms. Their plight became worse than slaves. Ambedkar noted this fact as follows:

“In slavery the master at any rate had the responsibility to feed, cloth and house... But in the system of untouchability the Hindus takes no responsibility for the maintenance of the untouchable. As an economic system it permits exploitation without obligation....”⁵⁷

That is why; Ambedkar raised voiced against these exploitations and encouraged the ill-fated peoples to be self-respected, self-dignified and self-honored to obtain their equal honourable status and position in the society irrespective of their caste, class, sex and religion. Every individual should have the right to enjoy as he deserves an open atmosphere of the society in connection with the concept of equality, liberty and fraternity. He encouraged the untouchables to fight to finish the socio-economic exploitation imposed upon them by the ancient law makers. He did not adopt Marxian methods of ending the exploitation of the untouchables. He admitted that economic factors play an important role in human relations but not to the extent to which Marx accepted. Marx stood for the abolition of private property and sided with those who were stricken by poverty, diseases and disabilities. He also included the rights against exploitation of man by man in the constitution. He not only emancipated the untouchables from the fetters of slavery but also the women, the children and the helpless people from the scourge of evil systems such as devadasi, forced labour, employment of children below the age of 14 years and so on. Apart from these, Ambedkar pointed out that “The force which will sweep all obstacles from their path and really emancipate them from their age-old bondage can, I am sure, come only from within. It is a fact, because this new movement of the untouchables, i. e., a movement from within that I feel sure that help and encourage, it will be a success... It has become a truism that without raising the untouchables the country can not rise

and that in their salvation lies the salvation of the country”⁵⁸. Therefore, the following points should be considered for a better understanding of the philosophical thoughts⁵⁹ of Ambedkar in respect of society, polity, economy and others:

- i. social, economic and moral regeneration is more important than political;
- ii. a movement, if comes only from within, surely leads to success;
- iii. the emancipation of the untouchables, dalits and the weaker sections of society, means the country would become a great and strong nation;
- iv. the political power is not an end but a means to cultural revolution; and
- v. this way the movement of Ambedkar gained momentum among the people in distress, poverty, tyranny, oppression, illiteracy, ills and ailments, widely spread in the country.

In fact, Ambedkar fought for the rights and duties of women who were forced to work under several distressed conditions to lead their livelihood. They were compelled to follow some inhuman evil social customs to remain in the never-ending distressed conditions. His ceaseless efforts made them aware to be self-respected and dignified to obtain their right position in the male dominated society. He clearly highlighted the fact that the nation can not be built up without the economic, political and social empowerment of women. So Ambedkar championed the cause of women. He highlighted a number of problems of Indian women and sought for their solutions in Bombay legislative council, in Viceroy’s Executive Council as a Labour Minister, in the Constituent Assembly as a Chairman of Drafting Committee and also in the Parliament as the first Law Minister of Independent India. His arguments on the maternity benefit bill and on birth control were quite relevant to recognize the dignity of women. He said that the employer should not be free from liability, it is absolutely reasonable to state that the employer gets certain special benefits by employing women instead of men. He pointed out that there could not be any progress without women. He accorded equal status to women and men in every sphere of their social, economic, political, and educational. Not only that but also Ambedkar demanded the abolition of the doctrine of rights by birth. He explained the importance of the right to property to women, right to share by daughters from parent’s property, provisions for divorce in the Hindu Code Bill. The Hindu Code Bill was a right step towards the Civil Code. The main target of the Hindu Code Bill was to codify and modify certain

inhuman provisions of the Hindu law in connection with women status and dignity. His contribution in the field of women emancipation is unique. So he highlighted the following points to take into consideration for the economic, social and political empowerment of women.

- i. To regard and respect the woman as a good companion to man in personal, social and economic life;
- ii. To share and seek full participation of woman in ordering the family affairs;
- iii. To accord and awaken the womenfolk about their social duties, economic position, legal obligations as well as human rights;
- iv. To shun and shift away from inferiority complex and evils of harmful nature;
- v. To get education and find graceful jobs for their emancipation and to support the children and husbands;
- vi. To enjoy equal status and dignity without being shadowed and swaddled by the pressure of men in power;
- vii. To fight and defeat the anti-social elements that force them to lead a disgraceful life like prostitution;
- viii. To grow in good conduct and character in order to keep and lead a clean public life, remaining away from illegal relations with men;
- ix. To believe in an 'independent judiciary' for protecting the rights of men and women;
- x. To advocate and agitate for the inclusion of deserving females in the judiciary in order to safeguard womenfolk from indignity, injury and injustice; and
- xi. To raise their voice for an honest functioning of independent judiciary as it was entrusted to safeguard the rights of individuals⁶⁰.

Ambedkar basically fought for human rights and privileges especially for the Indian proletariats, labours, women and dalits. He was called the champion of the Indian Sudras. He played a vital role in the Indian society, polity and economy with a motto to establish the concept of equality, liberty and fraternity among the citizens of India irrespective of their caste, class, creed, sex and religion. His violent opposition against caste-based economic exploitation and oppression heralded a new chapter in the

history of human rights movement in India. He mentioned the name of Manu, an ancient law-maker who was the chief architect of the Caste Institution in ancient India that wrecked the essence of liberty, equality and fraternity and compelled the common masses to remain in distressed conditions ceaselessly. On realizing the hard reality of the Sudra-Proletariats, Ambedkar came forward to save their life. Ambedkar identified the Manu Smriti as a fraudulent, adharmic manufacture of diseased minds⁶¹. He said that the priestly class was empowered with unlimited power in respect of socio-economic and religious rights and privileges by this religious law book and it became a 'sanad' for the privileged Brahmin class to act as a decision-making factor in the society without considering the needs and demands of the toiling masses in India. This cruel and despotic social order based on all that is ignoble, unjust and unequal, in direct opposition to the Dharma that many great minds, especially Gautam Buddha, and those who guided Indian society had laid down. But the fighting mind and challenging spirit of Ambedkar against all sorts of cruelties worked as a source of inspiration to the working classes in India. But Ambedkar played a vital role as a socialist for establishing an egalitarian society, with the help of Buddhism as the essence of Buddhism and its Dhamma greatly influenced his mind and thoughts. Some scholars pointed out that Ambedkar was perhaps the first person who imbibed and implemented the concept of the communist idea in his own way in India to bring the toiling masses or have not under a common united front to fight for establishing the socio-economic and political justice in India. Apart from these, we have seen how the Sanghis, who are essentially adherents of the Manu Smriti order, infiltrated and subverted the Congress Party, pre and post Independence, camouflage the core issue of economic justice while rationalizing 'social justice' to fool the people, assassinated Gandhi for opposing the domination of British finance capital in India which devastated the Indian economy. This class opposed the mild dose of reform for the Hindu society, the Hindu Code Bill and engineering riots and pogrommes and spreading division and violence through their well-oiled Goebellian propaganda machinery, all funded by the corporate class. Why is it that we too have deviated from the central threading that runs through the mission of Ambedkar's life? As we have seen Ambedkar through his logic, reasoning and scientific rationale, backed by a deep and real understanding of theoretical and applied economics, charted a path for all Indians, for the Dalits who he defined as all those engaged in the 'Struggle' for emancipation from the bondage of the exploitative order, through centuries of feudal

and capitalist domination. It is no surprise, therefore, that he set his precepts into practice by mobilizing and leading the march for temple entry at Mahad, to be shortly followed by his stirring address at the Independent Labour Party Conference at Manmad in 1938. This was a continuity of the calls of Tuka Ram, Shahuji Maharaj, Jyoitaba Phule, only set in the contemporary context and sharply focusing on the struggle for economic justice that lay ahead. These ideas he later introduced in his draft submissions for the Constitution and the final form of the Constitution, of which he was the principal architect. Manmad 1938, the GIP Railway Dalit Mazdoor Conference, (caste discrimination was practiced in the railways and the textile mills, with the lower and lesser paid jobs going to the Dalits; while clean and weaving jobs went to the 'other' workers), was a defining moment in Dalit struggle, an inflexion point, a turning point, that focuses both on the contemporary reality and a guiding star for the times ahead. Ambedkar places before all, this foundation of his beliefs, convictions and the path that leads to the future, that the Dalits in a common united front to be forged with all the exploited classes, to achieve the goal of social and economic justice⁶² in an egalitarian society and real democracy thus:

- i. The economic emancipation of the Dalits is as vital as the struggle for social justice. To make the Dalits aware of the definition of the Subjugated class so that Dalit awareness is raised to a level whereby our join hands and march shoulder to shoulder with all other subjugated classes, to wage the struggle against the Ruling Class.
- ii. Brahmanism (or the forces that negate and deny equality, liberty and the feelings of brotherhood, 'bhai-chara') and Capitalism are the two biggest enemies of the workers or toiling classes.
- iii. Karl Marx did not as a principle; say that there were only two classes, the owner and the worker, and that in India these two classes had evolved in their final form.
- iv. The spread of poisonous and vicious religious hatred in a casteist order in Indian society has resulted in workers and employees sometimes turning against each other, as opponents and enemies.
- v. Trade Union Leaders while exhorting and giving spirited speeches against the Capitalists adopt double standards and remain silent on the issue of Brahmanism.

vi. The Dalit workers and labourers movement is not against the common workers movement. It also does not support the Capitalists. Their only request is that their independent identity be protected.

vii. The movement of the Working class has deviated, from its main goal, and is solely concerned with trade unionism per se.

viii. The General Strike is the weapon of last resort; it is not an end in itself to be used for attaining the end of competitive trade unionism - leadership.

ix. In the struggle against capitalist owners the working class cannot be successful by resorting only to trade unionism. The workers have to seize and take the reins of political power in their hands.

x. Mazdoor Sanghatans which are politically directionless become tools in the hands of political parties that support the capitalist class.

xi. Equality, liberty and fraternity must be the ideals of the working class.

xii. Even after the end of British Rule, it would be wholly legitimate for the workers to struggle against the spider's web of the Landlords, Capitalists and the Baniya - Sahukar combine who will very much survive even after British Rule.

xiii. To wage a struggle to oppose the Imperialists does not mean that the class struggle against the internal structure of society has to be kept away on the shelf.

xiv. The Dalit class conflict in the interest of the Dalits must conjoin with the mainstream Mazdoor Andolan.

xv. In normal situations Mazdoors will take the Constitutional path. However they should prepare and ready themselves to use other means, should the situation and circumstances so demand.

xvi. Dalit Mazdoor Sanghatan is in full co-operation and support of the All India

Mazdoor Andolan; and it sees 'reservation' as complimenting and supplementing the Andolan.

However, it is very interesting to note that no economist in India has produced such monumental, vital and relevant works as Ambedkar did between 1916-25. Undoubtedly these studies gave him an incomparable advantage over his contemporaries. His contribution as the Law Minister after 1950 in the field of public finance was noteworthy. Ambedkar had emerged as an eminent economist on the sub-continent. His main mission was to free the toiling masses of India from the endless hardships, bondage and slavery by establishing economic democracy in the Indian society.

Ambedkar formed the Independent Labour Party on the basis of three principles⁶³ and these principles were as follows:

Firstly; all the wealth, property and assets in this world are the result of and have been created by the undying, hard labour of the workers and the kisans. Despite this, the worker and the kisans who toil with desperation in the field are naked and hungry. All these riches, property and the means of production have been arrogated by private property rights arbitrarily imposed by the profiteers, landlord class, capitalists and the rich class who have expropriated all this wealth by illegal loot, robbery and theft. This (parasitical) class has done nothing to earn this.

Secondly; Indian society is divided into the class 'The Ruled Over' and 'The Ruling' whose interests mutually clash as a class conflict between the 'Ruler-Exploiter' and the 'Ruled-Exploited', is fundamental, and this fact remains all encompassing.

Thirdly; the rights of workers and the toilers can be defended, (and will be secured) only when the reigns of 'Political power' will be in their own hands.

If the 1920s was the decade of learning and education in Ambedkar's life, the 1930s was that of struggle, agitation, deep sensitivity and commitment to the cause of the oppressed and the exploited classes and communities; the decade of the 1940s demonstrated his ability for creativity and innovation of national level institutions and

experimentation. Few equal his contribution in this decade which precedes and transgresses India's Independence or partition, the founding of the Republic and great hopes and aspirations to real democracy, however troubled they were in the predominant class structure in 1947. Even Ambedkar played a vital role to reduce the labour problems. He realized it very well that the Second World War transformed the economy that provided opportunities for an expansion of industries. While entrepreneurs and managers could hope for prosperity, labour was not given its due share. Ambedkar piloted and introduced measures for labour welfare. The spirit of his labour philosophy could be summed in his own words from the speech delivered on September 15, 1943 in the first session of the Plenary Labour Conference: "For a long time the conviction had gained ground that the industrial labour welfare problems could not be solved unless the three parties – government, employees and employer-developed a sense of responsibility towards one another, showed more respect for one another and agreed to work in a spirit of give and take, and that there was not much chance of such a sense of mutual respect and responsibility growing up. A plan to bring them together and to let them talk to each other across the table was felt to be necessary for the realization of this purpose"⁶⁴. The progressive labour policies adopted in free India owe much to the measures introduced by Ambedkar in the forties. Labour in India has been largely exploited. The efforts of Ambedkar were directed towards bringing the workers under the protective umbrella of social security. His contributions to the discussions on Workmen's Compensation Act⁶⁵, Maternity Benefit Act⁶⁶, etc. are of lasting importance. He played a vital role to pass the Coalmines Labour Welfare Ordinance⁶⁷ in 1944. His non-conventional approach to the problems of flood-control, navigation, irrigation and drainage, soil conservation and power developments revealed the modern and scientific mind of Ambedkar. It was evident that the not so young Ambedkar was burning the candle at both ends, unmindful of his health, all fired up with hopes and dreams. As a Labour Member of the Viceroy's Council, 1942-45, he initiated programmes to help increase the productivity of workers, by providing them education and skills, health care and maternity leave provisions for women workers, for example. Ambedkar set up the Tripartite Labour Council in 1942, to safeguard social security measures to the workers, giving equal opportunity to the workers and employers to participate in formulating labour policy and strengthening the labour movement by introducing compulsory recognition of trade unions and worker organizations⁶⁸. Labour was

placed in the Concurrent List. Chief and Labour Commissioners viz. were appointed, so was formed a Labour Investigation Committee. Minimum Wages Act⁶⁹ was his contribution. So were Employment Exchanges and importantly workers 'Right to Strike'. Productivity and job security went together, unlike the Reformers and Globalists of today, bent on contract labour and its in-formalization thru 'hire and fire' or 'Exit Policy'. Ambedkar's vision and economic philosophy is best illustrated by his thrust to improve human capital and human resources. He established the Central Water Commission, the Central Electricity Authority, the Central Irrigation and Waterways Commission in 1944 which became the Central Waterways, Irrigation, Navigation Commission on the approval of Babasaheb in 1945, and the Central Water, Power, Irrigation and Navigation Commission, the latter's integration to concurrently enhance employment opportunities, in 1948. The Central Water and Power Commission later bifurcated into the Central Electricity Authority and the Central Water Commission. Environment was a central concern. Downstream it gave birth to State Electricity Boards (now sought to be unbundled and privatized), the Regional and National Grids (and Corporations), the National Thermal Power Corporation a giant in the Power sector today, the Damodar Valley Corporation, work on both initiated in 1943-44. His initiative and contribution on the Multi-purpose Plan for Development of Orissa's rivers is noteworthy. Such was the energy and vision of a great 'Dalit' son of the soil. We now come to perhaps his greatest contribution to the Nation State, to the Republic and to his much dreamed concept of democracy. Appointed Chairman of the Drafting committee of a Constitution for India, Ambedkar found himself the only active member of the seven originally nominated. Extraordinary though, he was still subject to being over-ruled, especially in the interest of the dominant class as regards production and property relations. Ambedkar clearly saw that unless the means of production were nationally owned by the state and agricultural lands too were nationalized there would be no real democracy. The village commons were in earlier times, not under the ownership of individuals or families. They were only sanctified as private property, just over a hundred years ago by Wellesley's Permanent Settlement and the Zamindari system introduced to make it convenient to help collect revenues for the East India Company and later the Crown, which had destroyed the social and economic fabric of our villages, by an order of magnitude. The Dalits and the landless, of which the Dalits were a majority, had no hope in hell, so to say. For the call for 'Land to the tiller' did not cater for the interests

of the Dalits as they were not even tillers or 'hissedars' and 'bataidars'. While presenting the main memorandum on 'State and Minorities' Ambedkar clearly stated that 'The main purpose behind the clause is to put an obligation on the State to plan the economic life of the people on lines which would lead to the highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to private enterprise and also provide for the equitable distribution of wealth'. Ambedkar was against monopoly in every form because he knew monopoly leads to exploitation.....it extracts work at low wages and creates artificial scarcities.....monopoly of capitalists cannot give justice to the exploited, poor classes'. He wrote in 1956 in the RPI manifesto, 'that any scheme of production must in the view of the RPI remain subject to one overriding consideration that there should be no exploitation of the working class.' Ambedkar made it clear that economic reforms by equalization of property must have precedence over every other kind of reform, noting that man is not just an economic creature (the monster of caste also had to be killed). To recapitulate, Ambedkar's radical proposals for inclusion in the Constitution were as follows:

i. Consolidation of land holdings and tenancy legislation are worse than useless, as they cannot help the 60 million untouchables, who are just landless labourersonly collective farms set out on the lines in the proposal can help them.

ii. State Socialism is vital for the rapid industrialization of India. Private enterprise cannot do it and if it did it would produce those inequalities of wealth which private capitalism has produced in Europe.

iii. Nationalization of Insurance serves a double objective. Apart from greater security to people, it also gives the State resources for financing its economic planning in the absence of which it would have to resort to borrowing from the money market at a high rate of interest. This plan, elaborated in clause 4, Article II of his Memorandum to the Constituent Assembly included recommendations that:

- I. Agriculture be a State industry.
- II. Key and basic industries would be owned by the State.
- III. A life insurance policy would be compulsory for every citizen.
- IV. The State shall acquire the subsisting (existing) rights in agriculture and private owners will be compensated for by transferable debentures.

(Nationalization of land would simultaneously abolish caste, in Ambedkar's view.)

- V. The land acquired shall be divided into farms of standard size and let out equitably, and cultivated collectively. Finance or credit shall be provided by the State.
- VI. All this was without closing every avenue for private enterprise⁷⁰.

That is why; Ambedkar's ardent desire was that the plan of State Socialism must become a part of the Constitution. He further cautioned that this essential condition for the success of a planned economy should not be liable to suspension, abrogation or abandonment by the Parliament or the Government (and how prophetic he has turned out to be today). Political democracy, he said rests on the principle that the State shall not delegate powers to private persons (entities) to govern others. He also went on to write, 'anyone who studies the working of the system of social economy based on private enterprise and pursuit of personal gain will realize how it undermines, if it does not actually violate, the last two premises on which democracy rests. How many have to relinquish their constitutional rights in order to gain their living? How many have to subject themselves to be governed by private employers? Ask those who are unemployed whether what are called Fundamental Rights are of any value to them. If a person who is unemployed is offered a choice between a job of some sort, with some sort of wages, with no fixed hours of labour and with an indirect restriction on joining a union and the exercise of his right to freedom of speech, association, religion etc can there be any doubt as to what his choice will be? How can it be otherwise? The fear of starvation, the fear of being compelled to take children away from school, the fear of having to bear the burden of public cost are factors too strong to permit a man to stand out for his fundamental rights. The unemployed are thus compelled to relinquish their fundamental rights for the sake of securing the privilege to work and to subsist...What about those who are employed? Constitutional lawyers assume that the enactment of Fundamental Rights is enough to safeguard their liberty, and that nothing more is called for. They argue that where the state refrains from intervention in private affairs, economic and social, the residue is liberty. What is necessary is to make the residue as large as possible and state intervention as small as possible. It is true that that where the state refrains from intervention what remains is liberty. But this does not dispose of the matter; one more

question remains to be answered. To whom and for whom is this liberty? Obviously, this liberty is liberty to the landlords to increase rents, to the capitalists to increase the hours of work and reduce the rate of wages. This must be so. It cannot be otherwise, for in an economic system employing armies of workers, producing goods in mass at regular intervals, someone must make rules, so that the workers will work and the wheels of industry run on. Liberty from the control of the state is another name for the dictatorship of the private employer'⁷¹ The Advisory Committee did not accept his proposals. But Ambedkar pressed repeatedly with the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly to incorporate his proposals in the Chapter on Fundamental Rights of the Constitution and not disallow them on 'technical grounds'. He argued that it was a matter in which the labouring classes in general and the scheduled castes in particular, are vitally concerned. That is the precise reason why it was not permitted in the justifiable part of the Constitution...but relegated to the Directive Principles, now more honored in the breach than practice (that is why the PS Appu Committee observed in its report on Land Reforms in 1972, that the hiatus between precept and practice, between policy pronouncements and actual execution has been the greatest in the domain of land reforms.) The application of economic thoughts and ideas of Ambedkar can only be implemented in steps and phases when the mazdoors in both the formal and the informal sector, kisans, landless workers, rural and urban men and women without livelihoods and entitlements, adivasis, artisans, bundkars, students, teachers, educated unemployed, technicians and engineers, employed or unemployed, subscribe and dedicate themselves to a better future for all. That is why; ambedkar pointed out that Dalits only as a caste group are not sufficient in numbers to change the system, its core policies, priorities and its structure without joining with the other oppressed groups, communities and demonstrating an overwhelming democratic majority. So, he had given special attention again and again in all his writings and speeches to form a 'United Front' of all exploited sections. For this a United Front of all sections and elements who constitute the exploited majority must be forged as a federation with decentralization as its watchword. Then and only then will the Dalits advance forward to their goal of social and economic justice. Otherwise they must remain as they are confined to receiving a few crumbs from the top table, always at the mercy of the Capitalist class and their ideology of Brahmanvad as defined by Ambedkar. The programmes, policies and objectives will need the agreement of all. However there will be sufficient flexibility for local initiatives depending on the

material and human resources, and the stage of development which have been reached in different locales, in the uneven matrix of social and economic indicators that we are confronted with, as long as they conform to the direction and goals of the movement.

His great contribution was also the preparation of the Declaration of Fundamental Rights safeguarding the cultural, religious and economic rights of the Depressed Classes. He prepared a scheme of political safeguards for the protection of the Depressed Classes in the future Constitution of a self-governing India. Ambedkar got opportunity in policy-making as Law Minister in the Central Cabinet of Independent India during 1947-51 and earlier as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in Charge of the labour, irrigation and power portfolio. His ideas on fiscal policy, administration, provincial autonomy, poverty, unemployment, inequalities, stagnant agriculture and destroyed industrialization were outstanding. He gathered numerous research experiences on finance and highlighted the economic exploitation done by the colonial government. He completed his M. Sc. degree on the thesis of "The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India" and he was awarded D.Sc. for his thesis on "The Problem of Rupee". Besides, Ambedkar has dealt with the problems of landless labourers, small holdings, Khoti system, collective farming, land revenue and abolition of landlordism. He has expressed his views and opinions on nationalization of industries, food position, socialism and social equality. He was deadly opposed to the Gandhian economic philosophy that was completely based on the principles of trusteeship. He vehemently opposed the Varna based professions of Gandhiji. He struggled against caste based professions of the Hindus that were introduced in the time of Manu, an ancient Indian law maker. He encouraged people to discard the age-old traditional inhuman beliefs and professions due to empower themselves in the field of economy, polity, society, education, culture and so on. He boosted up the mind of the toiling masses to earn by learn not by tradition. He encouraged the Dalits to feel the importance of education as it is the master key of the entry point in different employment sectors. He taught the doctrine of labour-wealth relations to the common people in India. He highlighted the philosophical interpretation of the Marxian economy and pointed out that labour is the lord of wealth in the universe. So labour can change the world economy for the greater benefit of humankind. That is why Ambedkar was very much violent against the Indian caste based traditional professions or economy. He also tried to break the shackles of caste based

professional traditions of the Hindu society. He opposed to hereditary qualification in case of any work or occupation. He always fought for qualitative educational qualification deemed fit in respect of any kind of job irrespective of caste, class, creed, sex and religion. His tireless efforts for establishing the concept of equality, liberty and fraternity in respect of professional opportunities, social liabilities, political activities, economic earnings, educational facilities, religious worships and so on. His attitude towards the ill-fated peasants, exploited labours, women workers and half naked and half-hunger toiling masses was very much humane rather than Gandhiji-the Father of the Indian Nation. In the field of caste based economic life Gandhiji stands on false myth of Brahmanical socio-religious and economic tradition whereas Ambedkar stands on living myth of humanism in the world perspective. Some scholars pointed out that Gandhiji and Ambedkar, the two shining stars in the history of universe, worked for the benefit of humankind. But Gandhiji was completely convinced by the age-old Brahmanical traditions and beliefs that lopsided the benefit of the common people. Ambedkar came forward as a saviour to the unprivileged and exploited classes without any hesitation to establish the concept of human rights in the Indian society. The explanation of Gandhiji towards caste based economy was completely based on the traditional thoughts and beliefs. He did not implement the doctrine of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Satyagraha (truthfulness) to establish the concept of equality, liberty and fraternity in respect of economic activities, social mobility and political transparency for the benefit of the exploited sections of the Indian society. But Ambedkar launched ceaseless struggles to fight to finish the injustices prevailed in the Hindu society that was imposed upon the ignorant toiling masses in India. He never bends his head before the inhuman age-old traditional thoughts and beliefs relating to hereditary professions or works. His noble labour welfare measure heralded a new dimension in the history of Indian labour economy that brought a revolutionary change in the mind set up of the deprived sections of the society along with the attitude of the wealthy classes and the government. This is the first ever attempt made by Ambedkar to bring the three opposite directions under the common minimum programme for the benefit of the toiling persons along with the protection of the national interest of the country. Ambedkar came forward to save the life of the ill-fated labour women from their endless hardships, the problems of wages and maternity leaves. He also explained the ill-fated socio-economic conditions of the Hindu women and encouraged them to

fight to finish their woes and sorrows from the society that were imposed upon them since the implementation of the laws introduced by Manu. He boosted up the mind of the Hindu women to stand up their own feet by breaking the shackles of barriers made by the ancient law makers. In fact, Ambedkar fought for the establishment of socio-economic empowerment of women in the Indian society. But Gandhiji never came forward to accelerate the process of socio-economic empowerment of women in India. Apart from these Ambedkar struggled against the forces of capitalism, privatization, free marketing, disinvestment on the part of government and globalization, as these would ultimately ruin the country, and the most adversely affected lot of our society would be the people living below the poverty line; consequently, there would be an unbroken gap between the rich and the poor. It is actually happening at present. His life and work would remain as a source of inspiration to all men and women all over the world. Therefore, it is clearly found from the aforesaid discussions that the role and attitudes of Gandhiji and Ambedkar towards the question of Caste based economic life was completely opposite to each other. Gandhiji advocated caste based economic activities whereas Ambedkar vehemently opposed to it and identified the criteria of requisite qualification and expertise knowledge of a person to a particular work irrespective of their caste, class, creed, sex and religion. Gandhiji stressed on the criteria of hereditary professions of the ancestors for a person to a particular work. He said that caste is the basis of hereditary professions. But Ambedkar preached the gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity and pointed out that these ideological parametric principles should be the basis of socio-economic, political, cultural, religious and other affairs of life. He also pointed out that there is no conception of liberty, equality and fraternity in the caste based economic activities. In fact, the Caste System was the main source of the Gandhian caste based economic activities. That is why; Ambedkar gave a proposal to annihilate the Caste System as is completely against the human rights and privileges. The low born Hindus (Sudras, Untouchables and Harijans) were severely humiliated and victimized by this inhuman system. It is an irony of fate that Gandhiji, the father of the Indian nation was the ardent follower and believer of this inhuman Caste System that wrecked the life of the toiling masses in India. Even Gandhian Varna system was based on the norms of caste. To him, there was no distinction between the division of caste and the Varna division. His profound believe in the Varna system was quite different from the Varna system of the Bhagbat Gita. Ambedkar believed in

the three norms and principles of the Gita, i. e., qualitative qualifications, actions and virtuous deeds. These three principles would help to judge a person according his actions for a suitable work. It does not depend upon the heredity professions of the forefathers. It is completely based upon the norms and principles of liberty, equality, fraternity, socio-economic and political democracy. Realizing the hard reality of life Gandhiji changed his attitudes in his later activities relating to the caste based Varna issues to the doctrine of Varna propagated in the Gita. He came forward to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the Untouchables and the Harijans in India. But he could not overcome the inhuman norms of the Caste Institution relating to the economic activities of the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras in the true sense of the term. Some scholars pointed out that Gandhiji extended his helping hand to save the life of the Harijans only for the cause of political compulsions. But Ambedkar raised his voice against the inhuman role and activities of Gandhiji in respect of society, polity, economy, religion and so on. He played a vital role to establish the concept of Human Rights and Social Justice in the Indian society, polity and economy.

6.4. Conclusion

It can be pointed out from the above discussions that Gandhiji stressed on the professions of forefathers in the directions of heredity from generation to generation. He said that the object of the Varna system (caste system) was to prevent competition, class struggle and class war. To him, Caste determined the occupation of a man before he is born. There is no liberty to choose his occupation of a person in the constitution of the Caste Institution. The ideology of trusteeship of Gandhiji did not fulfill his cherish dream in the context of economic relation between the haves and have not. Therefore, the status and position of the Brahmins in the four-fold caste division in the Hindu society is unquestionable in matter of employment, education, occupation and all sorts of mastery over the other caste groups in the so-called Hindu society. They were the mastermind behind the caste based hereditary economic life. But Ambedkar vehemently opposed to the theory of forefather's hereditary birth occupational criteria for choosing any professions for any varnas. He clearly pointed out that a person should obtain a job if he would deserve according to the nature of that job. So he fought against the inhuman and unjustified hereditary birth criteria for

obtaining a job. He identified various criteria like, educational qualification, efficiency in work and expertise knowledge etc. in the occupational fields for obtaining any kind of jobs. He raised his voice against the caste based economic professions or occupations. He vehemently opposed to the caste based occupational divisions of varnas. But he profoundly believed in the philosophy of liberal thoughts and ideas to open up the occupational sectors to all irrespective of their caste, class, sex, religion etc. He mainly believed in the slogan of 'career open to talent' in respect of the social, economic, cultural, religious, political activities and administrative works. He played a vital role to protect the interest of the workers, peasants, women, untouchables and the Depressed Classes of India through the constitutional safeguards. He was in favour of modernization, industrialization and urbanization, which, he found, were indispensable for the overall growth of the nation.

References

1. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 9, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1991, p. 278.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p-277.
4. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 1, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1989, p. 77.
5. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 9, op.cit. , pp. 278-282.
6. Shukla, Ramakant; *Gandhian Philosophy of Education*, Sublime Publications, Jaipur, 2002, p.263.
7. Gandhi, M.K.; *Modern V. Ancient Civilization*, Hingorani T, Anand ed., Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1970, p. 14.
8. Gandhi, M. K.; *Industrial and Agrarian life and Relations*, Kher V. D. ed., Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1984, p. 260.
9. Gandhi, M.K.; *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*; Desai, Mahadev, translated, Penguin Books, 1982, p.365.
10. Bose, Nirmal Kumar; *Studies in Gandhism*, India Associated Publishing Co., Calcutta, 1962, p.47.
11. *Young India*, December 26, 1924.

12. The Harijan, October 9, 1937.
13. Ibid.
14. The Harijan, August 25, 1940.
15. Young India, November 15, 1928.
16. The Harijan, July 13, 1947.
17. Ibid, October 9, 1937.
18. The Harijan, April 20, 1940.
19. Ibid.
20. An address delivered before the Missionary Conference, Madras on 14 February, 1939, on Economics of Khadi.
21. Gandhi, M. K., Ethical Religion, Trans. By Ayar, S. Ganesan Publisher, Madras (1922), p. 46.
22. Ibid, p.59.
23. Ibid p. 48.
24. Ibid, p. 39.
25. Young India, March, 9, 1922.
26. The Harijan, September 4, 1919, p.466.
27. Gandhi, M.K, National Voice, p.212.
28. Young India, November 1928, p. 381.
29. Mishra, D. K; Doshi, S. L.; Jain, C. M.; Gandhian Thought (Gandhi and Social Order), Published by Research Publications, Jaipur, New Delhi, 2008, p. 23-24.
30. Ibid.
31. The Harijan, 29.11.51
32. February 1916 – Convocation of the Hindu University.
33. Moon, Vasant. (ed.)- Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 9, op. cit, p. 276. Quoted in Vol. II of the series called Gandhi Sikshan as No. 18.
34. The Harijan, September, 28, 1934, p. 560.
35. Vide Dr. Bhagwandas: Sanatan Vaidika Dharma (1928), p. 104.
36. The Harijan, July 18, 1936.
37. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 9, op. cit., p. 291; Quoted in Gandhi's Varna Vyavastha, p.51.
38. Mazumdar, H.T; Mahatma Gandhi- A Peaceful Revolutionary, Charles Scribner, 1952, p. 56.

39. Meherally, Yusuf; On Gandhi (Gandhi's 75th Birthday volume), 1944, p. 238.
40. Gandhi, M. K; Sarvodaya, Ahmedabad, NPH, 1954, p. 40.
41. Keer, Dhananjay; Dr. Ambedkar Life and Mission, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, Tenth Reprint 2002, p. 136.
42. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 9, op. cit., p. viii.
43. J.S. Narayan Rao and others, (ed.), B.R.Ambedkar-His Relevance Today, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 1994, p. 53.
44. Vidyasagar, I.S; Concept of Humanism of Dr. Ambedkar, ABD Publishers, Jaipur, India, 2005, p.72.
45. Jatava, D.R; Ambedkar Code of Conduct, ABD Publishers, Jaipur (Raj.), India, 2005, p.163.
46. Lokhade, G.S; Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar - A Study in Social Democracy, Intellectual Publishing House, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 33-34. / or ISV-P123
47. Jatava, D.R; Ambedkar Code of Conduct, op. cit., p. 162.
48. Lokhade, G.S; Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar-A Study in Social Democracy, Intellectual Publishing House, New Delhi, 1982, p. 35.
49. Ibid, pp.45-47.
50. Ibid, p. 47.
51. Deogirikar, T.R; Twelve Years in Parliament, Continental, Poona, 1964, p. 88.
52. Keer, Dhananjay; Dr. Ambedkar Life and Mission, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, Tenth Reprint 2002, p. 129.
53. Keer, Dhananjay; Dr. Ambedkar Life and Mission, op. cit., p. 298.
54. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 10, op. cit., p.78
55. Ibid, p. 220.
56. Vidyasagar, I.S; Concept of Humanism of Dr. Ambedkar, op. cit., p. 108-109.
57. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 9, op. cit., p. 197.
58. Quoted in Dalit Voice (Forty-nightly), Vol. 23, December1-15, Bungalow, India.
59. Jatava, D.R; Ambedkar Code of Conduct, op. cit., p.116.
60. Ibid, p.133.
61. Keer, Dhananjay; Dr. Ambedkar Life and Mission, op. cit., p. 106.

62. <http://atrocitynews.wordpress.com/2007/02/02/dr-br-ambedkar-economic-program-vision-central-mission/>
63. Ibid. See also Keer, Dhananjay; *Dr. Ambedkar Life and Mission*, op. cit., pp. 285-286
64. Moon, Vasant (ed.); *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol.10, op. cit., p. vii-viii.
65. Ibid, p. 320.
66. Mehra, Shashi; ed., *Ambedkar's Perspective on State, Caste and Social Justice*, Sanjay Prakashan, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 197-198.
67. Ibid, pp. 137-138.
68. Ibid, Vol. 10, pp. 188-200.
69. Ibid, pp. 211-219, 300-301.
70. Vidyasagar, I.S; *Concept of Humanism of Dr. Ambedkar*, op. cit., pp. 135-136.
71. Shabbir, Mohammad (ed.); *Ambedkar on Law, Constitution and Social Justice*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur and New Delhi, pp.341-342; Quoted in Appendix I (Explanatory Notes), Clause 4, Section II, Article II, States and Minorities..., 1947.