

# **IDEAS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY:**

**A STUDY OF NEHRU, AMBEDKAR AND  
JAYPRAKASH NARAIN**

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)  
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## PREFACE

The present study analyses two very important components of the thought processes of three great Indian leaders, namely Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash Narain. These components, rather, the philosophical foundations are social justice and economic equality – the goals for which all these three nation – builders had to struggle throughout their entire lives.

All the three thinkers appeared at a period of national life which was very fateful for more than one reason. They had taken active part in India's freedom struggle movement and witnessed the nature and course of its development and culmination in the achievement of independence, the leadership that was provided by Mahatma Gandhi was, in one sense, unchallengeable. Nehru had been very close to Mahatma and was under the influence of Mahatma's charismatic leadership. His involvement in the freedom struggle movement and later on, as the country's first prime minister convinced him that the Indian society needed some reforms from within. He did not like the social evils as manifested through casteism, religious fundamentalism and other issues. His preference for socialism inspired him to devise ways and means through which the country could proceed towards an egalitarian society. That is why, his ideas on social justice and economic equality formed the very basis of his ideas and actions.

Ambedkar's position was slightly different. He did not agree with Mahatma and also Nehru on many socio-political and economic issues. Born in a family which was socially backward and economically poor, Ambedkar tried to explain social justice

and economic equality in a different way. His primary aim was to create a social order which would be free from all the views of deprivation, discrimination and denigration. In fact, he was more a man of action than a man of philosophy. He was a social activist and his entire life was a record of carrying on a mission for the reconstruction of the social order. Quite obviously, his ideas of justice or equality, be it social or economic, were guided by this consideration. He did not accept the nature of social regimentation the orthodox Hindu society had imposed and the issue of 'untouchability' became the point of attack in his theoretical as well as operational construction.

Like Ambedkar, Jayaprakash also sought to bring about radical changes in the society, starting with Socialism, he embraced, Sarvodaya and ultimately accepted 'Total Revolution' – as the methodological tool for bringing about desired changes in the society. He had always been a 'looker' for a new method although his goal remained the same – establishment of justice and equality in the society. Jayaprakash, though a close disciple of Mahatma, had to seek for new avenues to achieve his ultimate goal not because he disliked Gandhian principle but he had in mind to find out newer means to supplement what he had borrowed from Mahatma. That was perhaps the reason to see so many 'shifts' in Jayaprakash's political life. But whatever might be the reason, it goes without any doubt that he was out and out an Indian nationalist thinker whose primary aim was to reach a point from where the society would be able to eradicate the evils from all levels.

Thus viewed, there are similarities in the core areas of thought and action of Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash. There had been wide dissimilarities in other spheres – in the family background, social status, economic position, educational and cultural background, so on and so forth. But the nature of over-all impact of the then socio-political and economic environment on them was tremendous.

The entire discussion has been made in this backdrop, keeping in mind the nature of colonial condition in India. For a better understanding of their views on social justice and economic equality, their individual views, leadership, value preferences and their ideas about means and ends have been discussed at length. The study is designed on a comparative basis; as such, in stead of mere narration of chronological events, emphasis has been given on nature of their ideas and actions, conditioned, of course, by the force of circumstances. As a result, many issues, though not directly related with the focus of the present study, have been discussed, analysed and incorporated in the discussion.

A study of this nature has some uniqueness of its own. It is not a biographical sketch and hence attempts have been made to frame a theoretical/conceptual frame relating to justice and equality in general terms to see how far the ideas (as well as actions) of these three epoch-making thinkers can be fitted into this frame. The purpose has been to identify the areas of agreement and disagreement or uniformity or otherwise with the frame so developed. One particular problem that has been faced while working on this theme is that these national leaders took part in the freedom struggle movement and later on, they had taken active

role in the twin tasks of 'state-building' and 'nation-building'. So a clear line of distinction can be seen in their political life-role in the pre-independent state (colonial phase) and role in the post-independent state (post-colonial phase) in India. This is something unique and demands greater investigation. After all, there are different views about the role of the colonial and post-colonial state. Of late, there has appeared a good number of works on the nature of post-colonial state and society. The post-colonial discourse put emphasis, among other issues, on the nature and extent of 'hang-over' of the foreign role and its impact on the process of nation-building. Much depends upon the manner in which the nation-builders marginalize or empower the newly-born state to overcome the effect of this 'hang-over'. Fortunately enough, the three leaders under the present study had the far sight and tried their best to raise the level of people's perception about the course to be followed in free country – that is India.

Efforts have been made to get ideas from all the available primary sources and these have been supplemented by the secondary sources. Analysis has been made in an objective manner, placing each one of them in the backdrop of social, political and economic milieu-both in the pre and post independent phases. In spite of this effort, if there remains any shortcoming that is essentially mine.

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# Chapter – I

## Introduction – The Problem – conceptual framework

### I

Man's quest for equality and justice can be found from days when he understood that there had been wide variations in the status and position of mankind. He understood that so far as physical position is concerned, there might be differences between man and man. But he failed to understand the cause behind differences in social status, economic equality or social justice that a man needs in order to live a decent life.

This realization prompted him to think of a situation where there will be no distinction regarding caste, class, economic status or social position. Infact this has been the core area of study and analysis of all great scholars who aimed at ushering an era where the evils of discrimination might be eradicated. But as each period of human civilization passed through different pulls and pressures, demands and desires, philosophers had to provide exact means for achieving the end. After all a philosopher is a true representative of his age.

A look at the cores of development in the western political philosophy will show that even during the period of ancient Greek political thought, philosophers like Plato and Aristotle were very much concerned about what they called 'Ideal' or just society where the role of the state was glorified to a formidable extent. The philosophical foundation of the Greek political thought was erected around one central idea in the relationship between man

and the state, primary focus would be on the state rather than man. They had their arguments also which stated that a man cannot, by his own effort, attain the ideal condition and in this process he needs help and guidance from the state. That was, perhaps, the reason, why in the idealist philosophy state was looked upon not a mere political designation but as an 'Idea' – the conscience keeper and the moral guardian of the individual. In other words, this philosophy projected the state as the source of all power and authority and looked upon man as solely a dependent creature. Whatever may be the nature of philosophical foundation, the basic thrust was to create a social condition where the state would provide, justice and equality for all. In a word, the very essence of political obligation was given a new meaning by placing the state in the front position and relegating the individual to the background.

Things underwent drastic changes when in the next era attempts were made to reverse the individual – state relationship and individual was accorded a frontal position vis-à-vis the state. Individual was given the role to direct and guide the state in its duty to provide social conditions in which justice and fair play could have their own space. The political ideas as propagated by the great contractualists would justify this position where they held the view that man created the civil order, or for that matter, the state with a view to achieving peace, order, discipline and justice. One may notice some differences in the interpretations of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, but these differences were primarily methodological and hence, peripheral, without altering or affecting the core concept in any manner.

One may further notice that the contractualist thinkers, notably John Locke, brought in two other concepts of natural rights and ownership of means of property which dominated the entire western philosophical world for a long time.

The same trend in the field of political theorization continued until a new interpretation was provided by Marx wherein the state was looked upon from an altogether different perspective. Before Marx, in the hands of T.H. Green, though an idealist thinker, the entire notions of social order, individual responsibility and the role of the state were viewed in a way that fitted more into non-idealist tradition than the idealist one. In simple terms, T.H. Green was greatly influenced by the liberal tradition already created by John Locke. That was the reason why Green could draw the conclusion that 'will not force, is the basis of the state'.

In the writings of Bentham and J.S. Mill, the issue acquired new dimension. While Bentham put emphasis on utility, Mill laid stress on individual freedom by restraining the authority of the state. The basic premise of Bentham's philosophy was man's desire for happiness and rejection of unhappiness. But Mill had altogether a different perception — establishment of individual liberty by minimizing the authority of the state. Therefore, he stood for absolute individualism.

This trend was not accepted by Marxian philosophy wherein the state was looked upon as machinery for exploitation. That was the reason for the abolition of the state ('withering away of the

state'). The establishment of a classless society is the ultimate goal of the Marxian philosophy where the state will cease to exist.

With this historical background, we should proceed to examine the basic concepts of justice and equality – the main thrust of the present discussion. Political philosophers since the ancient times have tried to formulate the concept of justice with a view to examining its relevance in the society concerned. However with the advent of modern consciousness, especially under the influence of the principles of democracy and socialism, this concept has been thoroughly transformed. As a result, the traditional view of individual justice has been replaced, in a general way, by a more extensive concept of social justice.

In common parlance, the term justice signifies the quality of being 'just' or 'right' or 'reasonable'. Since, these are primarily concepts relating to morality, so it has within it some ethical attributes. Morality is generally believed to be something like 'eternal truth'. Infact, this formed the basis of the idealist interpretation of the nature of the state.

With the expansion of modern social and economic theory, the meaning and nature of the concept of justice have undergone significant transformation. Morality is no longer regarded as the problem of adjusting some mystical qualities of spirit or character with some superior or transcendental notion. It is held that morality should be reflected in social reality, rather than in some supposed supernatural or mystical phenomenon.

Viewed in that perspective, justice as a moral concept is at once a dynamic idea. It symbolizes perfectness because our

realization of an ideal situation is in a continuous process. The progress in this direction depends upon the development of our social consciousness. That is why Earnest Barker in his 'Principles of Social and Political Theory' notes that the term justice is derived from the Latin word 'jus', which embodies the idea of joining or fitting – the idea of bond or tie. Naturally a question arises, what are the elements sought to be joined or fitted into the idea of justice? Barker seems to be quite explicit when he states:

'Primarily the joining or fitting implied in this root idea is that between man and man, in an organized system of human relations. But we may also conceive of the 'just' or justice as connected with, and expressed in a joining or fitting between value and value in a general sum and synthesis of values' <sup>1</sup>.

Barker has identified three other forms of values which are the basic foundations to an organized system of human relations: the value of liberty, the value of equality and the value of fraternity. To Barker, justice itself is a value which represents a synthesis of other values in individual and corporate relationships. In his own words:

'The claims of liberty have to be adjusted to those of equality, and the claims of both have also to be adjusted to those of cooperation. From this point of view, the function of justice may be said to be that of adjusting, joining or fitting the different political values. Justice is the reconciler and the synthesis of political values; it is their union in an adjusted and integrated whole' <sup>2</sup>.

He further notes : 'The general notion of justice represents the 'first' or 'total' value in which the others all are combined; by which they are all controlled; and in virtue of which their different claims (if and so far as a conflict arises) are reconciled and adjusted'.<sup>3</sup>

The notion of justice was further extended by other social scientists, notably, D.D. Raphael who in his Problems of Political Philosophy describes it as 'modern consciousness'.<sup>4</sup> But, this idea calls for further elaboration as 'modern consciousness' or which, in a broader sense, is known as social consciousness is an ever-growing phenomenon and should be viewed as a progressive idea as far as they are supported by reason or objective conditions.'

Considered in this aspect, justice can be stated as the thread which runs through all the values of liberty, equality and fraternity to make them an integrated concept. It reconciles their conflicts and contradictions and gives them the shape of universal principles and governance. Justice is the final goal to which all these values should conform.

One may come across two very important and at the same time inter-related questions of great importance:

1. Why does one demand that human relations in a society should be governed by the principle of liberty?
2. Why does one not leave them to the wishes of individuals, to the free play of the natural forces, to the element of chance or to irrational traditions or considerations?

In other words, these questions suggest that justice as a postulate of governing human relations in society should be

regulated by 'reason'. It demands that each individual should be treated as an 'end in himself', not as a means to an end. No individual should be accorded a superior status in comparison to others. Such a condition would not only safeguard justice, but also ensure liberty to an individual. To quote Barker once again:

'The need of liberty for each is necessarily qualified and conditioned by the need of liberty for all, and the liberty of A will therefore be such liberty as he can enjoy concurrently with the enjoyment of similar and equal liberty by B. and C and D... because the liberty of each is thus relative to that of others, and was to be adjusted to that of others, it must always be regulated; and indeed it would not exist unless it were regulated.<sup>5</sup> On this principle, it may be suggested that any restraint on liberty will be admitted if it is imposed in the interests of justice and equality.

The principle of equality, if it means 'absence of discrimination cannot be taken as the final principle of justice.' There are cases where there might be lawful discrimination as approved by the authority of the state. State can make discriminatory classification of people on the grounds of their backwardness, mostly in economic terms. But so far as political dimension is concerned, 'one man, one vote' may signify that each individual, irrespective of his social position is entitled to have equal political treatment from the authority of the state. But so far as economic sphere is concerned the mere absence of discrimination may fail to meet the requirements of justice. When society is divided into classes on the basis of property relations, the cause of justice will not be served. One may refer to Plato's concept of justice in which he sought to prescribe certain duties of

different citizens which were supposed to be the foundations of the 'virtues' supporting those duties. In the words of Richard Lewis Nettleship. 'Justice, in Plato's sense, is the power of individual concentration on duty .... Justice therefore is really the condition of the existence of all the virtues; each of them is a particular manifestation of the spirit of justice, which takes different forms according to a man's function in the community. In modern phrase it is equivalent to sense of duty'.<sup>6</sup>

It follows that Plato prescribed different duties for different groups of people and justice emanates from performing the exact task assigned to them. In other words, there appears to be a corresponding relationship between justice and the performance of one's own duties. But in modern sense the term 'social justice' has acquired a wider meaning, enabling the depressed section of the population to raise their voice against any excess of authority. The main problem of social justice is to decide on appropriate allocation of the advantages that are available or that can be secured through the instrumentality of the social organization.

On the legal plane, 'justice according to law' or 'law according to justice' has acquired special significance. To quote Morris Gins Berg: 'The notion of a legal order implies that decisions shall be made not arbitrarily but in accordance with general rules and these general rules (what ever they are) shall be correctly (that is, what moralists call impartially) applied; that is, by criteria defining the class of cases coming under the rule, and not affected by the subjective reactions of the judge. Justice then is in conformity with the existing law'.<sup>7</sup>

On this point, one may refer to what Barker observed:

‘A law has validity and I am legally obliged to obey it, if it is declared, recognized and enforced as the law of the authority of the legally organized community, acting in the capacity of a state. A law has value, and if I am bound to obey it not only legally, and not only by an outward compulsion, but also morally and by an inward force, if it has the inherent quality of justice’.<sup>8</sup>

One more dimension for the concept of justice calls for analysis. The term ‘socio-economic justice’ appears to be a combination of social justice and economic justice. While, these two concepts, used separately may indicate restricted sense of justice, a combination of the two, intends to give it a wider meaning.

The concept of justice has a number of important implications:

1. First, it requires a just state of affairs i.e., it is impossible to examine the justice of action without a ‘prior identification of the just state of affairs’.<sup>9</sup>
2. Second, it is associated with the conditions of morality. For e.g. a just and fair race is one in which a person who wins morality deserves to win, if he can fulfill these basic requirements.<sup>10</sup>
3. It carries the sense of proper distribution of gains and losses. In other words rewards and punishments are to be distributed among the individuals so as to ensure fairness.

4. Fourth, it normally prevails in a congenial atmosphere that is provided by a democratic set-up. In the words of Barry 'fair rules may be impartially enforced in regimes which allow little political participation and majority rule democracies may generate arbitrary treatment of individuals and minorities'.<sup>11</sup>

A few words on the Marxian theory of justice may be relevant here. The Marxian notion of justice proceeds on the assumption that the legislature makes a law, that is in the interest of the ruling class. The instruments of law and justice seek to protect and promote the interest of the bourgeoisie class. They will serve the purpose of the proletariat after the successful socialist revolution.

In the current discourse on justice, John Rawls offers a new critique of the principles of justice which is a combination of 'equality' and 'difference' principles in the scheme of establishing a doctrine which could serve as the basis for the distribution of benefits and burdens among individuals. Infact, the primary aim of Rawls is to provide a philosophy of justice which could be an alternative to the utilitarian principle of justice.<sup>12</sup>

According to Rawls, the two principles of justice would be chosen in the 'original position' behind the 'veil of ignorance' among various alternatives present. The two principles of justice are:

1. Each person is to have an equal right to the most sensitive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.

2. social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both

- a) reasonably expected to be everyone's advantage;
- b) attached to positions and offices open to all. <sup>13</sup>.

These two principles are to be applied to the basic structure of society and are to regulate the distribution of social and economic advantages and disadvantages. In other words, the two principles govern the pattern of rights and duties, dividing the social order into two broad categories:

- a) Those aspects of the system that define and secure equal liberty to all its citizens and
- b) Those aspects that establish social and economic inequalities.

Thus formulated, in Rawls' scheme 'justice as fairness' provides strong argument for equal liberty. <sup>14</sup>.

Political justice consists in distributing prestige, authority or power in the society. The second principle applies to the distribution of income and wealth. Rawls combines his two principles of justice in this way:

'All social values – liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and the basis of self respect – are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any, or of all, of these values is to everyone's advantage.' <sup>15</sup>.

In his arguments, Rawls concentrates on his conception of primary social factors like rights, liberties, power, wealth, opportunities and self respect. He holds the view that a 'just

society' is one that distributes these primary goods equally among the citizens. He believes that basic liberties are essential for individuals if a society has to look for perfection. Liberty, viewed in this sense appears to be a certain pattern of 'social norm'. It implies that representative persons in various social positions should get equal treatment like any other person not holding any social or other positions. For this Rawls takes for elaboration primarily three interpretations: natural liberty, liberal equality and democratic equality.

Turning to the operational aspects of the principles of justice, Rawls suggests that the first principles of equal liberty is of primary standard for a constitutional convention. Its main requirements are that fundamental liberties of the persons, liberty of conscience and freedom of thought in particular being protected. The second principle which is termed as difference principle is applicable at the stage of legislation. Comparing the importance of the principles of justice for basic structures, individuals and nations, Rawls says that the basic structure must be given first priority and second and third priority to individuals and nations respectively.

In the final analysis Rawls seems to have rejected any conception of justice which requires distributing power, prestige, authority or 'the good things of life' in general. According to David Miller, 'Rawls proposes his theory of justice in the form of the two principles in the place of utilitarianism'.<sup>16</sup> In his opinion Rawls attempts to construct his theory in two ways : First, he believes that an acceptable moral theory must be in accordance with initiative moral judgment. Second, Rawls attempts to provide

an independent justification for the two principles highlighting that they would be acceptable to rational individuals. To quote David Miller: ‘Had Rawls wished to make his account of justice legal procedural, he should have omitted the two principles together and prescribed only the institutional framework. But in Rawls’ case the institutions are set up to satisfy the two principles.’<sup>17</sup>

Miller has also pointed out two other dimensions of social justice as expounded by Rawls. In his words “The question is whether a large society could practice social justice in this form. It seems that the informal coordination of people’s behaviour that can occur in a small community cannot happen here – the economy must either be market – based, giving people incentives to produce the resources that other people want to consume, or state – directed, with a central authority planning what is to be produced and directing individuals according to the plan. Although in theory one can imagine both market and centrally planned economies that do not rely on material incentives, in practice this has proved impossible to achieve (attempts were made in the mid – twentieth century by Communist regimes in China and Cuba to replace material by moral incentives, but in neither case was the experiment successful).

Pursuing social justice in its radical form does seem to require dispensing with the market and reconstructing society on a quiet different, communitarian basis.”<sup>18</sup>

Miller goes on suggesting the fact that the liberal view of social justice might have embraced many democratic socialists and for those matter contemporary liberals. To quote Miller, “There is,

however, a less radical view of social justice which has been embraced by democratic socialists, and also by many contemporary liberals. On this view, social justice requires the equal distribution of some social benefits – especially equal rights of citizenship such as voting and freedom of speech. It requires some benefits to be distributed on the basis of need, so that every one is guaranteed an adequate income, access to housing and health care, and so forth. But it also allows other resources to be distributed unequally, so long as there is equal opportunity for people to try to acquire a larger share. These inequalities may be justified on the grounds of desert, or on the grounds that by giving people material incentives to work hard and produce goods and services that other people want, everyone in society benefits.”<sup>19</sup>

Miller has further suggested that “Rawls’ theory of social justice explicitly makes room for a market economy: his third principle is formulated so as to allow for the possibility that people may need to keep at least part of the gain that they can make through producing goods and services for the market if they are going to be sufficiently motivated to work hard and use their talents in the most productive way. This undermines Hayek’s claim that social justice and market freedom are conflicting goals. On the other hand, a market economy governed by Rawlsian principles would look quite different from the economic systems that exist in most liberal democracies today.”<sup>20</sup>

It may not be irrelevant if one concludes the analysis of social justice explained by Rawls if one relies on what Miller has to say about his own assessment of Rawls’ idea of social justice. In his opinion the theory of social justice should retain Rawls’ first

two principles – Equal Liberty and Equality of Opportunity, but replace the difference principles with two others. “The first is that of a guaranteed social minimum, understood in terms of the set of needs that must be met to give every citizen a decent life; as I indicated earlier, this minimum is not fixed, but changes between societies and over time. The second is a principle of desert: inequalities of income and wealth should be proportional to the relative contributions different people make, measured by the success in producing goods and services that other people need and want. Like Rawls’ theory, these principles do not entail getting rid of the market economy, but they do require the state to maintain an extensive welfare system, and to adjust the legal framework within which the market functions so that there is as close a link as possible between what people contribute economically and what they receive by way of income. This would require some big changes to the way that capitalist economies currently operate, since existing rules of property ownership and inheritance allow people to reap large rewards by virtue of luck, inherited wealth, corporate position, and so forth – factors that are unrelated to their contribution to society. Indeed the pursuit of social justice may point us towards a form of market socialism in which economic enterprises are owned and controlled by those who work in them, rather than by outside share holders, so that profits can be shared among the actual producers. This is not communist utopia favoured by Marx and other radical socialists, since it allows harder working and more talented individuals to reap the fruits of their labour, but it still takes us far beyond the political agenda of

the present day, atleast so far as the liberal democracies are concerned.”<sup>21</sup>.

While explaining Rawls’ idea on social justice, Miller concludes with views where he is candid about the fact that the exploration of social justice is an ‘unfinished project’. In a rhetoric way, Miller has summed up his views when he concludes that “Like democracy, social justice is an unfinished project. The political philosopher’s job is to tell us, in outline, what a just society would look like, without either building castles in the air or over – adapting to the political realities of the moment. Many now believe that the quest for social justice has been stalled by the global developments which reduce the power of any state to regulate the market economy as justice demands.”<sup>22</sup>.

Conceptually, the concepts of justice and equality have undergone changes both in terms of meaning and extent. Although essentially a universal notion it cannot be denied that interpretations vary due to differences in contextual setting or psycho-moral preferences of any particular community. This can be seen in the course of the present study dealing with three great nationalist leaders in India – Nehru, Ambedkar and J.P. Narain.

In political terms, justice may involve distribution of goods. It may also mean the distribution of evils as well. In other words, the notion of justice is to be placed in the context of scarcity of goods which needs to be distributed proportionately among the people. But the issue of distribution of scarce ‘goods’ calls for a rational basis which is very difficult to identify in a society where heterogeneity makes the issue more complicated. That is why, it is

found that in a conservative construction of the idea of justice, hierarchical distribution seems to be the only deciding factor; but the liberals have a different view altogether: to them distribution should be made on the basis of merit, the basis of which should be the equality of opportunity. Again, the socialist have tried to link it up with need and fundamental equality.

This wide variety of meaning of justice gives the impression that as a concept it is flexible and dependent on a number of conditions in a society under reference. That is perhaps, the reason why in modern analysis justice is looked upon as a 'property of situations'. But one should remember that situations might be created by individuals for their own benefit. It may also be created in such a manner as to deprive another section of their share in it. Such an explanation calls for analyzing to distinct phases in this process:

- a). the methods of distribution and
- b). the possible outcome of such distribution.

Thus viewed, it appears that justice involves equality, merit and need of the individuals in a society. It brings within its folds the notion of equality as it is considered to be the basic foundation of justice. But it should not be forgotten that the notion of merit admits of the fact that merit can be measured by contribution. It proceeds on the assumption that everyone, in the first instance, should have an equal share to make his own contribution. A theory of justice based on 'need' starts with the idea that every one should have the right to satisfy his need with no reference to his contribution what so ever. Philosophically, it becomes very

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difficult to prove and locate the concept of 'need' in a highly segmented society. The basic problem revolves around one issue: what constitutes the core of 'need'?

Whatever may be the yardstick, it is right to suggest that "a theory of justice based on the need reflects a fundamental idea of human equality and happiness, whereas one based on merit rests on a premise of the differential worth of individuals".<sup>23</sup> Any metaphysical notion of justice can explain fully the basic ingredients of either need or merit. The problem is to place proper emphasis on 'competing principles of justice' - which Rawls has so categorically stated.

That is perhaps the reason why Rawls asserts that an individual would logically select the following two principles of justice:

- a) Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others;
- b) Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they can both
  - (i) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and
  - (ii) to attach to positions and offices open to all.<sup>24</sup>

Rawls, while emphasizing the liberal aspect of justice, refers to procedural theory and argues that "pure criteria for the right result, instead there is a correct or fair procedure such that the outcome is likewise correct or fair, whatever it is".<sup>25</sup> A socialist, on the other

hand, seeks to make an ordering of the criteria of justice in placing need, equality and merit in a scale. In other words, a socialist theory of social justice may be a blend of number of major criteria which form the fundamental foundations of justice.

It has been very correctly observed that “once choice of a theory of justice depends on one’s ideological or moral outlook; this in turn also determines whether one locates justice in intentions, acts or outcomes. .... Any application of a theory of justice to the existing situations (outcomes) implicitly passes judgments on the results of passed actions viewing them in the light of their results”.<sup>26</sup>.

This suggests that there is an intimate relationship between justice and equality both on theoretical and operational planes. Equality is generally seen in the sense of ‘fair and non – arbitrary treatment of individuals’. Equality, as a notion can be invoked as a substantive or absolute principle which specifically determines the outcome of a distribution. In a slightly different context, Iris Marion Young has observed:

“It is possible to reason about substantive moral issues without understanding their substance, which always presupposes some particular social and historical context; and one has no motive for making moral judgments and resolving moral dilemmas unless the outcome matter, unless one has a particular and passionate interest in the outcome”.<sup>27</sup>.

She further observes: “Instead of a fictional contract, we require real participatory structures in which actual people, with their geographical, ethnic, gender and occupational differences



assert their perspectives on social issues within institutions that encourage the representation of their distinct voices”<sup>28</sup>.

In this sense it becomes imperative for everyone to create ‘public spaces’ where group differences can be recognized, affirmed and can inform policy. Young’s notion of “politics of difference” refers to such public and institutional support which will be necessary for ‘self-organisation’ and generation of people oriented policies. To another commentator, Anne Phillips, the notion of justice is a highly segmented and fragmented society should be taken as a “mirror” which shows the need for justice under certain given conditions.<sup>29</sup> The central theme of these views rests on the fact that justice will remain incomplete if a section of the people remains silent and accepts any kind of imposition on them.

This point has been forcefully stated by Patricia Williams when the scholar points out: “For the historically disempowered, the conferring of rights is symbolic of all the denied aspects of their humanity; rights imply a respect that places one in a referential range of self and others, that elaborate one’s status from human body to social being”<sup>30</sup>.

Young as noted earlier in this section, has sought to make a compromise between two situations arising out of individual’s demands and group’s requirements, plea for ‘a dual system of rights’ – a set of universal rights that will be applicable for all citizens; and a set of group – rights and group – conscious policies that will be necessary for understanding the relevance of “social difference for equality in particular circumstances”. Justice taken

in this sense, should mean empowering the weak to achieve a societal condition where everyone will not only be protected in their vulnerability but will not remain vulnerable in future also.

The notions of justice and equality confront another important problem: problem of conflict and the face of the loss of impartiality. The basic question is related to the issue of providing judgment in a conflictual situation. The central question is: how can one be assured that the problem of partiality does not affect that the common process of judgment? Attempts have been made to solve this problem with the notions “ethic of care” and “solidarity” which refers to what is known in general terms as “politics of recognition”. Not only that, it concentrates on the notion of “equal concern and respect” for every body in the society. This has led Jon Elster to use the term “the civilizing effects” to denote that even the minority section of the people can play a better role in any deliberative process to protect their rights and ensure justice.

This point has been very beautifully summed up when it is said by Habermas:

“The perspective contemplating that of equal treatment of individuals is not benevolence but solidarity. This principle is rooted in the realization that each person must take responsibility for the other because as consociates all must have an interest in the integrity of their shared life context in the same way..... Every autonomous morality has to serve two purposes at once: it brings to bear the inviolability of socialized individuals by requiring equal treatment and thereby equal respect for the dignity of each

one; and it protects inter subjective relations of mutual recognition requiring solidarity of individual members of a community”.

The Rawlsian acceptance of politics as a factor in analyzing social justice assigns the mechanism of “constructivism” which has been taken as a name for “a certain procedure” or “moral structure” which influences the policy-makers to produce the desired outcome of the public principles of justice.

This is designed to ‘regulate the basic structure of society’.

This calls for an analysis of the very foundation of the society. To what extent, ‘contract’ as a force can be recognized as the basic foundation is still open to debate. There is a section of opinion which discards ‘mystifying role of consent (contract)’ in creating a society. If accepted, it might negate or challenge this foundation of historical evolutionary process.

Any study of justice, should therefore, begin with a reference to certain basic political values about constitutional essentials and questions of social and economic inequalities. Rawls in his concept of “well – ordered society” refers to serious divisive issues and the need for social cooperation. Only rhetoric democratic equality cannot bring about the desired changes and will leave many issues unresolved. This justifies the need for having a kind of general social theory of justice that can address the problem in a comprehensive manner.

An analysis of the Indian views on justice and equality reveals that these are looked upon as vehicles for a social reconstruction from time to time. The entire Gandhian philosophy, if examined carefully, points to the fact that Gandhiji was out an

out a thinker as well as a practitioner for social change. The core of his belief embodies the fundamentals of creating a society free from injustice, inequality and social and economic discrimination. Thus the root of Gandhian philosophy and action can be identified with what in general terms, can be described as 'social transformation'.

That is why perhaps the reason why there appears to be an agreement among makers of modern India about the need for social reconstruction supported by the forces of political change. Consequently, the theories advanced for this purpose highlight the nature of inter relationship between the society on the one hand and individual on the other. In other words, the nature of thoughts and activities of all the social reformers sought, in their own ways, to have a model which would be capable of creating, what Ambedkar has said, "a just society".

The need for such a model – building did not escape the attention of a noted social scientist, Isaiah Berlin when he writes:

"The first step to understanding of men is the bringing to consciousness of the model or models that dominate and penetrate their thought and action. Like all attempts to make men aware of the categories in which they think, it is a difficult and sometimes painful activity, likely to produce deeply disquieting results. The second task is to analyse the model itself, and this commits the analyst to accepting a modifying or rejecting it, and in the last case, to providing a more adequate one in its stead".<sup>31</sup>

That major socio-historical reconstruction of society demands a revision of the existing social and political philosophy has been noted by William Connolly:

“Conceptual revision is not..... a sufficient condition of political change, but it is indispensable to significant political change. It is a part of that process by which events once considered mere facts come to be seen as the outcome of a political process..... Conceptual revision is involved in any political strategy that aims at reconstituting social life in modest or in radical ways”<sup>32</sup>.

The task of social reconstruction calls for a new paradigm has been rightly explained by Sheldon Wolin when he says:

“From this view point society would envisaged as a coherent whole in the sense of customary political practices, institutions, laws, structure of authority and citizenship and operative beliefs being organized and interrelated. A politically organized society contains definite institutional arrangements, certain widely shared understanding regarding the location and use of political power, certain expectation about how authority ought to treat the members of society and about the claims that organize society can rightfully make upon its members....”<sup>33</sup>.

The way the Indian political thinkers and activists sought to bring about radical changes in society can be examined with reference to Gandhiji's own construction of Sarvodaya as a golden path to achieve an egalitarian society. Gandhiji has made a unique contribution when he has successfully blended his ideas on Swaraj and Satyagraha in such a way as to create a social condition where

equality, justice and non discrimination can prevail. Gandhiji has sought to reduce the gap between tradition and modernity in India and in the words of P. C. Joshi, Gandhiji could become a 'far more powerful modernizer of Indian society than thousands of modernists who had dismissed him as a traditionalist'<sup>34</sup>.

Gandhiji's idioms of Ram Rajya and Ahimsa, Dharma – all aimed at creating a society which will not only be egalitarian in economic sense but also humane in social and spiritual sense. To some critics, his concept of Sarvodaya served as an ideological basis for, what can be broadly termed, as 'social revolution'. Gandhiji, with the help of his ideas and actions could level a national movement which was converted into a war of movement, a war of position and a war for creating a society which could create conditions for 'just' and 'humane' social living. He has tried to interlink the tasks of regenerating Indian traditions and reconstructing western modernity. His policies and ideas embodied elements of continuity and change. In the words of B. Parekh, Gandhiji gives us a new theory of revolution grounded in the three principles of unity of human kind, the indivisibility of means and ends and emancipation of individuals. That was the reason why Gandhiji preferred the construction of a moral-political individual who is ready to create a just society for his fellow individuals.'

Gandhiji's construction for social justice and economic equality contains a set of actions which has been summarized as follows:

1. Non – violent Ownership –Trusteeship.
2. Non – violent Production –Appropriate Technology.

3. Non – violent Consumption – Non-possession.
4. Non – violent Work – Bread Labour.
5. Non – violent Allocation – Cooperation.
6. Non – violent Distribution – Equality.
7. Non – violence in Reforming Economic Systems.<sup>35</sup>

According to V. P. Verma, India's political institutions should be based on an idealist- philosophical – humanist conception of man. Man should be considered as 'moral – spiritual subject' – the model of man which contains the eternal Indian values of justice and equality.<sup>36</sup> This notion of 'spiritual humanism' is deeply rooted in the Vedic idea where it is taught that man derives his power as an integral part of the Absolute power (God). He is the embodiment of the infinite 'spiritual consciousness' which teaches him to be faithful to his duty towards his fellowmen with a view to creating a society based on justice and equality in all senses of these terms. Verma has written very clearly:

“A philosophy of freedom for man as a moral and spiritual subject can alone be the antidote to the excesses of nationalistic chauvinism, ethnocentric imperialism, totalitarian materialism and the fascist cult of racism, controlled economy and power politics”.<sup>37</sup>

Thus the entire discourse on justice and equality can be viewed from the Indian perspective where emphasis has been laid down on the nature of spiritual feelings of the individuals which follow the Indian tradition and culture. It transcends all barriers-

casteism, racism or such type of parochial feelings. It is universal and admits of no restriction artificially created by a section of the people for their own interest. Thus following Verma, one can say, a philosophical humanist would want to universalize the foundational ethical and spiritual principles of Indian culture for the redemption of humanity.<sup>38</sup> This, infact, represents the very spirit and ethos of India's culture, tradition and society where individual can play the role of a catalyst in bringing about desired social changes for a better tomorrow.

## II

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of the present study is to examine in depth the ideas of Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash in general and those of social justice and economic equality in particular. It is admitted that any attempt at separating the basic components of mental makeup of any individual is bound to fail because all the components are not only dependent on each but also inextricably mixed up. That is why any study of this nature is bound to confront a serious obstacle : How to make such a study without making any reference to the formation of mental position of any individual?

To exemplify the position, one may refer to the nature of any biographical study in which all these elements of an individual are taken up, discussed and analysed following a sequence of time and

development. In other words, such studies are mostly narrative in character.'

The present study is slightly different in character as it has sought to analyse two very important notions namely, social justice and economic equality which guided not only the thought processes of these three leaders, but also set the goals they aimed to achieve through their ideas and actions. There had been differences in outlook perception and even the nature of goals they wanted to achieve, but behind these differences there was a common concern, a common cause and a common feeling for the people of India who had been under foreign domination. Their thoughts and actions were highly representative in character so as to raise high hopes among the people at a critical juncture of India's freedom struggle.

The present study is modeled on a comparative basis concentrating on two important parameters, namely, social justice and economic equality. For the purpose of situating these three leaders against proper contextual setting some other parameters have been taken into consideration. Again, for the purpose of conceptual clarity, a detailed theoretical discussion on justice and equality has been made. Although conceptually these two terms have universal application, but at the theoretical plane there appears a good number of debates among the scholars as to their specific and precise meaning.

Broadly speaking, these two concepts have their origin in the western as well as Indian thought processes. But, differences occur due to the emphasis that was placed, preferences that were

accorded and goals that were set to achieve through these concepts. In other words, inspite of their universal appeal, they cannot ignore the specificities of time, place or context.

Attempts have been made to examine the influence of western as well as Indian ideas on these three leaders. It has been noticed that there were differences among these three thinkers about the proper application of goals and ends principle. In other words, the controversy centered mainly on the methodological application of their theoretical position. This might be the reason for their shifting positions with regard to the operational tactics in achieving their desired goals.

The present study while highlighting these aspects, delves deep into the social compulsions and national requirements at that period when the country was struggling to attain independence. That is perhaps the reason why it is said that no study on the contributions of any maker of modern India will be complete unless a reference is made to the developments that took place along with the freedom struggle movement. Infact, the whole range of post-colonial discourse processes on the assumption that both colonial and post colonial periods are inseparable and hence, any compartmentalization in this regard will be meaningless in so far as it will give an incomplete picture and not the total one.

With this objective in view the present study has tried to explore the nature of

- a) impact of western education on these three national leaders;
- b) the manner in which they could assimilate within themselves both Indian and western ideas; and

- c) the way they had tried to put their ideas into practice.

### III

#### Research Questions

The whole discussion, centering around these three positions has sought to answer the following questions –

- a) What were the historical settings and contextual parameters which were the prime moving forces behind the formation of the political views of these leaders?
- b) What were the areas of agreements and disagreements among these three leaders on important social and economic issues?
- c) To what extent did the western ideas on justice and equality exert their influence on the ideas of Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash?
- d) What were the reasons that were responsible for so many 'shifts' on changes in ideas and positions of Jayaprakash Narain which cannot be seen in case of Nehru?
- e) How could Ambedkar assess the limitations of his being in the lower caste and what had been his prescriptive methodology to get rid off the situation?
- f) How far Nehru's concept of Democratic Socialism was in conformity with Jayaprakash's idea on Sarvodaya and Total Revolution?

Although these questions have been put separately but like many other issues of this nature, no such separation is at all possible. Proper care has been taken to look into these issues from two perspectives:- contextual setting and sequential developments. This has been necessary in view of the fact that all the three makers of modern India were missionary and in that way sought to reform and reconstruct the Indian society. Moreover, multi-faceted personalities like them cannot be understood without making any reference to their attitudinal factors, value preferences and above all philosophical orientation. In a word, a kind of holistic view has been taken in order to understand and examine the nature of the influence of their thoughts and actions in the political process in India.

## IV

### **Research Methodology**

The present work is basically a study of great personalities against the backdrop of their contribution to the making of modern India. As such the discussions have been primarily made on the basis of their thoughts and actions in different fields of national life. The methodology is primarily historical – analytical. Due emphasis has been given on the original writings of these three leaders and also other related primary sources such as proceedings and debates of the Constituent Assembly, correspondences among contemporary leaders, autobiographies and the like. In order to

substantiate the views, references have been made to other secondary sources such as books, papers and review articles published in different academic journals, both Indian and foreign. Proper care has been taken to make an objective assessment of their contributions towards the enrichment as well as methods of application of their ideas and actions. That is why; extensive references have been made to the original speeches and other writings of these leaders. For the purpose of situating them, elaborate theoretical / conceptual framework has been drafted so as to include within it the course of developments of these ideas and their relevance in the contemporary Indian situation.

## V

### **Overview of the existing literature**

There have been a good number of works, both biographical and critical, on the life and works of Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash Narain. For this reason it becomes difficult to identify only a few works on these three leaders. Looking at the works on Nehru, one notices that studies on Nehru varies from biographical sketch to analytical assessment of his thoughts and actions. To begin with one such work, though covers a broad canvas seems to be helpful for formulating ideas about the nature of Indian society and efforts directed towards its modernization. After all Nehru can be reviewed as an ardent believer in modernization process in India.

The book by *S.P. Aiyar* under the title '*Modernisation of Traditional Society*' (*Mac Millan, New Delhi, 1965*) deals with not only the nature of the Indian society at its transitional phase, but also situates the leaders as the accelerator of the modernizing process.

Another book which covers the period from 1832 – 1920 seeks to explain the factors responsible for the growth of the Congress Party in India. The book by *C.F. Andrews and G. Mookerji*, entitled '*The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*', (*Gitanjali Press, New Delhi, 1975*).

Another work, by *A. Appadorai* with the title '*Indian Political Thinking in the Twentieth Century from Naroji to Nehru*' (*OUP, 1974*) covers a period which contains the records of the activities of great national leaders. The approach of this book is both historical as well as analytical.

*Michael Brecher* has made an extensive study on Nehru and his book '*Nehru – a Political Biography*' (*OUP, London, 1950*) is still regarded as a significant contribution towards Nehru studies. As the title suggests this is purely a biographical analysis of Nehru but the uniqueness of this work is that in most cases Brecher has drawn conclusions after examining primary sources. This makes the study not only readable but informative. It will not be an exaggeration to say that no Nehru study is possible without making any reference to this work.

Another work, '*Jawaharlal Nehru : The Struggle for Independence*' (*Cambridge University Press, London, 1966*) by *Lord Bertler* has analysed Nehru's role in the freedom struggle

movement in India. The main thrust of discussion in this book is Nehru's leadership and the way he had responded to the emerging situations during the freedom movement in India.

*Atulnanda Chakrabarti* in his work, 'Nehru – His Democracy and India' (Thaker's Press, Calcutta, 1961) has analysed the nature of Nehru's views regarding democracy and its relevance in case of Indian situation. Though basically a study on Nehru's ideas on democracy and hence, uni-dimensional in scope and coverage, seeks to examine other related issues of the application of democratic principles.

*Partha Chatterjee's* work '*Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World : A derivative discourse*' (OUP, New Delhi, 1986) analyses various strands on nationalist thought in the backdrop of colonial discourse. Although essentially a Marxist position that the author has taken, the scope of the study extends far beyond this theoretical position and takes into account a very critical position regarding the currents and cross-currents of a national freedom movement and the ideas that influenced it.

Another work by *A.R. Desai*, '*Social Background of Indian Nationalism*' (*Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1966*) is generally referred to as a very authoritative study on the rise of nationalist feeling in colonial India. Although, Desai had been an expert on studies of social issues, the present work offers many insightful inputs in the study of Indian nationalism in its societal perspective.

*Justice P.B. Gajandra Gadkar* has made a study of Nehru as a man and the nature of his political ideas in the book '*Jawaharlal Nehru : A Glimpse of the man and his ideas*' (*Nagpur University*

*Press, 1967*). The title suggests the coverage of the book. Although an expert in jurisprudence, the author has tried to portray the man in Nehru and the ideas he cherished and propagated.

S. Gopal's two works entitled, '*Jawaharlal Nehru : A Biography*'; (London, 1975) and '*Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru (edited), Vol.I-VIII, (Orient Longman, 1970-1976, Bombay)*' deserve special mentioning. A renowned historian, S. Gopal, has in the first book, made extensive biographical study of Nehru during and after the attainment of independence. A critical and narrative study provides many aspects of Nehru's thought process, while in the second one, he has identified some major selected works of Nehru himself. So for any researcher, these two books are of immense value as source material for further investigation and detailed study.

Two other books, of different kind assessing Nehru's role and performance in the making of the constitution and in the life of the Indian nation may be mentioned. One such book is '*Jawaharlal Nehru : Promise and Performance*' (New Delhi, 1970) and the other by S.C. Kashyap (ed.) '*Jawaharlal Nehru : Promise and the Constitution*' (New Delhi, 1982).

Another scholar, a well known parliamentarian Hiren Mookerjee in his book '*The Gentle Colossus : A study of Jawaharlal Nehru*' (Manisha Granthalaya, Calcutta, 1964) has studied Nehru as a man and as a missionary. The title of the book is quite suggestive and the author has analysed Nehru's humanist approach towards socio-political and economic issues.

These are some of the works on Nehru which are illustrative of the nature and trend in the study of Nehru's ideas and actions. Besides these books, mention must be made of the following books by –

*B.N. Pandey, 'Nehru' (MacMillan, London, 1976).*

*V.T. Patil 'Nehru and the freedom movement' (Sterling, New Delhi, 1977).*

*V.T. Patil (ed) 'A Study of Nehru's Ideas' (Devika Publications, Delhi, 1998).*

*S. Radhakrishnan (ed.), 'On Nehru' (Publications, Division, Govt. of India., 1965).*

*M.C. Rau, 'Jawaharlal Nehru : Life and Work', (National Book Club, New Delhi, 1966).*

*V.K.R.V. Rao, 'The Nehru Legacy' (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1971).*

*Rafiq Zakaria (ed.), 'A Study of Nehru' (A times of India, Publication, 1960).*

The list is by no means an exhaustive one. There are many more works on Nehru by scholars both Indian and foreign. Primary and secondary sources on Nehru have been included in the section on Select Bibliography.

Life and activities of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar have been studied by many scholars, sometimes projecting him as the leader of the depressed classes, sometimes as the maker of the Indian constitution and sometimes as a struggling spirit against social evils.

In the book '*Dr. Ambedkar : Life and Mission*' (Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, First Published 1954, reprinted 2003) Dhananjay Keer, has studied the multi-dimensional personality of Dr. Ambedkar. This is considered to be a full length and authoritative biography of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. It is a record of a person who in the face of challenges from society, could rise to a height wherefrom he was able to provide able leadership and guidance for a nation in the making.

M.L. Ranga has edited a book under the title '*B.R. Ambedkar : Life, Work and Relevance*' in which a good number of papers have been included. Papers include studies on the socio-psychological dimension of Dr. Ambedkar, his economic ideas and his role in the dalit upliftment and his contribution to nation-building.

Another book edited by K.C. Yadav, '*From Periphery to Centre Stage*' (Manohar, New Delhi, 2000) deals with three themes:

1. Dr. Ambedkar as a central figure in the making of modern India.
2. Ambedkarism as a creed for the development of down-trodden people and
3. Ambedkar as a propagator of dalit equality.

S.K. Aggrawal has studied Ambedkar's views about religious fundamentalism in his book, '*Dr. Ambedkar on Muslim fundamentalism*' (New Delhi, 1993).

L.R. Balley in his edited volume '*Thoughts on Ambedkar*' (Jalandhar, 1972) has dealt with only the foundations of Ambedkar's thoughts and the roots of his socio-political thinking.

Similarly, Chandra Bheril in the book '*Social and Political Ideas of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar*' (Jaipur, 1977) focuses on socio-political dimensions of Ambedkar's thought process.

Almost in a similar line K.L. Chanchereek (ed) '*Dr. Ambedkar, Patriot, Philosopher, Statesman*' (A Century Volume Publication, Delhi, 1991) has included papers dealing with broad views of Ambedkar on society, economy and polity.

Another work of different nature on Ambedkar calls for discussion. It is a book by Dinkar Khabde under the title '*Dr. Ambedkar and Western Thinkers*' (Poona, 1989). Very few works has been done, making a comparative assessment of Ambedkar's ideas and the western ideologies.

G.S. Lokhande in his work '*Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar : A study in social Democracy*' (New Delhi, 1982) has analysed Ambedkar's views on social democracy. Infact the main thrust of the present work is Ambedkar's views on democracy as a form of social and political governance.

K. Rajavendra Rao has analysed Ambedkar's general views about Indian society and the way Ambedkar sought to reconstruct it in his work '*Babasaheb Ambedkar*' (Makers of Indian Literature Series, New Delhi, 1993).

Eleanor Zelliott has worked on '*Ambedkar and The Mahar Movement*' in a Ph.D. Thesis (University of Pennsylvania, USA) in which the scholar has examined Ambedkar's leadership qualities

and the way he could mobilize the people in the Mahar community against social injustices.

This review of literature on these three national leaders is not, by any standard, an exhaustive one. This illustrative nature of the works mentioned is intended to point out the major trend in the study of the lives and activities of these three leaders. Only some selected secondary works have been included in this overview. These are of representative character. Attempts have been made to select those works which are analytical in nature and not narrative in approach. This will be available in the detailed elaboration in the section dealing with Select Bibliography.

On JP and his political ideas and actions a good number of works have been done by scholars both Indian and foreign. JP has been primarily studied as a believer in socialism. His revolutionary ideas have been elaborately studied in B.N. Ahuja's book '*J.P. : India's Revolutionary, Number One*'. This book was published from Lahore in 1947.

Besides, this book, another work by S.R. Bakshi, '*Jayaprakash Narain : His socialist ideology*' also deals with the socialist foundation of JP's political ideas.

D.R. Bali, in his book '*Modern Indian Thought – from Rammohun Roy to Jayaprakash Narain*' (Sterling, New Delhi, 1989) makes an analysis of the chronological developments of socialist thought the contributions of national leaders towards the enrichment of socialist ideas.

A. Bhattacharjee's book '*Jayaprakash Narain*' (Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1971), although a biographical

study, has dealt with many ideas of JP relating to social reconstruction and achievement of Sarvodaya.

Of all the works on JP, Bhola Chatterjee's work '*Conflict in JP's Politics*' (Ankur Publishing House, New Delhi, 1984) treats JP's psychological contradictions regarding the means and ends dichotomy.

Shankar Ghosh has done extensive work on his political ideas, social movements, socialism and democracy which narrates the course of developments and their impact on the making of modern India. Mention may be made of these works in this regard.

- a) '*Political Ideas of Movements in India*' (Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1973).
- b) '*Socialism, Democracy and Nationalism in India*' (Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1972).
- c) '*Socialism and Communism in India*' (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1971).

Another work of great relevance is '*JP : From Marxism to Total Revolution*' (Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1981) by R.C. Gupta deals with the stages of developments and the nature of 'shifts' in Jayaprakash's Political ideas.

N.C. Mehrotra in his book '*Indian Socialist thinking from Dayananda to JP*' (M.N. Publishers and distributors, 1980) challenges the stages of development in socialist thinking in India. Although a chronological – historical study the present work seeks to highlight the contributions of important political thinkers and their role in enriching the socialist thinking.

Another work by K.N. Panikkar (ed), '*National and Left Movements in India*' (Vikash Publishing House, New Delhi, 1980), though not strictly on JP's thoughts and ideas, covers a vast landscape looking into the nature and impact of left movements in India. Needless to mention that JP took active part in the activities of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) during the very formative years of his political career.

Girija Shankar's book '*Socialist trends in the Indian National Movement – A Study of the Congress Socialist Party*' (Twenty First Century Publication, Meerut, 1987), deals with the nature and course of developments of socialist ideas in India. The entire discussion has been made in the context of India's freedom movement.

Besides these published works, references may be made to some important unpublished thesis of different Universities:

G. Lakshmi, '*The Growth of Socialism in India*' (Allahabad University, 1954).

Shakuntala Nihalchand, '*Economic Case for Socialism in India*' (Bombay University, 1950).

Crane Robert, '*The Indian National Congress and the Indian agrarian problem 1919-1939*' (Yale University, N.M.M.L., New Delhi).

Bibek Brotho Sarkar, '*The Socialist Movement in India, from 1919 to 1947*' (Delhi University, 1962).

R.C. Tyagi, '*The Development of Socialist Thought in India*' (Vikram University, 1980).

## Notes and References

1. Earnest Barker – **Principles of Social and Political Theory**, p. 102
2. **Ibid**, p. 103
3. **Ibid**, p. 103
4. D. D. Raphaël – **Problems of Political Philosophy**.
5. Earnest Barker – **Principles of Social and Political Theory**, op. cit., p. 145
6. Richard Lewis Nettleship – **Lectures on Republic of Plato**, pp. 151 – 152.
7. Morris Gins Berg – **On Justice and Society**, p. 53.
8. Earnest Barker – **Principles of Social and Political Theory**, op. cit., p. 101
9. David Miller – **Social Justice**, pp. 17 – 18.
10. Bryan Barry – **Political Argument**, p. 103
11. M.P. Barry – **Introduction to Modern Political Theory**, p. 116
12. John Rawls – **A Theory of Justice**, OUP, 1973., p. 3
13. **Ibid**, p. 4
14. **Ibid**, p. 4 – 5
15. **Ibid**, p. 62
16. David Miller – **Social Justice**, OUP, 1976.
17. **Ibid**, p. 45

18. David Miller – **Political Philosophy, A very small introduction**, p . 87.
19. **Ibid**, p. 87.
20. **Ibid**, p. 89.
21. **Ibid**, p. 90.
22. **Ibid**, p. 91.
23. Barbara Goodwin, **Using Political Ideas**, John Willy & Sons, UK, 2002, p. 279.
24. Rawls, **A Theory of Justice**, p. 60.
25. **Ibid**, p. 60.
26. Barbara Goodwin, **Using Political Ideas**, op. cit., pp. 390-391.
27. Iris Marion Young, **Justice and the Politics of Difference**, Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 104.
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29. Anne Phillips, **Engendering Democracy**, Pennsylvania State University, 1991, pp. 150-152.
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## **Chapter – II**

### **Nehru and his Broad Social Vision – Philosophical Foundation of Nehru’s Political Ideas – External Impact & Indigenous Roots – Views On Social Justice and Economic Equality**

#### **I**

A charismatic leader, a visionary who evolved ideas and concepts which sought to establish a link between the past, present and future course of the Indian society – Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the most prominent leaders of Independent India. He was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1889 to Swaroop Rani, wife of Motilal Nehru, who hailed from a wealthy family in Allahabad. Motilal Nehru was a barrister by profession and also a political leader. They belonged to the Kashmiri lineage, belonging to the Brahmin caste. Jawaharlal Nehru, was the only son among three younger daughters. His education began in the finest Indian schools of his time, following his education abroad in England at Harrow, Trinity College, Cambridge and the Inner Temple where he practiced Law, before joining his father into politics.

When he was drawn to the political arena soon after his return to India, his way was sharpened and smoothed under the guidance of his father, along with Gandhi. Prime Minister Nehru recalled his years of struggle and experience in the following words “My growth to public prominence, you know, was not by sharp stages. It was rather, a steady development over a long

period of tune. And if I may say so, he added dryly, ‘ I began at a fairly high level’<sup>1</sup>.

Nehru was also gifted with a conspicuously handsome appearance, both by Indian and western standards. Pictures of him at his young age reveal the slim, chiseled features which mark the Kashmiri Brahmin. His expressive eyes, the reflection of intellectual curiosity, wide mouth and sensuous lips, his soft moulded chin, his captivating smile makes him one of the most photogenic personality in history.

The benefits and positiveness of aristocratic background and the finest of education brought a touch of glow in his outlook. He was very much attached to the two men in his life – his father and Gandhi who exercised tremendous impact upon his character. His education in the west set him apart from his colleagues in the Indian National Congress. His approach to certain strategies revealed the western rationalist character, and for that matter he was into many misunderstandings with his colleagues and even with his own father and Gandhi.

He built himself high, second only to Gandhi. He proved himself to be the champion of the oppressed, symbol of a new India; he tried his level best to establish a bond with the masses. The impact of Nehru to the crowd and vice-versa was so strong that it could transmit a wave of energy to his personality. His wide vision on the other hand was also strong enough to move the masses. No one has recognized this unusual emotional link between Nehru and the Indian masses better than the Prime Minister himself. “Delhi is a static city with a dead atmosphere ....

I go out and see masses of people, my people, your people and derive inspiration from them. There is something dynamic and something growing with them and I grow with them. I also enthuse with them.”<sup>2</sup>

Going back to the most happening period of modern India, right from the pioneer of liberal thinking in Indian political system, Raja Rammohun Roy to Jawaharlal Nehru, several leaders have earned credit in influencing the destiny of India, by formulating ideas on the socio-political ground during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nehru was one of those stars among the galaxy of Indian leaders who shaped the future of the Indian sub-continent. The architect of modern India with his dynamic and superb leadership qualities deserve to be read, admired and evaluated. He had the strong ability to engage his mind in rendering service to the nation in many fields. His inspiring leadership and his fabulous ideas gave us our constitution on which India stands today.

His ideas which ran from social, economic and political to constitutional matters developed from many sources and influences over a long period of time. The impact of western ideas, along with Indian nationalism acted in a way as an influence on his thought process, giving way to his ‘wide vision’ and great leadership. Looking back in context of Nehru’s leadership we should mention here his great capacity for his great work, earning him vast popularity with his strong and competent will. His whole being was full of energy and pride and his life and work received the touch of the crowd with utmost appreciation and love. He had a

heart for the weak and the inefficient which added yet another colour to his leadership efficiency and quality.

He had an undying command over the crowd which made him the centre of attraction in Indian politics. He had earned a popularity for himself which touched India from the elites to common masses. He even had the impatience which could endure for any period of time till he had the things done in his own way. His outbursts of anger are well known, but he had acquired more of tolerance and sympathy for the failings of others. It cannot be denied that in Indian context of constitutional democracy his contribution has been the most effective. In his thoughts and ideas, and in getting his thoughts and ideas, and in getting his thoughts into practice he has no doubt been an autocrat, but he has successfully tried to curb the ideas to an extent for which India lies even indebted to him. This aspect goes to be appreciated by most of the Indians as well as western leaders during his tenure of leadership.

His speeches were excellent in form and he had that charismatic quality which would take the crowd into his confidence. He had that magic to communicate his sympathy with their problems. Even though there was a gap between his language and that of the masses, his speeches were translated and in his translation the people were transfixed by what was said – such were the powers of his words. When Nehru talked to people, it was always possible to dive into depth of his popularity. During his address to the audience, he stood in a peculiar position as though surveying each one of them carefully as though he his words were meant for all the individuals individually one after another. He had

a voice which was soft and relaxed which added to his qualities of a great leader. He never aroused his audience by a stern and loud voice, instead he approached them with a calm sway of conduct, stressing the need for discipline. In his speeches he always had the content for hard work, unity, tolerance and faith.<sup>3</sup>

Truth and spontaneity had always been the qualities of his speech. He had the power to talk, think and feel at the same time. His words when uttered had the touch of consciousness and had the ability to touch different channels of Indian politics. His speech proved to be a very positive quality in his leadership which provided an insight into his way of thinking, and also providing the content of his views. He possessed an undying enthusiasm and curiosity which is responsible for his all-embracing involvement in all directions of affairs.

## II

Pandit Motilal Nehru's father, Pandit Gangadhar Nehru, was the Police Chief of Delhi and served as an advisor to the East India Company at the Royal Court. But with the downfall of the Mughals, the Nehrus moved to Agra and it was here that Motilal Nehru was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1861. Motilal Nehru grew up in the guidance of his brothers, especially Nandalal Nehru, who served as a lawyer at the High Court in Agra. But from Agra, this family moved to Allahabad, which was then a quiet provincial town. Motilal received his early education at home till the age of twelve in the Persian and Arabic languages. He then joined the Government High School in Kanpur, thereafter joining Muir

Central College, Allahabad. Under the influence of his English professors, Motilal was very much attracted to the western ways of life and living. He moved to vocational training and passed the lawyers examination with a distinction. He then settled in Allahabad, practicing law at the High Court. The sad demise of his brother left Motilal Nehru heading the Nehru family at the age of twenty six. With his sharp inborn mentality and tremendous hard work, he rose up to the ladder of success as years passed by. Within the passing of some years he stood up to become one of the most distinguished lawyers of Allahabad. It was here that his only son was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1889, who was named 'Jawaharlal' – The Red Jewel ! <sup>4</sup>.

Motilal Nehru was a man who was very dedicated to his profession, and he knew little about politics and public affairs. He was a man who loved a fight against odds and struggle was his curiosity. He greatly admired the English men and their ways. At this particular point in his life the congress was divided into two camps of the Moderates and the Extremists, and strangely enough with very little interest in politics, he was somehow drawn into the arena of these two camps, and more surprisingly joining the moderates. For the first time in 1907, he presided over a provincial conference and his speech said 'we are constitutional agitators ..... and the reforms we wish to bring about must come through the medium of constitutional authority'.<sup>5</sup> In 1909 he was elected a member of the UP Council, he became the Vice-President of Seva Samiti. He served as a member of All India Congress Committee and also became the president of the Congress.

The coming up of Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian political front brought about a difference in the Indian history, as well as the Nehru family. Of his simple ways and his principles Jawaharlal felt an irresistible attraction towards Gandhi. But as against his son, Motilal Nehru was in no way attracted towards Gandhi. But, inspite of this vital difference, there was a genuine affection between the two. Jawaharlal loved his father and respected his ideas, thoughts and beliefs. His decisions always took into consideration the love and affection for his father, least he would hurt him. Due to the circumstances, Motilal Nehru gave way to Gandhi's practices and gave a strong support to him in all his movements. His life underwent basic changes as he entered Gandhi's circle. He gave much little time to his profession which was scoring its heights. He joined hands with Gandhi and survived to help the masses; he gave his comfort and luxuries, his lifestyle and his wealth to the cause of National Movement. He was so much dedicated to India, that he gave up his son Jawaharlal and his whole family to the cause of India's freedom. So strong and so pure was his dedication to India's freedom that his son Jawaharlal Nehru was being moulded by his thoughts. He was so much moved by his father's personality that he followed his father's strength of character, his devotion to his principles with blind faith. Jawaharlal Nehru found in his father security, love, devotion and a true man of whom he was very proud.

Pandit Motilal Nehru had faced a lot of tragedies in his married life, losing his first wife and his child, and again losing the first child from his second marriage. Hence, Jawaharlal Nehru was his only child who showed his love and hope for the coming years.

The only son of a wealthy barrister was spoilt in a princely fashion, surrounded by unwarranted love, wealth and luxury. He spent his childhood in the four corners of the palatial home 'Anand Bhawan', surrounded by splendor and happiness. His home was the first in Allahabad to have electricity and piped water. Motilal Nehru was the first civilian in Allahabad again to own motor cars directly imported from France. 'Anand Bhawan' was surrounded by people from three different cultures – The Hindus, Muslims and the English. The kitchens were in charge of the Brahmin cooks and all the helpers here were Hindus. In the western part, there were cooks and servants who were trained to cook in the English way, while other servants were Muslims. Motilal Nehru preferred to eat in the western style, with chairs and tables. He imposed English Language as a medium style, with chairs and tables. He imposed English language as a medium of communication in his family. He was infact very much attracted to western customs and traditions. There was a peculiarity in the ways of Anand Bhawan as all the festivals of the three cultures were observed. Nehru was deeply influenced by these mixed cultures resulting in his broad mission and sound secular and progressive outlook, but he also greatly feared his temper. Though his father was covered with the western style in Nehru's eyes he was a nationalist, though not an ardent one. It was from his father that he acquired a sense of national pride. In the big and splendid Anand Bhawan, Nehru had no one of his age and had to grow up amidst people elder to his own age. He grew up in the company of his elder cousins, who talked about the ill manners of the English people and so he was filled with resentment against the English people. The bond between the

father and the son was so strong, inspite of the contrast in their personalities. Nehru's shy nature stood in sharp contrast with his father's strong and stern personality. He never took his own decisions, as his father was a symbol of security and substance for him. His father provided him with an all embracing strength, love and defence.

### III

Jawaharlal Nehru, grew up in his father's guidance of strict rules and regulations, along with his mother's love and devotion. He was surrounded by his unconditional love and was much meal and deal to his mother, rather than his father. He could share to all his heart with his mother. Which he would not even dream of with his father. He had a considerable knowledge of the Hindu mythology, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, which refined his senses in all possible ways. Apart from these mythologies he also gathered knowledge relating to the stories of the 1857 rebellion, which was narrated to him by one of the Muslim servants, Munshi Mubarak Ali. Having grown up in an environment of mixed cultures and people, Nehru was fortunate enough to shape up his personality in a free and refined way. Motilal Nehru from the very beginning gave his son the best of British education under English governesses at home. Besides his English teachers, he also had the Sanskrit scholar, Pandit Ganganath Jha to teach him Hindi and Sanskrit.

Among his tutors, Ferdinand T. Brooks, touched Nehru's life in a significant way. He took charge of Nehru when he was only

eleven years of age. He was a theosophist and had been recommended by Mrs. Annie Besant, the theosophist leader in India. Brooks was a sensitive and highly talented young man of twenty-six when he joined Anand Bhawan. It was under Brooks that he developed a deep love for reading which lasted all throughout life. He had a deep interest in the fables of Lewis Carol and Rudyard Kipling, Don Quixote. His mind was influenced by the writings of Mark Twain, Sherlock Holmes, Scott and Thackery.<sup>6</sup> He was the only Brahmin in Allahabad to have such a wide variety of taste in English Language. He had a deep interest in higher education along with a deep thought on public affairs through his family. Due to the facilities in Anand Bhawan, Nehru decided to turn his attention towards natural sciences in his later years at Cambridge. Since Brooks was an ardent theosophist and his spiritual set up affected Nehru's young mind. Under his guidance again, Nehru was drawn towards Bhagwad Gita and Upanishads. He even attended the meetings of the theosophists and even took part in metaphysical discussions and arguments and karma and re-incarnations. Though he could not understand all the arguments that took place, he had been shaped to understand that there was a key to the secret of the universe. He also admitted that he was deeply influenced by Buddhism, especially its ethical and scientific, side and which was in later years more deeply rooted with his close association with Gandhi.

Swaruprani, like her children lived under the guidance and love of Motilal Nehru, she hailed from a conservative family, unlike that of the Nehru's. She had little formal education and never spoke English well. She never liked her husband's western

habits, though she in time tried her best to adjust to them. She was a delicate charming lady, a typical Hindu wife whose life was wrapped around that of her husband. Even though indirectly, she influenced the life of her children tremendously. In 1920, when Pandit Motilal Nehru joined Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, she gave up her comforts, extending her participation in the movement. Due to her husband's busy schedule, she felt a widening gap in their relation, and she lost another baby within days of his birth. But with all these difficulties, she herself adjusted and kept herself alert with the growing days of both her husband and her son. Her constant anxiety for this widening relation pushed her into depression. She had a deep love for her son, and she poured out her grievances in letters to her son. Jawaharlal Nehru responded with love to every letter and assured her that his love for her was always the same and that there was nothing to fear and feel bad for. He did all that he could for his mother staying abroad. He had the strength and ability to assure her in all possible ways. And she gave Nehru an unavoidable link between Indian culture and his personality.

His parents, to a great extent were responsible for generating that spark in Nehru to move forward. The love and dedication of his mother along with the stern personality of his father shaped his mind and personality. From the heterogeneous cultural basis of Anand Bhawan he grew up with an age to play a dominant role in life. At Harrow, he proved to be an intelligent, reserved and studious boy who did not have much difficulty in passing his exams. During his stay in England he lived a luxurious life, following his father's western life-style, which resulted in

expensive tastes and habits. His annual expense was so high that it was enough to support a comfortable life in England for three years! At Harrow, his interest in politics widened and he began to take interest in International Affairs. He gave himself in knowing about the local politics of his times. In school, he was awarded G.M. Trevelejan's Garibaldi books, which intensified his views on nationalism. In these years he kept himself in tune with Indian politics, which was filtered to him through his father's letters which covered the entire Indian Political scenario. He began to appreciate political methods which defied and challenged the British powers. He began to feel attracted towards political systems which viewed people with an equal eye, giving every individual an equal base. He was therefore drawn towards the policies of the Indian extremists and towards the principles of Fabian Socialism, but he did not give his heart and soul to any of the ideologies. His respect for Indian extremism however took a backseat, but at the same time, his fondness for this particular ideology increased with his visit to Ireland and the Sinn Fein Movement which was a new kind of Irish Nationalism. It was believed here that the salvation of Ireland should be achieved in the Irish soil, by Irishmen themselves. Here he found similar corners of India and Ireland. From Ireland he gathered the experience of boycott methods as a political weapon i.e. to boycott England and ignore England.

#### IV

The 1930s was the period in Nehru's life which was mostly spent behind the bars. During these days, he spent his time reading

and writing. It was during these days that the International world politics were writing towards the writings of Marx. In the 'Glimpses of World History', Nehru mentions that though he was attracted to socialism in his days at Cambridge. Marx had left a mark on his mind with his writings on socialism. The 19<sup>th</sup> century western capitalist democracy according to Nehru resulted in inequality in terms of note value. He gave emphasis to the fact that notes were taken from men without ensuring his economic security.

Nehru studied capitalism from the Marxist-Leninist point of view and agreed with Lenin when he said that Imperialism was the highest stage of capitalism. Taking this view into consideration he studied capitalism in the context of the British Raj in India. He compared capitalism with a huge machine – a machine that had the ability to crush millions of Indians. Imperialism for him constituted this machine, the outcome of Industrial Capitalism.

Nehru studied the point that Imperialism and Capitalism could not be improved upon. He could find no solution to the outcome of these ideologies and the only solution was to get rid of them altogether. An alternative to them was to adopt socialism in their place. The world he viewed was divided between two camps – capitalism and socialism, and there can never be a compromise between the two. This was not only a national view, but had also taken shape internationally. He had studied socialism in minute details that he was of the view that if socialism was to succeed, then it has to take the shape of International World Socialism.

It was during these periods, that Nehru deeply studied Marx and Lenin and was very much influenced by them. Nehru wrote in his autobiography that “the theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many of dark corner of my mind. History comes to have a new meaning for me. The Marxist interpretation threw a flood of light on it”.<sup>7</sup> The materialistic interpretation of history attracted him and for him it was scientific and logical. This interpretation of history was free of superstition and religious back up towards history and life. ‘It was the essential freedom from dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism that appealed to me’.<sup>8</sup>

Nehru believed in the working of various interest groups in the society. Society should be the ground for interplay of varied interest groups relating to Zamindars, professionals, industrialists bankers, agriculturists, lower middle classes, labourers etc... He observed that in such a society there is an obvious conflict in their interests. He observed that only policy, every law which is good for the interest of one class may be harmful to another. Thus he understood and recognized not only the existence of different class interest, but also the irreconcilability of class conflicting interests. He further said that the antagonistic class interests could not be shut up altogether unless followed by Revolution. Revolution for him did not mean the use of violence.

As regards class conflict in the society Nehru to some extent adopted the Marxist view point. Class conflict was the outcome of capitalism and as long as capitalism remains, class conflict remains. Again with reference to the state, Nehru does not agree with the Marxian concept of the state, especially the withering

away of the state.<sup>9</sup> For him socialism was 'control by the state', the means of production and distribution. Here he realized that in the state the necessity of a coercive force is a must. He felt the need of a state, though coercive in nature in nature. He agreed with the point that violence and force is the key of the modern state and society. He further said that the nation state existed due to some kind of force, offensive or defensive. He was of the opinion that social life as well as the government necessitates the use of force and coercion.

Nehru was highly critical while evaluating the matter of inequality in the Indian context. He said that the term 'politics' seems to have lost its importance when the question of social and economic equality takes place. For him the term 'Democracy' meant equality and that democracy could survive only in an equal society. "Social and economic equality" was the main crux of the term equality for him. He was against reservation for minorities in the social arena. Social and economic objective could not be possible in the framework of a socialist of society. Therefore he inclined towards the Marxian and the western brand of Socialism. While he had socialism, in mind, he also thought about the kind of socialism which was to suit India, and for that matter socialism should be practical as well as indigenous. For him, equality meant that everyone, men and women should have the equality of opportunity to develop themselves fully, to the best of their ability and capability. Merit should come from one's hard work and not through caste or birth. He was very much against privileges and reservation of castes and class. For him democracy meant the removal of disparities. His democracy also ensured a good

standard of living for the laymen. He said that there is an immense closeness between practical freedom and socio-economic equality. They are the necessities for the fullest development of an individual. For him real freedom came from political and economic freedom, and he also knew that there existed conflict among these two spheres of freedom. Political freedom and equality should result in economic freedom and equality. "There is no such thing as freedom for a man who is staying on for any country which is poor".<sup>10</sup> To achieve both these freedoms the problems must be met from both the sides – political as well as economic.

Motilal Nehru was already a prominent figure in the Indian National Congress, with its presidentship. It was at a young age that Jawaharlal Nehru entered the Congress. His young and handsome look excited young Indians everywhere and there was an air which felt that his entrance into the congress would reutilise Indian politics. However, Nehru did not follow his father's line, and instead was very much attracted to the leadership of Gandhi. He was taken away by Gandhi's principle of fighting for the Indian society, by peaceful means. And in return Gandhi saw a promising young Indian leader in Nehru. Nehru was so much moved by Gandhi and his teachings that the whole of the Nehru family transformed themselves to the Gandhian lines. They abandoned western concept of dressing and expensive living. They even abandoned the use of English language and embraced Hindu or Hindustani as their common language. They transformed their entire being and took to the use of khadi kurta and the Gandhi cap.

With this new look Nehru entered as a member of Indian nationalist movement.

During his first few steps into politics, he was arrested by the British during Gandhi's Non Cooperation Movement, in 1920-22. In 1922, when Gandhi decided to suspend the civil resistance, there were a lot of confusion in the congress and many congressmen moved away from Gandhi to follow leaders like Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru. But Jawaharlal Nehru decided to continue his political career under the leadership of Gandhi. In 1924, he was elected President of the Allahabad Municipal Cooperation which gave him ground for his leadership qualities, before taking on India's whole government in 1947.

## V

Nehru had an outlook of a new generation. During his stay abroad he had studied the socialism in England and Europe. He had the ideas of freedom struggle that took place in Ireland along with the revolution outbreak in Russia. He therefore stood for 'complete independence' for the Indian society from the British rule. It is to be noted here, that even Gandhi and Motilal Nehru did not share such a wide vision as Jawaharlal Nehru. This wide vision of complete independence was shared by leaders like Subash Chandra Bose during the struggle for Indian independence.

Nehru was very active in the political affairs, but along with his political activities, his personal life was also full of changes which divided his activities into two halves – personal and political. With the death of his father Motilal Nehru, in 1931, he

was left with all the responsibilities to head the Nehru family, which revolved its life in politics. By this time his three sisters had joined the congress women's wing, his wife Kamala Nehru was working as a social activist and his daughter Indira helped in forming the Vanara Sena. During his political activities, he had to spend sometime in prison from where he wrote letters to his young daughter, later published as "Letters from a father to his daughter" which constitutes many of his political dreams and visions for a better India. Due to his wife's ill health, he lost some of his precious time in treating his wife in Germany and Switzerland. After a lot of struggle he lost his wife in 1936. With this heartbreak he gave his way back to politics where he won the presidentship of the congress party. His famous speech in the Lucknow session, 1936 committed the congress party to embrace socialism as the foundation of India's future agenda for Independence. During his stay in the Congress, he had grown closer to Congress socialists like J.P. and Norendra Dev and was also greatly influenced by the liberal-socialists like Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad. This sway in his political thought brought him many criticisms from the congressmen, including Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhai Patel.

With Gandhi's Quit India Movement, on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1942, the congress set itself to call for complete independence. Indians were asked to boycott every British goods, institutions and factories. Public services and government programmes which were under the name of the British was opposed and with this major protests and demonstrations broke out in India. Though this was an all congress revolt, with the other parties remaining dormant, it was the most

powerful and forceful revolt even in the history of British rule in India. Gandhi along with the others were arrested. While the other freedom fighters were arrested and imprisoned in Allahabad, Gandhi was imprisoned separately in Pune. Thousands of congressmen were imprisoned and thousands lost their lives in police firing. During his imprisonment with other congressmen, Nehru focused on his writings – ‘Discovery of India’ with hope, vigour and courage.

It would not be out of place to rethink the ideologies of the congress, against the background of Indian nationalism, led by the congress, preceding the birth of Indian Independence. The struggle for Indian independence brought within its embrace a very wide national outlook with multi-dimensional features – it brought within its fold, people of all races, lives and colours. This character of the Indian movement is a contrast to the constitutions of Britain, USA, France and Russia whose constitutions were preceded by the great revolutions of 1688, 1776, 1789 and 1917. But India’s socio-political atmosphere was no less revolutionary in character which had its base in the activities of the congress. India did not have for this matter John Locke, Karl Marx or Lenin, or even a George Washington. But India’s struggle for Independence gave birth to great leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar and J.P. along with other numerous leaders. Their dynamic character and far-sighted leadership lighted the spark of socio-economic and political re-awakening at the hour of need. An analysis of the leadership that led the congress from 1886 – 1906, 1906 – 1919 and 1920 – 1947 gave us ideologies covering socio, economic and political dimensions. From the minds of these great leaders were

born brilliant social, economic and political ideas. The ideologies of the congress in socio-economic and political matters were realized in a variety of resolutions, policies and programmes.

Nehru was deeply influenced by the ideologies of the congress. An examination of the congress programmes and policies were targeted at the attainment of swaraj by peaceful and constitutional means. A mention should be made here of the reconstruction programme which was led by Gandhi, resolution demanding complete independence, resolution on fundamental rights and socio-economic matters etc. which made an impact on Nehru's thought process. The ideology of the congress as it developed through the freedom struggle was an amalgamation of the growing aspirations, desires and hopes of a new India. The ideologies of the congress had social, economic and political ideas within its fold.

Regarding the social dimension of the Congress ideology, the century old social set up made a mark on their politics and programmes. Social, religious and cultural diversities, the caste system along with the evils of untouchability accompanied by oppression of the socially backward classes proved to influence the social facet of the congress ideology. These existing conditions gave the congress an assurance for the need of social equality and justice engulfing social, religious, cultural differences and preserving the rights of the minorities. It convinced the congress for the need to wash away the age old curse of untouchability. One of the most painstaking result of the British rule in India could be seen in the economic field. The British manufactured goods were forcefully dumped in the Indian market, there was merciless

exploitations of Indian raw materials for the manufacture of British goods. The British tariff and fiscal policies in India resulted in the addition of the already existing sting of poverty. These forced economic policies of the British rule resulted in the unmanageable backwardness of the Indian masses. The British metropolitan economy with the looted advantage of Indian resources made India economically weak and stagnant. This situation convinced the congress the need for a positive and courageous move in the economic field. The congress saw the necessity of development planning for fighting the ills of poverty, unemployment, injustice and exploitation. The need for economic stability and reformation became the need of the day for India's economic status.

## VI

The philosophy and the fundamentals of the Indian constitution were influenced by the national movement in which Nehru played a crucial role. The framing of the India constitution took place during 1946-1947 when India was going through a lot of events and changes. The phrase 'constitutionalism', with which the name of Nehru gets associated, refers to the adherence of the principles of constitutional government. This constitutional government is based on the exercise of Law. Constitutional government embodies the philosophy of government of law, government by law and government based on law.

Nehru's concept of constitutionalism was comprehensive and positive in nature.<sup>11</sup> It was a blend of the basic principles of constitutional government and liberal democracy along with the

dynamic role of the state in achieving the goals and objectives of social justice. He reviewed constitutionalism both from politico-legal and socio-economic perspectives. Constitutionalism of Nehru was based on the primacy of the Individual and the governance of law. There is hardly any aspect which remains untouched by Nehru's adherence to the basic principles of the constitution. His decisive role in the making of the Indian constitution can be explained with aspects such as the working of the state, relation between state and individual, justifiable rights and liberties of the citizens etc.... and in determining and putting forward these ideas into practice, it is impossible to ignore Nehru's influence in the process of constitution making.<sup>12</sup>

Indian society is known for its ever changing character. Change is viewed as a law of human life and society. Taking this view into consideration, Nehru, like other Indian leaders ventured into the necessity to change the then existing Indian society into a better one. He set himself in making the Indian society a dynamic one for the effective functioning of the Indian democratic and constitutional system. Democracy in the political system together with injustice, exploitation, inhuman practices in the social system were two contradictory themes and could never go together. Nehru's perception of a new social order in this respect found harmony with the perceptions and thoughts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a crusader for democracy, justice and equality.

Law and social change is intimately linked together. Several factors play the role in changing the society and among such factors, law is a powerful one. Social change determines in what direction a society is actually moving. This factor in the pre-

independence period brought about two schools of thought – one which was led by eminent people like Bal Gangadhar Tilak who was of the view that political emancipation was the attribute and that no governmental authorities should intervene in bringing about social change. On the other hand was another school led by social reformers like Gopal Krishna Gokhale who did not object to the role of government authorities in bringing about social change. They looked upon law as a positive means to bring about social change, and reform. They considered law as an instrument to bring about social change. Nehru was highly influenced by this second school of thought. He carved out his thoughts on social change making law as the means to achieve this end.<sup>13</sup>

Nehru's approach to social change can be best understood when viewed from three different periods – 1. Period of freedom struggle; 2. Period of constitution making; 3. Post constitution making period.<sup>14</sup> Nehru's vision of social change was traced from his deep study of the Indian society with its deep rooted social problems and he knew that unless and until the Indian society was reformed and revitalized the realization for political freedom would remain a distant dream. He believed in social change where law would have the first hand to play its role of dynamism and positive vision. He laid emphasis on the role of the state to enact laws which would be able to fight the longstanding social evils and practices – Laws which would definitely bring about a change in the social sphere. He was of the view that social change in the Indian context, need not wait for its independence. He boldly attacked social evils and practices and bluntly attacked social problems like casteism, communalism, subordination of women

and religious fundamentalism that stood in the way of a progressive India. Nehru was a leader with a profound vision on the then existing social drawbacks and the need for social changes. Landlordism and the Zamindari system came in for a harsh attack at his hands in his public speeches. He made India aware of its deep rooted social problems and even convinced its citizens that there urgently was a need for social change.

His ideas and social awareness were explicitly expressed in the historic aims and Objectives Resolution in the Constituent Assembly. His speeches reflected his commitment to the values of western constitutionalism and democracy, giving individual dignity the first priority. The necessity of social change and modernization greatly influenced Nehru's thought and also influenced his role in the making of India's constitution. He formulated provisions relating to fundamental rights, right to equality, freedom and educational rights. He gave priority to the rights of minorities and their well being. His was the idea relating to the directives concerning the establishment of a social order with its basis on justice and equality. It is difficult to find words to show the crucial role played by Nehru in giving a needed shape to the constitutional provisions that aimed at the establishment of laws touching several folds of the Indian society for attaining social legislation – the crux of social change and social democracy. While reviewing the constitutional provisions aiming at parliamentary democracy, with factors like periodical elections, Nehru was aware of the Indian political system and all his plans would be unworkable unless the forces of social traditions would

be broken up and unless the primordial society would be changed into a new one.

All these ideas of Nehru needed the help and active role of the state in reorganizing the Indian society and giving it the touch of change wherever necessary. The Right to Equality as designed by Nehru was to be devised in such a manner as to emphasise on the social, legal and political dimensions of equality. This in turn is emphasized by the right to equality before law, no discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, colour, sex etc.... It took into consideration matters relating to opportunity matters in public employment free from caste, sex and religion. Special reference was given to the problem of untouchability barring social discrimination along with the idea of universal adult franchise. These aspects relating to the right to equality-social, legal and political were finely formulated by Nehru.

Religion was another forceful factor that was successful in dividing the country. It was one of the carelessly handled poison effecting social harmony and unity. India suffered much on account of religious antagonisms. Religious differences played the disbalancing factor towards a uniting India. Nehru along with other constitution makers kept in mind factors such as separation of religion from politics; Identification of the state from religion; Equality of all the individuals irrespective of their religious identity; and to engender the spirit of secularism.<sup>15</sup>

In relation to educational and cultural rights, the rights of minorities were kept in the top list. While inculcating these rights, Nehru assured that inspite of a legislating state, with vast powers

of social change, the cultural diversity of India should never be hampered. He therefore felt the need of a careful plan to keep this diversity in tune with the social reforms and social changes.

Among the ideas and their implementation should be mentioned the laws of social dimension relating to the Hindu Marriage Act, special Marriage Act and Divorce Act. The Hindu Marriage Act brought changes in the attitudes and outlook of women. It installed in them a feeling of security that they would no longer be inclined to allow their men to look at them as mere puppets. The changes brought about by the Special Marriage Act and Divorce Act were equally influential as far as changes in the status of women were concerned. In the caste ridden Hindu society, from ages, marriage between man and woman belonging to different castes were considered to pollute the Hindu social system. The advent of Nehru's ideas of the 'legislating state' with numerous powers bringing about social change was successful in the creation of an anti-thesis between the tradition ridden Indian society and western constitutional system. These acts were very prominent in bringing about social change and modernizing the Indian society. The special Marriage Act sought to break through the watertight compartments of caste and allowed men and women to open up their way through social and religious barriers, and create a union among themselves. The acts brought into realization that marriage was not a divine institution governed by divine laws, but a social institution governed by social laws and norms.

## VII

It is very clear that Nehru's vision of social change was implanted on a ground scale. He wanted to dig to the roots of India's social, economic and political problems. He hoped to carry India into the hands of modernity and progress. He found the solution in the eyes of Law, where law would act as a catalyst in transforming the society into a new one. But while making law the instrument of social change, Nehru kept in mind that law was not too advanced non divorced from the prevailing values of the society. Nehru in his ideas were clear and he was determined to use law in order to move India forward without the consent of the people. He was a liberal democrat and he kept the importance of the people in mind, but if there was any kind of barrier in his thoughts and ideas he was ready to use some kind of force, which was but not violent in nature.<sup>16</sup> He had a clear understanding between law and society. The purpose behind his wide vision was that he wanted a modern India, so that she could stand up in world politics. He was one among the great leaders who knew that 'change' was one factor which could move India forward. Nehru deeply felt the need of social change in view of the fragmented nature of Indian society which was devoid of egalitarian traditions.

The ideas of Nehru, to go for the western constitutional system, to shape the Indian constitution was expressed by him, but the western social and political traditions were a far cry for the Indian system. His ideas were admirable, but it was a superhuman task, when we turn back to the realities of the Indian society, both social, economic and political. This great idea however did not go

a waste, as Nehru's efforts gave polish to the construction of the Indian constitution. The constitutional document was definitely a change oriented one.

Nehru was fascinated by Russia's Piatiletka or the 5-year plans. A believer in the 'mixed economy' of Harold Laski and influenced by the Fabian society, he wished the economy of India to be partially capitalist, but with the state occupying a large role, especially in the economic field. In setting a path for economic policy after independence, he chose from a set of options considerably more limited than those available today, and followed to a large extent the wisdom among Indian academic economists of that time.

The study of Nehru will never be complete unless we analyse him as an exponent of developmental or economic planning and the architect of modern India. His ideas on economic planning are very much closely associated with his scheme of making India modern. His views on economic planning constitute an important sector of the congress ideology, especially during the Gandhian era. He attached great importance to economic problems and made the generation realize an urgency to wash away the problems, especially relating poverty, exploitation, illiteracy and unemployment.

Intellectually and ideologically, Nehru was very well versed in his idea of economic planning. It would be wrong to confine the meaning of Nehru's planning only to the boundaries of economics or economic aspect of life. Economic planning in the Indian context according to Nehru touches the sphere and efforts of

disinterested experts relating to matters of consumption, production, investment, trade, exchange and distribution of income in terms of clearly defined economic and social objectives, for the entire society. For a proper understanding of Nehru's economic planning, it would be wise to study these distinct phases: (1) 1927-1937; (2) 1938-1945; (3) 1947-1954; (4) 1955-1964.<sup>17</sup>

The foundation of Nehru's thinking on economic planning may be traced back to 1927. It was during this year that he participated in the Brussels Conference of oppressed nationalities and League against imperialism which brought him close to the leading socialists who attended the meeting, which in turn gave a lot of weightage to his social ideas. His visit to Russia gave an account of socialism there and from there he gathered a belief that though there were differences between Russia and India, some kind of economic planning under socialist banner was possible in India. But again he was convinced that could be achieved only if India's socio-economic conditions were improved. Nehru's ideas on economic planning took shape in the Lahore session, 1929-1930, and his statement on economic planning came to be implemented in the resolution on socio-economic matters in Karachi session, March 1931. But again he realized that nothing would last, unless the Indians freed themselves from the British rule. For him, along with new ideas of reform and modernization, political independence of the country became the most essential factor for socio-economic transformation. Nehru, as congress president has succeeded by Subash Chandra Bose, who fully shared and joined hands with Nehru's view on economic planning. The Nehru-Bose combination proved successful in the creation of

the National Planning Commission, with Nehru as its chairman. But their plans could be set into action only towards the dawn of Indian Independence, 1947.

The emergence of the new government of Independent India with Nehru as its first Prime Minister gave him enough room to spread his ideas on development planning. Though he admired Russia's plan for development, he was very much against the method which suppressed Individual liberty, thus reducing the whole method of planning into a totalitarian force. This totalitarian nature and repressive Individual liberty proved to be antithetical to his liberal and democratic mind. Moreover, he wanted to pursue economic development for India, keeping its, social, cultural traditions intact. Therefore he wanted to achieve its social, cultural traditions intact. Therefore he wanted to achieve development planning within the framework of democratic political system. The ideologies of the congress, his own political thinking, the state of India's underdevelopment, the necessity for a social, economic and political change deeply influenced his approach to economic planning. His thought process was further influenced by his rejection of the 'laissez faire' approach. Though he fought blood and sweat for refashioning India, his task of formulating economic planning was a very tedious task. His own ministry did not agree and were opposed to his idea of development planning. He sat with this idea of economic planning in the pre-independence period. His rejection of the laissez faire approach was a reaction to the then existing state of affairs. Under his model of economic planning, he favoured, a paramount place for public sector, but he did not altogether forsake the private sector. He put forward clear and

specific ideas on both the private and public sectors. The inclusion of both the private and public sectors thus came to constitute the keystone of mixed economy.

## VIII

In economic planning, Nehru, saw the need of bringing about changes in the Indian society. He knew that change was difficult in the tradition bound Indian society. His undying faith in the economic planning was further intensified with his faith in democracy, socialism and fundamental needs in the Indian society. At the same time he was aware of the fact that unless there was proper and strong administrative mechanism, it was impossible to implement development planning. But to wait for an effective administrative set up would delay the process of development planning, and therefore he readily made up his mind, taking all the risks in implementing his plans.

In his plans, Nehru envisaged the methods to bring about changes in the Indian society. His approach to the economic planning had in it three dimensions:- (1) Social; (2) Economic; and (3) Political.<sup>18</sup> His plans sought to provide food, clothing and upliftment for the poor and targeted itself to helping each Indian to take an opportunity towards self-development. With the era of development planning in 1951, the essential elements of development planning – capital, technical know-how, competent administrative machinery were all absent, but this however did not make Nehru fatal in his dreams. His outstanding courage, excellent leadership and his wise mind fought readily against these

scarcities. His leadership went a long way in ensuring his plans and giving priorities to the agricultural sector, food production and irrigation, along with importance to the rural sector. His development plans also brought about the necessity of nationalization of certain industries, which came in for the longer interests of the public. What India needed according to Nehru was a balanced, integrated and rapid economic development, embracing all the corners of the economy. This realization gave rise to the need of heavy industries, iron and steel factories, transport and communication which became an all essential factor for a changing India. The most tedious task for Nehru was how to make administration development oriented, goal oriented and change oriented. He found an answer to this in the face of democratic decentralization, enshrined in the Panchayati Raj.

Nehru saw in his economic planning a dynamic instrument of change for development and modernization. His plans were based on factors like liberalism, humanism, democratic socialism and modernization. He sought to attain his plans through an egalitarian and socialistic pattern of society. His society provided for equal opportunity for all, social justice and better standards of living.

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## **Chapter III**

### **Ambedkar and His Views on Society, Economy, and Polity – His Social Background and its Impact on His Thought Process – Emergence of Ambedkar as a Leader of the Depressed Classes and Construction of His Ideas for a Just Social Order.**

#### **I**

It has been observed that the two important issues of social justice and economic equality occupied the pre-eminent position in the minds of the makers of modern India. It may be noted that these two issues were deliberately neglected during India's subjugation to foreign power. Infact any study of India's freedom struggle movement will show that attainment of Independence had been the immediate goal, but the establishment of an egalitarian society had been the ultimate vision of the leaders in the movement.

A brief reference to the situation immediately after Independence will make the picture clear. A newly Independent nation, that was India had to tackle two important tasks – the task of nation building and task of state building. The infant state was not in a position to revive the economy which was totally sheltered. Consequently the idea of having social justice was not in the minds of the leaders. An open society with so many social changes needed cohesion first, development afterwards.

At this critical juncture B.R. Ambedkar represented that United India where all segments of the society would be in a

position to have their share and would be able to play a 'very constructive role. Dr. Ambedkar realized that mere framing of a constitution with lofty ideals might not bring good to the people unless there is a social consciousness, general commitment and urge for emancipation of the society. His name is best known for the service he rendered in framing the constitution for free India, but it is commonly believed that the constitution that finally emerged was nothing but a document containing high ideals, which Dr. Ambedkar fought his life through to bring them into reality through his words and deeds. Ambedkar was a 'great personality. His personality and his qualities touched the standards of a great visionary statesman, an ideal constitutionalist, an exclusive creative thinker, a hard working individual, a courageous Indian who waged a relentless struggle against the denial of social justice and economic equality to the submerged Indians throughout the country.

Ambedkar come from a poor family belonging to one of the untouchable community in India. These untouchables formed the lowest strata of the Hindu society, and were exploited as untouchables by the upper caste Hindus. These untouchables were known by different names in different parts of the country, like outcastes, untouchables, atishudras, Namashudras etc.<sup>1</sup> They were marked by several social disabilities which crippled their whole being. Their very presence, or for that matter even their shadows were considered to be polluting by the upper caste Hindus. They were forced to follow a different pattern of living, eating and even dressing. They were forced to occupy the most dingy and dirty places, which were usually on the outskirts of the villages. Apart

from these rules made by the upper castes for the lower castes were added the denial and use of public wells, denial of admission in public schools where the children of the upper castes studied. Though they worshipped the same Hindu Gods, the doors of the temples were always closed for them! This was not all, in addition to these, they were illiterate, and were forced to follow their hereditary occupations. They were born as untouchables, lived and died as untouchables – dominated, unwanted, restricted and unattained! Unto this community was born the fourteenth child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal, Bhim Rao Ambedkar. The origin of untouchability is an outcome of the Hindu caste system. With the passage of time the Vedic Aryans divided themselves into four different groups according to their occupation, according to the theory of division of labour. Those who chose learning were considered as Brahmins, the ones who took up administration and governance were classified as Kshatriyas, those who restored to trade were termed as Vaishyas and those who served these three classes were termed as Shudras. With this division, the most ignorant and fallen person could claim himself a Brahmin, and an individual from the Shudra group, however intelligent was considered a low caste Hindu, and the result was that they were labeled as untouchables. But this system did not go unchallenged and from generation to generation men came forward and dismantled this set up. Buddha threw this system apart, by embracing the untouchables into his teachings, Ramanuja threw open the doors and gates of temples for these people as well; following them were the saints of the Bhakticult like Kabir and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.<sup>2</sup> This change was caught up by the social

revival of Ram Mohun Roy. In relation to these social outbursts the name of Shri Sayajirao Gaekwad of Baroda should not go unmentioned, as he started the schools for the untouchables in 1883. Maharashtra was another place where the problems in the political and social fields were numerous. But it faced the courage of social reformers and political agitators. Tilak was one such agitator who spoke for the situation. Such was the situation of the Maharashtra on the eve of the birth of Dr. Ambedkar.

## II

Dr. Ambedkar was born in a Mahar Caste, their ancestral village was Ambavade, in a small town in Ratnagiri District in Maharashtra. Ambedkar's family background was conducive for a development of confidence and self respect, as his father and grand father were both military men. Ramji Sakpal acquired high knowledge in English language, serving as the headmaster of a Military school, with the rank of Subedar – Major in the army. Therefore, this was an unusual advantage for his children. This opportunity gave Ambedkar the fame of being the first untouchable ever to attain a doctorate. Ramji Sakpal was a great admirer of Mahatma Phule, and he was actively involved in social affairs. The family belonged to the Kabir cult. Ramji Sakpal was the father of fourteen children, of whom Ambedkar was the youngest. He was born at Mhow, on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1891. Ambedkar's mother Bhimabai was a very pious and gentle lady who hailed from the Murbadkars, another untouchable Hindu community. They were of a rich background from the village of Murbad in the Thana district of Mumbai. She was a lady who had

deep knowledge in the teachings of Kabir and theology and hence she observed a religious life. At the early age of six Ambedkar lost his mother, and was under the care and guidance of his father, brothers and an aunt who had a lot of knowledge in practical life. This family observed a very pious life, which was devoted to God's spiritual hymns and prayers. Ramji Sakpal read to his children the great epics, drilling into their minds divine inspiration and helping them to understand motive the force behind every strong personality. Since they resided in the military headquarters, they were surrounded by the stern and strict discipline of military life. Ramji Sakpal was not only a spiritual man, but a practical man who worked hard for the worldly betterment of his children. He was a master of Marathi Language, letting the command of the language flow to his pupils and children. He also had a good hold of English language which served as the key to guide his children. This hard working man took great interest in the social problems of the day. In 1892 he took great interest in fighting against the banning of recruitment of the Mahars in the Indian army by the British government. Such a man of wisdom, courage, practical knowledge guided Ambedkar till the last days of his life. Therefore Ambedkar was at an advantage in comparison to his fellow beings, under the curse of untouchability.<sup>3</sup>

### III

Ambedkar completed his primary education and high school education along with his elder brother at Satara. At his school he had already felt the sting of untouchability. He cultivated a spirit of patience and enduring pain in the school of experience. He

suffered when he learned that his very presence had the power to pollute animals as well as men and what astonished him was that he had the ability to pollute even non-living things like a bullock-cart! Yet another shock was when he learnt that his hairs defiled the purity of a barber's razor!<sup>4</sup> He slowly came to understand that he belonged to a family where nothing in the society – be it natural or man-made belonged to him! These were the cruel disabilities that an untouchable faced and which left irremovable stains on Bhim's young mind. These insulting and irrational rules made by the upper caste Hindus must have engendered in him an ever lasting hatred for Hinduism.

A Brahmin teacher in the High school however had a great liking for Ambedkar. It was his daily routine to drop a little amount of his lunch into Ambedkar's hands during recess. The original surname of Bhim's father was Sakpal, and Bhim drew his surname Ambavadekar from his native village Ambavade. The teacher was so much attracted to little Bhim that he changed his surname from Ambavadekar to his own surname Ambedkar in all the school records.<sup>5</sup> Ambedkar remembered this teacher whose kindness and humane nature took him off his feet. But amidst this sudden love and kindness, there always existed the untouchable rules of the High Caste Hindus. He and his brother were usually given one corner in the classroom and the teachers did not even touch their notebooks nor came near them in the fear of getting polluted. And when they were thirsty somebody would pour water into their mouth keeping a wide distance between them. Years passed by and Bhim developed a passion for reading. Changes took place when Ramji Sakpal shifted his family to Mumbai and

Bhim got admission in the Government Elphinstone High School. But although a government school, this institution was not free from the hurdles of casteism. One day he was called upon the blackboard to solve an arithmetic problem, and there was a sudden uproar in the class, and the reason was that the children of the upper caste Hindus used to keep their lunch boxes behind the blackboard.<sup>6</sup> He received the most deepest cut of untouchability in school, which he remembered all his life. He was forced not to study Sanskrit by the Brahmin teachers because it was held by the upper casts, that Sanskrit was the key to the Vedas and an untouchable did not have the right to have the Vedic knowledge he studied Sanskrit partly by himself and partly with the help of some pandits. With these great hurdles, he managed with patience and courage to pass his matriculation in 1907, which was an uncommon achievement for an untouchable. This event, was celebrated by this community, where his personality attracted a well-known Marathi writer Krishnaji Arjun Keluskar who presented him a copy of his new book, "Life of Gautama Buddha", which left behind irremovable prints on his young mind.<sup>7</sup>

Soon after this achievement he was greeted with yet another achievement of tying the knot with a girl of nine years. Ramu who was renamed Ramabai. She hailed from a good but poor family. Encouraged by his father's dream he then joined Elphinstone college in Mumbai Prof. Muller helped Ambedkar with books and clothes. The college hotel keeper who was a Brahmin never served him tea or water! He worked day and night with a lien to arm himself against the society in which he lived. It was during this period that the British govt. suppressed the rights of the Indians,

protests and appeals were not taken attention of, several social and political leaders and editors of newspapers were imprisoned and even deaths of some patriotic youths sent currents agitating the young mind of Ambedkar. After his graduation Ambedkar took service in Baroda, despite his fathers' disapprovals. He was appointed to the post of a lieutenant in the Baroda State forces. During this service his father breathed his last on Feb.2, 1913, which was the most unfortunate day in Ambedkar's life.

After the death of his father he had no intentions of going back to Baroda and the Maharaja of Baroda offered a scholarship for higher education in USA. This offer came as an uncommon opportunity for an untouchable. Life in a foreign land was a totally new experience for Ambedkar. Here there were no bars for an untouchable. His friends and his colleagues moved about freely with him – he could eat, talk, sit, share and even have a hair-cut in a status of equality! This status of equality and freedom enlarged his mental thinking, opening up new horizons in his constructive mind. He then slowly began to grasp the ills of the Hindu society which was reflected in his discovery that a better society can be cherished only if we base the society on education, education of both the sexes. In education he found the remedy against the seed of helplessness. While in the states, Ambedkar was and somehow deeply impressed with the American constitution and was more attracted to the fourteenth Amendment of the constitution which dealt with the freedom of the blacks.<sup>8</sup> He was also influenced by Booker T. Washington who was a great reformer and educator of the Negroes in America. He had opened the doors of education to the Negroes. After a successful career at the Columbia University

where he completed his Master's degree, he decided to move to London for further knowledge. He got himself admitted to the Grays Inn for Law and study of Economics to the London school of Economics and Political Science. He was then appointed for the post of a professor in Sydenham College, Mumbai. Professorship also did not bring him very good results as the curse of untouchability followed him like a shadow. Some professors agitated to his drinking water from the same pot reserved for other staff members!

#### IV

Dr. Ambedkar returned from London after receiving D.Sc. and barrister-at-law in 1923. By this time he had sharpened his mind with accurate knowledge and experience. He automatically became the spokesperson of the downtrodden. He now survived to work for the development of his style of leadership. When he came to the forefront the dynamic leadership of Lokmanya Tilak had ended and Gandhi had taken over as an all India leader. Savakar was also released and hired in Ratnagiri, which was Ambedkar's nature village. Efforts to do away with untouchability had begun a long time back, but Ambedkar kept himself away from these programmes as he wanted to do something in his own way. He initiated his work by opening an institution of education for the untouchables. During the years, he tried to organize the downtrodden in their struggle for emancipation. He moved from place to place holding meetings and conferences. While Gandhi was building up his leadership among the Indian masses,

Ambedkar was building up his leadership among the untouchables in his own way. Ambedkar's first attack was the use of public tanks and well by the untouchables, and he freed the public tank at Mahad for the untouchables. His next step was burning of the Manusmriti which codified and legalized the Hindu practice of untouchability.

Ambedkar's leadership among the untouchables brought him into conflict with Gandhi.<sup>9</sup> This conflict mainly revolved around the issue of the separate versus the joint electorates which were to be granted to the untouchables in the new legislative reforms. At the same time the two had built up their leadership in their own ways, and it was natural for their egos to clash with one another. However Ambedkar was forced to give up his demand for his men for separate electorates. But however a large number of seats for his men in the legislature, were granted. Another controversy between the two emerged on the on the issue of temple entry, Dr. Ambedkar fought on this issue as a means for attaining equality; he was not begging for entry into temples, where even dogs were allowed but not an outcaste! The real objective was to remove the four varnas on which the whole doctrine of; inequality rested. On the other hand Gandhi who was in favour of the removal of untouchability was not ready to abolish the Varna system, and considered it as an unremovable doctrine!<sup>10</sup> Due to these controversies Ambedkar also thought on the lines of moving out of the Hindu system altogether. He again realized that untouchability was not only restricted to this area and it was a difficult task to change traditions and customs, and also that religion alone could not wipe away the problems of poverty and starvation! Further

over attention on the religious aspect would lead to diversion of the economic problems. He realized that there were two fundamental tools – the right to political power and the right to education. He taught his men to systematically use both these, and taught them to be alert about law making processes and should them how it could be controlled through noting, i.e. they were eligible to change the law processes and also that he urged them to take up to education in order to understand things. He gave his own example that an untouchable could have a better occupational and economic status, only through education. He worked day and night to prepare his followers psychologically and to fight for their social, political and economic rights.

Dr. Ambedkar as an intellectual grew up under the influence of oriental as well as western traditions, engulfing the ideas on freedom of thought and expression. He never could tolerate a totalitarian ideology. He also feared communism least his followers would embrace this ideology on account of achieving equality.<sup>11</sup> It has been pointed out that Dr. Ambedkar was a believer of state socialism, as pointed out by Dhananjay Keer (Keer, p.389). In addition to equality and freedom he also believed in fraternity, which was more or less of the religious type. The final outcome of his philosophy rested on Buddhism. The three principles of Buddhism which touched and influenced him most ever – Prajna, i.e. understanding as against superstition; Karuna, i.e. Love and Samata, i.e. equality.<sup>12</sup> with these influences and teachings of Lord Buddha. Buddhism became the keystone of his analysis of Hinduism. The principles of Buddhism which appeared to challenge the hard notions of brahmanical Hinduism affected

Ambedkar a great deal. His admiration for Mahatma Jotirba Phule was deep rooted one as the latter at one time had been India's one of the greatest social reformers who was a crusader against Brahminism and casteism.

The position in and around education was still worse. It was a unique feature of the Hindu society prohibiting the mass of its people from acquiring knowledge. This was only observed in the Hindu society that education was restricted to the priesting class. Education and knowledge was an affair of the Brahmins only and others had no right to touch this sphere. All these observations as made by Ambedkar left us the weak basis of the Hindu society. He questioned every kind of humiliation that a Dalit had to undergo. He accumulated all his analysis in books, which were written to being forward his ideas an equality and social justice. During this process he also sought to discover alternative theories with the help of his vast knowledge and sharp analytical mind. His knowledge was too vast that we do not get his egalitarian thoughts accumulated in any of his works. Instead they are scattered in his numerous writings, especially from his writings on the exploitation of the Dalits.

With a detailed analysis and deep study of Hinduism, he concluded that the untouchables occupied a 'weak and low status' only because they were a part of the Hindu society. Hinduism and the Hindu society had given him the worse psychological trauma that being born a Hindu, he favoured Buddhism. The most important event in his life, from the point of religion was his renunciation from Hinduism.<sup>13</sup> As against the Hindu society, in his article "Buddha and the future of his Religion", in the Mahabodhi

Society Journal, 1950, he mentions that – 1. A society must have either the sanction of law or the sanction of morality to hold it together. Without either, the society is sure to go into pieces; 2. Religion, if it is to survive, must be in consonance with reason, another name for science; 3. It is not enough for religion to consist of moral code, but its moral code must recognize the fundamental tenants of liberty, equality and fraternity; 4. Religion must not signify or make a virtue out of poverty. All these requirements, Ambedkar discovered in Buddhism and in order to propagate these fundamental principles that embraced Buddhism were written down in his book “The Buddha and His Dhamma”.<sup>14</sup> He was bold enough to proclaim “what is called religion by the Hindus is nothing but a multitude of commands and prohibitions”. He was most discontented with the system of Chaturvarnya, which sanctified inequality and untouchability. He again denied that the Vedas were the final and the sacred doctrines which were infallible. Ambedkar was of the idea that everything in life was infallible, including the Vedas and that everything should be subjected to examination and re-examination if progress was to be achieved.

Ambedkar found in Buddhism a rational idea that centered around the whole philosophy. The scientific law of cause and effect in Buddhism attracted him very much. The religion holds that every event has a cause, and the cause is the result of human action. Buddhism wholly rejects supernaturalism.<sup>15</sup> Hinduism on the other hand shuts the doors of man’s inquiry into the cause of events. It vested the authority of learning and interpretations only to the Brahmins’. This was one of the vital reasons for the

numerous distortions in Hinduism. Another massive attack, he launches against Hinduism is found in his "Riddles in Hinduism – An Exposition to Enlightenment of the Masses", but unfortunately which remained unpublished during his lifetime. This book contained the exposition of the Brahmanic theology. It arrived to awaken the Hindu masses against the hazardous situations created by the Brahmins. He struggled to make the common masses aware that the Hindu society needed a change and that change could be brought about only if they changed their minds from the traditions of the Brahmins; if only they could start thinking by themselves, for themselves. The most poisonous teachings of this Brahmanic theology was the infallibility of the Vedas, and this should be destroyed from the very root, if India was to progress. It was because the Vedas made the Brahmins the lords of the earth, and they preached its sanctity and infallibility. Ambedkar put his words and deeds together to free the Hindu minds from this dogma, and he proclaimed that without the liberation of the masses from the ideas propagated by the Brahmins, India had no future.

In his book "Annihilation of caste", Ambedkar has thought of remedies to outdo the caste system. He pointed that the task should begin with the abolition of sub-castes, but this was not the sure remedy. Another remedy would be dining together with the inter-castes. Ambedkar himself was not satisfied with this remedy, because he knew that the sting of casteism would not be so easily wiped off! He then thought that the fusion of blood would be in a way, a helpful remedy and: he suggested inter-caste marriages. He said caste will receive a setback only when commonality, viz. inter-dining and inter-marriage would be operative in everyday

life. In relation to this he raises of fundamental question as to why a large majority of Hindus do not accept this idea?

According to him this is so because it goes against the fundamentals of the Brahmanic dogmas. Hindus observe this caste system, because Hindhism follows the basic principles of casteism. The only strong remedy is to destroy the sacredness of the Shastras. He regretfully announced that Hinduism breded inequality in all its forms and facets.

In his "Philosophy of Hinduism", Ambedkar has successfully applied the test of justice as well as utility to judge Hinduism. Justice, according to him revolves around the fulcrum of liberty, equality and fraternity. Hinduism according to 'him, breeds inequality due to the system of Varna-Vyavastha, which has its basis on the system of rank and gradation. He points out that in the Manu, slavery is justified which is confined to the Shudras only. The Shudras could be the slaves for the other three castes i.e. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas, but these classes could never be the slaves of the Sudras! Another eye-catching feature of the Manu was inequality of Punishments, for the same offence. The punishment depended upon the caste of an individual – the higher the caste, lesser the punishment, lower the caste, more severe the punishment, for the same offence. Since Hinduism gives place to inequality, therefore it neither has place for liberty to flourish. Along with the absence of virtues like equality and liberty, Hinduism also denies its people economic security. Hinduism denies freedom of occupation, and again according to the Manu, an individual's occupation is highly dependent upon his birth. The Shudras are born only to serve the higher classes and the

service they render should be their highest goal in life. Regarding knowledge, Hinduism maintained strict codes for the Vedic knowledge. Manus directs the upper three classes to study the Vedas, and the Brahmins had the authority to teach the Vedas. The Shudras had no right to learn the Vedic knowledge, nor letter the Vedas, and he was even barred from listening to the Vedas! This resulted in mass illiteracy and ignorance, as there was a direct link between reading, writing and a study of the Vedas. Ambedkar assaulted that the ancient world might have been quality of refusing to shoulder the responsibility of education of the masses. But there has never been a society guilty of closing to generality of its people the study of books of its religion.<sup>16</sup>

The spirit of fraternity obviously could not be expected in the Hindu society, where such a wide gap existed between man and man. Thus he analysed Hinduism from the point of justice and concluded that "Hinduism was inimical to equality, antagonistic to Liberty and opposed to fraternity".<sup>17</sup>

## V

Ambedkar, an impassioned advocate of the downtrodden struggled to transform an illiterate and disabled mass into an important factor in the Indian political power structure. He stood up against a rigorous caste-ridden society, which existed with a hatred for the untouchables. The better personal experiences and the situation of the downtrodden gave him the strength to strengthen and transform the Hindu society on the basis of equality, liberty as well as fraternity. To begin with, one would

have to examine Ambedkar's critique of the Hindu socio-religious system. His critique of the Hinduism was based on an extensive study of the Hindu religious literature. He used the philosophy of justice in order to judge the philosophy of Hinduism. For him, justice was the foundation for a moral order. Justice stood for equality, equality in terms of proportion. Equity signified equality, and if all men are equal, they have the same essence; this common essence entitles them to common rights and equal liberty. In a total framework, justice meant liberty, equality and fraternity. He pointed out that the four varnas in the Hindu social system was the root cause of all happenings, in other words of inequality. 'This inequality had seeped in every aspect of the Hindu social order. Rule of law in the Hindu society did not mean equality before law or in the eyes of law. Its basis was found in the discrimination based on varna. Punishment was in no way related to the offence, i.e. higher the caste, lesser the punishment and lower the caste, harder the punishment. The roots of inequality was strongly embedded in the Hindu philosophy.

With this, economic independence created an environment where liberty could never exist – and if it ever existed it existed on the basis of the four varnas, where liberty existed only for the upper caste Hindus.

Ambedkar was not at all satisfied with the British Raj and in his work "Administration and Finance of the East India Company", he has given us a clear picture of how India had been used to increase the wealth of Britain, resulting in a thorough disbalance of her economy. He pointed out that the untouchables could not improve themselves in anyway under the British Raj.

Here he set examples of the denial of the untouchables in the army; or even that the Britishers were not very happy to spread education among the depressed sections. This was not all, marks Ambedkar, with the appointment of the Hunter Commission, the Dalits were denied and discriminated on certain grounds, whereas the Muslims were given special treatment, socially, educationally as well as economically! Ambedkar was dissatisfied on the context that greater weightage was given to the Muslims on account of their political importance, which gave rise to communal dissatisfaction and strife. He was of the strong opinion that until this central problem of caste is not handled, it would be difficult to achieve an egalitarian state. He said that in a Hindu society, wherever you turn, caste would be the common factor, and in its most dissatisfying form! Reform of any kind was impossible until the caste factor was removed. His thinking was never satisfied with the British in settling religious, social, political problems nor did he conform to the policies of the congress leaders. He was away from the principles of Fabianism or for that matter Marxian socialist nor Gandhian. He sought for those remedies which were vital in re-structuring the Hindu society, and the upliftment of the downtrodden, the untouchable. He was far-sighted to understand that the Britishers would in no way help Ambedkar to free the untouchables from the shackles of the rigid Hindu society, and therefore he came to the conclusion that an alternative was the overall independence of India from the British Raj. Neither was it wise to fight for nationhood, nor a separate entity, because these untouchables neither had a common language, tradition, culture nor a common geographical location. What they had in common

was only the deprivation of progress – social, economic or political.

Thus, Ambedkar's analysis of the Hindu order highlighted its basis on inequality. He belonged to the revivalist school, influenced deeply by the principles of Buddhism which kept itself away from the Vedic dogmas having its basis on rational thinking. The knowledge which he had gathered for all these years, he used for the upliftment of the downtrodden. He had the courage to fight unshakably for his fellow beings. He did not believe in legislation nor force to create a new egalitarian society. He believed in the efficiency of legislation and worked to create a constitutional instrument to protect the fundamental rights of the depressed sections of the society, along with their economic and political interests. In order to make things easier he had already submitted memoranda's to the government from time to time. One of the major developments in the post independent India was that the constituent Assembly passed a provision legally abolishing untouchability on November, 29, 1949.

## VI

The concept of 'equality' forms another pillar of Ambedkar's thought process. Infact his idea on equality can be well gathered from his criticism of the Hindu society. His ideas on equality and justice are not systematically enumerated in any of his works, instead they scatter themselves as 'jewels of thought' in his various writings.<sup>18</sup> To begin with his mind was never satisfied with the British Raj, and proclaimed that England had used India

only for her gain. In his work: "Administration and Finance of the East India Company", he stated, "Apparently, the immenseness of India's contribution to England is as much astounding, as the nothingness of England's contribution to India".<sup>19</sup> Under the British scheme, it was the dalits who suffered the most. In "The untouchables and Pas Britannica", (Vol.VII), Ambedkar has highlighted how the dalits had been refused service in the army, who had had helped them a long way in the Revolt of 1857. Regarding education, these sections of the people were denied, justice as it was a theory of the Britishers that if these people where armed with the weapon of education, knowledge would spread only among them, least they would be in an advantageous position than rest of the society. With the appointment of the Hunter Commission, the dalits were looked down upon and instead special treatment was accorded to the Muslims. Ambedkar was very much taken back by this act of the British government. The backward class never got the attention of the government and they continued to be discriminated in every sphere of life. His views on equality were his own construction and ideas which had a different vision from other versions on equality. It did not find any match with the congress ideologies of political advancement, neglecting socio-religious equality, nor did it find any resemblance to the Fabian concept neither the Marxian nor even the socialist and for that matter even the Gandhian perspective. His concept of equality revolved around the necessity for reconstruction of the Hindu society, as also for the upliftment of the untouchables. He was impressed by the ideas which gave impetus to the French Revolution, fourteenth amendment of the American constitution,

the Marxist and Buddhist thoughts on equality etc.... But however he did not fully subscribe to any particular ideology. He also disagreed with the ideas of the socialists, on the point that economic power was the only source of power for the society. There existed social equality, property, religious, culture and all these could be viewed as different forms of power and authority. He firmly assured that unless social issues, especially untouchability was tackled, it was impossible for India to see a bright tomorrow. He pointed out, "turn in any direction you like, caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political reform, you cannot have economic reform, unless you kill this monster".<sup>20</sup> He studied that so far as the untouchability syndrome existed, and as long as man remained isolated from man, social harmony could not be achieved. When men can communicate with each other and live in perfect social harmony, fraternity, another criteria for equality can be achieved. Fraternity is only another name for democracy, according to Ambedkar. He regards democracy more than a form of government. It should be regarded as a mode of living in association with others in free communication.

Gandhi and Ambedkar both had concern for the untouchables, but they widely differed in their perspectives, while finding out solutions for the dejected class. Gandhi kept high the Vedic ideals in order to push India into an egalitarian society, whereas Ambedkar wanted to move far away from the vedic customs and traditions. Gandhi was of the view that the Chaturvarna was an unremovable doctrine of Hinduism and the Hindu society, whereas Ambedkar boldly apprehends that the

varna system, which forms the basis of Hinduism breeds inequality, and nothing else. Since Gandhi centered all his philosophy on non violence, he approached the problem of the untouchables applying the theory of 'self purification'. On the other hand, Ambedkar applied the theory of 'self-respect', with its basis on self-help, education and self organization. Gandhi was of the view that the law of the varna only taught man to earn his living. Therefore, there was nothing like inequality here. Nothing was too high, nor too low. He said that the caste system and untouchability should go, but the varna system should remain. Ambedkar, on the other hand asserted that varna gave birth to caste. Gandhi did not give much emphasis on the working of legislations to meet social needs, whereas Ambedkar gave utmost emphasis to the effect of law. In this context he framed a constitutional system to bring into reality his India, where liberty, equality and fraternity played the leading role. His vision of India was "all citizens would be equal before law: they have equal civic rights, equal access to all institutions, conveniences and amenities maintained by or for the public, they possess equal opportunities to settle or reside in any part of India, to hold any public office, or exercise any trade or calling".<sup>21</sup>

Along with this wide vision, he even gave room for economic equality, where agriculture would be treated as an industry, an industry which would be collectively owned by the state. Land would be distributed among the villagers without any distinction on the basis of caste. There would be no landlordism, no tenant and no landless labourer. To maintain equality, this was an important measure, according to him : in order to bring his

scheme into the limelight he pleaded for the safeguards of the minorities. It was not easy to fight against the age-old traditions, upheld by the Hindu society, or for that matter the rules and laws of denial of the depressed class, during the British Raj. Ambedkar should truly be worshipped as one of the great Indian heroes who fought relentlessly against injustices given to the depressed sections. He had a dauntless courage as he had himself sprung from among the untouchables, and he never broke down under strong pressures of any kind. He had dreamt of a mission in life and he did succeed in achieving his mission.

## VII

Ambedkar, holds the key to the understanding of modern India, our problems and our problems and our necessities. Therefore it is wise on our part that we study him from the aspects. In order to understand his egalitarian state, his economic reforms and ideas hold a strong position in his thought process. Being a professional economist, he was deeply interested in the discipline. Infact he held economics very close to his heart. He felt the need of this discipline in order to understand the problems of India and the Indian masses. His economic ideas proved fruitful in the old days and are useful carrying its relevance even today.

Agriculture, which was the chief source of Indian economy, then, as is today, the economic problems mostly centered on it. This was one of the main reasons for him to focus his attention on Indian agriculture. The main problem of Indian agriculture lay in the wrong system of land distribution. His main attention was

focused on the nature of distribution of land, especially their fragmentation and unproductive structures. He argued that the pressure of population on land was very high. People cultivated a small piece of land, with more or less no profit, depending on it as a means to their livelihood. If the society had given something more, they would not depend on these small holdings. Indian agriculture lacked the capacity to produce high earnings, leading to inefficient use of resources, labour and superfluous employment which generally resulted in low agricultural productivity. He suggested the remedy in consolidation of holdings – He suggested industrialization, which would “facilitate consolidation... It lessens the premium on land. It must precede consolidation. It is a barrier against future sub-division and fragmentation”.<sup>22</sup>

In 1937, Ambedkar introduced a Bill, seeking the abolition of the ‘Khoti System’: Under this system existed a superior land holder, and a tenant. It somewhat resembled the Zamindari system. This system gave way to a superior – subordinate relation, where, the superior usually strained the tenants, and they demanded the abolition of this unjust system, and Ambedkar too felt it important to abolish this system. By introducing this Bill, Ambedkar sought to establish a direct link between the tillers of the land and the government. The Bill also carried the provision for paying reasonable compensation to the land holder. Agriculture was to be made a state industry, where the state should divide the land into standard size, giving it to the villagers for cultivation, on the principles of collective farming. He felt the necessity to change the economic structure of India, in order to achieve an egalitarian

society. He assured the need to take changing steps to reform the Indian economy.

He gave a clear picture of the economic structure which he figured to be included in the constitution. He planned to place the basic industries under state control. Art. II, Section II, Clause IV of his proposal declares –

- 1) The industries which are key industries or which may be declared to be key industries shall be owned and run by the state;
- 2) That industries which are not the key industries but which are basic industries shall be owned by the state and shall be run by the state or by corporations established by the state;
- 3) That Insurance shall be a monopoly of the state and that the state shall compel every adult citizen to take out a life insurance policy commensurate with his wages as may be prescribed by the legislature;
- 4) That agriculture shall be a state industry;
- 5) That the state shall acquire the subsisting rights in such industries, insurance and agricultural land hold by private individuals, whether as owners, tenants or mortgages and pay them compensation in form of debenture equal to the value of his or her right in the land. Provided that in recovering the value of land, plant or security no account shall be taken of any rise therein, due to the emergence of any potential or unearned value or any value for compulsory acquisition;

- 6) The debenture holder nor the transferee and inheritable property but neither the debenture holder nor the transferee from the original holder nor his heir shall be entitled to claim the return of the land or interest in any industrial concern acquired by the state or be entitled to deal with it in anyway;
- 7) The debenture holder shall be entitled to interest on his debenture at such rate as may be defined by law, to be paid by the state in cash or in kind as the state may see fit;
- 8) Agriculture industry shall be organized on the following basis :
  - 1) The state shall divide the land acquired into forms of standard size and let out the forms for cultivation to residents of village as tenants (made up of group of families to cultivate on the following conditions:
    - a) The farm shall be cultivated as a collective farm;
    - b) The farm shall be cultivated in accordance with rules and directions issued by the government;
    - c) The tenants shall share among themselves, in the manner prescribed, the produce of the farm left after the payment of the charges properly reliable on the farm;
  - 2) The land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and in such a manner that there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless labourer;

- 3) It shall be the obligation of the state to finance the cultivation of the collective farms by the supply of water, draught animals, implements, manure, seeds etc.
- 4) The state shall be entitled:
  - (a) To levy the following charges on the produce of the farm : (1) a portion for land revenue
  - (2) a portion to pay the debenture – holders;
  - (3) a portion to pay for the use of capital goods supplied.
  - (b) To prescribe penalties against tenants who break the conditions of tenancy or willfully neglect to make the best use of means of cultivation offered by the state or otherwise act prejudicially to the scheme of collective farming.
- 5) The scheme shall be brought into operation as easily as possible but in no case shall the period extend beyond the tenth year from the date of the constitution covering into operation.<sup>23</sup>

Ambedkar while framing his scheme of state socialism had in mind two major objectives i.e. bringing about economic equality and ensuring its legal basis by constitutional means, making his scheme unalterable by any act of the legislature or executive.<sup>24</sup> He therefore gave a clear picture of the economic structure to be included in the constitution (Art. II, SecII; Clause IV). To quote him : “.....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.”<sup>25</sup>.

Ambedkar's ideas on social reconstruction in the post-colonial situation of India have been best reflected in his efforts to develop a socialist and secular constitution based on some of the fundamental principles of western constitutionalism. A look into the framing of the Constitution of India amply proves that Ambedkar's own perception of an egalitarian society inspired him to situate an individual in relation to the state where the individual world, in all practical senses, get adequate opportunities to express himself in the fullest sense of the term. The constitutional scheme guarantying individual rights is an elaborate mechanism for the protection of individual liberty and dignity. The whole secularization ethos underlying the Constitution can be explained with reference to Ambedkar's notion of man, society and the emancipation of man from all kinds of artificially created barriers.

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## **Chapter – IV**

**Jayaprakash Narain –**

### **Concept of Development for All.**

Jayaprakash Narain a leader who carried out the methods of Gandhi by keeping himself away from power politics, and gave himself for strengthening peoples power. He symbolized 'lokshakti', peoples power and his life was dedicated in expanding the power of the people in his quest for a better society. He represents one of the tallest leaders in Indian history. Though his life was an awful experience of contradictions and conflicts, yet we cannot overlook those historical facts which has made him one of the most important figures in Indian history. In JP's life his ideological journey assumes paramount importance. In search for truth and in his attempt to establish an egalitarian society, he changed his ideologies several times, trying to fit each of them into the then existing society.

The welfare of the masses constituted the fulcrum of all his philosophy. In his concept of democracy, he gave utmost concentration to the concept of 'demos'. But his political ideas were not sudden outbursts of his times. It took the whole of his life to frame his ideologies, with changes here and there from time to time. His multi-dimensional look out was meant only for the masses, the downtrodden. To trace his political ideas we should draw attention towards the political scenario of his times together with the prominent personalities of his generation. He was very much affected with the rising terrorist activities in Bihar which

had successfully left an impact on his young mind. He lived and grew up from boyhood to adulthood at a time when the spirit of nationalism was growing in the hearts of millions. Again this period witnessed the emergence of militant nationalists who were not satisfied with the programmes and policies of the congress, especially the division of Bengal in 1905. He was very much moved by the extremists and he was deeply fascinated by persons like Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai. He was influenced by Tilak's slogan of 'swaraj' and he also was inspired by the Geeta. Though not a pious man, he was inclined towards it, because the Geeta proved to be a saga of a great war. It was with these influences that the spark of patriotism was lit in him.

At a very early age he came into contact with national activities through his constant visits in Saraswati Bhawan, which was then a center of national leaders. Gandhi's simplicity and his favour for non-violence attracted him. He was drawn towards Gandhi and his technique of Satyagraha. He was so much moved by Gandhi and his ideas that he formed an association among his friends to discuss national issues, social reforms, politics of the day etc..... and his friends used to call him "Our Rajendra Prasad". He took out time to attend all the public meetings and he for the first time saw Gandhi in 1920 in a vast public meeting. He actively took part in Gandhi's call for non-cooperation. He also gave up his habits, shifting them totally with the cry of the Swadeshi movement. He took to wearing khadi and also learnt the use of the 'Charkha'.<sup>1</sup> He therefore gave up his heart and mind in the working of the freedom movement.

Jayaprakash Narain had a longing to pursue higher studies in science and he wanted to go to the states for this desire. With the consent of his wife and family he left for USA. He worked day and night, took up all kinds of work for his studies. He studied in different universities due to his unstable financial condition and here to there he gathered many friends. In USA he met the East European intellectuals and this brought him into close proximity with Marxism. With this friend circle he drank deep into the philosophy of Marxism. At the same time he was influenced by the writings of M.N. Roy which drew him more deeper into his study of Marxism. Jayaprakash Narain was very impressed by the Marxian Philosophy of revolution and in Marxism he found a surer and a quicker way to social problems, rather than Gandhi's civil disobedience and non-cooperation techniques. He was keen in learning and knowing about the activities of the American Communist Party. Side by side, he again thought that it was necessary to have a knowledge about social science in order to deal with the problems of India, namely the socio-economic developments. He then joined the Ohio University thus completing a thesis on "Social Variations".

On his return to India, he played a significant role in her struggle for freedom. In spite of his Marxist ideologies, his inclination towards Gandhi remained and with his attraction towards Nehru, he joined the Congress as a secretary of the Labour department. As a revolutionist he did not like the functioning of the Congress, and landed up organizing the Congress Socialist Party. But in spite of his programmes and actions he was liked by many leaders of the congress along with Gandhi. With all these

ideas and activities he always was in a search for 'all round development' of the society. This quest drew him closer to the idea of partyless democracy and sarvodaya. The theory of sarvodaya sprang up from Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave came up with his idea of Bhoodan. Vinoba Bhave was another great man under whose spell he was fascinated. He realized that Bhave was an original thinker and he had a power to inspire others. Vinoba gave him the lesson that only the spinning wheel would help all Indians to get employed. Jayaprakash Narain had discussed many a times about village industry with Bhave. He was enlightened with the ideas of a self-dependent village. Bhave stressed on the importance of lokshakti for the real welfare and progress of the society. Bhave also stressed on the point that people should take care of themselves in their own work. Jayaprakash Narain was of the view that people's polity should be so framed so that it is all encompassing and a society in which development for all prevails. Thus Bhave reinforced the idea of lokniti and lokshakti into his political ideas.

Jayaprakash Narain was a man who conflicted with his own thought process, and it was natural for him to have differences with his contemporary leaders. For example, he was not in good view with so many nehruvian policies and programmes, but at the same time he did not deny his leadership qualities. It is interesting to note here that the two loved each other tremendously. The statements made by each other had the power to disturb and hurt one another, but the spark of love was always there for one another. In respect to ideologies, he never was comfortable with Sardar Patel. He took Sardar to be the biggest blockade in

Congress's step towards socialism. But it was only after the death of Patel, that Jayaprakash Narain was moved and influenced by his thinking. He was in good harmony with Dr Rammanohar Lohia and he admired his vision towards social and political developments. Jayaprakash Narain was addressed to as an elder brother by Lohia. They set up a plan to cooperate the two principles of Sarvodaya and Socialist Party to achieve equity and their goals for a socio-economic revolution.

With so much of involvement and interest in creating a new society and his never quenching quest for truth, forced him to live till his end for the downtrodden. He was intelligent enough to organize several parties and merge them into Janata Party which was the first ever non-congress party. He made sure that he stood outside the realm of power politics, but nevertheless credit goes to him from all the angles.

## II

### **Philosophy of “development for all”**

Jayaprakash Narain with his long political experience came to the conclusion that an egalitarian society could be achieved only if there was a radical change in the society. This social and economic change could be brought about with the follow-up of the Gandhian methods. At this time Acharya Vinoba Bhave had started his campaign of Bhoodan and Sarvodaya in the country. In Bhave's Bhoodan Movement he could foresee a practical solution to the land problem. Narain viewed that the philosophy of Sarvodaya was a moral programme for collective welfare. He was

of the opinion that Sarvodaya was a political revolution, by peaceful means through a free expression of ideas. The Gandhian idea of Sarvodaya denotes collective welfare in which there was respect for all individuals and all types of jobs were respectable in their spheres. True life was attached with the motto of 'simple living, high thinking'. A Sarvodaya society would be free from centralised authority, usually a loose federation of self governing villages. There was no place for parties and forces to govern these villages and instead of 'Raj neeti', the principle that ruled would be 'Lok neeti'. JP's great love for freedom was the reason for his embracing Sarvodaya.<sup>2</sup> He felt this method more effective and original as compared to the old socialist ways of thinking. He felt that democracy needed the rule of the masses. In order to achieve liberty, equality and justice the masses themselves should participate in the affairs of the state. He was of the opinion that democracy could not be achieved unless it works in the lives of the people. He was of the strong opinion that the power of the masses is to be materialized in order to enable the people to be self-reliant. For him, that government was the best, which governed the least.

Sarvodaya, for him was people's socialism, which sought to achieve the goals of a socialist state through the participation of the masses, themselves. Sarvodaya's main aim was to establish a non-violent, non-destructive society. This society would be based on cooperative economy, thus erasing out the concept of competitive economy. Sarvodaya for him was a universal theory in which Gandhi stood in the middle with his model for social reconstruction. In this social reconstruction the society would be free from centralized authority, with due emphasis on self

governing villages. The representatives would have no power to play the game of politics, but would have the dedication to serve that society. Absence of party system would be experienced with authority which would flow from the people themselves. Regarding the agricultural aspect, the land should be redistributed and the ownership should be vested to the tiller of the land. In this aspect JP was highly moved by Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement. The Bhoodan movement proved to be successful which signified the distribution of land to the landless. In this movement JP found a fair and effective way of revolution, which was far better than the communist revolution where land was snatched away by forceful means. Here the Bhoodan movement was a totally agrarian revolution. In Bhave's Bhoodan movement, along with Gandhi's idea of Gramdan movement he found the true techniques of a practicable solution to India's economic problems. In his view, increase in production in the agricultural sector could be brought about by cooperative and collective farming. For him nationalization of industry was the not criteria for development, but decentralization of economic power was the necessity.<sup>3</sup>

Extending his philosophy of Sarvodaya to the democratic system, followed in our country, he stressed should involve the masses, and should do away with party politics. Democracy cannot survive amidst differences on the basis of economic status, social status and caste system. He stressed on the decentralization of authority. He put forward his concept of participating democracy in his pamphlet 'Swaraj for the people'. Here he emphasized that if people were to participate in the government procedures, the government should be brought very close to the people. This

closeness can be brought about only with the political and economic decentralisation. The basis for his idea of participating democracy was the successful working of village panchayats, and therefore he explained that Panchayati Raj should be recognized by one and all. Infact Gandhi's ideas on decentralization were formulated by JP in his theory of participating democracy on sarvodaya democracy. he stressed on the creation of a welfare society, based on self-help and hard work.<sup>4</sup>

Sarvodaya as preached by JP inclines towards the establishment of a non-violent technique to provide development in all the spheres of life. A society where there is the development for all.

JP's experience in life may be described as a search for a political system, which would exactly fit into the then existing system of Indian politics. His life, he spent in finding a political system for a better society – a society which would embrace the all round development of the Indian masses. All his writings and thoughts show us clearly his concern for the freedom of the masses. It was his quest for freedom and the downtrodden masses that he could not stick to any one ideology, and he shifted his ideologies from one to another trying to figure out which was the best for a total reconstruction of the Indian society. His ideologies, though they lacked consistency were based on the power of the people, for which he earned the title 'prophet of people's power'. He was never ashamed of these 'shifts', though they brought him a lot of criticism. He was strong enough to battle these criticisms and pave his way in search for a better society, for which he spent all his life.

He gave all his heart and mind to the Indian society and because of this perhaps it would not be wrong to admit that besides Gandhi and Nehru, there has perhaps been no one in contemporary Indian politics who occupies an important position as JP. In his long political career he has been a Marxist socialist, a die-hard revolutionist, a democratic socialist, a Gandhian, a Sarvodaya leader and finally an exponent of total Revolution. His constant quest for a better society brought him closer to the people, thus earning for himself the title of 'lok nayak'. He was a personality who had the germs of leadership in him; a personality who had the unquenching thirst to view human problems from a bigger perspective. His life was a continuous process of development with various ideologies replacing one another. His political course appears to be full of controversies, but yet if one sits down to study the various ideologies that he gave, and attempts to understand his quest for truth and in his urge towards developing a better society, one may find in his experience, a uniform line of development.

He spent his life in search of a new political order, not for any personal reason, but for the sake of human progress and individual freedom. He studied his society and the problems therein and spent his days finding solutions to these problems. He did not move back in admitting his ideologies and their irrelevance as pointed out in view of the changes that occurred in the social, political and economic context. He had the power to judge and study every political system on the basis of the progress of the people, especially in the Indian conditions. He did never feel sorry for changing his ideologies from one to another, because he

admitted that every shift or turn in his ideologies provided him with a better and more detailed picture of his thoughts and ideas.

Scholars have divided JP's ideologies into 'shifts' or 'phases' – Marxian socialist phase (1945-'46), Democratic socialist phase (1946-'54) and Gandhian phase. He adopted the Sarvodaya philosophy and embraced the concept of 'Total Revolution'.<sup>5</sup> Infact it is an impossible task to divide his ideologies into phases and put them into categories. His life was a continuous process of development, with overlapping tendencies. It is difficult to put his shifts into strict boundaries, as one phase of his ideology is a continuous process of development into another phase.

As mentioned earlier it is difficult to categories JP into one single 'phase' or ideology. He was very much moved by the principles of Marxism, but he was not a blind follower of the Marxist ideologies. In his own subtle ways he tried to redefine and revitalize Marxism. He also could not remain a Marxian for his entire life, thus shifting his mind and ideology to a Democratic socialist. During his stay in the USA he came under the influence of Marxism. Here he met a group of students and in their company he read books on Marxism and studied the philosophy it presented. He was in close association with a friend Abraham Landy, a Polish Jew who was well versed and refined in Marxist literature. It was with his help that he studied the deeper part of Marxism. It was with his close friends in USA that he drank deep at the fountain of Marxism. Besides the European friends he was driven into this philosophy by the writings of M.N. Roy. He was so much influence by Roy that he almost gave himself to Marxism. He

slowly held the ideology of Marxism and related it with the socio-economic situation of India. He analysed the point that would India's socio-economic problems be resolved by adopting the Marxian ideology? Marxism then appeared to be a surer and a quicker way of achieving the goals of the Indian society. Under the spell of Marxism he had turned out to be a die-hard revolutionist. He took the Gandhian techniques into consideration, but found that they could not fit into the Indian context at that particular time. At this juncture he found that Marxism was the only way to reach our goals in a faster and quicker way. His faith in Marxism was strengthened more by Lenin's success in Russia which gave his mind a turn towards Marxian Revolution. Instead of Gandhi's civil disobedience and non-cooperation movements, he found that the technique of Revolution given by the Marxist philosophy was far more positive. In Marxism he found that there was a place for equality and brotherhood which were the twin motives for JP's egalitarian society, from Marxism he received his actual truth regarding freedom. The concept of freedom for him was freedom from exploitation, from hunger and poverty. For him it was only Marxism that embraced them all.

The factor that attracted him towards Marx was that Marx had a great passion for social and economic justice, which was also JP's passion in life. He was moved by Marx's philosophy of freeing the labour class from the capitalist class. Marx freed the workers and gave them hope for a free living from the oppression of the capitalist class. Due to all these positive marks in Marxism, JP was not hesitant in confining himself as a Marxist. He confessed that he had no place for kings or princes in his thought

process. He was so much moved by Marx's interpretation of politics that he was firm to believe that development had its roots in the economic condition. He explains that in a capitalist society, political institutions cannot work effectively for the welfare of the masses. They fail to provide either liberty or economic security to the masses as exploitation by the property owners is the main force behind the system. Therefore the real danger was not any kind of state authority but the propertied class. With such an urge for freedom he undertook the Marxian Ideology for attaining the goals of the Indian society. He mentioned in his 'The Foundation of Socialism' that there exists only one type of socialism and that is Marxism. He summed up the philosophy of Marx as a system of social reconstruction to combat the inequalities – social, political and economic. He felt the real need for a revolution and did not move back in accepting that Gandhi's sober techniques would not be very much effective. He believed that the idea of good and bad varies from one individual to another depending on the economic background from which they come. The Marxist view is that men's ideas and values are determined by their class-ideologies, class interests and their privileges. He had a strong conviction in the theory of Dialectical Materialism and agreed with the Marxian principles regarding the material forces in the society. He also believed in the Marxian interpretation of history. He held the view that all the political institutions were a result of the economic conditions. Social division according to him was an organic process, whereby men earned their livelihood. Marxism for him was a scientific theory, which was engaged in the discovery of truth. But apart from his deep love for Marxism, he had a belief

that truth cannot be found only in one single theory, however scientific it may be.<sup>6</sup> He had written in his book "From Socialism to sarvodaya", that man is an ever progressing being. In his search for truth, he will never be able to confine himself to the ultimate truth, unless he eliminates the untruth and unfolds the truth. It was in this thought process that JP realized Marxism and its interpretation of history could not hold the truth at all times and under all circumstances.

JP analysed the difference between Marxism and Gandhism and pointed out that the content of the two philosophies did not lie in material or the spiritual factor, but the philosophies made difference with regard to the enquiry into the causes of economic inequalities and human exploitation. According to him Marxism sought to find out the above causes, but Gandhism had failed to take note of the above. He came to the conclusion that it was difficult to establish socialism in India which was ignorant of the industrial developments. Socialism could not be achieved with mere persuasion and non violent means as preached by Gandhi. Regarding the failure of the first phase of non-violent action during the Quit India Movement, he planned out to hit the enemy by trained fighters under the title 'Azad Dasta' and therefore he was the first one to introduce guerilla tactics through this trained fighters.<sup>7</sup>

These trained fighters should be technically trained to understand the policy of warfare. He also mentioned about an organization, an underground organization for secret activities and said that in order to fight our way, we should somehow organize manpower and materials. He was influenced by the Russian

Guerillas and wanted to prepare his Azad Dasta in a similar way. He however mentioned here, that their activities were not confined to looting and killing. He suggested possession of arms, not for harming others, but for self-defence. He also suggested that these weapons should include country weapons like spears, lathis, spades, axe, hack-saws, ropes, copper wires and the like. JP experienced practical methods of guerilla war-fare and stood like a commander for the Azad Dasta. His methods have proved to be successful in various parts of the country. His nationalist and revolutionary spirit was active and strong enough to stir many young men of his time. The Quit India Movement, 1942 witnessed JP to be the legendary hero of the movement as a guerilla leader.<sup>8</sup>

JP had a great liking and respect for Karl Marx and regarded him as one of the greatest man, ever produced by human race. He considered Marx as a path finder in socialism. For him Marxian philosophy was a science of the society; it was a scientific approach to social change which included within it the concept of a social revolution. He emphasized that socialist movement in India should be arranged in the Marxist line of thought, taking into account the conditions of the Indian society.<sup>9</sup>

With his return from USA, JP was so much observed with the Marxian philosophy that Marxism ran like blood in his veins. When the whole of India participated in the Salt Satyagraha of Gandhi, the communists moved back from this participation. They denounced this movement as "bourgeoisie and Mahatma Gandhi as a lackey of the Indian bourgeoisie".<sup>10</sup> A Freedom fighter like Narain could not stand this reaction of the communists and this marked his first step towards alienation from the communists. The

communists in India were following the policy laid down by the Third Communist International, under Stalin. He felt that the communist party of India was not a tool for the Indians but paid its loyalties to the Russian government just and then to others. These observations made him indifferent towards the communists. He refused to accept the dictatorial regime of Russia and somehow tried to ideologically alienate himself from her policies. The developments made so far by the Indian communists and the rise of leaders like Hitler and Stalin made JP to rethink about the Marxian philosophy. He further argued that in Russia there was the concentration of both economic and political power, and because of her economic set-up the Soviet State emerged as a dictator. In Russia, he observed the denial of formal freedom, social justice and equality. He then accepted boldly that the philosophy of Marxism was being misused throughout the world. He also analysed the fact that the Russian Revolution was a revolution of the masses, but ended up as a revolution of the few – the minority. All these events forced JP to re-examine the basic doctrines of Marxism.<sup>11</sup>

Hence, his conclusion was “Asia must find its own road to socialism and its own pattern of industrialization. It would be an illusion to think that the pace of industrialization would not matter if the process were carried out under democratic aegis; beyond a certain limit the pace itself would give rise necessarily to conditions of dictatorship”.<sup>12</sup> As JP began to observe the defects of over centralization, as in Soviet Russia, he turned his attention towards the idea of decentralization. Marxism, therefore could not be implemented for a good cause and it was immoral in its actions.

Thus he finally took refuge under Gandhi and shifted his Marxian ideology towards a more sober form of socialism – a kind of socialism which would transform the whole society, keeping intact human values of freedom, justice – social, economic and political.

### III

JP was in search of a political faith for the sake of freedom and human progress. He was always ready to revise and revitalize his ideas to suit the situation of the society. He considered socialism as a theory for socio-economic reconstruction of the society. His fight for an egalitarian society would not reach its goals unless and until change would occur through democratic means. He sought to establish a society with economic and political democracy. Therefore he came to the conclusion that democratic socialism is preferable to revolutionary socialism. After the illusion that Marxist ideologies would help him set up an egalitarian society, he mentioned that free India meant for him, a socialist India in which the poor and the downtrodden would be free from the chains of exploitation, economic and political. With this objective he set himself to a new target in forming the congress socialist party. This party he mentioned would give a new shape and content to the policies of the congress in view of socio-economic reformation.

This party was formed in 1934 with persons who were professional politicians, like Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, Ashok Mehta, Acharya Narendra Deva, Ganga Sharan Sinha etc.... They

took up the principles and ideologies which were influenced by Gandhi's concept of decentralization and non-violence. For him the objectives of socialism were not only nationalism of industry and redistribution of land, but it meant the exploitation of poverty should be totally eliminated with the twin objectives of equal opportunities and full development of the material and moral resources of the society, along with the best use of these resources for the needs of the society. While forming the congress socialist party, he played a very decisive role, keeping the love for Marxism alive in his heart. He logically rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat, thus rejecting the dictatorship of the bureaucratic oligarchy. He was in favour of the populist revolution, which was based on the consent of the people. He, along with this fought for a social revolution where freedom could be achieved in its full democratic form. The congress socialist party set itself, under the thoughts of JP, certain objectives with a view in putting the national struggle on revolutionary lines and helping the congress leaders along with the masses to embrace the socialist values. JP held the view that socialist values should be embraced by India, not only to fight out foreign rule, but to free the peasants and labourers from exploitation. He made the congressmen realize that the whole plan had to be broadened from the base itself, which should include the participation of the working class and the peasants. They should be convinced that their struggle for a better standard for living and working conditions had close connection with their freedom struggle. He struggled hard in his own ways to make the congressmen to realize that unless they sought to improve the social and economic conditions of the people, no

objective can be attained. The party's trade union movement along with the youth movement got its seeds largely from the policies of the Marxist ideology, which was framed and sorted out by JP. Though JP had misunderstandings with Marxism, he just could not erase out the influence of this ideology in the formation of other ideologies and plans. His efforts were directed in reconciling the aims and techniques of Marxism with the struggle for freedom.

He set himself to achieve such vast objectives, with the follow-up of Marxism, particularly the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he says had been totally misunderstood. He explains that according to the Marxists, Marx and Lenin, the dictatorship of the proletariat was not a socialist society, but it was a phase between socialism and capitalism. This concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat according to JP was necessary for certain circumstances, but this concept was different from the dictatorship of the party as in Soviet Russia. The Marxist ideology of the dictatorship of the proletariat meant the dictatorship of the working class, with a suppression of the ruling classes and their institutions. JP had completely understood that socialism without democratic freedom would be without any meaning and base. His picture of socialist India would be a picture of economic and political democracy where man would neither be a slave to capitalism nor to a party. Man would be free with a more or less equal distribution of wealth. He laid emphasis on the fact that the method for social transformation would depend on the conditions of the country. He did not move back in proclaiming that democratic socialism was the only true socialism. Turning away from his theory of violence and its practice through the Azad

Dastas, he engulfed the idea that democratic and peaceful methods would be more suitable to the Indian society.

But with these peaceful methods and plans, the role of a powerful socialist party should be the main focusing point. This party should be organized with the help of workers and peasants, along with the students and youth, and also supported by the downtrodden. It struck him here, that the Marxian interpretation of history was not suitable at all times and in all places, especially in industrially poor countries. He then advised that Asia should help itself by finding its own way to socialism, and help themselves to build up their own pattern of industries.

In his article "Transition to Socialism", he argued that Marx was not against democratic methods, nor were democratic means opposed to Marxism, rather the fact lay in the point that democracy and socialism were two sides of the same coin, which were inseparable from one another. From the very beginning he was influenced by Gandhi and his techniques of social reconstruction. Even during his Marxian days, he could not overlook this strong influence of Gandhi. He began to realize in course of time that mere control of the state over the means of production and distribution could not serve the real purpose of socialism. For him socialism was the instrument to pave the way for true freedom. Complete democratic government should be set up in the framework of abolition of social distinctions and equality among all the classes. Political and economic organizations of the state should be based on the principles of social justice and economic freedom. In addition to this mileage reconstruction should be encouraged by making them self governing units and

self sufficient. There should be the reformation of the laws of the land, where land should be given to the actual tiller of the land alone. One should possess only that certain amount of land which is needed to support his family. Further he emphasized on the establishment of cooperative forming maintained by gram panchayats. He advocated for the establishment of large scale as well as small scale industries, with agricultural improvements. He visualized a society where there would be freedom for the individuals and men would in turn serve the society providing his means of livelihood. Individuals would have the freedom to express his thoughts. It was his quest for a better society to shift from one thought to another. In his close association with Marxism and the workings of CPI, he was not satisfied with the outcome of the principles which did not fit into the society. It was the happenings in Soviet Russia where there was no freedom, no social justice, and no equality. This led him to re-examine Marxism. He also did not move away from the view that CPI was a tool of Moscow. Here he found the necessity of looking back at the Gandhian principles, and reopening the chapters of Bhoodan and Gramdan movements. To him freedom the mark of a socialist society and for freedom, he urged the necessity of the freedom of the press. The economic power should be scattered in trade unions, cooperatives and other such bodies. He also spoke for the abolition of special principles for the higher classes. He also urged for the freedom of religion and stated that religion should be kept away from the interference of the state. His thoughts and beliefs were backed up by studying the Indian people and the Indian society in depth. He stressed upon the initiative of the masses for achieving

social change. He suggested methods which would include, “.... vital large, mass movements, mass action of a non violent character, unconstitutional but at the same time peaceful”<sup>13</sup>.

#### IV

‘Participating Democracy’ or self-government to him was an order which was free of party politics and power. Participatory Democracy would be the order for self government to which the foundations were to be found in Panchayati Raj. The introduction of Panchayati Raj after Independence, created an atmosphere for participatory democracy, but JP thought that in order to make Panchayati Raj serve as the basis of a participatory democracy, certain conditions should be taken into consideration and should be accomplished. The first element he mentioned in this connection was education. He suggested that the people should be educated in order to understand the democratic values and ideals. He suggested that education should be imparted by those who are engaged in social activities and rural development. Political parties would also be a great help if they educated the people in a non-political manner. He mentioned the importance of schools, libraries, cooperative societies etc.

Another condition for the smooth functioning of Panchayati Raj was its aloofness from political sphere and groups. Parties should be allowed only to impart educational values. Panchayati Raj, according to JP meant the real dissolving of power. People should be handed the real power and should be allowed to understand their responsibilities. He mentioned about the three tier

administration of Panchayati Raj – the village Panchayat, Block Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. These three tiers should as far as possible give responsibilities and opportunities for the people.

Along with this he mentioned that the local authorities should be given its own minimum resources. He said that land revenue, should be the first resource to be placed at the disposal of the village panchayat. At the sametime local authorities should be given real authority over civil servants. In the three-tier system, gram panchayat which fell at the foundation of the system would serve as the basis, and the strength of the whole structure would depend on the gram panchayat.

Therefore JP successfully implemented Gandhi's ideals of decentralization in his idea of participating democracy also known as 'partyless democracy' or 'Sarvodaya democracy'. In order to keep the masses active and participating he suggested the concept of village community with all the elderly people, as its members.

JP, and other socialist workers aimed at the decentralization of power in a real democracy. They propounded for a welfare society, rather than a welfare state. Personally, he was critical about the role of the state even during the days of love with Marxism forced him to feel strong for a stateless society and human freedom could be realized in this society. According to him a welfare state abolishes human goodness and love, shaking and caring. He therefore suggested a welfare society, based on the ideals of self help, self dependence and hard work. People in a welfare society would plan out for themselves and initiate the plans according to their own ways. A welfare society and not a

welfare state would be the best instrument to achieve a socialist society. He thought of a society which would be free, with basis of equality, which justice would prevail where mutual cooperation would work for progress and development of the people. On the basis of technology and advanced industrialization, a false conception has arisen between industrialization and agriculture. According to him both industry and agriculture was essential for development. And therefore he wanted to abolish the difference between rural and urban. He said that the evils of science should be replaced by the science of humanity, leading to peace and happiness.<sup>14</sup> This ideal of a happy and peaceful life could be achieved only in small communities, and one had to sacrifice city-life to get a taste of humanitarian science. This communitarians society would succeed only if people show a sign of belonging to the community.

JP was totally dissatisfied with party politics along with the role of the state. He was a man of action, rather than a man of theory. His life was a quest for a better society and upliftment of the downtrodden. For this quest he moved from one philosophy to another, beginning from Marxism and Marxian Revolution to Democratic Socialism, with the Gandhian techniques of Sarvodaya, Satyagraha, following Bhave's Bhoodan and Gandhi's Gramdan. He was equally attracted to Vinoba Bhave's concept of Bhoodan and realized that Bhoodan meant the sharing together of land while Gandhi's Gramdan meant communization of land, this concept of Bhoodan was therefore an agrarian revolution, which had a different taste from other revolutions. A revolution which had a mutual surrender to the community only, through love and

sharing. Thus the outer social change was accompanied by inner human change.<sup>15</sup> In Bhave and Gandhi, JP found the best practical expression towards a socialist state. The ugly face of power politics pushed JP into sarvodaya – the politics of the people. He expressed sarvodaya to be the socialism of the people which could be achieved through peaceful revolution. JP was in close association with the people and he worked hard for the upliftment of the masses, he advocated for people's active participation in democracy which he hoped would help regenerate a new social order.

Further, he believed in the 'government that governed the least'. He pointed out that mere economic development was not the only measure of socialism, because from experiences he found out that though large scale developments in the economic spheres took place both in capitalism and fascism could not yield to socialism. He said that socialism was a moral attitude of the mind, it was a kind ethical behavior in man which was, his inward by some external agency, for JP a socialist society would be one in which the people would voluntarily submit their interests for the interest of the society, when people would voluntarily submit their interests to the society that would be the reawakening of morality in man. The more voluntarily people sacrificed their self-interest, the less would be the state power.

He also advocated for a group of selfless workers who would help in reorganizing the masses. This idea was also taken in refuge of Gandhi's 'Lok Sevak Sangh'. He had faith in this idea that the view of party-politics would be erased and that society would be given a different face altogether. With his emphasis on self

government he came up with the phrase 'Participatory Democracy' – or 'Lokniti', that is the politics of the people.<sup>16</sup>

## V

With his long experience in the effort of establishing socialism in India, he became aware of the fact that socialism in Europe was different from that in India. Europe was a well established industrial society, whereas India was weak in modernization. She was an agrarian community with very little knowledge in industries and other techniques of European style. The Indian leaders themselves were responsible for planning out their thoughts and ways towards socialism. JP therefore set out his mind to think and rethink about a new philosophy, which he found in the doctrine of Sarvodaya. In 1954 he took up the decision to sacrifice power politics and give his days for the success and achievement of Bhoodan and Sarvodaya Movements. After his magnetic attraction towards Acharya Bhave, he realized that socialism could not give us the basic needs of freedom, equality and peace. These necessities could be achieved by transforming socialism to Sarvodaya. Thus from his faith in Democratic socialism he moved to a new philosophy, thus embracing Sarvodaya. Through this doctrine he wanted to establish peace and prosperity for the individuals in the society. He realized that other philosophies only generated a tendency towards material prosperity. He laid stress that only material prosperity could not bring any benefit to India. In his 'The Ideological problems of Socialism' he said that socialism was more of a practical

philosophy than a theoretical one. He gave us several practical problems of a socialist society, especially the Soviet Russia. He explained that after the socialism in Russia, there was more of capitalism in that society, which led to a lot of corruption and upheaval in the party politics. Again he mentioned that there was a problem in creating a proper political framework for the development of a socialist society. Taking the situation in Russia, he pointed out that there was one party dictatorship with a corrupt and demoralized political framework. Automatically there was the absence of all democratic values and participation of the masses, were closed down to the active participation of party dictatorship. He also shifted his attention towards the economic structure necessary for a socialist state. The system that existed in Soviet Russia, was nothing more than centralization and bureaucratic rule, which undemocratic and exploitative nature of the bureaucrats towards the peasants. As a solution to this centralizing nature, he suggested that ownership of land should be scattered at different levels, moving down towards the village and municipal organization. He spoke for villagilisation of land, instead of nationalization. JP was in favour of democratic methods and democratic opportunities. He put forward Vinoba Bhave's method of love and sober means, which was the need of a socialist state. All these problems which were carefully studied by JP and his solutions for the same, reflect his attachment with Gandhi and his sharp mentality to fight the ills of the day.

JP mostly took into his thought some basic values of Gandhi. First were his moral and ethical values, which were mainly focused on social and economic equally, thus concentrating on a

casteless and classless society. This value of Gandhi focused mainly on the total wiping away of exploitation of one class by another. It kept into consideration of opportunities for self development. Another aspect was Gandhi's sober technique of social revolution, through civil disobedience and satyagraha. He was also greatly influenced by Gandhi's urge for economic and political decentralization which are the kingpins of a socialist order. Therefore he tried to accumulate all the Gandhian ideals for securing a socialist society. He realized that in order to establish a true socialist state, Marxism was not the ultimate weapon. He found a better path in the philosophy of Sarvodaya – thus embracing it to the quest for 'his better society'.

Sarvodaya, according to JP was 'People's Socialism'. It was for him the best programme for a social revolution. Sarvodaya aimed at a new social order with objectives like non-violence, equality among all the classes and individuals. It aimed at a cooperative society, based on cooperative economy, instead of competitive economy. In the agricultural side, the land should be redistributed and ownership should be vested to the tiller of the society. Regarding the industrial sector, there should be both centralized and decentralized industries. Centralized industries should be owned by the society. But inspite of this he gave concern to village self government, or gram-raj.

This was followed by his principle of participating democracy. sarvodaya aimed at a society consisting of human values, rights and equality, but with the absence of political parties. According to him political parties give rise to leadership, leading to the destruction of political ethnics, backed by personal

greed, backed by finance, and corrupt ideals. He placed value on party system only in the field of education for the masses. He said that in order to strengthen Indian democracy, all should join hands to help one another in the art of self-governance. In view of partyless democracy, JP suggested some ideas also regarding election and election system. For this he suggested an Electoral council at the village level constituting two members from the village assembly. However he insisted on the methods of electing a candidate. He took out the idea of electing only one candidate and he thought the best way would be to persuade the members to choose one candidate for a particular constituency, thus avoiding the unnecessary wastage of money and energy. He thought that this method would be simple and less expensive. Again this method would provide every adult citizen to participate in the democratic process. He visualized a society with the establishment of people's democracy comprising elements of equality, rights and justice. JP a staunch follower of the Gandhian techniques wanted to create a society in which there were the development prospects for a moral and healthy upliftment of the people. He wanted to form a society which favoured people's power. He brought forward his view that only material aspects were not sufficient to establish an egalitarian society. He forced on the transformation of the inner self or inner being of the people. He realized the fact that centralization and democracy could not go hand in hand progress would be futile unless and until people learned to guide the affairs of the state themselves. This progress would be brought by the idea of total Revolution. From his techniques of Sarvodaya he tried to move his philosophy towards total Revolution. His call for total

Revolution was an extension of the Gandhian ideals for an ideal society.

He said that the philosophy of total Revolution need not be carried out of the way of governmental interference. It could be carried out with the assistance of the government. It was for this reason that he formed the Janta Party in 1977 and hoped that this party would help him to carry on this programme of total Revolution. Total Revolution is not a philosophy to be confined only to the political sphere – it would have to be scattered to other spheres other than political. His idea of total Revolution gives us a humanist version of a democratic society. Total Revolution may be defined as a means to reach the end of Sarvodaya. His philosophy was directed in bringing about a drastic change in the society. He wanted to bring about revolutions in all the spheres of life – social, educational, cultural Intellectual, Economic, Political. He wrote in his 'Prison Diary' that "Total Revolution is a combination of seven revolutions – social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual". (Prison Diary, p.87). In this context he mentioned that the number may either be increased by breaking up one revolution into different groups or decreased by combining two or more revolutions. In fact, the matter of increasing or decreasing the number of revolution depends on the way a person labours to analyse and interpret them.

His call for total Revolution was to be carried in cooperation with the government with peaceful methods.

**SOCIAL REVOLUTION** : Social Revolution meant the reconstruction and the restructuring of the entire society. T aimed

at a complete change in the existing social set up. This social change was targeted towards the process of Gramdan and Bhoodan movements. Through these movements he tried to initiate community ownership of land, regular sharing of labour and income. He wanted the regrouping of mileages, which looked unto the merging together of small villages and redistribution of large villages, as according to the needs of the people. As a supporter of Gandhi's Sarvodaya, he wanted to set up a change on the Sarvodaya lines. These Sarvodaya lines meant a society established on the basis of truth, non-violence, tolerance and equality. This new order would survive for the development of all, and no distinctions would prevail. He advocated the need for physical labour and also stressed on the point that all the members in the society should work for a living. The ideal would be that everyone would engage themselves in the agricultural activities. He was a man who stood for rural civilization. According to him urbanization was unhealthy and it lacked community feeling. But agriculture he realized could not stand alone. It has to be backed by handicrafts and industries. Thus, he advocated for agro-industrial community life.<sup>17</sup>

This new social order would be free from social and economic inequalities and injustices. This was his conclusion that there can be no peace, security and cooperation, unless economic equality is found.

Through this social revolution he wanted to create a new idea between the new and the old social values. For example, he wanted to fight over the caste system in the present form, but somehow wanted to preserve its healthy practices. He thus

favoured this old system, but without implying any feeling of high or low. He was of the view that the caste dimension in the Hindu society should first be eradicated. The hierarchical structure of high, low, outcastes, untouchables should be pulled out of its roots in order to have a just social order. For this he suggested inter-caste marriages. He wanted to eradicate this problem not by any violent or revolutionary means, but by peaceful methods.

Further, in his new society he wanted to eradicate the distinctions between man and woman. Every kind of social evil should be done away with. Women should be free enough to compete with men and live an independent life. He wanted to establish a classless society through social revolution, the revolution being a peaceful one.

**ECONOMIC REVOLUTION:** In the economic thought of ancient India, man and not wealth was the centre of all economic activities. According to Gandhi, truth and non violence were regarded as the key-stones to judge all the human activities. JP was highly fascinated by these ideas and also became critical of western economy and large scale industries. All these, he considered as features of highly destructive nature, both for the state and the individual. He even pointed out that money played a crucial role in terms of western economy and that human values did not get any place in the system. He worked hard for Gandhi's model of decentralization and agrarian small-scale industry. He thus advocated for decentralized economy based on village community. Both industry and agriculture were important to him for the development of the economy. Science and technology

should be so used to develop the economic structure of the society. This science and technology should serve as instruments for social and economic welfare, rather than tools in the hands of the rich to exploit the downtrodden. He thought about an economic order based on rural community having self-sufficient villages. There should be the existence of cooperative labour and human feeling should be given priority; There should be decentralized industries and economic development should be focused on man.

In both capitalist and state controlled economy, the worker has no right to choose, except to sell his labour. There is no place for him to show his skills. According to JP, this shuts the way to the development of intelligence and artistic values. The position of the worker is like a cop in a machine and has no say in the production process. Large scale industrialism leads to the concentration of power in a centralized form. Centralized production may be positive in a country, where manpower is limited, but in a country with abundance of manpower, it leads to unemployment and poverty. In view of all these facts JP was allergic to large-scale industrialism. He concentrated on a society with economic decentralization. Here he suggested that all enterprises should be in the hands of the individuals. The unit for which they produce should be a village unit or small group of villages. He was not against the use of science and technology. He was of the view that the decentralized units would be benefited if modern science and technology helped it to progress. He said "commercialization of science has to be replaced by humanization of science, instead of science being exploited for power and profit, it has to be used for peace and happiness." (JP, A Plea for

Reconstruction of Indian Polity, p.53). Economic decentralization would lead to a self sufficient order in his new society. Thus, his idea of economic revolution is building up a new social order, with importance on rural development, with decentralized industries. In place of competition and complexities, life would be based on cooperation and simplicity.

**POLITICAL REVOLUTION** : JP was not satisfied with the existing democratic system in India. His political revolution found an important part of his total revolution, which aimed at the reconstruction of the political structure. This reconstruction and restructuring the existing political system found expression in his theory of participating democracy, with its basis on Panchayati Raj System. He strongly opposed the role of parties in the political system. He therefore favours the establishment of partyless democracy.

He contradicted the Marxian version of a stateless society and he thought that a stateless society was beyond the reach of man. Hence, he was not in the favour of abolishing the state altogether. In a sense his advocacy focuses on a philosophy of society without the active interference of the state. Regarding his partyless Democracy, it may be taken into notice that Gandhi had nowhere mentioned about his liking for a partyless democracy, though he disliked the party system. But JP had his own experience and hence he pleaded for a partyless democracy. He also supported Gandhi's ideal of communitarian society. The new construction of his political ideas were more or less a state free and self regulated state system. He favoured a peaceful revolution

to bring about these changes. For this change he made it clear that the people were to be made fully conscious of their political rights and duties. It was the strength of the people that would help him succeed with his reconstruction of the Indian society. He was of the idea that without changing the present political system, it would be difficult to follow any constructive plans for a change. Unless the old system would be totally wiped off, the values of liberty, equality, brotherhood, peace and justice could not be achieved.

**CULTURAL REVOLUTION:** His Cultural Revolution aims at bringing about a drastic change in human values and he stressed that external change would be of no use unless internal change of the heart takes place. It was a moral revolution aimed at changing the habits and values of humans. He wanted people to come to self-realisation. It taught people to realize the basis of actions like tolerance, fellow-felling, love, sacrifice, truth etc.... He was very much concerned with the quality of an Individual as well as the society. He advocated for the achievement of Swadharma. He preferred the path of action to that of knowledge and devotion. This was because he believed that knowledge was within the reach of a very few and unless and until self-realisation is not focused upon, it is important to perform the right action. Without knowledge and devotion there can be no upliftment of the heart. There can be no knowledge in importing one's duty in the right way. Thus he says that knowledge as well as duty along with action forms the basis of human culture.

Swadharma, according to him consists of all the duties of an individual. Duties may vary from individual to another, depending upon the age of an individual. There is nothing high or low, big or small about one's duty. It is only while discharging his duties that man walks in the path to progress. According to JP Swadharma includes the activities of the citizens in performing their duties, i.e. participation in the productive activities of the society. Swadharma also includes the duty of parents, neighbours and the society. Alongwith the principle of Swadharma, JP laid down another maxim 'Sacrifice yourself for the others. Along with these he asked the individuals to follow strict disciplines of morality. These rules and regulations were termed as 'vows' which served as guidelines for the right path in the absence of guide, a teacher. Of these the most important ones are truth, non-violence, continence, non-seating and non possession.<sup>18</sup>

## VI

**EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION:** According to JP the most essential need of the day was education. Education was one of the foundations in turning oneself towards a new society. Here, he mentioned about the recommendations of the various commissions and advised for their implementation. He even stressed that Educational activities are in no way helping the nation as a whole. Planning of educational schemes failed to be implemented properly which was failed to cover the overall national policies and programmes. Education serves as the foundation of every society, and the best educated system

recognizes and serves the needs of the society. The educational planners in India failed to recognize the basic needs of our society, especially of the rural population.

Gandhi had the ideas of a new society along with the formulation of a new scheme of education. Education served as the cornerstone of his socio-political thought. Closely following Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, JP also had the vision of a new social order, and while working for it, he spoke of a revolution in the educational field also. He accepted Gandhi's ideas of 'new education' or 'Nai Talim' and tried to move ahead with this idea. The two fundamental principles in Gandhi 'Nai Talim' was that all education be women round a craft, and the produce of the crafts be made to serve economically the cost of education. JP held that craft centered education would involve the harmonious development of head, heart and hands. Gandhi set a provision for education at every style of life, including the university level. However primary importance was attached to the education of children between 7-14 years. The subjects according to JP should be such so as to prepare the rural youth for all round development, and to make them fit for the new society which he was lying to formulate.

According to JP education should not be confined only to the school. Education should also take up adult or social education. Two fundamental principles about new education should be co-relation and self-support. This co-relation should be co-ordinated in such a way as to co-ordinate knowledge with like experiences. This principle of co-relation, when applied to the field of curriculum must provide knowledge of all basics of life.

He even advocated for self support. It stood for education, i.e. self sufficiency for education and for education through self-sufficiency.<sup>18</sup> It means that education should train students to be capable of learning and earning their livelihood and acquiring self-sufficiency and control over their lives. Education should have a rural basis on the context of Indian conditions. This was done basically to knit together the rural and urban people in cooperation with one another.

**INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION:** He was aware that an ideology was necessary for reconstructing a new socio-economical as well as political society. He wanted a radical change in the moral and intellectual perspective of people. And for this he advocated for Ideological revolution. He built up his ideological revolution, which was based on Sarvodaya principle of non-violence. Ideology is needed when something new emerges. And this should have within itself some kind of appeal to the reasoning capacity, so as to convince the masses. On the other hand, there should also be the appeal to the heart of the individual. The majority, according to him may have within themselves emotions that are weak and are unable to move their thoughts with new values. The emotions of such men should be shaken.

Conversion of people can proceed slowly, so that they can adjust themselves to new human values and ways of life. This process should take place with patience and should not be hastened to create confusions. At the same time, the programme of self government and self help is to be advocated as to make the people, embrace the new society, with new habits and values. The attempts

of this revolution should be double sided. Attempts should be made at the same time to transform the individual and to change the social system. His ideological revolution focused the values for bringing about a revolutionary change in the existing social order.

**SPIRIRUAL REVOLUTION:** Man is an animal, according to the materialists. But since man can sense intellect or spiritual hunger it appears wrong to call him an animal. If man was really an animal, he would be quite content with everything around him. But something in humans prompt them to seek beyond and to rise above. This something relates to the inner sense of man, his spiritual being. There is nothing bad in achieving material prosperity. Infact for man's existence, material prosperity is needed. It becomes evil when man uses his entire life in accumulating material pleasure, thus forgetting the values and needs of his society.

A good society can never be built on greed, and self-centered people, for which JP formulated his idea of spiritual revolution. To him humans are socio-organic, partly belonging to nature and partly to the society. For this reason man is both matter and spirit.

Thus, he visualized his concept of the seven revolutions in the nut-shell of his Total Revolution, for a change in the socio-economic and political sphere. But however he denied the attachment and role of any political party in his revolution. His revolution was people's movement, channelising them from one sphere to another. He gave his call for Total Revolution which is "all comprehensive – political, economic, social, cultural, religious

revolution in customs, manners, revolution in the individual's life as well as in the life of the group and in the life of the society".<sup>19</sup>

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## **Chapter V**

### **NEHRU, AMBEDKAR AND JAYAPRAKASH – A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THEIR VIEWS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY – POINTS OF CONVERGENCE AS WELL AS DEPARTURES – REASONS THEREOF AND IMPACT ON THE SOCIETY AT LARGE**

Any comparative assessment of leadership and personal attributes of epoch making thinkers in India invites many problems. The first of these is the problem relating to objective assessment of the contribution of the leader at a particular point of time. The reasons are many and varied in a situation where the nation struggles for independence, it is very difficult to isolate one leader from the rest and assess his contribution. This is true in all similar situations, not only in India but also all over the world. Moreover, in any freedom struggle movement there are many currents and cross-currents of events, forces, dynamics and trends which go and mix up inextricably and a proper separation is neither possible, nor desirable. It is not desirable because in separating each stream, there might be chances of marginalizing one and glorifying the other. Moreover, each leader has its own perception about the needs of the country and his ideological positions are responsible in formulating his own ideas about the course of events.

This is the problem in making comparisons or comparative assessment of the leaders under the present study. While

explaining Nehru, one may confront many questions which call for proper answers before assessing Nehru's ideas on social justice and economic equality. Born in a very rich family, with western education, Nehru had the advantage of looking at social, economic and political issues from a broader perspective. It had its own disadvantage too. It is said that Nehru, as he did not hail from the poor family, had no grass-root level base either in theory or in practice. But to accept such a position is to underestimate Nehru's vision of Indian society. After all a visionary like Nehru cannot be considered to be a product of any particular dogma or principle. A thorough rationalist in his ideas, Nehru tried to situate the Indian social problems in a broader perspective, so as to make it relevant for the rest of the world. This international outlook made Nehru truly global.

So far as Nehru's vision for the world community is concerned, it may be pointed out that his ideas were best examples of a blending between Orientalism and Occidentalism. This was possible because of his long association with the liberal western education which was developed on the foundations of Indian social thinking. As a child, Jawaharlal was very much influenced by his mother who was out and out Indian in thinking and practices. During this formative period, Nehru could gather ideas from Indian scriptures and mythologies. But because of his mother's liberal thinking Nehru did not develop any conservatism even during his childhood. At a later stage, completing his education at Harrow, and getting into barristership, he came into contact with the Fabian society. This association can be seen as a turning point in Nehru's political life also. His preference for socialism and

internationalism can be seen as results of this association. This is a peculiar situation which cannot be found either in Jayaprakash's thought process or rational thinking of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

From another point of view, this phenomenon of Nehru can be linked up with his vision for a global community free from any discrimination. In other words Nehru offers the finest example of a leader whose concept of nationalism did never stand in the way to internationalism. To him nationalism is complementary to and not antagonistic with internationalism. Here, a line of reference can be made to Tagore's concept of nationalism in which he could say that, nationalism conceived of in a narrow sphere, may prove to be a menace to civilization.

This is infact the feature of a great missionary whose ideas admit of no limitations, thus artificially created. This also negates the belief that because of his rich pedigree, he could not come down to the masses. Infact the case was a reverse one. His acceptability among the masses was proverbial. His charismatic leadership enabled him to penetrate into the hearts of millions of the Indian masses.

An examination of Nehru's leadership quality will show that he could surpass many of his contemporaries during and after the freedom struggle movement. Needless to mention that he had to contest, with the ideas of orthodox nationalism, religious fundamentalism and dogmatic casteism. Because of his power of assimilation, he could reshape all these into one very much suited to the emerging new liberated Indian society. As a statesman and

the first PM of India he had to shoulder the responsibility of transforming an infant state into a modern vibrant polity.

Historically speaking, the newly liberated state in India had to undertake dual functions – state building and nation building. Along with this there was the need for removing poverty after taking appropriate economic measures through national planning. Nehru's role in this regard can be equated with any mythological figures who by the exercise of his over whelming power and authority can remove all obstacles from the path of development. It may sound rather exaggeration when one says that modern India is the handiwork of Nehru. The state was in its infancy, the economy was shattered and the society was fragmented, both vertically and horizontally. Moreover there was the problem of having a heterogeneous society within a liberal framework. To any theoretical understanding, this may appear to be a paradox. But, because of Nehru's stewardship and the over arching influence of Mahatma Gandhi, the country could steer clear of all these complexities at a critical juncture of India's liberation movement.

Nehru's role in the making of the constitution deserves special mentioning. A close look into the debates that took place in the constituent Assembly will reveal that in almost all important policy formulations, Nehru had a very clear position. The drafting of Part III & IV, dealing with Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles is an example of reconciliation between not only of economic and social rights, but also of individual liberty and social control. Of course, this is not intended to marginalize the roles of other makers of the constitution, notably, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

As a leader of the masses he could communicate with the general people in the language they understand. This is something unique for a person who had such a western education and a high scholarship. Perhaps, for this reason of communicative skill he was very much liked by his political mentor, Gandhiji. His way of treating his colleagues was also exemplary. The works by his outstanding colleagues like Maulana Azad and others bear testimony to this. There had been occasions when controversy took place with regard to some policy issues having far reaching consequences. By his maneuvering skill Nehru could carry the decision with him to its final form.

Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts may not have been always consistent, nor could they fully solve the problems he discovered. But, some of his ideas stand out which have their own stand in the history of making Indian society an egalitarian one. His ideas were unique and bold which flowed from the mind of a versatile genius. First, was his service to those section of people who were the children of the lesser Gods – the Dalits. He waged a relentless struggle for the upliftment of these untouchables, in social, economic and political spheres; second, was his challenge to the Hindu society which were bound by the orthodox brahmanic superiority; third, was his search and discovery for an alternative to Hinduism, where he renounced Hinduism, embracing Buddhism; fourth, was his economic policies or ideas, which came

under state socialism, which he skillfully placed in the constituent Assembly and fifth, was his theory of Dalit Liberation.

The Dalit Movement created a political upheaval, more than any other social movements in India. Ambedkar's theory of Dalit liberation contained within its fold, matters like upholding power, interpretation of reservations, not only in the social and economic spheres, but also in the political sphere. He had made a deep study of various political parties, striking for power. One of his unforgettable words regarding his concern for the Dalit upliftment was – 'we must become a ruling community'.<sup>1</sup> A man of practical politics, he gave much emphasis to the strategies of political status of the Dalits. He sought to solve the problems of the untouchables, within the nation itself. He never opted for a separate territory for the untouchables, or a separate homeland for them. The Dalits for that matter did not have anything in common – language, culture, nor a geographic location. What they had in common was only economic discrimination.

Fighting for their economic upliftment, he also designs a separate section on the protection of the scheduled castes, describing their treatment by the upper caste Hindus. He argued for their separate electorates, separate village settlements etc.... He argued "so long as the present arrangement continues, it is impossible for the untouchables either to free themselves from the yoke of the Hindus or to get rid of their untouchability. It is a close knit association of the untouchables with the Hindus living in the same village which mark them out as untouchables ... it is the system of the village plus the Ghetto which perpetuates untouchability and the untouchables therefore demand that the

nexus should be broken and the untouchables who are as a matter of fact socially separate should be made separate geographically and territorially also and be settled into separate villages exclusively of untouchables".<sup>2</sup> Ambedkar was disappointed both with Nehru and Gandhi. He pointed out that the Indian socialists were unfaithful to their ideals, and that this was mainly because of the upper caste factor. They were unwilling to lend their eyes or ears to the presence and the voice of the Dalits. The neglect of caste was the main factor from which Ambedkar distinguished himself from the socialists. His political career was so much busy in finding the solutions of Dalit upliftment.

He founded the Scheduled Caste Federation in 1942. This organization represented the Dalits, but on an all-India set up. It focused on the separate village settlements and separate electorates. Ambedkar supported the various peasant movements, though there were tensions between the Dalit peasants and caste Hindu peasants. He supported anti-rent campaigns against landlords, anti-revenue campaigns. His proposals for collective forms and nationalization of land came to be the major programmes for his agricultural policies. Amidst these struggles there was the demand for a united Maharashtra. Though Ambedkar had developed a strong criticism against the Maharashtrian Brahman Congress leaders, he was enthusiastic about this movement mostly because of its strong anti-congress front. This was the period when the Scheduled Caste Federation transformed itself into a new organization, the Republican Party of India. This party now focused on working as a platform of all exploited communities in India, besides the Dalits. Thus the Dalits

could see that they lead all the exploited sections of the Indian masses. His major objective was to give the Dalits a place to stand with self respect and dignity. His other objective was to dismantle the Hindu social order, which was divided between high class Hindus and the low caste Hindus, regarding their social status and their respectable jobs; where usually a low caste was assigned dirty and low jobs.

Dr. Ambedkar in his scheme of social, economic and political transformation, tried very hard to transform the traditional Hindu order, replacing it by the dynamism of change. He was aware of the fact that to deal with the orthodox nature of the Hindu society, it was necessary to stimulate change, which could come only from the outside, with the help of modern ideas and institutions.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is perhaps one of those front ranking leaders who had in his mind to build a modern India where people belonging to all sections would enjoy equal status in their economic position and social advertisement. That is why it is not always correct to suggest that Ambedkar represented only the Dalit ethos in India. It will be wrong to conceive the idea that being a representative of the untouchable community; Ambedkar was naturally influenced by the sufferings of the community he belonged to. This will be undoubtedly a narrow estimation of a man of his stature. What is required is to assess his political ideas in the light of modern India's expectations – secularism, democracy, social equality and economic emancipation.

Philosophically speaking, such a multi-faceted personality demands an objective assessment by situating the person in the context of social imperatives and economic demands of the time. It may not be out of place here to suggest that no political idea, however pragmatic that might be, cannot emerge out of vacuum. Great personalities only work as the mouthpiece of the popular ethos of that period, herein lies the importance of Ambedkar.

Again, there is an opinion that present day phenomenon of Dalitisation of Indian politics owes much to Ambedkarian philosophy. Again, such a position suffers from a limitation of its own. Dalitisation or for that matter, Dalit assertion will be there in a society where the social cleavages are not only prominent but also ill-formulated in nature.

The emergence of Ambedkar during those fateful years of India's freedom struggle movement brought to the surface a number of questions which demanded their immediate solution. It is not simple to suggest that what Ambedkar tried to do was to reconstruct the thought process of the Indian society at that time. Ambedkar had to focus on two important issues like social justice and economic inequality. Rightly he had chosen these areas become various interpretations were forwarded by people of difference sections of the community.

What Ambedkar wanted to achieve was a 'just social order'. This very value loaded concept appears to be at the centre of Ambedkar's own construction of logic for social advertisement and economic emancipation. Again his ideas were to a great extent moulded by his own preference for 'just' order in society,

economy and polity. The entire process for secularization of the social, economic and political process can be considered to be a logical conclusion of his concept of just order.

One may notice that his ideas were not mechanical nor were borrowed from the west. These were indigenous and rooted into the very fabric of the Indian society. There are critics who hold the view that because of Ambedkar's attachment with western values and western education, he sought to inject the concept of secularism in his political ideas. That appears to be too narrow a logical construction. Ambedkar's adoption of Buddhism and rejection of orthodox Hinduism is a testimony to the fact that he had a total grasp of India's history, religion and cultural life. That was perhaps the reason that he could develop a sound mental and logical argument either for accepting or rejecting any creed, no matter whether it was Indian or western.

On the basis of his philosophical position he identified a number of goals that India should try to achieve. These may be summarized as follows.<sup>3</sup>

A close look at the goals suggested by Ambedkar one may find that on the surface there was nothing new in it; but given the conditions of Ambedkar's attitudinal formation were made, these were of profound implications. His concept of 'just' society was based on his preference for a humane society with an alternative face. If one considers this as a 'paradigm' of Ambedkar's philosophical position, one may well conclude that it was a new paradigm very much relevant and suitable for social reconstruction at a particular point of time. This is not to mean that Ambedkar

was out and out of social reformer only but he was a man with great vision and social reconstruction formed only a meager part of it.

Closely following this, come questions of Ambedkar's theoretical and ideological positions with regard to some of the foundations of his thought process, some of these questions may be formulated in this way –

1. What have been the meanings of freedom, rights and justice in Ambedkar's thought and action?
2. What are the cultural and historical roots of these conceptions in Ambedkar's thought.
3. Did Ambedkar have an implicit theory of colonial state?
4. How did Ambedkar view the complexity and contradiction in the nationalist movement?
5. Did Ambedkar have a theory of relationship black and white the state and religion?
6. How did Ambedkar conceive the issues of women's operation and gender justice?
7. How did Ambedkar view the problematic issue of minority rights in general?

These are source of the important issues which call for an indepth analysis in assessing Ambedkar's position in Indian rationalist history. Although out and out a believer in non-violence Ambedkar did not follow the philosophical position of Mahatma Gandhi. He was very much a believer of freedom and justice as derived from the liberal version and tradition. The concept of

human rights has been pre-eminently found a place in his theoretical as well as practical course of action. He was very much concerned about the destitution, deprivation and disadvantage meted out to the socially disadvantaged group of people. This perception about the artificially created social inequalities helped him in a bigger way formulate his construction about man, his position and the impact of environment on him.

Such a holistic concept of Ambedkar accorded a special position as a relentless fighter against injustice and all other related ills. His position in this regard marked a definite departure from the established notion of state and civil society. Interestingly, he addressed the civil society instead of the state in handling these issues. To him rights cannot put any restriction on the power and authority of the state. On the contrary they act as some kind of legal entitlements of the members of a civil society. In other words, rights in his view can put check on the nature and character of an interventionist state. The purpose of Ambedkar was to suggest that state should have a power coupled with duty to which the rights of the depressed classes correspond.

A few words about Ambedkar's ideas on negative liberties will be helpful. State should have the power and obligation to create conditions which can remove hindrances from the path of enjoyment of liberty by the members of the depressed classes. He was of the opinion that concepts like 'equality before the law', 'equal protection of law' and 'the Rule of Law' can work as mechanism to curtail state power for the enhancement of popular sovereignty.

Besides this, Ambedkar was very much keen in solving the theoretical problem between the concepts of rights and basic needs. In one sense he was very much inclined towards the protection of basic rights become, to him, in a society which is in egalitarian in nature, rights cannot have any theoretical or operational value. This perhaps may be the reason why Ambedkar did not develop a theory of representation in General. Rather, he was in favour of according weightage to the disadvantaged minority communities. To him this minority – majority syndrome is purely artificial and based on numerical strength without taking into the real needs of the communities concern. In a situation where there are wide disparities in social, economic and political positions, such numerical understanding may fail to project the real problem. That is why he was in favour of a situation where reality, instead of philosophical or theoretical conjecture shall be the guidelines for addressing the needs of the particular community.

In this context Ambedkar's views on nationalism and nation building seem to be relevant. As said earlier Ambedkar's privacy concern was to see that a man is fully liberated and is inspired by a sense of belongingness – to the community, to the society and to the nation as a whole. To him, nationalism was more than a sentiment – it is a feeling of generated out of a sense of spontaneous attachment with one's own society, community and above all, in general terms, humanity. To Ambedkar: 'A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle. There are two things. One is the common possession of a rich heritage of memories, the other is the actual consent, the desire to hire together, the will to preserve

together, the will to preserve worthily, the undivided heritage which has been hoarded down".<sup>4</sup>

In explaining the concept of nationalism one can find his preference for peaceful co-existence of all communities and in the creation of an international situation where people across the globe can live in harmony. To him, nationalism is a dynamic concept and it should not be seen in the context of any time specificity or situation – specificity. It is element, transcendental, and assimilative in character.

There is a section of opinion that his concept of nationalism excludes a large section, particularly the Muslim community as in his scheme no specific reference has been made to this community. But, to take such a position, would mean narrowing down Ambedkar's broad view of community and communal harmony. It is true that Ambedkar included religion within his philosophical notion of nationalism. This might help one in understanding his reason for leaving orthodox Hinduism and embracing more liberal Buddhism. He extensively quoted from Edmund Burke in support of his position on religion. In his opinion : "I agree with Burke when he says that religion is the foundation of the society, the basis on which all governments rest and earn their sanction....The nineteenth century European thought about nationality and nationalism centered around the concept of religion and culture. Mill and Mazzini developed a theory of nationalism on the basis of religion and culture".<sup>5</sup>

Another important point which deserves consideration is that Ambedkar did not have full faith in the leadership of the Indian

National Congress as the true vanguard for people's movement. To him congress was basically composed of high caste Hindus and moneyed traders. Secondly, congress in its struggle for freedom movement did not attach a importance to religion, the way Ambedkar wanted. His observation in this regard is worth noting. During the freedom struggle the congress platform under the garb of national integration has done a great job for the governing classes. The governing class his aware of the fact that the political campaign based on class ideology or class conflict will toll its death knell. It knows that the most effective way of sidetracking the servile classes and fooling them is to play upon the sentiments of nationalism and national unity. It clings to the congress because it realizes that the congress is the only platform that can effectively safeguard the interests of the governing class. For if there is any platform which despite all talk of conflict between rich and poor, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, landlords and tenants, creditor and debater can still talk of and preach nationalism and national unity, that is what the governing class wants, as it is on this the safety of this class depends, but it prevents any other ideology inconsistent with the nationalism being preached from its platform.<sup>6</sup>

Closely following this, comes his ideas on liberal democracy. To him, an individual is an end. In himself and he has certain inalienable rights which must be guaranteed through legal sanctions. In order to protect individual's position, he wanted to restrict the authorities of the state in interfering with individual rights and privileges. It suggests that, Ambedkar did not view democracy as a mere form of government – it was a way of life.

This concept, he borrowed from the western philosophical world. The four pillars of his democratic notion were, liberty, equality, fraternity and natural rights – the ideas mostly came from the French Revolution

Ambedkar considered the Constituent Assembly to be the appropriate forum for enhancing his ideas on man and society. His efforts to make constitutional guarantees for individual rights are the best examples of the society he was stemming at through his relentless struggle against orthodoxy, dogmatism and conservatism of all kinds.

Jayaprakash Narain has been correctly described as one of the multi-dimensional and epoch making personalities who symbolize the spirit of one India based on equality and fraternity. Like Gandhi, he believed that the character of the nation largely determines the course of the history of a particular country. Infact JP, as he was popularly known, wanted to move with the people which earned for him the name Loknayak. He tried to create a social and cultural environment free from want, exploitation, discrimination and marginalization of the people. It was his firm connection that any kind of disparity that confronts a community is artificially created for the purpose of excluding a section from the mainstream concept.

If one looks at the transition in JP's thoughts and movements, one may notice some important turning points in his entire political career. Basically, a believer in Gandhian ideals of Sarvodaya, he did not hesitate to embrace Marxism because, to him, there is no fundamental difference of spirit and intent both in

Marxism and Gandhian ideals in so far as both aim at social transformation and eradication of social ills.

Right from the beginning, JP had been in search of a right path through which he could achieve his goal. This justifies so many 'shifts' in his thought process. A person of his caliber cannot change his ideological positions without there being valid reasons.

One may recall the days when JP along with Nehru and others sought to establish a socialist order and for that reason, the congress socialist party (CSP) was formed. He was convinced that only through socialism two of his basic ideas can be fulfilled; establishment of a just society and minimization of the role of the state in determining the destiny of the people. But his closeness with Gandhian ideals did not allow him to completely abandon Gandhi's ideas.

A kind of conflictual situation can be noticed in JP's thought process – a dilemma which he wanted to solve by making reference to other ideological positions. It will be wrong to suggest that JP was primarily a nationalist thinker and not an internationalist. His ideas on social reconstruction based on Bhoodan movement are an example of his attempt at reconciliation between India social needs and the creation of an egalitarian society.

JP should be considered more a social activist than a political theoretician. At the fag end of his wife, his call for Total Revolution should be considered a culminating point of his ideas and actions. He did not hesitate to raise his voice against the authoritarian rule during national emergency. He gave a call to the

students in Bihar and other parts of the country to protest against this despotic rule. The formation of the 'Chhatra Sangharash Samiti' became a vehicle for launching vigorous demonstrations against the despotic rule as proclaimed through the emergency.

JP had in mind that a revolution is necessary for a total change of the social relations, economic structures and political configurations. His concept of total revolution should be seen from that perspective. It was not a revolution of the Marxian type nor a change exclusively on Gandhian principles. As the name signifies it was a 'total' revolution aimed at overhauling the society, economy and polity.

In the entire construction of JP's logic, individual formed the centre of any discussion. He stood for individual liberty and equality for all irrespective of his social position, economic background or political affiliation. His call for total Revolution was the outcome of his thought that the system of present governance would not be able to change the lot of the people.

JP, as is found, was in constant search for the ideals he stood for and for that reason he had to struggle with himself. On the issue of a proper method for the achievement of his ideals he had confronted with Nehru and Patel on many issues. One may also notice that he had agreements on many points with Dr. Rammonohar Lohia and both of them stood unitedly for regenerating the socialist party to achieve equity and goals for a socio-economic revolution.

Right from the beginning JP was guided by the philosophy of 'development for all' and in that respect, he put emphasis on

'lokniti' than 'rajniti'. He was all for the participation of the people because the ideals of liberty, equality and justice could be achieved only in a governing system where the people can identify their needs and they could suggest appropriate measures to fulfill those needs.

In its broader meaning, Sarvodaya to JP, was a socialism for all. He considered Sarvodaya as a universal theory and in that process the game of politics will be substituted by the principle of participation of all for social reconstruction. In the extended version of Sarvodaya he tried to link it up with democratic system where political parties would not have any place. It would be a 'partyless' democracy and people would choose their own representatives who would be responsible to the people. In this process power and politics should not be given any space to raise their heads.

This position may sound rather highly philosophical with no operative values. But JP chalked out a methodology of his own for the achievement of his goal. He stressed on the decentralization of authority and in his concept of 'Swaraj for the people, he pleaded for people's participation' in the government procedures. The basis for his idea of participating democracy was the successful working of the village panchayats. This is in conformity with Gandhi's concept of village reconstruction through democratic functioning at the grass root level.

About JP it is said that he had been a leader who did never run after any political or governmental position. He had enough scope within the congress party and also in the governmental

machinery to occupy a position where from he could influence the process of decision making. But, as a true disciple of Gandhi, he preferred not to be with the administrative machinery but with the people at large. This does not mean that he did not have any managerial skill which was needed to become a successful administrator. The entire process of his upbringing and later on his academic excellence prove that he had all the qualities necessary to become a man in the administration.

But as said, he was, ideologically very close to Gandhi and like Gandhi, he believed that it was the people and the people's forum which can put forward popular demands and aspirations of the nation as a whole.

This nationalist feeling in JP prompted him to look for a proper avenue through which he could implement Gandhian ideas and ideals. On many occasions he was seen asking himself what should be the appropriate course in the process towards upliftment of the people. This thrust in him led him to think in a manner totally different from the conventional path. He was in a constant search for an appropriate and just course suited to the task of social and economic regeneration of the nation.

Within the congress socialist party, JP had an overarching influence over his colleagues. There had been occasions for disagreements or setbacks but on a number of times he was supported by no other than Dr. Rammonohar Lohia. His socialist bias helped him take a wider view of socialism as a way of life. That is why he could say that Sarvodaya was nothing but people's socialism, through which people can take part in the process of

social transformation. He also held that democracy as a form of good governance cannot exist or function in a social condition where there are wide differences among the people either in the status or their location in the society.

It is seen that scholars have sought to divide JP's ideological shifts into three phases – Marxian Socialist phase (1945-1946), Democratic Socialist phase (1946-1954) and the Gandhian phase. The last phase of his life can again be sub-divided into two: Pure Gandhian phase and non-Gandhian pro-people activist phase. It should be kept in mind that no water tight compartmentalization is possible for a social activist like JP as each of these phases has its impact on the subsequent phase. So, for understanding JP, it will be rather convenient if one takes a holistic or integrative approach, rather than segmented or piece meal one.

His inclination towards Marx was the outcome of his desire for economic justice. Like Marx he also believed that the development of the society depends on the proper distribution of economic power. A capitalist society cannot provide either liberty or economic security as the basic philosophy of such a society is exploitations by the property owners. He summed up the philosophy of Marx as a system of social reconstruction to combat inequalities both in social and economic fields. It is interesting to note that he had a strong conviction in the theory of Dialectical Materialism and agreed with Marx regarding the material forces in the society. His book on "from Socialism to Sarvodaya" is a testimony to this trend.

He analysed Marxism and Gandhism on the context of their philosophical and ideological factors. He held the view that so far as the end was concerned there was no difference between these two philosophies. He equated Gandhi's concept of 'Rama Rajya' with that of Marx's ideas on communism in so far as both aimed at establishing social justice and economic equality for all in the society. But inwardly, JP did not accept any form of dictatorial regime – be it a communist or a non-communist one. This drove him to conclude that while initially the Russian revolution was a revolution of the masses, ultimately it established a rule by the few. That is why, to him Asia must find its own way to socialism and method for industrialization. In a word, he wanted to have a sober form of the application of Marxian principles.

The entire life of JP is a story for the search for an action rather than of a theory for the establishment of equality and justice. That may be the reason for his acceptance as well as rejection of many of the philosophical currents like Marxism, Gandhism, Socialism and Sarvodaya. Like Gandhi, he was all for a change of heart of the individual. The Bhoodan Movement attracted him most because in such a movement he could assess the state of mind of the people who gave away excess lands to the landless people. It was a sense of abdication on the part of a people who possessed land, because by nature, all men are possessive by temperament.

Thus, JP's philosophy and ideas can be analysed from three aspects – (a) Moral aspect; (b) Ethical aspect; (c) Operative aspect. JP is the finest example of a person who believed in what is called 'praxis' – a happy blending of ideas and actions. <sup>7</sup>

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# Chapter – VI

## Conclusion

### I

The foregoing discussions show that the concepts of social justice and economic equality formed the 'core' of politico-social ideas of all the three makers of modern India, viz. Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash Narain. In a sense, they had their own perception about Indian society, economy and polity. There might be differences in their attitudes and modes of achieving these goals, but placing them in the broader Indian socio-political perspective, it can be safely concluded that they were primarily guided by one basic objective – the establishment of an egalitarian society, free from artificially created distinctions based on caste, religion or economic condition. In a Memorandum to the National Planning Committee, June 4, 1939, Nehru formulated the aim of planning thus:

“The ideal of the Congress is the establishment of a free and democratic state in India. Such a free democratic state involves an egalitarian society in which equal opportunities are provided for every member for self-expression and self-fulfillment, and an adequate minimum of civilized standard of life is assured to each member so as to make the attainment of this equal opportunity a reality. This should be background or foundation of our plan.”

On Nehru's mental make-up, Michael Brecher, while writing his biography, could state:

“Nehru is by nature an individualist. His power in the Congress, both before and after Independence, rested largely on his personality the adoration of the masses and his acknowledged position as Gandhi’s heir-apparent, never on the organization itself”.<sup>1</sup> Besides this, he could establish his superior position in the administrative setup and could direct the decision-making process in his own way. To quote Brecher: “He wielded power in spite of the machine, which was controlled by Sardar Patel. And as the Prime Minister, he has concentrated authority and decisions in his own hands”.<sup>2</sup> While summing up this position, Brecher could write: “This (Concentration of power) is not because of a love of power, though like all men who have tasted power, he wishes to preserve it, but because of a conviction that he alone can ensure the realization of his social, political and economic goals”.<sup>3</sup>

There had been many issues where Nehru had shown his ability to offer right judgment – be it an issue relating to any policy or ideology. Congress, right from the beginning had to encounter a struggle between the conservatives and the radicals which at times, threatened “to wreck the party”. This position has been beautifully narrated by Brecher when he observes:

“Gandhi knew that Nehru was the one person who could bridge the growing gap between Socialism and Gandhism. As the godfather of the Congress Socialist Party, Nehru was entirely acceptable to the Left. As Gandhi’s favourite son he was tolerated by the Old Guard, most of who were colleagues of at least fifteen years’ standing. Thus he was uniquely suited to the task of reconciliation”.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout his political life, Nehru had shown remarkable degree of the spirit of accommodation and compromise on many issues which were primarily peripheral and not central to his basic philosophy of justice and equity in the society. His primary concerns were mainly two: social justice and economic equality which wanted to achieve through democratic means by waging a relentless war against any kind of socio-economic injustice or exploitation at any level.

One may recall what Nehru had said after the assassination of Gandhi who symbolized all the basic values that mankind should strive for. In a very touchy and emotional speech, Nehru told the nation the immediate consequences of Gandhi's death. In his own words:

“Friends and comrades, the light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness every where .... The light has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. For the light that shone in this country was no ordinary light ..... that light represented something more than the immediate present, it represented the living, the eternal truths, reminding us of the right path drawing us from error, taking this ancient country to freedom. .... A great disaster is a symbol to us to remember all the big things of life and forget the small things of which we have thought too much. In his death, he has reminded us of the big things of life, to living truth, and if we remember that, then that will be well with India”.<sup>5</sup>

That Nehru had opted for a world free from narrow-mindedness is evident from what he told to the students of Allahabad University:

“I am not alarmed at anything in the world to-day, but at this narrow-mindedness is the human mind in India. This is the most terrible thing”.<sup>6</sup>

Nehru had tried to ensure justice and equity to all men through the democratically constituted governmental structure and practices. He wanted that the democratic government should be capable enough to take up the task with sincerity and honesty. In the words of S. Gopal: “This fair chance of raising a rational, educated and forward looking society based on modernization, industrialization and a scientific temper was made possible by a government that accepted the task, planned for it, and informed the people that they had been sentenced to hard labour striving for it”.<sup>7</sup> He accorded highest priority to culture – culture of values, wisdom, ideals and manners. That is why he could say: “A man of culture does not speak of culture but acts culture and in fact, lives culture”.<sup>8</sup>

Nehru’s firm belief in the power of the people and the great heritage of this nation convinced him, that India could attain the high ideals of justice, freedom, popular participation and national self-reliance. The path was bound to be thorny and long but its commitment is there, nothing would stand in the way. To quote S. Gopal :

“By the end of 1956, Nehru’s long term objectives did not appear beyond attainment. Unbroken growth at home was linked with increasing prestige abroad. Individual freedom, social justice, popular participation, planned development, national self-reliance, a posture of self-respect in international affairs – all high and

noble goals, yet all being steadily achieved under the guidance of the Prime Minister (Nehru), himself brimming with confidence.”<sup>9</sup>

That is why; Nehru put emphasis on the importance of setting “economic programmes in the larger context”. He called for raising the standard of living of the people but not at the cost of the spirit of man, of his creative energy and of his conviction to great national culture and ethos. Social justice was of utmost importance to him but that could not be achieved in a condition of poverty and underdevelopment. To Nehru, the end and the means are always linked up with one another. “Socialism would endure only if the approach were democratic; and there was increasing conflict between the idea of parliamentary government and full-blooded private enterprise. What India required was not merely an economic programme but a recasting of society and a revolution in thought; and if these were to endure they needed to be based on popular acceptance and would take time to achieve”.<sup>10</sup>

## II

Let us begin with an analysis of Dr. Ambedkar as a leader and a maker of modern India. It may not be out of place here to mention that quality of leadership depends on many factors – social and others. In this frame, if one places Dr. Ambedkar, one may draw the conclusion that Ambedkar was destined to be a leader – a fighter against all social evils which he had to confront throughout his life before becoming Dr. B.R. Ambedkar! A visionary and a creative thinker as he was, Ambedkar could easily identify the basic social (including political and economic)

problems and provided, in his own way, the ways and means to solve them.

His understanding of the Indian social system inspired him to wage a relentless struggle against the denial of social justice, economic opportunities and human dignity. Needless to mention, he was all for the establishment of a just and humane social order free from the artificially created barriers based on religion, caste and other considerations. Ambedkar put forth his views in a frank and fearless manner, displeasure and criticism from many of his contemporaries. His conviction was so deep-rooted that he even did not spare the Hindu society which was infested with out-model customs, meaningless rituals and age-old dogmas. In fact, one may find this to be the immediate cause for Ambedkar's plan of action for social transformation.

Any objective and analytical assessment of Ambedkar's ideas should begin with his own perception of 'self-development' of man. This was necessary as it would help a man identify his own position in the society. He believed that only liberal education could eradicate social evils and one may find this assertion when at the age of twenty, he could write:

'Let your mission, therefore, be to educate and preach the idea of education to those at least who are near to and in close contact with you.'

This was, perhaps, the reason why Ambedkar could say that in the strongly regimented social structure of the Hindu society, individuals belonging to the down-trodden segment had very little or no scope to move higher even with the help of education. The

Hindu social structure was equated with a tower with no ladder or window. He believed that the Hindu society consisted of three parts: the Brahmins, the non-Brahmins and the Untouchables. His construction of logic and arguments dealt a serious blow to the orthodox Indian minds and set a stage for the reconstruction of the Indian society in general and that of Hindu society in particular far achieving his desired goal – a just and human society.

With a very searching insight, Professor Upendra Baxi in his paper under the title, 'Emancipation of Justice: Legacy and Vision of Dr. Ambedkar' has tried to conceptualize his basic ideas keeping in mind the different phases of his life as:

- (i) The first Ambedkar – a student who had to face the consequences of evil practices of untouchability;
- (ii) The second Ambedkar – a student-scholar who devoted his entire thought process in constructing his own logic of arguments and conclusions;
- (iii) The third Ambedkar – a militant Ambedkar engaged in drawing attention of the right thinking people to the evils of caste-ridden system and other related issues.
- (iv) The fourth Ambedkar – looking for the reorganization of the Hindu society on two main principles – equality and absence of casteism.
- (v) The fifth Ambedkar – asking for reservation in the legislature and that too challenging the established leadership in the community;

- (vi) The sixth Ambedkar – engaging himself in the tasks like transfer of power, making of India’s Constitution and nation-building.

At this point, one may recall his very critical observation about the plight of the down-trodden people when he said:

“There have been many Mahatmas in India whose sole object was to remove untouchability and to elevate and absorb the Depressed Classes, but everyone of them has failed in this mission. Mahatmas have come, Mahatmas have gone. But the Untouchables have remained Untouchables.”<sup>11</sup>

A brief reference to Ambedkar’s ideas on equality and justice will strengthen the points advanced so far. It may not be an exaggeration to say that his primary aim was to transform ‘apolitical’ masses into a crucial and decisive factor in the political power structure. It has been very correctly observed that while the western liberal education provided him with the weapon for broadening the support base for the cause of the down-trodden, the Indian philosophies gave him the basic foundation of ‘soul-force’. Given the Indian context, Ambedkar was of the strong opinion that religion should be viewed from three perspectives – a) as a social force; b) as a knowledge for the ideal scheme; c) as a set standard for judging the value of the ideal scheme.

While analyzing Ambedkar’s views on society, economy and polity in general terms, it should not be forgotten that his idea of equality and social justice had a specific point of reference – the orthodox Hindu social order. It should be kept in mind that he was

not a theoretician or philosopher in the formal or conventional sense of the term. Being essentially a pragmatist who drew his knowledge from his own experiences, he put forward his ideas on equality and justice which may not, in many ways, match with any kind of accepted views on this subjects – both Indian and western. This appears to be a ‘problematic’ area to some to understand the logic of his construction of arguments for equality and social justice.

The crux of the problem seems to have originated from the fact that Ambedkar cannot be bracketed with any particularism’ – be it Fabian, Gandhian or Marxian. His ideas were essentially his own conditioned by the prevailing social, economic and political order. His method of identifying the roots of social evils and ways to remove them can be considered to be a superb example of what is known as ‘praxis’ – blending of policies and actions.

Ambedkar is better known as the believer of ‘self-respect’ model of man which puts emphasis on education, self-help, self-assertion and self-organization. Apparently on this count, one may find his close approximation with Gandhi although on many issues there had been fundamental differences between them.

Before one concludes, one state be failing in one’s duty if one does not say a few words about Dr. Ambedkar’s legacy to the ‘Dalits’. Ambedkar preferred the term ‘Depressed classes’ as it broadens the scope of the term to include within its fold the whole of the down-trodden segment of the society. He was all making a

good number of institutional as well as legal provisions for the protection of the interests of the oppressed classes. The debates in the Constituent Assembly conclusively prove that he made every effort to accommodate his ideas in the provisions of the Constitution. To him, untouchability is not a religious system but “an economic system which is worse than slavery”. His deep and penetrating insight convinced him that Indian society, in general, suffers from many contradictory and conflictual limitations which, he believed, could be thrown away by an “operative man”, taxing an active and decisive part in the process of social transformation.

It will be very much relevant to quote Professor K. Raghavendra Rao, an eminent political scientist and a great scholar of repute on the way the intellectuals of to-day look upon Dr. Ambedkar in their academic exercises. To quote him:

“We are now taking the trouble of looking at Ambedkar’s theory and thought as an almost ritualistic exercise ..... prompted by the emergence of increasingly aggressive ‘Dalit’ power. This applies to the entire Indian intellectual system – its institutional channels, its prophets and its practioners .... We as a nation should feel ashamed that we have condemned to silence one of the brilliant and concerned voices of modern India. Nevertheless, it is never too late to make amends”.<sup>12</sup>

### III

Jayaprakash Narayan, a multi dimensional and epoch-making personality, symbolizes the spirit which seeks to establish a society free from want, exploitation, discrimination and

marginalization of people belonging to all sections of the community. Like Gandhi, he believed that the character of a political system was largely determined by wider social and cultural milieu. There is the necessity for improving the quality of national life – both economically and culturally. A man much identify himself as a contributing member to the society he belongs – until and unless, he feels like that he can take effective part in the process of social reconstruction. His emphasis on morality is thus a quality not in abstract theoretical sense but a concrete social and emotional foundation for accelerating the pace of development. This ideal is deeply rooted in fellow-feeling and tolerance and can not be separated from individual freedom and social justice.

That is the reason why Jayaprakash opposed any kind of totalitarianism in which individual freedom is curtailed. For, this, he relied heavily on Gandhian ideal where there would be minimization of governmental and maximization of community initiative. The roots of his belief in Bhoodan Movement and Sarvodaya can be traced here. He sought to establish a social order where individual would not be treated as a small unit isolated from other but an integral part of the process of social regeneration and recreation. He sought justification in his call for 'Total Revolution' as he thought that the system of governance would not change the present position.

One may recall that while as a student, he wrote a thesis under the title 'Social Variation' in which he attempted to employ the principle of natural selection in the study of social change.

Basically he was interested in providing answers to these three very important and interrelated questions:

- a) What is society?
- b) How is it formed and changed?
- c) What are the forces of transition?

His observations were highly appreciated because of his clarity ;of thought and well-conceived construction of logic.

The thesis was developed by Jayaprakash to show that every society has within it self some require some well-thought out plan which would bring about a kind of social revolution both in thought and action. His nationalist thought convinced him that there was the security of forming a brand socialist front to fight the evils of social regimentation and economic injustice.

Jayaprakash withdrew from party-politics because he realised that politics could not obtain the ideals of equality, freedom, brotherhood and peace. That is the reason why he embraced Sarvodaya in place of conventional method of socialism to bring about social and economic revolution. He believed that it was through the non-violent technique of Sarvodaya movement that a social revolution could be brought about.

He also accepted Acharya Vinoba Bhave's "Bhoodan Movement" as he regarded it as the beginning of a programme of converting proprietorship of all property into what Gandhi called trusteeship. To him, this new methodology was not to be applied only in case of land but could be applied to the entire social field. He was thrilled to visualize the great moral, economic, political

and social revolution that would sweep over the country if 'Bhoodan' exercises were repeated in every village.

At one point, Jayaprakash was seen asking a very fundamental question – the question relating to the application of Gandhian philosophy : Could Gandhian philosophy offer a practical method to accomplish the social revolution? He found that in the philosophical as well as practical senses, Gandhi's attempts were not only consistent but also oriented towards solving the basic problems of the society. He realized that many other social revolutions failed those who tried to bring them about used means that were not correctly conceived and had no direct relations with the ends.

To Jayaprakash, the main object of Sarvodaya is to establish real democracy in the country with the cooperation of the people. He had firm faith in the strength of the people and asked them to generate strength to bring about desired changes and solve their problems. That is why he believed that democracy would remain incomplete if political power is not decentralized among the masses. He wrote in his 'Prison Diary' (1977) : "The struggle for freedom was not fought simply for national independence." The establishment of democracy in free India was also an important goal of the struggle. It was in view of this goal that the Constituent Assembly had drawn up a Constitution for democratic India and adopted it on 26 November, 1949, on behalf of the Indian people".

13.

The idea of 'Total Revolution' aims at bringing about a complete change of the existing social and economic structure. It

may be seen as the culmination of his thought and ideas on humanity and socialism. To Jayaprakash, it a philosophy of the moral and spiritual rebirth of the Indian people.

Jayaprakash had a vision of an ideal society in which great human values of equality, freedom, justice and brotherhood would be best realized. For the purpose of achieving this goal, he engaged himself in a continuous search for the ideal type – the ultimate truth. As a social activist, he had always tried to test the validity of his formulations through personal experiences in the given situations and circumstances.

To draw a conclusion, it may be said that there might have been differences in outlook and the way of implementation of their ideas, but Nehru, Ambedkar and Jayaprakash had one common viewpoint – the eradication of social evils and economic injustice and the creation of a society based on egalitarianism and free from all artificially created distinctions between man and man. It may not be out of place here to mention that all these three nation-builders were, in one sense, the children of stream of India's freedom struggle movement. It is quite natural that there had been wide variations in the socio-political environment in which their philosophical frames were shaped. But one may not disagree to suggest that all the three thinkers had wide exposure to western philosophical views – democracy, individual liberty, justice and equality. So it will not be an exaggeration to say that their primary concern was the transformation of Indian social and economic system so as to create a democratic system committed to the establishment of a society free in all sense of the term. Any assessment of these three great epoch making leaders of India

should be made on the basis of these objectives and considerations, by neglecting the differences in their perception or prescriptions which are essentially peripheral and not central in content or spirit.

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