FINDINGS

This scholar’s detailed study on the topic “Gandhi’s concept of Intercaste marriage, has yielded certain new important ‘findings’, that are started briefly below:-

Gandhi had firmly declared himself a ‘Sanatana Hindu’. He had even gone to the extent of realizing ‘Rama Rajya’. But he had accepted his own limitation of not thoroughly going through all the Hindu scriptures. Despite his strong belief in Vedas and other ancient Hindu Scripture, Gandhi had found ‘untouchability’ a blemish on Hinduism. So, being a proud lover of the religion – ‘Hinduism’, Gandhi wanted to purge the evil of untouchability from Hinduism. For this he wanted to get rid-off, innumerable castes from Hinduism that can be achieved, Gandhi believed, only through inter-caste marriages.

In his earlier phase of freedom movement, i.e., before 1920, Gandhi didn’t have any idea of inter-caste marriage at all. But, we could find a different person in Gandhi after 1932, from when he started expressing his thoughts based on his ideological shift that he had undergone within himself. This change in Gandhi, by which, he spoke in favour of inter-caste marriage, owes its origin to three historical ‘landmark’ incidents that happened between 1920 – 1930.

The first incident was the reform movement and the meeting with Narayana Guru in 1925, after ‘Vaikkom’ Satyagraha that fought against untouchability. The second incident was that of the meeting with E.V.Ramasamy (Periyar) and his Self Respect Movement (SRM). And the
third major incident was that of the meeting with Dr. Ambedkar and his Vituperative attack against casteism, that nurtured untouchability.

The Round Table Conferences at London between 1930 – 1932, and its aftermath political developments like ‘Poona Pact’ also had contributed a lot for Gandhi’s ‘ideological shift’.

The ‘Harijan Sevak Sangh’ founded by Gandhi in 1933, was an organisation meant out-and-out for untouchability eradication. This sangh, Gandhi believed, could cater to the needs of consoling and emancipating the ‘untouchables’. Gandhi’s these activities were done by him as a staunch Hindu and that too as an true follower remaining inside the ‘Hindu’ fold itself. But the sad irony was that, Gandhi’s these activities were not supported by any other Hindu Organization, for that they remained indifferent to all these Gandhi’s activities.

The good intention and the real reform spirit that Gandhi had injected into his ‘Harijan Sevak Sangh’ and his ‘anti-untouchability’ movement was not carried out by any of Gandhian organisations including Harijan Sevak Sangh, after his death. His novel and noble expectation of “All becoming Harijans“ within the Hindu fold, still remains a dream and is yet to be fulfilled. And what to say? His very Religious word ‘Harijan’ is a banned word in this country. And this aptly reveals all the prevailing trend towards reaching the Gandhian dream.