Chapter IV
Dr. Ambedkar and His Economic, Political and Legal Writings

Economic Theory

Besides being a prominent social and religious thinker, Dr. Ambedkar also emerged as an original economic thinker from the pages of his writings – an authority to challenge the scholars of economics. The study of Dr. Ambedkar cannot assume its completeness unless his economic thought is also given due significance. It is evident from his speeches and articles that he mastered the subject to a great extent. He was an expert in both theoretical and applied economics. Economics was one of his highly-concerned domains from the beginning of his career. He joined Columbia University from where he obtained his post-graduate degree in the year 1913-15 for the thesis *Ancient Indian Commerce* which was later on included in Vol. XII by the Government of Maharashtra. He was awarded Ph.D. from the same university for his thesis *National Dividend of India: A Historic and Analytical Study* which was published as *The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India* and was included in Vol. VI. He also joined London School of Economics and Political Sciences for further study in Economics. Due to the financial crisis, he was forced to leave his research. But soon he resumed his study and was awarded M. Sc. for his thesis *Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India*. He also submitted his famous thesis *The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution* to the University of London. Later on, he resubmitted his thesis to the Bombay University and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Science. It was published in Vol. VI. We come across his thought-provoking economic ideas not only through his famous books, but also through his speeches in the Constituent Assembly, articles and memorandums focused on various economic problems of the country.

One of the most remarkable features of Dr. Ambedkar's economic thought was his scientific approach to the study of economics. K. Raghavendra Rao comments,

Ambedkar’s training in liberal epistemology predisposed him towards the notion of economics as a scientific enterprise based on the standard methods of positive natural sciences. How does Ambedkar reconcile these two conceptions of economics – as a humanistic study and as a scientific study? The solution he accepts is also within the framework of a liberal epistemology. He relates the two conceptions by making the first conception postulate the ends/goals and the second conception analyse the world or empirical facts so that one can see the possibilities of achieving the postulated goals in a real, empirical world. (1998: 62)

Dr. Ambedkar’s advocacy of economic freedom had social, political and religious implications. His concept of free man – a man free from all kinds
of inequalities – could not be conceived without economic equality. His economic thoughts presented an occupational and operational analysis of the issue of free man. His intelligence to analyze the problem and to suggest remedial measures keeping in mind various perspectives was remarkable.

He could find out the problem and strike through its roots. “According to Ambedkar, the fundamental cause of India’s backward economy was the delay in changing the land system in India’s villages. The real remedy was democratic collectivism in which economic efficiency, productivity and overhauling village economy are materialized.” (Kuber 2009: 280)

His economic ideology was value-oriented as it respected man’s dignity as well as economic welfare. He favoured individual freedom in choosing any respective course of his livelihood. He thought that there must be alternative choices of profession and employment for all. He insisted that the basic needs of man had to be satisfied and fulfilled within a social situation.

His writings and speeches were centered on the economic emancipation of India. His knowledge of economic history of India was wide. His economic ideas were so powerful that they had displaced the economic system of the time. He projected a casteless as well as classless society in his economic works and speeches. He was against all types of inequalities including economic inequality. He emphasized the freedom from want and fear. He rebelled against the Khoti system (Jamindari). This was not merely a verbal rebellion; it was brought to action as a part of a programme of Independent Labour Party. Next was his interest to abolish the Mahar Watan System and Khoti system through the bills in the Legislative Assembly which exposed the economic inequalities in India.

His concept of nationalization of agriculture and major industries stunned the Indian Parliament. To mention a few of his recommendations: (i) To maintain the right of every subject to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and to free speech and free exercise of religion. (ii) To remove social, political and economic inequality by providing better opportunities to the submerged classes. (iii) To make it possible for every subject to enjoy freedom from want and freedom from fear.

Comparing the economic views of Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. P. T. Borale wrote,

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s philosophy of economy is based on the ideal of material detachment as has been followed in the Buddhist Sangh. Buddha’s theory of no-god, no priesthood, no exploitation of priesthood and absolutely no personal property as exactly enunciated to Buddhist Sangh or Bhikkus is ideal one with a view to have humanitarian service in form of hospitals, joint-services and development of human service by recognizing the human dignity and human rights. (Dongre: xii-xiii)
Socio-economic separation was prevalent in India. Dr. Ambedkar’s plan of State Socialism, labelled as ‘Constitutional State Socialism with Parliamentary Democracy’ by Prof. Dongre, seemed practical in the contemporary situation. The State and its Constitution must become predominantly active and efficient to avoid social, economic and political problems.

Dr. Ambedkar’s State Socialism came as a foundation for Parliamentary Democracy. But he did not wish to give all the powers to the parliamentarians. He believed that the important decisions for the development of State economy must not be left to the mercy of the parliamentarians. He wanted to include all economic rights as Fundamental Rights in the Constitution. But unfortunately, his Memorandum was not accepted by the Constituent Assembly. As a result, Right of Employment, Right against Exploitation and Right of abolition of Ghettos – all were left to the fancies of Parliamentarians.

He suggested abolishing economic inequalities and removing monopolies and economic disabilities which were originally known as Adhan – property-less. His basic philosophy of State Socialism based on nationalization of agriculture and major industries would serve as food for the hungry people who wanted to digest economics of Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar scrutinized the so-called much allured communist phenomenon against this exploitation. But the only way out he could admire and advocate was Democracy. His economic views pioneered the shattering of the communist world. In that society, exploitation prevailed. It enslaved man. Absence of poverty did not guarantee absence of sorrow. Man wanted to remove sorrow from his life. The communism proved to be a failure in this matter. It is necessary to ponder over the warning given by Dr. Ambedkar as quoted by Prof. Dongre:

The Buddhist countries that have gone over to communism do not understand what communism is. Communism of Russian type aims at bringing it about by a bloody revolution. The Buddhist communism brings it about by a bloodless revolution. The south East Asians should beware of jumping into the Russian net. All that is necessary for them is to give political form to Buddha’s teaching. Poverty there is and there will always be. Even in Russia there is poverty. But poverty cannot be an excuse for sacrificing human freedom. Once it is realized that Buddhism is a social gospel, its revival would be an everlasting event. (1974: xv-xvi)

Economic Democracy

Dr. Ambedkar did not merely advocate the theory of democracy but also believed in the practical implications of it. He attached social and economic aspects to democracy. He prescribed the system of social economy
with the provision of the Constitution. He found that the concept of liberty stood in close connection with the concept of economic equality. Therefore he expected the state to intervene and guarantee economic equality. He wanted to remove all kinds of inequalities which were responsible for exploitation.

Dr. Ambedkar’s advocacy of political democracy was based on the ground of socio-economic equalities. He wanted to end the rule of imperialism, bureaucracy, social tyranny, forced labour, casteism, communalism, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, ill treatment and insecurity. He preached fraternity. He did not intend to establish the rule of the untouchables. He only wanted to free them from the tyranny of the majority and enable them to become economically independent.

Explaining the purpose of the Directive Principles incorporated in the Constitution of India, he said that the objective of framing them was to lay down the form of political as well as economic democracy. Every government should strive to bring about economic democracy.

As he talked about the nationalization of some economic resources, some critics thought that his concept of nationalization was contradictory to the concept of economic democracy. But it was not so because he did not want to nationalize all the means of production, distribution and exchange. He only advocated it in some fields of the economic life of the country like agriculture, key industries and insurance. According to him, the main aim of this system was not to end the private sector but to raise the productivity with equal wealth distribution.

Dr. Ambedkar said that Indian political life encouraged equality but Indian social and economic life was still far away from this ideal of equality. He asked, “How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up.” (Vol. 13: 1216)

To understand the complexity of the issue of economic democracy in India, Dr. Ambedkar recommended to study two main points namely economics of caste system and economics of untouchability.

(1) Economics of Caste System

Dr. Ambedkar’s works related to the caste system dealt with the Chaturvarnya system of Hindu society. He demonstrated how the caste system affected the socio-economic life of the nation. The caste system was defended on the economic grounds at that time. But Dr. Ambedkar did not agree to it.

He believed that the caste system was not occupational or work-oriented from any angle. On the contrary, it attempted to assign tasks to individuals in advance, selected not on the basis of their original capacities but on that of the social status of their parents. He further added, “Caste is the
natural outcome of certain religious beliefs which have the sanction of Shastras, which are believed to contain the command of divinely inspired sages who were endowed with a supernatural wisdom and whose commands, therefore, cannot be disobeyed without committing sin.” (Vol. 1: 69)

Thus, the division of occupation did not lead to the foundation of the caste system but the caste system assigned particular professions to the four Varnas which, in turn, converted into castes. The caste system was not merely a division of labour but also a division of labourers. It was responsible for the segregation of society and gradation of labourers. He blamed the Hindu Social Order for the preservation of gradation of labourers. He said that it was an unnatural division of labourers into water-tight compartments in which change of occupation was not allowed and even punished heavily. It restricted mobility – i.e. change of place and class – by eliminating prospects of promotion to any caste or class through hard work.

The result was inadequate supply of labour for some industries only because they were the monopoly of a particular class. An individual remained unfit for any other job than the job of his class. Moreover, no one was willing to take the profession of the other class, particularly of lower class, which resulted into voluntary or semi-voluntary unemployment. As he himself said, “By not permitting readjustment of occupations, caste becomes a direct cause of much of the unemployment we see in the country.” (Vol. 1: 48)

Dr. Ambedkar also believed that the caste system reduced efficiency of labour which depended on mobility. It did not allow a person to make a career of his own choice. Individuals were forced to accept the profession which was not spontaneous and was not based on natural aptitudes. The division of labour promoted by the Hindu Social Order was not a division based on choice and had no place for individual sentiment and individual preference. It had no place for the conception of dignity of labour. It was based on the dogma of predestination. He wrote about the psychological impact of the system:

Considerations of social efficiency would compel us to recognize that the greatest evil in the industrial system is not so much poverty and the suffering that it involves as the fact that so many persons have callings which make no appeal to those who are engaged in them. Such callings constantly provoke one to aversion, ill-will and the desire to evade. (Vol. 1: 48)

A person under the caste system had to follow his ancestor’s business which hampered production and economic growth. Under the caste system, the person had to consume traditional commodity and make the product limited to his caste only. This marred the large-scale production.

Dr. Ambedkar was of the view that it was necessary to remove the notion of sanctity attached to caste which denied reason and morality. Therefore he advocated annihilation of caste as one of the pre-requisites for the rapid economic development of the country.
(2) Economics of Untouchability

Dr. Ambedkar discussed religious, social and political aspects of untouchability at length. Simultaneously, he scientifically and analytically presented the economic aspect of it in his philosophy and literature.

It was not easy to define untouchability, but Dr. Ambedkar tried to explain the term and find out its origin. According to him, untouchability sprang from (i) the contempt and hatred of the Broken Men as of Buddhists by the Brahmans, and (ii) the continuation of beef-eating by the Broken Men after it had been given up by others. Due to their poor economic conditions, the Broken Men (who were Buddhists) had to continue beef-eating. As a result, the Brahmans cultivated the feeling of contempt towards them which, in turn, resulted in the notion and practice of untouchability.

Dr. Ambedkar did not accept the theory of the origin of untouchability in the unclean and filthy occupations because such occupations prevailed in other human societies also. Only the Hindus considered such occupations low. It was found only in the Hindu society that those who were indulged in the unclean and filthy occupations were regarded as the untouchables. He also found that the untouchables were not included in the Chaturvarnya system. They were not considered as the Shudras but as Atishudras, Avarnas and Advijas. Besides social and religious segregation, the untouchables had to face economic isolation and separation from the four Varnas.

Dr. Ambedkar, in his works, fully exposed this division of labourers which he considered unnatural. He said that the first three Varnas were also once engaged in filthy occupations. But they were never treated as untouchables. On the other side, the untouchables had to follow their filthy occupations not by choice but by force because the higher classes expelled the untouchables from the public life and made them pursue unclean and filthy occupations. They had to suffer economic injustice because they were bound to the duty that was left for them by the socio-economic organization of the Hindus, i.e. the system of Chaturvarnya. The untouchables were unapproachables and unseeables too. Prof. Dongre writes, “Economically, they were not only dependent, but also depressed, degraded and made defenseless.” (1974: 16-17)

As there was no choice in their manual work, they could not bargain for their wages. The wages they received could scarcely satisfy their basic needs. Insufficient wages did not allow education to their children. They remained landless and continued serving as agricultural labourers in the farms of the landlords. Though their work was essential for the society, they were treated inhumanly and kept poor. Dr. Ambedkar remarked, “It (Hindu Civilization) is diabolical contrivance to suppress and enslave humanity. Its proper name would be Infamy.” (Vol. 7: 239)

Though the problem of untouchability was socio-religious, Dr. Ambedkar equally emphasized the economic aspect of it. In his writings and speeches, he not only raised the problems of the untouchability but also suggested ways and means to improve their standard of living. He considered untouchability even worse than slavery. He found that the Hindus did not take
responsibility for the maintenance of the untouchables. He wrote, “As an economic system it permits exploitation without obligation. Untouchability is not only a system of unmitigated economic exploitation, but it is also a system of uncontrolled economic exploitation.” (Vol. 9: 197)

After seeing such a wretched economic condition of the untouchables Dr. Ambedkar wrote, “The Hindu sacred law penalized the Shudras from acquiring wealth. It is a law of enforced poverty unknown in any other part of the world.” (Vol. 9: 291) He feared that “in prosperity he (an untouchable) will be the last to be employed and in depression the first to be fired.” (Vol. 9: 294) Dr. Ambedkar urged his people to keep pace with changing time and give up all the traditional values of Hinduism. He was of the view that unless and until the untouchables would not renounce the evils of Hinduism, they would not be able to uplift themselves socially as well as economically.

He found that the untouchables had to face many tyrannies at the hands of the Hindus. He saw the struggle for existence in the war between the untouchables and the Hindus. As the Hindus were socially as well as economically powerful, the untouchables were heavily handicapped and had to face socio-economic boycott. Seeing the social, religious and economic conditions of the untouchables, Dr. Ambedkar suggested ‘separate settlements’ for them. But this demand was not paid considerable attention at any level and the untouchables were left in their poor conditions. He expected from the government to think over giving lands to the scheduled caste people because he saw that the land-owning was a matter of social status in India. He also wanted to make agriculture a state industry in which it became the possession of all and monopoly of none. In such a condition, there was no place for landlords, tenants or landless labourers. But again, the state did not ponder over this matter and the untouchables had to remain landless.

Dr. Ambedkar favoured rapid industrialization of the Indian economy which he considered a basic remedy for removal of untouchability. He felt that the untouchables should join this industrialization. It would destroy the traditional pattern of society and inherit various occupations and social status to individuals. The village untouchables should quit the villages and join the urban life of the country. But when the other side of the situation was considered, it was seen that the collapse of traditional obligations threatened the source of employment and substance for the untouchables. Therefore they were forced to face either untouchability in villages or unemployment in industrial towns.

Though the Constitution of India has denied using the word ‘untouchable’, there are still some parts of India in which we find the practice of untouchability. The evil of the untouchability is still not abolished even after the actions taken by the government in the form of legislation and the public bodies in the form of various awareness programmes. Dr. Ambedkar said that the Swaraj would make the Hindus more powerful and the untouchables more helpless.

Nowadays, the Government of India offers scholarships for studies, right to land ownership, cottage industries, co-operation and grain shops,
housing schemes, reservation in government jobs. In spite of such facilities provided to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the complete upliftment is still a dream. Some argued that the aids do not reach to all of them. But it is equally true that these people are also not willing to accept the change. They do not want to give up their orthodox mind-set and want to remain backward. Their minds are so conditioned that they are difficult to be trained in new practice. Their inferiority complex hinders their progress.

Labour Problems

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the caste system in India was a major stumbling block to economic development since it did not offer any freedom of choice of occupation. It did not allow people to teach professional skills to any other than their fellow caste-members. Even if an individual did possess the skill necessary for a job, he would be reluctant to take up a profession of a caste lower than his own. In such a society, there was no inclination on the part of the individuals to seek employment where they might be best suited. Neither change of occupation nor change of place was allowed to them. This inevitably reduced mobility of labour leading to inadequacy in production, thus, hampering economic development.

The class that suffered the most under this system was none other than the untouchables. They were denied economic rights and could not make any economic change in their status. Dignity of labour was lost. Many careers were abhorred and kept reserved for the lower classes by the Hindus. This approach of society provoked antipathy towards those professions in the people engaged with them. As the untouchables were denied incentives, promotions and higher wages, the productivity was marred. Prof. Dongre remarks, “It is evident that there was no ‘mobility of labour’ under untouchability and the problem of ‘misplaced labour’ was the outcome of this situation.” (1974: 15)

The untouchable labourers were so poorly paid that they could hardly think of any kind of progress. Managing the basic needs would scarcely leave them free for education or civilization.

Dr. Ambedkar was appointed the labour member of the Viceroy’s Executive Committee in 1942 which was a milestone in the history of labour legislation in India. He tried hard to get rid of untouchability in a democratic manner. He had also suggested a number of provisions for solving the problems of Indian labourers. Due to his efforts, “The Constitution has abolished forced labour and prohibited exploitation of child labour. Property rights are guaranteed. Equal right of work, equal pay for equal work and adequate means of livelihood both to men and women are guaranteed under the state policy. Ambedkar had vigorously justified the above provisions in the Constitution.” (Kuber 2009: 271)

Canons of Public Expenditure

Discussing the functions of the Comptroller and Auditor General, Dr. Ambedkar said that Governments should spend the resources gathered from the public according to rules, laws and regulations. They should also see that
faithfulness, wisdom and economy would be adhered to in the acts of expenditure by public authorities.

M. M. Goel remarks, “The remarkable thing about Dr. Ambedkar’s canons of public expenditure is that they are ism-neutral. One can follow a policy of a large or small public sector and yet the principles behind these canons are applicable.” (Ranga 2000: 67)

First was the canon of faithfulness. Faith meant a duty or commitment to fulfill a promise. It was necessary for the government to be faithful to the original intentions. Wisdom was the second canon. Fidelity to the original intention must be tempered with wisdom. A just and wise government should demonstrate sagacity, prudence and common-sense along with experience and knowledge that could be applied critically and practically in specific areas. Economic wisdom was a paramount necessity for the fair utilization of public funds. The third canon was economy. The apparent faithfulness to the original intentions and wisdom were not sufficient in themselves for public expenditure. Economy in public expenditure did not simply mean a low level of public spending. Rather, it suggested an intelligent use of funds so that every paisa would fetch the most benefit.

These canons established by Dr. Ambedkar were adequately flexible so that expenditure could be related to the state of the Indian economy. He emphasized that the expenditure decision, besides ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness, should closely relate to the specified objectives and the available resources. The allocation of expenditure among competing demands and the manner of utilization fell within the domain of these canons.

Dr. Ambedkar’s canons could be used as a touchstone to see whether a particular item of expenditure was necessary or not. Every single expenditure decision should be assessed in terms of the faithfulness to the will of the people, wisdom as provided by the professionals in the field, coupled with well-considered and honest judgment in execution.

Following the canons meticulously in individual items of expenditure could not always eliminate problems arising out of the broader economic policy pursued by the government. But they could mitigate the harmful effects of ill-considered policies of the government at the center and the state levels.

The Taxation Policy

The land tax was one of the major taxes of the imperial system. Land was taken to be the state property and the cultivator was not the proprietor but only the occupier. The land tax was imposed irrespective of necessity or justice.

Dr. Ambedkar observed that heavy rates of taxation were ruinous and unwise. He calculated the ratio of land revenue to the total revenue of India for the years 1792-3 to 1841-2. He arrived at a conclusion that such a heavy land tax system prevailing in India might well be paralleled to the single tax system. The poor man having one acre of land and the landlord owning hundreds of acres of land were charged tax at a uniform rate without realizing
the huge income disparities between them. This produced stark inequalities of treatment between the rich and the poor. He found that land tax prevented the prosperity of agriculture.

He saw that the customs taxes hindered the progress of the manufacturers of the country. Both internal customs and external customs were injurious to trade and industry. The internal customs were made up of transit and town duties. The country was divided into a number of small customs areas for the purpose of transit duties. Commodities which crossed the customs areas were liable to duty. The transit duties hampered trade, which in turn crippled the growth of manufacturing industry. The town duties which formed a part of integral customs duties worked towards de-urbanization.

In addition to this miserable internal condition, the Indian Industry was called upon to meet external competition. The external duties did not offer any concession. The trade was left completely free. The tariff was based on political rather than economic considerations. The Indian import tariff showed variations based not on the nature of the imports but on the origin of the imports. Goods from England and goods shipped on English bottoms were charged at the rate of half of what goods of foreign origin and shipped on foreign bottoms were charged. Moreover, British goods were allowed to enter India at lower rates than what the Indian goods had to pay under the internal customs. At the same time, England was prohibiting the entry of Indian goods and India-built ships by very high tariff. Thus, Indian industry was beaten by heavy export duties. Therefore Dr. Ambedkar said that the customs laws, internal and external, obstructed trade and hampered industry.

He believed that there was no justice in taxation under the imperial regime. He said:

The landlords who passed their lives in conspicuous consumption and vicarious leisure on the earnings of the poor tenants, or the many European civil servants who fattened themselves on pay and pickings, were supremely exempted from any contribution towards the maintenance of the Government whose main activities were directed towards the maintenance of pomp and privilege. On the other hand, the salt tax and the Moturpha and other oppressive taxes continued to harass the industrious poor. (Vol. 6: 77-78)

He urged the removal of the salt tax from the revenue system of India. He concluded that the collapse of imperial system was due to a faulty financial system marked by adverse taxes and unproductive and extravagant expenditure.

W. N. Kuber notes, “The main plank of taxation policy as advocated by him was (1) tax must be levied on the taxable capacity and not on the income; (2) the tax must be progressive, i.e. the rich must be taxed more and the poor less; (3) exemptions to tax payers below a certain limit; and (4) the land
revenue item must not be rigid, but elastic and subject to variations.” (2009: 266)

The Exchange Rate Policy

Dr. Ambedkar examined the relationship between the exchange rate and external trade in his book *The Problem of the Rupee* (1923). If the countries employed the same metal functioning as their standard money, the parity of exchange among these countries would be stable. But there could be no fixed parity of exchange among the countries having different metals as their currency standards. In that case, their exchange was governed by the relative values of gold and silver and fluctuated as their relative value change. The gold-silver exchange between England and India was stable before 1873. But it started fluctuating widely after 1873. Sterling rupee exchange, being a reflection of gold-silver exchange, also fluctuated. The principal countries of the world opted for the demonetization of silver as a standard money medium due to the agitation for uniformity of weights, measures and coinages. On the other hand, the production of silver, compared to gold, was greatly increased. There was a continuous fall in the exchange rate due to the decline in the relative value of silver in terms of gold. This increased the burden on the Government of India.

Dr. Ambedkar suggested a solution to maintain the exchange stability. As all important countries in the world moved towards the gold standard, the silver standard countries should abandon it and move in favour of gold. Or, the gold and silver standard countries should establish a fixed ratio of exchange so as to make the two metals into a common standard of value. He believed that the progress of trade depended on stability of both exchange rate and price.

The Problems of Indian Currency

Dr. Ambedkar presented a new viewpoint on the vital issue of the problems of Indian currency. The major area of his research was the history of the rupee from 1835 to early 1920s. He criticized the management of Indian currency by the British. He gave competent answers to the problems of Indian currency in the national interest.

M. M. Goel puts the range of his study in these words: “He presented a pertinent explanation of all the important developments dating from the bimetallic experiment of the 1840, the decline in the value of silver in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the abolition of the silver standard, the pegging of the rupee at 15s 4d, wartime developments down to the post 1918 exercises concluding in a floating rupee.” (Ranga 2000: 62)

Dr. Ambedkar favoured restrictions on the gold-standard reserve. “The smaller the gold-standard reserve the better it would be, for there would be no inflation, no fall in the purchasing power of the rupee, and no necessity for its retirement.” (Vol. 6: 554)

He was strongly against any connection of the rupee with gold in any way. He was in favour of a currency which was not exchangeable for another
currency. He recommended launch of an inconvertible currency with a fixed limit of issue. He concluded: “It is therefore much better to introduce a currency system which will do away with the Exchange Standard and also the Gold Standard Reserve.” (Vol. 6: 630)

He indicated that the exchange could not be related to the whole of the price level of a country. Exchange affected only such things as entered into international trade. He thought more in terms of prices rather than in terms of exchange ratio. He remarked that this standard concerned itself only with symptoms and did not go to the disease; it would aggravate the disease. He gave multi-faceted dimensions to the ratio issue that immediately became the center of monetary controversy in India. The vital issue was to close the mints for public and the government in order to confirm the principles embodied in the English currency system. He suggested the government to use part of the gold standard reserve for reducing the rupee currency by a substantial margin so that even in terms of reserve depreciation, it might remain limited to the needs of occasion.

Dr. Ambedkar thought that the stability of currency in terms of gold was only important for the dealers in gold, but its stability in terms of commodities in general would affect all. His recommendation regarding a fixed limit of currency was a competent ground of relevance particularly in a system of ‘monetary targeting’.

M. M. Goel comments:

Thus, Dr. Ambedkar showed great scholarly insight in finding solutions to the problems of Indian rupee. His cloudless foresight in visualizing the future in the shadow of the present forms the perspective of the stability of internal price level. This practical aspect of his vision is a noteworthy contribution to the Indian Monetary System. (Ranga 2000: 63)

**Decentralization of Imperial Finance**

The origin and development of provincial finance, major reasons leading to the Reform Act of 1919 and his views on financial relationship between the center and the provinces was the subject matter of Dr. Ambedkar’s monumental work *The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India*.

The term ‘Imperial Finance’ was used for the finances of the central government during the colonial period. ‘Provincial Finance’ referred to state finance in post-independence period. The system of imperial finance was started in India in 1833. In 1858, the Crown took over from the East India Company. The provinces were strictly denied any individual powers for authorizing any separate financial resources. There was almost no power of creating or modifying any appointments in the service. The Government of India started interfering with all the aspects of provincial administration through these restrictions.
The Government underwent financial inadequacy from the very beginning. The finance ministers failed miserably in restoring equilibrium and staying off the hours of crisis. The crucial condition of imperial finance during the 1860s was the main reason for the proposal of a federal plan. Dr. Ambedkar opposed the federal plan on the ground of practicability and suitability. A new arrangement was made under which the revenues and charges remained imperial in their status, but their management was provincialized. Dr. Ambedkar referred to this system as imperial finance without imperial management.

Provincial finance was really of the nature of departmental finance. Notwithstanding in provincial finance nothing was provincial in status. Provincial finance was a matter of accounts, the operations on the debit and credit sides of which were subject to stringent control by the government of India. Provincial finance was worth striving for and had conferred great benefits upon India by delegating to the provinces what were really matters of detail and therefore could be economically handled by the provincial government. (Kuber 2009: 264-265)

Financial resolution brought into practice in 1870 through which the assignment of funds from the imperial treasury was adopted as a method of supply to balance the provincial budgets. Dr. Ambedkar called it the ‘budget by assignment’. Commenting on the system, he said,

The assignment made to the Provincial Governments for the year 1871-2 had been declared to be fixed and recurring. Recurring they were, but fixed they were not; for, every year, since the start, the Government of India kept on adding to and withdrawing from Provincial Budgets items of charge already incorporated in them. In accordance with these modifications in the incorporated charges the Imperial assignments had to be either reduced or augmented as necessity dictated. (Vol. 6: 120)

The second stage in the evolution of provincial finance was the ‘budget by assigned revenue’. For fulfilling their growing needs, the provinces were given certain sources the income of which largely depended upon efficient management.

The third stage was the ‘budget by shared revenue’. The budget was grouped under two distinct categories: wholly imperial and wholly provincial. Provincial finance in British India entered an entirely new phase. Dr. Ambedkar dealt in detail with the mechanism which inter-related the finances of the central and provincial governments under the old phase.

M. M. Goel writes, “Ambedkar concluded that the only theory of financial relationship between the two Governments which accorded with the
facts and agreed with law was that of aggregation of sources and distribution of the yield. This conclusion is justified in several pages that show his power of analysis and investigation.” (Ranga 2000: 65)

**Reformation of Agriculture**

Dr. Ambedkar found the basic problem of Indian agriculture – it was incompetent of generating a surplus which ultimately resulted in scarcity of capital. This led to the inefficient use of resources, surplus labour and superfluous employment. It culminated in low agricultural productivity by raising the cost of production. This, in turn, affected adversely the process of overall economic growth.

He found two factors weakening the structure of Indian agriculture: small holdings and idle labour. He drew attention to the fact that

A large agricultural population with the lowest proportion of land in actual cultivation meant that a large part of the agricultural population remained idle instead of performing any sort of productive labour. The depression of our national dividend was another important effect of this idle labour. The agricultural population exerted tremendous pressure on land resulting in the increasing ruralisation of the country. (Kuber 2009: 249)

He was concerned about the nature of land-holding, especially its fragmentation and division into unproductive and economically unviable structures. He ascribed it mainly to a huge pressure of population on land and argued:

Thus the grievance lies in the circumstances which put a premium on these small pieces of land. The premium, is no doubt, due to the large population depending solely on agriculture to eke out its living…….It is not, therefore, the law of inheritance that is the evil, but it is the high pressure (of population) on land which brings it into operation. People cultivate the small piece not because their standard of living is low, but because it is the only profitable thing for them to do at present. If they had something more profitable to do they would never prefer the small piece. (Vol. 1: 474)

He offered a solution. He said that the remedy for preventing subdivision and fragmentation was consolidation of land-holdings. It could eliminate the hostile effects of uneconomic holdings and lead to the progress of the cultivators. He favoured successful growth of industrialization and argued that it would help improve agriculture. “It can be laid down without fear of challenge that industrialization will foster the enlargement of holdings and that it will be the most effective barrier against sub-division and
fragmentation… industrialisation….will facilitate consolidation.” (Vol. 1: 478) It would lessen the premium on land. It must precede consolidation.

Dr. Ambedkar introduced a bill seeking the abolition of the Khoti system in the Bombay Legislative Council. Under the Khoti system, Khots were engaged by the government to collect the revenue from the tenants. The Khots were called superior holders while the tenants (occupants of the land) were referred to as inferior holders. They were to pay a certain part of the revenue to the government. Once such a payment was made, they enjoyed unlimited liberty to do whatsoever they liked to the tenants. They generally misused such freedom and subjected the tenants to all kinds of exaction. The net result was that the tenants were reduced to a state of dismal poverty. This made the tenants go frantic. They demanded the eradication of the unjust system of Khoti. The system disturbed the peace and tranquility of the presidency. Therefore Dr. Ambedkar felt the need for its removal. By introducing a bill to abolish the Khoti system, he sought to put an end to the exploitation of the actual tillers of the land and establish a direct relationship between them and the government. He also made provision for paying reasonable compensation to the Khots in the bill. Thus the bill proved to be a forerunner to the Land Reforms Legislation in post-independence India.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted to make agriculture a state industry. According to his recommendations, along with the key and the basic industries and insurance, the state should acquire all the agricultural land held by the private individuals whether as owners, tenants or mortgagees and pay them compensation equal to the value of the land. Then the state should divide the land into farms of standard size and let them out for cultivation to residents of the village 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 Government; (c) The tenants shall share among themselves in the manner prescribed the produce of the farm left after the payment of charges properly leviable on the farm; (ii) The land shall be let out to villagers without discrimination of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless labourer; (iii) It shall be the obligation of the State to finance the cultivation of the collective farms by the supply of water, draft animals, implements, manure, seeds, etc.; (iv) The State shall be entitled to – (a) to levy the following charges on the produce of the farm: (i) a portion for land revenue; (ii) a portion to pay the debenture-holders; and (iii) a portion to pay for the use of capital goods supplied; and (b) to prescribe penalties against tenants who break the conditions of tenancy or willfully neglect to make the best use of the means of cultivation offered by the State or
otherwise act prejudicially to the scheme of the collective farming. (Vol. 1: 397)

Dr. Ambedkar stood for a drastic change in the agriculture system of the country. He also argued for the industrialization in order to increase the employment opportunities. He thought of relating the main areas of agriculture to India’s industrialization. He wanted to achieve economic efficiency and productivity through it. He wanted India to become a social republic.

Thus, his understanding of India’s agricultural problems proved not only to be prophetic, but also reflected his unflinching commitment to democracy based on liberty and equality as well.

**State Socialism – A Way to Economic Progress**

Dr. Ambedkar wanted the state to take the responsibility of providing the underprivileged masses the minimum employment with adequate constitutional provisions to protect them from disease and hunger. According to him, the state must be an instrument for social and economic change. He, therefore, advocated the State Theory of Socialism. He explicitly affirmed that the economic and social conditions of the oppressed in India could not be improved without the proper help and intervention by the state. He thought about economic welfare in terms of peaceful and parliamentary methods to socialism.

For the socio-economic upliftment of the downtrodden, he suggested a two-fold scheme: (a) State Socialism in important fields of economic life and (b) State Socialism by the law of the constitution. He did not want to leave the establishment of state socialism to the will of legislature since he feared that it could be altered at the whims. Prof. Dongre writes, “It is an attempt to establish State Socialism without abrogating Parliamentary Democracy and without leaving its establishment to the will of a Parliamentary Democracy.” (1974: 73)

Dr. Ambedkar’s ‘Constitutional State Socialism with Parliamentary Democracy’ differed fundamentally from all the traditional concepts of State Socialism. His concept of State Socialism aimed at social as well as economic development of India. He found Democratic Socialism vague and unconvincing. Therefore he adopted State Socialism. He was of the view that both democracy and socialism were complementary to each other and both were essential for the social, economic and political life of the people. He wanted to establish individual liberty through democracy and to bring social emancipation through socialism. He stated that the state could work as an ideal agency to protect both democracy and socialism by resorting to timely intervention and adequate controls. He opposed monopoly in every shape and form but recommended state-ownership in the areas like agricultural land, industry and insurance for the purpose to protect the economic interests of his people. He expected the state to restrict socio-economic exploitation effectively. He firmly opposed dictatorship and capitalism as he took them to be great hurdles in the rapid progress of India.
Dr. Ambedkar gave some guidelines to organize the nationalized agricultural industry. He had a hope that such a design of Indian agriculture would help the country be free from the economic and social exploitation and be able to increase economic efficiency and productivity. Prof. Dongre rightly comments, “Hence, Dr. Ambedkar is not in favour of nationalizing the whole economy, for he realizes that nationalization is a form of State monopoly.” (1974:70)

Dr. Ambedkar was not in favour of nationalization of all the industries but that of a few key industries only. He realized that the private industries would not be helpful to the overall development of the country because of the expectation for more profit and the nature of exploitation. He favoured the nationalization of insurance sector with two aims (a) greater security to the individuals and (b) adequate funds to the state for financing economic plans. The Government of India has already nationalized insurance and also a few leading banks.

Regarding the protection of an individual's fundamental rights, he said, “The useful remedy adopted by Democratic countries is to limit the power of Government to impose arbitrary restraints in political domain and to invoke the ordinary power of the legislature to restrain the more powerful individual from imposing arbitrary restraints on the less powerful in the economic fields.” (Vol. 1: 410)

He saw that the principle of ‘one man, one value’ was limited to the political field only. The Constitutional Law dealt with only democratic political structure of the society. But he advocated prescribing the shape and form of the economic structure of society to enliven this principle of democracy. According to him, it was the time to take a bold step and decide the economic and political structures by the Law of Constitution.

**Strategy for Economic Development**

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that any strategy for the sound economic development India should start with eradication of poverty, elimination of inequalities and termination of exploitation of the masses. He suggested partial implementation of the economic theories of Communism for that. In his speech *Buddhism and Communism* (1956), Dr. Ambedkar expressed his views on Communism. He desired to have a combination of the principles of Communism and State Socialism for rapid progress of the society.

Though he believed and also followed the basic principles of Communism (Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice), his attitude seemed non-biased, scientific and practical in his action and works. He agreed with Karl Marx that the ‘have-nots’ were always exploited by the ‘haves’. The supremacy of the ‘haves’ must be overthrown because the enslavement of the masses by the privileged few led to continuation of poverty and its resultant suffering. At the same time, he rejected Marx’s theory of economic relationship as the be-all and end-all of human life. To him, merely economic motive could not be the driving power behind all human activity. He considered social, political, religious and economic dimensions of exploitation seriously and found that social and religious exploitation was no less
oppressive than economic and political exploitation in India. He did not believe in the violent methods to bring socio-economic change in the society.

He did not want the annihilation of capitalists. He was in favour of an individual's right to private possession of wealth and property and advocated for a greater security of the individual’s economic interest with the help of state control. He expected the state intervention for the welfare of the society. He denied the totalitarian theory of Karl Marx. This theory propounded that the state was a temporary institution that would ‘wither away’ in course of time. On the contrary, Dr. Ambedkar maintained that the state would continue to exist as long as human society survived. He believed in a classless society but not in a stateless society. He considered the state as a means to establish good relations among individuals and different groups of society for furtherance of human ends. In his book *State and Minorities*, he proposed that the state should plan the economic life of the society in such a way as to lead to the highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to private enterprise. It should also manage impartial distribution of wealth. Defining the goal of the state, he said that it should guarantee Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice to all its citizens. Thus, he perceived an active but well-defined role for the state in the economic life of the country. He did not favour the imposition of arbitrary restraint on the economic processes.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, communism stood for revolution and not for reformation. Communism advocated revolutionary methods for overcoming dictatorship. He disliked them and thought that constitutional provisions and democratic means should be relied upon for the desired reformation. His concept of State Socialism was constitutional. He held the theory of Parliamentary Democracy which was opposed by Communism. Therefore he was against the Marxian approach of Democracy and asked his people to choose a better option which he found in Buddhism. His peculiar socio-economic design found consistent with Buddhism and perhaps better than Communism. His theory of State-ownership was limited only to agricultural land with a democratic collectivized method of cultivation and a new modified form of State Socialism in the area of Industry and the nationalization of Insurance companies.

Prof. Dongre comments, “If communism is an influential socio-economic and political ideology, Buddhism, according Dr. Ambedkar, is a better substitute to Communism because it is a way of life which deals also with the religious and moral aspect of human life. It does not merely believe in material advancement but also assures eternal peace and spiritual enlightenment.” (1974: 46)

Dr. Ambedkar believed that the expenditure on education, infrastructure and other development activities should be increased and unproductive expenditure should be reduced. Trade and industry should be encouraged with price-stability, but not through exchange rate instability. Trade should improve the competitiveness of the industry. Foreign direct investment would not flow unless there was exchange stability and price stability. The Indian Government could mobilize the necessary revenue to solve the monetary problems. In order to save the Indian economy from the
financial crisis of today, it would be relevant to adopt the economic theory propounded by Dr. Ambedkar.

Prof. Dongre appreciates the economic theory of Dr. Ambedkar in the following words,

Dr. Ambedkar’s concept of ‘Constitutional State Socialism with Parliamentary Democracy’ is therefore unique and independent. It is an attempt to give up the drawbacks and combine the merits of all the socialistic concepts. His advocacy of Constitution to become an important and most powerful weapon for implementation of socialistic plan is a valuable contribution to the philosophy and literature of socialism. His concept of constitutionalism in this regard aims at the achievement of common good of an individual, the society and the nation as a whole. It should therefore be appreciated and realized that the socialistic philosophy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is not only useful and beneficial but also convenient and essential for all round progress and prosperity of a country like India. (1974: 74)

It was evident that Dr. Ambedkar’s political economy had a moral purpose. It studied economic activity from the point of view of its effect on human welfare. It was not concerned with wealth or economic relations as such, but in their relations to man and his choices.

Dr. Ambedkar as an economist was a reflection of Dr. Ambedkar as a politician-statesman. He wrote on economic matters when it became expedient in the field of politics. The dominance of political activities overshadowed his study of economics. If he had devoted himself completely to the field of economics, the Indian economy would have seen new heights.

He said that India could not develop fully without giving due opportunities of growth to the untouchables. He was right to some extent as the untouchables formed a considerably large part of the society. Socially undeveloped, they hindered the overall growth of the society. More important was the fact that they formed a huge portion of unproductive population. They were kept away from the main stream of the Indian economy. They did not contribute anything to it. Rather, they were considered to be the burden on it. If they were allowed to raise money and give their share to the country, India would progress rapidly.

Political Theory

During the time of Indian Renaissance, India witnessed the emergence of an untouchable leader who championed the cause of the downtrodden in the course of time. He was none other than Dr. Ambedkar. He was one of the few statesmen-politicians in India who actively participated in all the deliberations of constitution-making beginning with the Montford Reforms
(1919) to Cabinet Mission Scheme (1946) except Cripps Proposal in order to make some concrete provisions for his people. Along with his political career, the graph of his literary career also went high during these years. A writer and a journalist of great worth, he wrote in English, Marathi and Hindi. The major part of his writings consisted of political articles. He was a learned speaker on constitutional matters.

Dr. Ambedkar was not merely an abstract and academic theorist but even more a practical statesman and a constitutional craftsman. He gave deep thought to the practical and contingent problems involved in fashioning or running an appropriate political system for his own motherland India. In this job, he used profound understanding of his country, society and culture, its strengths and weaknesses.

His political and legal theories intersect and blend at many levels. Both of them “… can be broadly characterized as liberal, though not without caveats, riders and reservations, even very serious ones. In fact, the ideological-theoretical liberalism that he imbibed from distinguished liberal western academic institutions … and from the distinguished scholars like John Dewy came into conflict with his experience and understanding of the socio-political realities on the ground in India.” (Rao 1998: 34) He was highly dissatisfied with the socio-economic conditions of India in general and the untouchables in particular. He took resort to religious reforms and political struggle for securing the rights of his people. He was a politician for whom politics was not a mission but a platform for socio-political reforms.

He wished politics to be an instrument of social change and economic transformation. But he was soon disillusioned. Politics was always opportunistic and individualistic. The Untouchables could never achieve anything through it. “The politics of Brahmanic hegemony and the Marxist umbrella, both of which were stumbling blocks to the rise of Untouchables as liberal democrats, compelled him to visualize a new life for the lower strata of Indian society.” (Jatava 1998: 61)

Issue of Adequate Representation to the Depressed Classes (1920 – 1946)

Dr. Ambedkar was convinced that the only way to uplift the depressed was to acquire sufficient representation for them in administration. He wanted to secure a respectable position for his fellow men in the social and political life of India. He believed that they should have it as their right and not as an obligation. He emphasized that seats should be reserved for them in the legislature and that the contemporary practice of nominating one or two members should cease. He worked hard to achieve the same.

In 1909, the Morley-Minto Reforms sanctioned separate electorates to Muslims and Europeans on communal grounds. As a result, the separatist tendencies Hindus and Muslims began to be manifested and the gap between them got widened. Dr. Ambedkar noted in his book Pakistan or The Partition of India, “In 1909 the Muslims took the bold step of suggesting that the Depressed Classes should not be enrolled in the census as Hindus.” (Vol. 8: 245)
Indian Constitutional Reforms came into action in 1920 after the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report in 1918. The Franchise Committee was selected to manage franchise problems with reference to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Along with some others, Dr. Ambedkar was also invited to give evidence. Here he put forward his demand for separate electorates and reserved seats for the depressed classes in proportion to their population. He further claimed that the representatives of untouchables must be elected by the votes of untouchables only. But the claim was not found justified by the committee.

Dr. Ambedkar saw that the nationalist leaders demanding home rule for India were not ready to allow the representation to the untouchables. Keer quotes him from *The Times of India*, “It was the duty of the advanced classes to put all on social equality. For everybody recognized that home rule was as much the birth right of a Brahmin, as that of a Mahar.” (1962: 40) He was so deeply engrossed in his mission of the upliftment of the downtrodden that he tried tooth and nail to connect every movement for the freedom of India with his untouchability motive. He feared that once India won freedom, nobody would look after the rights of the untouchables. Therefore it seemed that in his priority list, the freedom of India came second to the cause of the depressed.

In 1920, the All-India Conference of Untouchables was held. One of the leading representatives of the untouchables V. R. Shinde made the suggestion that the representatives of the untouchables should be decided not by the government or by the institutions of untouchables but by the members of the Legislative Council. Dr. Ambedkar opposed him by a special resolution to protest against such a step being taken by government. His insistence on the principle that the representatives of untouchables be elected by the untouchables alone gathered momentum. “It was during this debate that Ambedkar’s skill and presence of mind as a debater and his ability as a prospective leader were seen to remarkable degree. It was here that Ambedkar won his first victory in public life.” (Keer 1962: 42)

The British government appointed the Indian Statutory Commission in 1927 under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon to revise the Act of 1919. This non-Indian commission enraged the nationalist feelings and was opposed by the Congress Party. The liberals also joined the boycott. In order to find support for the Simon Commission at local level, some provincial committees were appointed. Dr. Ambedkar was selected from the Bombay Legislative Council to work with the Simon Commission. “Ambedkar’s students in the Law College, Bombay, boycotted his lectures. He was dubbed as a British stooge.” (Kuber 2009: 101)

Dr. Ambedkar forcefully pleaded that the depressed classes should be classified as a distinct community entirely different from the Hindus. He negated the common belief that the depressed classes, due to their illiteracy, were less intelligent than the other communities. He said that there was no link between the Hindus and the depressed classes. Therefore they must be regarded as an independent community. He claimed reserved seats accompanied by adult suffrage, but in the absence of such an arrangement, separate electorates. He also fought for certain safeguards regarding the
education of the depressed classes and their entry into the public services. In his evidence to the Simon Commission, he emphasized the need for greater political protection to the depressed class minority. He bitterly criticized the attempts of the Hindu social reformers by calling them platform speeches. He did not sign the common report made by the committee and submitted his separate one.

In 1928, the first attempt was made at Constitution-making by the Congress Party. The All-Parties Conference confirmed the appointment of a committee under Pandit Motilal Nehru to draft a Swaraj Constitution for India. Its main purpose was to close the Hindu-Muslim breach. The report published in 1930 clearly showed that the political value of the depressed classes was grown through these years as the Congress Party made the abolition of untouchability one of its main agendas. But no special provisions were made for the representation of the depressed classes in the legislatures. The report regarded special electorates and reservation of seats as unsound and harmful and opposed nomination. "The report advocated the abolition of the depressed classes by raising them economically and socially by giving them adult suffrage and educational and other facilities." (Kuber 2009: 102) But the Simon Commission opined that the Nehru Report was not an agreed solution.

The Congress Working Committee excluded the Depressed Classes Institute led by Dr. Ambedkar from its invitation list. Annoyed by this, Dr. Ambedkar condemned the constituencies designed in the Nehru Report by calling them an arrangement made to preserve the upper class hegemony and Brahminical rule in society. "He said that keeping away the depressed classes from the political power was the sure way of preserving the Brahminical order of society and added that because the Nehru Committee consisted of Brahmins and upper-class men, they had done it deliberately." (Kuber 2009: 102-103)

Dr. Ambedkar equally forcefully criticized the Nehru Committee for granting the separation of some provinces on the demand of the Muslims. He strongly believed that the plan to keep the Hindus in Muslim-majority provinces at the mercy of Muslims was dangerous. It was better to grant them separate electorates. He also thought that the residuary powers must not be given to the constituent states as demanded by the Muslims.

In 1930, a Round Table Conference was held by the government to frame a Constitution for India in order to satisfy the demand of the people of India. The Congress Party opposed it and therefore, was kept aside. Dr. Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur Srinivasan represented the depressed classes. Aware of the value of the opportunity, Dr. Ambedkar wrote in one of his letters to Gaekwad that this was the first time in history that the British government felt it necessary to discuss the constitutional matters with Indians and the representatives of the depressed classes were also called. In a way, it was recognition of the independent status of the scheduled classes.

Dr. Ambedkar and Srinivasan presented there a scheme of political safeguards for the protection of the untouchables in the future Constitution of self-governing India. He suggested that the untouchables should be named as
non-caste Hindus, protestant Hindus or non-conformist Hindus. In one of his speeches, he attacked the British Raj in India for not taking adequate actions against the evils of untouchability. He said that the wrongs of untouchables had become open sores waiting to be righted since 150 years of British rule. He upheld the demand for domination status. He wrote, “We must have a Government in which the men in power will give their undivided allegiance to the best interest of the country... We feel that nobody can remove our grievances as well as we can, and we cannot remove them unless we get political power in our own hands.” (Vol. 2: 505)

The conference appointed nine sub-committees. Dr. Ambedkar served the Minorities, Services and Provincial Subcommittees. He demanded to consider the depressed classes as a separate community for electoral purposes disjoined from the Hindu population at large. He firmly believed that the representatives of untouchable community should be included in the cabinet otherwise the work of social uplift and removal of untouchability would not be recognized. He declared that “... they could not consent to any self-governing Constitution for India unless their demands were met in a reasonable manner.” (R. Coupland 1944: 120)

He urged for common citizenship, free use of common rights, adequate representation in legislatures and government services. He constantly thought and fought for the untouchables. His pen never stopped until his death. His knowledge, oratory, art of writing and skill of presentation helped him create a stable and significant place on the Indian political scene. W. N. Kuber remarks: “The evolution of the conception of a united India and definite emergence of the depressed classes in the political picture of India were the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar’s eloquence.” (2009: 104)

In 1931, Gandhiji took part in the Round Table Conference as a result of which the Gandhi-Irwin Pact came into existence. Gandhiji was against the political separation of the untouchables from the Hindus. Finding him there as a representative of the Indians, Dr. Ambedkar emphatically said, “Those who are negotiating ought to understand that they are not plenipotentiaries at all; that whatever may be the representative character of Mr. Gandhi or the Congress people, they certainly are not in a position to bind us – certainly not.” (Vol. 2: 653) He emphasized that the power should be shared by all communities in their respective proportions.

The Minorities Committee was presented with a supplementary memorandum on the claims of the depressed classes for special representation. Dr. Ambedkar strongly advocated separate electorates. He said that they were not to be changed unless a referendum of the voters held at the demand of a majority of their representatives in the legislatures concerned resulted in an absolute majority of the members of the depressed classes having the franchise; no such referendum should be resorted to until after 20 years and until universal adult suffrage had been established.

The Minority Pact jointly produced by the leading representatives of the Muslims, the depressed classes, a section of the Christians, Europeans and Anglo-Indians suggested that there should be no discrimination in enjoyment
of civil rights on account of untouchability; generous treatment in the matter of recruitment to public services and the opening of enlistment in the police and military services; right to appeal for depressed classes to the Governor-General and adequate representation. Gandhiji was annoyed. He criticized Dr. Ambedkar by saying that the bitter experiences in life had perverted his judgment. He declared that he would tolerate the conversion of the untouchables but resist with his life any attempt made at separate electorates. Dr. Ambedkar did not respond to this argument of Gandhiji. W. N. Kuber notes: “According to Ambedkar, Gandhiji’s partiality, discriminating conduct in solving the problems of minorities, his equivocal manner of dealing, his absolute disregard for the other representatives and the insults he inflicted upon them did not help Gandhiji to solve the problem tactfully.” (2009: 106)

Dr. Ambedkar believed in complete provincial autonomy. He was of the view that provincial governments should be given as complete autonomy as was possible under the circumstances. Provincial autonomy must also consider provincial questions of all-India character; undefined powers must be left with the central government and protection for the interests of the minorities and the depressed classes must be assured.

As far as the communal representation in the cabinet was concerned, he opined that the policy of ministers having dominant interest in communalism might encourage the practice of partiality. Instead of one common Indian civil service to all departments, he suggested specialization of services in the interest of greater efficiency. He doubted that in civil services also communal feelings might vitiate the personnel.

The Franchise Committee presented a detailed proposal for the revision of franchise and distribution and demarcation of the constituencies for the new legislatures, central and provincial. Dr. Ambedkar gave a separate note. One of the most important contributions of the committee was the exact definition of the term ‘depressed classes’ given by it. Previously, various committees had grouped the depressed classes with the aboriginals or hill tribes, or criminals or with others. But the Lothian Franchise Committee said that the term should be applied only to those who were untouchables. “This was clearly Dr. Ambedkar’s victory as he had insisted in his note to the committee that the test of untouchability must be applied in its notional sense as untouchability in its literal sense has ceased to obtain.” (Keer 1962: 198)

In 1932, the British Premier gave his award on communal issue. The depressed classes were granted separate seats in the provincial assemblies and the right of double vote under which they were to elect their own representatives and to vote also in the general constituencies. The Communal Award gave separate electorates to the Muslims, Sikhs, Europeans, Christians and Anglo-Indians. It perpetuated divisions among Indians. In the history of India untouchables were for the very first time given independent political existence and legal right to shape the future of the motherland. It could be seen as an impact of Dr. Ambedkar’s writings and speeches.

Gandhiji strongly disagreed with the proposal of separating untouchables from caste Hindus. He feared that separate electorates would
vivisect and disrupt the country. To him, these electorates were neither a penance nor any remedy for the crushing degradation they had groaned under. He firmly declared fast unto death to oppose the creation of separate electorates. Dr. Ambedkar considered it as a political stunt of Gandhiji.

Dr. Ambedkar was given the responsibility to resolve the deadlock and save the life of Gandhiji. It became necessary to amend the Communal Award. He said that it was no use holding a conference in a vacuum or discussing things without any specific date. “The reaction in the nationalist press was bitter and in a furious campaign he was called a monster, a traitor and a hireling.” (Kuber 2009: 108)

He made one more bitter statement:

It would have been justifiable if Mr. Gandhi had resorted to this extreme step for obtaining independence for the country on which he was so insistent all through the Round Table Conference debates….It is also a painful surprise that Mr. Gandhi should have singled out special representation of the depressed classes in the Communal Award as an excuse for his self-immolation….The Mahatma is not an immortal person, nor the Congress….Mahatmas have come and mahatmas have gone. But the untouchables have remained as untouchables. (Keer 1962: 207)

This statement showed his bitterness towards the leading national hero. Dr. Ambedkar thought that only his attempts towards the upliftment of the depressed classes and his means to achieve the goal were right. Only the way through which he tried to uplift them was true. None other could think or do anything good for the untouchables except him. Even Gandhiji was not sincere regarding this matter according to him.

Dr. Ambedkar met Gandhiji in Yervada Prison. He accepted Gandhiji’s suggestion to apply the panel system to all the seats. He advocated the termination of primary election system at the end of ten years. Simultaneously, he insisted that the question of reserved seats should be settled by referendum of the depressed classes at the end of another fifteen years. 148 seats were granted to the depressed classes in the provincial assemblies and 10 per cent of the seats of the Hindus from British India in the Central Assembly were also given to them. Devdas Gandhi showed disagreement with the issue of referendum.

Dr. Ambedkar was not prepared to give in on the point of the period of referendum which should be not less than 10 years. Gandhiji agreed. The agreement they signed was known as the Poona Pact. Dr. Ambedkar signed it on behalf of depressed classes. As a result, the Poona Pact was accepted by the British government thereby nullifying the Communal Award of MacDonald much to Gandhiji’s satisfaction. Dr. Ambedkar was bitterly criticized for this compromise.
He reacted bitterly afterwards. He firmly believed, “The second vote given by the Communal Award was a priceless privilege...No caste Hindu candidate could have dared to neglect the untouchable in his constituency or be hostile to their interest if he was made dependent upon the votes of the untouchables.” (Sapru Committee Report: 220) He suspected a conspiracy done by the Hindus to make the Poona Pact of no benefit to the depressed classes. Many sacred promises were given at the time of the Poona Pact by the Congress leaders. But then they contested the depressed class seats by means of false leaders. This disloyalty poisoned Dr. Ambedkar’s attitude so much that he supported the Muslim League in celebrating the ‘Salvation day’ when Congress ministries resigned in November 1939.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the Poona Pact and its system of voting were responsible for the defeat of scheduled caste candidates in general elections. Therefore, in 1944, the executive of the Scheduled Castes Federation expressed their demand for separate electorates for the depressed classes. Dr. Ambedkar initiated the resolution. W. N. Kuber quotes him from *The Times of India* as he opined: “The Poona Pact must go. It has resulted in disenfranchising 60 million untouchables. According to international law no treaty was final and sacrosanct.” (2009: 109-110)

According to him, the reason for his failure in 1952 general election was the system of joint electorates. In one of the Rajya Sabha speeches, he expressed that he accepted the Poona Pact as inevitable because it was not possible for him to get more. Summing up this controversy, he said that the Poona Pact gave a death-blow to the self-reliant movements of the depressed classes. The Cabinet Mission deliberations were also disappointing to him. He wanted to get the Poona Pact cancelled and have the system of separate electorates sanctioned by the Communal Award.

In 1942, he submitted a memorandum to the Governor-General expressing his political, educational and other grievances. He complained against inadequate representation of the depressed classes in the Central Legislature and in the central executive. He also drew attention towards the absence of representation in public services and in the Federal Services Commission. In the services, fixed proportion of the annual vacancies was not maintained in respect of the depressed classes. In a cabinet of 15, there was only one member of scheduled castes while the Muslims had three members. “He suggested some remedies: scheduled castes must be declared a minority; their proportion in the annual vacancies must be fixed; the age bar must be raised; examination fees must be reduced and scheduled caste officers must be appointed to see whether the provisions had been carried through.” (Kuber 2009: 110)

The political thinkers and leaders put forward a demand for a constituent assembly elected by the people of India from time to time. The miserable failure of the Round Table Conference convinced the Indians that the Constitution of India must be framed by the Indians through a sovereign constituent assembly. The Swarajya Party, for the very first time, claimed for India the right of self-determination. The only method for the application of that principle was to convene a constituent assembly, representative of all
sections of the Indian people to frame an acceptable Constitution. All-India Congress Committee, Gandhiji, Sir Maurice Gwyer and Prof. Reginald Coupland, the Cripps Proposals and the Sapru Committee – all recognized the importance of the demand and expressed their views on the formation of the constituent assembly.

But Dr. Ambedkar opposed it. He considered it as a most dangerous project which might involve this country in a civil war. He was not ready to take the communal question as a part of the constituent assembly. He believed that the constituent assembly suggested by the Sapru Committee could not be taken by the minority as a safe body in the impartiality of which it could place inherent confidence. He feared that it would be dominated by the caste Hindus and even if the scheduled castes joined it, they would remain a small minority which would always be outvoted. This fear of Dr. Ambedkar echoed in one of his interviews taken by the Cabinet Mission.

The communal question proved to be a big hurdle in getting swaraj. Dr. Ambedkar was of the opinion that it must be solved not by the policy of appeasement but by the implementation of some definite principles. He presented two considerations to be kept in mind while solving the communal problem: (1) it was essential to define the governing principles which should be raised for determining the final solution and (2) these governing principles must be applied to all parties equally without fear or favour.

He was of the view that the majority in India was a communal majority and not a political majority. He made a proposal that the Prime Minister and the members of the cabinet from the majority community should be elected by the whole house by a single transferable vote. And the representatives of the different minorities in the cabinet should be elected by a single transferable vote of the members of each minority community in the legislature.

The British government came with the August Offer. According to it, India was to be granted dominion status and free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth. It suggested that other constitutional issues were to be solved after the termination of the war. Gandhiji and Congress rejected the offer. But Savarkar and Rajaji supported it. The scheduled class organization, under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar, showed interest in accepting it.

In 1942, the Cripps Commission came with other proposals. Dr. Ambedkar viewed that the British government, showing Munich mentality, wanted to save oneself by sacrificing others. He said, “We are absolutely convinced that the proposals are calculated to do the greatest harm to the depressed classes and are sure to place them under an unmitigated system of Hindu rule.” (Menon 1957: 126) The depressed classes threatened the government against any such effort of imposing a Constitution without their consent. Cripps asked Dr. Ambedkar whether he represented labour or the depressed classes and asked him about the strength of his party. That was a turning point. He thought of his role seriously and planed his actions accordingly. In 1942, All-India Depressed Classes Conference was held in which he described the Cripps Proposals as a great betrayal. He was determined to resist any such catastrophe befalling his people with all the
means at his command. He considered the proposals as a surrender of the minorities to the majority. It supported the need for Constituent Assembly and granted the League the right to create Pakistan. By doing so, the proposals were cajoling them. On the contrary, it knotted down the hands and feet of the untouchables and threw them at the doors of the Hindus.

Then Lord Wavell put forward his proposals in 1945. He held a conference of Indian leaders in order to form a new executive council. The government was eager to have a constitution-making body. The support of all the leading parties of India was sought for the same. Dr. Ambedkar, being a member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council, could not take part in the conference. But he was preparing the case for the scheduled castes. The Muslims were given status equal to the caste Hindus without regard to the rights of other minorities. Sivaraj objected this. He thought that parity in the executive council might lead to Muslim claims for parity in the services and in the Indian army. He wanted the government to take into account their population and give them proportionate representation.

The Cabinet Mission came with one more proposal. It was for an interim government consisting of 14 members – 6 from the Congress including a scheduled class member, 5 from the Muslim League, 1 Sikh, 1 Parsi and 1 Indian Christian. When the Muslim League joined the interim government, it was hoped that it would also join the Constituent Assembly. But it adhered to its demand for Pakistan and two Constituent Assemblies.

Dr. Ambedkar divided the work of the Constituent Assembly into two groups: (i) constitutional questions (the relations between the legislature and the executive and their respective composition and functions) and (ii) communal questions. Matters under (i) should be referred to a commission presided over by an eminent constitutional lawyer from Great Britain or the USA. The other members should be two Indian experts and one representative each of the Hindu and Muslim communities. The terms of reference should be the Government of India Act, 1935. The commission should be required to recommend what changes should be made in the act as it stood. Matters under (ii) should be referred to a conference of the leaders of the different communities. If the conference failed to arrive at an agreed solution, the British government should give an award.

“He claimed that before they left, the British must ensure that the new Constitution guaranteed to the scheduled castes the elementary human rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and that it restored their separate electorates and gave them the other safeguards which they demanded.” (Kuber 2009: 118) As far as the issue of joint electorates was concerned, he said that scheduled caste voters would be so few that Hindu candidates could safely ignore their wishes. Caste Hindus would never support scheduled caste candidates. Separate electorates were inevitable for the scheduled castes in order to have their own representatives.

Jagjivan Ram, Congress Harijan leader, recalled the defeat of Dr. Ambedkar’s followers in the recent elections. Responding to that, Dr. Ambedkar said that the untouchables were completely ignored as they had no
right to nominate their representative in the central executive and no right to separate representation in the Constituent Assembly. The recognition of untouchables in the RTC and the Communal Award was taken away. He considered the Cabinet Mission’s attempt to start a departure from the established policy of the British government as a mere copy of Gandhiji’s theory i.e. not to recognize untouchables as a distinct force. In this matter, he emphasized that the results of the primary elections must be taken into consideration but not taken as final. He was against the idea of appointing an advisory body as he feared that it would again be dominated by the Hindus. He believed that scheduled castes had fallen a victim to the intrigues of the government.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted to force the British government to declare that they regarded the untouchables as a minority; to declare whether the British Government would institute machinery, and if so, of what sort, to examine whether the safeguards for minorities, framed by the Constituent Assembly, were adequate and real; and to declare if they would insist upon the Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly containing clauses restricting the power of the future Indian legislature to do away with minority safeguards by bare majority.

In 1946, Dr. Ambedkar and V. Sivraj went to London and explained to Attlee that the Cabinet Mission betrayed the assurances given by the government to the scheduled castes.

Dr. Ambedkar’s contribution in the constitutional matters done through writings and speeches should be evaluated against this political background.

(I) Views on various issues of the Indian Constitution

Dr. Ambedkar was one of the most leading non-fictional writers who deeply, actively and enthusiastically worked for preparing the Indian Constitution. His concept of a constitution and his role in writing the Constitution of India must be studied to gauge his contribution to the political field. The Constituent Assembly first met in December, 1946 and the final Constitution was first adopted in November, 1949. He was actively involved in all the proceedings regarding the Constitution during these years.

Defeated in his Karmabhoomi Bombay, Dr. Ambedkar was elected to the Constituent Assembly of India from West Bengal. He was primarily elected on the Drafting Committee and later appointed its chairman. The other members who contributed in the process of drafting of the Constitution were N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, K. M. Munshi, Sir Muhammad Sadulla, N. Madhava Menon and D. P. Khaitan, with B. N. Rau as the constitutional adviser.

He defined constitution as merely a mechanism for the purpose of regulating the work of the various organs of the state and a mechanism whereby particular members of particular parties were installed in office. When the issue of the formation of a constitution for India was discussed in the Round Table Conference, he drew attention of the government to a grave
matter. He asked the Government to prepare a constitution that could win the consent of the majority of people.

In the course of his participation in the Constituent Assembly, he made himself deeply engaged in the matters of policy of the state, the social and economic organization of society and the adoption of new policies according to the needs of the changing times. He firmly believed that all these matters should not be stated in the Constitution because it would destroy democracy altogether leaving no scope for people to design social organizations for themselves. The Constitution should not restrict the people of the country to live in a particular type of society. He asserted the concept of constitutional morality and declared that it was not a natural sentiment. It had to be cultivated.

According to him, the forms of administration were closely related to the forms of the Constitution. In fact, the forms of administration must be incorporated in the Constitution. The legislature should not be trusted to prescribe the forms of administration. There was a possibility of perverting the Constitution without changing the form of administration and to make it inconsistent and opposed to the spirit of the Constitution.

The span of more than three years of drafting and designing the constitution of India witnessed different turns in the attitude of Dr. Ambedkar. During the years of his political activities, he was asked by many to get associated with the Congress. But he did not even soften his attitude towards the party. When persuaded to join hands with the Congress, he, revealing his animosity towards the party, declared that he was a greater nationalist than any of the congressmen and only a man without self-respect would cooperate with the Congress.

As the chairman of the Drafting Committee, he piloted the Constitution very confidently and enthusiastically. To do the assigned job efficiently, strong backing was required. He started admiring the Congress Party for the same. How drastic was the change of mind! W. N. Kuber comments on the opportunistic attitude of Dr. Ambedkar:

He (Dr. Ambedkar) said that the Congress Party inside the Assembly brought into its proceedings a sense of order and discipline. He gave all the credit to the Congress Party for the smooth sailing of the Constitution in the Assembly. Ambedkar's tribute to the Congress Party was a calculated one. Dr. Ambedkar was a relentless opponent and an uncompromising critic of the Indian National Congress in its policies towards his community. In the opening session of the Assembly he was one of the very few who opposed the Objectives Resolution moved by Nehru. But subsequent developments culminating in the partition of the country made him realize that political realism demanded a moderate attitude on his part towards
those who had in their hands effective political power. The Congress leaders responded to this gesture so generously that they elected him the chairman of the Drafting Committee. (2009: 120-121)

Dr. Ambedkar’s main aim in entering the Constituent Assembly was to safeguard the interests of his community. He did not have any ambition of drafting the Constitution. He was surprised on being elected on the Drafting Committee and its chairman. S. G. Barve comments:

Dr. Ambedkar’s outstanding capabilities were now being yoked to the monumental constructive purpose of drawing up the Constitution of a free India. It was a very eloquent piece of poetic justice that a Mahar should have turned out to be the supplanter of Manu and become a new law-giver of the times………The wheel of time has come up a full circle. The man who publicly burnt the Manusmriti in 1927 was himself the chief instrument in giving to the Hindu community another ‘smriti’ or law of living in conformity with the requirements and urges of modern times. (Nim 1969: 54-55)

The Draft Constitution was said to be a replica of the Government of India Act, 1935. Responding to this charge, Dr. Ambedkar said, “There is nothing to be ashamed of in borrowing. It involves no plagiarism.” (Vol. 13: 60) According to him, the problem in 1935 was a redistribution of the powers of the British government in India to reconcile the Indian demand for full self-government. The British were determined to keep India under their control. Therefore the act was full of compromises. It was appropriately revised to become the Constitution of the Dominion of India. He held that the appointment of a Constituent Assembly was superfluous. All that was necessary was to remove those sections of the Government of India Act which were inconsistent with dominion status. The provision for the residuary powers made in the present Government of India Act, 1935 could be adopted as the best compromise. In this case, the only task left for the Constituent Assembly was that of finding out the solution of the communal problem.

It was charged that the constituent body could not be considered to be a representative body as it was not elected on adult suffrage. Dr. Ambedkar accepted that the Constituent Assembly did not include every adult male and female in this country. But the question according to him was: “Does this Constitution or does it not acknowledge, recognize and proclaim that it emanates from the people? I say it does.” (Vol. 13: 1131)

He took the example of the Constitution of the United States of America to support his argument. Its Preamble states: “We, the people of United States do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.” It was drafted by only 13 states which were considered to be the
representatives of the whole nation. With reference to this, he very energetically pleaded the case of Indian Constitution Assembly. He argued,

If the representatives of 13 states assembled in a small conference in Philadelphia could pass a Constitution and say that what they did was in the name of the people, on their authority, basing on it their sovereignty. I personally myself, do not understand, unless a man was an absolute pedant, that a body of people, 292 in number, representing this vast continent, in their representative capacity, could not say that they are acting in the name of the people of the country. (Vol. 13: 1131)

Sovereignty

Dr. Ambedkar held the view that Indian sovereignty did not derive from the sovereignty of the British Parliament. In 1949, the Constituent Assembly declared that India would associate with the commonwealth. Some feared that it would lead to degeneration of the sovereignty of the people. He put forward a simple logical answer to this criticism saying that a country would not lose the sovereignty just by making a treaty with another sovereign country. He believed that our sovereignty vested with the people of India. A demand in the house was arisen that the Preamble should straightaway declare that the sovereignty belonged to the people. But Dr. Ambedkar held that it was implied in the words, ‘We, the people in India’.

Citizenship

One of the significant features of the constitutional provisions related to citizenship was that it presented a uniform or single system of citizenship law for the whole country. This stood in remarkable contrast to the system of double citizenship prevailing in some federal states. In Dr. Ambedkar’s words,

In all the dominion countries, the residents would be divided into three categories, citizens, aliens and a third category of what may be called Dominion residents residing in a particular country. All that would mean is this, that the citizens of the dominions residing in India would not be treated as aliens, they would have some rights which aliens would not have, but they would certainly not be entitled, in any judgment, to get the full rights of citizenship which we would be giving to the people of our country. (Vol. 13: 632)

He believed that all the citizens should feel that they were the active and useful participants in a democratic system. Then only they would be willing to undertake the responsibility of thinking and judging for themselves.

Federalism
Federalism was also one of the significant features of the modern constitutionalism. It mainly focuses on unity in diversity, devolution in authority and decentralization in administration. It stood as one of the base pillars on which the edifice of constitutional government in India was built.

Dr. Ambedkar, during the discussion on the Draft Constitution in the Constitution Assembly, informed that the form of the Constitution was federal. It established a dual polity with the union at the center and the states at the periphery each endowed with sovereign powers to be exercised in the fields assigned to them respectively by the Constitution. The union was not a league of states united in a loose relationship. And the states were not other agencies of the union deriving powers from it. Both the union and the states were created by the constitution. Both derived their respective authority from the Constitution. The one was not subordinate to the other in its own field. The authority of one was coordinate with that of the other.

Actually, Dr. Ambedkar was not opposed to federalism. His main argument was that the center should not make an invasion on the powers of the constituent units. In the case of USA, the Constitutions of the federal and state governments were loosely connected. While in the case of Indian Constitution, no state had a right to frame its own Constitution. The main trait of federalism based on a balance of powers was the partition of the legislative and executive authority between the center and units. He clarified that the Indian federation was not a league of states nor were the states administrative units or agencies of the union government.

W. N. Kuber comments,

His (Dr. Ambedkar’s) view of federal states attached great importance to institutional means for the solution of human affairs. His concept of federalism meant that the state was a federation in normalcy, but unitary in emergency. To him, the words “Indian Union” indicated two things, viz. that the Indian federation was not the result of an agreement by the units, and that the competent units have no freedom to secede from it... According to him federation was not confederation. It avoided extremes in the political life of this country and thus paved the way for emotional integration and national unity. (2009: 124-125)

Dr. Ambedkar held that all federal systems were put in a tight mould of federalism unable to change their form and shape. They could never be unitary. On the other hand, Indian Constitution could be both unitary as well as federal according to requirements of time and circumstances. In normal times, it worked as a federal system. But in times of emergency, it could turn to be a unitary system. Under Article 257, the President had such a power of converting federal into a unitary state which no federation possessed.

He showed two weaknesses of federal system – rigidity and legalism. They were overtly found in the Constitution of the USA. He was not against
the amendment to the Constitution in order to overcome the flaw of rigidity. On the contrary, he said that the distinctive feature of the Constitution was that it was a flexible federation.

Then he compared our Constitution with that of Australia and said that ours had a long list of subjects for concurrent powers of legislation like Australian Constitution. Australia had 39 subjects, while India had 37 subjects. The biggest advance was in the matter of exclusive powers of legislation vested in Parliament.

In the matter of the judiciary in a federation, he compared the cases of USA, Canada and India. He mentioned that the federal judiciary and the state judiciary were separate and independent of each other in the USA. The Indian federation, though a dual polity, had no dual judiciary at all. Canada was a close parallel to the Indian judiciary.

Dr. Ambedkar then presented the difference between ‘federation’ and ‘union’. It was very clearly mentioned by the Drafting Committee that though India was to be a federation, the federation was not the result of an agreement by the states to join in a federation. Therefore no state had the right to withdraw from it. The federation was a union because it was indestructible. He resisted the tendency to make the federation stronger. He expected the center to be stronger than that imagined by the Government of India Act of 1935.

He was criticized for making the center mightier and reducing the states to municipalities. But he rejected the charge by saying that it was based on a misunderstanding. Clarifying the main principle of federalism, he said that the legislative and the executive authorities were partitioned between the center and the states not by any law made by the center but by the Constitution itself.

To substantiate his stand on the matter of strong central authority, Dr. Ambedkar said that centralism of powers was inevitable in the contemporary situation. He admitted the charge that power had been given to the center to override the states. But he also made attempt to defend the provisions.

Dr. Ambedkar did not consider the overriding powers as the normal feature of the Constitution. Their use and operation were explicitly confined to emergencies only. He further added that the residual loyalty of the citizen in an emergency must lie to the center and not to the constituent states. Only the center could work for a common end and for the general interests of the country as a whole. On the issue of over-centralization, he remarked that the Constitution assigned to the center a larger field for the operation of its legislative and executive authority than was to be found in any other federal Constitution. He maintained that over-centralization did not destroy the federal principle.

**Fundamental Rights**

The problem of fundamental rights assumed extreme difficulty under a democratic system of
government. For the success or failure of a democracy depended largely on the extent to which civil liberties were enjoyed by the citizens in general. The incorporation of a list of fundamental rights in the Constitution and their guaranteed inviolability by executive and legislative authorities were the most important thing. (Kuber 2009: 126-127)

Many parliamentarians argued that the fundamental rights were not fundamental unless they were also absolute rights, i.e., not subject to any limitations or exceptions. Dr. Ambedkar clarified, “It is incorrect to say that fundamental rights are absolute while non-fundamental rights are not absolute. The real distinction between the two is that non-fundamental rights are created by agreement between parties while fundamental rights are the gift of the law.” (Vol. 13: 63)

Unlike the Constitution of the United States of America, the Indian Constitution made comprehensive provisions regarding the fundamental rights. Dr. Ambedkar felt it necessary because of the peculiar social and economic conditions of the people of India. He mentioned the provisions regarding abolition of untouchability and prohibition of discrimination on grounds only of religion, caste, race, etc.

He drew attention to one more striking feature of the Indian Constitution. He said that the Constituent Assembly conformed to the British theory of legislative supremacy. Simultaneously, it evolved a principle of its own combining the elements of both legislative supremacy and judicial supremacy. That created a perfect equilibrium between them. He had a conviction in the twofold object of fundamental rights. One was that every citizen must be in a position to claim those rights and the second was that they must be binding upon every authority created by law which had certain power to make laws, to make rules, or to make bylaws. To him, equality of opportunity for all citizens was the most important right of all the rights.

Dr. Ambedkar claimed no special rights for the press because they were not to be given rights which were not to be exercised by the citizen in his individual capacity. Again, he believed that it must be considered one’s duty and not a right to bear arms. In emergency, military service must be imposed if the right to bear arms was granted.

The Indian society gave enormous extensive jurisdiction to religion so as to cover the whole life. It also prevented the legislature from encroaching upon that field. Dr. Ambedkar held that it was not necessary to have the laws governed by religion. But this liberty was given in order to reform the social system which was full of inequities. These inequalities and discriminations were so widely spread that they conflicted with the fundamental rights. In his speech Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah, he remarked,

As experience proves, rights are protected not by law but by the social and moral conscience of society. If social conscience is such that it is
prepared to recognize the rights which law chooses to enact, rights will be safe and secure. But if the fundamental rights are opposed by the community, no law, no parliament, no judiciary can guarantee them in the real sense of the word. (Vol. 1: 222)

**The Right to Constitutional Remedies**

In accordance with the nature of various provisions mentioned in the chapter on fundamental rights, the Indian Constitution guaranteed the right to constitutional remedies. Guarding these provisions, Dr. Ambedkar selected the British method of dealing with rights. British jurisprudence asserted that there could be no right unless the Constitution provided a remedy that made the right real.

He described the article on constitutional remedies as the very soul and heart of the Constitution. The Constitution endowed the Supreme Court with these rights. Such a provision was made that these rights could not be taken away unless and until the Constitution itself was amended by means left open to the legislatures. “This was one of the greatest safeguards that can be provided for the safety and security of the individual.” (Kuber 2009: 129)

Dr. Ambedkar, in a very convincing manner, replied to the severe criticism related to the provision for the suspension of the right to constitutional remedies.

There can be no doubt that while there are certain fundamental rights which the State must guarantee to the individual in order that the individual may have some security and freedom to develop his own personality, it is equally clear that in certain cases, where, for instance, the State’s very life is in jeopardy, those rights must be subject to a certain amount of limitation. (Vol. 13: 436)

**Minorities**

The article on the fundamental rights bore the term ‘minority’. The word indicated some political purpose. The community specified by the term was not a minority in the technical sense but actually, a minority in the cultural and linguistic sense.

Dr. Ambedkar explained that the articles regarding the minorities accepted the term in the wider sense and proposed to give protection in the matter of culture, language and script. He added that minorities had loyally accepted the rule of the majority which was basically a communal majority and not a political majority. He emphatically claimed services and posts for the minority communities. The house accepted that the only minorities were the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, liberty was meant for social reform. The social system required reorganization as it was full of inequalities and discriminations which conflict with the fundamental rights.
Dr. Ambedkar was highly concerned about the social stigma of untouchability. The scheduled castes were socially ‘untouchables’. W. N. Kuber observes,

His sense of self-respect would not allow him to realize, or, though he had realized it, would not allow him to beg for economic salvation. He thought that once political and social equality was established and educationally the scheduled castes were advanced, every other difficulty would disappear. For him fundamental rights would mean establishment of equality only. (2009: 131)

Reservation

Dr. Ambedkar wanted to create space for the untouchables in the field of politics. He concentrated on adult franchise for that. Being numerically important, they knew that they would certainly create a big change under adult franchise. As the scheduled castes were scattered, they had very little possessions to preserve. They did not get chance for sufficient representation in the legislature due to absence of reservation. He also recommended that reservation of seats was to expire after ten years. He also clarified that any change must be made by the amendment to the Constitution. He noticed that Muslims and Christians got the reservations long before; but the scheduled castes got this only in the Constitution of 1935. They were commenced in 1937 and were in force only for about ten years. But the 1935 Act was suspended and the scheduled castes were not in a position to enjoy the benefits of the privileges of the act.

The Proportional Representation

On the matter of the proportional representation, Dr. Ambedkar explained his own point of view:

... proportional representation presupposes literacy on a large scale.... having regard to the extent of literacy in this country, such a presupposition would be utterly extravagant... in the House where there is the parliamentary system of government, you must necessarily have a party which is in majority and which is prepared to support the government... one of the disadvantages of proportional representation is the fragmentation of the legislature into a number of small groups. (Vol. 13: 531)

He added that the Royal Commission appointed by the British Parliament in 1910 objected proportional representation as it would not permit a stable government to remain in office. He was expecting the establishment of a stable government and maintenance of law and order. He said that there were these majorities and minorities in our country. There was an agreement between the two before the meeting of Constituent Assembly. Separate
electorates were given up and joint electorates with reservation of seats were prescribed, definite quota of representatives to minorities was given. “... this proportional representation is really taking away by the back-door what has already been granted to the minorities by this agreement, because proportional representation will not give to the minorities what they wanted, namely, a definite quota.” (Vol. 13: 533)

The Directive Principles

The Indian Constitution prescribed some directive principles for the state. They included a long list of state activities related to economic, social, legal, educational and international problems. Jawaharlal Nehru considered these directives to be a dynamic move towards a creative objective. Dr. Ambedkar called them the ‘Instruments of Instructions’.

They contained the positive obligations of the state towards its citizens. The Directive Principles of State Policy constituted a novel and hence a controversial aspect of the Indian Constitution. It was novel because before its incorporation into the Constitution of India only Ireland had such principles enunciated in its Constitution. Its distinction from the fundamental rights had been a bone of contention; it was the very soul of the Constitution. (Kuber 2009: 132)

The directives meant to ensure social and economic democracy in addition to political democracy which was secured by the provision of fundamental rights in a written Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar held that these directive principles were obligations laid down by the Constitution upon the various governments for doing certain things. But if the governments failed to do so, no one would have the right to call for specific performance. He expected the word ‘directive’ to be used in the heading itself as he believed that the Constituent Assembly should give certain directions to the future legislature and the future executive as to the manner in which they should exercise their legislative and executive powers. According to him, the Constituent Assembly intended that in future both the legislature and the executive should not merely pay lip-service to those principles enacted in this part but that they should be made the basis of all executive and legislative action that might be taken subsequently in the matter of the governance of the country.

K. T. Shah proposed to announce India to be a secular federal socialist union of states. Dr. Ambedkar called the amendment superfluous because both the legislature and the executive were placed by this Constitution under certain definite obligations as to the form of their policy. In his own words, “If these directive principles to which I have drawn attention are not socialistic in their direction and in their content I fail to understand what more socialism can be....socialist principles are already embodied in our Constitution.” (Vol. 13: 327)
The Constitution established parliamentary democracy. By this Dr. Ambedkar meant: one man one vote. But the establishment of merely a parliamentary form of government was not expected from the Constitution. He emphasized the need of economic democracy. In order to provide some guidelines for achieving the economic ideal and forming a healthy social order, the Directive Principles were introduced. He clarified that the object in framing this Constitution was two-fold: to lay down the form of political democracy, and to lay down that India’s ideal was economic democracy. “The framers had deliberately introduced in the directive principles a language which would not make it either fixed or rigid, so that enough room was left for people of different ways of thinking, with regard to the reaching of the ideal of economic democracy.” (Kuber 2009: 134) The directive principles yielded the substance of a socialistic state. They were truly socialistic in their direction and in their content.

Dr. Ambedkar made an important suggestion to form a separate committee for economic planning. He considered it necessary for the maintenance of the liberty of an individual in modern conditions. He added that the laboring classes in general and the scheduled castes in particular were crucially concerned with the issue of economic planning. As a representative of the latter, he took it to be his duty to pursue the matter so that the proposals would be considered on its merits. He informed the house the various ways through which economic democracy could be brought about. Some of them were individualism, communism and establishment of a socialistic state.

He observed that the proposed Constitution was not a mechanism for capturing power. Rather, it sought to establish political democracy as well as economic democracy. He suggested that the Directive Principles of State Policy had some implied powers implementing which the state could enact laws for the general welfare of the community which may even contravene fundamental rights.

He mentioned that the directive principles had no legal force behind them. But at the same time he was not ready to accept that there was no binding force behind them or they were useless. He said that even those who would capture power would have to respect those directive principles. They might not have to answer for this breach in a court of law. But they would certainly have to answer for the breach before the electorate at the election time.

He considered the directive principles as a series of provisions containing the doctrine of implied powers in them. He further added that the courts should invoke them and support legislation undertaken by Parliament or state legislatures which tended to give effect to the directive principles embodied in the Constitution.

Dr. Ambedkar added that these directive principles were not justiciable. Therefore none would be entitled to file a suit against the government. But he warned that the directive principles should not be disposed of in this way. These principles were bound to affect the decisions of the courts on
constitutional questions in the manner the provisions of *Magna Carta* had affected the decisions of English judges and Preamble to the Declaration of Independence had affected the decisions of American judges. "The attitude of the judiciary towards the directives was that the directives should not only be subordinated to fundamental rights but could not be given effect to if they came in conflict with the operation of any other provision of the Constitution for the mere reason that the directives were not ‘enforceable in a court of law’". (Kuber 2009: 136)

M. C. Setalvad, Attorney General of India, accepted the utility of the directives to the judiciary in spite of the non-enforcement clause. W. N. Kuber found him saying, "These principles have helped the courts to exercise their power of judicial review. The directive principles are but an amplification of the Preamble to the Indian Constitution." (2009: 136)

Dr. Ambedkar emphatically said that there was an inherent contradiction in the Constitution between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the State Policy. It was up to the Parliament to remove the contradiction and make the fundamental rights subserve the Directive Principles of the State Policy.

**The President**

Both parliamentary and presidential systems were democratic. Dr. Ambedkar tested the democratic government on the base of stability and responsibility. He said, “The American and the Swiss systems give more stability and less responsibility. The British system on the other hand gives you more responsibility, but less stability...The Draft Constitution in recommending the Parliamentary system of Executive has preferred more responsibility to more stability.” (Vol. 13: 51-52)

Dr. Ambedkar made the comparison of the President with the British king and the President of the USA. He said that under the Draft Constitution the President occupied the same position as the king under the English Constitution. He was the head of the state but not of the executive. He represented the nation but did not rule the nation. He was the symbol of the nation. The President of the Indian union would be generally bound by the advice of his ministers. The Draft Constitution did not follow the American model.

K. T. Shah believed that the election of the President by an electoral institution was not sufficiently representative of the people’s will. Therefore he suggested that the President should be elected by the adult citizens of India. Dr. Ambedkar answered that the committee took into consideration the large size of the electorates, inadequacy of government machinery to manage the elections and the position of the President as only a figurehead in the Constitution. He emphatically said that the Indian President was not in the same position as the President of the USA. Instead, the Prime Minister was elected on the adult suffrage. He clarified that in our parliamentary system of government, the President would function only with the aid and advice of the council of ministers and not *vice versa*. 
The Constitution gave authority to the President to promulgate ordinances which had all the force of law. In the case of urgency, when the Parliament was not in session, the President could produce an ordinance for some temporary duration. Pocker advocated that such an ordinance should not deprive any citizen of his fundamental right of personal liberty except on conviction after trial by a competent court of law. But Dr. Ambedkar favoured the provision saying that it was necessary for an emergency enactment when the house was not in session.

The Prime Minister

Dr. Ambedkar justified with the reasons why the cabinet system of government prevailing in England was preferable in India to the presidential system of government as existed in the USA. The cabinet system followed by the Indian Constitution was based on collective responsibility. The only sanction through which collective responsibility could be enforced was through the Prime Minister. The instrumentality of Prime Minister was essential in order to achieve the principle of collective responsibility. Therefore, he must be considered as the bedrock of the cabinet. Unless and until he had statutory authority to nominate and dismiss the ministers, there could be no collective responsibility.

Dr. Ambedkar considered K. T. Shah’s proposition to be fatal to the principles of collective responsibility as Shah held that the Prime Minister should not be by statute. Shah further suggested that a Prime Minister might be retained as a part of the executive by convention. Dr. Ambedkar remarked, “…collective responsibility is enforced by the enforcement of two principles. One principle is that no person shall be nominated to the Cabinet except on the advice of the Prime Minister. Secondly, no person shall be retained as a member of the cabinet if the Prime Minister says that he shall be dismissed.” (Vol. 13: 512)

The Governor

Mentioning the importance of the Governor, Dr. Ambedkar remarked that he had the pivotal position in the states. He was the agent of the center and influenced the ministry-making. Moreover, he was the constitutional head of the state. In other words, it meant that although he was the ‘chief executive’ in the exercise of his functions, the real power was in the hands of the council of ministers.

The Constitution granted no functions to the Governor to be discharged by him independently. But he was assigned certain duties to perform. The Governor was bound to accept the advice of the ministry. He was the representative, not of a party, but of the people of the state as a whole. He carried on the administration in the name of the people.

Dr. Ambedkar was of the opinion that the selection of the Governor would be on the basis of personality. As the Governor was purely ornamental, it was unnecessary to have such a functionary elected at so much cost and so much trouble. He clarified that Governor’s powers were nominal. It was a waste to spend public resources on a popular election for governorship.
But the crucial issue was not election or nomination. Rather, it was that of discretionary powers. He clearly mentioned that assigning the Governor certain discretionary powers was in no sense contrary to or negation of responsible government. He said that the provincial governments were required to work in subordination to the central government. It was the duty of the Governor to look into this. Therefore the Governor would reserve certain things in order to enable the President to see that the rules under which the provincial governments were supposed to act according to the Constitution were observed. The moment the ministry had lost the confidence of the majority, it was assumed that the President would exercise his power in dismissing the ministry.

**The Supreme Court**

Dr. Ambedkar considered the Supreme Court under a federal Constitution to be an essential part of a federal system because it was an arbiter between the disputes of the center and the states. It was at once the highest interpreter of the Constitution and a tribunal for the final determination of the disputes between the union and its constituent parts. He explained the importance of the Supreme Court by saying that it stood at the apex of India’s judicial hierarchy with effective power to supervise and control the working of the entire system. He explained the nature of this system: “The Indian Federation, though a Dual Polity, has no Dual Judiciary at all. The High Courts and the Supreme Court form one single integrated Judiciary having jurisdiction and providing remedies in all cases arising under the constitutional law, the civil law, or the criminal law.” (Vol. 13: 58)

Regarding the appointment of the Supreme Court judges, Dr. Ambedkar said that: (1) they should be appointed with the concurrence of the Chief Justice; (2) the appointments made by the President should be subject to the confirmation of two-thirds vote by Parliament; and (3) judges should be appointed in consultation with the Council of States. He warned that the appointments made by the executive subject to the concurrence of the legislature were not a very suitable proposition because the appointments might be influenced by political pressure and political considerations. He was personally against a sitting judge of the Supreme Court being assigned to any non-judicial work (e.g., a diplomatic assignment) and then his returning to the judiciary.

He said that the judiciary was engaged in deciding the issue between citizens and very rarely between citizens and the government. As a result, the chances of influencing the conduct of a member of a judiciary by the government were remote. Therefore the provisions applied to the Federal Public Service Commission had no place so far as the judiciary was concerned. Dr. Ambedkar informed that there was a provision that no member of the Public Service Commission should be entitled to hold an office under the crown for a certain period after his retirement from the Public Service Commission. He mentioned that the work of the Public Service Commission was intimately connected with that of the executive.
Dr. Ambedkar felt the need for including some writs in the Constitution. He called them prerogatives. They could be sought for by an aggrieved party without bringing any proceedings or suit. According to him, the aim of these prerogatives was to grant some interim relief.

Then he turned to the question of the relationship between the legislature and the judiciary. The judiciary would be given the power to question the law made by the legislature. The legislature would be trusted not to make any law which would abrogate the fundamental rights of man.

**The Executive and the Judiciary**

In order to fulfil the desire of the Indian people, the directive principles were made to reveal the separation of the executive and the judiciary. Explaining the issue, Dr. Ambedkar said that magistracy would not be under the control of the high court. It was intimately connected with the general system of administration. The Governor was entitled for the appointment, posting and promotion of the district judge according to the Government of India Act, 1935. But the Indian Constitution offered the help of high courts for the same.

Dr. Ambedkar explained that they intentionally did not make the separation of the executive and the judiciary a matter of fundamental principle. If they had done so, it would have become absolutely compulsory to bring about the separation immediately on the passing of the Constitution. He added that the state would take steps to separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the state. Moreover, he clarified that the directive principles ought to articulate principles and ought not to go into details of the working out of the principles.

Pandit H. N. Kunzru recommended to include this proposition in the chapter related to the directive principles. Pandit Nehru dismissed Kunzru’s suspicion and praised Dr. Ambedkar saying the government was entirely in favour of the separation of judicial and executive functions.

**The Legislative Council**

The Constituent Assembly did not wish to decide on the question of the formation of legislative councils in the states. In fact, many members opposed the idea of establishing the upper house for the states thinking that an additional house for the Legislative Assembly in the states was superfluous. Therefore the matter was left to be decided by the members of the legislative from each state. Dr. Ambedkar clarified his stand on the matter by saying that he was not intensely prepossessed in favour of second chambers. He also reminded that second chambers were not made a permanent part of the Constitution.

Dr. Ambedkar denied the proposal for the representation of the agricultural labour in the upper chamber put forward by Nagappa. He objected such provisions because he thought that the lower chamber would have a large representation of agricultural labour as it would be elected on adult suffrage. He again rejected the suggestion of Muniswami Pillay for special
representation for the scheduled castes in the upper chambers. He argued that the representation to be guaranteed to the scheduled castes should be guaranteed only in the lower house of the central and provincial legislatures.

**Public Service Commission**

One of the noteworthy characteristics of the Constitution was the provisions related to the all-India services. The union and the states had separate services under a federal system. The Government could not make its policies effective without efficient civil services. "Ambedkar accepted the fundamental limitation upon the authority to dismiss such servants. He also defended the right to appeal to the Public Service Commission. He said that every state should have its own Public Service Commission, and there must be a provision for a regional commission of two or more states." (Kuber 2009: 143)

Explaining the reason for the distinction made between services to be employed under the Public Service Commission and the services to be employed under the High Court, Supreme Court and the Auditor-General, Dr. Ambedkar said,

> ... those who are occupying the highest places (in judicial department and the high court staff) are required to exercise a certain amount of judicial discretion. Consequently we felt that not only their salaries and pensions should be determined by the Chief Justice with the approval of the President but the conditions of their service also should be left to be determined by the Chief Justice. In the case of the Public Service Commission much of the staff – in fact the whole of the staff – will be merely concerned with what we call “ministerial duties” where there is no authority and no discretion is left. This is the reason why we have made this distinction. (Vol. 13: 842)

Some recommended appointing scheduled caste people on the commission. But Dr. Ambedkar was very clear in his mind about the issue. He argued that there was no point in making it obligatory upon the President to appoint a member of a scheduled caste, scheduled tribe or backward class. The function of a member of Public Service Commission was a general one having no scope to protect the interests of any particular class.

**Public Funds and Religious Instruction**

Dr. Ambedkar mentioned that the public funds raised by taxes should not be utilized for the benefit of any particular community. He distinctly pointed out that the state funds should not be used for the purpose of religious instruction whether given by the state or by any other agency. In his aggressive and argumentative speeches, he proclaimed that the religions of this country were not non-social but anti-social as far as their mutual relations
were concerned. The responsibility of the religious instruction was assigned to respective communities according to their aims and objectives.

**Emergency**

Discussing the issue of emergency, Prof. Saksena opined that any change in the fundamental rights should be made by Parliament and not by the state during emergency. Dr. Ambedkar answered, “... under normal circumstances, the authority to make laws affecting Fundamental rights is vested in both and there is no reason why, for instance, this normal right which the State possesses should be taken away during emergency.” (Vol. 13: 774)

Dr. Ambedkar boldly asked whether the power to suspend the rights should be vested absolutely in the President or whether they should be determined by Parliament. He informed that India followed the American pattern. In the USA, while the power was left with the Congress, the President was also vested with what may be called the *ad interim* power to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus*. Moreover, the Indian Constitution possessed another safeguard: Indian President would be guided by the advice of the executive and the executive should be subject to the authority of Parliament.

**Provisions for Offenders**

The constitution guaranteed three rights to offenders: (1) A person who was arrested should be informed of the cause of his arrest; (2) He should be permitted to consult and to be defended by a lawyer of his choice; (3) A person arrested and detained in custody should be produced before the nearest magistrate within a period of twenty-four hours and should be kept in continued custody only with his authority. All these rights were without any qualifications and were, therefore, in absolute terms.

But then it was asked if there was any written Constitution in the world in which there was provision for detention of persons without trial in this manner in normal times. Replying the question, Dr. Ambedkar highlighted the special safeguards mentioned in the Constitution even when a person was arrested and detained under a preventive detention law. He established the fact that if constitutional methods were followed, then there would be no necessity of preventive detention. If people impatient to capture power resorted to unconstitutional methods, the executive might detain them. In such a situation it was not feasible to satisfy all the elaborate legal procedure necessary in the case. He specifically showed that preventive detention and other features were specially intended against the anti-social elements and proclaimed that the exigency of the liberty of the individual should be placed above the interests of the state.

**Views on Villages**

It is important to notice that the Draft Constitution cast away the village and accepted the individual as its unit. The Drafting Committee, especially Dr. Ambedkar, thought that village panchayats could not be the basis of new
democracy. His attitude was bitterly criticized by K. T. Shah, A. K. Ayyangar and Shibbanlal Saksena.

In reply, he quoted Metcalfe, “Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down. Revolution succeeds to revolution. Hindoo, Pathan, Moghul, Maharatha, Sikh, English are all masters in turn but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves. A hostile army passes through the country. The village communities collect their little cattle within their walls and let the enemy pass unprovoked.” (Vol. 13: 61)

He also added his views which revealed his unfriendly outlook towards villages:

Knowing this, what pride can one feel in them?......mere survival has no value. The question is on what plane they have survived? Surely on a low, on a selfish level. I hold that the village republics have been the ruination of India. I am therefore surprised that those who condemn Provincialism and communalism should come forward as champions of the village. What is the village but a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism? (Vol. 13: 62)

Maulana Hasrat Mohani proposed to make “a village soviet” as the unit of the Constitution. K. Santhanam opined that the state would take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them sufficient powers and authority to enable them to function as units of government. Dr. Ambedkar accepted the amendment and made the salutary provision for village panchayats in the directive principles.

The Issue of Amendments in the Constitution

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that a Constitution, being a dynamic document, was expected to grow with the progressing nation and to accommodate the changing needs and circumstances of a developing and changing people. So long as parliamentary democracy existed and the government established under the Constitution continued to be a responsible government, constitutional changes were nothing but a reflection of the needs of the nation that it served. He said,

The Draft Constitution has eliminated the elaborate and difficult procedures such as a decision by a convention or a referendum. The powers of amendment are left with the legislatures, central and provincial…. It is difficult to conceive a simpler method of amending the Constitution…. I feel that it is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace-time and in war-time. (Vol. 13: 69-70)
Dr. Ambedkar exemplified the provisions made for the amendments in the Constitutions of Canada, Irish Free State, Switzerland, Australia and the USA. He claimed that in none of these countries, any amendment was made by simple majority. The Drafting Committee divided the articles under three categories. The first category was the one which consisted of articles which could be amended by Parliament by a bare majority. The second set of articles required two-thirds majority. The third set of articles called for two-thirds majority plus approval of states. He challenged his critics to find out any constituent assembly anywhere in the world providing such a simple procedure for the amendment of the Constitution.

Comments on his Constitutional Views

Dr. Ambedkar was showered with praises for his zealous and challenging task of piloting the Constitution of free India in the Constituent Assembly. Harijans felt proud that their capacities would be recognized not only by the Harijans but by all communities. His contributions instilled confidence in Harijans. His learned speeches were highly admired. He was lucidity and clarity personified. He made logical exposition of the provisions of the Constitution in the House.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava praised him thus: “…words fail to convey the gratitude that all of us feel for the legal acumen, the untiring industry, the consummate skill and the firmness, tempered with moderation with which the Chairman of the Drafting Committee has piloted this Constitution.” (Vol. 13: 1169)

Mr. Mahboob Ali Baig Sahib said, “Dr. Ambedkar was unique in his clarity of expression and thought, and his mastery over the Constitutional problems including those of finance has been marvelous, unique, singular and complete.” (Vol. 13: 1176)

Syamanandan Sahaya elevated his position by saying “…The achievement of independence would go to the credit of Mahatmaji, and its codification to one of Mahatmaji’s worst critics, viz., the great architect of our great Constitution Dr. Ambedkar. … He deserves the gratitude not only of this Assembly but of this nation……and the masterly way in which Dr. Ambedkar piloted it will ever be remembered not only by us but by the posterity with gratitude.” (Vol. 13: 1180)

R. V. Dhulekar commented, “I would not say (that his task was) Herculean because that is a very small word. He has performed a task worthy of the great Pandava Bhim and worthy of the name that he has – Bhim Rao Ambedkar. – He has certainly justified his name – Bhim Rao – and he has performed the task with clarity of vision, clarity of thought and clarity of language.” (Vol. 13: 1184)

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya said, “… I should have liked to tell him what a steam roller intellect he brought to bear upon this magnificent and tremendous task: irresistible, indomitable, unconquerable, levelling down tall palms and short poppies; whatever he felt to be right he stood by, regardless of consequences.” (Vol. 13: 1202) Dr. Pylee said,
Ambedkar brought to bear upon his task a vast array of qualities, erudition, scholarship, imagination, logic and eloquence and experience. Whenever he spoke in the house usually to reply to the criticisms advanced against provisions of the Draft Constitution, there emerged a clear and lucid exposition of the provisions of the Constitution. As he sat down, the mist of doubts vanished, as also the clouds of confusion and vagueness. Indeed, he was a Modern Manu and deserves to be called the Father or the Chief Architect of the Constitution of India. (1960: 138)

His policy revolved around liberalism and constitutionalism. His frequent reference to the Constitutions of various countries testimony his in-depth study of the same. Though he was influenced by the Constitution of the USA, “Here, it is worth noting that his language betrays a heavy influence of the American Constitution.” (Rao 1998: 37)

Dr. K. V. Rao, a critic of Dr. Ambedkar, called him the ‘mother’, not the ‘father’, of the Constitution. This was one of the most thought-provoking and penetrating comments on him. When the word ‘father’ meant the author of future life and the germinator of ideas, his role required a more careful analysis. Rao stated that Dr. Ambedkar had no part in making decisions regarding the Constitutional matters. Far from germinating ideas, he had to compromise his own. Failing in his purpose, finally he had to accept and advocate the ideas of others. He was one of the leaders who through his actions, speeches and works came forward to uplift the scheduled caste people but unfortunately did not get complete success.

My reading of the Constitution makes me feel that it is inappropriate to call Dr. Ambedkar the ‘Father of the Constitution’. If any people are entitled to be called so, they are Nehru and Patel, but I would like to call them ‘Presiding Deities’, the sources of all the ideas of the Constitution – the real makers of the Constitution. I would like to attribute fatherhood to them as well as to the members of the Drafting Committee in common, but would not like to single out Dr. Ambedkar for this honour. We may call him, more appropriately ‘the mother’ of the Constitution – and I am not using it in any depreciating or jocular sense. Dr. Ambedkar had to bear in fact others’ ideas and nurture them and bring them out as his own and this he did remarkably well ‘possessing legal acumen, untiring industry, consummate skill and firmness tempered with moderation’. (Rao 1961: 10-11)

The Indian Constitution that finally emerged was essentially a work of the Constituent Assembly as a collective body. It did not fully reflect Dr.
Ambedkar’s views on all topics. Many provisions made in the Constitution were contrary to his personal convictions. He did not wish to have administrative details mentioned in the Constitution. But he had to put them in because others wanted them. In his personal writings, he advocated a presidential executive as most suited to Indian context. But later on, he had to oppose it in the Constituent Assembly. He criticized the Objective Resolution for not including the principle of nationalization of industry and land. He forcefully stated that the government should propound a socialistic economy in order to do social, political and economic justice. But at a later stage, he objected an amendment moved by K. T. Shah to call India a ‘socialist state’ saying that no Constitution should contain any such philosophy.

Dr. Rao’s criticism undermined present calculations and evaluations. Ambedkar’s position in the Constituent Assembly was secondary, and he was revolving round the Congress leadership as a planet revolves round the sun. He deliberately took this position as he had to safeguard the interests of depressed classes in the Constitution of free India. Dr. Rao’s evaluation takes us near the truth and deserves to be studied in that light. (Kuber 2009: 149)

While hailing Dr. Ambedkar as a successful hero of the play of the Constitution-making, one must not forget the contribution of the producer (the Congress), the director (the eminent leaders of the Congress), the supporting cast (the other members of the Draft Committee), the location (India) and the ethos (the Indian culture). Drafting and piloting the Constitution was such a Herculean task as would demand enormous efforts from many. It obviously cannot be carried out by a single person however efficient he might be. To give all the credit of such a job to one is to insult the others working on it and to ignore their roles.

(II) The State Theory

According to the liberal theory, a state was neutral regarding the diverse and conflicting interests that characterized the society. The theory presupposed the state as a significantly autonomous entity. But for Dr. Ambedkar as for Marxists, a liberal democratic state could not be an isolated category and could not operate independent of society to any significant extent in any case under normal conditions. It required an appropriate context of society, culture and religion to become a functioning reality. W. N. Kuber notes his ideas thus: “The state had to serve the interests of man and society as a servant and not as a master.... To him, the state was not an end in itself, but only a means for the furtherance of human ends in the interests of a better future society.” (2009: 293)

Dr. Ambedkar rejected the idealist notion of an absolute state which led to a totalitarian ideology in politics. To him, the state was a conditional category resting on a multiple source of support such as society, economy and religion. He conceptualized the state not in any idealistic or moral terms
but in purely functional and instrumental terms. He believed that the state was machinery designed to handle internal disorder and external aggression. He regarded it as an instrument of the social structure. He accepted the Gandhian and Marxist supremacy of society over the state, but he rejected the Marxist commitment to a narrow class-orientation and Gandhian utopianism based on a mythical rural democracy.

He rejected the Gandhian theory of civil disobedience because he believed that it would result in anarchy. He argued that once people lost faith in the validity or the moral authority of the state, it would be no longer a functioning state and it was a real anarchy camouflaged as a state. Rao observes, “What Gandhiji would call civil disobedience implied a complex moral Socratic position of simultaneously accepting the State as potentially good and rejecting it as not good in actuality at a given point of time. Ambedkar’s realism did not encourage such highly moralistic political stances.” (1998: 37)

His state would perform three sets of functions and promote three types of goals: (1) The individualistic functions: to maintain the right of every citizen to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and to free speech and free exercise of religion. (2) The justice functions (law and order functions): to maintain social, political and economic justice within society by reducing or eliminating inequalities of class or caste or other non-functional group categorizations. (3) The material-economic functions: to allow every individual subject to enjoy freedom from want and freedom from fear.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, a legitimate state was an instrument of public welfare. It was democratic by nature. All its functions were predicated on its capacity to generate intellectual and spiritual resources necessary to maintain a humanly volitional and morally suffused ethos. Justice was considered to be the pinnacle of human political activity and it should be institutionalized in the state.

State is thus conceptualized as an arrangement set up by human beings to make effective their natural rights, and the state derives its power and legitimacy from its function of providing the conditions for the realization of rights. But Ambedkar departs from this liberal model to the extent that he also refers to the rights of groups within the organized political society. (Rao 1998: 38)

(III) Nationalism

Nationalism has been a source of strength for the mankind in general and leaders and men of letters in particular all through the history of India. It is a vital force closely connected to man’s life, pride, activity and welfare. “It has some disruptive tendencies no doubt; but whether one calls it an irrational instinct or positive hallucination, the fact remains that it is still a potent force which has a dynamic power to disrupt empires. Nationalism is a feeling of a
corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin.” (Kuber 2009: 150)

Dr. Ambedkar explained the difference between nationality and nationalism. “Nationality means ‘consciousness of kind, awareness of the existence of that tie of kinship’. Nationalism means ‘the desire for a separate national existence for those who are bound by this tie of kinship’. Secondly, it is true that there cannot be nationalism without the feeling of nationality being in existence… That is to say nationality does not in all cases produce nationalism.” (Vol. 8: 38-39) Nationalism was a dynamic expression of the desire to live as a nation. There must be territory which nationalism could occupy and make it a state as well as a cultural home of the nation.

He thought that nationalism was a double-edged feeling. It triggered the sense of belonging and isolation at once. On one hand, it inspired the feeling of togetherness among the particular group and on the other hand, it gave birth to the feeling of seclusion from the rest of the society. He opined that nationalism in relation to a nation should be based fundamentally on a strong feeling of social unity. And nationalism in relation to internationalism should be founded on human brotherhood. He emphasized that nationalism should not be tyranny and menace to any other community and country.

The 19th century Indian leaders spoke and wrote a lot about the British Rule in India. Some of them believed that the colonial rule was a providential power that enabled them to come out from the bondage of old traditions and notions. Dr. Ambedkar also once thought the same. “As regards British rule, he expressed his view that apart from all other defects or disabilities, it had conferred two benefits on Indians, namely, one common Central Government, and a feeling among the people belonging to different religions that they were part of one Government.” (Keer 1962: 322) Critics comment that he realized that hatred of British rule would invite double enmity on his people. So he thought it prudent to cooperate with British rule so far as his cooperation would enable him to secure those rights.

When Dr. Ambedkar decided to co-operate with the Simon Commission by accepting a membership of a committee formed in Bombay, every Indian was taken aback as the commission was boycotted nationwide. People held that Dr. Ambedkar betrayed the nation. They considered him to be a political mendicant. He clarified his stand saying that he had upheld the task of the people. But in the case of people misusing the power in their hands, he would support the present government. His idea of nationalism did not stop him joining hands with the British Government in order to get some privileges for his people.

Nationalism in terms of Independence

Dr. Ambedkar’s nationalism began with a vision to bring welfare of the depressed classes. He basically wanted to bring equality and civil rights for the scheduled castes in particular and the downtrodden in general who, according to him, were deprived of them for centuries. As Kuber quotes him from Dalitbandhu, he boldly announced, “Attempts to uplift my community rather than win the swaraj for the nation is my goal.” (2009: 176)
He was against the over importance given to the political independence. He asserted that it would be fatal to consider political independence to be the complete freedom and neglect social and economic independence. G. S. Lokhande writes, “A pragmatist to the core, Dr. Ambedkar believed that in the absence of economic and social justice political independence would not bring about either social solidarity or national integration.” (Ahuwalia 1981: 48) Therefore the nature of his nationalism was different from the leaders and writers of his time. His concept of nationalism demonstrated a severe protest against both external domination and internal oppression. He was well aware of the fact that he had to fight against the caste Hindus and the British government for the rights of his people.

He firmly believed that the depressed classes in no sense formed an integral part of the community in India. The status granted to these poor people was midway between that of the serf and the slave. “According to him, this enforced servility and bar to human intercourse were due to untouchability, which involved not merely the possibility of discrimination in public life, but actually worked out as a positive denial of all equality of opportunity and as a denial of the most elementary of civic rights on which all human existence depended.” (Kuber 2009: 151) He was afraid that the British would utilize this disastrous condition as an excuse for delaying the political progress of India.

Dr. Ambedkar complained that the British government did not do anything to abolish the evil of untouchability. It did not ensure them any right to well or to temple entry. It did not even grant them any career in police force or military services. Explaining the importance of political power to his people, he argued,

Nobody can remove your grievances as well as you can, and you cannot remove them unless you get political power in your own hands. No share of this political power can come to you so long as the British government remains as it is. It is only in a swaraj constitution that you stand any chance of getting the political power into your own hands without which you cannot bring salvation to your people. (1947: 243-44)

He wanted his people to become a ruling race. He made sincere efforts to transform the depressed classes into a political army.

Nationalism in terms of Social Integration

Dr. Ambedkar distinguished between the freedom of the country and that of the people of that country. He, through his actions, speeches and writings, emphasized the freedom of the people. He firmly believed that without freedom, nationalism became a means of internal slavery, forced labour and organized tyranny for the poor and servile classes. According to his conviction, unless the Indian people secured political power and unless that power was concentrated in the hands of the socially suppressed section
of Indian society, it would not be possible to completely wipe out all social, legal and cultural disabilities under which that section suffered.

It was commonly believed that the British were neutral in social and religious matters. But according to him, it was a myth. He blamed the British rule for the poor and wretched conditions of his people. It was expected from a competent government that it would initiate towards the elimination of all kinds of inequalities. But he was quite disappointed to know that the British government would never be able to play such a role. “The British government did not energetically and enthusiastically work for the restoration of the rights of the depressed classes and that it did not exercise its power to strike at the undemocratic denial of elementary human rights to the untouchables.” (Desai 1948: 250) He was convinced that the whole social and economic code of life would be amended by our own government.

He pointed out that political equality and social and economic inequality was a great contradiction to be removed at the earliest. He feared that the people suffering from inequality would blow up the structure of political democracy. He asserted that people should place country above creed. Otherwise, the independence would be put in jeopardy and probably be lost forever. He also drew attention to the fact that people would not have any excuse of blaming the British for anything wrong after getting the independence.

Nationalism in terms of Cultural Integration

As language is taken to be a cultural attribute, it can work miracle for spreading cultural affinity in the nation. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the cultural unity defied political and racial divisions. Keeping this in mind, he favoured one common language for the whole nation. It would smoothen the way to democracy and removal of racial and cultural tensions prevalent in the country. He wanted to awaken a sense of unity and oneness and a feeling of nationalism with the instrumentality of a common language.

Nationalism: Negation of Communalism

Dr. Ambedkar believed that the foundation of communalism was a sense of ‘groupism’ resting on narrow interests, habits and sheer slogans. It generated anti-social spirit. Therefore he sensed the need of fighting back not only communalism but also provincialism, linguisim and casteism. He firmly believed that casteism was the mother of communalism and worked against the spirit of nationalism.

To him, nationalism meant the negation of caste-spirit and caste-spirit was nothing but deep-rooted communalism. He regarded that communal feelings were a menace to national integration. He was convinced that nationalism was to receive its perfect harmony in the realization of social brotherhood of men irrespective of caste, colour and creed. (Kuber 2009: 152-153)
The reason of political deadlock, according to him, was absence of the settlement of the communal question. He asserted that our social system was “… too undemocratic, too overweighed in favour of the classes and against the masses, too class-conscious and too communally-minded.” (Vol. 1: 224) He noticed that the British government tried to connect the issue of independence with the solution of the communal problem. It was a technique to delay the independence of India. According to him, to make the independence dependent upon the agreement of the different communities was to postpone its solution indefinitely.

Nationalism in terms of Majority and Minority

Dr. Ambedkar became sarcastic while talking about a new doctrine of Indian nationalism: the divine right of the majority to rule the minorities. He wrote, “Any claim for the sharing of power by the minority is called communalism while monopolizing of the whole power by the majority is called nationalism.” (Vol. 1: 427)

He denounced all kinds of hypocrisy and oppression especially in the name of religion and nationalism. He condemned the same in his writings and speeches. To him, patriotism and nationalism inferred economics, politics, social and cultural equality and liberty and moral values. It is important to note here that his concept of nationalism expressed his desire to win freedom not only for every slave country but also for all subjects and subjugated masses even in free countries.

Responding to the insistence on using the phrase ‘the Indian nation’ instead of ‘the people of India’, Dr. Ambedkar asked, “How can people divided into several thousands of castes be a nation? The sooner we realize that we are not as yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the word, the better for us.” (Vol. 13: 1217) Castes generated hindrance in the development of the spirit of nationalism.

Nationalism in terms of Observance of Law and Order

Dr. Ambedkar was highly against any kind of breach of law even as a strategy of the freedom struggle. He bitterly criticized the civil disobedience movement launched by Gandhiji calling it the most inopportune one. He remarked that this movement was not a rebellion as it could not overthrow the British government. He also opposed the Quit India movement. According to him, Gandhiji’s open rebellion was irresponsible and insane. It was a bankruptcy of statesmanship and a step to retrieve the lost prestige of the Congress Party. He said, “It would be a matter of madness to weaken law and order at a time when the barbarians were at the gates of India for the mastery of India. If democracy won, no one would stand in the way of India’s independence.” (R. Coupland 1944: 294-295) In accordance with his belief, the Ambedkarites kept themselves aloof from the national struggle for freedom.

Dr. Ambedkar was hostile towards the national movement for freedom and antagonistic towards the leaders indulged in the same. But he could not remain untouched by the fervour of nationalist forces. Patriotic spirit running
through his nerves made him appear in the court and fight effectively for the accused of the Chirer Satyagraha.

Comments on his Thoughts on Nationalism

Two things were apparent: (1) he stood detached as far as participation in the national movement was concerned and (2) he invariably tried to connect his cause for the depressed classes with each and every national movement. W. N. Kuber comments on the attitude of Dr. Ambedkar:

But the anti-British feelings of a great community (untouchables) were not culminated in the common national struggle for emancipation. His aloofness from the current national trend was characterized as the expression of his anti-national and therefore pro-British feelings. This anti-movement trend was current among the depressed classes. To cooperate with the foreign government when necessary, but not to make frontal attack on the nationalist forces became the watchword of Dr. Ambedkar’s policies. (2009: 155)

Due to the formation of some Congress ministries, he, as a leader of an opposition party, had to take clear stand on certain issues. He tried to give a sound leadership to his people. But when he was not backed by mass movements, he became isolated and pro-government tendencies became dominant.

(IV) Leadership

In his speech Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah, he presented his views on idol worship, great personalities, national leadership, influential leadership and the impact of these on the people of any nation. He did not agree to the notion of man being a creature of time. He discarded it as a wrong interpretation of history. According to him, great men had a role in creating the history of a nation. He believed that no man, without the combination of sincerity and intellect, could be great. He differentiated between a great man and an eminent man. A great man would find a way to save society in its hour of crisis. “A great man must be motivated by the dynamics of a social purpose and must act as the scourge and the scavenger of society.” (Vol. 1: 215)

Though he respected great men, he did not believe in idol worship. He wanted to break the tradition of the same prevalent in India. He asserted that our country was greater than great men. The worship of great men and service to the country were two very different things and even contradictory of each other.

According to him, a social reformer required courage of conviction. He had to dedicate all his energies for the transformation of his society. His challenge to society and its traditions might lead him to excommunication. He would not be regarded as a martyr. He believed that political prisoners could make no claim to greater courage than a social reformer.
He was contemptuous about hero-worship. He had courage to disagree with the public heroes like Gandhiji and Jinnah. He evaluated the personalities and work of Ranade, Gandhiji and Jinnah from his own point of view and poured his mind in *Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah*. In its Preface, he announced,

I am condemned because I criticized Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah for the mess they have made of Indian politics, and that in doing so I am alleged to have shown towards them hatred and disrespect. In reply to this charge what I have to say is that I have been a critic and I must continue to be such. It may be I am making mistakes but I have always felt that it is better to make mistakes than to accept guidance and direction from others or to sit silent and allow things to deteriorate. (Vol. 1: 208)

**Ranade – A Pen-picture by Dr. Ambedkar**

Justice M. G. Ranade was a man of positive temperament and pleasant disposition. He was versatile in his capacity. Though he was a first class economist, historian and educationist as viewed by Dr. Ambedkar, he was known more as a social reformer. Besides being a lawyer and judge of the high court, he was an intellectual. He had the sincerity which was the sum total of all his qualities.

One of the remarkable characteristics of Ranade was that he was a profound student of politics though he was not a politician. “Indeed it would be difficult to find in the history of India any man who would come up to Ranade in the width of his learning, the breadth of his wisdom and the length of his vision…. His reading was on the scale of the colossal, and every inch he was a scholar.” (Vol. 1: 215-216) Ranade’s intellectual attainments could have justified any amount of pride or even insolence. But he was extremely modest and did not have a drop of egotism in him. He had an ennobling influence. He could be a guide, friend and philosopher to the present and even to future generations. Measured by any standards, Dr. Ambedkar found Ranade great. He respected him a lot. Ranade was accused of being opposed to India’s independence. Dr. Ambedkar defended him.

Ranade maintained that the Hindu society offered no rights, only privileges. But these privileges were for a few and the disabilities were for a vast majority. He desired to stimulate the scruples of Hindu society which had become moribund as well as sullen. He warned his adversaries against playing the part of political radicals and social tories. He opined that one could not be liberal in politics and conservative in religion. The heart and head must go together. He gave more importance moral stamina than political freedom.

Social reform was the chief aim of Ranade’s life as he found that the flaw of the Hindu social system was the reason for its downfall. He established the Social Conference, an all-India organization which worked as an ally to the Indian National Congress. He attended the sessions as though it was a pilgrimage and fostered the cause of social reform.
In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the intelligentsia of Maharashtra was divided into two schools both of which combined against Ranade’s school of thought. The one, led by V. K. Chiplunkar, was orthodox in its beliefs but non-political in its outlook and the other, led by Lokamanya Tilak, was modern in its beliefs but basically political in its aims as well as objects.

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that the political form of democracy presupposed a democratic form of society. The formal framework of democracy was of no significance and would really be a misfit if there was no social democracy. He observed that the political school never realized that democracy was not a form of government; it was essentially a form of society. Ranade’s opponents never realized the fact that “Democracy is incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness, resulting in the distinction between the privileged and the unprivileged.” (Vol. 1: 222-223)

Dr. Ambedkar found that the intention of Ranade was to cleanse the old order of society if not to build a new one by improving the moral tone of the Hindu society. He declared that Ranade’s philosophy would have made the communal settlement easy. He commented that desertion of the Social Reform Conference meant the triumph of politicians over the social reformers. But “Ranade has had his revenge. Is not the grant of political safeguard a penalty for denying the necessity of social reform?” (Vol. 1: 224)

Dr. Ambedkar learnt three things from Ranade’s political philosophy: The ideal of any person must be practical one and not an imaginary one. In politics, sentiment and temperament of the people were more important than intellect and theory. In political negotiations, the rule must be what was possible. Dr. Ambedkar was not a liberal, but he held that Ranade’s point of view was the right one.

He compared the philosophy of Ranade and Tilak. “Tilak would have the possible maximized by the application of sanctions; Ranade would look askance at sanctions…. On the rest they were agreed. The absence of sanctions in Ranade’s philosophy need not detract much from its worth.” (Vol. 1: 229)

In the galaxy of Indian national leaders of the Indian Renaissance, Dr. Ambedkar was found very close to Lala Lajpat Rai. Lalji’s political affairs were radical in nature because basically he was a confirmed social reformer. Lalaji wanted the Hindus to make honest attempts to educate the untouchables and to uplift them to the elevated positions in society. Dr. Ambedkar admired Lalaji for connecting politics with social reform. In his article in Bhahiskrit Bharat, he praised Lalaji by calling him honest, selfless and ready to sacrifice for what he undertook.

Jinnah

Dr. Ambedkar used to consider Jinnah the leader of the minorities. But he was stunned at his demand for Pakistan. He criticized Jinnah’s rebellious stubbornness. He was annoyed by the perverse and obstinate resistance of authority demonstrated by Jinnah. W. N. Kuber notes,
Ambedkar thought that the contumacy and obstinacy shown by Jinnah in refusing to declare the boundaries of Pakistan was unforgivable in a statesman. The concept of a sub-nation was unheard of. It was not only an ingenious concept but it was also a preposterous one. The relations between a nation and sub-nation were no higher than the relations which subsisted between a man and his chattels, or between property and its incidents. Chattels go with the owner, incidents go with property, so a sub-nation goes with a nation. Such was the chain of reasoning in Jinnah’s argument. (2009: 196-197)

He was surprised at Gandhiji’s ignorance about Jinnah’s growing influence over the Muslim masses. Jinnah was deeply engaged in mobilizing all his forces for battle. Never before was Jinnah a man for the masses. Initially, Jinnah wanted the Congress to restrict its membership to matriculates. He did not trust the masses. He always advocated for a high franchise in order to exclude the masses from political power. Again, he was never known to be a devout, pious or a professing Muslim. Besides kissing the Holy Koran as and when he was sworn in as an MLA, he did not appear to have bothered much about its contents, or its special tenets. It was doubtful if he frequented any mosque either out of curiosity or religious fervour. He was never found in the midst of Muslim mass gatherings, religious or political. But he had become a man of the masses. He was no longer above them. He was among them. He not only became a believer in Islam, but was prepared to die for Islam.

Jinnah’s hatred towards Gandhiji crossed all the limits as he held an adulterous and a fallen Muslim to be better than Gandhiji!

**Struggle with Gandhiji**

Dr. Ambedkar’s writings and speeches reflected his bitterness towards Gandhiji and Indian National Congress. Indian National Congress, under the effective and powerful leadership of Gandhiji, struggled a lot for independence of India. Gandhiji thought that Swaraj was worthless until the Hindu society was liberated from the curse of untouchability. Due to his efforts, the Indian National Congress accepted the abolition of untouchability as one of the main political agendas. But Dr. Ambedkar did not agree with either the thoughts or the actions of Gandhiji in this matter. He saw that Hindus were not showing any signs of change of heart regarding the problem of untouchables. According to him, Gandhiji liked to create illusions in order to use them as arguments to support his cherished proposition. He declared that they were not prepared to have faith in great leaders and mahatmas. Being ‘brutally frank’ in his own words, he stated that history demonstrated that mahatmas, like fleeting phantoms raised dust, but no level.
In his famous conversation with Gandhiji, he asserted that he had no homeland. But Gandhiji recognized him as a patriot of sterling worth. Gandhiji was taken aback to hear him further.

No self-respecting untouchable worth the name will be proud of this land. The injustice and sufferings inflicted upon us by this land are so enormous that if knowingly or unknowingly we fall a prey to disloyalty to this country, the responsibility for that act would be solely hers... If at all I have rendered any national service as you say, helpful or beneficial, to the patriotic cause of this country, it is due to my unsullied conscience and not due to any patriotic feelings in me. If in my endeavour to secure human rights for my people, who have been trampled upon in this country for ages, I do any disservice to this country, it would not be a sin; and if any harm does not come to this country through my action, it may be due to my conscience. (Keer 1962: 166-167)

All the claims of nationalism and patriotism done for Dr. Ambedkar immediately fell under suspicion. It became clear that he was only and solely interested in the progress of his own people. He did not have any concern for India or Indians.

Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedkar had difference of opinion on three issues: (1) issue of becoming a representative of the Indian untouchables (2) issue of considering the untouchables as an integral part of the Hindu community and (3) issue of finding ways to secure due representation for the untouchables.

Gandhiji was so opposed to untouchability that he wished Hinduism to die than untouchability to live. But the political and socio-religious solutions, namely separate electorates and conversion, devised by Dr. Ambedkar to fight back the problem of untouchability were not acceptable to Gandhiji. Both of them strongly rejected each other’s claim of being a representative of the untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar aggravated his people against Gandhiji. He declared Gandhiji a failure as a unifying force.

Gandhiji condemned the Minorities Pact. He was furious on the matter of giving special political recognition to the untouchables. He thought that the claim advanced on behalf of the untouchables was the unkindest of all. He called it a perpetual bar sinister and declared that separate electorates and the separate reservation were not the ways to remove that bar sinister. He was not ready to sell the vital interests of the untouchables even for the sake of winning the freedom of India. He would not bargain away their rights for the kingdom of the whole world.

Gandhiji understood that the bitter experiences that Dr. Ambedkar underwent had distorted his judgment. He feared that the attitude of Dr. Ambedkar would create a division of Hinduism. He bluntly declared that he would accept the conversion of the untouchables to Islam or Christianity.
instead of their separation in Hinduism. He did not want division among the ranks of the untouchables. He was adamant to resist such a consequence with his life even! But Dr. Ambedkar considered it to be a political stunt.

According to Gandhiji, separate electorates would bring division among villagers. As villages were the strongholds of Hindu orthodoxy, the lives of untouchables as villagers would be miserable. It would prove to be a positive danger to the untouchables. Separate electorates would perpetuate the stigma of untouchability. Gandhiji wanted to solve this problem by putting the untouchables on the voters’ list and grant them the fundamental rights of the Constitution. He believed that adult franchise would give them complete security. His thought infuriated Dr. Ambedkar.

The Poona Pact enlarged the fixed quota of seats but it also took away the right to double vote. Dr. Ambedkar believed that the second vote granted by the Communal Award was a priceless privilege. Its value as a political weapon was beyond reckoning. “Disliked by the Hindus and disfavoured by the untouchables the Pact was given recognition by both parties and was embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935.” (Kuber 2009: 165)

When Gandhiji joined the temple entry movement, Dr. Ambedkar thought that he did so in order to abolish the foundation of the demand of the untouchables for political rights by destroying the barrier between them and the Hindus. He characterized the movement of Gandhiji as a strange game of political acrobatics. When the Hindus threatened to defeat the Congress in the election, Gandhiji gave up the issue temple entry.

Dr. Ambedkar gave Gandhiji the credit for the creation of a party machine. After Gandhiji took charge of the Congress, the Congress forged sanctions. The weapons used by them were non-cooperation, boycott, civil disobedience and fast. Civil disobedience was showing utter disbelief in the government by deliberately breaking law. They willingly embraced imprisonment and filled jails. It was generally practiced on a mass scale. Fasting was reserved for Gandhiji only. The demonstrations between for sanctions were described as fight for freedom. But the irresponsible use of those sanctions made the partition of India starker, surer and nearer. “He (Dr. Ambedkar) opposed Gandhian Satyagraha because he thought that Gandhiji had never used the weapon of satyagraha against the Hindus to get them to throw open wells and temples to the untouchables. He said that there was not a single fast undertaken by Gandhiji for the removal of untouchability.” (Kuber 2009: 166)

When asked to join hands with Gandhiji in order to get chances and resources to uplift his people, Dr. Ambedkar said that he enormously differed from Gandhiji on many points and he was not ready to sacrifice his conscience for his success. He complained that Gandhiji always discriminated between the constitutional safeguards of untouchables and other communities but never explained the reasons for that discrimination. Such a man could not be a friend of untouchables.

Dr. Ambedkar thought that Gandhiji did not wish to antagonize the caste Hindus. When the untouchables launched Satyagraha campaigns
against the Hindus, Gandhiji stated that Satyagraha was to be used only against the foreigners. Dr. Ambedkar blamed Gandhiji for not allowing the untouchables to be organized and strong. He also said, “The (Harijan Sevak) Sangh under the pretense of service is out to kill the spirit of independence from among the Untouchables.” (Vol. 9: 66-67)

Gandhiji accepted the fundamental concepts of Hinduism such as caste, cow-worship, the law of karma, predestination of man’s condition in this world, the authority of the Shastras, avatars or incarnations of god and idols. Dr. Ambedkar remarked, “All that Gandhism has done is to find a philosophic justification for Hinduism and its dogmas.” (Vol. 9: 296)

Dr. Ambedkar believed that the non-cooperation movement had its origin in the Khilafat agitation. It was adopted by the Congress only to help the Khilafatists. Swaraj was not its primary object. Rather, it was added as a secondary object to induce the Hindus to join it. It was started to make a common front against the British. It helped Gandhiji achieve double purpose – he carried the Congress plan of winning over the Muslims to its culmination thereby making the Congress a power in the country.

Gandhiji said that the Muslim League did not represent the Muslims and that Pakistan was a fancy of Jinnah. Dr. Ambedkar believed that the only basis of Gandhiji’s extraordinary view was the existence of Nationalist Muslims and his baseless arguments were insufficient to solve the communal problem.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the Hindu society became mad after politics under the leadership of Gandhiji. The Hindus, who earlier believed in social reform, went mad for non-cooperation, civil disobedience and Swaraj. He admired Gandhiji’s capacity and tenacity to continue fast but remarked that Gandhiji was not a rationalist. He thought that the trusteeship theory of Gandhiji was ridiculous and silly. Gandhiji’s so-called mesmerism could not capture him.

Gandhiji opposed excessive use of machines as it would increase unemployment. He feared that it would result in aversion to labour. But Dr. Ambedkar criticized Gandhiji for his conventional outlook. He said that Gandhiji denied progress and advancement of civilization. He maintained that the ills were not due to machinery and modern civilization; they were due to wrong social organization which made private property and pursuit of personal gain matters of absolute sanctity. He considered Gandhism to be a paradox. It sought to perpetuate the system of scavenging by praising scavenging as the noblest service to society. He remarked: “In short, Gandhism with its call of back to nature means back to nakedness, back to squalor, back to poverty and back to ignorance for the vast mass of people.” (Vol. 9: 284) W. N. Kuber writes,

Ambedkar characterized Gandhism as conservatism in excelsis, and purely imaginary. He remarked that Gandhism meant return to the village and making the village self-sufficient and as such it made Gandhism a mere matter of
regionalism. In his opinion it was not a revolutionary creed. It was a reactionary creed blazing on its banner the call of return to antiquity. It was reanimation of India’s dead past. In conclusion, he said that Gandhism was the philosophy of the well-to-do and the leisured class. (2009: 273)

Dr. Ambedkar loved the principle of absolute non-violence as an end and believed in relative violence as a means. He opined that Gandhi’s non-violence was derived from Jainism.

Dr. Ambedkar compared the ages of Ranade and Gandhi. He mentioned the age of Ranade as the age of renaissance. It was an age in which the leaders tried to modernise India. In the age of Ranade, the leaders depended upon experience, whereas the leaders of the Gandhian age depended upon their ‘inner voice’ as their guide. “… If the India of Ranade was less agitated it was more honest and that if it was less expectant it was more enlightened.” (Vol. 1: 352)

Talking more about the age of Ranade, Dr. Ambedkar viewed that men and women engaged themselves seriously in studying and examining the facts of their life. Facing the opposition of the orthodox mass, they tried to mould their lives and their character in accordance with the light they found as a result of their research. There was no divorce between a politician and a student which one saw in the Gandhian age. “It (Gandhian age) is an age in which people instead of looking for their ideals in the future are returning to antiquity. It is an age in which people have ceased to think for themselves and as they have ceased to think they have ceased to read and examine the facts of their lives.” (Vol. 1: 352) Dr. Ambedkar failed to notice that people who stopped thinking of themselves started thinking collectively for the nation. They took more interest in fighting for freedom than in finding facts of life.

Attitude towards Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress was one of the leading political organizations which struggled a lot to win independence for India form the shackles of the British Raj. First the intelligentsia and then the common masses got attracted towards its programmes. It tried hard to consolidate the socially and economically scattered forces in order to strengthen India’s march to freedom. The political movements started by the Congress bore results in the form of various political reforms. Its top leaders held that social reform was required but not from the platform of the Congress. The Social Reform Conference was discontented with Congress attitude of completely dissociating itself from questions of social reform. The Indian National Congress and the Social Reform Conference functioned as two parallel organizations, each developing itself according to its own particular aims and objects. Dr. Ambedkar remarked that the opposition to the Social Reform Conference was headed by Tilak.

With the advent of Gandhi as the national hero and the leader of the Congress party, a new era took birth in the political history of India. The
agenda for social elevation found place in the programmes of the Congress. The party launched many programmes for the purpose of social reform and passed a resolution for abolition of untouchability. But Dr. Ambedkar believed that the resolution for the removal of untouchability was entirely opposed to the declared policy of the Congress.

In 1922, the Congress Working Committee resolution requested the All-India Hindu Mahasabha to take up the work of abolishing untouchability and remove the evil from amidst the Hindu community. Dr. Ambedkar criticized the effort by saying, “If there is any body which is quite unfit for addressing itself to the problem of the untouchables, it is the Hindu Mahasabha. It is a militant Hindu organization. Its aim and object is to conserve in every way everything that is Hindu, religious and cultural. It is not a social reform association. It is a purely political organization whose main object and aim are to combat the influence of the Muslims in Indian politics.” (Vol. 9: 23)

He was highly critical about the administration of the nation which, he thought, was completely in the hands of the caste Hindus. W. N. Kuber captures his disgust thus:

According to Ambedkar, the woes of the untouchables were not due so much to bad laws as they were to the hostility of the administration, which was controlled by the Hindus who imported into administration their age-old prejudices against the untouchables. The untouchables would never hope to get protection from the police, justice from the judiciary or the benefit of the statutory law from the administration so long as the public services continued to be manned by Hindus. (Kuber 2009: 171)

Dr. Ambedkar believed that Congress did nothing beyond giving formal recognition to the problem of untouchability. He satirically suggested that the Congress would have made the removal of untouchability a condition like the wearing of khadi for becoming a member of the Congress. He believed that the congressmen should not oppose the movement of untouchables and dub him a traitor.

The Congress party explained the reason for not including the representatives of the minorities in their cabinets saying that a cabinet must be a party cabinet if it was to take collective responsibility. Minorities were included in the cabinet only when they were prepared to join the Congress and sign the pledge. Dr. Ambedkar also found that no untouchable became president of the Congress from 1885 to 1940.

Dr. Ambedkar condemned the Congress policy of not admitting the right of the untouchables to be represented in the cabinet and declared that this policy had the support of Gandhiji. He also unveiled the curtain from the picture of the candidates selected by the Congress for the legislature. The candidates from Brahmin and allied communities were the most highly
educated; the candidates from non-Brahmins were moderately educated and those from the untouchables were just above literates. He charged that it was designed to allow none but the Brahmans and the allied castes to form the main part of the ministry and to secure for them the support of a docile unintelligent crowd of non-Brahmins and untouchables who would be no rivals but would be content to follow the lead for no other consideration except that of having been raised to the status of members of the legislatures.

A foreigner would believe that the Congress had the representative character and it was fighting for India. But Dr. Ambedkar claimed that the Congress was not a majority party nor did it represent the nation as it did not obtain even 50 per cent votes in the election of 1937. The Congress claim to represent all classes and communities was a hollow one with no foundation in fact.

The system of joint electorates and reserved seats was a system of two-member constituency. The Hindus under the Congress were absolutely organized. Therefore there was no possibility of an electoral contest and consequent waste of votes. The result was that the system helped the Hindus to win the reserved seats and worked against the scheduled castes.

The Congress party desired a democratic form of government based on adult franchise with no safeguards for untouchables. But Dr. Ambedkar criticized this vision of the Congress party by saying that without any guarantee to the untouchables, the Hindu communal majority would not only capture but overrun the legislature, the executive and the administration. Consequently, these powerful organs of the state, instead of protecting the minorities, would become the tools of the Hindu communal majority doing its bidding. He said that the demand of any political rights made by the scheduled castes were ridiculed by the Congress as ‘communalism’ and the leaders of the untouchables were represented as ‘job-hunters’. He stated that to support Congress was to let tyranny have freedom to enslave as it was run by capitalist, landlords, moneylenders and reactionaries. The conflict between the Congress and untouchables was converted into the conflict between the ruling class and the servile class as viewed by Dr. Ambedkar. He blamed that the governing class found the nationalism in danger at every demand of the servile classes. Far from sacrificing its privileges for nationalism, the ruling class was exploiting nationalism to preserve them.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the Hindu communal majority was the backbone of the Congress. It was made up of the Hindus and was fed by the Hindus. The Congress, therefore, was bound to protect its rights. The social psychology of the Hindu communal majority was dominated by the dogma of graded inequality as the rule governing the interrelationship among the various communities. This dogma was absolutely hostile to liberty and fraternity.

Dr. Ambedkar boldly proposed to consult an international board of arbitration for the dispute between the Hindus and untouchables. He also advocated the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the cases of tyranny and oppression by the Congress ministries. He had faith in the British
people. He said, “The reply of the Untouchables is that they see no reason why Indians should start with such complete distrust of the British intentions.” (Vol. 9: 179) This was something shocking for the nationalist Indians.

Dr. Ambedkar thought that the Congress totally failed to realize that the fundamental issue, hidden behind the question whether to grant or not to grant constitutional safeguards, was union versus separation of a social group in the population. Muslims and Christians were given political recognition because they formed in fact separate elements form Hindus. Though the Congress did not accept, he declared that untouchables were a separate element in the national life of India. They were distinct from Hindus and must acquire independent status in the political life of the country. He ironically remarked, “Hindus and social union are incompatible…. If Hindus wish to be one they will have to discard Hinduism…..Hinduism is the greatest obstacle to Hindu unity.” (Vol. 9: 187) To a minority, the problem was not only to achieve liberty but also equality from the hands of a hostile majority. Therefore the problem of untouchables was fundamentally a political problem. He thought that the egoistic and bankrupt attitude of Gandhiji and the Congress towards persons and parties outside Congress was a big hindrance in solving the problem of minorities.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, untouchability became a system of religious, social, political and economic exploitation. The reason for that was absence of independent public opinion to condemn it and lack of impartial machinery of administration to restrain it. He firmly believed that the Hindus had vested interests in perpetuating untouchability. And it was an established fact that vested interests had never been known to have willingly divested themselves unless there was sufficient force to compel them. He feared that Swaraj, instead of putting an end to untouchability, might extend its life.

He also mentioned that the governing class in the contemporary India was a Brahmin-Bania class. He firmly believed that this class would not disappear by the magic of Swaraj. In proportion to their numbers, the Brahmans and the Banias secured overwhelming representation. He feared that Swaraj would not be a government by the people in these circumstances. In the absence of government by the people, government for the people would be what the ruling class would choose to make of it.

A persistent anti-Congress attitude of Dr. Ambedkar could be perceived throughout his speeches, writings and actions. He considered the struggle for freedom launched by the Congress, which he called the ruling class, to be a selfish one as it would offer the ruling class freedom to rule the servile classes. He compared this to the Nazi or Nietzschean doctrine of freedom for superman to rule the common man.

... the governing class is aware that a political campaign based on class ideology, class interests, class issues and class conflicts will toll its death knell. It knows that the most effective way of side-tracking the servile classes and fooling them is to play upon the sentiment of nationalism and national
unity and realizes that the Congress platform is the only platform that can most effectively safeguard the interest of the governing class. For if there is any platform from which all talk of conflict between rich and poor, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, landlord and tenant, creditor and debtor, which does not suit the governing class, can be effectively banned it is the Congress platform which is not only bound to preach nationalism and national unity which is what the governing classes want and on which their safety entirely depends, but which prohibits any other ideology inconsistent with nationalism being preached from its platform. (Vol. 9: 233-234)

Dr. Ambedkar tried to justify the demands of reservation put forward by the servile classes by saying that the purpose of these demands was to have control over the power of the governing classes.

In 1939, the Congress ministries resigned collectively. Reacting to that, Jinnah called on Muslims to observe the Deliverance Day. Dr. Ambedkar announced his desire to join Jinnah in the celebration. He clarified that it was not an anti-Hindu move but an anti-Congress one and therefore purely political.

He then found out the reasons for dispute between the Muslim League and the Congress. The Congress refused to recognize the Muslim League as the only representative body of the Muslims. Moreover, it also refused to form coalition ministries in the Congress majority provinces in 1937 as it believed that the coalition cabinets were inconsistent with collective responsibility of the cabinets. But the League blamed the Congress for not showing any collective responsibility and running the government by the departments. The Congress was resolved for unity and the League was for division.

In 1937, the Congress introduced a new plan of mass contact in order to establish political unity between Hindus and Muslim masses by ignoring or avoiding the leaders of the Muslims. Dr. Ambedkar called it a mad plan and doubted its success. He commented that Muslim politics never merged with Hindu current of politics.

He believed that the policy of ‘Hindus for Hindustan’ was not only arrogant but was utter nonsense and was aggravated by the Congress appeasement policy of dealing with the Muslim question. Settlement was the only remedy. He opined that Pakistan as a settlement was a proposition worth consideration. It ought to be accepted as it would do away with this constant need of appeasement.

Dr. Ambedkar denounced the Congress as a tool in the hands of the capitalists behaving against the interests of workers and peasants. He attacked Bombay ministry as a tool in the hands of Sardar Patel and Gujarati capitalists and considered them the enemies of Maharashtra and the untouchables. Swami Sahajanand, a peasant leader from Bihar, tried to convince Dr. Ambedkar to join the Congress to form a united front against
imperialism. But he accused the Congress for using the constitutional machinery to advance the interests of the capitalists and other vested interests by sacrificing the interests of peasants and workers. Dr. Ambedkar charged the Nehru government and the Congress for their failure to give a pure and incorruptible administration. He said that the Congress failed to produce pure administration, free from corruption, bribery, nepotism and favouritism as it was conducted on the basis of personal allegiance.

Dr. Ambedkar commented that there was no difference between the Congress and the liberals as far as the resolution of the Congress on the proposed federation was concerned. The Congress could be called the left-wing of the Liberal Federation. The liberals were honest but the Congress was not. The advocates of the acceptance of office were reprimanded by the Congress as traitors. It justified its action saying that the acceptance of office was to ruin the Constitution. He said that they had been deceiving the people all the time.

Comments on his views on INC and Gandhiji

K. Santhanam, a less known critic of Dr. Ambedkar, in his book Ambedkar’s Attack, harshly condemned Dr. Ambedkar for his extravagant thoughts for Gandhiji and the Congress. He called Dr. Ambedkar’s book What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables, “as an incoherent jumble of incidents torn from their contexts, allegations unsupported by any evidence and sweeping conclusions devoid of rational justification, all strung together by one tenacious purpose, viz. that whatever the Congress and Gandhiji have been doing and have done must be represented as wholly evil.” (1940: 3) He called Dr. Ambedkar a laborious scholar.

He bitterly criticized Dr. Ambedkar while talking about the representation at the Round Table Conference. According to K. Santhanam, the members of the conference were chosen for their hostility to Congress. The most appropriate person befitting the criterion was Dr. Ambedkar. In 1942, he was nominated as the member of the Viceroy’s Council. Resentment to the Congress became the main qualification for membership to the vacant seat and Dr. Ambedkar grabbed the chance on the eve of the Quit India movement. From these experiences the idea gripped him that he could find the position and support from the government as long as this hostility persisted.

Dr. Ambedkar wrote his book Congress and Gandhi in 1945, i.e. when he was the member of Viceroy’s Council. The author being a member of the Viceroy’s Council, the imprudent or innocent foreigner would think that his statements and allegations had official authority. K. Santhanam considered such propaganda highly objectionable and blamed him for prostituting his higher position to defame and vilify his political opponents. He also blamed that the book was written for the foreign readers to obtain some cheap sympathy from them.

K. Santhanam noted that Gandhiji thought that adult franchise combined with a powerful and moral social drive against untouchability was the true means of liberation. The intellectuals of the day also held the same.
But Dr. Ambedkar always stood with the banner reflecting ‘NO’ to any of the advancements of Gandhiji.

(V) Princely States

Dr. Ambedkar touched upon the issue of the princely states in his speech *Federation versus Freedom* (1939). The princely states were considered as the pockets of British imperial interests. The liberation struggles of Indian people in British India encouraged the states’ peoples to fight for political rights and independence. Gandhiji started directing the people’s struggle of Rajkot state. Dr. Ambedkar also insisted to carry on their struggle for political rights. He opined that the grant of responsible government to British India should not be made dependent on the eagerness or otherwise of the princes to join an all-India federation proposed to be set up under the Government of India Act, 1935.

He discussed various federal forms existed in the USA, Switzerland, Canada and Australia and put forth the difference between the Constitution of USA and the proposed Indian federation: “The Constitution of the United States originated in a compact but resulted in a union. The Indian Federation originates in a compact and continues as a compact.” (Vol. 1: 300)

The seats assigned to the states were to be filled by the princes by nomination and the seats assigned to British India were to be filled by election. The proposed federal legislature was therefore a heterogeneous legislature, partly elected and partly nominated. Dr. Ambedkar commented, “The Federation makes the Princes the arbiters of destiny. Without their consent India cannot politically advance.” (Vol. 1: 338) The motive behind this provision was to use the princes to support imperial interests and to restrain the rising tide of democracy in India. The fact was that the proposed federation would hinder the process of democratization of Indian states.

The Muslims were interested in making the center weak and giving residuary powers to the provinces. Accession of the princes was regarded as an accretion to the Hindu strength. The commercial community behind the Congress claimed to displace Europeans from trade and commerce and take their place in the name of nationalism. Dr. Ambedkar said, “I have no doubt that this Federation if it comes into being will be a standing menace to the free man and an obstacle in the way of the poor man.” (Vol. 1: 351)

In 1947, the transfer of power took place. It brought the problems of the princely states with it. Travancore and Hyderabad states declared their independence after India attained freedom. Dr. Ambedkar recommended the states to merge their sovereignty in the Indian Union violation of which might lead to further balkanization of India. The Draft Constitution allowed the states to maintain their own armies. He considered it harmful and regressive. He objected it as he feared that it might lead to break the unity of India and overthrow the central government. He remarked, “When the whole of sovereignty is transferred under the provisions of 212, the territory of that particular ruler becomes so to say the territory of India, with complete sovereignty vested in the Indian Union.” (Vol. 13: 343)
Then Dr. Ambedkar came to the problem of paramountcy. According to him, paramountcy was just another name for the prerogative of the crown. Since paramountcy was the prerogative of the king, its exercise was, contrary to the general opinion, not subject to the rules of international law. It was subject to the part of the municipal law of the British Empire called the law of the Constitution. According to the constitutional law of the British Empire, while the prerogative vested in the king, the king had no discretion in the exercise of his prerogative. The king could not exercise it independently of the advice of his ministers.

When India became a dominion the crown would be bound to act in the exercise of its prerogative rights, i.e. paramountcy on the advice of the Indian cabinet. Constitutional law of the British Empire made an important difference between responsible government and dominion status. In the case of dominion the crown was bound to accept the advice of the ministry in internal and external affairs. (Kuber 2009: 182)

According to Dr. Ambedkar, independent India could make a valid claim for the inheritance of paramountcy. While suzerainty remained, they could never be independent. The only way for the Indian states to liberate themselves from paramountcy would be to bring about a merger of sovereignty or suzerainty. That could happen only when the states joined the Indian Union as constituent units thereof.

He opined that any Dewan instructing his prince for not joining the union was really acting as the enemy of princes. The union would guarantee the rights relating to dynastic succession to the princes. He believed that to be independent and to hope to get recognition and protection from the UNO was to live in one’s own paradise. He maintained India’s paramountcy and sovereignty with regard to princely states. His views on this issue were progressive and in line with the general nationalist sentiments of Indian people.

He wanted the interim government at the center to take the following steps:

(1) To notify the British government that the British Parliament has no right to pass any law abrogating paramountcy and that any clause to that effect in the forthcoming legislation conferring dominion status on India would be treated by the people of India as repugnant to their sovereignty and therefore null and void. (2) To declare that the government of India will never recognize any Indian state as sovereign independent state. (3) To inform the UNO that admitting an Indian state which declares itself as sovereign independent state to its membership would meet with the strongest
objection from the people of India as a violation of the sovereign rights of the Union of India. (2009: 182-183)

(VI) Linguistic Provinces

In *Thoughts on Linguistic States* (1955), Dr. Ambedkar wrote, “The formation of Linguistic States, although essential, cannot be decided by any sort of hooliganism. Nor must it be solved in a manner that will serve party interest. It must be solved by cold-blooded reasoning.” (Vol. 1: 140)

Dr. Ambedkar favoured the formation of multilingual states. He outlined the following safeguards for a successful multilingual state: the vesting government with certain special powers to protect the minorities in that state; establishment of committees of members belonging to different linguistic states and the right of appeal to the Governor. If this did not work, the alternative leading to the logical extreme end, namely linguistic state, would be thought out.

According to him, a linguistic province must be a viable unit having certain size, certain volume of population and a commensurate amount of revenue. He suggested that a linguistic state might mean either of two things – all people speaking a language must constitute a single state or they might live in more than one state but they must be unilingual.

He pointed out the advantages of the formation of linguistic provinces. According to him,

The main advantage of the scheme of Linguistic Provinces which appeals to me quite strongly is that Linguistic Provinces would make democracy work better than it would in mixed Provinces. A Linguistic Province produces what democracy needs, namely, social homogeneity…. there are no artificial barriers or social antipathies which lead to the misuse of political power. (Vol. 1: 102-103)

He said that ‘one state, one language’ theory may be put up by any of two ways: (1) one state, one language and (2) one language, many states. He favoured the second. He was for eliminating the disparity between different states.

He went through the history of the linguistic movement and expressed his own views on the problem. He suggested three criteria for the formation of linguistic states: (1) economic and administrative viability; (2) protecting the interest of a communal minority and (3) managing the danger of one language – one state to national unity effectively.

It could be seen from his writings that he was uneasy with the idea of linguistic states. He thought that the creation of linguistic provinces would be fatal to the maintenance of the necessary administrative relation between the center and provinces.
Dr. Ambedkar linked together the issues of linguistic provinces and that of federalism or ‘a dual form’. He argued that one must examine the effect of linguistic provinces on the central government. The language of each province would be its official language. He feared that the latter would lead to the creation of provincial nationalities. Consequently, the Central Legislature would become a League of Nations and the Central Executive might become a meeting of separate and solidified nations filled with consciousness of their being separate in culture and therefore in interests. Mentality of political insubordination might develop. He held that linguistic difference was another name for cultural difference. It was an appeal to local patriotism and might destroy the feeling of national patriotism. It would leave provincial cultures isolated, crystallized, hardened and solidified thereby making the nation weakened, declining, lacking harmony and facing discord. This would easily make the working of the Central Government impossible.

In this situation, he feared the break-up of India. Instead of remaining united, India might end in becoming Europe – faced with the prospect of chaos and disorder. He warned against the fragmentation of the country which already had great potential for such disintegration. According to him, Gandhiji and the Congress popularized the idea of linguistic provinces. But “No thought was given to the possibility that it might introduce a disruptive force in the already loose structure of the Indian social life.” (Vol. 8: 27)

Commenting on the report of State Reorganization Commission, he said that the report predicted new States without regard for their population ranging from below two crores to above six crores. He found that the issue was related to the question of the relationship between the North and the South. He claimed that the report seemed to aim at the consolidation of the North and balkanization of the South and regarded it as poison.

He thought that any scheme of politics must be evaluated on the basis of its ground plan, i.e. the social structure of a community. In India, this meant the caste system which he called the special product of Hindu civilization and culture. The formation of linguistic states would create political majority and dominant castes resulting in the exploitation and suppression of minority castes. These were permanent majorities unlike the majorities acquired electorally by political parties. As a solution to this problem he recommended (1) reservation of seats and (2) separate electorates.

He feared: “These evil consequences of the caste system are sure to be sharpened by creation of Linguistic States. Minority communities may be crushed. If not crushed they may be tyrannised and oppressed. They are sure to be discriminated against and denied equality before law and equal opportunity in public life.” (Vol. 1: 168)

Dr. Ambedkar’s policy with regard to various linguistic states can be summarized as follows: (1) the idea of having a mixed state must be completely abandoned; (2) the states must be unilingual, principle – one state, one language; (3) abandon the formula one language, one state; (4) a people speaking one language may be cut up into many states as is done in the other parts of the world; (5) four principles must be observed: (a) efficient
administration, (b) needs of the different areas, (c) sentiments of the different areas, (d) proportion between the majority and minority must be taken into consideration; (6) the state must be small, as the area increases, the proportion of the majority to minority increases; (7) protection must be given to minorities to prevent the tyranny of the majority – to do this, the Constitution must be amended and provision must be made for a system of plural-member constituencies (2 or 3) with cumulative voting. "It is clear that Ambedkar took an impartial, objective and scholarly view of the problem of linguistic states, though he did not hesitate to deal with the nitty gritty and seamier side of politics." (Rao 1998: 45)

He connected the issue of the linguistic provinces to the problem of minorities. He sensed the consequences of partition. He feared that it would aggravate the problem of minorities in both the nations. Rao comments on Dr. Ambedkar's point of view: “The linguistic provinces even when most thoroughly worked out would involve linguistic minorities, and Pakistan would also involve religious minorities – Hindu minority in Pakistan and Muslim minority in Hindustan/India.” (1998: 51)

One official language

Dr. Ambedkar held that the Constitution should provide one official language for the center and the provinces. “According to Ambedkar, one language, one way of life and one religion are the pillars of nationalism. He regarded unification of Indians more vital and essential than unification of different provinces on linguistic basis.” (Kuber 2009: 225)

Dr. Ambedkar sensed the greatest danger to Indian unity arising from linguistic exclusivism. Therefore he argued for one official language. He presented the paradoxical proposition that “By a Linguist Province, I mean a Province which by the social composition of its population is homogeneous and therefore more suited for the realization of those social ends which a Democratic government must fulfil. In my view, a Linguistic Province has nothing to do with the language of the Province.” (Vol. 1: 104)

He considered language to be a basis for a socio-culturally homogeneous population. The cultural unity of a province could also be sustained by other non-linguistic factors like common historic tradition and community of social custom. "In his view, it is the enshrining of the regional language as its official language which transforms a Linguistic Province into a Provincial nationality and endangers Indian unity as a nation." (Rao 1998: 42)

He preferred one official language at both central and provincial levels and recommended the same. In free India, an Indian language would play this unifying role.

He advocated Hindi as a national language as it would strengthen national feelings. He felt the necessity of emotional harmony and national integration and proposed to achieve that through one common language – Hindi. He pointed out that sense of nationalism was initially awakened in India through the common language – English.

(VII) Issue of Minorities
The issues of minorities and the questions of Indian states begged urgent attention. The Constituent Assembly of India was enforced to address them immediately. Many members of the Assembly participated in the discussion and expressed their thoughts regarding the matters. Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that the scheduled castes were more than a minority. Any safeguard given to citizens and to minorities would not be sufficient for scheduled castes. They would require special protections against the tyranny and discrimination of the majority. He also showed that the fundamental rights were of no use to the underdog in the absence of economic security.

In order to turn his ideas into reality, Dr. Ambedkar presented a memorandum to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation under the title States and Minorities. It was virtually called an alternative constitution. K. Raghavendra Rao comments: “States and Minorities constitutes a crucial political text since, in it, more than in the formal Indian Constitution, one finds reflected Ambedkar’s most authentic constitutional, political and social commitments. In fact the text has the form of a string of constitutional Articles. It was published in 1947, and should be seen as an Ambedkar alternative to our formal Constitution of India.” (1998: 52)

The memorandum explicitly dealt with the problems of the minorities in India elaborately mentioned their rights and means to secure them in the Constitution of free India. Dr. Ambedkar designed the memorandum in the form of the Indian Constitution. He not only briefly presented the fundamental rights but also suggested remedies against invasion of fundamental rights in 21 articles of the memorandum. He, as a student of liberal democratic theory, must have learnt from John Stuart Mill the danger of majority tyranny in a democratic polity. Therefore he forcefully put forward the case of Indian minorities.

Dr. Ambedkar pleaded for some special treatment for the scheduled castes as he considered them more than a minority community. K. Raghavendra Rao writes,

Defining the Scheduled castes as a “minority” in relation to the other Hindus, who constitute the majority, he defines further their status as a minority in a special sense so that they would constitute a special minority – a minority with more handicaps than that of being a mere minority. Ambedkar advances this position on the ground that the scheduled castes were worse off socially, economically, culturally and educationally than the other minorities. (1998: 51)

The major theoretical argument he put forward was that there was a fundamental distinction between the concept of majority – minority in developed, modern democratic societies and the concept of the same in pre-modern and relatively less modern and highly traditional societies. In the former, both majority and minority referred to electoral phenomena revolving
round the principle of competitive party politics; whereas in the latter category, in which he placed India, both a majority and a minority remain permanent social categories. Therefore a simple modern electoral democracy based on one-man-one-vote would not serve them. According to him, a formal modern democratic polity in India came into conflict with the informal society which was basically undemocratic and inegalitarian. Therefore he believed that some special safeguards should be provided to protect the interests of such permanent minorities.

The solution he offers to this problem – the problem of primordial minorities and special backward minorities like the scheduled castes is to design a constitutional order embodying Fundamental Rights, Minority Rights and Scheduled Caste Rights. In essence, what he is saying is that India is not a homogeneous nation-state, and hence any attempt to establish a modern liberal democracy there will have to give up part of classical liberal baggage in order to maximize democracy in an undemocratic social ecology. (Rao 1998: 52)

Dr. Ambedkar wrote about judicial protection against the tyranny of the executive, against unequal treatment, discrimination and economic exploitation. He recommended protection for minorities against communal executive, social and official tyranny and social boycott. He demanded guarantees for the rights of representation in the legislature as the safeguards for them. He proposed that the method of election introduced by the Poona Pact would be substituted by the system of separate electorates. He also claimed for adult franchise, the system of cumulative voting, right of representation in the executive and in the services and provision of higher education.

The British Model of Executive

Dr. Ambedkar summarized the characteristics of the British or the parliamentary executive. The British system had given stable government to the British people. But would it produce a stable government in India? Dr. Ambedkar believed that the chances were meagre. He applied the same system to India and concluded that the British system of government by a cabinet of the majority party rested on the premise that the majority was a political majority. But, to him, the majority in India was a communal majority. Again, under this system, it was easy to bring about the downfall of the government for petty purposes. The present solidarity of the major parties could not be expected to continue. Constant overthrow of government was nothing short of anarchy. Therefore he thought that the introduction of the British form of executive would be full of menace to the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of the minorities in general and of the untouchables in particular.

Dr. Ambedkar said that India had a heterogeneous population. Therefore, unlike the British system, he emphasized the need for a strong
federal system in India by designating India not just Bharat that was India but ‘The United States of India.’

The Hindu Model of Executive

Dr. Ambedkar held that the administration of India was the monopoly of the Hindus. They dominated every branch of administration including the police, the magistracy and the revenue services. He firmly believed that the Hindus in the administration had the same anti-social and hostile attitude to the untouchables which the Hindus outside the administration had.

The result was that the untouchables were placed between the Hindu population and the Hindu-ridden administration, the one committing wrongs against them and the other protecting the wrong-doers, instead of helping the victims. Ambedkar asked: What would be swaraj to the untouchables? According to him, it could only mean one thing – that while under British it was only the administration that was in the hands of the Hindus, under swaraj the legislature and the executive would also be in the hands of the Hindus, and it would aggravate the sufferings of the untouchables. (Kuber 2009: 185)

The Model of Executive by Dr. Ambedkar

Dr. Ambedkar suggested the following form of executive: (1) to prevent the majority from forming a government without giving any opportunity to the minorities to have a say in the matter, (2) to prevent the majority from having exclusive control over administration and thereby make the tyranny of the minority by the majority impossible, (3) to prevent the inclusion by the majority party in the executive of the representatives of the minorities who have no confidence of the minorities, (4) to provide a stable executive necessary for good and efficient administration. Finally he suggested the appointment of an officer to be called Superintendent of Minority Affairs.

He opined that the system of joint electorates would worsen the situation. The general elections categorically proved that the scheduled castes could be completely disenfranchised in a joint electorate. The Simon Commission observed that the device of the reserved seats would stop working where the protected community constituted an exceeding small fraction of any manageable constituency.

According to the new system introduced by Dr. Ambedkar, the primary election would be eliminated as a needless and heavy impediment. And joint electorates would be substituted by separate electorates. The following charges were made against the system of separate electorates for the scheduled castes. They were: (1) The scheduled castes were not a minority. (2) The scheduled castes were Hindus and therefore they could not have separate electorates. (3) Separate electorates would perpetuate untouchability. (4) Separate electorates were anti-national. (5) Separate
electorates enabled British imperialism to influence the communities to act against the interests of the country.

Dr. Ambedkar argued against these charges. He said that to make religious affiliation the decisive factor for constitutional safeguards was to overlook the fact that the religious affiliation might be accompanied by an intense degree of social separation and discrimination. The real test of determining whether a social group was or was not a minority was social discrimination. He added that nationalism had nothing to do with the electoral system. He considered these charges futile leading to escapism. He noticed that politics in India was unable to cut across communal and caste divisions. He fiercely claimed that his opponents failed to realize that the system of electorates had nothing to do with the religious or communal relationships. They also ignored the distinction between the demands for separate electorates by a majority community and a similar demand made by a minority community.

He held that the system of electorates was a device for the protection of the minority and it must be left to the wishes of the minority to choose. As the majority was in a ruling position, it could have no opinion in the determination of the system of electorates. Instead, the majority must look to the decision of the minority and abide by it. Every majority must recognize the existence of minorities. He thought it was wrong to perpetuate them as minorities.

Comments on the Memorandum

Dr. Ambedkar had to withdraw his demand for separate electorates because of nationalist pressure and Gandhiji’s fast unto death to cancel the Communal Award. He was compelled to accept the Poona Pact. He repented a lot, in his own words, for his ‘sentimental blunder’. It is said that he tried to correct it in this memorandum. K. Raghavendra Rao opines,

The more authentic Ambedkar Constitution differs from the formal Indian Constitution in three fundamental respects. Firstly, it builds explicitly economic provisions into the document. Secondly, it also builds explicitly social provisions into the constitution. Thirdly, it provides specific and special facilities for the most deprived minorities, the Scheduled Castes. On the whole, it is more socialistic, egalitarian and collectivistic than the formal Indian Constitution, and in it Ambedkar tries to balance his liberalism with his insight that a liberal essence can be preserved in an illiberal ecology only by sacrificing as necessary some elements of liberal morphology. To put it in another way, Ambedkar argues that in India a liberal anatomy will come into conflict with a liberal morphology, and to make effective the former it is
necessary and legitimate to sacrifice a little of the morphology. (1998: 52-53)

(VIII) Partition and Pakistan

Dr. Ambedkar dealt with the issue of India – Pakistan partition at length in his scholarly and academic work *Pakistan or the Partition of India* (1945). It was a realistic work related to Indian politics replete with statistics and theoretical insights. It also contained a plenty of historical-cultural-social data. K. Raghavendra Rao opines: “Ambedkar’s discussion of the Pakistan problem constitutes one of the finest political texts ever produced in modern India, combining subtly large-scale theoretical issues with meticulous attention to minutest details.” (1998: 51) Dr. Ambedkar made his stand clear by saying that he wrote the book neither to advocate nor to oppose Pakistan but to understand the complex issue of partition. Before examining his position, it must be borne in mind that the book was written before Pakistan had become a fact.

Dr. Ambedkar saw the issue of Pakistan in terms of self-determination which formed the basis of nationhood. Self-determination meant the right to establish a form of government in accordance with the wishes of the people. According to him, it was a right to obtain national independence from an alien race irrespective of the form of government. The claim of Pakistan, based on the principle of self-determination, was put forward by the Muslim League on behalf of their community for the benefit of India. But at the same time, the League objected the application of self-determination to Palestine. Thus, the principle was neither imperative nor universal. It was not absolute at all. It was to be considered in the light of the factors like language, religion, land and geographical elements.

The decision regarding a one nation theory or two nation theory was to be made by Hindus and Muslims. According to him, the Muslim resistance to the establishment of one Central Government having supremacy over the whole of India could be considered as the cause of the formation of Pakistan. The Muslim way of escape from the ‘tyranny’ of a Hindu center was to have no central government at all.

The Muslims felt that to accept one central government for the whole of India was to consent to place the Muslim provincial governments under a Hindu central government and to see the gain secured by the establishment of Muslim provinces lost by subjecting them to a Hindu government at the center…. The demand of the Muslim League for Pakistan was to create a monolithic state of the followers of Islam. (Kuber 2009: 188)

Dr. Ambedkar bitterly commented that the brotherhood of Islam was not the universal brotherhood of man. It was brotherhood of Muslims for Muslims only. The Muslims wanted to create culturally homogeneous administrative areas, predominantly Muslim, and get them constituted into separate states. They believed that they constituted a separate nation and
desired to have a national homeland. He claimed that even the Hindus themselves, due to their inter-state or inter-provincial rivalries and conflicts, might not want a strong center. There remained only two alternatives: Pakistan might be formally made a separate nation-state or left to be a potential nation-state embedded in a weak single nation-state.

The 1935 Act was completely unacceptable to the Muslim League. According to their demand, the constituent units should be autonomous and sovereign. Dr. Ambedkar argued that the use of the phrase ‘constituent units’ indicated the existence of a federation. If that was so, then the use of the word sovereign as an attribute of the units was out of place. Federation of units and sovereignty of units were contradictory. Again, nationality had a very close connection with the claim for self-government. If the Muslims in India were a separate nation, then of course India was not a nation.

In order to save the Muslims from the so-called tyranny of the Hindu majority, the Communal Award granted the Muslims retention of weightage and separate electorates. In addition to it, they were given the statutory majority of seats in the provinces where they were a majority in the population. Indicating the drawback of the Communal Award, Dr. Ambedkar said that it neglected the question of the Hindu minorities. It can be said that he was concerned about the problems of any minorities irrespective of religion they follow. W. N. Kuber points out Dr. Ambedkar’s views on the Hindu minorities in Pakistan:

The Muslims in the Muslim provinces having been given both statutory majority and separate electorates, the Communal Award must be said to impose upon the Hindu minorities Muslim rule, which they could neither alter nor influence. This was what constituted the fundamental wrong in the Communal Award. He remarked that to allow a majority of one community to rule a minority of another community without requiring the majority to submit itself to the suffrage of the minority, especially when the minority demanded it, was to prevent democratic principles and to show callous disregard for the safety and security of the Hindu minorities. (2009: 190)

Dr. Ambedkar opined that the establishment of Hindu raj would be the greatest calamity for this country. The Hindus would believe it or not, Hinduism was a threat to liberty, equality and fraternity. On that account it was incompatible with democracy. He aggressively and bitterly said that Hindu raj must be prevented at any cost. He held that the lower orders of Hindu society would be more ready to make common cause with Muslims for achieving common ends than they would with the high-caste Hindus who had denied and deprived them of ordinary human rights for centuries. To him, partition as a remedy against Hindu raj was worse than useless.

Muslim Point of View
Dr. Ambedkar dealt with the Muslim case for Pakistan. He discussed the issue in detail with elaborate and forensic arguments. He presented the colonial plight of the Muslims in blunt words:

Without prestige, without education, and without resources, the Muslims were left to face the Hindus….For six hundred years, the Musalmans had been the masters of the Hindus. The British occupation brought them down to the level of the Hindus. From masters to fellow subjects was degradation enough, but a change from the status of fellow subjects to that of subjects of the Hindus is really humiliation. Is it unnatural, ask the Muslims, if they seek an escape from so intolerable a position by the creation of separate national States, in which the Muslims can find a peaceful home and in which the conflicts between a ruling race and a subject race can find no place to plague their lives. (Vol. 8: 49)

The Muslim experience showed that the Hindus treated them as though they were second class citizens in an alien land.

The Muslims declared themselves first a community and then a nation. Dr. Ambedkar viewed that a community had a right to safeguards. But a nation had a right to demand separation. The Muslims developed a will to live as a nation. He mentioned that the theory of nationality was embedded in the democratic theory of the sovereignty of the will of a people.

He gave the credit of the ideological transformation of Muslim leaders to their goal of Pakistan. It unlocked the possibilities of realizing the Muslim dream of linking up all the Muslim kindred in one Islamic state. In a way, it was a positive disintegration of society and country.

Hindu Point of View

In Part II, with equal forensic skill, he advocated the Hindu case against Pakistan. The Hindus feared that separate Pakistan would mean breaking-up of Indian unity and weakening of defence of India. It would fail to solve the communal problem.

Dr. Ambedkar found that there was no real unity between the Hindus and the Muslims and within a single territory, they existed as hostile nations. In this situation, the question of preserving a non-existing unity did not arise. Citing the separation of Burma from India as a valid historical parallel, he said, “And if the Hindus did not object to the severance of Burma from India, it is difficult to understand how the Hindus can object to the severance of an area like Pakistan, which, to repeat, is politically detachable from, socially hostile and spiritually alien to, the rest of India.” (Vol. 8: 66)

The formation of Pakistan was required to be viewed in terms of the question of defence which was related to the issues of frontiers, resources
and armed forces. Dr. Ambedkar said that natural frontiers had lost significance in modern times. Artificial fortifications could be created as barriers. As far as the resources were concerned, Hindustan was richer than Pakistan. Therefore the establishment of Pakistan would not leave Hindustan in a weakened condition.

The Simon Commission Report found out that the fighting forces mostly came from areas included in Pakistan. But this would not mean that without those areas, India would be lacking in adequate defence forces. Dr. Ambedkar remarked that the argument that Pakistan produced soldiers, and Hindustan could not, was unsustainable. The division between martial and non-martial classes was purely arbitrary and artificial. He believed that this pattern of defence forces was intentionally created by the colonial policy of setting apart certain regional or ethnic groups as martial. It was as foolish as the Hindu theory of castes making birth instead of worth the basis for recognition. Again, India was richer than Pakistan as far as the resources were concerned. He found that the bulk of the amount contributed by Hindu provinces was spent over the Muslim army. It was a tragedy and the surest way of putting an end to it was to allow the scheme of Pakistan to take effect. He argued, “The Pakistan Provinces are a drain on the Provinces of Hindustan … To oppose it (Pakistan), is to buy a sure weapon of their own destruction. A safe Army is better than a safe border.” (Vol. 8: 101)

The two evils causing the communal problem were: (1) the communal statutory majority based on separate electorates and (2) the communal provinces especially constituted to enable the statutory majority to tyrannise minority. In short, the problem existed and would exist whenever a hostile majority was brought face to face with a hostile minority. Dr. Ambedkar studied history of various countries and found some parallel examples. He favoured the separation of Pakistan saying that the evils like the demand of separate electorates would automatically vanish forever, if Pakistan was made a single unified ethnic state. As an additional advantage to the Hindus, the formation of Pakistan would sever the bonds between the Muslims of the North and the East and the Muslims of Hindustan. It would at least liberate the Hindus from the turbulence of the Muslims as predominant partners.

Dr. Ambedkar believed that a peculiarity of the high-caste Hindu nature often led the Hindus to disaster. It was their acquisitive instinct and aversion to share with others the good things of life. They had a monopoly of education and wealth with which they captured the caste.

Charged with this selfish idea of class domination they did their best to exclude the lower classes of Hindus from wealth, education and power, and taught the lower classes that their duty in life was only to serve the higher classes. The other trait of high-caste Hindus was to exclude other classes from place and power. They would mete out similar treatment of Muslims even. This must be understood if we try to understand the politics of that class. (Kuber 2009: 192)
Dr. Ambedkar derived that the high-caste Hindus might oppose Pakistan for no other reason than that it restricted the field for their self-seeking careers. They might cheat lower orders of the Hindus in the name of nationalism; but they could not cheat the Muslim majorities in the Muslim provinces and retain their monopoly of place and power. He described the national movement emerged during the partition of Bengal as a selfish attempt of the high-caste Hindus having anti-government character. Anyone can notice Dr. Ambedkar’s usual hatred towards the high-caste Hindus.

The Alternatives

Dr. Ambedkar thoroughly and minutely studied the problem and tried to find out the alternatives to Pakistan available to Hindus as well as Muslims. Part III of the book dealt with this matter. He started with the possible Hindu alternative. The first was to liquidate the Muslims by converting them to Hinduism. This would automatically eliminate the Muslim problem! To him, it was simply unthinkable. He also gave reason for this. “Hindu religion is not a proselytizing religion.” (Vol. 8: 129) The concept of caste was incompatible with the idea of conversion. The second Hindu alternative suggested by Savarkar was to keep the Muslims as a subordinate minority population within the Hindu nation. This was based on the assumption that the Hindus were a nation and India belonged to them. Dr. Ambedkar argued against this by calling it illogical as it accepted the Muslims as a separate nation by implication but rejected Pakistan.

Then he took up the Gandhian position that Indian nationhood could only rest on Hindu-Muslim unity. He recognized this as a sincere commitment for which Gandhiji was working hard. He remarked the generosity of Gandhiji never allowed him to blame Muslims for any of their crimes against Hindus. “Indeed, Ambedkar roundly accuses Gandhiji for being excessively and wrongly pro-Muslim in his anxiety to build a single nation.” (Rao 1998: 48) The history of Hindu-Muslim relationship from 1920-1940 was full of brutal violence and hostility. In evaluating the Gandhian alternative, Dr. Ambedkar remarked,

Placed side by side with the frantic efforts made by Mr. Gandhi to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity, the record makes most painful and heart-rending reading. It would not be much exaggeration to say that it is a record of twenty years of civil war between the Hindus and Muslims in India, interrupted by brief intervals of armed peace. (Vol. 8: 184)

The Hindu-Muslim riots swept over the nation to the extent of taking the form of a civil war. There were murderous barbarities committed by members of one community against people of the other community. According to the report of Simon Commission, “... communal riots were a manifestation of the anxieties and ambitions aroused in both the communities by the prospect of India’s political future.” (Vol. 8: 188) These communal discords and
disturbances could not shake Gandhiji’s faith in humanity. He was always advocating Hindu-Muslim unity.

Dr. Ambedkar said that Hindus and Muslims had racial affinity as a Madrasi Muslim and a Madrasi Brahmin were closer to each other than a Madrasi Brahmin and a Punjabi Brahmin. Hindus and Muslims also had linguistic unity. Muslims did not have any common language. In towns, Muslims spoke Urdu and the Hindus spoke the language of the province. However, in the countryside, there was complete linguistic unity between Hindus or Muslims. But the political and religious antagonisms divided the Hindus and Muslims far more sharply than the so-called common things that were able to bind them together. In practice, the two communities could never forget and obliterare their past. Under these circumstances, in the common historical antecedents, the Hindu view that the Hindus and Muslims formed one nation fell to the ground.

The possibility of Hindu-Muslim unity was based on two premises: the first was a general belief in the efficiency of a central government to frame a diverse set of people into one nation. But the ever growing list of Muslim political demands would be a threat to this. The second premise was a general feeling that the satisfaction of Muslim demands would be a sure means of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. But that would demonstrate the spirit of exploiting the weaknesses of the Hindus.

According to him, the Hindu-Muslim conflict had two aspects – first was the separate involvement in the process of mutual adjustment and accommodation regarding their respective rights and privileges and second was the problem of the reflex influences which this separation and conflict produced upon each of them. He dealt with the second aspect in Part IV. He pointed at the production of a malaise manifested in three ways – social stagnation, communal aggression and national frustration of political destiny. He tried to examine whether this malady could be cured by the creation of Pakistan. He argued that social stagnation was prevalent in both the Hindus and Muslims in India. But only that of the former was widely exposed. He found that the non-progressive nature of Muslim community did not allow social reformation and caused stagnation. The basis of the politics of Muslim politicians was rivalry and continued rivalry which marred the social progress of the Muslim community. The basis of politics was Hindu-Muslim conflict. Though the spirit of independence was growing, the communal bitterness was also growing. The Muslims forgot the struggle against the British after adopting Pakistan as the goal.

Then he indicated the fact that both the communities were developing aggressive attitudes towards each other. Evidently, the Muslims showed more of it than the Hindus with a longer history of showing it. But he suspected that the Hindus having just started showing aggressiveness might even overtake the Muslims in the matter. Finally, he offered a brilliant description of the communal situation:

No common meeting ground exists. None can be cultivated…. There is no common continuous cycle
of participation. They meet to trade or they meet to murder. . . . When there is peace, the Hindu quarters and the Muslim quarters appear like two alien settlements. The moment war is declared, the settlements become armed camps. The periods of peace and the periods of war are brief. But the interval is one of continuous tension. (Vol. 8: 343)

Dr. Ambedkar must not be misunderstood for having anti-Muslim bias. He tried to study the objective record of historical hostility and incompatibility.

Dr. Ambedkar thought that the Muslims had no alternative to Pakistan. At least, they had never disclosed any. However, he speculated on the fourteen possible concessions they might demand as the price for being part of one nation: 50 percent representation in all legislatures through separate electorates; 50 percent in the Executive; 50 percent in the civil services; 50 percent in armed forces at all levels; 50 percent in all public bodies; either the post of Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister; either post of Commander-in-Chief or Deputy Commander-in-Chief; no changes in provincial boundaries without the consent of 66 percent of Muslim legislators; no action or treaty against a Muslim country without the consent of 66 percent of Muslim legislators; no law made affecting Muslim culture, religion or religious usage without the consent of 66 percent of Muslim legislators; Urdu to be the national language of India; no law prohibiting or restricting cow slaughter or conversion without the consent of 66 percent of Muslim legislators; no change in constitution without the consent of 66 percent of Muslim legislators. He claimed that it was not his wild imagination but an intelligent anticipation. He concluded that the Muslim proposal to Pakistan was not a bargaining manoeuvre. Rather, the Muslim alternative – Muslim dominance in every field – was a frightful and dangerous alternative. The policy of concession, namely appeasement, had increased Muslim aggressiveness. Moreover, they interpreted these concessions as a sign of defeat of the Hindus and the absence of the will to resist.

Problems and Solutions related to Pakistan

In Part V, he answered three questions: (1) Must there be Pakistan? Answering this, he said that the realization of Indian freedom and the defence of India demanded Pakistan to be approved by the Hindus.

(2) What were the problems and solutions relating to Pakistan? He identified three problems – division of financial assets and liabilities between two nation-states, delimitation of the areas and transfer of population between the two nation-states. He suggested that the issue of boundary must be solved on moral-rational considerations. He demanded the Muslim League to be reasonable and ethical. As for the minorities, he offered two solutions – one, to provide constitutional safeguards and the other, to transfer them territorially. If the boundaries of the Punjab and Bengal were reconstructed, the question of transfer of population would be solved a marked way.

Dr. Ambedkar referred to the history of the minority problem generated in Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria to justify his idea of transfer of population. He
firmly believed that the transfer of minorities was the only lasting remedy for communal peace. The question of bargaining for safeguards would lose significance. "The only way to make India homogeneous was to arrange for exchange of population. Until this is done, it must be admitted that even with the creation of Pakistan, the problem of majority versus minority would remain and would continue to produce disharmony in the body politic of Hindustan." (Kuber 2009: 195) He proposed that the question of transfer of population could be successfully tackled by a commission with equal members of both communities.

(3) Who had the authority to decide the issue of Pakistan? Here he offered a scheme of two referenda in the form of an Act of British Parliament. According to it, the Muslims only would decide whether the wanted Pakistan. And the non-Muslims were to decide whether they want to be in Pakistan or to be in Hindustan. This was on the principle that communal majority, unlike a political majority, had no right to rule over a communal minority.

**The Skeleton Act (Preliminary Provisions Act)**

Dr. Ambedkar described the Preliminary Provisions Act of the government of India as the *Skeleton Act*. It was a specimen. The main premises of the act were: (1) A poll of Muslims and non-Muslims be taken for or against separation. If the majority of Muslims were in favour of separation and a majority of non-Muslims were against separation, steps must be taken to delimit the areas wherever it was possible by redrawing provincial boundaries on ethnic and cultural lines by separating the Muslim-majority districts from the districts in which the majority consisted of non-Muslims. (2) A boundary commission should be set up. It is better if it was an international commission. (3) Partition of the country – Hindustan and Pakistan.

Other major considerations, according to Dr. Ambedkar, were as follows: (1) A minority has no right to put a veto on the right of the majority to decide on questions of ultimate destiny. This was the reason why the referendum on the establishment of Pakistan was confined to Muslims only. (2) A communal majority could demand of a communal minority to submit to its dictates. Only a political majority might be permitted to rule a political minority.

**His Plan for Pakistan**

Dr. Ambedkar approved a separate referendum of non-Muslims only to decide whether they desired to stay in Pakistan or come into Hindustan. He had kept the door open and provided for the following possibilities in the act: (1) for union for ten years and then separation and (2) for separation for ten years and union thereafter. He preferred the second alternative because the Muslims should have the experience of Pakistan. But he firmly believed that live contact between the two nations was essential. Dr. Ambedkar planned to provide a council to be used as a coupling between Hindustan and Pakistan. He warned that it should not be mistaken for a federation or a confederation.

The province could not be taken as a deciding unit as suggested by Cripps. The issue of Pakistan was an inter-communal dispute involving two
communities in the same province. Therefore Dr. Ambedkar proposed communal referendum. It was only a judicial separation of Hindustan and Pakistan; not a divorce.

He recommended there ways to accomplish the plan: (1) The British government should act as the deciding authority; (2) the Hindus and the Muslims should agree to submit the issue to an international board of arbitration; and (3) fight it out by a civil war. The safest and the most constitutional method of solving the problem of Pakistan was a referendum by people in the Pakistan provinces.

The way Dr. Ambedkar analysed the intricate issue of partition and pleaded the case for Pakistan, one cannot help declaring “This is a masterly, most accurate and most reasonable and most sympathetic presentation of the case for Pakistan one can wish for.” (Rao 1998: 46)

When India got partitioned into India and Pakistan, Dr. Ambedkar stated, “I was glad that India was separated from Pakistan. I was the philosopher, so to say, of Pakistan. I advocated partition because I felt that it was only by partition that Hindus would not only be dependent but free.” (Vol. 1: 146)

After partition the question of the untouchables in Pakistan became hazardous. Dr. Ambedkar urged untouchables in Pakistan and Hyderabad (Sind) to come to India. Again, he tried to persuade Pandit Nehru to appoint an officer to look after the interest of untouchables in Pakistan. For that purpose he suggested the name of Bhaurao Gaekwad. He came to know that the Pakistan government was prohibiting the untouchables from coming to India. He assumed that the object behind all this must be to employ landless labour for the landlords.

(IX) Parliamentary Democracy

Dr. Ambedkar went through the writings of the Western political writers and found that they highlight the establishment of universal adult suffrage for the realization of the ideal of democracy. But he firmly held that adult suffrage could produce government of the people in the logical sense of the phrase, i.e. in contrast to the government of a king; it could not by itself be said to bring about a democratic government in the sense of government by the people and for the people. Attacking the Western political writers, he states that their views on democracy and self-government were erroneous. In his most celebrated book _Pakistan or Partition of India_, he criticized them thus:

(1) They omit to take into account the incontrovertible fact that in every country there is a governing class. (2) They fail to realise that the existence of a governing class is inconsistent with democracy and self-government. (3) Self-government and democracy become real when the governing class loses its power to capture the power to govern. (4) The governing class may be so well entrenched that the servile classes will need other safeguards besides adult suffrage to
achieve the same end. (5) Social outlook and social philosophy of the governing class is not taken into account. (Kuber 2009: 199)

Parliamentary democracy meant ‘one man one vote’. He said that every government should be on the anvil and people would be given an opportunity to assess the work done by the government. He believed that democracy always changed its form. Place and time-span were the factors affecting the form of democracy. He emphatically mentioned that democracy always changed its purpose also. He defined democracy as a form and method of government in which revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people were brought about without bloodshed.

According to him, the conditions precedent to the successful working of democracy were: (1) absence of glaring inequalities in society, i.e. privileges for one class; (2) existence of an opposition; (3) equality in law and administration; (4) observance of constitutional morality; (5) no tyranny of the majority; (6) moral order of society; and (7) public conscience.

“Ambedkar regarded democracy as a way of life. It involved rational empiricism, emphasis on the individual, the instrumental nature of the state, voluntarism, the law behind the law, nobility of means, discussion and consent, absence of perpetual rule, and basic equality in all human relations.” (Kuber 2009: 202) He emphasized constitutional morality, public decency and public conscience for the optimum results of a democratic system.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, democratic society cannot be indifferent to machinery. Machinery and modern civilization were indispensable for emancipating man from leading the life of a brute and for providing him with leisure and making a life of culture possible. He mentioned, “… a democratic society must assure a life of leisure and culture to each one of its citizens.” (Vol. 9: 284)

He considered democracy as an organization of all members of society. To him, democracy was a mode of associated living. The roots of democracy must be found in social relationship, in terms of the associated life between the people who formed the society. The social evils like poverty, illiteracy and caste distinctions were the positive dangers to democracy. His concept of democracy denied any class structure in society because a class structure contained, on one hand, tyranny, vanity, pride, arrogance, greed, selfishness, and on the other, insecurity, poverty, degradation, loss of liberty, self-reliance, independence, dignity and self-respect.

His aim was to bring justice and freedom for people thereby making democracy safe for the common man. To him, the democratic principles of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness were essentials in human life. He gave prime importance to human rights. He objected any kind of discrimination in the exercise of human rights because it denied social as well as political democracy. To him, the freedom to form associations in various fields of life was important for which he sought help of a constitutional system. He firmly believed that only a constitutional government, the very soul of democracy, could give such freedom to create an ideal society. According to him, “An
ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. In other words, there must be social endosmosis.” (Vol. 1: 57)

Dr. Ambedkar criticized the politicians for not realizing that democracy was not a form of government but a form of social organization. A favourable social setting was a prerequisite for the success of democracy. The formal framework of democracy was of no value and would be a misfit if there was no social democracy. “To him, social democracy involved two things: an attitude of mind, an attitude of respect and equality towards their fellows and a social organization free from rigid social barriers. To him, democracy was incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness resulting in the distinction between the privileged and unprivileged.” (Kuber 2009: 201) Democracy was a political method to realize a social ideal.

He enlisted four principles on which political democracy rested: (1) The individual was an end in himself. (2) The individual had certain inalienable rights which must be guaranteed to him by the Constitution. (3) The individual would not be required to relinquish any of his constitutional rights as a condition precedent to the receipt of a privilege. (4) The state would not delegate powers to private persons to govern others.

He struck at the core of political democracy. He propounded that every party would have right to criticize and capture political power in democracy. The party in power, of course, would try to keep the power in its hands. But the real test of the party system would come when the governmental power might shift from the ruling party to some other political party or parties.

Dr. Ambedkar believed that only political rights did not constitute the basis of democracy; sociability and morality were equally important. As W. N. Kuber puts it:

The keynote of his concept of democracy as a way of life was the necessity for the participation of every human being in the formation of social, economic and political values that regulated the living men and kept them together. The fundamental elements of his concept of democracy, in short, were liberty, equality, fraternity, reason, human experience, the rule of law, natural rights and an emphasis on the individual in social relationships. (2009: 202)

He considered the following devices essential to maintain democracy: (1) Constitutional methods: He insisted on abandoning the bloody methods of revolution and the methods of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and Satyagraha. He called these methods the ‘grammar of anarchy’. (2) No hero-worship: He believed that there was nothing wrong in being grateful to great men. Bhakti in religion was a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, bhakti or hero-worship was a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship. (3) Making a political democracy a social democracy: Political
democracy could not exist without social democracy. It must incorporate in it the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity to form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other was to defeat the very purpose of democracy.

According to him, the success of Indian democracy depended upon the satisfaction of the millions of people who were devoid of primary needs of life. The realization that parliamentary democracy failed to assure the masses the right to liberty, property or pursuit of happiness became the main reason of public discontent against it. Again, it did not take care of economic inequalities. It also failed to understand that social and economic democracy were the tissue and the fibre of political democracy.

Dr.Ambedkar held that political societies were divided into two classes: the rulers and the ruled. Rulers were always drawn from the ruling class. Therefore a political democracy could not become a government of the people or by the people. He warned that the failure of democracy would lead to rebellion, anarchy and communism.

**Legal Theory**

Being a lawyer by profession and a jurist by temperament, Ambedkar emphasized the role of law in civilized society. To him, law was an important factor in maintaining social peace and justice among different groups of people. It is an obligation which depended upon the social and moral conscience of the people. It was a guardian of equality and liberty. “All citizens are equal before the law and possess equal civic rights.” (Vol. 1: 392)

Dr. Ambedkar strongly believed that laws were made by man for man. Law had not created man, but man had created law for his own happiness. In the course of time, law might require amendments. They should be made but with the consent of people. He accepted that some laws might be defective and depressive. But he never attempted to undo them by force and unconstitutional means. He believed that a wrong or repressive law must be debated and brought to a proper forum for due amendments and changes.

He favoured secularism and urged to consider all the religions equal. But when a religion tried to interfere with the legal system of the nation, he would sternly react to it.

A secular outlook did not allow any hostile indifference to a religion, but a tolerant and liberal attitude towards all creeds and its people. An attitude of tolerance and mutual appreciation is the essence of secularism. If any religion, however, defends and nourishes what is against the established law or if it is violative of the legal system, it must be amended in the national interest. (Jatava 1998: 51)

He underlined the point that law must be the same for all and in the interest of all. It must be social and human. It must have universal effect. His
concept of law demonstrates that law should be enforced not only by punishment but also by education. He thought that law prescribed through education would appeal to the mind of man and the spirit of society.

The Preamble of the Constitution of India articulated the principles on which law should be based. His thoughts on constitutional law demonstrated the dignity of mankind. The fundamental human elements involved in it were: (1) It was a rule in public interest. (2) It was not an arbitrary force. (3) It was secular law applicable to all. (4) It was not divinely inspired, but it was man-inspired; (5) It could be changed according to time and need.

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that the state was accountable for the execution of the rights. And the implementation of these rights should not take place unconditionally but within the constraints imposed by the state through the instrumentality of law. Thus, neither the state nor the individual was absolute. Both of them were supposed to check and balance each other through the legal system. This arrangement also implied equality because no individual, merely as an individual, was regarded as superior to any other. He assigned the judiciary the responsibility for enforcing justice through law. Therefore, the judiciary as the guardian of the legal order had to be impartial, independent and adequately competent. K. Raghavendra Rao remarks,

In his theory of law, the State was conceptualized as both a creature of law and a creator of law. On the one hand, a State could not be legitimate unless it was founded on constitutional law whose ultimate source must be the democratic will of the people. Therefore, the State cannot act arbitrarily but must act according to a fundamental law constructed in the form of a constitution. But once founded on contractual, natural law, it acquires a democratic right to make other laws... While formally and technically the State may be a sovereign, this sovereignty had to rest on a democratic base. (1998: 39)

As the law was above the state, it was to be operationalized through a judiciary which had the technical – legal – formal competence to interpret the law.

Apart from performing a legal function, law also regulated the life of the whole society and nation. It kept within limits all men irrespective of caste, colour or creed. "Law (to him) is secular, which anybody may break while fraternity or religion is sacred which everybody must respect." (Keer 1962: 456) His faith in individual liberty and dignity led him to the rule of law. He said, "No State shall make or enforce any law or custom which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty and property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of law." (Vol. 1: 392)
Thus, he spoke of the law as an instrument of social progress and national unity. The law, according to him, must reflect the progressive and social techniques of change. He displayed great faith in the system of law. He believed that the observance of law would reduce chaos and hasten the progress of the society.

Anyone who reads his books and articles related to politics or the national issues will certainly be led to conclude that Dr. Ambedkar was primarily interested in the upliftment of his community and for him the national independence meant the freedom of his people. He could be blamed for keeping the untouchables away from the main-stream of the country. He secluded the masses from some very important social and political movements. C. Rajagopalachari charged Dr. Ambedkar of delinking the scheduled castes from the Congress movement. Any political movement led by the Congress and any social movement advanced by the caste Hindus were blamed for their selfish motives by Dr. Ambedkar.

His works revealed that any idea of launching any fight against imperialism did not come to his mind even once. Consequently, he did not try to consolidate anti-imperialist forces in the country. On the contrary, he became the member of Viceroy’s Executive Council. He satirically said that courting prison became an act of martyrdom in India. He was not imprisoned even once during his lifetime for any of his effort for national freedom. Striking enough was the fact that almost all men and women of his time related to the freedom movement not only went to jail but also spent quite a lot of time there.

Proclaiming himself as the only representative of the depressed classes, he went on with the single mission of their welfare. Though himself proved to be a great leader, he could not produce any second cadre leaders to continue his work. He was constantly compared with Gandhiji in the matter of leadership. But Gandhiji had mesmerizing effect on the whole world, whereas Dr. Ambedkar’s thoughts and actions could influence only the depressed classes. The rotten things he spoke and wrote about Gandhiji need not be repeated. But it could be inferred easily that those were the implicit expressions of his political frustration.

He lacked consistency of thought. Many a times he contradicted himself. He told his people to fight for Swaraj as it would give them political powers. But again he feared that it would guarantee no good for them. He proclaimed that he would like to take second birth as a Maharashtrian only. But again he expressed his feeling of shame when called a Maharashtrian.

Dr. Ambedkar thought that the independence of India would be a disaster! He wanted the British to stay in India as he was afraid of more injustice and atrocities to the untouchables in free India. Many a times he had mentioned his fear to the British officials. He got so blind with the upliftment of the untouchables that he was ready to stake the independence of his motherland. He was unwilling to have Indian Constitution and the Constituent Assembly. He thought that the Indians were not worthy of having them! He believed that the Indians were just unable to handle freedom and had no
capacity to run parliamentary institutions. They did not have any guts to form a constitution!
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