



Dr. B.R. Ambedkar : Origin of Untouchable and Who Were Shudras

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the proposed study is to find out the origin of the untouchable in Hindu society. To Dr. Ambedkar the caste system is the hereditary division of labourers, a system of graded inequality, a process of sterilisation and devitalisation. Like Rome, England and other part of the countries the Indian social order is based on caste and graded of inequality. Manu was the chief law giver of Indian Hindu society. Hindu smritis such as Upanishad, Manusmriti, Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana and Mahabharata are responsible for the origin of the untouchable. The caste is originated from Varna. It is needless to mention that the caste is a social, economic, religious and political category.

Keywords : Touchable, Untouchable, Hindu, Society, Manusmriti, Vedas

Introduction: He has described the origin and the actual position of the untouchables in Hindu society in his several works like "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development", 'Annihilation of Caste', 'Who Were the Shudras', and 'The Untouchable: Who Were They and They Became Untouchables' (1948) etc. He has tried to find out the origin of the Shudras and Untouchables in the Hindu society. Dr. Ambedkar has analysed the concept of the caste system which are revealed by the writing of Senart, Nesfield, Sir H. Ristley and Ketkar. In the Hindu social order Dr. Ambedkar found fault with Senart's conception of caste as 'ideal of pollution'. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the idea of pollution is not necessarily connected with caste. It is priestly ceremonialism. To him, "idea of pollution" is a characteristic of caste only in so far as Caste has a religious flavour. Nesfield emphasised on non-commensality as a special mark of caste. Dr. Ambedkar found its fault. He said that the non-commensality is not the cause of the mark of caste, the effect of caste system is the cause of non-commensality. He said Ristley's concept of caste is nothing. He does not make new point deserving of special attention. To him, Ketkar was only a protagonist of caste who had focused on the fact that caste was a system involving other castes. Ketkar prohibited inter marriage and membership by autogenic. Dr. Ambedkar recognised inter-caste marriage and inter-dinning system for abolition of caste system. In endogamous marriages the Brahmins themselves considered as purity, superiority than other Varnas.(Ambedkar, Caste in India,6-9) According to Mr. Stanley Rice, the Untouchables are non- Aryans, non-Dravidian aboriginals. They were conquered and subjugated by the Dravidians. He said that the India was invaded two times. At first India was invaded by the Dravidians. They conquered the non-Dravidian aboriginals. They were ancestors of the Untouchables. The Dravidians made them Untouchables. The second time India was invaded by the Aryans. The Aryans conquered the Dravidians and made them Shudras. (Ambedkar, The Untouchable, 271-272) To Dr. Ambedkar, the theory of Mr. Stanley Rice is too mechanical speculation and too simple to explain a complicated set of fact relating to the origin of the Shudras and the Untouchables. To Mr. Stanley Rice, the origin of Untouchability is to be found in the unclean and filthy occupations of the Untouchables. To Ambedkar, unclean and filthy occupations not only perform by the Untouchables but are common to all Varnas.

Dr. Ambedkar's views on Origin of Untouchable:

Dr. Ambedkar in his book "The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables" (1948) has described the origin of untouchable and their emergence in Hindu and non- Hindu society. Dr. Ambedkar claimed that Manusmriti of Manu is responsible for the emergence of untouchable in Hindu society. In view of Dr. Ambedkar, the transformation of society from primitive society to modern society is the main cause of Untouchables live outside the village. Primitive society consisted of 'nomadic society' while Modern Society consisted of 'settled communities', Primitive Society consisted of 'tribal communities' based on 'blood relationship', while Modern Society consists of 'local communities' based on 'territorial affiliation'. Therefore, Primitive Society became to a 'territorial' community from a 'tribal' community and from a 'nomadic' to a 'settled' community. The Primitive Society was cattle society. The Primitive society was migratory because wealth like cattle was migratory. The cattle had to move always from place to another place and the Primitive people became settled community.(Ambedkar, The Untouchable, 275) So Primitive Society was always changeable. Ambedkar has stated that all tribes of Primitive community could not settle at the one place at one time. The people of the Primitive Society were divided into two categories, i.e. 'settled' and 'nomadic'. According to Ambedkar, when the Aryan Society was passing from a nomadic life to the settled community, the Aryan society became into two groups namely 'settled tribes' and the 'Broken man'. The settle tribe founded the 'village' and formed a 'village community' and nomadic broken man founded a separate group and live in 'separate quarters', outside the village.

The Hindu Shastras recognises the terms 'Antya', 'Antyaja' and 'Antyavasin'. The Hindu Scriptures argued that 'Antya' means one who was born end and 'Antyaja' means an Untouchable. The Hindu Shastras believes that the Shudras were born last. The Untouchable is outside the scheme of creations, the Shudras were Savarna and Untouchables were Avarna i.e. outside the Varna system. Dr. Ambedkar's view was that the term Antya does not means creation of last and the last of the village. The word 'Antya' was a name and those who were lived on the outskirts of the village called 'Antya' and 'Antyaja'. Those who were lived outside the village called 'Antya and Antyaja.' Who were Antyavasin? Were they Untouchables? The term Antyavasin is used into two senses. In

first sense, it was used to a Brahmachari living in the house of the Guru during his studentship. Here, the Antyavasin is a Brahmachari. The term Antyavasin does not meant the Untouchability. In the second sense, the term Antyavasin is used as a group of people. According to Vasistha Dharma Sutra (18.3) the Antyavasin are the offspring of a Shudras father and Vaishyas mother. But according to Manusmriti (V.39) they are the offspring of a Chandala father and a Nishad mother. (Ambedkar, The Untouchable, 362)

The 'Broken men' were Buddhists. The Brahmins disliked the 'Broken men'. The 'Broken men' embraced Buddhism and shunned the Brahmins because they were the opponents of Hinduism. Dr. Ambedkar said that there was a time when the Brahmins and non-Brahmins ate only 'flesh' but also 'beef'. Animal sacrifice in Hindu society was as religious right. The beef-eating was common to both the 'settled tribes' and 'Broken men'. The settled community ate fresh beef and the 'Broken men' ate the flesh of the dead cow. The Brahmins left beef-eating and started 'cow-worship'. The dead cow's skin, bones, flesh etc. were the economic resources of the Untouchables. They have continued the habit of beef-eating against the will of Brahmins. (Ambedkar, The Untouchable, 319) The Untouchables were 'Broken Men' belonged to the Mahar community'. The Mahar community is a principal Untouchable community in Maharashtra. Every village in Maharashtra was a wall and they had separate quarters outside the wall. They were appointed as watch and ward on behalf of the village. Yajnavalkya Smriti says that "183 (2) Slavery is in the descending order of the Varnas and not in the ascending order". (Ambedkar, 306) Manu in his Manusmriti x. 24 says that "A Brahmin shall never beg from a Shudras, property for (performing) a sacrifice i.e. for religious purposes". (Moon, 113)

Ambedkar's Views on real position of the Shudras:

In his book, "Who Were Shudras? How they came to be the fourth Varna in the Indo-Aryan Society", (1946) Ambedkar has pointed out that the creator of the Vedic literature belonged to the Aryan race. They came from outside India and invaded India. Those were natives in India known as Dasas and Dasus and they were racially different from the Aryans. The Dasas and Dasus were a dark race and the Aryans were a white race. The Aryans conquered the Dasas and Dasus and the Dasas or Dasus were conquered and enslaved were called Shudras. The Dasas and Dasus form a fourth Varna popularly known as Shudras. The Shudras were racially black such as the Dasas and the Dasus. (Ambedkar, 65) According to Dr. Ambedkar, there was no evidence in the Vedas of any invasion of India by the Aryan race and its having conquered the Dasas or Dasus to be natives of India. There was no relevance and evidence to show that the Aryans, Dasas and Dasus were distinct elements. The Vedas do not support

in the contention that the Aryans were different in colour from the Dasas and Dasus. (Ambedkar, 85)

He has stated that the Shudras were Aryans community. The Shudras belonged to Kshatriya class and some powerful kings of the ancient Aryan communities were Shudras. (Ambedkar, 144) To improve his argument he has mentioned Verses 38-40 of Chapter 60 of the Shanti Parvan of the Mahabharata. The Shanti Parvan mentioned that the Paijavana was a Shudra and the Shudra Paijavana performed sacrifices. The Brahmins performed sacrifices for him and accepted Dakshina from him. (Ambedkar, 122) Yaska's Nirukta ii.24 formed that the person who was the son of Paijavana is Sudas and Paijavana means son of Paijavana. In Rig Veda VII.18.22, VII.18.23, VII.25 Paijavana was another name of Sudas. (Ambedkar, 118-119) Sudas was neither Dasas nor Aryan. They were enemies to each other. Sudas was neither Dasa nor Arya. Divodasa was a king and the father of Sudas was Divodasa. Divodasa fought against Turvasas and Yadus, Shambara, Parava and Karumja and Gungu. Sudevi was the wife of Sudas. Sudas was a king and his coronation ceremony was performed by the Brahma-rishi- Vasistha. The king Sudas was more superior to a Kshatriya. He was a mighty king. (Ambedkar, 127) The Rig Veda did not mention the Shudra as a separate Varna. Satapatha and the Taittiriya do not speak of the creation of the Shudras as a separate. Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda mentioned that there were four Varnas. The Shudras were one of the Aryan communities of the solar race. In the Indo Aryan society there were three Varnas namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishya and the Shudras were not a separate Varna but was a part of the Kshatriya Varna. There were many fights between the Shudras King and the Brahmins. As a result, the Shudras were defeated with Brahmins communities. In this way the Shudras became socially degraded and fell below the rank of the Vaishya and came from the fourth Varna. (Ambedkar, 133)

Conclusion: It has rightly been observe that the Hindu religious books such as Vedas, Purans and Upanishad etc are responsible for the origin of untouchable for vested interests of the Caste Hindus. He observes that the population of India is mixture of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians and Scythians. Ethnically all people are heterogeneous. The untouchability is an imitation system of Hindu society made by the Caste Hindus. Who are Shudras in Hindu society they were the Kshatriya in Varna. They were the solar race. The Shudras were Aryans community. The Shudras belonged to Kshatriya class and some powerful kings of the ancient Aryan communities were Shudras. The Shudra King Sudas was more powerful king. Untouchability is the product of social evolution.

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