

# Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Philosophy of Constitutionalism as an Instrument of Justice : Social, Economic and Political<sup>1</sup>

BALMIKI PRASAD SINGH\*

---

---

## Abstract

Speech in the remembrance of most distinguished son of India - Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for the values of justice, fairness and equality that stand as a foundation of constitution relect in the words of the author delivered at Indin Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). Babasaheb belonged to a poor dalit serving armyman's family whose thoughts inspired the brightest mind in the indian history. He is known as the architect of the constituion laid the founbdation of the federal India. His thoughts and philosophy developed through societal frameworks and finely felt injustice, urged people to be active members of the social revolution that would lay the foundation of modern India. The author propogates the philisophy of democracy of social inclusion, justice, distributive reforms and religious preaching of Buddha.

---

---

**JEL Code :** A13; A31; D63; D71

**Keywords :** Constitutionalism; Justice; Political; Economic, Social; India; World

## I. Introduction

I AM THANKFUL to Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) for inviting me to deliver the Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture. It is a privilege to speak in the memory of one of India's most distinguished sons, a person who epitomised rare values of justice, fairness and equality and contributed towards their realisation through works of outstanding creativity and scholarship.

Each visit to IIPA makes me both nostalgic and happy given my long association with IIPA and its increasing relevance in the changing milieus of India's democratic governance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from 10th Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture delivered by His Excellency Shri. Balmiki Prasad Singh, the then Governor of Sikkim on 28th March, 1999.

\* 14th Governor of Sikkim; Honorary Professor and Chair, Indian Institute of Finance, Centre for Peace and Prosperity, 45A, Knowledge Park III, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201310, INDIA

*Submitted February 2024; Accepted July 2024*

has was a social revolutionary, author, original thinker, institution builder and more. In the highest traditions of our culture, Ambedkar's spiritual quest too is very significant. After he retired from public office in 1951, he devoted the remaining years of his life to studying the life and teachings of Lord Buddha. His last book "*The Buddha and His Dhamma*" published after his death in 1957 is monumental work. R.R. Bhole, Chairman, People's Education Society in the foreword to this book hails it "as the culmination of his labours on this earth".

Babasaheb reflected on one occasion that goes on to give us a glimpse of the linkage of his political philosophy with his spiritual quest. He wrote: "*My social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in three words: liberty, equality and fraternity. Let no one, however, say that I have borrowed my philosophy from the French revolution. I have not. My philosophy has roots in religion and not in political science. I have derived them from the teachings of my Master, the Buddha*".

Babasaheb inspired millions of Indians and continues to do so. All of us are indeed indebted to him for giving us a forward- looking Constitution, a document that has kept us moving on the democratic path firmly all these years and holds great promise for our future well-being as well. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was indeed a multi-faceted genius. He successfully combined in himself several roles. It was T.S. Eliot, the famous poet, who wrote: "*To do the useful thing; to say the courageous thing; to contemplate the beautiful thing: that is enough for one man's life* (Eliot). Babasaheb accomplished all these and more.

I am reminded of the character of Karna in the epic Mahabharata, a book that Ambedkar recited every evening as a child at the insistence of Sakpalji, his father. In *Rashmirathi*, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar has put it appropriately about Karna which in my view equally applies to Ambedkar. He writes:

विक्रमी पुरुष लेकिन, सिर पर  
चलता नछत्र पुरखों का घर  
अपना फल तेज जगाता है,  
सम्मान जगत से पाता है । (Dinkar, 1967)

### References

Agarwal, J.D.; Yamini Agarwal, Manju Agarwal and Aman Agarwal, (2023), "**Trust as a Financial Value**", *Finance India*, Vol XXXVII No. 3, September 2023, pp. 665-678

Ambedkar, B.R., (1948), "*Speech in Constituent Assembly on 4 November 1948*", as reproduced in *Constituent Assembly Debates: Official Report* (reprint Lok Sabha Secretariat, Delhi, 1988), Vol. 7, pp. 31-44.

- Bhole, R.R., (1957), "*The Buddha and His Dhamma*", SSRN
- Dickens, Charles, (2008), "*Great Expectations*, OUP", Oxford World Classics, New York, also quoted in Amartya Sen's book *The Idea of Justice*, Allen Lane 2009 (pp.vii).
- Dinkar, Ramdhari Singh, (1967), "*Rashmirathi*", Udyachal, Patna, pp.40.
- Eliot, T.S., (1933), "*The use of Poetry and the use of Criticism*", SSRN
- Guha, Ramachandra, "*The Past and Future of the Indian National Congress*", Indian National Congress
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2017), "*The 21st Century Geopolitics, Democracy and Peace*", Routledge, London and New York, pp. 188
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2024), "Leadership in 21st Century: The Bahudha Approach for Peace and Prosperity", *Finance India*, Vol. XXXVIII No. 1, March 2024, pp. 27-44
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2023), "The Bahudha Approach", *Finance India*, Vol. XXXVII No. 4, December 2023, pp. 921-930
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2017), "*The Bahudha Approach*", Speaking Tree (www.speakingtree.in), November 4th, 2017
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2016), "*The Bahudha Approach*", Vivekanand International Foundation, May 23rd, 2016
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2013), "*Swami Vivekanand : A Monk of Humanity*", Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, India, August 2013
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2020), "*Geopolitics, Democracy and Peace in the 21st Century*", 2nd Edition, Routledge, New York, USA
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2016), "*Culture and Peace*", Lecture Series of Address given on 19th November 2016 at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Delhi, India on the occasion of the IGNC's Foundation Day
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2008), "*Bahudha and the Post 9/11 World*", Oxford University Press, Delhi India
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad, (2011), "*The Enlightenment of Buddha*", Working Paper, Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok based on Presidential Address at the Global Buddhist Congregation, Delhi, India
- Sirswal, Desh Raj, (2011), "Ambedkar on Humanism, Action, Reflection", *Action Frontier*, Vol 43, No 27, January 16-22, 2011.