

Knowing a Towering Personality in the Sights of His Adherents: Nature of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar Leading The Depressed Classes

Abstract

This article mainly subjected to focus on Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar's nature, his nurtured behaviour for everyone, his hospitality, punctuality, sympathy about the poor and downtrodden population, and logical dealing with the others. Basically this essay tries to articulate his scholarly conduct and his higher goals motivational handling with a simple conduct. No. doubt, except his critics, he was a towering multifaceted personality for this nation but actually what he was as a human, which can be sure with knowing his adherents' views so that Indian society may acknowledge Babasaheb properly.

Keywords: Babasaheb, Savarnas, Biographers, Architect Of Indian Constitution, Orthodox Hindus, Untouchability, Ambedkar Era, Nigam Bodh Ghat, Ramu, The Guardian, The New York Times, Lokmanya Tilak.

Introduction

The life of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (14 April 1891—6 December 1956) is a saga of his rise from dust to glory and from the lowest social hierarchical order to the position of the 'architect of Indian Constitution' for which the University of Columbia conferred on him the degree of L.L.D (honoris causa) in 1952. It also provides insight into his long and often bitter struggle for breaking the tyranny of caste in Hindu society and raising the position of the downtrodden. Babasaheb was "a brilliant thinker" who analyzed the entire range of roles caste played in Indian society, and how it should be annihilated to the point of unsettling the orthodox Hindus. He felt suffocated in the ambience created by the *savarnas* in the India, and that is why he walked out of the Hindu fourfold system along with a large number of his followers.

He proved by his deeds that superiority neither lies in the birth of a particular caste or religion nor can be a paternal property of a particular region. His thoughts were all theoretical as well as practical. He did not live only in the world of thoughts but he was ever busy in his deeds also. Indian constitution is a living example of his great deeds, which is imitable not only in India but also in all the countries of the world. The whole nation will remain ever grateful of his novel contribution. In spite of lot of terrific problems in his life that he faced throughout the life, Babasaheb became a man of character. Some critics say that Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar was only the messiah of Dalits, while M.K. Gandhi, his contemporary, was a leader in general. But truth is this that nobody publicized the deeds of Dr. Ambedkar in his time. That is why; people have been ignorant with his actual identity and deeds.

Prof. Gopal Guru observes, selective reading of Ambedkar by his adherents is another impediment in knowing Dr. Ambedkar's actual feelings and nature. While selective reading has become a part of common sense imagination, it is all the more disturbing when we come across instances of it among one of Ambedkar's biographers. (Gopal Guru: 2015: 96)

C B Khairmode, who is considered perhaps the most reliable biographer of Babasaheb, fails to objectively present Ambedkar's feelings over the assassination of Gandhi. Khairmode (1983:192) observes, "Babasaheb neither participated in the funeral nor did he make any public statement on the assassination of Gandhi."



Ajay Kumar

Assistant Professor,
Deptt.of Political Science,
Ramanujan College,
Kalkaji, New Delhi

Nanak Chand Rattu, (who is supposed to have been the closet to Babasaheb) however, gets an opposite account from the correspondence of Ambedkar of his feelings on Gandhi's assassination. Ambedkar strongly condemns the assassination saying,

"...that Gandhi should have met his death at the hands of a Maharashtrian. Nay! ... it would have been wrong for anybody to have committed such a foul deed...I owe nothing to Mr. Gandhi and he has contributed nothing to my spiritual, social and moral makeup. Notwithstanding his antipathy to me I went to the Birla House on Saturday morning... I was very much moved on seeing his dead body. I went with the funeral procession for a short distance as I was unable to walk and then returned home and again went to Rajghat on the bank of the river Jamuna (Yamuna) but could not get to the Burning Place being unable to break the ring formed by the crowd (Rattu 1995: 63)."

Even then, Babasaheb is not to be acknowledged more ethical than M. K. Gandhi. Because nobody knows his actual character what is more than that of M. K. Gandhi. Those who were in contact with Babasaheb, they knew him actually what he was. Few names can also be merged with Babasaheb's companions list like Nanak Chand Rattu, Devi Dayal, Shankranand Shastri, Bhagwan Das, Sohanlal Shastri, and Namdeo Nimgade. One of them was Devi Dayal who was born in Disstt. Etawah (U.P.). He was educated in Lucknow and Delhi and received his Bachelor's degree (B.A.) from Punjab University. He joined the Labour Department under the Central Government in 1943 and retired as an Under Secretary in 1976. During 1943-1951, he worked as a Personal Assistant to Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar and looked after his personal library. In 1956, he was drawn to Buddhist movement and studies. He attended several Conferences and Seminars. In 1986, he wrote a book on 'Buddha Jivan' (the Buddhist Life). He published Babasaheb's book 'Dasata tatha Asprasyata' (Slavery and Untouchability). He also wrote a four-volume biography of Babasaheb. He died on 24 August 1989. Later on Babasaheb was conferred Bharat Ratna Award. Shankaranand Shastri, also had been a close companion of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar. He has also written a book on Babasaheb's life, *Yugpurush Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar: Jivan Sangharsh Evam Rashtra Sevayen*. Nanak Chand Rattu was Personal Secretary to Babasaheb. In his book *Little Known Facets of Dr. Ambedkar*, he has furnished some very interesting information about Babasaheb. It is an undeniable fact that Advocate Bhagwan Das was perhaps the tallest Ambedkarite in the post Ambedkar era. The amount of work that he contributed to explore Dr. Ambedkar and his writings is unparalleled. He published edited first volume with Navayana publication *Thus Spoke Ambedkar* in 1964. That was strongly criticized by the press. Namdeo Nimgade, the next, inspired by Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar, he steadfastly pursues his education. Graduating from Nagpur, Nimgade goes on to complete his Ph.D. in soil science from the University of Wisconsin in

1962—perhaps the first Dalit after Ambedkar to earn a doctorate from an American university. In the 1950s, as an associate at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute in Delhi, Nimgade gets to spend time with Dr Ambedkar. Throughout his life, Nimgade remains singularly committed to the ambedkarite movement also. His experiences can be collected in his autobiography—*In The Tiger's Shadow*. Sohanlal Shastri was another companion of Babasaheb. He admired Babasaheb's deeds in his book *Babasaheb ke Sampark Mein 25 Varsha*.

It is not only with Babasaheb, the followers of every great man in the world are generally very anxious to know possibly the most about them. The adherents crave to know not only the most about their savior but also about their likes and dislikes. So, these are all collected works describe the actual character of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar. Some characteristics can be discussed here meaningfully.

Objective of the Study

Aim of writing this research paper is to throw light on the nature of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar which will help to know Babasaheb Ambedkar as a human being or an ordinary person and what was his real behavior being a constitution maker and nation builder. Because there have been many critics who considered Dr. Ambedkar a partial man or a messiah of only downtrodden section. But this paper will help them to know the actual personality beyond the curtain of a national figure.

Babasaheb's Love for Everyone

When we come across the instances of how he empathized with, understood and suffered the everyday pains of the ordinary people, we feel guileless pride. Babasaheb who helps a poor man lying by the road, brings him home, gives him clothes and food, and even offers him the job of a help—all this astonished us. One narrator, Polonius, speaks of Ambedkar sobbing like a child over the death of a pet dog in an accident. That he loved plants and gardening and had a special relationship with nature made us think of the relationship of Dalits with nature.

"Whenever Babasaheb needed a manicure, he sat on an easy chair, spread a towel on his knees, and started cutting nails, the bits of which fell on the towel. Once, Choudhary Devidas remarked, "Babasaheb, your style of cutting nails is quite different." Babasaheb looked meaningfully at Chaudhary Devidas and said, "See Chaudhary! Never let the bits of nails fall on the floor. It is no superstition. In fact, some birds take them for insects and swallow them, which causes their death. Therefore, these bits should be collected and thrown into a dustbin." How compassionate was Babasaheb, who was conscious of the well-being of not only human being but also the birds and the beast!", written in Devi Dayal in his diary.

Reading about Babasaheb's experiences of humiliation and exclusion since his schooldays, every dalit would recall his experiences of untouchability and feel heavy-hearted. Suffering without water to drink, or the difficulties Babasaheb faces in public transport or in accessing public spaces because he is

an untouchable, make for a common shared experience with all dalits.

Bama observed, in the latest book *Ambedkar: The Attendant* edited by Salim Yusufji, published by Navayana. There's an episode here narrated by Shantabai Kamble, who was a schoolteacher. In 1932, after a political meeting in a Maharashtrian village, Babasaheb summons the organizer for a chat the next morning. Shantabai's husband tags along. When they get there, Babasaheb is on his way to finish his morning ablutions, a jug of water in hand, the end of his dhoti hitched up on his shoulder. What follows is a discussion on a serious political issue. Clearly, Babasaheb never spared any moment from engaging with the concerns of the dalit movement (Bama: 2017: 1).

Punctuality

Babasaheb's another quality was punctuality which is incomparable with his contemporary leaders. Nanak Chand Rattu shares his notable experiences regarding the same. "Babasaheb finished his breakfast by 9:00 or 9:30, following which he reviewed some important papers at his office desk. If he had some time before leaving for his office, he took some book or important paper and sat in the verandah reading. The time was utilized by the visitors, who were there to see him or approached him with some request. That time was a best for those who required a short meeting. He had such visitors almost daily. Sometimes, he had important talks with people while boarding his car. He left for office at 9:45, with some books, which he read while commuting. His reading was not disrupted even on a train. He was never seen without a book in his hand. He always reached his office before time. Sometimes, he was there even before the peons." He observed punctuality all through his life.

Hospitality

Hospitality was also another special feature of Babasaheb's daily routine. Shankaranand Shastriji endorses that Babasaheb possessed another quality. Though so engrossed in his studies, he welcomed his guests properly. If there were any guests, he attended them personally and took great care of them. After all the care by the servants, Babasaheb himself took care of the convenience to be extended to the guests.

"On 22 December 1944, there were some visitors from Madras and Bombay. It was very cold. Guided by their local climate, they had not cared to bring warm clothes with them. They did not have warm clothes. Babasaheb walked out of his study to see the guests. He found them shivering with cold. He at once brought them his quilt and blanket, and spent that night studying beside a heater." So caring was he to his guests! He felt proud to respect them and arrange for their comforts. The visitors from Madras and Bombay were mighty pleased at Babasaheb's hospitality.

Caring about the Poor People

Once, as Babasaheb sat talking with some people in his guest room, he saw through the window. His cook, Sudama, was walking past with a platter. Babasaheb called him in. When asked, the cook informed that he was going to throw away the left over

(rice) from the past night. It peeved Babasaheb. He told his cook in a very serious tone that he should never cook so much in future that he would have to throw it. "See Sudama," Babasaheb said, "These are winter days. The rice does not get spoiled overnight in this season. Go; get it heated for the breakfast. You are perhaps not aware that many of our people do not get enough to eat. They have to sleep on an empty stomach. Whereas, you are throwing food. It is not good" Advocate Bhagwan Das admitted.

Logical Conduct

Once, Babasaheb sat amidst his fans. A discussion about the heaven and the hell was started. It was variously described by them. The discussion was drawn long. Presently, Babasaheb was made aware of a funeral procession going past his bungalow. Babasaheb directed Choudhary Devidas to go out and see what was going on. Choudhary Saheb returned to inform that some people were marching with a dead body to the cemetery (Nigam Bodh Ghat). Babasaheb enquired about the number of people accompanying it. "Some ten-twelve people," Choudhary Saheb replied.

Shortly, there was another funeral march. Choudhary Saheb was again sent out. The same question was put up to Choudhary Saheb on his return. "This time there were a lot of people, must be a thousand," Choudhary Saheb said.

Babasaheb observed with a smile, "See, this explains the heaven and the hell. The one accompanied by lesser people went to the hell. The one accompanied by a lot went to the heaven. Which means, the death of one caused grief to lesser people. The departure of the other one made more people sad. "Elaborating it, Babasaheb said," The household, whose master is corrupt, a gambler, and is, therefore, impoverished; who respects no one, beats his children, disrespects his wife, where there are quarrels, such a household may be called hell.

On the other hand, a man who is righteous, who remains aloof from evils and invests his earnings in good deeds staying away from evil, who minds savings and is, therefore, rich; who respects all, respects his wife; who is a generous giver; in whose household peace prevails; who welcomes his guests; who has compassion and loving-kindness for his neighbours; whom everyone wishes a long life; the household of such a man is to be regarded as the real heaven." However, Babasaheb did never believe in heaven and hell throughout his life because they were the superstitions in the sights of Babasaheb. But his description was too logical and depended upon praxis.

A Ready Wit

Babasaheb even attracted some criticism for adopting European style of clothes. But, his replies silenced his critics. When he was a barrister, the barristers in Bombay wore hotch-potch of a dress. They looked weird in English socks and boots, a Marathi loin cloth (Dhoti), an English coat, topped by a Konkana turban. Babasaheb, however, ever appeared in the English barristers' dress at court. Once, as he was seated in an armchair in the Bar-room as usual calmly reading a book, an advocate seated beside

him proudly in a native dress and turban made some insulting comments. "Why Dr. Ambedkar," the advocate said, "Did your forefathers wear such an English dress as this?" Babasaheb retorted, "Your forefathers lived without clothes. Why don't you appear naked in court? He was speechless."

Books Lover and Studious

Whether it was 22 Prithviraj Road, or the bungalow at Harding Avenue (Now Tilak Marg), or the spacious building at 26 Alipur Road, his personal library essentially occupied several rooms everywhere. As for the Rajagriha (his house at Mumbai), it was exclusively constructed to house books. His every moment was devoted to the books he kept with him. The books that were with him all the time were his companions and friends. He obtained something from every book, for which he was always eager.

Shankaranand Shastriji further writes- "Babasaheb's life was chiefly devoted to studies. He would never waste a moment in trifles. His studies were specifically focused. He could grasp the essence of a book by merely browsing through it. Some of the books he read sparingly. There were a few special books that he deemed to be profound and, therefore, settled down to study it seriously. He would often say that some books are seen, some are read, and there are some books that are studied. "Studying was an addiction with him. That is why he said—'is there a man in Asia who has climbed the Everest of knowledge? Remember, he is Babasaheb Ambedkar."

Once a while, Shankaranand Shastri came down from Amritsar almost every Sunday to see Babasaheb. One such Sunday in 1944, Babasaheb took Shastri to the Kabadi bazaar at the Jama Masjid, Delhi. His body guard was also with him. There, he approached a shop selling old books. With much interest, he examined those books and purchased the ones he liked. When the locals knew that the Labour Minister had come personally to purchase books from the shop selling old books, they were astonished. The lunch time arrived without his knowing. When Shastri reminded him of that, he did not heed. Finally, he came back home but not before he had purchased a lot of books on various subject. On the way, he observed that sometimes one got rare books on these shops selling old or second hand books. The readers are already informed that on the way to his house from the shops at Connaught Place. The books sellers, whether in Bombay or in Delhi, made it a point to send him catalogues of new books.

Babasaheb made it his habit to note down the gist of a book at the end of it. He wrote his notes in a code language in order to include the maximum on the least space, for which he had developed his own short hand script, un-decodable to others. Such was his accomplishment of knowledge, contemplation, hard study, and perception!

Shankaranand Shastri simply wondered whether anyone could study as Babasaheb did. Whether anyone could cultivate such love for books and such habit to collect them. Whether any of his followers could invest their ration money in purchasing books and to balance the budget, could sustain on

meager snacks. Shastri secretly concluded that such a man would be rarity. For, our people have no interest in studies. Only if the followers of Babasaheb could emulate this ideal habit from him and made his purchasing and reading of books and study a part of their life, it would not only enhance their dignity in knowledge but their family and children would also be studious. They will also consider it essential to purchase books and maintain a personal library like other needs of life. The light of knowledge will thus spread through the society, and no one proud of their caste will look down upon us."

From Babasaheb, the genius, we learn of his love for books, his speed in reading, his fortitude to bear sorrows, and his unceasing hard work. It is not surprising that his residence in Delhi had been called the House of Justice. (Devi Dayal: 2011:65) Remarking that it is not the lions that are slaughtered but goats, he called upon dalits not to be submissive and instead to assert themselves. He emphasized the importance of being brave and clever, and asked them to live with dignity and self-respect. Babasaheb also wanted his people to turn education into a weapon. He advised dalits not to get married early in life, but to give priority to educating themselves and achieving a good station (Bama: 2017: 1).

Not only this, Macaulay said that he did not want an empire without books. When Sir Burter Sweet left his library he wept. Like Johnson, Babasaheb would not lend his books to anyone. He thought that the borrowers never read the books but spoil them; and moreover, they would not even return the borrowed books.

Writing a book always pleased Babasaheb a lot. Whenever he received the published work, his joy was as spontaneous as a mother's at the sight of her newborn child. When Babasaheb was sent proofs during the printing process from the press, he made thorough changes. For, there were even more additions to his knowledge by then. The printing press people were naturally irked, but were silenced by his deep knowledge.

Reading and learning was not merely a part of Babasaheb's routine but, in fact, this addiction was integral to his life. He read books on the same subject only at a table. However, when he was exhausted by continuous reading, he would pace up and down his study for a short time before he sat down at another table to read or study the books on other subjects. Shankaranand Shastri witnessed it. "When he felt tired reading a book on one subject, he got up, walked in the room muttering something to himself, and sat down at another table reading a book on another subject".

Shankaranand Shastri Ji's remarks in this regard are quite notable. He writes, "Whoever saw Babasaheb knows that he is always surrounded by books. He visited libraries and book sellers every day. If there was a new arrival, he would purchase it. Learning consumed his time. No one could waste his time. To a businessman, earning wealth is time. To Napoleon Bonaparte, time was everything. To Babasaheb, learning or acquiring knowledge was everything. He knew the value of every moment in his

life. Therefore, he spent his every moment in learning. No visitor could waste his time. Once he entered his study and started reading, he would get lost in books. The visitor would note his concentration and leave the room. He was surrounded by quietude.

Life of an Indian Saint

Not that Babasaheb despised the Indian clothes. In fact, on invite and special occasion, he wore Indian achkan, churidars, and black shoes. At parties with the Viceroy, which were attended by a good number of high English officials, Babasaheb always appeared in Indian clothes. He had a special dress for these parties. In fact, he had declared to the Viceroy that he would always appear in the Indian dress. "Invite me if you would, or don't invite me. I don't care." He had told the Viceroy. However, Dr. Ambedkar was allowed to wear what he liked. "During my four years with Babasaheb, I never saw him dressed up otherwise when attending a party at the Viceroy's", Devi Dayal observed.

At home, he wore simple clothes. During the summer, he wore chappals, loin cloth, Kurta, and cap. His loin cloth was thin but measured four 'hands', with comparatively less width, which he wrapped around his waist. His Kurta was knee-long. And, dressed up in that, he looked like a saint. He also wore shirt and pyjama at home. He loved to wear 'kachchha' (underwear), which opened like pants but always had a waist band. He said, "This dress is very inexpensive and comfortable. I will advise the poor people to adopt it as their general uniform." During winter, he wore a sweater over his shirt. He had also got himself a thick woolen jacket, which, he said, was something which warded off all fear of cold. In a cold weather, his choicest item was a muffler. He said that a muffler was the most useful item in winters as it protected such vital parts of body as neck and chest against season; he also wore a woolen long coat at home. That made him quite comfortable. A coat reaching down to his heels was sufficient for him. Working in that outfit, he appeared like a Tolstoy working on his 'War and Peace'

A Diligent Scholar

Apart from this, Babasaheb was a scholar of scholars and a man of firm resolve. Sohanlal Shastri ji says—"In 1948-1949, I saw Babasaheb drafting the Constitution, reading and re-reading it, and revising and enlarging it till 2:00 AM. How honestly, sincerely and diligently did this great man, who was a diabetic, prepared the Constitution! (How he) debated with and convinced the great scholars of law in the Constituent Assembly to have its each and every article passed! (How he) taxed his brain to the extremes at the Congress cabinets so that the Constitution of India could be passed properly. (He) did not at all mind his own health, comfort and convenience, whereas the other members of the cabinet went about getting their bungalows decorated, and getting themselves praised at the fairs, fests and functions..." (Sohanlal Shastri: 310)

On the contrary, Babasaheb disliked attending big parties. As Sohanlal Shastri writes, "He was the least interested in dining out, recreative games and shows, and going to movies. He was not

much fond of attending big parties and even hosting them. To him, it was sheer waste of time and money."

A Man of His Words

It is widely known fact that Babasaheb stayed up late studying books. Going late to bed was routine with him. This late night habit added a very inspiring episode to his ideal life. Shankaranand Shastri writes towards the end of his book, "In the third week of February, the representatives of *The Guardian*, Manchester, England and *The New York Times*, America, arrived in India to interview the Indian leaders. They started with Gandhiji, who fixed 9:00 PM for the interview. When they contacted M. A. Jinnah, he called them at 9:30 PM. However, Babasaheb allowed them to see him at any time for interview. When the two representatives went to interview Gandhiji at the fixed time, they were told that he was asleep and that they should come in the morning. Mr. Jinnah was also informed to be sleeping. But, when they arrived at Babasaheb's place at midnight, they were astonished. They saw that Babasaheb was in his study, fully dressed up, reading, and waiting for them. Their first reaction was 'It is surprising. We found two great leaders of the country—Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah—asleep. Here, you are, in your formal dress, still awake and waiting for us.' Babasaheb replied—Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah are comfortably asleep because their community is awakened—they are aware. I am awake because my community is asleep and ignorant. It is not awakened like them.' The two journalists were speechless.

Higher Goals

Babasaheb usually said, as Devi Dayal had written in his diary, "My principle of life is altogether different from others'. They say that something is better than nothing. But, I say that nothing is better than something."

Babasaheb further said "man must possess a strong desire to achieve excellence. Without desire, he cannot make his nature creative. Desire is a sprout that sends forth creepers of all kinds. Desire is an incentive that struggles against man's fate. Of course, the desire should not be for a trivial but for a great thing. One who desires a trifle gets a trifle and he who desires great thing gets a great thing. Following that, one should toil to fulfill his desire. I cherished a high desire and worked hard to fulfill it. I never accepted low position. Initially, the Bombay Government offered me a post at the Home Department at Rs.650 per month, which I declined. Again, they desired to appoint me as a District Magistrate, which I rejected as well. In 1937, the Congress offered me the Chairmanship of the Dhara Sabha. I did not accept it either. It was eventually in 1942 that I agreed to be the Labour Minister under the Central Government. Had I engaged myself with smaller things, how could I have attained this post?"

Quality of Conversation/ Love for Wife and Parents

Conversation is an important part of Babasaheb's behaviour. An excellent means of his recreation is his conversation at the end of a toilsome day. It not only refreshed him bodily but also

enhanced his attitude, thought, feelings and imagination. A calm Babasaheb in a pyjama, and angarkha, a round black cap, and a book in his hand—sat in a serene attitude like Lord Buddha. His friends, his followers, and his adversaries surround him to hear him speak. As he started speaking, he was a wizard, and the assembled people were spell-bound spectators. He talked on various topics. The scope of his conversation was as immense as his knowledge. His main topics of conversation were the moving tales of his own struggles; the sweet memories of his parents and the saintly 'Ramu', the legend of Lord Buddha and other great personalities; the Indian philosophy, social set-up, its appreciation and reality; the contemporary political questions and other solutions; Mr. Gandhi, his social, political and religious dominance, and his confusing theories.

The narration of his past days was punctuated with—"Oh! I remember this event so vividly that I can portray it." While portraying the personal incidents, he enjoyed himself immensely. He smile, and he laughed loudly in those moments. Sometimes, he was so pathetic recalling such incidents that, lost in ecstasy, he moved his audience to oblivion and they listened to his rhapsody like a recluse in concentrations. While he talked, he forgets to eat or drink. On several occasions, his conversations started at five in the evening, to last till twelve at midnight. His conversations focused primarily on his parents, and wife 'Ramu' (Ramabai). His perception regarding that was most unusual. He said, "I never grieve over the loss of my parents. For, I have this strange feeling that my parents are not dead, that they are alive and always with me. And, you know, when I am alone, I talk to them." What an uncommon instance of love and faith for one's parents!

Not only this, Babasaheb did never forget to admire his wife—Ramabai. "Babasaheb said that he was the first barrister from his caste in all Maharashtra. He told that 'when I thought of practicing law at Bombay, I grew nervous. I did not have either a nice house or the essential law books. The worst of it was that all the court business was grabbed by the Brahmins, the Baniyas, and the Parsis. Even though I had become a barrister, no solicitor would accept me as his junior. Finally, I took up a job at a commerce college for one hundred and fifty rupees per month. Even that job was not easily handed over to me. I faced opposition from various quarters. Out of my salary, I gave fifty rupees to my wife—Ramabai towards the domestic expenses. My wife was illiterate and not good at accounts, but she had her own unique method of budgeting expenses. She would take thirty pieces or pouches of papers, put one and half rupees in each of them, and keep it tied in a piece of cloth. She kept five rupees aside for contingencies. Come what may, she would never spend more than the contents of one packet in a day. She was so shrewd a woman that she purchased the basket of dry dung cakes from a neighbouring village two miles away, and when she walked back with the basket on her head, the local women taunted that the wife of Mr. Barrister was walking down with the basket of dung

cakes. She was totally mindless of her position, they remarked. But Ramabai carried on her routine despite those women's remarks.'

He further said that 'I checked her on a few occasions that it did not behave her to fetch a basket of dung cakes on her head from some village. But, she invariably replied that she would never spend more than one packet, or one and half rupees, in a day. The dung cakes are much cheaper and better in village than in the town. Therefore, she said, she saw no harm in carrying dung cakes on her head, and that she was not at all affected by whatever nonsense the people talked.

Babasaheb related pleasant anecdotes from his domestic life. Tears of love appeared in his eyes as he spoke about the righteous Ramabai. "My wife was very good cook. I think she was the best," he said. "She prepared all sorts of dishes. I was used to nice food at that time. Since 1947, when she fell ill and could cook no more, I did away with my habit and ate whatever food was served to me. Ramu! She was a great woman in every respect of life."

Satiric Personality

Sometimes his conversation on other topics was generally quite critical. It was tinged with satire, humour, and fun as well. However, it was not without instructions and exhortations either. It may be cited some specimens of his conversation from Devi Dayal's diary. In The Constitution house, April month was that. In the evening, he is conversing with a reporter:

The reporter: Doctor Saheb! What is news these days?

Babasaheb: Don't you see news? All the papers are filled with Gandhiji's shit and urine. What more do you want? You have turned publication into prostitution. After the prayer, the nonsense about Gandhi, that he defecated, he pissed, this and that, which you publish full on the front page. On the other hand, you change, converse, or altogether suppress what is essential, important and in the interest of the country. Your press had done nothing more than promoting the folly of the fools and wife of the wily.

On another occasion, a congressman: Then, you don't consider Gandhi a great man?

Dr. Ambedkar: No, not at all. He has given nothing new to the world. If wile is the trait of greatness, I will consider (Gandhi a great man).

Conclusion

The great characteristic of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar is his realism. There is not an iota of affectation there. He speaks and acts from his heart. This quality of his character is recognized not only by his followers but also by his adversaries. Once, while sitting in his lawn, he said, "Even my rival Congressmen respect me. Do you know why they respect me? They are well aware that my 'yes' is always 'yes' and my 'no' is always 'no', and nothing would ever change it. I have not learnt hypocrisy." This moral quality is the surest way to get respect. That is why Dr. Ambedkar is respected even by those who do not see eye to eye with him politically. He is universally accepted for his character. On another occasion, Babasaheb observed, "There are but two

types of people I hate in this world. One, those who are immoral and, two, those who are ungrateful. A man must be grateful for his favour done to him. I would never pardon a man who forgets an act of favour and disregards the obligation of a benefactor. You know how I was insulted at Maharaja Gaikwad's office, how I was tormented by the people there. But, I never uttered a word against him. Anyway, he has done only good to me." Gratefulness is a characteristic of great man.

According to Jafferson, though the books were his first love. Lokmanya Tilak said that he aspired to be a Math teacher in a college, but was deviated from his goal by the fight for freedom. Babasaheb also aspired to be a college professor, but the Untouchables' problem pressed him into politics. Had he not fought for dalits' emancipation, he would have become a saint or a very great Buddhist monk. Pandit Madanmohan Malviya recognized his immense knowledge and declared in 1935 at Lahore that "Babasaheb is a storehouse of knowledge. He possessed immense knowledge." According to Pandit Malaviya's mythological belief, Babasaheb was a son of goddess Saraswati.

References

1. Rattu, Nanak Chand (1995): *Reminiscences and Remembrances of Dr B R Ambedkar*, New Delhi: Falcon Books.
2. Khairmode, C B (1983): *Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: Charitra, Vol 9, Mumbai: Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya & Sanskruti Mandal.*
3. Khairmode, C B (2002): *Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: Charitra, Vol 5, Pune: Sugawa.*
4. Guha, Ramachandra (2001): *An Anthropologist among the Marxists and Other Essays*, New Delhi: Permanent Black.
5. Guru, Gopal (2017): "Ethics in Ambedkar's Critique of Gandhi", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.LII, No 15, p.96.
6. Bama (2017): "He loved outsize fountain pens", *The Hindu, Delhi, Sunday, April 16.*
7. Dayal, Devi (2011): *Daily Routine of Dr. Ambedkar*, New Delhi, Samyak Prakashan.
8. Keer, Dhananjay (1995): *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Life and Mission*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan.