

Frantz Fanon And B.R. Ambedkar: A Comparative Study Of Their Emancipatory Thought

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Abstract

Frantz Fanon and BR Ambedkar as theorists of the marginalised communities belong to the so-called 'global south'. A comparative reading of both the thinkers aim in bringing them together in understanding their respective experience, personal history, and theorisation around the formation of the oppressed subject-hood. Experientially, Fanon and Ambedkar have a lot in common. Their thinking emanating from lived experience and an active life of learning and working diligently in their vocation, find sincere convergence. In the discussions around the formation of oppressed identity and subject-hood we find that Fanon and Ambedkar give due place to the socio-psychological diagnosis of racism and casteism. They have devoted a great amount of study into the genesis of these oppressive structures. This paper particularly looks at Fanon's and Ambedkar's prescription for emancipation of that oppressed identity and subject-hood.

Keywords: Ambedkar, Fanon, Humanism.

I. Different Struggles

Frantz Fanon has been a victim of racism. He lived under the black skin, with the black identity, and an imagination of an alternative world where his experience would be different than that of the experience under colonialism. Ambedkar lived a life of an untouchable, and experienced trauma associated with receiving humiliation under casteism. Ambedkar as a thinker has a double vantage point of both caste and race. He experienced racism during his overseas study in America and Britain. And he had experienced trauma of casteism right from his childhood. In their writings we find that Ambedkar is able to address the questions of caste as well as race, however, Fanon is focusing on race only. Ambedkar not

only deals with conceptualisations of caste and race individually, he goes on to relate both these conceptual categories in their functioning with each other.

“The Caste system cannot be said to have grown as a means of preventing the admixture of races or as a means of maintaining purity of blood. As a matter of fact Caste system came into being long after the different races of India had commingled in blood and culture. To hold that distinctions of Castes or really distinctions of race and to treat different Castes as though they were so many different races is a gross perversion of facts. What racial affinity is there between the Brahmin of the Punjab and the Brahmin of Madras? What racial affinity is there between the untouchable of Bengal and the untouchable of Madras? What racial difference is there between the Brahmin of the Punjab and the Chamar of the Punjab? What racial difference is there between the Brahmin of Madras and the Pariah of Madras? The Brahmin of the Punjab is racially of the same stock as the Chamar of the Punjab and the Brahmin of Madras is of the same race as the Pariah of Madras. Caste system does not demarcate racial division. Caste system is a social division of people of the same race.” (Ambedkar, 1936)

Ambedkar clarifies that even though the psychological and social impact of racism and casteism as exploitative structures in society might be similar on the victims, they do not necessarily entail similarity in the conceptual category of race and caste. It is to say that race and caste are very different mechanisms or categories in which people are marked. Caste is very different from racism also because the oppressive structure of caste is built by the same society and same indigenous people one lives with. However in case of racism, a black person can easily identify and consider the white person as outsider. Under racism, the oppressor is an outsider who has encroached the victim's life. Apart from clear symbolic markings such as the colour of the skin, physical features, culture, language, tradition and ways of life can be very different in the society of the black people and the society of the white people. However in the case of caste, physical features, colour of the skin, culture, language, tradition, ways of life, and religion, all can be same but still caste can categorise, differentiate, and demarcate people into different categories placed vertically in a graded hierarchy. Casteism as a structure has not arrived from a foreign land. It is as local as the victims themselves.

The other difference in the situation of casteism is that casteism has been independent of colonialism. It is not colonialism that is substantiating casteism as an oppressive structure. Colonialism is an independent and additional oppressive structure over and above the already existing ancient system of caste. Therefore, in the colonised Indian subcontinent the victim is dealing with dual layered identity and dual layered oppressive structure giving that identity. The intersection of caste and colonialism made it a complex struggle for thinkers like Ambedkar. It was very difficult for Ambedkar to negotiate between these two oppressive structures and simultaneously be able to think about a new utopia. Unsurprisingly, Ambedkar's struggle against casteism were, in the times when struggles against colonialism were being forged, considered as a distracting force diluting the independence struggle. Due to colonialism, and its overarching impact on almost all castes, the anti-caste struggle was being considered as untimely, unnecessary, and weakening the imagination of an independent India. Ambedkar found himself tussling between these two forces and imagining a combined struggle. However it is noteworthy that Ambedkar worked with a clear priority that he has to work for his own people and his own community first. His people being the Dalits and the untouchables who were victims of casteism first and colonialism second. Ambedkar was clear that decolonisation would not bring much positive change in the lives of the untouchables just like colonialism did not bring much worse. Life of the Dalit, the untouchable was determined by the caste structure and discriminatory practises in every moment of the person's existence. Therefore, the pressing need for the emancipation of the Dalits and the untouchables were to fight against casteism and forge anti-caste struggles while simultaneously imagining a society which is obviously not being colonised from outsiders. One must be cautioned with this argument, for Ambedkar in his analysis *Who Were the Shudras* is hinting at an ancient colonisation of the broken Buddhist men. Therefore, one must not confuse that Ambedkar is suggesting that Dalits and the untouchables readily considered caste Hindus as part of their own society. He keenly traced their evolution through different phases of history.

Ambedkar has also compared slavery and untouchability as two different yet quite similar unfair structures of social organisation. Ambedkar compares slavery and untouchability for various reasons. Firstly, since he has been a victim of racism and slavery is the instrument of oppression under racial organisation of society, he was very keen in understanding slavery. Second, he was keen to know what other forms of

oppression existed in a similar manner in their functional mechanism when compared to caste system in India. Third, he wanted to find out the uniqueness of caste system when compared to other forms of oppression. Fourth, in a bid to imagine an utopia beyond a caste-based society, he compared emancipatory possibilities under different structures of oppression in society. And he concluded that casteism has a unique route and function when compare to racism and slavery, and would perhaps require an altogether different kind of emancipatory struggle compared to the struggles of the slaves in Roman Empire or in the modern world Americas. Certainly he was curious in comparing anti-caste struggle with anti racism struggle. Upon comparison he found that casteism is fundamentally different even though functionally similar to race. All this because untouchability is rooted in the religion of the local culture. He writes,

“Neither slavery nor untouchability is a free social order. But if a distinction is to be made—and there is no doubt that there is distinction between the two—the test is whether education, virtue, happiness, culture, and wealth is possible within slavery or within untouchability. Judged by this test it is beyond controversy that slavery is hundred times better than untouchability. In slavery there is room for education, virtue, happiness, culture, or wealth. In untouchability there is none. Untouchability has none of the advantages of an un-free social order such as slavery.” (Ambedkar, 1989, chap. 3 vol. 5)

“The Untouchable has no entry in the higher arts of civilisation and no way open to a life of culture. He must only sweep. He must do nothing else. Untouchability carries no security as to livelihood. None from the Hindus is responsible for the feeding, housing and clothing of the Untouchable. The health of the Untouchable is the care of nobody. Indeed, the death of an Untouchable is regarded as a good riddance. There is a Hindu proverb, which says The Untouchable is dead and the fear of pollution has vanished.” (ibid.)

Fanon on the other hand, experienced different kind of dual arrangement in his praxis. Racism and colonialism complemented and supplemented each other and from the vantage point of the victim appeared as a single force in the determination of the subject hood. His experience in Algeria and interaction with Islamic world was very different from what he had experienced at home and in France. He understood that racism when it

functions with the blacks is slightly different than it does with Arab Muslims.

II. Transcending the Identity

We concluded in the last chapter that the identity which the oppressed person receives from the oppressor is an instrument of exploitation because it serves as a physical, social and psychological marking. As discussed, the black colour of the skin does not entail blackness as inferiority. Similarly, caste name does not entail untouchability. These are instruments of markings where meaning is loaded by the oppressor. And the oppressed in the Hegelian juggle of master slave dialectic cannot come to terms with his authentic consciousness and allows the marking to determine. Therefore, it comes out as a pertinent question for the oppressed person to take a call on what should be done with such an identity? This identity because it is given by the oppressor must be thrown away, one might feel. However, it is not so easy to simply do away with an identity you have born into. The identity determines and defines the consciousness from childhood, therefore it cannot be so easy to reimagine a self, which never existed actually, by removing the current identity. It is further complicated by the lifelong accumulation of aspirations that the oppressed person develops in a bid to become just like the oppressor; a want to acquire cultural privileges and self-affirmative high ground. These aspirations do not give space in the active consciousness of the oppressed person to take a philosophical pause and critically re-examine everything they desire. Since it is not anymore, only about the material superiority in the life long experience with unauthorised identity. The oppressed person accepts “Epistemological superiority” of the oppressor. Karthik Rama Manoharan (2019) argues that it is this “Epistemological superiority” that further paves the way for “epidermal superiority” in the case of racism.

The aspiration of becoming white and becoming that of the upper caste is the precise logic behind the negritude movement, and the movements associated with self-respect based in self aggrandising. Fanon outlines this phenomenon experienced by the oppressed person of being encapsulated in to the given identity as follows,

“As I begin to recognise that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro. But then I recognise that I am a Negro. There are two ways out of this conflict. Either I ask others to pay no attention to my skin, or else I want them to be aware of it. I try then to find value for what is

bad—since I have unthinkingly conceded that the black man is the color of evil. In order to terminate this neurotic situation, in which I am compelled to choose an unhealthy, conflictual solution, fed on fantasies, hostile, inhuman in short, I have only one solution: to rise above this absurd drama that others have staged round me, to reject the two terms that are equally unacceptable, and, through one human being, to reach out for the universal.” (Fanon, 2008, p.153)

Negritude, as a politics of instilling pride in the oppressed self to resist and challenge the inferior status that has been assigned to the Black person, to a degree, can be justified. It is based on the belief that peculiarities are unique and therefore the black culture, black identity, and in a life world that has been created in society of the black people is unique with its peculiarities. Negritude aims at changing the definitions which determines and marks the black identity and vouches for an imagined “Negro authenticity and Negro past” (Manoharan, 2019). In his book *Towards African Revolution* (1964) Fanon claims that Negro as a term has been used by the oppressor to highlight the black person in a degenerative way. It has no historical meaning or significance except that of humiliation and torture that it brought. He is very sceptical of such an attempt in which the very marker of determination and symbol of encapsulated existence, the black identity, is being used to glorify a past that never existed; a culture that is not authentic; a being that never was conscious. Fanon cannot find any justification behind this rather communal attempt of segregating the black identity as a separate compartment trying to build on its own imaginary and inauthentic imagery. Fanonian critique of the negritude movement outlines his tendency to look for the future rather than the past.

According to him the past is full of drama (read inauthenticity) and as he speaks in BSWM, he wants to rise above the drama in search for a universal where he is not forced to become, but he authentically becomes the real self. The Negritude movement, or any other essentialising movement which tries to build on an aggrandisement of the black identity is not convincing Fanon. For he as a psychiatrist does not see any point in holding onto the torturous past. His focus is on healing not remembering the wounds. According to Fanon, one cannot look at the world in a positive light to stop it from hurting oneself. Practicality demands a clear proclamation, that a wound is a wound.

“As a psychoanalyst, I should help my patient to become conscious of his unconscious and abandon his attempts at a hallucinatory whitening, but also to act in the direction of a change in the social structure.” (Fanon, 2008, p.74)

Fanon has considered the arguments around the Negritude movement by Aimé Césaire, Senegalese Léopold Sédar Senghor, Léon Damas et. al. According to these writers Negritude is based in the claims of a ‘black universalism’; a search for an authentic black past which contains a harmonious belonging for the Negro. These writers considered Negritude to be a way of reclamation of the authentic identity, as well as resistance to the oppressor’s attempts of assimilation. Césaire considers Negritude as an act of challenge and resistance, since the word Negro/Negre have been a strong affirmation of the black self in the world of the white oppressor. Jean Paul Sartre understood the intention behind the Negritude movement and its push for a revaluation of particularism. In his work “Black Orpheus”, Sartre recognises that the black identity is addressing itself as black. And it is an act of consciousness since this is not what the oppressor has expected out of the black person. This unexpected outcome from the oppressed person is an evidence that the black is “awakening to consciousness”. Thus, it could be argued that Negritude is actually an “anti-racist racism”. However, Sartre did not consider Negritude as a strong movement in the historical flow of dialectic. He considered that since it is an ‘anti-racist racism’ it will not lead to any transcendence. The ultimate goal, if it is transcendence, cannot rely upon racial compartmentalisation. Be it from the oppressor or the oppressed. Negritude cannot be considered as the destiny it is at most a means to an end.

Jean Paul Sartre believes in socialism and utopia of a classless society. He is a Marxist who imagines a Marxist universalism where due to the nature of classless society everybody is deemed to be equal. For Sartre, racism is a class problem and only a true socialist revolution can eradicate racism and establish the utopia. Even though he is concerned about the oppression of the black identity, he expects that the black person will play a considerable role in the socialist revolution rather than endlessly engaging in an anti-racist racism of negritude. Fanon is influenced by Sartre. He had a complex relationship with the movement of Negritude. Sometimes he has sympathy for the movement, the other

times he is hostile to it. Although Fanon gives due place to the lived experience of the black identity under racist structure, he does not consider Negritude as the way forward for emancipation. Fanon is exactly in line with Sartre's understanding that any re-racialisation of society is a futile attempt for an emancipation from race.

Ambedkar on the other hand outlines that the Brahmins in order to carve for themselves a privileged identity, created the other caste identities. It is the Brahmanical ideology which has been making concerted efforts to suppress and lock the shudras, throughout history. This is carried out through the religious and mythologically sanctioned texts. As discussed in the previous chapter the oppressor creates the slave in order to mark himself as the master. The Brahminical ideology actively debarred the shudras and created practises of untouchability by giving them religious sanction so that this practice gets a metaphysical legitimacy. Here we find another convergence between Fanon and Ambedkar. Ambedkar asserts that the untouchables have to realise and break the clutches of the Brahmanical ideology. This dominance has to end and the untouchables should get a consciousness that the lowly status conferred upon them was never their destiny or in fact, any result of their previous birth or karma. The conditions under which they survive are absolutely external to them. They are a result of the unjust and exploitative system. Ambedkar has elucidated at several moments of his writings that the most important work towards the emancipation of the Dalits and the untouchables is to make them realise that they need not be oppressed or inferior to the oppressor. This system of oppression can be ended and they have the necessary power to do it. Ambedkar considers that this realisation will be the first step in any effort for the emancipation of the oppressed Dalits

All those sympathetic to the re-significations of the Dalit identity in which Dalits attempted to alter the meaning of the word shudra by utilising several name changes like Dalits, Harijan, or Valmiki. Just like Fanon, Ambedkar also realises that a sense of worth and value is needed in a person to lead a dignified life and if the oppressed is attempting any valuation of its identity there is nothing morally wrong in that. However, just like Fanon, Ambedkar is concerned that the re-signification of the oppressed identity shall be futile because the identity itself has been responsible for the experience of torture and degradation. It is the identity itself which contains degeneration and dehumanisation, therefore, the identity must go. There is no benefit in holding on to such kind of an identity. He emphasises that the untouchables need to develop a sense of dignity and self-respect, and in this process of developing this dignity and

self-respect, they will despise their current situation and develop a sincere desire to transform it through a concerted social revolution. According to Ambedkar, self-respect and dignity are the quintessential factors in the life of any human person (Kheer, 1971). As pragmatic as Ambedkar was, he made it very clear that societies do not have respect and dignity as given, rather these values are acquired. And they cannot be acquired by mere claim or any call for human rights. They will be earned and established through struggle, sacrifice, and moral energisation of the self. Only that can aid in the emancipation of the untouchables and Dalit.

III. New Humanism

Another important perspective that Fanon is putting forth in explaining the situatedness of the oppressed person under colonialism is that the identity formation of the oppressed person has been a process marked by sheer violence. The oppressed person whatever he has become today is a result of violent techniques used by the coloniser. Fanon considers liberalism along with any identity reinstating movement, depending upon recognition of the other, to be mere attempts of reforms. Fanon believes that since the coloniser is using violent methodology and techniques to oppress the black subject, any attempt to play in the established game, by seeking recognition from the oppressor or oppressors culture, or by reversing the logic of oppression, will not fetch any emancipator zeal. Fanon has clarified his intention behind the diagnosis of racism and colonialism. He intends to understand the causal roots of the functional mechanism of racism under colonialism and after the successful identification through the psychoanalytical lens he wants to identify ways in which he can destroy those roots. (Fanon, 1988)

In this endeavour emancipation for him requires a radical revolutionary Praxis. There is no point in going back to the Past in search for rediscovering the lost tradition of black identity. There is no evidence according to Fanon, whether any glorious African/black past existed. It would be a waste of time to wander in the past in search for any emancipatory methodology. The search for humanism does not need to look backwards. In the WOTE, Fanon declares that attempts by the African movement to look for a glorious native culture and re-establish it in the present is nothing more than their adoption of white tendency. The White considered the natives as exotic therefore redeveloping the native is giving in to that tendency of exorcising the native. When it comes to the importance of recognition, Fanon outrightly suggests that non-recognition

is not a problem of the oppressed. The onus of the non-recognition does not lie on the oppressed or somebody who has not been recognised; it lies with the oppressor. He declares that whosoever is "reluctant to recognise me opposes me" (Fanon, 2008). In the title of his book itself, he is clarifying his intentions that the black people need not wear the white masks. The crux of his thinking on emancipation lies in the title of his book itself. Only in a situation when the black skin throws away the white mask can any possibility of emancipation be nurtured. The black oppressed personhood needs to be emancipated from the "psycho-existentialist complex" (ibid.). The black himself has to attack the social origins of the neurosis that the white colonial experience has created in the mind of the black. And this can only be done through a method of psychological redemption through action.

Fanon is not interested in the particularities that identities shape because it is in these particularities that the origin of oppression, the cause of consequence is hidden. It is these particularities that have the roots of the oppression. Fanon has clearly diagnosed the cause in the black identity itself. He wants to do away with it. Therefore, his idea of emancipation is a radical transcendence of black particularities.

"Thus human reality in-itself-for-itself can be achieved only through conflict and through the risk that conflict implies. This risk means that I go beyond life toward a supreme good that is the transformation of subjective certainty of my own worth into a universally valid objective truth." (ibid., p.169)

Prof. Gordon (1995) illustrates that race is an illness brought on by the European division of humankind. The idea of identity that we must live by must not be racialised or reduced to a singular definition. The definition of all other racial colours is useless without the norm of whiteness. "Freedom" is neither "Black freedom," "Asian freedom," "Native American freedom," or "Latino freedom." The link between coloured freedoms and systemic racism and white supremacy has shaped how we see freedom or social equality. De-racialisation takes many different forms, including civil liberties, black power, or national independence. But these movements' concepts and goals were weak and constrained. National liberation or Black Power were not brought about by them. One must concentrate on how these new social links emerged, the socioeconomic, and political patterns that followed, and the implications for potential outcomes. In

order to reverse the flood and put humanity back into the picture, de-racialisation becomes crucial. These ideas are in consonance with Fanonian thinking.

“When one tries to examine the structure of this or that form of exploitation from an abstract point of view, one simply turns one’s back on the major, basic problem, which is that of restoring man to his proper place.” (Fanon, 2008, p.65)

De-racialisation aims to alter the social landscape. To de-racialise, we must disrupt the existing social structure. Race-related economic and social conditions need to be altered by individual behaviour. The elimination of humanity brought about by race cannot be properly grasped unless in the precise proportion that we engage in societal activity to reform its social base. Shared agreement or the fostering of relationships across racial groupings cannot change racial reality. The process of de-racialisation results in a re-articulation of the meaning assigned to being human by bringing together two forces that are by nature antagonistic to one another. The first step in this process focuses on how and why race is used to categorise persons at both life and death. The Fanonian understanding of an emancipatory methodology call for a reconstruction of a new society with new social relations. According to him, one shall have to keep fighting for the construction of a race-free society until racism has been eradicated from our daily lives and ideals. But in order to do that and take a seat at a table where everyone is welcome, we must engage in a rigorous philosophical and political criticism of racism as well as ideologies of uniqueness.

Only if the commemoration of difference touches onto the central issue of our moment of giving, of the common good, and of broadening our horizons—will it be significant. There's going to be the impact of history. We must improve our ability to bear and distribute its heaviness. We are destined to live with both the things we have inherited and the things we have generated. Given that the attitude of a time in which the hierarchisation of human kinds predominated has not quite left us, we will be expected to work both with and against history to build a future that will be embraced in full and with equal dignity. The way forward is obvious: we must build a future which is inextricably linked to ideas of morality, humanity, and the common good on the foundation of a deconstruction of the past. The deconstruction of the past is necessary because the ideas

with the oppressed works has been constituted in his mind by the oppressor. He argues that,

“...Negro knows nothing of the cost of freedom, for he has not fought for it. From time to time he has fought for Liberty and Justice, but these were always white liberty and white justice; that is, values secreted by his masters.” (ibid., p.172)

Fanon completely disregards any structural aid from the world of the oppressor. In other words he does not seek any possibility of emancipation through the social, political or economic arrangements ideated by the white colonisers. Fanon is against the language which white colonisers use. He argues that colonialism did not start with any culture of mutual respect and recognition, it did not had a contract written in a mutually recognised language therefore any attempt of carrying out decolonisation within the same language of social contract is not possible. That is the reason why Fanon is not interested in the classical meaning or process of decolonisation. He intends to fight not for a politico-legal process of decolonisation. He clarifies that decolonisation is a process within the oppressive measures of the colonisers. The coloniser just like they oppressed might possibly confer some liberty to the oppressed. However, that does not change or challenge the master-slave relation. That relation has resulted in neurosis in the mind of the oppressed and the oppressed does not find any way out of it. Decolonisation is not going to cure the mind of the oppressed person. This healing would require experience of true freedom.

In true freedom for Fanon is in a radical revolution which if needed shall not shy away from violence. In the book towards the African revolution Fanon fell on his arguing that the slave, the black identity, the oppressed does not want any cooperation, contract, legal dealing with the oppressor. The oppressed African person who wants the elimination of the master all together. It is in that kind of a struggle an outcome that the black person will uproot the causality of all his pain and psychological trauma. With the elimination of the master the black identity shall not remain black anymore and all the tea generative practices meanings and values attached to the Black identity shall cease to exist. Paving a way for fresh creation of social relations based in the idea of a new humanism. That is how fan and imagines freedom of the individual. He wants to recreate the human person from scratch. Complete Tabula Rasa shall be created

through struggle according to fellow. And then the renewed human personality after the study shall write the future of social relations marked by harmony peace and togetherness not any more dependent on any invert looking conception of the clear it is rather looking forward to an expansionist identity of humanism.

Ambedkar also elucidates that in order to free oneself from the clutches of caste there is no possibility of finding any methodological significance in seeking recognition from people who believe in caste. Unlike Fanon who completely disregards the structural mechanisms which are in practice of the oppressor, Ambedkar believes in law as the instrument of social change. Ambedkar does not vouch for violence like Fanon. Ambedkar is a person of enlightenment, modernity, and liberal tradition. And through this framework, he imagines an emancipation of the most downtrodden of the society. Without the conception of violence in the methodology of social change, Ambedkar is imagining a radical restructuring of the society where the power relations will be altered in such a way that the age old structure of caste will not be able to segregate people in graded hierarchies. This would be undertaken by the untouchables who must develop a sense of urgency and concentrate on formulating strategies throughout the country for launching struggles of social justice. Ambedkar's firm belief in modernity, liberalism, and law convinced him that something like the universal adult franchise becomes remarkably crucial step for the empowerment of the marginalised communities. Democracy and representation is the set of tools with which Ambedkar wants to achieve social justice however he is concerned that the Hindu majority can use democracy and voting rights against the socially marginalised Dalits. We must note here that unlike other social thinkers of the time Ambedkar is reluctant in calling Dalits as Hindus. He is adamant and logically arguing that the Hindu society, which does not accept with dignity and self-respect the existence of Dalits, cannot call them as their own. Therefore, according to Ambedkar, Dalits and the untouchables are outsiders.

In order to prevent democracy being overtaken by the majority Ambedkar brought in the idea of major constitutional arrangements with which there can be a check on the power access in democracy. One such example is the policy of reservation. The policy of reservation is supposed to ensure, according to Ambedkar, a proportionate representation through constitutionally guaranteed seats for the untouchables. This

shows that Ambedkar had a huge faith in the legitimacy of the political system as the driver of social change. However, more importantly it is Ambedkar's thought on the locked identity of caste that paves the way for his imagination of a radical emancipatory move which is the conversion to put this in Buddhism. According to Ambedkar since the untouchables are the wretched of the earth, they can never be welcomed to form an equally respectable part of the Hindu social framework. This impossibility is something which Ambedkar was clear about since the beginning. He is firm that the Hindu society is inherently based on a system of caste divisions and the untouchables fall at the bottom most, therefore, there is no chance that even with a system of representation, reservation, voting rights, and participation in democracy, that the untouchables can attain equal status in society. The political status shall not automatically translate into social status of for the untouchables. Even if there is political democracy, representation, and political equality, none of them can ensure social justice or social equality for the untouchables.

This is the reason why Ambedkar is look looking for a radical change that will emancipate the Dalit subject out from the clutches of the caste and ensure justice at the social front. Just like Fanon is not interested in delving into the past or reasoning with the creation and reformation of the black identity, Ambedkar is also not interested in negotiating with the identity of the untouchable. Both these thinkers find convergence in the diagnosis of the causality of these oppressive structures but none of them is actually interested in re-creation of any glorious past or negotiation with the oppressed identity or giving renewed meaning to the oppressed identity. Both of them are at the same page when they argue that the only way for emancipation is to leave this oppressed identity imposed and stamped by the oppressor.

Ambedkar lost faith in any allegiance with the Hindu social order since he thought that a religion which has not given due place to the untouchables for centuries cannot change its fundamentals suddenly. Ambedkar famously proclaimed that he was born a Hindu but he shall not die a Hindu. That was the beginning of a new journey. In his famous speech What Way Emancipation, he gave a clarion call to the other backward castes and the untouchables for conversion to Buddhism. He thought of other religions also. He thought of Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism, however, ruled them out on several grounds. One of the reasons why he did not choose any other religion is the existence of caste system or influence of caste system

in them. According to Ambedkar, Buddhism was one religion being truly 'egalitarian' and having ancient roots challenging Brahmanical Hindu religion. It gave centre stage to moral virtues rather than any God. It ruled out heaven and hell, and talked of Nirvana. (Parekh, 2019).

According to Ambedkar, conversion to Buddhism will free the untouchable of any obligation with the oppressive social structure of caste. Just as imagined by Fanon, Ambedkar also paved the way for an emancipation rooted in futuristic outlook of an expansionist identity rather than a negotiation with the oppressors given identity. Both Fanon and Ambedkar converge heavily in their methodologies of emancipation and conversed with each other in imagining a new utopia of humanism rooted in eradication of traumatising identities and social clutches. In Ambedkar we find resonance of Fanonian thinking. For Ambedkar conversion to Buddhism is a redemptive therapy which shall bring out the true authenticity of the individual erstwhile enveloped by the artificiality of caste determination.

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