

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Thoughts on Buddha, War, and Global Peace Prabhuraj K. Nayaka

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ABSTRACT:

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar thought that Buddhism is an ultimate way to a civilized world order. For a better global order, nonviolence is an ultimate way to civilize society. Dr. Ambedkar thought that, "Before the world, and especially before Asia, only two paths are available today. One is the path of Buddha, the other is the path of Marx. If the world does not adopt Buddha's philosophy from now on, the victory of Communist Philosophy will become inevitable. Only Buddha's philosophy is the sole foundation for the world, and to the extent that its spread happens, to that extent the world will move away from war and closer to peace."

KEYWORDS:

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Buddhism, Foreign Policy, Democracy vs. Communism, Global Peace.

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Introduction:

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a democrat. He studied deeply the philosophy of Buddha. The world wants from India the technology of peace, not a state of war madness. To believe that national security can be achieved through wars, accumulation of arms, and increasing defense expenditure, and to believe that global peace, stability, and progress can come from a balance of power through war, is unfortunate. The lessons of the two world wars are invaluable. War can never solve problems. Instead, it becomes the cause of new problems. As a follower of Gautama Buddha, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar argued that employing Buddha's mantra of peace as the ultimate strategy for world peace, stability, and progress is essential. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who did not agree with the principle of aggressive foreign policy of communist countries, believed that if the world did not accept the principle of Buddha's peace, it would fall prey to the aggressive policy of the communists.

The Panchsheel principles are among the most important core

beliefs and foundations of India's foreign policy.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To make an overview of the ideas expressed by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the field of India's foreign policy.
2. To introduce to the nation Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's thoughts on India's foreign policy in the view of Buddhism.
3. To provide a sustainable foreign policy to present and future India and the world.
4. To identify and explain neglected thoughts of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's ideas related to India's foreign policy, and to make policy makers and people aware of his thoughts.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar held differing opinions from Pandit Nehru regarding the democratic structure and implementation of India's foreign policy. As the architect of the Indian Constitution, and in accordance with Mahatma Gandhi's wish, Dr. Ambedkar became a minister in Prime Minister Nehru's cabinet. However, as part of the parliamentary principle of collective responsibility of the council of ministers, he resigned from Nehru's cabinet in protest against the formulation of a flawed foreign policy, thereby becoming the first person to draw the nation's attention to the mistaken stands and defects in Nehru's foreign policy. In matters related to foreign policy, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's intellectual brilliance, deep study, practical understanding of the foreign policies of global nations, theoretical standpoints, democratic spirit, commitment, realistic approach, and profound analytical experience remain relevant even today. In the light of his interdisciplinary understanding and analysis, the suggestions and insights he offered regarding India's foreign policy did not receive much importance at that time.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a democrat; he studied deeply the philosophy of Buddha. The world wants from India the technology of peace, not a state of war madness. To believe that national security can be achieved through wars, accumulation of arms, and increasing defense expenditure, and to believe that global peace, stability, and progress can come from a balance of power through war, is unfortunate. The lessons of the two world wars are invaluable. And it is tragic that in this era the belief has become that peace is established through war. War can never solve problems. Instead, it becomes the cause of new problems.

As a follower of Gautama Buddha, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar argued that employing Buddha's mantra of peace as the ultimate strategy for world peace, stability, and progress is essential. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who did not agree with the principle of aggressive foreign policy of communist countries, believed that if the world did not accept the principle of Buddha's peace, it would fall prey to the aggressive policy of the communists.

In 1953, while speaking in a program of the Indo-Japan Cultural Organization, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar expressed the following opinion: "Before the world, and especially before Asia, only two paths are available today. One is the path of Buddha, the other is the path of Marx. If the world does not adopt Buddha's philosophy from now on, the victory of communist philosophy will become inevitable. Only Buddha's philosophy is the sole foundation for the world, and to the extent that its spread happens, to that extent the world will move away from war and closer to peace."

Thus, Ambedkar reflected upon war, global peace, and the ideas of Buddha and Marx. The mantra of Buddha's peace and the methods for it are complementary to democratic or republican rule. Ambedkar clearly saw in the teachings of Gautama Buddha the necessity of democratic governance for protecting the world from conflicts. When the world is deprived of the path of democracy, unrest, wars, and violence have afflicted mankind barbarically—examples of this are abundantly available in world history.

In this context, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar seems to have perceived in Buddha's message the logical thought of establishing protection through a democratic political system. It is unfortunate that neighboring China, a country with a large Buddhist population, continuously imposed military aggressions on its neighbors. The world had to wait until Ambedkar's thoughts on foreign policy came into real experience. Likewise, Ambedkar's concerns, warnings, and reflections on social, economic, and political history need to be considered seriously and implemented effectively.

China, having a political system opposed to democracy, with uncontrolled politics, always remains in a state of fear and unrest of war, and has become a disturbing nation to its neighboring countries. With Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, France, and other nations of the Red Sea rim, China, pushing aside the principle of peaceful coexistence, follows a confrontational foreign policy. Ambedkar recognized and warned

of this expansionist policy of China in its seed form, and explained it not just for India but as a lesson for the world.

The communist doctrine of class struggle, at all its stages, is filled with seeds of conflict, unrest, and revolutionary change. Ultimately, the state loses its importance. An executive body claims to represent the people's will. But at no stage can this be a true representative assembly of the people's will. If foreign policy is shaped through public opinion, it cannot become harmful to the country or to the world. What is happening in China is that, in the name of a People's Republic, the policies of a small ideological group are being imposed upon the entire people.

Findings of the Study:

1. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had a strong interest and academic, theoretical, and practical knowledge about India's foreign policy issues in his time.
2. Dr. Ambedkar's theoretical clarity was that democracy and communism cannot go hand in hand relating to Indo-China relations.
3. In seeking peace, instead of means of war, Buddha thought of peace technology for the world order.

Conclusion:

In this background, it is seen that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar placed two choices before the world onedemocracy; twocommunism. His fear that if democracy does not strengthen, communism will spread its dominance, is seen even more strongly today. America's policy toward Asia is also built on this background. Strengthening India's democratic political system and preventing the spread of communism was the goal of America's foreign policy. George Fernandes remarked: "China, not Pakistan, is India's number one threat. This is where we made mistakes in the 1950s and paid the price in the 1960s." It took two decades for India to understand Ambedkar's views about China. Newspapers reported George Fernandes's opinion: "We became a soft power. But a nation cannot be built with this softness. One has to be willing to live a hard life." Today, there is a necessity for India to frame a strategic foreign policy to prevent China's expansionism.

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The Authors have no conflict of interest to declare that they are relevant to the content of this article.

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