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# ROLE OF DALIT'S IN TEMPLE ENTRY MOVEMENT OF NASHIK

Mr. Atul A. Ohal,

**Assistant Professor**,

Department of History,

R.N.C.Arts, J.D.B.College and

N.S.C.Science college Nasik Road.

## Abstract:

This study covers almost all dalit leaders who were involved in the movement of this satyagrah. In this study the focus is also on the overall contribution made by various caste sub caste leaders including dalit women who participated and supported this movement.

**Key Words**: Role of dalit's in temple entry movement.

#### Introduction:

The present work is a humble attempt to give a brief account of dalit movement in Nasik especially for kalaram temple entry movement. The purpose of this paper is to know the history of dalit liberation, with special emphasis on the role played by the dalit leaders, and common people. The present study is however limited to the temple entry movement in Nasik. Maharashtra state had a very long history of dalit movement. And in all those movements, Satyagrah of kalaram temple in Nasik is one of the important events. Dr. Ambedkar the father of Indian social unrest launched the temple entry satyagrah in Nasik.

### **Hypothesis:**

In this study, certain fundamental questions have been raised which constitute the working hypothesis. To mention a few:

- 1. Whether or not the social scenario in Nasik favored social inequality?
- 2. Whether or not government's role in this satyagrah was against dalits?

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3. Was the satyagrah of dalits mobilized the public opinion in favor of temple entry?

## **Methodology:**

The methodology followed in writing this paper is partly descriptive and partly interpretative.

## **Background:**

The kalaram temple is situated in Nasik. Nasik is a city of temple and priests, and is revered by the Hindus as 'the kashi of south'. Its total population in 1901was 21490 including 1300 families officiating, as priest of the hereditary supporters (Yajman) and the piligrams. They were well of, living in large houses, able to save and occasionally lending money. <sup>1</sup>

Kalaram temple is simple and large temple was built in 1782 by sardar Rangnath Odhekar, sardar of peshwa. The idol of lord Rama here is in black stone hence its called kalaram mandir. the building stands in the middle of the walled enclosure with 96 pillars.

Since the earlier period, this Satyagrah aimed at winning an equal right for untouchables. D ar. Ambedkar wrote to Bhaurao Gaikwad on 3 march 1934, "I didn't launch the temple entry movement because I wanted the Depressed Classes to become worshipers of idols which they were prevented from worshiping or because I believed temple entry would make them equal members in and an integral part of the Hindu Society."

1. Bombay government, gazetteer of the Bombay presidency,nashik (1883),page no 475-476

It is just because of the hectic work and busy schedule of his work, it was not feasible for him to remain present regurly in the satyagrah, but his presence was almost there in the form of his letter writings to the dalit leaders. In this satyagrah Bhaurao Gaikwad, Amritrao Rankhambe Patitpavandas, Devram naik, and Savlaram dani were leading thousand of dalits. That shows Nasik district was one of leading districts that fought for the Ambedkarite ideology, and peculated the movement in all the parts of Nasik district.

Preparations for this movement had been going for over three months. Dr, Ambedkar was guiding, stimulating and organizing it from Bombay through the letters and lieutenants.

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The depressed class at Nasik had formed a satyagrah committee and through its secretary, Bhaurao Gaikwad informed the trustee of kalaram temple that they would launch satyagrah <sup>2</sup>

In Nasik local leaders took the initiative under the leadership of Bhaurao Gaikwad. On 17<sup>th</sup> nov.1929 mahar sangh was founded in nashik.Samabhaji Rokade was president and Bhaurao Gaikwad secretary of mahar sangh.mahar sangh collected 10 rupees from each village in the region. By the end of February 1930 they had collected more than 15000 rupees.<sup>3</sup> The Ambedkari jalsa also played a crucial role in mobilizing people for the Nasik satyagrah.

When satyagrah committee declared that they struggle for their right to the entry in temple. Dalit people started assembling at Nasik from the different parts of the region. On 2<sup>nd</sup> march 1930 about 15000 volunteers and representatives assembled at erected pandal in depressed class locality in Nasik.<sup>4</sup>

- 2. Raj kumar, History of chamar dynasty, page no 449.
- 3. Anupama rao, the caste questions: dalits and its politics of modern India, Page 96
- 4. Keer dhananjay ,Dr. Ambedkar life and mission. Page no 137

Dr. Ambedkar came at Nasik on 2<sup>nd</sup> march 1930, some other leaders also came at Nasik to support the satyagrah. Sasrabuddhe, Devram naik, and D.V.Patvardhan balasahb kher and swami anand came to nasik to support the satyagrah.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> march 1930 Dr, Ambedkar held a meeting to all the Satyagrahi, and gave them some guidelines to be followed at the time of satyagrah. At afternoon the agitators divided in self into four extending itself over a mile long procession. it was the biggest procession in the history of nashik. The untouchables who were in military services at the time to contributed in this satyagrah, as they played band in military style, and they were leading the procession of agitators. Then followed a batch of scout, a striking feature of the satyagrah was the presence of about 500 women demonstrators who were trained in gymnastic. They were followed by thousand of agitators. They were walking with a full sense of discipline, order and determinations.

As soon as the procession came up to the eastern gate of the temple, the district magistrate, and the police officers closed all the gates of temple. Next day dalit leaders

discussed the issue and decided to launch a non violent struggle before the gates. The first batch of 125 men and 25 women was posted at the four gates of the temple and over 8000 enlisted Satyagrahi were awaiting their turn.<sup>7</sup>

- 5. Keer Dhananjay, Dr. Ambedkar life and mission. Page no 137
- 6. Markand Mehata, The dalit temple momenvet in Maharashtra and gujrat, ,1930 to1942 the other gujrat, edited by takshi shinoda page no 6.
- 7. Keer Dhananjay, Dr. Ambedkar life and mission. Page no 137

In these four doors following leaders were leads, on north door – Patitpavandas, on south door – Rajbhoj, on east door –Kachru salve and on West door –Shankardas Nagarjundas.and Dr. Ambedkar and Bhaurao Gaikwad controlling all situations. 8

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1930 the doors of temple open for Ramnavmi. So untouchable's start their satyagrah, Bapusaheb Rajbhoj was arrested by the police with 10 Satyagrahi 2 women was also arrested. On 7 April on the occasion of Ramnavmi Satyagrahi again entered in the temple. According to '*Kesari*' news paper, a mahar girl slapped to raghunath ganesh, the priest of temple. In a literary sense this was a symbol of old frustration and anger of the dalits.<sup>9</sup>

On 9<sup>th</sup> April 1930 it was the time for the chariot procession of the image of Rama, so a compromise patched up between the caste Hindus and the untouchables. It was decided that strong men from the both side should draw the chariot. But caste Hindus run away with the chariot. As secretly planned, and after that there was free fighting between groups of untouchables and caste Hindus. In this fighting most of untouchables seriously injured.<sup>10</sup>

This Satyagrah provoked considerable ill feeling in the minds of the orthodox Hindus throughout the district. As a result of this tension children of the untouchable were thrown out of schools, road were closed for them, necessaries of the life were denied to them in the market. Became they claimed equal right with all other Hindus. Untouchables in several were maltreated .despite their sufferings the struggle of kalaram temple satyagrah Nasik was carried on.

8. Y. D. Fhadake, Dr. Ambedkar and kalaram satyagrah, sugava prakashan, page no 9

 9. Markand mehata ,dalit temple entry movement in Maharashtra and gujrath,1930-1948, the other Gujarat edited by Tahashi shinoda,popular publications, page no 8.

10. Keer Dhananjay, Dr. Ambedkar life and mission. Page no 137

Satyagrahi held a mass rally on 15 March 1931. As the caste Hindus threw stones at it, the dalits respond in the same manner. The satyagrah was resumed on 15April at the time of Ramnavami; on 15 April North door of the temple was opened by trustees. At that time untouchables also tried to get in the temple with other Hindus. Some dalit women trying to enter in temple were arrested by police. After that the police arrested Dadasaheb Gaikwad, Amritrao rankhambe and other leaders. Then trustees of the temple immediately close the door of temple. <sup>11</sup>

In these 14 dalit women who were arrested, one woman Pawali kale was the age of 75, so court punished her 15 days imprisonment and other women were punished for one month imprisonment. And Dadasaheb Gaikwad, Amritrao Rankhambe, Savlaram dani and other11 satyagrahi'were imprisoned for two months.<sup>12</sup>

# **Role of government in this movement:**

When satyagrah started the doors of the temple were closed, except the one from pujari's house. This was his private entrance but when all doors were closed he allowed caste Hindus to use the door, so the purpose of blocking all doors failed.

So secretary of Satyagraha committee bhaurao gaikwad requested Gordon collector of Nasik. But he refused to meet gaikwad .and he told satyagrahi that if they agitate in front of pujaris door, he will take legal action against satyagrahis.the role of local police officers in this movement was anti dalits, this was quite clear on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

- 11. Markand mehata ,dalit temple entry movement in Maharashtra and gujrath,1930-1948, the other Gujarat edited by Tahashi shinoda,popular publications, page no 8.
- 12. Y.D.Fhadake, Dr.Ambedkar and kalaram satyagrah, sugava prakasha page no 53

On the day of Ramnavami the rath would be drag by both parties, but when rathyatra started only caste Hindus run along the rath, so the untouchables did not get chance to catch

 the rope, and when they tried to hold the rope of rath, the caste Hindus, sepoys started to assault untouchables.

When the fight started between caste Hindus and untouchables police openly took the side of caste Hindus, and sepoyes started lathi charge on the touchables, other side caste Hindus started to throw stone on untouchables and they were seriously injured in it. <sup>13</sup> So the role of British government and the caste Hindu local police officers was anti-dalit.

Attempts were being made to perusable both the parties to reach the compromise. But so firm was the resolve of the depressed classes that orthodox Hindus had kept the temple closed for a whole year, and the agitations continued till October1935.<sup>14</sup>

At Vinchur Dr.Ambedkar explained that such temple entry movement was no longer needed. Dr.Ambedkar started this movement because he felt, that was the best way of energizing the depressed classes and making them conscious of their position and he believed that he had no more use for temple entry. <sup>15</sup>

- 13. Dr, Ambedkar, writing and speeches, vol-17, Page no188
- 14. Keer Dhananjay, Dr. Ambedkar life and mission. Page no 138
- 15. Dr. Ambdkar, writing and speeches, vol-17, page no 203

Participation of dalit women in this satyagrah is most important .some names of dalit women who participated in this satyagrah as follows;

- 1. Smt.Gaubai Unvane 2. Manjulabai Namdev Wagh. 3. Yamunabai Govinda Jadhav.
- 4. Rakhamabai Sitaram Raje 5 .Yamunabai Lokhande. 6. Gangubai Pagare. 7. Parvatibai Lokhande. 8. .Bhikabai Unvane. 9. Kundabai Dani.10.Thakubai salve. 11. Radhabai Jadhav.
- 12. Sonubai Shinde. 13. Chandubai Thor. 14. Pavalabai Kale. 15. Sarubai Bhalerao.
- 16. Chimabai Shinde. 17. Salubai Bhalerao. 18. Radhbai Umale. 19. Kondubai More.
- 20. Pavalabai Revaji Kale. 21. Savalabai Kadam. 22. Kanhubai More. 23. Krishanabai More.
- 24. Saibai More. 25. Sulubai Rode. 26. Sarubai Gaikwad. 27. Ahilyabai Kardak.
- 28. Ranbhabai Jadhav. 29. Sayajabai Jadhav. 30. Sayajabai Lokhande. 31. Revabai Gotarane.
- 32. Sayajabai Bhalerao. 33. Sundrabai More. 34. Devubai Mahadu. <sup>16</sup>.

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#### **Conclusion:**

Dr, Ambedkar struggled six years for the kalaram temple entry issue. In these six years this temple was not open for dalits, but this Temple satyagrah was meant for playing a strategic role in politicizing dalits. It certainly created a sense of awareness among the urban and rural dalit that the plank of cultural freedom and social equality was as much relevant as political freedom, and so Dr.Ambedkar made dalits aware of their human right and hoped they would continue their movement to gain their rights. Some good leaders were emerged in this satyagrah.

The role of women is very significant in this movement as they too made their participation and raised their voice against the Hindu hegemony. Many of them faced imprisonment in it. Struggle in retrospect dalit women fought for the social equality At the point of women's liberation dalit women fought on dual fronts, and women's liberation looking at this to fight on Dalit women have dual fronts.

16. At the source of Interview of gangaram kashiram barve.by shantabai dani, Dr. Ambedkar and kalaram mandir satyagraha, Y. D. Fhadake, sugava prakashan, Pune

This movement inculcated the sense of awareness for human rights among dalits and librated them from the shackles of the old religious order. This leads to the conclusion that the movement cannot be measured in the form of failure as the upper caste did not allow the depressed classes to make entry in the temple. It is a fact that nobody can deny that Dr. Ambedkar did his best to correct the Hindu society but the supporter's believers and followers of Hindu dharma did not want to lose their power that they had enjoyed for thousandth of the years. Ambedkar realized that the Hindu social structure which is based on *chaturvarna* cannot give equal rights to his people, the low caste. That's why he declared that he was born a Hindu, that was not in his hands but he will not die as a Hindu. He embraced Buddhism in 1956 along with many of his followers in due course. The same trend is visible even today with mass conversion ceremonies being organized by various dalit groups.

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