



Historicity of Chamar Women's Contribution Ambedkarite Movement: Part -1

Gunabai Gadekar

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar played very important role in the liberation of untouchables in India. He believes men & women are very important part of society. Both should take part in the social reform movement to bring change in the society. He encourage women to participate in social movement. Dr. Ambedkar gathered people of scheduled caste for their emancipation. Dalit Women also played very important role in movement. Women actively participated in different stages like, establishing Mahila Mandal, organizing events, giving money to the movement, delivering speeches etc. some women came in movement because their father, mother, bother and husband and some women came from very common background. Gunabai is one of those who don't have any legacy of social reform but still she actively participated in social reform movement and create

6 at Dharavi Mumbai, then education up to third year trade completed at Seva Sadan Pune. In 1926, she left the Seva Sadan and joined a school in Mahawada, Mangalwar Peth at Pune. While working for Chamar Student Board in Pune, she went to various places to collect help for boarding. In 1930, she remarried to Ramchandra Gadekar who was highly qualified in chamar community of Maharashtra. She was one of the earliest women from depressed classes to get formal education and went on to become first female headmaster from the community. She strongly advocated for women education and boarding facilities for women.

While her social active Participation, she got to know Dattoba Powar, Vinayak Karnataki and Indumati Rani Saheb (Daughter in law of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj), Sant Gadage Baba, P.

ternoon for their classes. Gunabai is witness of this incident as a student. After she completed her education she joined school and also actively participated in community reform movement.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had the honor of presiding over the first Mahila Parishad (1930) held by All India Depressed Classes at Nagpur. (1930). H. L. Kosare has also mentioned in Vidarbhatil Dalit Chal-



a legacy for chamar women. Gunabai Gadekar was an Indian social activist and one of the early women leaders of the depressed classes in 20th century. Under the leadership of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, she presided over the women council of All India Depressed Classes Association twice in 1930 and 1936.

Gunabai was born in 1906 in an erstwhile 'untouchable' Chamar family in Maharashtra. She started her primary education as a child, after the second pass in 1918, at the age of just 12, she got engaged to Anandrao Marutrao Waghmare (South Africa) in Mumbai and got married in the same year. Her husband died in the same year. After that, education up to class

N. Rajbhoj and many other contemporary social reformer. She also contributed for social justice in Pune Parwati temple Satyagrah as well as Dhor - Chamar community conferences.

Dr. Ambedkar and Gunabai

When Gunabai was in Seva Sadan Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar visited Pune for some work also visited to see Seva Sadan. Seva Sadan was started Ramabai Ranade for women's education and self-reliance in 1909 at Pune. When Dr. Ambedkar saw living arrangement of untouchable girls at long attic. Dr. Ambedkar asked, aren't these girls suffocate here? Answer was given to Dr. Ambedkar's question was, the girls are downstairs in the af-

valichaltihis that Gunabai was the president of the convention. But we don't have her presidential address. Re: President Mahila Parishad All India Depressed Classes Nagpur (1936). After this she engaged in her personal and family life.

Gunabai Gadekar made a speech on radio from Pune centre on the topic of 'Dalit issue and duty of women'. Only women can do a real and substantial job of dispelling the ignorance and crazy ideas of the Dalit class especially among their women and spreading knowledge among them, they will make the idea of high morals and thoughts easy to this class due to their natural loveliness, woman is a very important element in the family, she is a well-educated and a good housewife. She put forth an important idea that if the families will improve and if the families improve, the name Dalit class will become history, in fact it will become extinct, then real democracy will not be established in India.

Gunabai Gadekar's memoirs

from 1959 to 1974 are included in Smritigandh. In the autobiography, Gunabai's lifelong struggle reflects the contemporary social system. As a social account of the movement and as a sociological document, this book is of unique importance. Also important references of social history are in this autobiography. While studying, Gunabai Gadekar came into contact with Ramabai Ranade, Babasaheb Deodhar, Bapusaheb Mate.

She also came in contact with Maharishi Vitthal Ramji Shinde and his sister Janakka Shinde, who were leading the movement to end untouchability. The family relationship of Saint Gadge baba and Gunabai Gadekar used to be on top. Her autobiography is a detailed account of her experiences in Seva Sadan and contemporary social reform with its limitations.

The information about Babasaheb Ambedkar and the movement led by him is in this autobiography. Gunabai Gadekar's experiences of the caste system is a very important part of her autobiography. This great social reformer Gunabai Gadekar died at the age of 1969 in Mumbai.



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I, as a regular reader and contributor to Ambedkar Times ever since its foundation, can firmly say that its success, inspite of all the challenges and hurdles, is a testament and reflection of your journalistic talents, perseverance and hard work for which you deserve all the compliments and

congratulations.

I wish and hope that Ambedkar Times joined by its sister publication "Desh Doaba" weekly will continue to grow in its readership with a spirit of passion, optimism and impartiality in the years ahead.

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