



# TheDaak

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

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### **AMBEDKAR IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA**

B. R. Ambedkar has a tall legacy of being a scholar, jurist, social reformer, academic, thinker, writer, and more popularly, the architect of the Indian Constitution. Ambedkar is available to scholars through a number of his writings, his speeches in forums that he helped build and to those in which he was invited. He is also available to us through his work in the Constituent Assembly.

For a considerable period of time, Ambedkar was hailed as the social reformer of the ‘Mahars’ only, with hardly any engagement with the emancipatory potential of the entirety of his scholarship. Today, this engagement has become more robust. In recent times, we find scholarly interests piqued around his personhood, his work as a social reformer, his ideas on gender inequality and women, and the richness of his academic work with implications on socio-political and cultural life.

Ambedkar also finds himself ascended to the status of a savior, seemingly a supernatural being who occupies a hallowed position in the popular cultures built around Dalit identity and its assertion. He is increasingly being celebrated as a symbol and the fear of his thought receding into the background finds itself echoed. Still worse is that his canonisation is foreclosing possibilities for any serious engagement with his social and political thought. Ambedkar is also being utilized across the political spectrum in a way that suits the exigencies of ideological battles. His thought and legacy at worst are being appropriated by those he dedicated his entire lifetime opposing.

India's freedom struggle became the platform for thinkers like Gandhi, Nehru, and Ambedkar in a particular historical context. They were socio-political actors who were also thinking about the question of history and the future of a people. That legacy of freedom struggle itself is one of the sharp ideological contests but the broad consensus on the need for emancipation, freedom, and fraternity won over as the idea of India. Ambedkar was the staunchest voice against oppression. He privileged the written word over everything else and hence, produced a large scholarship on questions that concerned the depressed classes, untouchables, women, and the impact of brahmanical orthodoxy.

India of today, however, is no longer the India that was inherited at the stroke of midnight one day in August of 1947 and yet in contemporary times we find the idea(s) of India in contest again. They have come up resurfaced threatening to reconstitute the idea and reconfigure the relations of power. Ambedkar's thought and legacy in this regard make him one of the most important thinkers for our times. Ambedkar, the person; Ambedkar, the writer; Ambedkar, the scholar; Ambedkar, the social reformer; and Ambedkar, the messiah, are all available to any student of Ambedkar. However, how can the thought and legacy of Ambedkar help us in thinking about the challenges that 'We, the people of India' face today?

TheDaak is hence, announcing its special issue on ‘**Ambedkar in Contemporary India**’. We are seeking submissions on this thematic exploration that aim to tap into the tradition of Indian thinking and hopefully to excavate from Ambedkar’s scholarship ideas that may help respond to problems faced by Indian democracy. These include, but are not limited to:

- Ambedkar and Constitutionalism
- Ambedkar and Nationalism
- Ambedkar and Religion
- Ambedkar and Representation
- Ambedkar and Citizenship
- Ambedkar and Language
- Ambedkar and Gender
- Ambedkar and Identity
- Ambedkar and Caste
- Ambedkar and Buddhism
- Ambedkar’s Economic Thought
- Ambedkar and Cinema

Please send your papers, essays, book reviews and review essays to [submission@thedaak.in](mailto:submission@thedaak.in).

The deadline for the same is **15 February 2025, (extended to 15 March 2025)**. This issue is due for publication on 15th April 2025.

1. Book review (not more than 1200 words)
2. Review essay (not more than 2000 words)
3. Commentary/Perspective (not more than 4000 words)
4. Explainer (not more than 4000 words)
5. Research Essay (not more than 7000 words)

Editorial Team

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