Attempts of reform and integration have been a part of social and political processes in India for long. The unnatural divisions in society have invited differing approaches in finding out solutions. In the variegated models and prolonged periods of reform and regenerative endeavours, the approaches of Gandhi and Ambedkar occupy crucial slots. Spreading back to the immediate past of works by Bhakti Saints, Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), Swami Dayanand (1824-1883) through Swami Vivekananda (1861-1902) and other equally important regional and national reformers and reform movements, these two socio-religious and political stalwarts form a continuum and also provide winds of change. Moribund social practices and political structures attracted the reformative attention of both Gandhi and Ambedkar. They, after critical examination, suggested the requisite emend to be brought in at socio-political levels. Between the two, Gandhi was a tactician, an organizer, a 'sweeper', a sanitary expert, an
anarchist, a moralist and a saint, Ambedkar was a scholar, a constitutionalist, an administrator, a liberal, statesman and a rebel.

Gandhi was of a pious religio-spiritual background. A deep influence of traditional value system and socio-ethical frame is very evident on Gandhi. Even as a student he had the chance of knowing the degrading social practices and it caused a kind of dislike in him towards de-humanizing practices. This compelled him, in intellectual terms, to think, to talk and propagate structural reforms and progressive integrative remedial measures in the polity. He had a severe experience of racial discrimination and of the claims of racial superiority by the Europeans (while in South Africa). So the genesis, cause and resultant political suppression emanating from racial arrogance conditioned his attitude towards freedom and social reform. Active political campaign spanning over a period of quarter of a century (from 1920 through 1945) in India for reforming indigenous order and to eradicate colonial imposition characterizes the whole complexion of Gandhian approach. This involves an innate dislike for monolithic structures,
whether caste structures or political orders, state or government, including the colonial establishment. He never believed in the infallibility of ideas and individuals, center of civilization shall not be a person, but the supra personal notion of 'truth' (Satya), so he preferred the 'Sanatana Dharma', a principle of eternal value. Monolithic structures, whether it is of administration, government, science and technology, politics or religion was bound to crush the personality of the individual, stifles his conscience, it establishes violence and coercion in turn. Hence, the concerns of political mobilization were not to be based on caste or creed. Small time alienated occupational groups like weavers; peasants, cultivators and craftsmen were accepted as units of political articulation, aggregation and mobilization in the context of colonial society and political ordering.

The above is explained by making ‘Gramraj' co-extensive with 'Ramraj' and it only is real independence. Methods of non-violent political struggle, civil disobedience and peaceful resistance through 'Satyagraha' and ‘means and ends’ paradigms all formed an expression of this perceptual
mould. Thus, Gandhi prescribed a morally enlightened order where the rigid organizational power of the state will not come in the way of the dignity of the individual. Obedience in Gandhian scheme was more of moral and spiritual nature originating from religious conviction and inner calls. Corollary to this, Gandhi never approved political party as an effective contrivance of political expression, instead of this, he held that the ultimate tune should be set by the people themselves.

Mere legal enactments will not hold good. The general conscience of the people at large must change. As Gandhiji observes, “Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barrier between man and man and between the various orders of Being”1. In dealing with the problem of untouchability, Gandhiji even went to the extent of calling himself a Sanatana Hindu. Gandhiji comes to the conclusion that whether his theory is correct or not, untouchability is

repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity and love which are the divine attributes of God. And as we are the children of God, we should love and treat one and all equally.

Gandhi stressed on constructive social programmes to ensure the dignity of the individual and dignity of labour. Neither caste nor class formed a point of reference in this context, equally distasteful was the divide into minority and majority to Gandhi, and his audience were the rich and poor as well, the caste Hindus and the dispossessed. Hence, he repudiated the idea that panacea for social alienation is social segregation, for politicization of caste will fuel sub-caste contradiction leading to complete social and political fragmentation. He was for mending, not ending the system. By propounding a well-defined social, economic and political blueprint for future Gandhi insisted on continuity between past and future, stressing on heritage he coined a dynamic approach but he was no revivalist. He was neither a system breaker nor an innovator, he was a system maintainer attacking only what was wrong in the order. Reform from both within and without was his prescription. The Bhakti reformative
tradition of religio-spiritual revamping was carried to the social and political levels by Gandhi, it was not limited to the scales of religious conversions and mere structural arrangements at the levels of state and Government. ‘Satyagraha’, which was based on the force of the soul, was adopted as the means for this purpose, and party politics or partisan politics was not to be the method followed.

Ambedkar was a product of caste discrimination and a staunch reformer from among the ranks of untouchables. Exposure to pious religious instructions at home and virulent caste ostracism, at one and the same time, during the early formative years of his life, made him approach the social, economic and political problems of Indian society with a unique perception of his own. He proved a reformative dissenter or rebel both at the levels of social and political action and also in his approach to the formal legal-constitutional constructs. Ambedkar stood for social and political reforms through a democratic order and constitutional methods; he repudiated bloody, violent and revolutionary means. He regarded even civil disobedience, Satyagraha and non-
cooperation as grammar of anarchy; a state centric approach was his preference. All political mobilization was to culminate in creating suitable legal and constitutional reformative frames. But at the same time he realized the inapplicability of the Western pattern of democracy in Indian society. So consciously he made a distinction between state and society, between state and Government, and state and nation. He never wanted to make the caste-dominated village as the basic unit of Indian society and polity, for he feared that it would perpetuate the authoritarian socio-cultural milieu. Also he believed that social reform in India called for a reform of Hindu family system, and this was to be effected through the device of law (through Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, Hindu Succession Act, 1955 etc.).

The first priority for Ambedkar was social emancipation. Both moral and social regeneration was to be effected through the structures of the state. A ‘New India’ was to be created first before Swaraj and before total political emancipation from the colonial yoke. Since societal order in India was that of graded inequality social independence and integration was to be
attained prior to independence and integration at the political levels. Termination of caste factor and untouchability, hence, was to be achieved before the removal of the colonial state system. Comprehending well the locational disadvantage, social and political, of the downtrodden masses Ambedkar developed a bargaining model in politics and in the methods of social reform. He adopted this in the context of the irreconcilable contradiction between the forces of national liberation struggle and the colonial interests in India. A separate identity for the untouchable was found to be inevitable in this process. But the total social segregation of the untouchables and collaborative stances; toward the colonial order, were not the ingredients of such an approach. He makes this amply clear when he observes that, "The touchables and untouchables cannot be held together by law, certainly not by an electoral law substituting joint electorate for a separate electorate. The only thing that can hold them together is love." This can well be discerned from his

attitudinal shift in the post-independence period. He joined the Nehru Cabinet to extract maximum benefit for the untouchables and to promote effective and emotive integration through legal modes. At this stage he exhorted the untouchables to keep national interest as their first priority and sectional interest as of secondary importance.

Mere affirmation of what Gandhi and Ambedkar said is not enough. With both scientific knowledge and faith as our guides, we must carry forward the torch of progress that was lit by Gandhi and Ambedkar. Mahatma Gandhi has been the symbol of peace, truth and non-violence. Bharat Ratna Dr.B.R.Ambedkar was the chief architect of the constitution. He was not only an eminent jurist but also a distinguished man of letters of vision.

Gandhi as the Father of Nation and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar as the Father of the Constitution, it is our duty to carry forward the torch of progress that was lit by Gandhi and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar.
In conclusion the following may be presented to arrive at a clear perceptual precision about the differing approaches of Gandhi and Ambedkar towards the problem they confronted in Indian society at a very crucial period of its political transformation. When the Jat-Pat Todak Mandal, Lahore, refused Ambedkar the chance to deliver his presidential address at its conference in 1936, Gandhi stated that, "The reception committee appears to have deprived the public of an opportunity of listening to the original views of a man who has carved out for himself a unique position. Whatever label he wears in future, Dr. Ambedkar is not the man to allow himself to be forgotten." Critical of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Harijan (Newspaper) of Gandhi, Ambedkar said that, "Mr. Gandhi is kind to the untouchables. But for what? Only because he wants to kill by kindness, them and their movement for separation and independence from Hindus. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is one of the many techniques which had enabled Mr. Gandhi to be a successful humbug." Pleading

that caste system was at best the concrete structure with which Hindu culture organized its social dimension, and hence, it cannot be considered the soul of Hinduism or an intrinsic element of Hindu order, Peter Van Der Veer comments as, "The idea that caste is the basis of Indian social order and that to be a Hindu is to be a member of a caste became an axiom in the British period. What actually happened during that period was probably a process of caste formation and more rigid systematization due to administrative and ideological pressure from the colonial system, which reminds us of the so called "secondary tribalization" in Africa."5