PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the approaches to the socio-political development of the Scheduled Castes with reference to Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

The process of social and political reforms shows the degenerative trends and requirements of rejuvenation during a particular span. During the 19th and 20th centuries repeated and prolonged attempts of reform have been tried in the social and political context of India. From different angles, with varied ideological and value frames, models of reform and restructuring have been applied to the many social and political problems. Among the various reforms and integrative approaches the modalities suggested by two stalwarts of 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar deserve a special attention. India, living under an imposed value system in politics, in the form of colonial domination with good degree of social inadequacies, endeavoured to solve these with the help of indigenous wisdom, also by allowing desirable alien solutions to enter in and in this process traditional native institutions and functional units received renewed examination and critical scrutiny. There have been suggestions for total abrogation of dysfunctional phenomenon like caste hierarchies and social exclusivism based on caste practice.
The focal point in the reformative approaches has been the moribund social practices and political arrangements that were effected resulting in disintegrative tendencies in society. Both Gandhi and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar stressed the need for positive and progressive developments at the social and political levels to streamline societal integration.

The process of socio-political uplift and integration of the scheduled castes is examined and studied from two prominent angles. Rationale of this study is to bring out the similarities and differences in the approaches of Gandhi and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar towards the issue of socio-political developments of the Scheduled Castes in Indian Society.

Gandhi believed in the universality of God, hence he accepted the theory of equality of all. Gandhi and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar recommended the removal of untouchability. Gandhi advocated Sarvadharma Samabhava. Mahatma Gandhi has been the symbol of peace, truth and non-violence whereas 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.

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