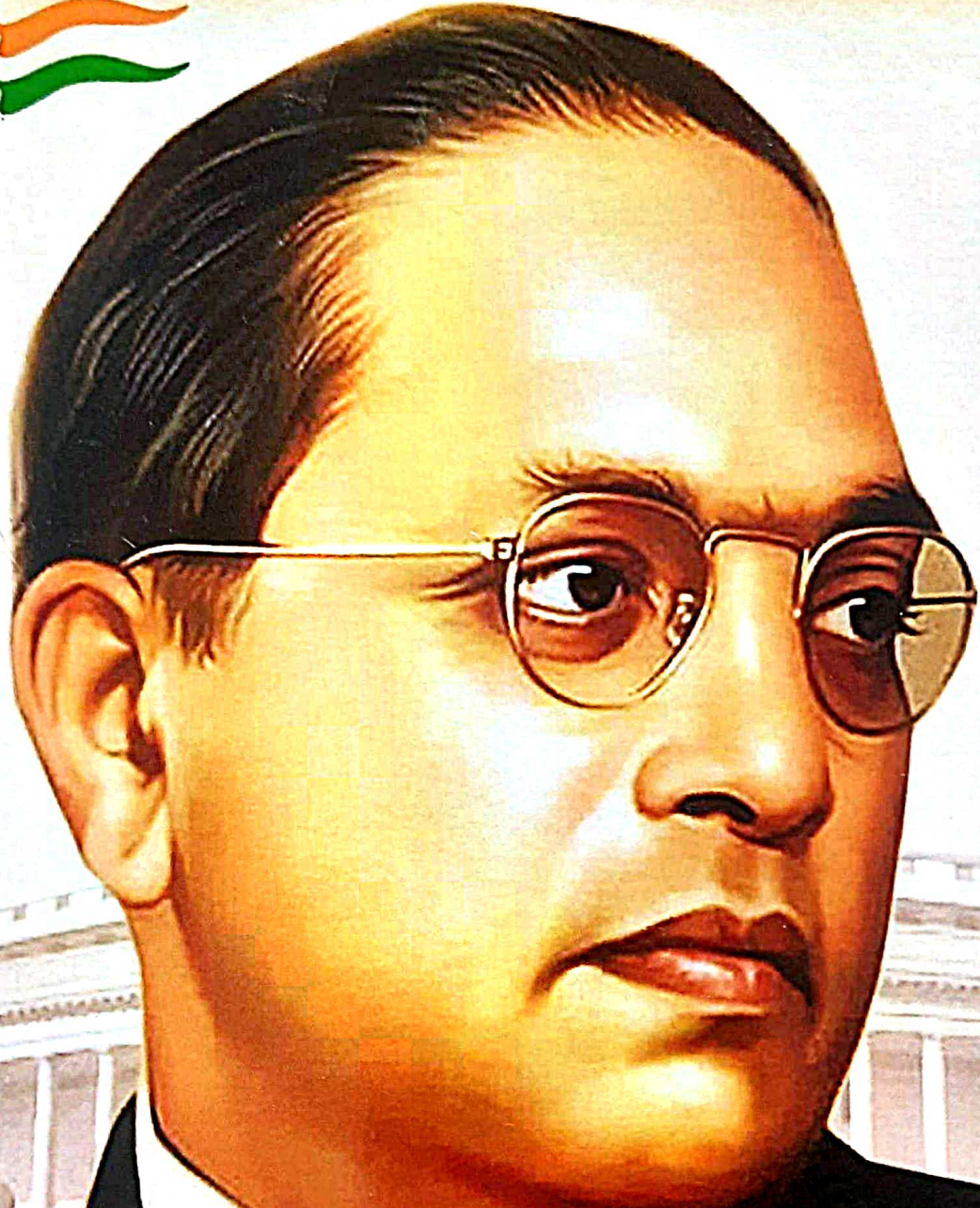


राष्ट्रनिर्माते

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर



आजादी का  
अमृत महोत्सव



संपादक

डॉ. डोंगरे एल.बी.

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**27) IMPORTANCE OF THE PERSPECTIVE OF DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR TOWARDS BRAHMINS AND BRAHMANISM, IN TODAY'S CONTEXT: A NEED OF HOUR FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT IN INDIA.**

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**Abstract:**

If we observe today's India, the Caste system is not remained a social issue, it is maintained at personal level in the home but when enter into the society everybody mix together. Even inter- caste marriages also getting, the best example has been set by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. But unfortunately, may be due to inadequate knowledge or deliberately made by some people, it became political issue. To get political mileage, politicians always try to mix both the words- Brahmin and Brahmanism, which are totally different from each other. They confuse, misguide the community and the soft target is always Brahmin. For that, people always use the words **Manuwaad** or **Manusmriti** even though they don't know who is **Manu**?. Whether he himself was Brahmin or not? They have not even seen, reading is far away, the original Manusmriti, because original one is already burnt and destroyed symbolically by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. To get the political mileage, they want to keep burning the issue, because if once the issue ends then they lose their importance, their political career. Therefore, for that they use the name of Dr. Ambedkar, even break the thoughts, principles set by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. They narrated as Dr. Ambedkar hates Brahmins or Brahmins hate Ambedkar, on contrary Dr. Ambedkar have many Brahmin friends, many Brahmins helped Ambedkar in his goal of social reforms, many a times Dr. Ambedkar helped his Brahmin friends, married with a Brahmin Dr. Sharda Kabir (later she changed her name as Savita Ambedkar). They restricted Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar as

a leader of a particular community, where as he was a leader of whole India, he worked for the development of whole the country social reforms.

**Keywords:** *Brahmin, Brahmanism, Ambedkar, Manuwaad, Manusmriti, Social, Political.*

**Introduction:**

Brahmanism is far different from Brahmin, as Brahmanism is a tendency of so called superiors to suppress the inferiors. It is just a superiority complex developed in the so called developed and educated elements within the society to dominate the undeveloped and uneducated people. Brahmanism can be find everywhere in the society, in every caste, every religion.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, Brahmin is just a caste, which is a derivative of Varnasystem. In the period Budhism, the Varnas slowly get converted into their respective caste. In Varna system anybody from lower Varna can develop himself to go in upper Varna, there are many examples of Sages and Kings from lower Varna in our mythological history. The problem started to occur when the so called Brahmanism (Superiority complex) developed in the Varnas and they slowly get converted into their respective caste when importance of **Birth and Legacy** took place, means Brahmis son should be Brahmin, Shudras son should be Shudra, Kings son should be King, despite of his ability, eligibility etc. Dr. Ambedkar despised this Brahminic system, but he did not hate Brahmins as a person.

Dr. Ambedkar's legacy as a socio-political reformer had a deep effect on modern India. In post-Independence India, his socio-political thought is respected across the political spectrum. His initiatives have influenced various spheres of life and transformed the way India today looks at socio-economic policies, education and affirmative action through socio-economic and legal incentives. His reputation as a scholar led to his appointment as free India's first law minister, and

chairman of the committee for drafting the constitution. (Sunita Magre, 2017)

Scholars, journalists and writers have analysed and critiqued the life and works of Dr Ambedkar in many ways. One of his great characteristics has been to appreciate others irrespective of caste or religion. Though he despised Hindu Brahminic system, he did not 'hate' Brahmins as persons. (Sheshu Babu, 2018).

The attitude of Babasaheb's followers is in sharp contrast to Babasaheb's own attitude towards Brahmins. Babasaheb's anti-Brahminism did not lead him to hate Brahmins. (Justice R. A. Jahagirdar).

### **Review of Literature:**

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's relationship journey starts with his early school days, when the surname 'Ambedkar' has given by his teacher named **Krishaji Keshav Ambedkar**. In a short autobiographical account, Babasaheb has recalled that he had a Brahmin teacher named Ambedkar in his school. Babasaheb affectionately remembers that his teacher used to give a share of his food. This teacher thought that Ambawadekar was a clumsy name and shortened it to Ambedkar which was then put in the school record. (Justice R. A. Jahagirdar). He had great affection with boy Bhemrao and took great care of him whenever and wherever he needed. Babasaheb himself wrote in his autobiography that this teacher usually called him at his house and would take meal with him. (E. Rajesh Pathak, 2019). In 1894, Subhedar Ramji Sankapal migrated from Konkan to Satara. Chhota Bhiwala, that is, Babasaheb, was admitted to the camp school. There Krishna Keshav Ambedkar was teaching Babasaheb. At that time, the people of Konkan used to name the village after their last name. The name of Babasaheb's village was Ambadve. This last name is difficult to pronounce, so Guruji recorded his own Ambedkar last name in Babasaheb's attendance book. (Divya Marathi, 2016).

Krishnaji Keshav Ambedkar Guruji was originally from 'Bandra' village near Ratnagiri. He was given the land of 'Ambedkar' village by the Peshwas and he got the surname 'Ambedkar'. Ambedkar Guruji's family was Devarukhe Brahmins. The characters of Babasaheb written by Chhangdev Khairmode and Dhananjay Kir are considered standard. But in this book, the name of Babasaheb's original village is printed as 'Ambavade'. That information is incorrect. The name of Babasaheb's village was 'Ambadve'. At that time, Babasaheb's last name would have been 'Ambadvekar'. That is why Krishnaji Guruji changed it. (Divya Marathi, 2016).

Today, the third generation of Krishnaji Guruji is scattered in Pune, Satara and Mumbai. The eldest of them is in Mumbai. Rajiv Ambedkar retires from IDBI Adv. Sanjay and Adv. Vinayak has a law firm 'Ambedkar Associates' in Mumbai. Every year the Ambedkar family in Mumbai helps some tribal children for education. Adv. Vinayak Ambedkar works on Mahalaxmi Trust. They are always on hand to fund medical aid to the needy. 12 feet oil painting of Babasaheb in the bar room of Mumbai Minority Court Planted by Adv. Vinayak Ambedkar.

Krishnaji Master lived 85 years, none of the surviving Ambedkar family has seen Guruji; but their memories have been kept alive by this family through oral tradition. The Ambedkar family donated the historical collection of photographs and letters of Krishnaji Guruji to the Symbiosis Museum in Pune. (Divya Marathi, 2016).

Later when Babasaheb was in the second standard of the High School (present Sixth standard), he had a Brahmin teacher named Pendse whom Babasaheb remembers as an affectionate person. In Elphinstone High School, Bombay, Babasaheb was asked to write on the blackboard to which some students in the class objected because their tiffin boxes kept behind the blackboard would be defiled. The mathematics teacher told

those students that Babasaheb would write on the blackboard and they were free to remove their tiffin boxes. The mathematics teacher was a Brahmin called Joshi (This autobiographical account is included in Bhalchandra Phadke's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar – 1985, Shri Vidya Prakashan, Pune). When in school Babasaheb used to go to Charni Road Garden (now S.K. Patil Udyan) to study. Krishnaji Arjun Keluskar, the Brahmin Headmaster of Wilson High School, who used to frequent the same garden, noticed the studious boy. Keluskar had pleasant talks with Babasaheb who says that these talks used to set him thinking. In 1907 Babasaheb, being the first Matriculate in the Mahar community, was felicitated in a public meeting where Keluskar was a speaker. Keluskar presented to Babasaheb a book on Buddha written by him in Marathi. Keluskar sowed the seeds of Buddhism and conversion in Babasaheb's mind. Keluskar continued to take interest in the untouchable boy and was instrumental in getting financial help from the Maharaja of Baroda for Babasaheb's higher education. (Justice R. A. Jahagirdar).

Dr. Ambedkar had the credit of having been first Indian to have done PhD in Economics from London School of Economic. That who financially assisted this great man in sending him to London was none other than the king, Sayaji Rao Gayakwad, of Baroda State. And that who inspired Sayaji for this humanitarian work was notably Bheemrao's another Brahmin teacher, Krishnaji Arjun Kaluskar. (E. Rajesh Pathak, 2019).

In the well-known Mahad Satyagraha where the Chavdar Lake was "polluted" by the untouchables, Bapurao Joshi, a leading Brahmin citizen of Mahad, was a strong supporter. The caste Hindus wanted to purify the lake, but Bapurao Joshi jumped into the lake before that, challenging the pollution theory. Two prominent non-Brahmin leaders of Maharashtra offered to support Babasaheb in his campaign on the condition that no Brahmins, even the liberal-minded Brahmins sympathetic to the cause of the untouchables, should be allowed to participate

in the campaign. Babasaheb flatly rejected the offer by declaring that the view that all Brahmins were enemies of the untouchables was erroneous. What was objectionable was the spirit of Brahminism viz., the idea that some castes were higher than the other. Babasaheb said that a Brahmin free from the spirit of Brahminism was welcome. Not birth, but worth — that was what counted. This in effect was a basic Buddhist principle. (Source, Ambedkar and Buddhism by Sangharakshita: Windhorse Publications, 1986).

Many right wingers propagate that Ambedkar hated upper caste people. This criticism is leveled most prominently on his comments of Gandhi. But his own thoughts give a clear idea of his intentions: *"I hate injustice, tyranny, pompousness and humbug... I want to tell my critics that I regard my feelings of hatred as a real force. They are only the reflex of the love I bear for the causes I believe in, and I am in no wise ashamed of it ..."* (*"Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah"*, address delivered on 101st birthday celebrations of Ranade, in Poona, 1943). This indicates his attitude towards leaders of his time. He was vehement in highlighting the cause and had nothing personal. That is why he applauded the greatness of Mahadev Govind Ranade and his contribution to the betterment of society.

**Ranade in Ambedkar's view:** *"He was a man of sanguine temperament, of genial disposition and versatile in his capacity. He had sincerity which is the sum of all moral qualities". He was not merely a lawyer of the high court and a judge, but a "first class economist, a first class historian, a first class educationist and a first class Divine". His whole life "is nothing but a relentless campaign for social reform."*

Ambedkar never ceased to admire others' greatness. Similarly, he also sincerely applauded contribution of the members of drafting committee who helped in framing of constitution, like Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer, N. Madhavrao, Sayyed Saifulla, etc. (Sheshu Babu, 2018).



Ambedkar praised the contribution members in preparing draft copy of constitution. He said of Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, "bigger, better and more competent than myself" and possessed knowledge of the world's constitutions and Indian law like none other. ("Alladi Krishnaswami: An Architect" by Rinchen Norbu Wangchuk, September 18, 2018, the better india.com). His contribution related to citizenship and adult franchise.

**Ambedkar paid his homage in 1949 in his concluding speech:** *"I came into the Constituent Assembly with no greater aspiration than to safeguard the interests of scheduled castes. I had not the remotest idea that I would be called upon to undertake more responsible functions. I was greatly surprised when the Assembly elected me to the Drafting Committee. I was more than surprised when the Drafting Committee elected me to be its chairman. There were in the Drafting Committee men bigger, better and more competent than me such as my friend Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar"* (Simrin Sirur, September 15, 2018, theprint.in).

When Babasaheb was under a siege while piloting the Hindu Code Bill, which was opposed by President of India, it was two Brahmins — Hridaynath Kunzru and N.V. Gadgil — who made strong speeches in its support in the Lok Sabha. As a rule, a sitting judge of a High Court cannot comment upon a bill pending in the legislature. Casting aside this rule, Justice P.B. Gajendragadkar (of the Bombay High Court) delivered lectures supporting the Hindu Code Bill.

Justice P.B. Gajendragadkar's elder brother, Professor Ashwathamacharya Balacharya Gajendragadkar, took premature retirement from his post in Elphinstone College, Bombay, to accept the offer of Babasaheb to become the first Principal of Siddharth College, Bombay, — the first college established by Peoples Education Society. Incidentally, Babasaheb and Prof. Gajendragadkar were classmates in the college and both of

them passed the BA examination in the same year i.e. 1912. (Justice R. A. Jahagirdar).

### *The interactions between Savarkar and Dr. Ambedkar.*

For social harmony how seriously Veer Savarkar [a Chitpavan Brahmin] was engaged in making his efforts that Ambedkar knew too well, which he even expressed on different occasions. One such occasion occurred when a temple in PethKila in Ratnagiri was built by Bhagoji Seth Keer, and Savarkar sent an invitation to Ambedkar to inaugurate it. In response to the invitation Ambedkar wrote a letter to him - "Due to my engagement in previously scheduled programme I am unable to join the function; but as you are in social field this has lent an occasion to draw a favorable conclusion in this matter. Destruction of untouchability alone will not make untouchables an inseparable part of Hindu community. Chaturvarnya [fourfold varnas] itself should be abolished. I am extremely delighted to say that you are among those few who felt the necessity of this." (E. Rajesh Pathak, 2019).

- In pursuance of the resolution of the Mahad municipality, which in 1924 had declared to have its water tank open to the Depressed Classes, Ambedkar decided to lead a satyagraha with his followers to take water from the tank and establish the rights of the ex-untouchables. The one leader who fearlessly and whole-heartedly supported Ambedkar's struggle was Savarkar. Savarkar said that untouchability must be condemned and abolished not only as the need of the hour but also as the command of the true religion; not only as a matter of policy or as an act of expediency but also as a matter of justice; not only as a matter of obligation but also as a service to humanity. Savarkar said that the notion of purifying oneself with animal urine was more ridiculous and despicable than the notion of defilement at the human touch. Savarkar, therefore upheld the satyagraha of the ex-Untouchables at Mahad and declared that the pious and bounden duty of the Hindu world at large was to restore full human rights to their co-religionists

(Keer, Dhananjay; *Dr. Ambedkar: Life and Mission; Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 1954, p.75*). In the month of September 1929, Ambedkar went to Ratnagiri in connection with a murder trial at the Sessions Court. Savarkar who was in internment in Ratnagiri, seized this opportunity and extended to Ambedkar an invitation signed by hundreds of citizens to address a meeting at the Vithoba temple, a very important centre where battles for social reforms had been fought and won by Savarkarites. The reactionaries ran for an injunction. The question became the talk of the town. Just then, Ambedkar received a wire from Bombay demanding his presence, and Ratnagiri lost an opportunity of vitriolic and valuable speeches on one platform by India's two great revolutionaries (Keer, *ibid, p. 128*).

- In 1948, Savarkar was arrested and charged with conspiracy to murder Gandhi. The Nehru government was hell-bent on implicating Savarkar. Ambedkar was then Law Minister in the Nehru government. He secretly met Savarkar's counsel LB Bhopatkar and expressed his sympathies and anxiety for Savarkar's well being. Ambedkar opined that there was not an iota of evidence against Savarkar. The whole cabinet had to bow down to the whims of one man (meaning Nehru) in implicating Savarkar, said Ambedkar. He warned Bhopatkar that Nehru was prepared to go to any lengths to implicate Savarkar. (KeerDhananjay, Savarkar.org, 2017)

#### **Savita (Mai) Ambedkar and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar:**

SavitaBhimraoAmbedkar, also known as 'Mai' or 'Maisaheb', was a medical practitioner and the second wife of DrBhimraoRamjiAmbedkar. Her maiden name was ShardaKabir, which she later changed to SavitaAmbedkar. Savita's father was a registrar of the Indian Medical Council. She completed her early education in Pune and obtained her MBBS degree from Grant Medical College, Mumbai in 1937. After briefly working as a chief medical

officer at a hospital in Gujarat, she came to Mumbai where she met Ambedkar, who was suffering from diabetes and blood pressure at the time.

The two exchanged around 40-50 letters for a year after that. Ambedkar would pen letters that were 18-25 pages-long, said Surwade. In one of the letters to Savita in February 1948, Ambedkar had discussed the blurring of his private and public life. "You have not cared to inquire into my past," he wrote. "But it will be available to you at any time in the pages of many Marathi magazines." The two married on 15 April 1948 in New Delhi, 13 years after the death of Ambedkar's first wife, Ramabai. Savita was a close witness to his contributions in framing the Constitution. She was also present during his induction into Buddhism at Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur. In an unpublished preface to his last book *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Ambedkar credited Savita and his personal doctor, Dr Malvankar, for nursing him back to health during the five years while he was writing the book. (Pai Krishnamurthy, 2021)

Rakshit Sonawane's account of how Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's son and the so-called followers of Babasaheb treated Dr. Savita Mai makes very sad reading (Indian Express, Friday, 30th May, 2003). The devotion with which Babasaheb's Brahmin wife looked after him in his fading life and health went totally unheeded; worse, even Babasaheb's appreciation of the way she nursed him and cared for him was sought to be erased by his followers.

When Babasaheb's *The Buddha And His Dharma* was posthumously published, it was published without the Preface written by Babasaheb. The Preface which was written on 15th March, 1956 contained touching references to the help he had received from his wife. After the great leader's death, his widow had become *persona non grata* to his followers and the publishers suppressed the Preface and along with it.

Babasaheb's expression of his fine feelings for his wife. (Justice R. A. Jahagirdar).

All this came to be known only when Bhagwan Das, a Punjabi Buddhist Litterateur included that preface in his *Rare Prefaces* written by Dr. Ambedkar published in 1980. In this Preface Babasaheb had given an account of his early religious expressions, the origin of the book, and the circumstances under which the book came to be written. These points were incorporated by Mr. R. R. Bhole (the then Chairman of People's Education Society) in his Foreword (dated 19th November 1957) to *The Buddha and His Dharma* published first in 1957 but the references made by Babasaheb to his wife Savita were avoided. The non-inclusion of Babasaheb's Preface in the edition of his own book was in fact an insult to his memory. How could a poor summary of Babasaheb's narration be a substitute for the original Preface written by him? Even in a later edition (1974) in the Preface, written by Justice R.R. Bhole (he was a Judge of the Bombay High Court at this time) not a word was said about Mai Ambedkar. (Source Ambedkar and Buddhism by Sangharakshita: Windhorse Publications, 1986).

Savita was, however, blamed for Ambedkar's death in December 1956. There were conspiracy theories that she had poisoned Ambedkar with a glass of buttermilk or suffocated him with a pillow, said archivist Vijay Surwade, who has dedicated his life to collecting memorabilia concerning Ambedkar. The rumours even prompted the government to launch an inquiry into Ambedkar's death but the probe ruled out any foul play.

Many have also doubted her commitment to the Dalit-Buddhist movement because of her Brahmin roots, despite her converting to Buddhism along with Ambedkar.

A researcher and an Ambedkarite, Sadanand Fulzele, has said, "The people of Maharashtra had many misgivings about her, and think that she gave Babasaheb a slow poison. Once,

(Ramdas) Athawale tried to bring her to the dais at a party event, but the people did not accept her."Fulzele added that those who took an extreme stance on Savita's role were seen as more legitimate at the time, while those taking a more neutral view were believed as betraying the cause. (Pai Krishnamurthy, 2021).

### **Conclusion:**

After reviewing the literature, the study can be concluded as follows, Brahmanism is a tendency of dominance, which was restricted and concentrated to only Brahmins of Hindu Religion in the medieval period. But now a day it is diluted and percolated within all community, caste and religion. A different type of Brahmanism has been developed between rich and poor, literate and illiterate, educated and uneducated, within the same caste and community. This should be stopped. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar never hate the Brahmins as a person, he hate the tendency of Brahmanism, injustice and inequality. He fought against untouchability, which is almost eradicated from the society. Brahmins are inevitable part of Dr. Ambedkar, it may be in the form of teachers, in the form of friends, colleagues, political thinkers, philosophers and last but very important his own wife Savita Ambedkar.

Almost all Brahmins, who influenced by Ambedkar, is inspired to work together with him for social justice, social reforms etc. They helped him or sometimes took help from him for the same purpose. This should be positively considered by the followers. While asking for the social justice, we must consider the contribution and sacrifice of Savita Ambedkar, do justice with her then and then only we will overcome and take our self to a higher level of thinking, and we will achieve the ultimate goal of social justice, social reforms for the betterment of the society and ultimately the country.

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