PREFACE

Modernisation represent social attitudes or social programmes. Modernisation of religion means modernisation of society. In other words, religious response to social change. So modernisation is a kind of social change. It is a positive social change. Since social attitudes are largely influenced by religion, there is a need of modernisation of religion. Religion must be equipped with modern and innovative techniques so as to confront contemporary problems.

In Buddhist terms modernised society connotes, the society which has welfare of the mankind as its fundamental motive for social change by rational planning. It makes a rational formula for the transfer of institutions both economic and social for "Bahujan Sukhaya".

The Buddha as an innovator, offered systematic critiques of the older values and redefined the meaning of existence and the nature of man and society within a more universal, transcendent framework, which became the basis for new cultural re-construction.
The thought of the Buddha, time and again modified and re-defined to make solutions for the contemporary problems. this process has been carried out by many personalities at different historical times i.e., Asoka’s Dhamma; and in modern period Ambedkar’s Buddhism, the Dalai Lama XIV’S Modern Tibetan Buddhism.

In this work, the historical significance of the modernised Buddhism in modern India and the world, has been pointed out. Both Ambedkar’s and Dalai Lama’s approaches to solve social problems have been studied. It is examined that, whether the Buddhism preached by Ambedkar and the Dalai Lama, is something different from traditional Buddhism. It is also examined that how far Ambedkar and Dalai Lama succeeded in their mission to modernise Buddhism.

The first chapter attempts to examine the social relevance of different religious philosophies and also it tries to trace the emergence of Buddhist thought within the context of contesting philosophies and social conditions in ancient India.

The second chapter seeks to analyse Ambedkar’s interpretation of Buddhist society, which includes
metaphysical questions and scientific humanism of Buddhism.

The third chapter finds Ambedkar's role in modernising Buddhism. It includes his critique of Hindu religion and society and also social scientific interpretation of Buddhism.

The fourth chapter examines role of the Dalai Lama XIV, in modernising Buddhism. It includes, his interpretation of philosophy of the Buddha, and his innovative methods to apply Buddhist thought to post-industrial societies.

The fifth and final chapter attempts an overall assessment and makes concluding observations. This chapter defines the purpose of modernisation particularly at religious level. Comparision is made on Buddhistic thoughts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the Dalai Lama XIV. Finally, it is to draw conclusion on the significance and relevance of their philosophy which contributed in modernising Buddhism, in the context of a highly developed materialist world.