CHAPTER - II

BUDDHISM AND SOCIETY; AMBEDKAR'S INTERPRETATION

The Buddha on Metaphysical Questions:

Man is, by nature, a social being, because he believes in society, and acts together with his fellow beings. He has developed in society. His whole mode of life is social. Therefore, just as it is in his social activity, that he enlarges his perceptions, he begins to form ideas, to think and to develop his conceptions. The basis of man's social activity is, in the Buddha's philosophical term 'karma' i.e., human action or human effort. Karma cultivates human mind which leads to the individual and social well-being. The importance of human effort is the basic idea in the reconstruction of society and the cultivation of human personality.

For the Buddha, man is responsible for what he is and what he may be in the future. In Buddhism, it is the karma of Man which maintains individuality in the social order\(^1\). What a society is, depends largely upon karmas without which the image of man cannot be conserved and conceived. The social order rests on "man and nobody

\(^1\) Ambedkar, Dr. Babasaheb, Writings and Speeches, Vol. II, The Buddha and His Dhamma, Bombay, 1992, p. 344.
elso". **Karma** means man's action and **Vipaka** is its effect. If the Social organisation is oppressive and unjust it is because man's karmas create such things. If the social order is good, full of co-operation, it is because men's Karmas create such things. In the principle of **Karma**, what the Buddha wanted to convey was that the effect of human action was bound to follow the deed, it was like a rule. No society could fail to benefit by the good effects of men's good Karmas and no society could escape the evil effects of men's bad Karmas.² The shape and structure of any society definitely depends on what men do by living in a particular environment.

Emphasising the importance of moral values of human society, Prof. Radha krishnan writes on Buddha, that the vital problem for the Buddha was not how the world spirit, if any, manifests itself in the superhuman realm, but in the individual man and in the empirical world. "What controls the universe is dharma, the moral law. The world is made, not by gods and angels, but by the voluntary choice of men..... By substituting the laws of cause and effect for the caprices of demons and gods, the Buddha put the noblest system of morality in the place of tribal custom and taboo."³ It is said that the Buddha


knows that the human will is not omnipotent; it works in a material, animal, and social environment which impinges at every point on the life of man, though he, by his will and exertion, can modify and re-shape to some extent his environment. This continual interaction between man and his environment is the texture of which history is woven. Hence it can be said that for the Buddha, human efforts count.

What the Buddha said, is that society is based on what men do and how they manipulate their environmental forces. In the absence of any supernatural help, the reconstruction of man’s social life is not possible without his own Karma or action.

Man has developed his social activitis, his perceptions and thoughts; and through this he has continually revolutionised his own conditions of life, and has increased his capacities and powers. It is through action, Karma, that man has been able to affect the life of his own and the existence of human society. Man has wider activities and interests, and in developing these activities and interests, he has affected the course of social development, consciously and co-operatively.

4. Ibid.
It was commonly accepted by Buddhists that the development of human action or the cultivation of *karma* necessarily helped the people bring the members of society together by multiplying cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. Men, in the process of making, have arrived at the point where they have something to say to one another. This something includes the ends to be achieved and the results to be aimed at by co-operation among human beings.

The Buddha attached a moral significance to man's *karma*. In Buddhism, man's *karma* is the whole mode of individual and social existence. About the divine and man's relationship to it, the Buddha spoke rather as men who, through their own efforts, discovered truth about the nature of things and especially the nature of human life.

Almost all religions, except Buddha's *Dhamma*, believe on the immortality of soul. A belief in the existence of soul is as common as the belief in the existence of God, the supreme being. 'The soul does not die but the body perishes. Death is said to be the cause of separation of the soul from the body' -- according to the believers of the existence of soul.
Ambedkar feels that, the belief in the existence of the soul is as much a source of superstition as the belief in God is. And the belief in the existence of soul is more dangerous than the belief in God. "For not only does it create a priesthood, not only is it the origin of all superstition but it gives the priesthood complete control over man from birth to death" Ambedkar writes.

In Buddhism, there is no soul, eternal and unchanging, because the Buddha believed in the impermanence of all composed things. What Buddhism really believes in is not the non-material soul which the theists regard as permanent and unchangeable, even after death, but human consciousness that everyone knows from his own experience.

On the basis of Ambedkar's interpretation of Buddhism, it can be explained that, in Buddhism, a sentient Being is a compound thing consisting of certain physical elements and certain mental elements. They are called Khandas. The Rupa Khanda primarily consists of the physical elements such as earth, water, fire and air. They

6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
constitute the Body or Rupa. Besides Rupa Khanda, there is such a thing as Nama Khanda which goes to make up a sentient being.\(^8\)

This Nama Khanda is called Vinana, or consciousness. This Nama Khanda includes the three mental elements: Vedana (Sensation springing from contact of the six senses with the world), Sanna (perception), and Sankhara (states of mind). Chetana (consciousness) is sometimes spoken of along with the three other mental stages as being one of them. A modern psychologist would say that consciousness is the main spring from which other psychological phenomena arise. Vinana is the centre of a sentient being. Consciousness is the result of the combination of the four elements: Prithi (earth), Apa (Water), Tej (Fire) and Vayu (air).\(^9\)

When the Buddha was asked, "How is consciousness produced?", Ambedkar writes, "his answer was, not that the co-existence or aggregation of the physical elements produce consciousness. What the Buddha said was that wherever there was rupa or kaya (body) there was consciousness accompanying it".\(^10\) So it is only the body (Kaya) that produces consciousness but not all the matter.

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8. Ibid., p. 262.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 263.
Once consciousness arises man becomes a sentient being.\textsuperscript{11} Consciousness, therefore, is the chief thing in man's life. Consciousness is cognitive, emotional and volitional. Consciousness is cognitive when it gives knowledge, information, as appreciating or apprehending, whether it be appreciation of internal facts or external things and events. Consciousness is emotional when it exists in certain subjective states, characterized by either pleasurable or painful tones, when emotional consciousness produces feeling. Consciousness in its volitional state makes a being exert himself for the attainment of same end. Volitional consciousness gives rise to what we call will or activity.\textsuperscript{12}

It is said that, in Buddhism, so long as the Khandas are united, we have being; when the Khandas dissolve, the being disappears. This can be well illustrated. Just as fire, though not lying hidden in the two sticks rubbed against each other, orginates through friction, in the same way, says the Buddha, appears consciousness (Vinana) Under certain material conditions, and disappears when these conditions cease to exist.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Narasu, P. Lakshmi, \textit{The Essence of Buddhism}, Delhi, 1976, p. 225.
When the wood is burnt out, the fire disappears; just so, when the conditions of consciousness cease, consciousness disappears. To say it briefly, vital organisation is the indispensable substratum of all consciousness. Consciousness is known to us only as a phenomena of life, connected with an organisation.14

Prof. Narasu, an eminent Buddhist Scholar says that, physical processes are only known to us as dependent on organic processes. Changes in the brain and the nervous system are essential conditions for all phenomena of consciousness. When the blood supply is cut off from the nerve centres, there is instantaneous loss of consciousness. He says, "normal psychology proves that consciousness can have no existence independent of the organism".15 In fact, this conclusion is strongly supported by mental pathology.

In Buddhism, the relation between matter and consciousness can be put it that matter is pre-dominating in the formation of the physical universe; but human personality is a combination of both material and mental elements. Consciousness (mind) is pre-dominating in the individual life of man. Matter is the substratum in the

15. Ibid.
formation of the world and human personality; but consciousness in human personality is something very active. As the evolution goes on towards the higher stage, consciousness becomes dominant and controls the material conditions of society and creates moral values for the well-being of men living together. Even the human consciousness is always in "restless change".16

Hence both being and consciousness are real and accompanying each other.

So it is said that, the Buddha recognised mind as creative centre in human personality. And human mind plays a significant part in man's social affairs and relations.

Mind (Consciousness), precedes things, dominates them, creates them. If mind is comprehended, all things are comprehended. The first thing to attend is the culture of the mind.17

Buddhism, holds that mind should be used not only to change the material conditions, but also for the cultivation of human personality. So the consciousness or

16. Ibid., p. 225.
mind, if it is well directed, can transform material conditions and it can create values for a better society than the present one.

Hence the Buddhist dynamic realism helped man to become free of all superstitions. Since ancient times, it taught him not to fear of supernatural forces.

The Buddha expresses that there is necessity in nature; there are natural laws, which are knowable by man. And it is the knowledge of the necessity of nature and natural laws, that can set man free from misery and interruptions caused by man himself and by natural forces as well. What seem "Accident or chance" to ignorant persons, the Buddha denied them to be divine and emphasized the need of correct comprehensive understanding of all what exists, what reality is, inorder to change the living conditions of mankind for larger happiness.

Generally, people belive that the fact of succession is either accidental or due to supernatural power i.e., God. Which means that in both the cases man could not effectively interfere with the course of things. Here Buddha's dynamic realism explains that there is every scope for human efforts since a series of causes in nature is understandable. And Buddhism refutes the role of
accident or chance or divine power in determining human's life.

The casual factors are determinable in their entirety; and the series they give rise to is, therefore, terminable, according to early Buddhism, at least in respect of the misery of existence. Whose removal is the chief problem of life. It was the knowledge of these factors, with the law of contingent causation implicit in it, that "flashed across Siddartha's mind at last and made him the 'Buddha'".18

Its chief significance for man is that since misery caused in accordance with a natural and ascertainable law, it can be ended by remaining its cause -- a discovery which points at the same time to the positivistic and practical basis of Buddha's teaching. The explanation was then extended to all casual phenomena. In this general form, it states that for everything that is, there is an adequate reason why it is so and not otherwise; and the causes accounting for it are at least in theory completely knowable.

Buddhism has no concern with either determinism or determinateness because it is a religion (Dhamma) of "self

creation". And it holds the theory of free will (not absolute) within the sphere of human beings.

Every being is a stage of dynamic becoming. There is a long continuity of existence of man and nature, birth and death. Birth and death are not the pre-determined fate of a living being but a corollary of action (Karma).20

So the world is 'a universe of relations' and what appears to be permanent and eternally determined, is a phase of temporary existence, an instant in a causal sequence, one ripple in the long line of Waves, the effect of the two or more causes combined.21 The fatalist view that man's destiny is influenced by the stars is not accepted in the Buddhist Philosophy. In the ongoing of the world new events are continuously happening and that the destiny of each individual is to a very great degree dependent upon what the particular individual is and does.22


20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., p. 38.

Hence, it can said that, Buddhism does not believe in any fatalism and determinism, in the sense of being determined by fate and God. It hold the view that man’s will is always determined in the moment of willing, not wholly by external forces, but by the tendencies, the impulses and purposes, that belong to man’s character. The act of choice is not uncaused; like any other event, it is always an element within a causal situation. It is by knowledge of causal order or about things that man can make many choices. With the knowledge of things, and in the midst of choices, man enables himself to realise the fruits of his free nature.

The Buddha emphasized that, with true understanding of the nature, man may not be the victim of superstition and demagog in religion and politics. So the knowledge of human nature, of society and thought is important for a man who want freedom from suffering and exploitation. Unless the sufferers know how they are being exploited, they cannot get rid of exploitation being done through the ill-natured social system.

Relationship Between Individual and Society:

Scholars of Ambedkarine Buddhism are of the view that, Buddhism offers a realistic relationship between the
individual and society, and not a Utopia that neglects the obvious facts of human nature. It is said that, Buddhism does not isolate individual from the society; rather relates him to it in all his moral principles. Benz writes, "Buddhism originally was a social religion. Early Buddhism as preserved in Pali canon is nothing if it is not a practical way (Magga) for Man's progress and emancipation".23

So it is believed that, in Buddhist society, the individual is expected to give of his best to the society in which he lives, develops and works; where as society's duty to the individual is to compensate him generously and give him such care and protection as one extends to one's own children. It is said that, a Buddhist lives knowing that when he dies the only treasure which he will leave behind to his society is in the form of good deeds he has done for others. This is the only true and lasting source of worldly happiness,24 in an ideal Buddhist society.

Benz also writes that, the highest form of self-interest is seen to be the denial of self for the welfare of others. And by the conscious cultivation of compassion

23. Benz, E., Buddhism or Communism, New York, 1965, p. 188.
and benevolence the Buddhist gradually weakens the bonds of self, until he reaches the stage at which they, and the illusion of selfhood, no longer exist.\textsuperscript{25} So the problem of the exploitation of man by man is resolved in Buddhism by absolute condemnation of all forms of greed, i.e., greed for passion, greed for power and greed for the pleasure of the senses.

It can be said that the Buddhist man-society relationship is against exploitation of man, which is embodied in the Buddhist ethics that condemns greed, lust for power, and passion for false prestige. The Buddhist middle way expresses the real relationship between the individual and society. The views like, individual is prior and superior to society or society is supreme than individual -- both the ideas are not acceptable to Buddhism. This conclusion can be made on the basis of Madhye Marga (Middle path) of Buddhism.

In other words, purely capitalist society or outright totalitarian system is harmful to human kind in Buddhist point of view. Because, in capitalism, a socially oriented planning is ignored and individuality is lost in totalitarianism. So what Buddha wants is both individuality as well as social emancipation. Therefore,

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., pp. 109-110.
Buddhism aims; neither capitalistic nor totalitarian, but humanistic and that is what Buddha means for society with Middle Path. Hence Buddhists believe that Buddha teachings are the good teachings proper for the present world. And even, the modern society demands, Buddhist path to follow for the betterment of mankind, since it is as natural as it is based on dynamic realism.

In Buddhist society, according to Sangha Rakshita, a modern Buddhist scholar of Ambedkarism, the important function of the state is to uphold the moral and spiritual law. He interprets Buddhist society, that being the means to enlightenment; Buddhism naturally demands that the state should recognize the fact that the true goal of life is not to eat, drink and produce the species, but to attain nirvana; and that, therefore, it has the duty of providing for its citizens a political and social organization within which both monks and the laity can live in accordance with the Dhamma.26

Hence, it can be said that, in Buddhist view of state the role of the individual is very significant; by reforming one self, one can contribute for the development

of society by fashioning some part of state and society in which he lives.

It is said that the Buddha emphasised on individual's responsibility in relation to society and state. And it is not possible unless a man follows the rules of morality. It is also said that, the Buddha laid the foundation for true harmony between individual and society and created the values for all-round development of personality's development; giving the individual an opportunity to play a greater part in social reconstruction. His emphasis was on individual responsibility so that society might not suffer by individual's bad deeds. It is only when an individual becomes responsible that he realises the joy of true freedom. The significant aspect of individual responsibility is the task of constantly directing one's creative activity into the sphere required by society and state and of giving the maximum of one's abilities to the common cause. So in Buddhism, the freedom of man coincides with full responsibility towards society.

The Buddhist ethical system as Buddhist scholars of Ambedkarism put it, sets up the service of one's fellow-men as the ultimate human goal. And it holds that the individual can find his own highest goal in working
for the good of all, which, of course, includes himself and his family. They are with the view that, it refuses to accept the reduction of human motivation to only marxist economic terms, to only Freudean Sexual instincts and to only caravakean pleasure-seeking activities. It does not mean that it opposes economic development, rather it purifies man's economic acquisitive tendency in so far as it teaches according to them, that no individual should earn his livelihood by exploitation. And he must earn and save only that which is necessary in life.

They feel that, if man's mind is convinced that he has to co-operate with other and to share the sorrow of other fellow beings, he would naturally oppose exploitation of man by man. They say that the Buddha wanted it through impulsion. Because in their opinion the fundamental aim of Buddha is the service of humanity of this earth as contrasted with the salvation of the individual in some other world.

In Buddhist ethics, it is said that, science is the only dependable guide to truth. Reasoning is basis of right understanding. And science is nothing but another name for correct reasoning. It is also said that, the Buddha laid an emphasis of responsibility, individual and
social (collective). And everything for the sake of human community is the perennial theme of Buddhism. So Buddhism aims to apply reason (Science) to understand the nature in which man lives and to make use of natural laws for the betterment of his society. This is what the right understanding in Buddhism, on which the Buddha emphasized very much.

So it can be said that, the great value of Buddhism, in the present situation, is that it fosters a sense of responsibility and equality, peace and righteousness, among the people of the world. The Buddha said, "the Passionate sense of egoism is the root of the world's unhappiness". Therefore, Buddha always stressed the need of being 'Self-Purified', 'Self-controlled', for becoming a true social man.

Buddhism as a religion differs from the standardised meaning of religion. In the sense, what is called Religion commonly that is Religion is personal and it is mainly other worldly - contrary to Buddhism i.e., Dhamma, is social and is chiefly this worldly. In the view of Ambedkar, Dhamma is righteousness, which means right relations between man and man in all spheres of life. From this, it is evident that one man if he is alone does

not need Dhamma. But when there are two men living in relations to each other they must find a place for Dhamma whether they like or not. Neither can escape it. In other words, society can not do without Dhamma.28

(Prajna) and love (Karuna) to Dhamma and declared that, "A unique amalgam of prajna and Karuna is the Dhamma of the Buddha".29 He said that, the Buddha made Prajna one of the two corner-stones of his Dhamma because he did not wish to leave any room for superstition. Without Karuna society can neither live nor grow, that is why the Buddha made it the second corner-stone of his Dhamma.30 Hence Buddhism is essentially a system of right relations and is entirely based on morality. "The Purpose of Dhamma is to reconstruct the world".31

Ambedkar felt that, the morality is the essence of Dhamma. And morality in Dhamma arises from the direct necessity for man to love man. He said that, it does not

28. Ambedkar, Dr. Babasaheb, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 316. Ambedkar further added Right understanding words, "Man’s misery is the result of man’s inequity to

29. Ibid., p. 317.

30. Ibid.,

31. Ibid., p. 322.
require the sanction of God. And it is not to please God that man has to be moral. It is, for his own good that man has to love man.³²

According to Ambedkar, the righteous conduct is prime necessity of religious action in Buddhism. In his man. Only righteousness can remove this inequity and the resultant misery".³³ So he felt that, through the righteous conduct Buddhists enter the stream of right relations. And Dhamma, as the principle of right relations, is necessary for a nice social behaviour and its implication of Karma is the builder of the world.

Hence it is maintained that, the Buddhist thought is highly realistic and humanistic in comparison to the theistic systems which are bound to indulge in superfluous morality. In fact moral laws are merely man made and they were not given by divine revelation. And it is apparent that the universe is not ruled by ethical principles but simply its own laws. Buddhism is able to show how this can be true, yet at the same time maintains the validity of the moral laws. And law of Dhamma, the righteous human law, which was discovered by the Buddha for the benefit of

³². Ibid.,
³³. Ibid., p. 284.
mankind, can make the world and its conditions most favourable to man. Therefore As Ambedkar puts it, the Buddhist morality is more rational and humanistic.

On the basis of Ambedkar’s interpretation of Buddhism, it is said that, teachings of the Buddha do not deny any scientific fact. And the Buddha comprehended and passed beyond them inorder to rationalize and moralise the material world, the nature. The mind of man, if emancipated from hatred and ignorance, views all things and sensations impartially, without clinging to any -- this alone is the true secret of mental peace and stability that constitutes the greatest happiness in this world. Ambedkarism maintains that, Buddhism humanises this material world and rationalises it for the benefit of mankind.

According to Ambedkar’s view, it is also said that, Buddhist morality is the result of the rationalization and humanization of the nature of Natural Laws. And Buddhist morality includes the highest degree of personal responsibility and the largest sense of social duty. Mere economic basis of society does not create human values. It is the quality of mind that can keep the higher stage of development in human society, although matter is the
primary foundation of all that exists in the universe. So it is said that, the Buddha prescribed human values for the purification of mind. And the Buddha viewed this material world from a right angle and passed beyond it and rationalized it for the larger interests of humanity.

Human society cannot stand long without moral principles which are universal and sacred for all men and women. So it is said that, the Buddha believed in morality and derived it from the nature of material world. Through self-purification, one can achieve this. Therefore, men should undertake actions which promote social happiness and lessen dukkha.

Buddhism in Ambedkar's view, refuses to recognise the morality created by divine power. Therefore, it preaches that men should make their own morality and they are builders of their own destiny. And to avoid exploitation of a man by a man, that Buddha gave the people the law of Karuna and maitri (Love and brotherhood) which is the most needed principle in the contemporary world.

Hence, the Buddhists morality is a human morality and universally applicable to whole humankind. And Buddhism recognises the need of moral principles. Because
in the absence of common principles, society can not be a harmonious whole and even for an individual, it is impossible to attain peace and consistency of mind. The only way to end such conflicts is to have the common rules of morality which are sacred to all. It is to safeguard the growth of the individual. That is why that the Buddha preached Dhamma that is morality, which is nothing but humanity.

What the Buddha wanted to convey is that the scientific method and its discoveries should cease to be mere instruments of greed. The supreme consideration, for him was the suffering humanity. Impressed by the harsh facts of life, the Buddha produced a theory of social emancipation and revolutionary change which profoundly influenced the views of millions of people.

The Buddha rejected mysticism and supernaturalism. So Buddhism is nothing if not rationalism as Ambedkar felt. The Buddha’s object was to lead man to the path of rationalism and he wanted to free man from supernaturalism to go in search of truth and to uphold the spirit of inquiry.34 The Buddha wanted the truth or belief based on reason. All his philosophical discoveries are expressions of a rationalist and empiricist.

34. Ibid., p. 250.
The Buddha is both rationalist and empiricist, in the sense that what he discovered was based on reason and experience. He did not indulge himself in wishful thinking as most of the philosophers did of their times. The Buddha wanted human community without dukkha; this could be achieved through rightway, which was showed by him but not by supernatural illumination. Because mystical method would not help people in attaining such aim.

The Buddha was an ethical humanist and he asked people to be righteous in conduct and this naturally induce in them a spirit of non-exploitation, which avoids violence. And Yet the Buddha did not rule out violence wherever it was necessary in self-defence. The Buddha’s view was that in the wods of Ambedkar, "where virtue is in danger do not aviod fighting, do not be mealy-mouthed".35 So the Buddha wanted the humanistic way transforming the life of man. The humanistic method to which Buddhism strictly adheres is the need of contemporary world.

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35. Ibid., p. 447.
Scientific Humanism As Basis of Buddhism:

Buddhism stressed the need of understanding and transforming the world with the help of Social and natural laws but not through one's submission to supernatural power or divine authority. For Buddhism, a scientific world-outlook only, can serve as a reliable guide to action. The Buddhism is not based on rigid principles, which have to be accepted blindly, but it is creative, developing nature, always striving for human welfare on this earth.

In fact, if we look around, it can be seen that millions of people are not satisfied with theistic idealism because it has failed to serve the interest of the suppressed humanity. So the future belongs to a scientific world outlook based on social service. The fact is that the Buddhist dynamic realism has been interpreted and re-analysed in the light of modern science and newly emerging forces. So it is the Buddhist philosophy which fit into the modern scientific world but not superstition, dogmatism and supernaturalism.

Buddhism is scientific in its temper as well as in action. Because the philosophy of Buddha Dhamma is, to put in Ambedkar's view, reflection of reality. It is said
that, Buddhism does not contradict science whereas it welcomes it as the promoter of knowledge. Buddhism stands for the liberation of fettered and suffering humanity and it condemns exploitation of man by man in all spheres of life. For this purpose, it propagates scienticism rather than dogmatism.

The purpose of 'Scientific Humanity' of Buddhism differs from the purpose of concept of 'Humanity' in theistic idealism. Theistic idealism adopts the theory of Humanity, only to serve its major purpose that is maintaining social stability and avoiding social conflict. In fact for it, 'Humanity' is secondary objective. Human concern is not primary but maintaining some sort of peace in human relations even at the cost of human welfare is major important. In other words, it spreads dogmatism, blind faith, suppress reason, and eventually helps the perpetuation of exploitation of a man by a man or a community by other community.

It serves two purposes at a time; one is exploitation and other is peace (stability) i.e., it maintains stability and peace in the society only to protect exploitation of all sorts. By blocking the development of rationality, reason, and knowledge of
understanding nature, the theistic idealism maintains equilibrium between exploiters and exploited, finally making the social system to serve the cause of exploiters.

Where as scientific Humanity of Buddhist dynamic realism gives first preference to the question of Humanity. It’s primary concern is Human touch in social relations. In Ambedkar’s view, the basis of Buddha Dhamma is nothing but 'philosophy of Humanism'. And it supports ‘scienticism’ in all aspects of human life and adopts scientific analysis to the problems faced by human community. It uses reason as its base and question everything to avoid blind belief, by which it expects emergence of rational conclusion to the problems in social relations. And it understands human concern from different angle altogether compare to theistic idealism. It wants exploited community to know why and how they are exploited and urge them to find the way to over come inability in resisting exploitation, here, in the very world itself, rather than talking about the other world.

Indeed, ‘Scientific Humanity’ concerns only the existing world. It opposes the belief of other divine world for salvation. For it salvation is, to live happily in this world itself. For this, the opposition of depressed community to the exploitation is approved by it.
Hence for scientific Humanity, 'violence' doesn't matter if it required to fight against exploitation, though first it prefers 'self-change' among individuals to maintain good social relations.

In other words, Buddhist dynamic realism adopts Scientific Humanity, rather than simply saying it concerns Humanity like theistic idealism, because it's approach to attain humanity in social relations based on scientific ideals i.e., reason, logic, and rationality, and oppose superstition, dogmatism and supernaturalism i.e., belief, that divine power can change bad situation into betterment of all mankind without 'human effort'.

Hinduism propagated theory of *Karma*, that is, by doing good things in this life one can born in better position in the next life. Christianity says Good deeds of this life helps to enter into divine state, where one would lead happy life. The fear of next life in Hinduism and the desire to enter god's world in Christianity, prevented people to fight against their problems, which are prevailed in the society, rather made them to wait, until divine power to take its own action.

Hinduism went bit further and altogether left the concept of Humanity in its philosophy and reserved its
special and different place in theistic idealism. Hinduism added its inhuman theory to its *Karma* philosophy that is, a man becomes poor and lowly because of his bad deeds in past life. By which Hinduism justifies, exploitation of a man by a man saying that it is because of one’s *Karma* (deed). And it made exploited community to believe that its all due to their misdeeds in past life. And to get good position in the next life they have to do good things in the present life that is ‘serving the exploiters’ without showing any opposition.

In other words *Brahman* is regarded as socially high just based on birth not on merit and efficiency. But lowly born should not question Brahman’s privilege rather he has to feel himself that it is his *Karma* (duty to born as lowly only to serve highers. He can be born as *Brahman* in next life, only if he serve the socially high, restricting himself not aiming to disturb their position.

The Hindu Shastras (Law books of Hindus), and *Bhagvad Gita* (the Bible of Hindus) authorise, unethical view of human society in the Hindu belief system. (See appendix -I).
So, it can be said that, Hinduism differs from other theistic religions in the question of humanity, since it outrightly oppose any sort of opposition from suppressed and depressed people to its social system and prescribe such social duties that justifies social and economic exploitation. Fortunately, this element is absent in other religions. Non-Hindu religions not only oppose any sorts of exploitation and prescribe social duties as well as responsibilities equally to all people. This make all people to go against of bad deed (exploitation) at least due to God’s fear, since in these religions God does not prescribe to justify exploitation where as in Hinduism exploitation is supported by divine justification and became right of privileged to perpetuate exploitation, since they believe it is their Karma (duty) to exploit.

So in Hinduism there is no place for self-change unlike Buddhism. In Buddhism one can realise one self through self-purification and can contribute to the betterment of all. But in Hinduism, both the exploiter and exploited are under belief that, it is their Karma (duty) prescribed by God so have to act accordingly. Hence in Hindu society, the final result is perpetuation of exploitation, whereas in other religions people stop exploitation due to fear of god and particularly in
Buddhist society people get chance to change their hearts and through self-realisation, Buddhists abandon exploitation. This in brief how Hinduism differ from other religions in the question of humanity and also how Buddhism gives pride of place to humanity is discussed.

Uchan Htoon says that, in contrast to all religions which demand an absolute faith and unconditional obedience to divine revelation, Buddhism is itself a system for the discovery of truth and reality by man's own efforts. It encourages rational criticism and objective analysis. He also says that, Buddhist philosophy is full in accordance with reason and experience; it agrees with the picture of the Universe given science and it does not ask us to believe in anything outside the normal cosmology because, in contrast to Christianity, it has from the beginning held out for a multiplicity of worlds. He feels that, It has always stressed that our earth is not the only planet capable of bringing forth and sustaining but that it is part of an immense system, of an immeasurably plurality of worlds, and stand intimate relation to system.36

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36. From the address delivered by Uchan Htoon, Justice of Burma's Supreme Court, to the Conference on "Religion in the Age of Science" held at Starland, New Hampshires, August, 1958, Quoted in Pamphlet released by SC/ST Forum, Madras, 1990.
Even science without the use for society, is not desireful. New inventions in scientific field should be utilised for the betterment of mankind. If it serve for the destruction of humanity, Buddhism oppose it outrightly. Hence science without Dhamma (righteous and peaceful uses) is always a threat to world. That is why Buddhists claim leadership for the religious insights of Buddhism even in the fields of scientific knowledge. Religious insight, they argue, can establish a bridge between scientific thinking and man's moral life, between knowledge and responsibility. Buddhism comprehends scientific thinking, but is not limited to it. Rather it applies the fruit of science to the definition and practice of the moral.37

Science is valued for its practical advantages which it gives to suffering humanity. So according to Ambedkar's view, Buddhism accepts the basic facts of science so far as they are useful in mitigating the sorrows of mankind. It claims that, the conflict between theology and science, physics and metaphysics, does not exist in the Buddhist thinking. It means Buddhism fully accords with the conclusions of the natural sciences. And it is said that, Buddhism supports science because bearings of science on practical life can be seen.


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According to the Buddha, Ambedkar says that, ignorance was the cause of suffering of man. So to him, he says that, Knowledge (Prajna) is necessary. But Sila is more necessary. In his opinion, Prajna without Sila is dangerous. He elaborates that, Prajna is like a sword in the hand of a man. In the hand of a man with Sila it may be used for saving a man from danger. But in the hand of a man without Sila it may be used for murder. That is why Sila is more important than Prajna. Prajna is Vichar Dhamma (thinking aright, that is, the understanding of what really is). Sila is Achar Dhamma, acting aright (that is, practice base o the right understanding). 38

The Buddha Says, "He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and though are weak, that lazy and idle never finds the way to knowledge", 39 Ambedakr writes.

The Buddha’s main emphasis was on right view and right action based on it. There should be close relation between thinking aright and acting aright. So it is said that to understand Buddhism one must practise it. Infact

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39. Ibid., p. 369.
Buddhism gives more importance to the practical aspect of knowledge than to its theory. That is why Buddhism is modernized time and again to serve the modern needs and to fit into the new changing society. And that is the reason why Buddhism even after 2500 years of its birth, looks more needed for contemporary world.

Philosophy is a true understanding of the world, its laws and functions, and unless such a philosophy becomes a method of effective social change, it would remain largely speculative and futile like Brahmanic theology. Hence the Buddha insisted on practice because it was the only way to find out the truth of world and human mind. Because for Buddhism, world is always changing reality. So it emphasised on, application part of the theory i.e., knowledge putting into practice, by this way only one can understand the changing reality since practical knowledge enable to know the validity of one's own philosophy.

It is said that, the Buddhist realism includes the true elements of both materialism and spiritualism, that is for Buddhism what constitute spiritualism. In otherwords Buddhism is a dynamic realism which means that matter and mind are real and they constitute the one whole existence. This what is called as middle path. So Buddhist philosophy is synthesis of both materialism and
spiritualism but neither just materialistic nor purely spiritualistic. And the modern science also confirms the view that there is eternal unity between the material particles and mental elements.

It is also said that, the Buddhism proposed reconstruction of the world both by changing the material conditions of society as well as by moulding the mental habits of man. So to end exploitation and suffering, Buddhism stress on reforming human attitudes and manners. For Buddhism, just transformation in the material conditions would not bring end to exploitation but self-purification and self-transformation alongwith change in the material conditions could contribute to the welfare society.

The theory that Buddhism gives more importance to humanism, can be proved from the realistic philosophy put forwarded by the Buddha. Buddhism wants the realization of peace and happiness in the present life itself, since it doesn’t believe in heaven and Moksha. According to the Buddha, man can fulfill his needs by his own efforts in the very life itself. The interesting point of Buddhist way life is that, instilling hope in the life, which results into peace and happiness in man’s mind.
The 'hope' in Buddhism implies the relentless spirit of work towards social re-construction. So in the Buddhist way of life 'work culture' means fighting against exploitation and dukkha in the world. So man must work with hope and without work there is no hope, no-well being in Buddhism. Full optimism for mankind is the basis of work culture in Buddhism. And work culture is only hope for the development of society. Since work is for everybody, Buddhist society does not create lazy class to exploit working community. But in Hinduism the work is assigned to lowly whereas high born claim all rights to utilise the produce this in turn resulted into existence of inequality in the society and perpetuation of exploitation. In this sort of society, human relations are based on enmity, suspicion and no scope for self-change. Ultimately this sort of social realtions contribute to disintegration of mankind.

Hence, it can be said that, the ultimate goal of Buddhism is the establishment of society, where there is no exploitation and no suffering. Buddhist humanism as Ambedkar puts it, is based on ethical insight of man and society. In other words individual freedom and social responsibility are two basic ideas of Buddhist society. To achieve these ideals it seems to be that, democratic way is the only alternative to Buddhists.
A true humanist society is not possible without doing away with all exploitation. So Buddhism wants social relations based on actual help and co-operation. Buddhism wants Humanist re-construction— that is what one can call as scientific Humanism; revolutionising the very concept of Humanism, which means giving altogether different meaning to the purpose of Humanism, different from the meaning used by theistic idealism.

It is said that, Buddhist scientific humanity or dynamic realism has no God, no immortal soul, no creation, no last judgement. Buddha himself is not a saviour, but a teacher. He born as a man; everything about him is unequivocally within the domaine of nature. Every human being, therefore, can aspire to imitate him wholly, and indeed, can be come a Buddha, an enlightened one. The whole drama of salvation, as Buddhism depicts it, takes place on the stage of this life, on this earth40.

Buddhism, by teaching the non-existance of eternal soul (self), it does away with selfishness. And it is the righteous conduct of man helps to make better society but not the economic and material forces on their own. It is righteous person use material factors to support human

40. Kaplan, A. A New World of Philosophy, Delhi, 1962, p. 265.
welfare and certainly evil minded person try to use all material benefits to exploit society. So if scientific results are to be benefitted to all people, that can be possible only though the practice of righteousness in the attitude of individuals. That is why the Buddha emphasised the importance of man with his ethical conduct. So it can be said that, Buddhist humanism sets man even above the Gods, but without a trace of the impiety of worshipping man as God41.

Hence the Buddha have put purely humanistic goals before mankind. When an individual has attained the state of Buddhahood (Nirvana), he will behave in a manner that is conducive to the general well-being of the whole of society. In fact, the contemporary society has become more aware of humanistic ideology. And Buddhism is becoming day by day, more and more relevant to the present world. And Buddhist scientific humanism based on dynamic realism proved itself time and again in the history that it is very appropriate ideology to follow for the betterment of society.

41. Ibid., p. 268.