Chapter VI

CONCLUSION
Conclusion

This chapter draws implications and findings based on the data and analyses given in the previous chapters. It shows how Dr Ambedkar examined many aspects of philosophical, religious and social preachings of Buddha through his writings. He shows how Buddhism can free the society from the evils of non-morality and inequality and encourages the values of fellow-feelings and human dignity. Ambedkar’s Buddhism is relevant in today’s fundamentalist times. The chapter details about how Buddhism has played a pivotal role in according humanity a best-deserved dignity; and how it has initiated a Herculean task of establishing world peace. What Ambedkar thought of Buddha’s Dhamma is a true religion, which could be able in all respects to reconstruct not only the Indian society but the society at large in the world also wherein human dignity will be protected and the world peace honoured. It is thus from this point of view Dr. Ambedkar looked upon religion and adopted his own way to approach the Buddhist religion, wherein human dignity and values will be gracefully preserved.

In first Chapter, ‘The Problem of Caste and Religious Reform’ it was argued that although the problem of caste discrimination was raised by Hindu social reformers, they did not think through the radical project of the annihilation of caste. This was because they were caught
up in the hierarchical mode of thinking. They did not uphold the values of social equality and human dignity. Following Phule, Ambedkar upheld the notion of social equality and fraternity. He could however do so only because of his constant engagement with the ideals of Buddhism. The introductory chapter discussed the problem of caste discrimination as social and political; it did so on the ground of religion in 19th and 20th century India. It attempted to situate Ambedkar as making a unique attempt towards social change via the annihilation of caste.

The second chapter, ‘Ambedkar’s Critique of Hinduism’ examines Ambedkar critique of attempts to reform Hinduism. It will show how these attempts fail to address the basic problem of caste prejudice. For according to Ambedkar, Hinduism institutionalizes caste hierarchy. Hence, following his argument in various writings, it was important to reject Hinduism and convert to Buddhism.

In the third chapter, ‘Ambedkar’s Turn to Buddhism’ there was an analysis of Ambedkar’s major work *Buddha and his Dhamma* from a philosophical perspective. The chapter studied the specific manner in which Ambedkar turned to the spirit of Buddhism and also reconstructed it from the contemporary point of view. This chapter gives an account of how Ambedkar differs and conforms the early Buddhism will be studied. He rejects Karma and nirvana. But he keeps Buddha’s social
criticism alive. So, Ambedkar gives a new religion- he reconstructs Buddhism. He does so to provide the basis for liberty, equality and fraternity.

The fourth chapter, ‘Human Dignity and Cultural Identity’ focuses on how Ambedkar’s Buddhism opens the space for the philosophy of human dignity in it which is the core of Buddhist philosophy. The latter rejects the essentialist conception of the human being and proposes a notion of the self that is constantly changing and interdependent. It allows for engaging with the social sense of the self. These other works are reflections of humanity that has no bar of caste, class or privilege. Apart from this, the chapter makes a reassessment of some of the scholars and thinkers on Buddhism and Dr Ambedkar’s philosophy. This chapter will explore Ambedkar’s argument that social justice requires and egalitarian cultural identity. Hence, conversion to Buddhism is necessary.

In chapter five, ‘Relevance of Ambedkar’s Neo-Buddhism’ an attempt is made to argue that Ambedkar’s Buddhism can show the way out of the current religious violence towards world peace. The fifth concluding chapter would draw implications and findings based on the data and analyses given in the previous chapters. It would also show how Dr Ambedkar examined many aspects of philosophical, religious
and social preachings of Buddha through his writings. He shows how Buddhism can free the society from the evils of non-morality and inequality and encourages the values of fellow-feelings and human dignity. Ambedkar’s Buddhism is relevant in today’s fundamentalist times.

On the basis of the arguments in the above chapters, one can conclude that Ambedkar followed Buddha, the premier religious leader of the world to expound peace and equality. Five precepts (Panchsheel) of Buddha’s life are the cardinal principles of building world peace the precepts Panchsheel based on Buddha’s life would help to build world peace and harmony among the Nations. Buddhism sets enlightenment at top of human priority. Buddha had established a classless society by opening the gates of the Sangha to all deserving individuals, making no distinction between caste and class. Buddhism, the religion of the underprivileged people, is based on a fundamental principle of equality. Lord Buddha raised his voice against separatism and Untouchability. Buddhism is the only religion, which does not recognize caste and affords full scope for progress. Buddha’s Teachings are grounded on wisdom, morals and concentration, which are germane not only for Buddhist nations but are of Universal application. He showed humanity a path of sublime promotions and reliever from painful demotions.
Buddha attempted to abolish slavery and “invented the higher morality and the idea of the brotherhood of the entire human race, and in striking terms condemned” the degrading caste-system which in Indian society at that time was firmly rooted. The Buddha declared: “By birth is not one an outcast, By birth is not one a Brahmin, By deeds is one an outcast, By deeds is one a Brahmin.”

This philosophy was upheld and revived by Dr. Ambedkar. Buddha, whose life and movement Ambedkar had studied, was a believer of the educatability and the creativity of the people. Under the influence Buddhist teachings, the most rejected peoples of India has once risen and uplifted their own lives and that of the whole society at large. Dr Ambedkar had envisioned such kind of change only Buddhism can bring about in the lives of his brethrens. Babasaheb Ambedkar hoisted the banner of Buddhism and brought back to his motherland her own Buddhism that was lying stranded expatriate for over twelve hundred years. Ambedkar, a man of exceptional learning, challenged the distracters of Buddhism to hold discussions with him, and was confident that he would trounce all his rivals at philosophical frontier. He promoted Buddhism in India and facilitated the study of Pali in the Indian constitution. India continues to be proud of its Buddhist heritage. Buddhist symbols like the Wheel of Dhamma and the Asoka Capital,
have become national symbols and the Mathura Buddha adorns the	house of Parliament and inspires Indian lawmakers. The most
noteworthy development in the resurrection of Buddhism in modern
India was the movement spearheaded by Dr. Ambedkar, as a result of
which mass conversions of Buddhism have been taking place in many
parts of the country. The Neo-Buddhist is progressively gaining self-
sufficiency as regards temples and shrines, monastic leadership and
guidance, educational institutions and religious literature. In India,
Buddhism is numerically the fastest growing religion too.

The attempts have been made to accommodate Buddha into Hindu
Avatara pantheon. However it is also clear from the fact that caste
Hindus never worshiped the Buddha and no temples were built in his
honour. Hence the theory that Buddha is an incarnation of Vishnu is
dubious one. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar exhorted Buddhists not to believe
that the Buddha was an incarnation of Vishnu. Those who are turned to
Buddhism, but remained within Hinduism but wanted Hinduism to
change, Ambedkar made the following suggestion: “You must give a
new doctrinal basis to your religion-a-basis that will be in consonance
with Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, in short, with Democracy.”
Buddhists of India needs the friendship, understanding and cooperation
for uplifting themselves and for strengthening the hands of those who are striving for peace, equality and justice

Ambedkar envisioned that the emancipation and empowerment of Dalits is possible only through education. Dr. Ambedkar explained to his people that a great responsibility had fallen on their shoulders in connection with the upholding of Buddhism; and if they would not follow rigidly and nobly the principles of Buddhism, it would mean that the Mahars reduced it to a miserable state, no other person under that the sum was burdened with such unparalleled responsibility as he was, he concluded. Dr. Ambedkar set the wheel of Dhamma in motion once again, spreading the message of his Master to all the nooks and corners of the world. The Buddhists said the “the Dhamma Chakra was set revolution by Dr. Ambedkar and it was the greatest religious revolution which India had witnessed in modern times.” Dr. Ambedkar had given himself to the cause of the propagation of the Buddhist revival in India. He wrote a book on Buddhism titled “Buddha and His Dhamma” explaining its tenets in simple language to the common man. His two other books “Revolution and Counter Revolution in India’ and “Buddha and Karl Marx”

The hypothesis of this research work is that Ambedkar’s Buddhism emerges from the quest for social justice. It is a struggle
towards human dignity. However, it will also prove that for Ambedkar Buddhism is relevant wherever there is discrimination. Hence, Ambedkar Buddhism is helpful in the critique of prejudices based on class and gender as well. Further, Ambedkar’s reconstruction of Buddhism is also against religious fundamentalism given his critique of religious dogmatism and commitment to pluralism. Hence, this thesis also maintains that Ambedkar Buddhism is a step towards world peace during these troubled times of communal disharmony.

**Research Methodology**

The research work refers to the data in social sciences- i) data of suffering of unprivileged castes on grounds of religion even in 21st century. ii) recordings of fundamentalism and absence of peace. Normative paradigm to solve these problems in the data. A plural and non-hierarchical religion; Ambedkar’s Buddhism towards textual analysis, critique, interpretation and reconstruction.

The primary objective of the proposed research work is to make a philosophical study of Dr Ambedkar’s discourse on Buddhism. The aim of the research is also to bring forth the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar to the upliftment of the downtrodden through non-violent Buddhist philosophy and evaluating his appeal to restore the human dignity. Its
objective is also to show how Philosophy is an expression, perhaps the ultimate expression, of human freedom as Ambedkar and John Dewey believed. Ambedkar wanted a noble, religious life and freedom for his followers. Therefore he questioned the origin, the growth and development of the caste system in Hinduism. He also believed that religion can be founded on a scientific basis by shaking ourselves free from all assumptions and preconceived ideas.

Thus, this research work humbly aimed at the following:

1. To present Dr Ambedkar’s thoughts on religion and social justice in a systematic manner following a philosophical classification of his views.

2. To pinpoint the problems with which he has been concerned.

3. To state the answer given by him to this problems as clearly as possible.


5. Assess the criticisms against Dr Ambedkar
6. Place and relevance of Dr Ambedkar’s philosophy in comparison with some predominant philosophers.

This research work is a monograph that attempts to achieve the above academic objectives through a philosophical book length study of Ambedkar. It is thus a contribution to the field of Ambedkar studies and philosophy. This research will be relevant to teachers and students in both philosophy (philosophy of religion and socio-political philosophy) and social sciences (political science, sociology and history). This contribution is unique because there has been no book length philosophical study of Ambedkar so far. Yet such a study is the need of the hour.