

Buddhism and Its Impact on Hinduism after Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: A Quest from Historical and Philosophical Perspective

Jhumu Saha

Ph. D. Research Scholar, Department Of Philosophy, Raiganj University,
Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal, India, 733134

Abstract: The Present Paper Deals With Buddhism And Its Impact On Hinduism After Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar Who Played A Pivotal Role In Shaping India In A New By Means His Conversion To Buddhism From Hinduism According To History. He Fights For Justice And Non-Discrimination Of Social Beings. In This Respect, Nobody Can Deny The Relation Between History And Philosophy Is Colossal After Ambedkar. In The Same Vein Of Greek Tradition, Ambedkar Claimed That The Role Of Leader Can Be Evaluated From Ethical Perspectives. Equally, He Evaluated Hinduism From Moral Code. In Hinduism, Social Order Is Based On Caste, I.E., Varnasramadharama And So It Lacks Justice, Equality And So On. Instead Of Hinduism, Buddhism Is Based On Love (Ahimsa), Care, Kindness, Forgiveness For All. Thus, In Contrast To Hinduism, Buddhism Promotes Equality Between Man And Man According To Ambedkar. This Is, In Short, How Buddhism As A Religion Impacts On Hinduism After Ambedkar.

Key Words: Buddhism, Caste, Equality, Justice, Hinduism.

Date of Submission: 05-3-2018

Date of acceptance: 21-03-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

The Prime Objective Of This Paper Is An Attempt To Show The Impact Of Buddhism On Hinduism Is One Of The Major Religions In India In Particular And The World In General After Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (Hereafter B. R. Ambedkar) From Historical And Philosophical Perspectives. It Would Not Be An Exaggeration If We Claim That The World Is A Global Family And Functions As An Organic Whole From The Point Of View Of Philosophy. It Is Equally True In The Field Of Development And Cultivation Of Knowledge Or Cognition. The Development Of Knowledge Should Be Interrelated And Mutually Dependent. In Fact, The Age Of Compartmentalized Sort Or Kind Of Knowledge Or Cognition Is Over. Keeping This Background In Mind This Paper Proposes To Do Interdisciplinary Research Paper.

We Think That There Is An Entwined Relationship Between History And Philosophy. Here One Can Ask: What Is The Relation Between History And Philosophy? To Reply This, It Can Be Said That Historical Facts Or Events Can Be Evaluated From Ethical And Moral Perspectives. Nobody Can Deny That Moral And Ethical Implication Of History Is Colossal. For Example, The Philosophical Teaching Of Plato In Greek And Ashoka The Great Hinges That The Role Of A King Or A Leader Can Be Evaluated From Moral Perspective. What It Reveals That Both The Greek And Indian Tradition Envisages The View That A King Should Be A Philosopher King. The Most Pertinent Question At This Juncture Is: Why The Society Or State Needs A King Like Philosopher? We Think That Society Or State Needs A Philosopher King For Establishing Justice And Other Related Moral Virtues, E.G., Equality, Fraternity Etc. Apart From Philosopher King Or King Like Philosopher Or Leader Like Philosopher With Full Wisdom, The Justice Of The Society Or State Cannot Be Retained In Proper. Because Philosophers Handle Substantive Ethical Problems Of “What Would Represent A Descent Life, What Square Measure Our Ethical Obligations, And The Way We Must Always Resolve Ethical Dilemmas.”¹ Here It Is Worthy To Note That B. R. Ambedkar Highly Disgusted By The *Divide And Rule* Method Practiced By Hindu Caste, I.E., *Varnasramadharama*. Instead Of Hindu Social Order Based On *Varnasramadharama*, B. R. Ambedkar Wanted To Establish Social Democracy Which Would Continue To Raise The Cause Of Justice In Indian Society. Briefly Speaking, B. R. Ambedkar Fight Against The Evil Of Casteism. His Struggle Is A Struggle For Moral Redemption Of Humanity To All Which Is Grounded In Buddhism. Perhaps, This Is The Reason Why Ambedkar Shifted His Position From Hinduism To Buddhism On The Basis Of Moral Or Ethical Force With Which A State Or Society Governs.

From The Historical Point Of View Buddhism As A True Religion Appeared As A Footnote Before The Mankind In General. Buddhism Deserves Equal Significance Not Only From Philosophical Point Of View But Also From Historical Point Of View. History Of Buddhism Teaches Us The Impact Of Buddhism In Our Surroundings. The Philosophy Of Buddhism Teaches Us About The Insight Of Buddhism Towards Maintaining Peace And Harmony Among Rational Beings. Unlike Hinduism And Other Religions Of The World, Buddhism Is Extremely Transparent And Liberal. Non-Violence, Compassion, Sympathy And Kindness Etc. Are The Basic Principle Of Buddhism. In His *Buddha And His Dhamma*, B. R. Ambedkar Makes No Distinction Between *Dhamma* And Morality. For Him, *Dhamma* Is Inseparable From Morality. Thus, *Dhamma* Is Same As Morality According To Ambedkar. In His Own Words: “In *Dhamma* Morality Takes The Place Of God Although There Is No God In *Dhamma*. In *Dhamma* There Is No Place For Prayers, Pilgrimages, Rituals, Ceremonies Or Sacrifices.”² It Reveals That Unless There Is Morality, There Is No *Dhamma*. That Means That Where There Is *Dhamma* There Is Morality. Thus, *Dhamma* And Morality Are Interrelated. “Morality In *Dhamma* Arises From The Straight Necessity For Man To Love Man. It Does Not Involve In The Sanction Of God. It Is Not Please God That Man Has To Be Moral. It Is For His Own Good That Man Has To Love Man.”³ We Think Without Doubt That Buddhism Gives Extreme Importance On Peace And Harmony. Negatively, There Is No Place For *Himsa* (Violence) In Buddhism. In This Sense, Buddhism Differs From Hinduism And Other Stringent Religions. The History Of Buddhism Shows That Buddhism As A Religion Not Only Pays Due Attention To Peace And Harmony, It Equally Paves The Way Or Path Or *Marg* Towards Achieving This Goal.

Ambedkar Followed Buddha’s Eightfold Path (*Astangika Marg*) To A Great Extent. He Led A Life Guided By The Three Principles Of Knowledge, Right Path And Compassion.⁴

It May Be Noted Here That Buddhism As A Religion Of True Wisdom Impacts A Lot On Hinduism. Historically The Tussle Between Buddhism And Hinduism Is Known To Us. Even Though Both Religions Are Designated As Universal Religion, But The Very Nature Of Buddhism Is Different From That Of Hinduism. Many Would Say That There Is Absence Of Equality And Justice In Hinduism. In This Regard, From Historical Point Of View We Can Examine The Position Of B. R. Ambedkar. Historically, It Is Known To Us That B. R. Ambedkar Even Though Born In Hinduism Was Humiliated By Hinduism. B. R. Ambedkar Was Against Caste System Based On Birth Instead Of Quality And Education As Mentioned Above. From Historical Perspective We Can Say That Division Of Labor Is Good, But Division Of Laborers Is Not Good. “Caste”, According To Ambedkar, “Is Not A Division Of Labor; It Is A Division Of Laborers”⁵ And So Not Good. Accordingly It Follows That Casteism Is Bad For Society Or State Or Humanity According Ambedkar. Everyone Should Enjoy Equality, Liberty And Fraternity. This Is All About Of Justice. However, Ambedkar Felt That There Is No Justice In Hinduism Because Hinduism On The Basis Of Sheer Caste System Makes Differentiation Among Hindus. To Make This Point More Clear It Can Be Said That In Hinduism “The Commendable Conduct Is Not Concerned ... With The General Good Of Community.”⁶ But In Buddhism The Commendable Ethics Is Concerned With The Common Good Of People Of The Society Or State. Thus, Ambedkar Called For Justice And Equality For Human Welfare Rooted In Buddhism. “The Buddha By His *Dhamma* Laid The Foundation To The Kingdom Of Righteousness On Earth And Urged Both The *Bhikkus* And The Laypersons To Strive For It.”⁷ The Kingdom Of Righteousness Means Kingdom Of Humanism Consists Of Love. Where There Is Love There Is Peace And Justice For Mankind.

II. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

From The Above Discussion It Becomes Clear That The Historical Impact Of Ambedkar Was Colossal. On The Basis Of Sheer Influence Of Ambedkar, There We Witnessed A Massive Religious Conversion From Hinduism To Buddhism. B. R. Ambedkar Interpreted Buddhism In A Different Way And Termed It As “Neo-Buddhism Or Navayana”⁸. According To Ambedkar, Buddhism As A Religion Had Made A History As It Based On Care, Compassion And Universal Brotherhood. It Protects The Trio Principles Of Social Justice, Such As Equality, Liberty And Fraternity. It Denies Any Division On The Race Of Caste. Thus, In A Nutshell It Can Be Said That Buddhism As A Religion Deserves Worthy Of Consideration Both From Historical And Philosophical Perspective On The One Hand And The Role Of Ambedkar Has Immersed Philosophical And Historical Significance On The Other Hand. The Reason Behind Ambedkar’s Conversion To Buddhism Is That He Makes Casteless Society For Vast Humanity.

REFERENCES:

-
- [1]. Rao, S. (2016). *Ambedkar’s Philosophy on Religion and Morality*, Delhi; Kalpaz Publications, p. 30.
 - [2]. Ambedkar, B. R. (1991). *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Bombay: Siddhartha Publications, p. 227.
 - [3]. Ibid., pp. 230-31.
 - [4]. Pandagale, S. K. (2011). *Life, Ideas and Thought of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar*, Delhi: Swastik Publications, p. 175f.

- [5]. Omvedt, G. (2015). *Understanding Caste: From Buddha to Ambedkar and Beyond*, Second edition, New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, p. 53.
- [6]. Rao, S. (2016). *Ambedkar's Philosophy on Religion and Morality*, op cit., p. 233.
- [7]. Moon, V. (1991). *Babasaheb Ambedkar's Writings and Speeches*, Vol. V., Govt. of Maharashtra, p. 319.
- [8]. Pandagale, S. K. (2011). *Life, Ideas and Thought of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar*, op cit., p. 174.

Jhumu Saha "Buddhism and Its Impact on Hinduism after Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: A Quest from Historical and Philosophical Perspective." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 3, 2018, pp. 01-03.