

Vivekananda's Walk to Spiritual Revolution in Consonance with Politics and Nation Building.

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Abstract- *The philosophies of India harbor the ethos of spirituality from ancient times. The ancient Hindu monks used to meditate as their means to connect with the Supreme God – Ishwara/Brahman. Spirituality is considered to be a connector between the supreme and the humans. In simple words, spirituality means a sensory experience that a greater whole exists of which we are a part. Spirituality involves exploring certain universal ideas- love, compassion, altruism, wisdom and truth etc. Here, we would look into the proposition of practical spirituality laid out by Swami Vivekananda and his project of nation building basing on this concept. The underlining relationships and intricacies associated with his concept of spirituality and nation building lies at the core of this discussion. In other words, this study inquiries about the overlapping tendencies of both the realms of spirituality and nation building. Taking into consideration the current political and social scenario, this work will subsequently revisit the issue of reviving the force of practical spirituality into politics and national development indeed.*

Index Terms- *Spirituality, Nation, Politics, Truth, Atman.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Vivekananda, not merely a name of a saint who is only remembered for his meditative practices but way beyond. He is the manifestation of love, bravery and courage. He was born to Bishwanath Dutta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi in 1863 in Kolkata. His paternal name was Narendranath Dutta. From his early years, he was very kind at heart, sensitive to the needs of people. This broad mindedness sensitized his heart to work for the poor, undernourished.

He remained active in serving people. What made him different was his words and actions always aligned with each other. He discouraged fraudulent practices, manipulation in every sense as he believed truth is the only mean to reach God.

Man making is the task that we shall look into. The project of man making is comprehensive in nature. A good human being is not judged by material

possessions; whereas he /she is assessed by his humanistic principles which he/she exercises in daily life. To swamiji, religion was never a means of ascertaining rituals or rites over mankind. Rather it was way more. Religion gives a man proper identity as he feels religion helps one to mature. In words of Vivekananda, Superstitious practices in name of religion degraded human values and made them more vulnerable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Swami paramananda (1985) writes in Vedanta in practice how has been the idea of Vedanta conceptualised in the past and present. He talked about necessity of spiritual practices, right discrimination, and power of concentration in everyday life. He has also used selections from Upanishads to break down the difficulty level in understanding the core concepts.
2. Subodh Chandra Sen Gupta in his work titled Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism writes the core ideologies of Vivekananda related to nation building. The new India as envisioned by him has been characterised in this writing. The necessity of spiritual development as means of individual and collective growth comes at the centre of discussion.

III. PRACTICAL VEDANTA:

According to the conception of creation given in Vedanta, this human body is the greatest body on earth. Man is not greater than all animals but greater even than devas. No other manifested form of life is greater than man, for man alone is in fit position to attain perfection. It is said intelligence makes the key difference. Vedanta takes us to the idea that we are a part of the greater whole. Knowing ourselves (atman) and ultimate reality (brahman).it teaches that self is divine, the universe is the manifestation of Brahman .the perceived material world (illusion) is seen as transient impermanent. To

achieve liberation from the birth and dead cycle is the ultimate goal of human life. Vivekananda writes, practical Vedanta talks about practical implementation of Vedantic ideas. Liberation of soul is not attended only through rigorous meditation whereas, a disciplinary life leading based on yoga (jnan, karma, bhakti) helps in emancipation. Liberation of soul is not confined to individual liberation alone it takes into consideration helping others to liberate. He sees every living being as a personified brahman. Living beings and the Supreme Being are not separable. In his words, serving man is serving god.

Selfless human mind can reach out to human problems easily which in turn, help to serves human as manifestation of God. This is how practical Vedanta works. Spiritual development may lead to removal of barriers between god and man.

IV. NATION BUILDING AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:

Vivekananda was never a revolutionary in political sense. He rejected politics as an instrument of national or human improvement and necessarily involved a rejection of the whole idea. He had a new idea of revolution, by revolution he meant a spiritual moral revolution based on fundamental transformation of human nature. He rejected political revolution as he thinks the result of political revolution is disastrous. In his My Plan of Campaign he made his first significant statement of the view of politics. He says to throw off religion and take up either politics the vitality of the national life will become extinct. He quotes, before flooding India with socialistic ideas deluge the land with spiritual ideas. In his address My Master, he says, if you teach politics to Hindus they don't understand but if you teach religion, you will have hundreds and thousands of followers. Vivekananda's vision of man as portrayed by poet is as follows

Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul
Whose nature is its own divine control?
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the seas
Familiar-acts are beautiful through love

V. VIVEKANANDA AND HINDUISM:

Swamiji's contribution to Hinduism is immense. His thought provoking ideas has made us rethink about his stature, relevance in Indian politics and culture. Following marks out key contributions of Vivekananda in Indian culture:

1. IDENTITY AND UNITY:

One of the key contributions of Swamiji made in Hinduism was giving proper identity, a totality. Before swamiji came on the scene, there were several sects. Each of the sects were claiming superiority over others. There was no clear understanding of Hinduism as common ground. Through his lectures he roused the consciousness of Hindus. Pointing this, K.M Panicked wrote this new Shankar Acharya may be claimed to be a unifier of Hindu ideology.

2. UNIVERSALISATION:

Hinduism was made open to absorb ideas from other religions as well. The ancient nature of exaggerating ones belief as superior to others had a setback. Vivekananda explored various religious scriptures to defend his arguments. He was in favour of synthesizing understandings of different thoughts. He made Hinduism flexible and welcoming to other faiths. He tried to incorporate European judgments to deal with then existing superstitions and biases. What we practice as secularism in India- equip distancing of every religion is something we borrowed from Vivekananda. Tolerance and respecting diversity is a modern day practice which we inherited from thinkers like Vivekananda.

3. HINDUISM AND ITS GLOBAL ACCEPTANCE:

At the end of 19th century, people in the West had a poor opinion of India and Hindus. Hinduism was regarded as a religion of superstitions as Hindus worshipped snakes and cows. One great achievements of Vivekananda was that, he introduced Hinduism to the West with a new dimension. He proved the believes of the West wrong and established the glory of Hinduism. What Vivekananda believed is like natural sciences different religions of the world are based on eternal truths and laws of spiritual world. The world parliament of religion gave Swamiji the platform to discuss fundamental beliefs and understandings of Hinduism. He was successful in articulating the formulas of ancient Hindu religion, contribution of Hindu religion in other disciplines as well. His famous

introductory speech mesmerized other delegates of the conference. His selection of salutation-differed from other speakers. He tried to reflect the essence of Vasudhaiva kutumbakum (the world is the family) by addressing the Americans as the brothers and sisters. Americans were really delighted to see swamiji's heartwarming address. Subsequently he became the speaker of the session by winning hearts of Americans.

VI. SWAMIJI ON PEACE AND FREEDOM:

Swamiji observed that the Western society was standing on the brink of a volcano, as it were and unless man mended his ways it might erupt any day. Here, swamiji referred to the turbulences, systematic violence and disorders of the world. Moreover he warned about the future perils as well. He feared, future wars might kill a large number of people, but what made him more perplexed, was the thought of intolerance, mistrust and non-alignment among people. He questioned the effectiveness of the League of Nations and its failure to subdue warring mindsets reflected low vitality of the institution indeed. Swamiji offers us an answer to the question. He used an example of Upanishad and applied it there. As it goes- a covered vessel covers up the face of the truth. Because all are running after truth, they fail to see the truth inside. So here, he meant unless people are good from heart, no matter how many legislations are made they will find loopholes to escape through. Unless we take it seriously, there can be no peace in the world both individually and collectively.

VII. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

Swamiji idealized Spiritual revolution as a means of growth in case of India. He was more concerned about the collective development of the society as a whole. He vehemently opposed superficial structures those acted as barriers to unity of the nation; be it casteism, child marriage, untouchability etc. His dreams and aspirations related to a new India is yet to be achieved. Even in this 21st century our society is curbed by afflictions of fundamentalism acting as a divide between men. It now depends on the policy makers of the state how they make policies on it. A collective effort from ends of government and civil society may foster the process of making the project into reality.

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