

Swami Vivekanad's philosophy of universality is the representation of harmony, peace and universal brotherhood

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Abstract: Unity was the secret of Swami Vivekananda's spiritual experience; unity was the background of his philosophical learning. Spiritual and emotional worth was the great characters of his philosophy. In his ideal and practice of patriotism there was no place for the elements of hatred and distrust of the strange and its culture. In the making of Modern India, in the welding together of a unity in this country, no one has played so great and so inspiring a part as Swami Vivekananda. Returning from America he recast the contents of Indian philosophy so as to meet the present day needs and difficulties. Even those who were antagonistic to him admitted that he was a man with consummate genius for national reconstruction. This paper focuses on the multifaceted personality of Swami Vivekanand and tries to unveil his deep philosophy of love, peace and harmony that is required in our society to live with peace and fraternity.

Key words: monasticism, *gerua*, asceticism, renunciation, vicious intellectualism.

Discussion: Swami Vivekanand was a man of incredible attitude of thought and often to all appearances a living paradox; but beneath the surface of appearance he was clearly the living explanation of the spiritual life. And the understanding of this man, apparently almost impossible, becomes almost simple when one remembers that he was a man of manifold realization. Thus all the apparent paradoxes of his thought were reconciled by the greatness of his heart and by the consistencies of his emotional consciousness. He was intellectually like a great hammer mercilessly beating down the structures of complacent belief. Even with regard to his own mind, he was an eternal iconoclast, always searching for and demanding a sounder, saner and a more comprehensive basis. He never allowed himself any intellectual ease. He peremptorily refused to be satisfied with finality in thought and ideas which by their very nature connote limitation and imperfection.

Swami Vivekanand was a true monk with a resurrecting message to society, in this respect he showed himself to belong to the order of those Rishis who gave laws to society whilst they themselves remained dedicated in the meditative life. In the monastic vision his soul soared above the world, beyond all laws and limitations, making its abode in the Eternal. He was a monk in an uncompromising sense. He lived in the silence of his soul, occupied with the thought of his Guru and the Mother of universe, though the message which he uttered was tumultuous with vibrating strength to the Indian consciousness. He often turned aside, seeking the solitude and the grand aloofness of the 'inner life'. He was an ascetic in a larger definition than the world is ordinarily conceives of to mean. For him, asceticism was not a constant and conscious striving, but a natural state. He had undergone a severe ascetic discipline at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna and he fully

developed it in the days at Baranagore and when he was the itinerant monk. The ascetic life for him was the constant demonstration of conquest over the sense propensities, which makes a perfected monk and he was that. Purity with him included not only the triumph of chastity but the fulfillment of the Dharma in every respect. Anything which blights the heart and distorts the spiritual vision was to him Adharma. It was thus that he spoke of pride, anger, hatred and materialism in any form as impurity.

Swami Vivekananda was wonderful as a Guru. He was a teacher who not only practiced what he taught, but who was verily the teaching incarnate. He was remarkable in the freedom which he accorded to his disciples. He believed in freedom even to the seemingly paradoxical extent that he would not even aid them at times in their struggle at clearness of perception. He knew that it was better to make mistakes in an effort to understand than to believe without knowing. He would discourage any dependence on their part even to him. His first and last advice was, 'Stand on your own feet'. He repeatedly cautioned his disciples not to try to rule over others. Those who were to take charge of the different centers and works of the movement must do so 'not as a leader, but as a servant', for, 'the least show of leading destroys everything by rousing jealousy'. His philosophy cannot be separated from his spiritual experience. It was a school of its own, gained from observations along all lines of human speculation and realization concerning the Divine nature. To him religion and philosophy were controvertible terms. To his poetic vision, the Upanishads were the greatest poems ever given out by man to man. His audiences were always transformed into a state of heightened passivity. He spoke as saints speak. He desired that man might understand what angels knew. He wished to share his realization with others. The spiritual temperament was behind his philosophy and his character was the test of his intellectual assertions. Therefore his philosophy aroused in men not one, but all the faculties of consciousness in a new and spiritual awakening.

Though he perceived the grandeur of the ancestral inheritance of Hinduism, he bowed his head with equal reverence before those other forms of Religion, like Buddhism and Roman Catholicism, which had Truth and Sadhanas, Devotion and Renunciation, as pillars to support them. With equal enthusiasm he could speak of Guru Nanak and Buddha, of Krishna and Mohammed, of Sri Chaitanya and Jesus the Christ, for he had realized the Divinity of these. That is why different persons saw him through different lenses. Some saw a Buddha in him, others a Sankaracharya. Art entered even into his philosophy and dry history of philosophy he animated with an emotional and a visualizing power that was his very own. He could show the inter-relationship of history and religion and would speak of Shivaji as the disciple of a saint, of Omar as the devotee, of the great emperor Ashoka as Ashoka the monk and then vice versa, he would show the maker of history and re-moulder of a national consciousness in the Buddha and the statesman and political seer in Mohammed. In the makeup of the Swami's temperament, one saw glimpses of the intellect of Sankara, the heart of Buddha, the realization of Sri Chaitanya and the spiritual fire of Guru Nanak combined with the mildness of Jesus the Christ and the apostolic eloquence of Saint Paul. As a thinker, he was possessed of a great catholicity and yet he was firm with reference to his own conclusions. He could see the genuineness of another's point of view, but denounced any 'vicious intellectualism' in scathing terms. As the artist is passionately in love with his ideal, so was the Swami both artistically and passionately in love with Truth. His

philosophy was artistic, both in arrangement and in statement. To read his utterances requires no preliminary schooling in logic. It was realization not speculation, it was all living fact to him and not fancy. It was mysticism, more than logic; Vision of spiritual reality, more than philosophical form. It was characterized by consecutiveness of idea, logical accuracy, clear conception and lucid statement; but above and beyond these, it was the Personal Experience of the Divine Life.

Swami delivered the message of India to the world, a message of Universal religion to which every religion was 'only a travelling, a coming-up, of different men and women through various conditions and circumstances to the same goal' a religion which proclaimed that 'man is to become divine by realizing the divine'. The idea was all inclusive that he preached of Hinduism. 'From the highest spiritual flights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the lowest ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion. The message that the Swami delivered to the modern world of the West and to India was his own interpretation of the philosophy and religion as embodied in the Sanskrit scriptures in the light of his own realization- in the light shed upon them by his Master, who had attained the ultimate goal of each and all religions by going through the means and methods of each severally and which light the Swami had assimilated in his own life by making it his very own. Thus it was that he wrote in a letter to a friend: 'I have a message and I will give it after my own fashion. I will neither Hinduise my message, nor Christianise it, nor make it any "ise" in the world. I will only my-ise it, and that is all'.

The great motto of the Swami was "Renounce and Serve", renunciation of personal advantage and comfort, renunciation even of life, renunciation even of salvation, so long as the Nation lives. Everything must be done for the masses. The unnumbered suffering millions cry out for the help. Responsibility points to the task of aiding and relieving the dread misery. As the true Indian, Swamiji knows the greatness of his land, its culture, its beauty, its oneness, its potentialities, its realities, who has made himself useful in its cause, who feels himself at oneness with the millions, who makes their sufferings, their joys and their aspirations his very own, who is proud of his birth, versed in the history of the past, confident in its present and its future, bold and courageous in the cause of righteousness, defiant in the defense of the traditions of the forefathers, whose God is his country, whose country is his God and the watchword of whose heart is India, India, India! In the making of Modern India, in the welding together of a unity in this country, no one has played so great and so inspiring a part as Swami Vivekananda. Returning from America he recast the contents of Indian philosophy so as to meet the present day needs and difficulties. Even those who were antagonistic to him admitted that he was a man with consummate genius for national reconstruction. He interpreted the principles of the Vedanta not in the light of the seventh or eleventh century or of the *Shashtirs* and *Pandits* but in the light of the nineteenth or twentieth century, more definite in the light of needs of his people as was the way with the prophets and *Acharyas* of old.

Nationality to the Swami's mind was not a political supremacy or the acquisition of rights and privileges to have a voice in the government of the country, but a sacred ideal, 'whose inmost striving was to express its own conception of ideal manhood'. Remote as he stood from the political significance of Nationality, the picture that it called up to his mind was a unity to be realized more of heart and spirit than of the mind, a unity which he found already existing, though it had to be co-radiated to a common and practical purpose for the fulfillment of the Indian national ideal, which had ever been and should ever be spirituality. He never preached nationality but he was the very personification of its true Indian spirit. Strength, courage, fearlessness and service with the Lord as the magnet of all work, which characterize true manhood and true womanhood, were Swamiji's ideals for the people of India. It was a wonderful discovery of his that manliness might be the whole of goodness. It was a survey of life, most comprehensive and far-reaching that he offered to the Indian peoples as a veritable treasury of religious truth. This manliness is Dharma or righteousness itself which is the natural blossom of a life expressing itself in all circumstances as strength and fearlessness to follow and uphold whatever is true and uplifting. Not to plead on the dust with the debasing idea of one's weakness and impotency but to rise like a lion and exert oneself to be a man with an omnipotent faith in himself to reach the highest.

The Swami Vivekananda was a man of wonderful versatility. He could speak on any subject with authority, invariably throwing new light on it- be it religion, philosophy, history, science, art, literature, philology, sociology and what not. He could clothe any dry subject with such a beauty and grace that it became a most interesting study and roused the keenest desire for further knowledge. One wondered as to how he could have exercised his thinking and analytic mind in such a masterly way over them, especially those which were outside his sphere of study as a Sannyasi and how without a moment's hesitation he could give them out, enriched with his own original comments and conclusions. No wonder that a famous Harvard University professor has spoken of him, 'Compared to his learning all our University professors are as mere children. He is more learned than all of us put together'. Thus in Swami Vivekananda we find a truly inspired patriot-saint who deserves to be ranked as the foremost among the national workers of the modern age. He was the interpreter of the Soul of India to her own children and to the World. In his vision he saw the day must come when India will rise, self-conscious of her high destiny to fulfill the great mission of spiritualizing the whole human race, making of man the animal into man the divine and to the realization of that end he devoted his whole life and soul, moving among the nations of the world as the herald of Light, Love, Peace and Harmony.

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