



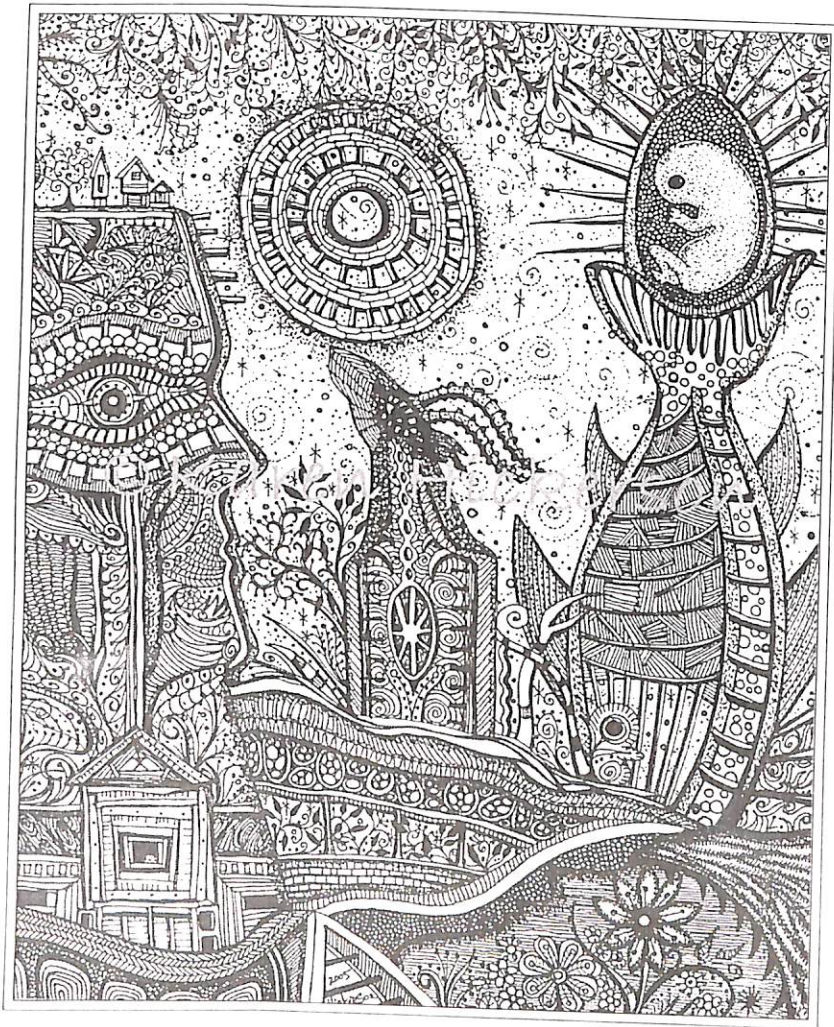
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To

The faculty members of Philosophy Department
Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya
Narangi, Guwahati -171

My dear colleague

Congratulation for Second year publication of departmental journal DRSTI. Doing all the extra work while continuing in your full time position, took a lot of effort and dedication to publish the journal in time from your part is not an easy one. I appreciate your team work.

I am sure your department will be sole example for the other departments in the college. Well done.

Reeta Dutta Hazorika

Principal i/c

Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya.

Ph- 03612642954

From Editor's Desk

Globalization is the process by which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and as a result of which the people around the world are incorporated into a single world society. The consequences of this interaction reflect in the thoughts and activities of the people around the globe. To meet the need of this contemporary world, philosophy also focused on different aspects of life, in connection to present situation. Therefore different new areas like the concept of applied philosophy, applied or practical ethics, human rights, feminism etc. are included with the province of philosophy.

In the next century, philosophy has a big role to play. The more people are swayed by materialistic tendencies; greater is the importance of philosophy to show them the right direction. We also need to think where our subject is going and the implications of our present concerns have for the future.

UNESCO celebrates "World Philosophy Day" every year on third Thursday in November to honour philosophical reflections around the world. On the eve of this day, we publish the journal of our department "Drsti". Here I want to thank our principal Reeta Dutta Hazorika and all my departmental colleagues: Sebika Das (HOD), Pinkumani Barman and Garima Saikia for their constant support and help in the unveiling of this journal. It is our hope that this journal will reflect more on philosophical thinking and bring forth new ideas. And with this hope I would like to conclude in the words of Mahatma Gandhi - "Be the change that you wish to see in the world".

Karabi Goswami
(Karabi Goswami)

THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF SANKARADEVA



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The religious movement of India during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries marked a growth of new religion founded on the liberal doctrine of bhakti as revealed in the Bhagavata Purana. It was regarded as Neo-vaisnavite Movement and several saints of great endowments appeared in various parts of India starting from the South to the North. This Bhakti Movement in South India enunciated by the Alvars in the seventh and eight centuries gradually expanded in the tenth and eleventh centuries and had its total flowering in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a new religious movements in entire India. The waves of this movement also surged over the Brahmaputra valley through the Neo-Vaisnavite religion introduced by Sankaradeva.

The unique contribution of Sankaradeva in religion and culture through his monotheistic outlook is known as 'Eka Sarana Nama Dharma' or 'Neo-Vaishnavism'.

There is philosophy behind every religion. Neo-Vaishnavism of Sankaradeva is also not independent of philosophical foundations rather his religion is deeply rooted on it. Technically, Sankaradeva was not a philosopher and he did not build a system but there are sufficient philosophical insights available in his works. He was not doing philosophy consciously. Sankaradeva was unconsciously tend to a highly spiritualized philosophy and pure monotheistic doctrine brought a Copernican revolution to the society. His philosophy was totally different from the philosophy of other Vaisnavite saints of contemporary India.

Sankaradeva's philosophy is Monotheism. Monotheism is a theory of god as the sole creator and moral Governor of the universe, especially of human kind. In Indian philosophy it is called Ekeswarvada. Philosophy is a quest for truth. Sankaradeva propagated practical philosophy which inspired people to have a direct, immediate and intuitive vision of the highest truth which is also the supreme reality. Realisation of truth is the highest end of Indian philosophy. Sankaradeva professed his philosophy provided

necessary instructions for the ways of its practical realisation. On the metaphysical plane Sankaradeva holds a non-dualistic standpoint, unlike many of his vaisnava counterparts in the rest of India . This explains the absence of dual images in his religion such as Radha-Krishna of Caitanya, Gopi-Krishna of Vallabhacharya, Rukmini Krishna of Namadeva and Sita-Rama of Ramananda.

The Neo-Vaishnavism of Sankaradeva, the Bhagavata-Purana has been acknowledged as the supreme scripture under various contexts. Sankaradeva says as—

cari veda astadasha purana
parama vedanta Bhagavata
sanake sananda muni yoga jnana vicariya
uddharila tara sara tattva

(Kirtanaghosa : Vedastuti : 1673)

[The Bhagavata is the Supreme Vedanta among the four Vedas, eighteen puranas and other sastras. Sages Sanaka and Sananda in quest of yoga and knowledge discovered in it the essential truth].

Bhagavata Purana is the essence of all the Vedantas. It was also called crown-jewel of all religious scriptures (Sarva-Sruti-Siro-Ratnas). Sankaradeva and Madhavadeva regarded the Bhagavadgita as the essence of the Upanishads. Thus, the religious system as well as the philosophical thoughts of both of them are rest mainly on the Bhagavat Purana and the Bhagavadgita which they took as the essence of the upanisadic vedanta. In the same way, all types of vedic religions are based on Vedanta Philosophy. The Neo-Vaishnavism, a significant branch of vedic religion is also specially based on this system of philosophy. The ideas of Vedanta occupies a prominent place in Indian Philosophy.

It is noteworthy that Sankaradeva accepted the commentary of Sridharasvami with great respect and made the best use of it while interpreting the Bhagavata Purana. Sridharasvami who has synthesized the advaitic philosophy with Bhakti-vada, i.e. theory of love and devotion and the admixture of Advaitavada was the main centre of Sankaradeva's philosophy. Sankaradeva's acceptance of the commentary of Sridharasvami and the act of following and using Bisunupuri's Kantimala will be enough to produce him to be a like minded of the advaitins. The neo-vaishnavism of Assam derive a great deal from the Vedanta Philosophy, specially from the Sankaracharya. Vedanta means "The ultimate part of the Vedas" which includes unsystematized thoughts of the Upanishads in their free growth. The Vedanta philosophy is known popularly in the East and the West is the Advaita Vedanta of Sankaracharya which is based on the upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and the Brahma Sutra. The upanishads contains its cream and Sutras expounds its philosophical basis. Sankaracharya's philosophy expresses in a half-verse.

Brahman Satyam Jagat mithya
Jiva Brahmaiva na parah.

[Brahman is the only Reality, the world of multiplicity and plurality is false and ultimately the Atman and Brahman are the not different of the soul from Brahman, these three constitute the essential teachings of Advaita.

According to Sankaradeva's Metaphysics, the supreme reality is Brahman, He is purusottaman. Brhaman is also called Narayana or Vishnu, the highest God. Thus, Sankaradeva identified Brahman with Vishnu or Bhagavan, the highest God of the Bhagavata-Purana and the Gita. He is sat (Existence), Cit (knowledge or consciousness) and ananda (Bliss) Sankaradeva stated clearly this in the very beginning of the Kirtanaghosa as follows -

prathame pranamo brahmarupi sanatana
sarva avatara karana Narayana

(Verse-I)

[At first I pray the Supreme Reality in the guise of Brahman who is the cause of all things and beings. He is also Narayana].

The religious philosophy of Sankaradeva accepts that both Brahman and Ishara are absolute Truth. Lord Krishna has been described both as determinate and indeterminate, as immanent and transcendent. The distinction between indeterminate and determinate Brahman of Advaita Vedanta is reflected in the philosophy of Sankaradeva. The former is unconditioned and attributeless while the latter is conditioned and possesses attributes. The ultimate reality is Nirguna, Nirakara. Brahman conditioned by Maya is God. He is the personal God. Sankaradeva said as -

chaitanya swarupa vyapi eka niranjana
tomaka buliba dvaita kona ajnajana

(K.G. : V : 83)

Sankaradeva with so much respect towards advaitism and its propounder is focussed in different context throughout his writings. He is to be regraded as an indirect proof of his being advaitin.

tomara advaita rupa parama anandapada
tate mor magna hoka citta.

(K.G.:Vedastuti:1669)

[Thine Monistic Form is seat of Supreme Bliss, Let me mind get involved there].

Sankaradeva said about God as the true Reality, the World is unreal, but since it is manifested through the Brahman, it is supposed to be real.

tumi satya brahma tohmata prakase
 jagata ito asanta.
 jagatate sada tumio prakasa
 antaryamin bhagavanta//

(K.G. 1662)

[Brahman, who alone is the truth, in Thee is manifested this false world. Thou, art alone always manifested in the world as the inner controller, the possessor of power.

The individual being or jiva and the jagata or the world are not different from the Brahman or Paramatman as Sankaradeva holds in his Borgeet as -

yata jiva jangama kita patangama
 aga aga teri kaya//

(Sankaradeva:Borgeet:8)

The philosophy of Sankaradeva holds that the world is unreal, but has the ultimate reality of Brahman as its basis. There, it looks like real. Thus, the world has an empirical existence and Brahman can be called its efficient or material cause only in the empirical sense. Both Sankaracharya and Sankaradeva say that Absolute or Brahman is in essence of qualityless or Nirguna. It reflects in Bhagavata-X skandhas and Bhaktiratnakara.

The doctrine of maya is the pivotal of the Advaita philosophy of Sankaracharya. Like, Advaita Vedanta, Sankaradeva has also accepted that the origin of the world lies in the magical power of God. According to Sankaradeva Brahman is the ultimate Reality, jagat is unreal and under the spell of Maya the jiva believes in the illusion of this world of multiplicity and take the illusory world as real. Sankaradeva has ascribed the name 'Mohini' to Maya. He explains the same advaitic view through his literature as -

dekhi suni mane ito jagata yateka
 mayara racana jana//

(Nimi-Nava-Siddha-Sanbada:132)

[The entire world is seen and heard is but a creation of Maya, indeed of Jugglery]

Like Sankaracharya, Sankaradeva define Maya as a condition (Upadhi) by which the phenomenal world of appearance is explained. Maya is the adjunct of God and is responsible for this manifold universe of appearance. He speaks like Advaitavada of two functions of Maya - viz. Avarana, to cover the real and Viksepana, project the unreal upon the real.

avastuka dekhaye vastuka avari
 ehise mohora maya jana nistha kari

(Bhagavata II : 229)

The philosophy of Sankaradeva maintained that liberation of soul is the highest end of life. Moksha or liberation means freedom of the human soul from samsara. He also upholds the annihilation of sins is liberation. His views on moksha and bhakti are to be found in his Bhaktiratnakara, which contains his philosophical reasoning. Sankaradeva is in full agreement with Sankaracharya's advaita mukti regarding the concept of moksha. According to both Sankra and Sankaradeva, removal of ignorance, is the way to liberation. The transitory nature of the world appears to be the cause of profound sorrow for human beings. They believe that death is not the ultimate end of human life. The individual self can attain immortality through liberation. Ignorance is the root cause. Sankaradeva maintains that the individual self is under the suppression of maya which conceals the real happiness of individual jiva (Bhakti-ratnakara:V:89)

Mukti or liberation may be of two types viz. 1) Jivan-Mukti or liberation attained in this life and 2) Videha mukti or Absolute liberation from birth and death. Sankaradeva holds that liberation which can be attained in one's own life time is called Jivan Mukti. There are divergent views regarding the means of liberation. Sankaradeva considers devotion to be the easiest means of liberation that can be accepted by all. According to him, Bhakti is the best for all to get rid of this painful life.

jnana karma bhakti kahilo kari bhed
 bhakati parama pantha dilo parichched

(Bhagavata-XI : 141)

Thus, Sankaradeva prefers the way of devotion as the best way of realising God. Hence, one has to choose the way of devotion for the attainment of the highest goal i.e. God.

Sankaradeva's philosophy service to humanity is taken to be the parama-dharma. His religious philosophy called Creative Humanism appeared as a protest against polytheism and other social prejudices and evils, mal-practices of rituals in the name of religion. To establish creative Humanism which was being inherent in his thoughts and propagated Vaishnavism.

In the context of the present time when religions tend to divide us, ethnicity threatens national integration, we recall and learn Sankaradeva's humanistic philosophy not only the ideal of harmony and love but also that of larger unity. Sankaradeva gave a new discipline to Assamese society, a faith in single divine who is sat-cit-auanda. His religious philosophy is deeply rooted on secular ideas. His religion is secular and symbol of peace and harmony. The seed of integration is inherent in the character of Krishna.

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"You're not to be so blind with patriotism that you can't face reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or says it."

— **Malcolm X, By Any Means Necessary**

"Vedanta— a practical way of life" — Swami Vivekananda



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Vivekananda, whose pre-monistic name was Narendranath Dutta, was one of critical figures in the history of Hinduism who belonged to Vedanta tradition in Indian philosophy. As a new vedantist of the modern India, he tried to introduce Vedanta in a new shape. He went to western world with his message of Vedanta which can be regarded as Vedanta in practice or practical Vedanta. In Vivekananda's thought, besides theoretical aspect, Vedanta has a practical aspect also. Mere theoretical knowledge is of no use what is wanted in practical application of the teaching of Vedanta. Vedanta is the guiding principle of human lives. It can re-order, regenerate our lives and society. Vivekananda's message is not meant for little bits of social or religious reform, but for a complete rejuvenation of her national life in all its phases. Moreover, Vivekananda holds we have infinite power within us; this power never perishes but is immortal. Often it gets a veil over it & the same has to be removed. Through a tireless personal revolution or a general social evolution, this removal may be achieved. When it is true, the infinite potential within will be in it's a full glory. So the key word towards individual success is freedom. Thus, the teachings of Vivekananda are echoes of messages in our Vedas, upanisads.....which has a universal appeal not restricted in time and space.

Vedanta is the foundation of the spiritual culture of India. It has kept the Hindu society alive for the past seven thousand years. It is the philosophy of all the important religious sects and groups. In its various phases vedanta represents the progressive thought of man beginning with dualism, passing through qualified non-dualism and ending in absolute non-dualism, the doctrine of the total identity of the subject and object, beyond which human reason, thought and experience cannot proceed.

The religion of the Indo-Aryans is generally known as Hinduism or Brahmanism. Both these words have been coined by western thinkers. The river Sindhu, flowing into the Arabian Sea and forming a part of western boundary of India, was known by the

ancient Persians as the 'Hindu'. The Greek borrowed this name, changing it into 'Indos' which much later was converted by the English as 'Indus.' The Greek called the country east of the 'Indos' by the name of India. Its inhabitants became known as Hindus and their religion as Hinduism. Early European travellers and Christian Missionaries coined the word "Brahmanism" because they found the Brahmin caste dominating Hindu society and religion. This word leads to much misunderstanding among the modern thinkers. But the Hindus prefer to call their religion as the 'Sanatana Dharma', the Eternal Religion, because it is based upon eternal principles or the Vaidika Dharma, and the teaching of the Vedas. They prefer to call the country as Bharata or Bharatavarsha, derived from Bharata, an ancient king who was the son of Dushyanta and Sakuntala. Even in the Visnupurana, we find the country which lies to the north of the seas and to the south of Himalayas, is Bharata and the people of this country are Bharateyas.

There arose serious misunderstanding regarding this Sanatana Dharma. Actually Hinduism is not a religion proper for which the misunderstanding arises. Rather it is a way of life, as it includes the content of Indian culture and heritage. And therefore Swami Vivekananda has established that Vedanta is not a particular philosophy. It is universal religion of man. Vedanta is to be honored as a universal religion which represents the thought and ideal of India

Vivekananda was the firm believer of Vedanta philosophy. He tried to introduce Vedanta philosophy in a new shape. According to him, besides intellectual exercise in search of 'Reality' Vedanta has a practical exercise also. So, he is known as the neo-vedantist of the modern India.

Vivekananda was deeply influenced by Hindu philosophy-especially by Advaita Vedanta of Sankara. He writes, "According to the Advaita philosophy there is only one thing real in the universe which is called Brahman. Everything else is unreal, and manufactured out of Brahman by the power of Maya. To reach back to the Brahman is one goal. We are each one of us, that Brahman, that reality plus this Maya".(1)

Vivekananda belonged to the great Vedanta tradition. Vedanta means knowledge of God or the Absolute Reality as recorded in the Upanishad, the ending part of the Veda. He accepted 'vedanta' in a broad sense including Veda, Upanisad and Gita. Emphasizing authenticity of ancient vedic tradition, Vivekananda said, "By Vedas, no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times... the moral, ethical and spiritual spirits and the father of all spirits, were there before their discovery and world remain even if we forget them".(2) Only Vedas can supply information of all that is most interesting in the relation of spiritual investigation. Hence, Vedas are regarded, the earliest documents of human mind. Even those western scholars, who do not believe eternity of Vedas, also opine that, Vedas are not only the

oldest literary monument of Indian thought but also the oldest literary monuments of the Indo-European languages. Macdonell, the western scholar commented, "The Rigveda is undoubtedly the oldest literary monument of Indo-European languages".(3)

Vivekananda believed, vedantic knowledge is not that type of knowledge that we can acquire it easily by scripture or by education. But, through direct experience every individual can attain this knowledge, can reach the goal. To reach this goal, Vedanta announced us principles which can guide us in our approach to life, in affirming that ---

The universe is a manifestation of one Spiritual Reality.

Within each person this Divine Essence is at the core of one's innermost being.

Thus, human life becomes an opportunity to unfold and manifest this Divinity from within.

All religions are valid paths which can lead one to the realization of these truths.

Vivekananda is not in the opinion that Vedanta is an intellectual gymnasium only for high thinkers. The principles of Vedanta philosophy are based on truth that every individual can experience these. Vedantic principles might be considered as the central point and essence of practical Vedanta. Swamiji emphasized more to the practical side of Vedanta philosophy. If we try to follow the teachings of swami Vivekananda, they color our approach to life. He held Vedanta as the foundation and uniting focus behind any spiritual effort, trying to mould Vedanta as guiding principle of common masses. He redirected Vedanta from strict philosophical principle to reorder our lives. Therefore, his philosophy of Vedanta is regarded as practical Vedanta. The spiritual monk Swami Vivekananda was not only a dreamer but also a practitioner. He was a man of both thought and action.

By 'practical vedanta' is meant the practical application of the basic principles of in solving the problems of day to day life. He showed that the vedantic principles were intended not only to help people to attain mukti, but can be applied in ordinary life to solve the everyday's problems of life and even in social life also. Vedanta is a practical philosophy on the ground that, it is not the outcome of meditation in the forest only, but that, the very best part of it were thought out by persons which were busy in the everyday affairs of life-like ruling monarch. Swamiji is of the opinion that downfall of India took place mainly because the eternal spiritual principles were not applied in collective life.

According to Vivekananda, practical Vedanta aims to help us realize our divine nature, to see the unity behind diversity and to turn hatred into love. Vivekananda regarded four ways to realize our divine nature or self-realization. One is bhakti yoga, where we devote ourselves with faith to God. Another is karma yoga, in which a person acts without selfishness for the good of all. He says, "Karma yoga is a system of ethics and religion intended to attain freedom through unselfishness and by good works. The karma-

yogi need not believe in any doctrine whatsoever. He may not ask what his soul is, nor think of any metaphysical speculation. He has got his own special aim of realizing selflessness, and he has to work it out himself". (4) From this description we have come to know that it emphasizes both the importance and value of action, also, the unselfishness of its application. Then comes jnana yoga which helps us to discriminate between the real and unreal and renounce the transitory. Lastly, there is Raja yoga in which one takes up meditation and chanting mantras, to control the monkey mind. Although Swamiji regarded these four ways differently, he says that they are different paths to achieve the same goal. Men differ in their temperament, disposition and capacities. So, these four different paths are recommended differently.

The followers of Vedanta philosophy have well-developed personalities. So, the practice of Vedanta is beneficial to the whole human race. It leads one from mortality to immortality, falsehood to truth and darkness to light. The real divine self appears in every one even in the vilest of human.

Vivekananda held Vedanta as the base uniting focus behind any spiritual effort. By applying the universal principles of Vedanta to one's own circumstances, one could become not only a better Christian, a better Jew, a better Hindu, and so forth, but a better person in every respect. The message gives an inspiring solution to the nagging problems of the human race. One who studies Swamiji will find a new energy into him opening the flood gates of intense activity. His teachings and sayings convinced the followers that before worldly concerns, God always comes first. Human life becomes drudgery, boring and painful if materialistic longing is the goal, but the same life becomes meaningful, joyous and inspiring, if spirituality is the goal. No religion can survive for long unless it incorporates the final truth, i.e., "each being is potentially divine". He always said that though we find the differences in fundamental teaching of various religions, yet he maintained that every religion leads us to the same highest truth. In America, Swamiji talked and lectured on novel ideas of seeing Advaita in one's own religion. In India also he preached to the masses to rise above the narrow sectarianism and follow the path of "service and renunciation", the twin ideal of Vedanta that was most suitable to India in its regeneration and as a necessary precondition for spreading the universal message of spirituality and Vedanta. He believed that God dwells inside every heart. Always he said that one is not a true worshiper unless one cannot see God in poor and unhealthy people, but says to see God in the idol. God is always in one's own heart, so one need not go anywhere outside to find God. He brought into notice the concept of practical Vedanta as the religion of the day, the aim of which was to manifest vedantic Truth of oneness of all beings interrelated by that one "all pervading divinity".

Regarding practical Vedanta, Vivekananda delivered four lectures in London. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th lectures were delivered on 10th, 12th, 17th and 18th November, 1896 respectively. From these lectures, Vivekananda wanted to establish the divinity of human being. He reiterated that this divinity should be worshipped. Refusing unacceptable metaphysics, logic, we should simply spread the message of divines of all our fellow beings to the world. Vivekananda was an optimist. So, again, with hope he asserts the possibility of Vedanta philosophy practically, ".....let us try to make things simpler and bring about the golden days when every man will be a worshiper, and the 'Reality' in every man will be the object of worship".(5)

From the above discussion of Swamiji's view point on Vedanta philosophy, it can be observed that, the various problems faced the Indian masses can be solved through Vedanta philosophy in practical. In spite of some developmental achievement, India is still an undeveloped nation; colossal human problems confront us everywhere. Leaving the majority untouched, only a minority of people has got the blessing of freedom. Swami Vivekananda was against the dangerous ideology of materialism and sensuality. It is needless to state that in spite of this, the damaging ideology of materialism has gripped the nation's soul and infused her with thorough profaneness in every sphere of life. We have the philosophy of Vedanta to inspire us to achieve total human development.

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"A woman has to live her life, or live to repent not having lived it."

— D.H. Lawrence,
Lady Chatterley's Lover

Basic Particular in Strawson's Individuals



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The idea of particular is one of the core areas of philosophical discussion, especially in metaphysics. The term particular is understood from three different angles, i.e. metaphysical, conceptual and linguistic. Peter Frederic Strawson in his *Individuals* dwells on the issue with emphasis on basic particulars and tries to defend that his foundationalism is based on giving identifying references to them for identification of particulars of another type. The sub-title of the book *Individuals* is 'An essay in Descriptive metaphysics' and its aim is to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world. With full regards to Strawson's perception, in the commonsensical view, I would like to do an in depth analysis of conglomerates such as 'Material Bodies' and 'Persons'.

Strawson starts with the idea that there are strong relative particular or relative particulars which are different from particulars within history, i.e. reality¹. Whether it is the speaker's sense of reference or hearer's sense of identification, a hearer can know which particular object the speaker is referring to. If the intended reference is about a sensibly present object, then the identification is demonstrative and if, on the other hand, the particular referred to is non-demonstrative i.e. is not sensibly present then it can be identified using descriptions. The description which is given to identification of particulars must be a fit description so that both speaker and hearer can refer to the same particular. If the description is entirely general, it does not guarantee the uniqueness of reference. Specificity may sometimes obstruct communication while a generic reference may be directly communicable, owing to the concept of space and time². Our concept of space and time depends on re-identification of particulars. However, for such identifying references we require an independent base. Strawson was in quest of such grounds and ultimately he found 'material bodies' and 'persons' as basic particulars. Material bodies belong to a class of particular such that 'as thing are, it would not be possible to make all the identifying references which we do not make to particulars of other classes, unless we make identifying references to particulars of that class, whereas it would be possible to make all the identifying references we do make to particulars of that class without making identifying reference to

particulars of other class³. Strawson emphasizes that the basicness of basic particular concerns only their basicness of identification - he does not wish to say that non-basic particulars are in any sense less real than basic ones; however he says that it seems to him 'unobjectionable' to say that basic particulars are 'ontologically prior' to others⁴. It is in fact, not necessary to mention that Strawson is a foundationalist so far as his concept of basic particular is concerned. But there are many versions of foundationalism. They differ with respect to what particulars they take to be basic as well as in their accounts of what being basic consist in. Strawson argues that 'given a certain general character of conceptual scheme that we have, it follows that material bodies must be basic particulars⁵. They must be three dimensional objects through times and also be accessible to our means of observation. In other line Strawson says that there are another type of basic particulars called 'Persons' which are referred to identification of 'private' particulars such as sensations, sense data, mental events etc. He continues that the principle of individuation of such experiences essentially turn on the identities of persons whose history they belong. Hence identifying references of private particulars depend on identifying references to another type, namely 'Persons'. Moreover, there is implicit reference of a third particular in discourse, for example-'this pain is terrible'

According to Strawson, if identification of particulars is possible (and possible for him), there must be some basic particulars as the grounds for identification, because identification of particulars ultimately rests on some fundamental grounds. Like other foundationalists Strawson also shares the idea of a privileged class of things having the character of basicness and the members of this class are justified, rationally credible, without support from others⁷. From this, according to him, it seems that his basic particulars assumed to be credible having the character of basicness. Strawson may be in the list of standard foundationalists since his justification of basic particulars appeal to sensory and introspective experiences. But it is, sometimes, difficult to develop foundational ideas in a fully convincing way. Strawson says that basic particulars can be located in our spatio-temporal system. The particulars are related in our spatio-temporal system in such a way that if anyone of them is identified as the ground then other particular can easily be identified. It means that identification of particulars conditionally depends on some other particulars among the related particulars. If it is true then, there is possibility to identify another particulars rather than material bodies and persons as basic particulars and then they will no more enjoy the status of being basic. If somehow, on the other hand, we ascertain that material bodies and persons are basic particulars then there will be no reason for such basic particulars that is accessible without questioning their status as basic⁸. To this, Strawson may argue that basic particulars must have a correlative specific character (i.e. in case of persons - states of consciousness and certain physical

characteristics.). But if his basic particulars have such characters, some specific sorts of experiences, than the original, then his basic particulars appear to have lost that status, since they conditionally depend on some other things. This is the terror of foundationalism.

From our practical day to day purpose, it is quite relevant to say that material bodies and persons are basic particulars to identification of particulars. Strawson himself says that the outer boundaries of the application of particulars is vague. His use of it is no way eccentric⁹. But it seems that, his way of accepting particulars are no way intrinsic i.e. it lacks extremely important or basic characteristic of it. Of course, if there are such particulars, they will form a severely restricted class. However, if there are such classes, no foundationalist even thought that they can be possibly represented as intrinsic which, perhaps, compels Strawson to ignore it. Moreover, Strawson's aim is not to go into the depth of what is there in our ontology but to describe the actual thought about it. But when he says, 'it is no good using a name for a particular unless one knows who or what is referred to by the use of the name', he means that there are some connections between the word and the description though he says that 'a name is worthless without a backing of descriptions which can be produced on demand to explain its application.'¹⁰

Strawson gives three closely related meanings of the term 'basic particulars' - 1. Basic particulars are those which can be identified without the reference of any other particulars. 2. Basic particulars are basically prior and 3. Basic particulars primarily exist. If Strawson's material bodies and persons are basic particulars in these senses, they must function as fundamental categories. But is it so? Hence arguments are necessary to establish that material bodies and persons are fundamental or basic particulars.

Let us start with the idea of material bodies as basic particulars. What we understand by material bodies in physics is the macroscopic objects of sensory experiences¹¹. But Strawson's material bodies do not mean macroscopic bodies of sensory experiences. It may mean that Strawson does not presumably think that there could not be any particles unless there were macroscopic material bodies.¹² He may think that his application of material bodies as basic particulars is restricted only to the range of 'Descriptive Metaphysics' to describe the actual structure of our thought i.e., only to identification of particulars not in general. However, from the above it seems that he makes a passing reference when he says theoretical entities of natural science are not to be encompassed by 'our conceptual scheme'¹³. Moreover, the identifications and the world at large are supposed to be linked together as he himself says, 'we know our own place' in the spatio-temporal system.

Though Strawson draws a line between the description of actual structure of our thought about the word and the world at large, it is seen from the above that both them are somehow connected. Whenever we make some identifying references i.e., descriptions,

our identifying references rest ultimately on some existing things which Strawson wants to call basic particulars.

So far we have seen that Strawson's material bodies fail to being basic. To establish argument about persons as basic particulars is more problematic as it links up with a mysterious entity. Strawson says that it is a primitive or fundamental unit; that it is a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicted ascribing corporeal characteristics... are equally applicable to a single individual or that to a single type¹⁴. The distinction of these two predicates clearly show that there are two types of entities, reconciliation of which we have a unit. According to Strawson, P-predicates can be ascribed only to persons not to the material bodies. If it is true then there is something which can be a subject of mental events and there is another thing which cannot be such a subject. Hence the thing which is the possible subject of mental events is different from another one¹⁵. Strawson presumably admits this distinction when he says, 'this is not to say that the concept of a pure individual consciousness might not have a logically secondary existence, if one thinks or finds, it desirable. We speak of a dead person - a body and in the same secondary way we might at least think of a disembodied person and is not an embodied ego but an ego might be a disembodied person...' ¹⁶ Now if there is possibility of such distinction, in which there is a subject of mental event and there is another which is not such a subject, then there is also possibility such that persons may conditionally depend upon other entities which may be more primitive or basic to persons.

When Strawson makes distinction between M- predicates and P- predicates, another important matter invites discussion i.e., the P- predicates are ascribed to persons and only to persons as corporeal beings¹⁷. But some P- predicates can also be ascribed to computer which is not a person. Hence, whether Strawson's person is a corporeal being or more than that is not clear. It seems his ascription of P- predicates is only meant for persons which are not more than a corporeal being. We ascribe states of consciousness in certain physical characteristics to the same thing not because that person is a fundamental category but because that the constituents of it are systematically inter-related. It is quite relevant to quote Descartes - 'I am not lost in my body merely as a pilot in a ship, but so intimately conjoined and as it were intermingled with it, that I form a unitary whole'¹⁸.

From the above analysis, it seems that Strawson's basic particulars do not deserve their privileged status since they conditionally depend on some of its constituents. To grasp material bodies and persons at all, we need some understanding of their constituents. If, somehow, on the other hand, we are able to identify material bodies and persons as basic particulars in description, we seem forced to acknowledge that, where there is

description, there is possibility of mis-description. Moreover, being basic to something, it is, perhaps, necessary to exhibit some sort of self sufficiency. We believe material bodies and persons as basic particulars because of our general reliability on them. But it gives up the characteristics of being basic. Strawson's application of basic particulars is appropriate to the day-to-day purpose but at the same time, it hides the root fundamentals.

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Marxism and M.N. Roy's Radical Humanism

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M.N. Roy gave much importance on reason and freethinking. Therefore, his approach to his contemporary personalities was critical. He was a nationalist, Marxist and above all a humanistic philosopher. He worked with so many great personalities of the world during his lifetime. He was influenced

by some of them, and also influenced them through his personality. As a Communist, he worked with Lenin, Stalin, Borodin etc., as a nationalist with Gandhi, Nehru and other nationalist leader of that time. Above all as a Marxist, he was greatly, influenced by Karl Marx.

M.N. Roy held that revolution is concerned with the ultimate things, and that the first necessity of revolutionary is a philosophy and his first choice of philosophy was Marxism up to the early 1940s. He reformulated the Marxian philosophy in such a way that it appears as a philosophy of freedom¹. Roy's philosophy of Radical Humanism founded upon Marxism, but it diverse from it, in so many important points.

Marxism exists in two main forms, with intermediate mixtures. On one extreme, it is almost pure theory and on the other it is a practical politics. Marxism tended with Lenin was carried to its logical conclusion of subordinating the theoretical side of Marxism wholly to political opportunism. Roy was against Stalin, and never showed much interest in the Lenin's technique of bringing off Coups d' etat. He always showed a feeling for the broad social effects of political and technical changes, within the general Marxian framework².

Roy was inspired by Marx's original humanism and by his social goal. He considered Marx as essentially a humanist and lover of human freedom. Like Marx, Roy regarded the physical being of man in constant relationship with nature, wherein man plays an active role. He was also inspired by Marx's basic doctrine "existence determines consciousness". He agreed with Marx that biological urge for self-preservation was the moving force. Again, Marx's socialism "as the kingdom freedom" where human reason

will overcome the irrational forces, which now tyrannies the life of man and as a rational being man will control his destiny was also his ideal³.

But to Roy, "I have never been an orthodox Marxist. My attitude to Marxism was critical from the very beginning"⁴ Roy differed from Marxism in several points. Although Roy was inspired by Marx's basic doctrine "existence determines consciousness", he would not go all the way with Marx and identify this with the economic interpretation of history. To Roy, Marx made a false distinction between primitive man's intelligent effort to earn a livelihood and biological struggle for existence. Marx had wrongly held that the origin of society and subsequent human development were economically motivated. Physical urge and economic motive both were different to Roy⁵. According to Roy, Marx had started from a society engaged in economic activity, not concerning the means of production, asked who produced the means of production. But for Roy means of production is produced from the ideal of means of production. This idea itself is the production of brain. He maintained that an idea in the brain of the ancestor of man, made the means of production possible. He explained it, with the help of biological struggle for existence. Man's urge to be free, produced the idea of means of production⁶. "The brain is the most powerful means of production; when you talk about means of production, do not forget that". So man is greater than any means of production. That is the defeat of Marxism according to Roy, and he tried to free Marxism from its basic fallacy in his own philosophy of Radical Humanism⁷. Roy criticized that Marx entirely ignored the entire process of becoming the man, before he entered into social relations. So he knew nothing of the human nature which underlies the ensemble of social relations, which induces man to enter into these relations⁸.

Roy pointed out that the very principle of Marx's dialectical materialism was absurd. To Roy, the methodology of dialectics could be applicable to the realm of ideology, not materialism. Therefore, the dialectical materialism of Marx was only in name, it was essentially an idealistic system⁹. Roy claimed that the processes of nature can be explained without making use of dialectic. The analysis of matter by modern physics made him to reject dialectics in the domain of ontology. Again, the movement of thought from democracy to socialism is not dialectical but continuous¹⁰. Roy criticised Marx's materialism as dogmatic and un-scientific, because Marx did not carry the analysis of mental phenomena far enough, beyond the dawn of social history. Marx ignored the entire process of the becoming of man before he entered the social relation. Roy held that the substratum of the human nature is stable. The becoming of man involves the parallel process of mental and physical activities. The relation between the two is not causality, but priority. From primitive consciousness, mind evolves in the context of a biological organism. Mental activities are determined in the entire stages by physical existence and thereafter by social

conditions, but for Marx man's relation to matter is the relation of one material entity to other material entity¹¹.

Moreover, Roy held that the negation of a constant element in human nature lead to the negation of morality. Without the recognition of some permanent values, no ethics is possible. If morality is not found in human nature, it must have a transcendental nature. However, to Roy man is essentially rational and therefore mortal¹².

Again, if the principles of dialectical materialism and allied with that the economic interpretation of history are unsound, naturally the theory of class war is misleading, which is the key tenet of Marxism¹³. Marx's doctrine of class war "makes social progress sterile and stagnant. If class struggle be the mark and measure of the class progress of society, then naturally there will be no progress when there is no class war."¹⁴ The cohesive force in society is the cause of progress in the society to Roy. "No class is ever destroyed owing to its antagonism to any other class"¹⁵. "But there is another side of the picture- the cohesive force in society. Without that force, human society would have broken down long ago, and there would have been no evolution of civilization. There is some social interest which binds classes together."¹⁶

Roy maintained that Marxism certainly was wrong regarding the role of the middle class in the capitalist society¹⁷. Roy gave much importance on the middle class. Middle class attained great height in intellectual and political considerations. The importance of the middle class as a part of society was on the increase and it played an aggressive role in the history of many countries. The decay of capitalism economically ruined the middle classes and thus quickened in their minds a desire for a new social order. "Between capital and labour the middle class numerically grows, politically as an enemy of the status quo". Even to him the ideology of socialism was conceived by middle class¹⁸.

Marx regarded "surplus value" as the source of increasing exploitation by the Capitalist class. Roy remarked it as the fundamental fallacy not only Marxist economics, but of the entire philosophy of revolution. The surplus value, of Marxist economics was called by Roy the lever of all progress. This 'social surplus' was the marginal product which was not consumed by the labour of community. Roy held that economically, a demand for the abolition of surplus value was impractical. "Social surplus will disappear if production of surplus value is ever stopped; then, with the disappearance the lever of progress society will stagnate and eventually breakdown. Ancient civilizations disappeared, owing to inadequacy or shrinkage of social surplus"¹⁹. Roy asserted that for the development of society, it was necessary that everyone must produced something more than what was just enough for himself²⁰.

Again, Roy held that the appropriation of social surplus by one particular class was certainly an undesirable system. But, the sanction for the demand was not economic, but

moral, social justice demanded it, which would not result from Marxist scheme of revolution. Marxist implicitly admitted that even under the socialist economic system, social surplus was produced in the form of 'exploiter should be exploited by the proletariat'. That evidently meant that under the new order, the social surplus was appropriated, by the new ruling class- the proletariat pending the advent of the utopia of a classless and stateless society. Roy held that the ideal of a stateless society would never be realized, because state is the creation of man through which man realizes his freedom²¹.

Regarding the role of individual, Roy made a significant departure from Marx. Roy thought that Marx was blinded by his sense of the overwhelming importance of social factors in human character, which eventually made him consider the individual as an abstraction and consequently attribute all reality and potency not to individuals but to classes. According to Roy, Marx ignored the self-evident truth that society is an association of individuals²². "Man must be man, individually conscious of his dignity and creativeness, before he can make history not the masses."²³ Roy maintained that the community is the creation of individuals to serve the interests of individuals. The basic biological urge of self-preservation made individuals realize the necessity of combining in the struggle for existence. It never meant that subordination of the individual to society. So, unlike Marx Roy held that society was the means and the individual the end²⁴.

Roy explained that Marx was an advocate of freedom; and as a Humanist, he stood for the freedom of the individual. He talked of socialism as 'the kingdom of freedom,' where man will be the master of his environments. However, he also criticizes Marx as, "one who preached such a humanist doctrine could not be a worshiper at the shrine of an exacting collective ego, even of the proletariat". "The positive value of Marxism can be appraised only in the context of liberal tradition"²⁵. To Roy, the social relationship should be to secure for individuals, as individuals, the maximum measure of freedom. The sum total of the quanta of freedom actually enjoyed by its members individually was the measure of the liberating or progressive significance of any social order. A political system and an economic experiment, which subordinated the man of flesh and blood to an abstract collective ego, could not possibly be the suitable means for the attainment of the goal of the freedom. It was absurd to agree that negation of freedom was the road of freedom. Therefore, "the purpose of all rational human endeavour, collective as well as individual, should be the attainment of freedom in ever larger measure, and freedom if real only as individual freedom"²⁶. Explaining Marxist so-called stateless or classless society as a utopia, Roy maintained that in that utopia 'man can never be free' and that negation of freedom was logically inherent in the communist theoretical system. Therefore, Roy gave much importance on individual and his freedom²⁷.

Regarding morality, Roy held that "Marx's ethical questions were also of the tradition of bourgeois Utilitarianism". Hegelian influence induced Marx to reject the individualistic approach to moral problems. The projection in the future of the Hegelian moral positivism made Marxian relativism dogmatic while the ethical relativism of utilitarian was rational. Hegelian doctrine held that 'that present might is right'. Marx projecting the Hegelian doctrine into future declared that 'coming might to be also right'. That influence of Hegel according to Roy, Marx broke away from his original moral Radicalism, which was the strongest appeal of the philosophy of revolution²⁸. So he criticized Marx as, "Karl Marx may have put Hegel on his feet but has certainly placed himself on the head"²⁹.

Roy rejected Marxism on the ground that what Marx had written a hundred years ago, was not applicable today. However, Roy called himself a spiritual descendant of Marx³⁰. Because he agreed, that Marx was a passionate Humanist and with a burning faith in revolution, he was a romanticist. As a romanticist, "he proclaimed his faith in the creativeness of man, which according to the process of social evolution, brought about revolutions. Marx, being a Humanist, the force of his theory of revolution was its powerful moral appeal"³¹. So, Roy accepted Marxism as a Humanistic Philosophy. But, the dogmatic rigidity of Marx was missing in Roy. Roy thought that his philosophy is the result of his critical approaches towards Marxism, which is free from orthodoxy. In spite of his regards to communism and materialism, Roy was inclined to believe in certain spiritual values in a limited sense. Here he comes closer to Buddha than to Marx. Roy said, "A philosophy, to be guide for all forms of human action, must have some ethics, some morals, which must recognize certain things as permanent and abiding in humanity. And only a group of human beings-be it a political party or any other kind of organization-- primarily moved by these abiding (and I should say even permanent, as permanent as humanity itself) values, can claim to be the maker of the future". He said that there are certain values, certain principles, which transcend time and space otherwise we shall have to lose faith in the progress of humanity³². His acceptance of this abiding permanent principle and values is perhaps due to the impact of tradition and culture of Indian Philosophy on him. Roy said, "None can run away from his shadow. Over present is the result of our past." In this point Roy comes closure to Buddha's doctrine of dependent origination i.e. every origination depends on some cause. As a believer of freethinking irrespective of himself, his Radical Humanism is the outcome of his critical attitude towards Marxism.

It is very difficult to compare Roy with the prominent people of his period, because the circumstances in which he worked and the fields that he covered are so unique that no comparison or construct is likely to be meaningful. Thus as a lifelong revolutionary and a thinker of great originality, Roy makes a position of his own in the international field. Roy's attitude towards all was very critical. He accepted nothing without scrutinizing

it. Perhaps, that is why, he critically analyze all the personalities he met. He writes about 21 such personalities including Trotsky, Mao-Tse-Tung of China, Tito of Yugoslavia, Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam, and also Gandhi, Nehru and others in his book 'Men I Met'. At the third phase of his life, i.e. as a Radical Humanist, he had a liberal attitude to all. The personalities that he had boldly criticized earlier, he analyzed them liberally later.

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Who am I?



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Although the question at the first sight seems to be impractical still it has relevance from the perspectives of our work either official or individual or social. The recent occurrence of conflict either in the context of personal level or in the social context among us not only indicates that time has come to ask the question individually or socially but also invokes us to answer the question. It is significant that or known to all that we are not only rational being but also a social and moral being. At the present age can we live in an isolated place without taking help of others or a society? Hopefully the answer will be Impractical if we think of an isolated human being. It implies that we are naturally a social human being. We cannot think of living without a society. Society is a living force of human being, although the very nature of the term seems to be abstract. But from the point of nature of a human being the very question of abstractness cannot come to our mind. But, now a days this predominant nature of a human being has been transformed into isolated ness in the sense that we are ignoring the fundamental question- (who am I or are we?) which starts from the dawn of civilization and which has to be studied or answered for the betterment of ourselves. The answer of this question can be placed from different points of view. They are mainly philosophical point of view, sociological point of view, religious or spiritual point of view, political point of view, materialistic point of view etc. If we search the answer from the philosophical point of view the answer will be that I am a part of the cosmos or an indispensable part of the cosmos. Again from the same point of view it can also be added that I am a part of Brahman who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipotent. It indicates that we are spatio-temporal being and come to the world for some momentary period, but God or the supreme power is eternal who regulates or guides jivas. Individual beings or jivas can attain peace in this phenomenal world or mukti in the philosophical sense by following the paths of Bhakti, Karma and Knowledge. Ignorance or maya is the root cause of all conflicts in this world. We are unconsciously or unknowingly engross in mundane happiness which are not intrinsically conducive for the upliftment or betterment of a human being. As a result we are going away from the very basic question (who am i) which should be the prime question to ask

ourselves to lead a peaceful life without disturbing others in a society. Good work (karma), bhakti not in an artificial sense but in the natural sense, and holistic knowledge will definitely guide a man not to choose wrong path in his life. Although all the subsequent views come under this pillar still the tendency of human being to explore the answer from the other points of view in the present day context cannot be ruled out. If we search the same answer from the sociological point of view it can be opined that man is a social human being. In order to live peacefully men in their own choice creates a society. So, the very technical 'I' can be answered only from the society itself. So, there is no possibility of searching or exploring the word 'I' from the sociological point of view. According to this view, the problems or conflicts emerged in our society like identity crisis etc. are due to overlooking of others sentiments or freedom. And when the needs of a society will be common and people will be deprived of their own rights then revolution starts in a society. Therefore, the word 'I' or individual human being transformed into 'we'. However, the intrinsic question remains "who am I"? We can also opine from the sociological point of view that we are remaining ignorant of the basic question that promotes a human being to forget about others in the context of food, cloth and habitat etc. The answer also can be searched from the religious point of view. From this angle it can be said that we are indispensable part of Divine force. We are in control of a supernatural power that guides us in every activity. But due to our mistake or misdeeds we tend to forget the essential message (i.e., we are essentially same) distributed to us by different religions. No religion either literally or theoretically instigates people to involve in conflicts like fundamentalism, religious war etc. But people by his oblivious nature or misinformation or due to lack of comparative approach, involve in wrongdoings due to his ignorance. Therefore, the fundamental question needs to be asked or re-thought or discussed from the religious point of view too. The searching question also can be placed from the viewpoint of political science. The basic question (who am i) can be answered theoretically from the points of birth, parenthood, property, and marriage. However, the proper answer can not come out if we theoretically explore all the factors unless we go in depth. The intrinsic view is that am I conscious of myself? If I am literally conscious of only all the factors regarding the identification of 'I', the answer will not properly come into light. Besides, this answer cannot solve the today's burning problem like foreigners infiltration in Assam unless and until are we asking ourselves from the core of our heart - who am I or are we? Are we trying to understand ourselves at first? But due to our forgetfulness or ignorance we try to answer the other questions that mean the answers to our problems. Therefore, we defeat in our effort. This entails that we are individually incompetent enough to sort out any kind of problems unless and until we unite through dialogues or mutual understandings. The values like co-operation, tolerance, patriotism, concern for others come into force

when we go through individually at the first step. In this regard Individuals are the centre force of beginning any enquiry as well as the instrumental in order to find out the answer of the query itself. From the materialistic point too we can explore the searching question. Generally, we are engrossed in getting personal happiness in order to satisfy our outward 'I' by overlooking others' weal and woe. Although it is difficult to differentiate between external happiness and internal happiness, still it can be said that outward happiness leads to materialistic happiness and as a result the duration of happiness becomes temporary. It is needless to mention that our desire or craving for getting materialistic happiness does not come to end. It remains up to end of our life. While, intrinsic kind of happiness for instance, helping people in distress, fight for injustice, patriotic feelings etc. are not deleted easily from human life. These noble works helps a man to become great. That is why Wittgenstein, one of the Great Philosophers of the 20th century beautifully remarks that "whoever is happy must have no fear. Not even of death.....Fear of death is the best sign of a false, i.e., bad life." Therefore, the searching question- (who am I or are we?) has to become an important issue to discuss in the present context in order to open our mind by our knowledge in such a way that whatever be the problems in life are created by men, so men have to find out the strategy to remove ignorance involved in life. That is why, Protagoras views that man is the measure of all things.



"We are all atheists about most of the gods that humanity has ever believed in. Some of us just go one god further."

— Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*

Gandhi's views on Education : Its relevance in the 21st century



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Abstract:

Like many other leaders of our national life M K Gandhi stressed the need and necessity of proper education in our national development. He believed that literal education having no practical outlook is of no value and significance. Gandhiji was of the view that good education should aim at development of mental, physical and spiritual faculties of all students. Regarding meaning and purpose of education, he was quite clear. He was also clear about making education purposeful, a perfect means for all- round development of personality. It is clear that Gandhi's views on education are rational. They seem matured, important and worthy. They are not of the least importance when compared to the views of any of his contemporary educationists. His suggestions to make education valuable and prophesying were and are worthy of consideration. They were, and are, much relevant even today and will remain so in future in their refined form as per the demand of time and space.

Introduction:

It is an admitted fact that Education is the backbone of a nation. It is a lifelong process by which an individual can adjust him to new and newer environment and live peacefully in society.

But today we feel that as if our education process fails to establish harmony between Nature and Human race, between man and man, as if we are suffering from conflicts, agonies, pains etc. The youths seem to be restless and depressed. This is a matter of great concern for a society. The aim of education should be to create a free and just society where each individual can live peacefully and develop his all potentialities to pursue the higher ends of human life of truth, Goodness and Beauty. The intention of education must be the inner transformation of the human being. The social Structure built on individual advancement and profit is competitive and ruthless. So, when the individual

will change, the society would be transformed. Education in the true sense is the understanding of oneself, which comes only through self-realization. True education is the sole basis of achieving one's purpose in life.

Mahatma Gandhi was one of those great Indian thinkers who systematically applied their minds to the complex problems of Indian education. He was a great educationist in this sense that through proper education Gandhi wanted to build up a strong man, not strong in the physical sense, but strong in character having high moral and religious virtues. The primary object of his socio-political-economic set up was to prevent a person from degenerating into a materialistic being and this he believed could be done only by a system of proper education.

The meaning of Education:

Education means "To nourish", "To bring up" and "To raise". This means educating a child, nourishing or bringing out a child in accordance with norms, ends. In other words, it means educating a child, or drawing out what is ingrained in child or to lead out of darkness into light. Ancient Indian thinkers viewed education as idealistic or spiritualistic where as the modern Indian thinkers regard education from the practical standpoint. In Rigveda education has been understood as something that makes man self-reliant and selfless. In the upanishadic thought education has been regarded as a means to attain salvation. Sankaracharya considers education as realization of the self.

Gandhi's views on Education:

According to Gandhiji, "Literacy is neither the beginning nor the end of education. This is only a means through which man or woman can be educated¹." To him, formal literacy did not mean real education. He believed that education should develop all the capacities of the child so that he becomes a complete human being. Complete human being means full development of body, mind, heart and soul of the child. So, true education stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of the individual.

Gandhi always emphasizes that the goal of education is not merely to produce good individuals but to turn out individuals who understand their social responsibilities as integral members of a dormant and dynamic society. Gandhi is a pragmatist who emphasizes the practical aspects of education rather than its theoretical foundations.

Education in India as observed by Gandhi is completely out of touch both with the realities of national life and the upsurge of national aspirations. This type of education has given youth little insight in their national culture as it neither strengthens nor weakens.

Gandhi holds that education is not an end in-itself but a powerful instrument which creates men and women of strength and sterling character. To Gandhi, all education

should enrich the personality of the individual otherwise it is meaningless. Gandhi conceives education as a man-making and character building process which is essence of spiritual education. Gandhi claims that the moral based spiritual education makes the uplift of the masses, develops inner potentialities of the individuals and manifests the perfection already in man. In other words knowledge becomes valueless in the absence of character. The true aim of education is to prepare a man for a profession and also to make him perform functions other than the production and transmission of wealth for his self - preservation.

Education for Gandhi is a gift which distinguishes man from the beast. Gandhiji is a strong supporter of the principle of free and compulsory primary education. But, on the other hand he does not agree with the view that the fullest development is impossible without knowledge of the art of reading and writing. He considers this nation as superstitious.

Moreover, Gandhi did not support the present existing system of education. He lays great stress on both religious and moral education. It is indeed very tragic that our educational system does not give the necessary importance to moral or religious instruction. "Our educational system without the cardinal moral and spiritual values can be compared to an individual without a soul²."

Mahatma Gandhi tried to frame his basic education in accordance with the ancient system of ashrama. Ashrama education is nothing but education with shrama or labour. The student is ancient ashrama learnt by rendering service to his 'Guru' (teacher).

Again Gandhi believes that discipline is an important aspect of education. In student life as well as in ashrama life one was required to follow the Dwadasha vrata prescribed by Gandhi. Those twelve fold vows were nothing but only a few spiritual principles to guide the student along the right path. The universal prayer of Gandhiji 'Vaishnava Janato, tena kahiye' was to be recited by the student. The meaning behind it was that the qualities of a vaishnava should be the qualities present in every student.

Gandhi's concept on basic education and its advantages:

Gandhi, in his scheme of basic education gave utmost importance to vocational training or work experience. Again the foremost place according to him should be given to handicrafts in the process of a child's education. This has two advantages, namely that it stimulates the sense of creativity in a child and it also helps one to be self-supporting. Gandhi disliked the present-day system of education that is prevalent in India. Such an education merely imparts instructions or makes man literate, but literacy is not education. Gandhi, like Dewey, perceives the value of learning by doing and therefore recommends that education should begin with the learning of some crafts like carpentry, poultry, spinning, weaving or any other similar handicraft. By actually doing physical work while learning,

the individual will develop interest in his work and will be able to give out his best. This is what is known as Basic Education. One advantage of this system would be that unlike the present-day prevalent system of education, the individual will find the things that he learns are of actual use in life. That is why Gandhi is completely dissatisfied with the higher education that is imparted today in Indian universities. A scholar after completing his studies enters into the life-field only to find that there is absolutely no relation between what he had learnt and what he has to do.

There is yet another advantage of this kind of education, basic education or Nai Talim (new system of education) as Gandhi calls it is revolutionary in its conception. It will bring the city-life and village-life closer and thus will eradicate the evil of class-difference. Moreover, as this system will make individuals skilled in their own arts, they will be masters of their own field and will not become the object of exploitation of the privileged people through basic education. Gandhi's goal was to build up "a non-violent, non-exploiting social order in which the ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood can be fully and universally realized³." This type of education is life centered but not textbook centered.

Conclusion:

Finally Gandhi may be regarded as one of the greatest teachers of human society. It is clear that his views on education are logical, matured, important and worthy. His suggestions to make education valuable, purposeful and more effective were and are worthy of consideration. Gandhian aim of education is human change and transformation but not merely to acquire knowledge or information. So Gandhian views were and are adaptable in current perspectives and will remain so in future in their refined form as per the demand of time and space.

Many educationists believe that Gandhi had a little or no practical knowledge about the ancient or modern theories of education. Being too much pre-occupied in social and political matters he had no time to devote to educational matters. But this we find is largely a misconception. Like the greatest educational philosopher of the 20th century Prof. J Dewey. Gandhi found opportunities to put his ideas to test at the phoenix settlement, the Tolstoy farm in Africa and Sabarmati Ashram in India. He also founded the Gujarat Vidyapith in 1920. He kept himself constantly in touch with students, teachers and educationists. As such the education system that he proposed for India is unique and practical. Moreover, the scheme of basic education can be of relevance even today, if a new orientation and new interpretation is given to it in the light of the rapidly changing socio-economic milieu in India. Gandhiji's idea is to make education need best so that the problem of unemployment could be eradicated at the earliest opportunity. According to Gandhi, real education means economic self-sufficiency. And it is only through education

which creates a sense of responsibility that has crept into the society and finds a way to get rid of exploitation, violence and hatred.

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"Human evolution has two steps— from being somebody to being nobody; and from being nobody to being everybody. This knowledge can bring sharing and caring throughout the world."

— Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

The Greek Mathematician Pythagoras and his Philosophical Ideas



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Pythagoras was an Ionian Greek philosopher mathematician and founder of the religious movement called Pythagoreanism. He was born on the Island of Samos,, between 580 and 570 B.C and might have travelled widely in his youth, visiting Egypt and other places seeking knowledge. Around 530 B.C. he moved to croton, in Magna Gracia and there set up a religious sect. His followers pursued the religious rites and practices developed by pythagoras and studied his philosophical theories. The society took an active role in the politics of Croton, but this eventually led their downfall. The Pythagoras's meeting places were burned and Pythagoras was forced to flee the city. He is said to have died in Metapontum.

Pythagoras of Samos is often described as the first pure mathematician. He is an extremely important figure in the development of mathematics yet we know relatively little about his mathematical achievements. Unlike many later Greek Mathematicians, where atleast we have some of the books which they wrote, we have nothing of pythagoras's writings. The society which he led, half religious and half scientific, followed a code of secrecy which certainly means that today Pythagoras is a mysterious figure.

Pythagoras was influenced by three philosophers while he was a young man. One of the most important was pherekydes who many describe as the teacher of Pythagoras. The Other two philosophers who were to influence Pythagoras and to introduce him to mathematical ideas, were Thales and his pupil Anaximander who both lived on Miletus. It is said that Pythagoras visited Thales in Miletus when he was between 18 and 20 years old. By this time Thales was an old man and, although he created a strong impression on Pythagoras, he probably did not teach him a great deal However he did contribute to Pythagoras's interest in mathematics and astronomy and advised him to travel to Egypt to learn more of these subject. Thales pupil, Anaximander, lectured on Miletus and Pythagoras attended these lectures. Anaximander certainly was interested in geometry and cosmology and many of his ideas would influence Pythagoras's own views.

The philosophical and religious school founded by Pythagoras in Croton had many followers. He was the head of the society with an inner circle of followers known as matematikoi. The matematikoi lived permanently with the society. They were taught by pythagoras himself and obeyed strict rules. The beliefs that Pythagoras held were :

- 1) that at its deepest level, reality is mathematical in nature.
- 2) that Philosophy can be used for spiritual purification.
- 3) that the soul can rise to union with the divine.
- 4) that certain symbols have a mystical significance and
- 5) that all brothers of the order should observe strict loyalty and secrecy.

Nothing is known about Pythagoras's actual work. His school practised secrecy and communalism making it hard to distinguish between the work of Pythagoras and that of his followers. His school made outstanding contributions to mathematics. They were not acting as a mathematics research group does in a modern University or other institution. There were no open problems for them to solve, and they were not in any sense interested in trying to formulate or solve mathematical problems.

Pythagoras was interested in the principles of mathematics, the concept of number, the concept of a triangle or other mathematical figure and the abstract idea of a proof.

Pythagoras believed that all relations could be reduced to number relation. Number is an extremely important aspect of things, and forms a fundamental part of the framework of the world. He declared that whatever exists, exists in number. Things are the copies or imitations of numbers. Like proportion and order, even the musical harmony is founded upon numbers. This generalisation stemmed from Pythagoras's observations in music, mathematics and astronomy. He noticed that vibrating strings produce harmonious tones when the ratios of the lengths of the strings are whole numbers, and that these ratios could be extended to other instruments. In fact Pythagoras made remarkable contributions to the mathematical theory of music. He was a fine musician, playing the lyre and he used music as a means to help those who were ill.

Pythagoras studied properties of numbers which would be familiar to mathematicians today, such as even and odd numbers, triangular numbers, perfect numbers etc. He offered a table of ten such opposites.

Pythagoras was certainly a geometrician. Of course today we particularly remember Pythagoras for his famous geometry theorem. He is credited to have discovered the theorem that in a right angled triangle the sum of the squares on the sides is equal to the square on the hypotenuse. Pythagoras transformed the study of geometry into a liberal education, examining the principles of the science from the beginning and probing the theorems in an immaterial and intellectual manner. It was he who discovered the theory of irrational and the construction of the cosmic figures.

The Pythagorean school also gave its attention to the study of astronomy and produced a number of noted astronomers. In astronomy Pythagoras taught that the Earth was a sphere at the centre of the Universe. He also recognised that the orbit of the Moon was inclined to the equator of the Earth and he was one of the first to realise that Venus as an evening star was the same planet as Venus as a morning star. The influence of Pythagorean number mysticism on physics and astronomy has been appreciable. The theories of Kepler, for example, display marked Pythagorean and Neo-Pythagorean influences.

Primarily, however, Pythagoras was a philosopher. He was better known as the founder of a religious and moral order. His philosophy is known as the philosophy of the Pythagoreans, as it was not known what share Pythagoras had in his philosophy or what share was contributed by his successors. The Pythagorean society formed by pythagoras was basically known as a society of religions reformer.

Pythagoras's religious and scientific views were inseparably interconnected. Religiously he was a believer of metempsychosis. He believed in transmigration or the reincarnation of the soul again and again into the bodies of humans, animals or vegetables until it became immortal. His ideas of reincarnation were influenced by ancient Greek religion.

Pythagoreans were closely associated with Orphic sect. Like Orphism they believed that intellectual pursuits, the cultivation of science and philosophy and the intellectual contemplation of the ultimate things of the universe would be of great help towards the release of the soul. From this arose the tendency to develop science and philosophy and their philosophy gradually attained a semi-independence from their religious rites. As Orphism has much in common with Indian thought, so Pythagoreanism too is an echo of Indian thought.

In these ethical practices, the Pythagoreans were famous for their mutual friendship, unselfishness and honesty. Their ethical views were rigorous and ascetic in character. Pythagoras laid emphasis on asceticism and the purity of conduct. In later Pythagoreanism vegetarianism was also accepted.

Pythagorean society was largely a mystical society. They developed their own ritual, ceremonial and mysteries. They enforced moral self control. They cultivated the arts and crafts, gymnastics, music, medicine and mathematics. The development of mathematics in early Greece was largely the work of the Pythagoreans. Pythagoras is said to have discovered the 47th proposition of Euclid. It was believed that practically the whole of the substance of the First Book of Euclid was the work of Pythagoras.

Pythagoras made influential contribution to philosophy and religious teaching in the late 6th century B.C. He is often revered as a great mathematician, mystic and

scientist, but he is best known for the Pythagorean theorem which bears his name. It is said that he was the first man to call himself a philosopher or lover of wisdom.

Pythagoras, or in a broader sense, the Pythagoreans, allegedly exercised an important influence on the work of Plato. Both Plato and Pythagoras were influenced by Orphism. Both shared a mystical approach to the soul and its place in the material world Aristotle claimed that the Philosophy of Plato closely followed the teachings of the Pythagoreans. Bertrand Russell in "History of western Philosophy" contended that the influence of Pythagoras on Plato and others was so great that he should be considered the most influential of all western philosophers.

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"Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric."

— **Bertrand Russell**

The Socio-spiritual Ideology of Gandhi



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Gandhi a modern Indian genius was not only a philosopher, but also a political leader, social reformer, freedom fighter and also a deep religious priest. He tried to shape India for better position in every field. His religious sentiment and also moral and spiritual feeling was coming down to his mind in his very early age. He learnt the inner goodness of human being i.e. honesty, love and sincerity from his mother. His feelings of love; kindness and Compassionate turned him as "Mahatma". He was very much pathetic to the Poorest. His concept of spirituality is the fusion of sociality.

Gandhi's spiritualism is not a narrow, creedal, sectarian, spiritualism. It is not preaching denial of the life of the senses nor is it a form of escapism. It rather affirms life, is not insensitive to beauty and joy, does not encourage indifference to socio-political activities, and is not avoid of historical sense. It is conscious of our inescapable involvement with our day-to-day Socio-cultural and Economics - political Surroundings. It motivates us to transcend the triviality of the daily life and Strive to make our life and society beautiful, authentic, purposeful and perfect. Such Spiritualism does not over look the natural and material base of life and society. It is integral to sociality. Gandhi was always felt for man, worked for man and dreamt of a better and brighter future for man. Homo-centricism and purposiveness merged in his thought. The goal of his philosophy and religion was to inspire man to self realization and perfection, to seek his own larger identity. In him we hear the echo of the ancient Vedic and upanishadic message in new form. In his writings and works our old traditions receive new interpretation.

Gandhi certainly has played the most significant role in the construction of new India and he is aptly regarded as the 'father of the nation'. His ideas have attracted the attention and reverence of the entire world. His philosophy has opened up to the world a new dimension of the Indian attitude towards life, society and spirituality. He is the true symbol of social spiritualism. His entire life and work represent the perfect synthetics of religiousness and sociality. In fact all the modalities that have been imported by Gandhi for bringing about social change actually spring from our ancient spiritual tradition. The

concept of 'Satyagraha' and 'Ahinsa' emanate from some inner power. Without proper self-control, faith in love and truth these would be inefficacious in practice.

The ultimate goal of man's life according to Gandhi is to attain self-realization. But it cannot be achieved without Service to Society. It is necessarily connected with Sarvodaya, the greatest good of all. Such Sarvodaya, in its turn, requires social and political stability, for Social degeneration and political insecurity may hinder our moral and Spiritual upliftment. For Gandhi self control and non-violence bring inner-peace and outer stability. Gandhi takes ahimsa, generally regarded as the heart of most religions, as the basis of all inter-personal relationships. Gandhi was a revolutionary, but to him revolution is not violent mass action. His conception of revolution is based on a transformation of heart.

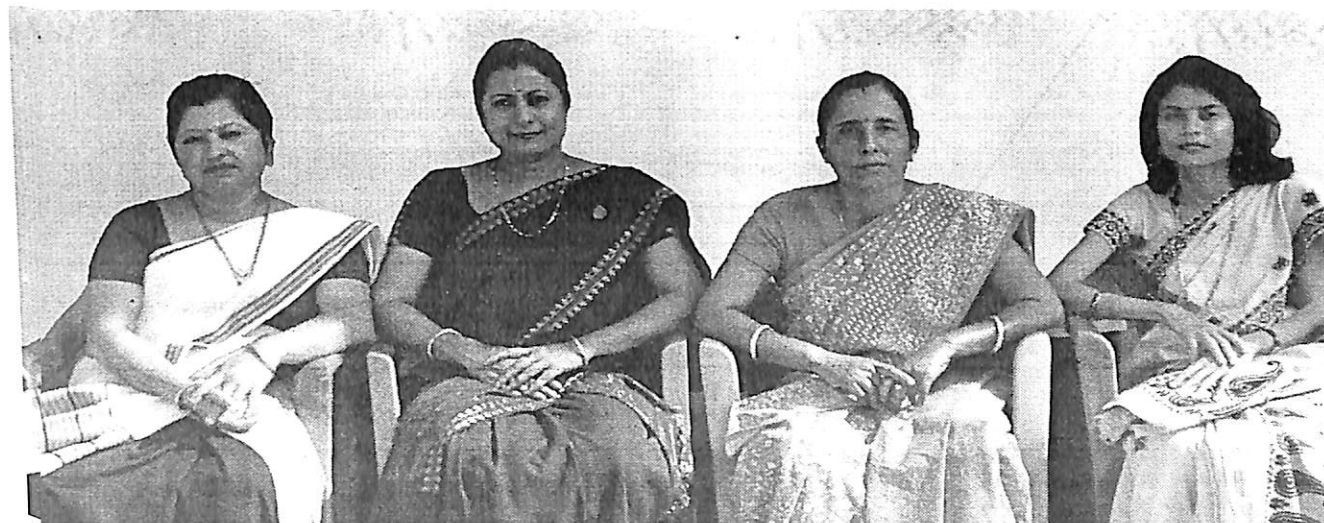
Gandhi's social and political ideas are perfectly consistent with his moral and religious principles. His broad, synthetic, moral attitude was manifested in his criticism of social evils and in his ideas of new liberated society. Gandhi says that social evils such as untouchability and communalism should be removed from society by proper education and liberal pursuits. For the removal of these social evils Gandhi's method was to follow certain spiritual exercises. Non-violence, prayer and fast are recommended by him for the construction of a new moral social order, where each and every individual would be fearless, unselfish and loving in disposition.

Gandhi was the supporter of self rule and self restraint which is called Swaraj. In his ideal society there should be no political power; harmony and order would be maintained by fellow feeling and co-operation. Such a conception of ideal society is very much interlinked with Gandhian economic principle of trusteeship is to ensure a compromise between public and private enterprise. His basic aim was to make such a society where there will not be inequality by any means. He would appeal to man's charity, goodness and love for his fellow being to ensure economic justice and social harmony.

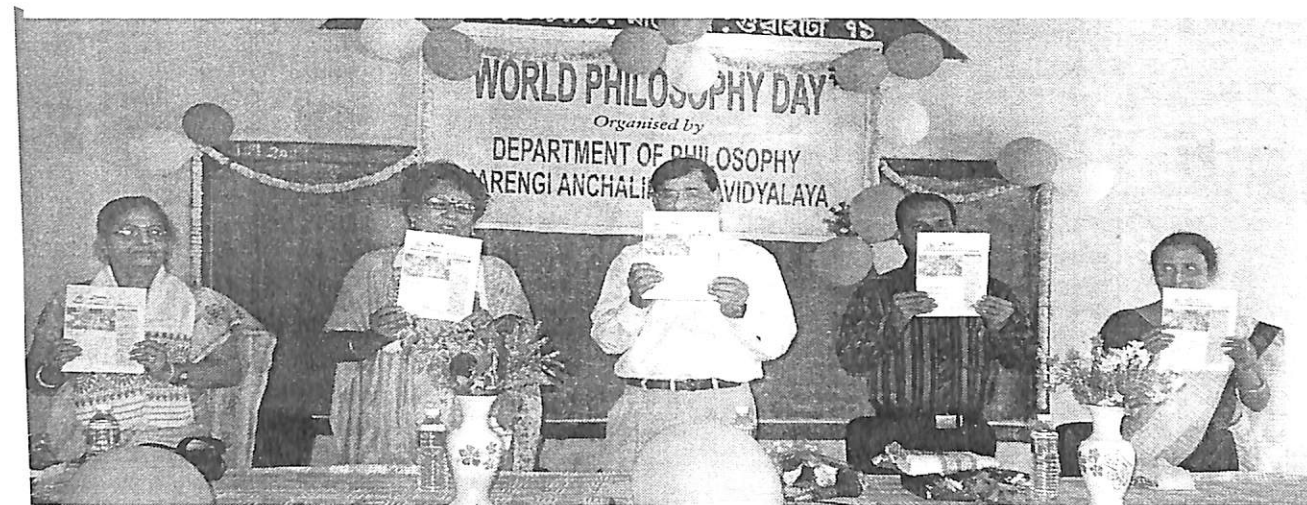
Thus Gandhi's spirituality is not separate from sociality; rather it is the fusion of sociality with spirituality which characterizes his concept of man. The novelty and originality of Gandhian philosophy, thus, lies in his utmost faith in man's spiritual power to bring about social and economic justice.

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