



POLITICAL RAMIFICATION OF VIVEKANANDA'S IDEAL SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT:

Swami Vivekananda commonly known to the world as a distinguished philosopher and a profound spiritual leader was also a great patriot and a crusader for the betterment of the downtrodden in a sheer attempt to reinstate their individuality and dignity. A stoic philosopher of immense magnitude and grandeur Vivekananda never engaged himself in an orderly investigation of the dynamics of political processes and the modus operandi of the political structures and institutions. As the most powerful modern interpreter of the Vedantic philosophy he engaged himself in the ennobling deed of resurrecting our society by contemplating on the blue print of an ideal society which would emerge out of an amalgamation of the spiritual values of the East with the scientific and technological accomplishments of the West. Vivekananda gave a fervent call for the proper application of religion in the social arena based on the fundamental divinity of all beings. His firm conviction in the fundamental unity of the universe made him yearn for an ideal society based on the principles of freedom, equality for all and democracy as a man making process. His selfless attitude and temperament made him go beyond being merely engrossed with speculative and mystical realizations. His views on spiritual freedom was absolutely eloquent but sweeping enough to subsume within itself all other forms of freedom. He was the most original protagonist of the theory of natural rights to be enjoyed by all men but within social and reasonable limits. His projection of an ideal society with democratic, truly socialist and humanistic credentials was but an agenda for the regeneration of his country and was to be achieved through the guiding force of spiritualism. Even though he was not very vocal about his political inclinations but an in-depth study of his social and spiritual contemplations would conclusively confirm and portray him as a true lover of humanity and a true democrat whose ideas and immortal life principles would continue to illuminate the country for generations to come.

KEY WORDS:

Spiritualism, theology, synthesis, universal, regeneration, motherland, idealism, contemplations, protagonist, comprehensive, harmonious, freedom, vedantic, equality, oneness, socialism, democracy, mystic, materialism, adaptation, modernization, inclusive, self-preservation, nationalism, antiquity, integration, divinity, humanism, perfection, moderation, compassion, comprehensive.

INTRODUCTIN

The most venerated spiritual leaders in the annals of Indian history, Swami Vivekananda endeavored throughout his life to emphasize that the exhilaration of a religion would be determined by the earnestness of its social encounters. A man bestowed with mystic sensibilities, Vivekananda occupies a place of utmost and perennial prominence not only in India but in the global community as well for his cultivation of the contemplations of synthesis, moderation and universalness tempered with a strong dose of the emphasis on the innate spirituality amongst human beings. Vivekananda's (1863-1902) life and profound philosophical introspections symbolized the consummation of Indian socio-cultural reawakening. Destined to experience a short span of earthly existence, Vivekananda represented the temperament of his times and put forth a rich and intense philosophy which promised to fulfill the aspirations of the then incipient nation and the world as a whole.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

This article seeks to rationally analyze Swami Vivekananda's conceptualization of an ideal society and its political implications. His vision of an ideal society in fact puts forth an agenda for the social and political regeneration of our country. Much emphasis has been given on the investigation of the inherent political principles of his spiritual philosophy which seeks to constructively synthesize moderation, harmony and growth. Vivekananda's comprehensive thought and all-embracing contemplations are based on a very crucial and universally relevant message of universal brotherhood, global peace and spiritual oneness. He was the first Indian philosopher who attempted to successfully bridge the gap between the spiritual and the materialistic world and between philosophy and theology so that a wholesome view of life can be arrived at. What is remarkable about his thought process is his penetrating insights into issues relating to society and religion which continue to fascinate and provide guiding lights to present day thinkers irrespective of ideological affiliations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

1. Pantham Thomas, Deutsch KL (Ed.) "Political Thought in Modern India, (Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd.), New Delhi, 1986.

Pantham and Deutsch in their edited book on "Political Thought in Modern India" provides a much helpful analysis and discussion on world historical and political context in which modern Indian philosophy has taken shape. Attempt has been made to comprehensively cover the philosophical content and ideologies of a whole range of Indian political thinkers with a particular focus on the social and historical transformations that their perspectives and ideas were determined to bring about. An analytical survey of ideologies of prominent political movements of modern India has also been undertaken.

2. Naravane V.S. "Modern Indian Thought" (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1978)

The above book by Naravane provides its readers with philosophical details and characteristics of the understandings of Indian philosophers starting from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Ramakrishna. Besides a detail coverage of the Indian philosophers a serious discussion has also been undertaken to clarify and highlight the background and features of modern India and the contemporary relevance of the ideologies of various philosophers have also been taken into consideration.

3. Mahadevan T.M.P. and Saroja G.V. "Contemporary Indian Philosophy" (Sterling Publishing New Delhi, 1981).

The above book authored jointly by Mahadevan and Saorja is a major discourse on the nature of modern Indian thought and philosophy contributed by a host of our philosophers. It provides its readers with a sharp analysis of the content and profile of numerous political themes as laws, sovereignty, justice, liberty etc. What is distinct about Indian political philosophy and its contribution to global political thought has been significantly focused upon. In fact this book is a holistic understanding and discussion on the very nature of our philosophy which is very enriching.

4. Mehta N. Chhabra S.P. “Modern Indian Political Thought” (Jullundur : New Academic Publishing Co., 1976).

This book jointly written by Mehta and Chhabra consists of scholarly discussions and arguments of the ideas and philosophy of modern Indian thinkers which still continue to significantly influence and shape the society and polity of contemporary India. What remains unique about this book is a deliberate attempt to avoid excessive reliance on Eurocentric concepts and ideas to decipher Indian conditions be it social, economic or political. A forceful interpretation on the concept of man, religion, unity, morality, state and likewise by the prominent Indian thinkers are the other highlights of this study.

5. Vivekananda Swami, “The complete works of Swami Vivekananda” (Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata 2016).

The masterpiece collection of books by the great Indian monk and philosopher is a rare series of books wherein the great philosopher himself provides us with a lucid analysis of spirituality and the various aspects of non-dualism which is of immense interest to people of all religious faith. The essence of these readings in fact provide the ultimate clue for the unity of mankind spiritually, socially and ultimately in the global sense where all temporal differences ceases to have significance paving the path of one society, one world. The positive and most significant component of these series of books is a serious and meaningful exposition of the contemplations on preservation via the holistic path of reconstruction and concern for the immediate issues confronting social life. These books are the best for all times and pertains to all cultures and traditions even though its central focus has been to put forth the powerful view that the most crucial component of Indian social life is religion and transformations in every sphere of life will be preceded only with changes in the sphere of religion.

6. Mehta V.R., “Indian Political Thought” (Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2017).

This book by V.R. Mehta seeks to articulate and scrutinize the unfolding of Indian political thought with an indepth understanding and analysis of the concepts of state and society in the context of the historical traditions of our country in an unremitting and sporadic manner. In providing a constructive work on Indian social and political thought Mehta’s book not only seeks to look into the historical context of its evolution but also tries to meaningfully relate the political concepts with the general philosophical traditions of our country.

7. Appadurai A. “Political thoughts in India 400 B.C. - 1980” (Khama Publishers, Delhi 2018).

The above book by Appadurai traces the evolutionary nature of political thought in India and particular emphasis has been given on the political contemplations of ancient political thinkers beginning from Kautilya to Ram Manohar Lohia. As the name suggests this book provides its readers with the foundational knowledge of our indigenous political tradition and how it seeks to differ from the western political philosophers and thought. The element of continuity between the ancient and modern thinkers and their thought with regard to interpretations of various political ideas and concepts has been emphasized on.

8. Varma V.P., “Modern Indian Political thought” (Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Educational Publishers, 1974).

V. P. Varma in his book on Indian Political thought leaves no effort to go into the details of the various phases, aspects and divergent schools of Indian political thought. What is unique about this book is its systematic analysis of not only the philosophies of our thinkers but the political ideas of social leaders and their contributions in shaping modern India has also been taken up. To a large extent a critical analysis of the thought and ideas of our thinkers has also been attempted at. The metaphysical details and sociological foundations of the political philosophies have also been analyzed. In some instances, economic inferences have been taken up for a comprehensive reasoning and investigation.

9. Pranay, “Spirituality for Leadership and Success” (Published by @fingerprintpublishing books, 2021).

This is a complete book on the different life phases of Swami Vivekananda and his multifarious teachings of life. This absolutely non-fictional book provides a fresh and useful insight into the life experiences of the Swami. The central theme of this book is about the leadership qualities which an individual can emulate from the life experiences of Vivekananda himself. The message of this book is clear and loud – one should not remain attached to one ideology as it limits his action and thought but one should have an open mind and dare to reach out even for the impossible.

MAIN TEXT:

Vivekananda’s multi-dimensional personality and cultural pursuits made him an enigmatic figure vulnerable to varied interpretations and interesting renditions. In the nineteenth century when Vivekananda was born India was in a situation of abyss and socio-political chaos bringing the country to the brink of stagnation and mental stillness. The colonial rulers had already made their firm footing on the Indian soil thus opening up the not so porous philosophical boundaries of our ancient land to forces coming from the far flung economically advanced western nations. New waves of thought created grounds for a new awakening and our country witnessed a tumultuous situation as she had to resist pressures on all fronts and this tumultuous situation triggered the sensitivities of the then young lad called Naren who soon metamorphosed to Vivekananda. Every burning issue made him more and more restless and he set out to satiate his spiritual urges which could not be quenched by mere temporal forces. Vivekananda lived and dedicatedly worked for the spiritual regeneration of the country but his voyage was marked by perplexities. He had to encounter numerous hardships and personal losses but the showering of virtues coming from his parents and his inherent virtues of fearlessness and self-control made him determined to lead a spiritually meaningful life. But Vivekananda was also deeply attached to his motherland and he had deep concern for the social and spiritual regeneration of the country. Such proclivity towards his brethren remained with him throughout his life even amidst distressful situations. He had a sincere concern for the destitute of our country and even though his central focus was on spiritual values, but he often asserted that his priority was to make bread available to the poor. His religion was not equated with dogmatic beliefs and rituals. It was more comprehensive and practical in nature having a social responsibility to fulfill. It was thus placed within the broad framework of social contemplations. His emphasis was on the altruistic nature of religious considerations and his activities were not merely confined to moral preachings but political and social issues and problems that had gripped the country equally bothered his empathetic blend of mind. This was because of his underlying understanding that social issues and their reconditioning is a part and parcel of spiritual regeneration.

Both in his speeches and action Vivekananda vociferously defended his moral and ethical postures but he was the first personality in modern Indian history to avert from the path of establishing an undeviating link between conception of God and established moral standards of life. Vivekananda's philosophical contemplations had strong spiritual biases, but he infused into them deep social intents. He was passionately attached to his motherland and always nurtured the intense desire to ameliorate the condition of his unfortunate brethren. Being a self-confident man, he wanted to instill the same among the citizens of his country. The practical behavior of the religious person in Vivekananda did not deny him the need to assert that the first requirement is to provide bread to the people, to the distressed and a religion that could not placate the hunger of the poor was no religion at all. As such in Vivekananda's scheme of things religion was to be appropriated a secondary position. For Vivekananda thus the philanthropic component of religion falls at par with its moral elements. Considering the social implications of Vivekananda's spiritual contemplations one can establish for sure that unlike his philosophical precursors, Vivekananda sought to link social issues to the doctrine of salvation. The credit for a comprehensive social philosophizing with spiritual underpinnings can thus be attributed to him. His explications of the Advaita Vedanta was such that his social philosophy emerged as well-equipped to respond to the exigencies of the contemporary times. Vivekananda was firmly convinced about the innate spirituality among human beings that stands them on an equal platter, and this made him a powerful protagonist of equality for all. This was to be the most important component of his tentative sketch of an ideal society which would facilitate the then prospective overhauling of our country. Equality for him did not symbolize the absence of differences between men. Men can never be born equal. They can be particularized on the basis of their natural aptitude or physical looks. Thus, their social standing would be dissimilar. Such inbuilt differences would always remain and any attempt to disregard them would mark an end of the society. He was always opposed to social injustice and sought to pursue a harmonious social arrangement endowed with the sublime ideals of equality and freedom. His equality had no specific manifestation as he was more interested in the process rather than the form in which equality would be demonstrated. Every individual had his own ideal to which he should remain committed. Society may be multifarious in its structure and disposition, but unity should be inbuilt into its very being. Vivekananda was infact calling for an end to all privileges as all human beings have the same rights and are entitled to exercise the freedom of will and thought without any discrimination. The principle of morality which acknowledges no privileges should prevail over all other considerations. So preoccupied was he with the concept of equality that he never hesitated to adopt a critical attitude towards the Brahmins for their attachment to privileges. He considered it as a social evil endemic to the conventional Indian society and it had to be eliminated.

In his social philosophy much of his concern was for improving the conditions of the common men particularly the labour class who constituted the backbone of the nation and the hope for the future of the country rests on them. Vivekananda took a pledge to restore the lost individuality of the masses of our country and instill into them a sense of confidence and self-reliance and make them take their destiny into their own hands. In the restructuring of our social arrangements exclusion of all privileges would be the most essential precondition. Significantly enough his call for equality of men finds a strong resonance in the inherent Vedantic gospel of the sameness and existence of the only Absolute which inevitably stands for the spiritual and divine equality amongst all. The real trouble comes from a sole reliance on incompatibilities rather than taking into cognizance the inherent similarities and oneness among things. The bedrock of Vivekananda's ideal society infact is an emphasis on the equality of all. Such an affirmation leaves no scope for privileges or the notion of superiority and inferiority. It

is only the privilege for the spiritual man that marks the beginnings and end of all schemes of social regeneration. Whenever he talked of equality it did not symbolize any specific category of equality as his focus was more on the process of equality rather than the forms. Inequality was for him the anathema of social peace and existence and the fountainhead of all subjections. Vivekananda always objected to being branded as a social reformer. He never desired the upper strata of the society to change their attitude and habits, but he wanted them to develop faith in themselves and inculcate the ideal of oneness.

Developing faith in oneself can help individual realize this ideal of sameness, the essence of which is that man is divine in nature and all men are essentially similar. It stands for the belief that the element of divinity is present amongst all making them identical and thus creating propitious grounds for the emergence of universal brotherhood and equality, the foundational pillars of socialism. In tune with this acceptance, he broadly rejected privileges not only of individuals but also of groups and nations. "The idea that one man is born superior to another has no meaning in the Vedanta."¹ This logically follows that no nation as well can be categorized and placed in a pedestal in comparison to other nations. Vivekananda's social thought and philosophy has in fact been stimulated by his accentuation on the ideal of social congruity and amalgamation as it is reflected in the four-fold varna order. It is significant to note that Vivekananda always hesitated to stringently criticise the caste system. He in fact upheld it as a socialistic institution forming the foundation of our society and functioning on the basis of social and economic harmonization and it sought to promote the democratic principles of individual freedom and equal opportunities for all. It conciliated individual good with the larger benefit of the society and encouraged social equality and hence serving the cause of harmony. He denounced the forced imposition of listless homogeneity on social arrangements and wanted every individual to enjoy a free and fulfilling life without being subjected to the tyrannical behavior of the priests. He had immense regard for the common masses and strongly desired to ensure that the floodgates of Vedic knowledge be made accessible to them. Spiritual wisdom should not be monopolized by a few but Vivekananda said that the blessings of the highest truth should be made available to every individual irrespective of his placement in the varna order. Vivekananda thus championed the cause of equality in the utmost sweeping manner by including within its scope the conception of spiritual equality as well. He denounced spiritual aristocracy and his interpretation of spiritualism was indeed democratic in both letter and spirit.

It is interesting to note that Vivekananda depicted strong interest in going into the details of the institution of caste which he described as intrinsic for inducting an era of spiritual homogeneity, social equality and progress. He considered it as a glorious organization as it encouraged individual or group freedom by permitting them to manage their own affairs and by cooperating with one another the goal of harmony in the society is also served. This would enable the entire society to march ahead towards economic prosperity. Even though Vivekananda was fully abreast of the deficiencies of the caste arrangement and strongly rejected the practice of untouchability, but he was convinced that groups are indispensable in all societies, and we cannot get away with the formation of groups. Rather than complete annihilation of the caste system he wanted to abolish the cruel and obsolete customs and practices and wanted the elevation of the lower castes so that they are at par with the others and their social and economic upliftment is ensured. It is thus for no reason that he lauded the materialism of the west as it demolished the exclusive privileges of certain castes and made available the opportunities of life to every individual. Vivekananda was of the firm belief that the Indian society is afflicted with a severe cultural exigency because of which the Hindus have become mesmerized and lethargic towards life. Too much of reliance on mysticism have made

the Hindu race blind towards the recognition of the glory of their souls. Attending to the problems of submissiveness and weaknesses of our society would require major structural transformation. Internally the essence of the Vedas are to be effectively absorbed and popularized so that the Hindu society moves out of the present phase of inertia and learn the assiduous way of living. Vivekananda was particularly concerned about ameliorating the condition of the poverty of the common masses of our country. As such he was in favor of treading the path of material civilization so that more work could be created for the poor. This external mode of redemption of our society thus for him calls for the erudition of the essentials of material civilization of the West. He was however very cautious in underscoring the fact that India should take the best from the West and all importations should be subjected to adaptation to suit our diverse circumstances and problems. Recourse to mindless adoptions from the West would in fact lead to chaos and unwanted disasters.

It is significant to note that Vivekananda was the first Indian to stipulate himself as the strongest protagonist of socialism which would hold economic fairness and social unity as its two strong pillars. As opposed to the conventional explication of socialism, he premised socialism on spiritual grounds of social oneness denoting egalitarianism as its cornerstone. Vivekananda was always hesitant in putting forth a philosophy of socialism in a candid manner. His championing the cause of social equalitarianism in terms of providing equal opportunities for all has strong socialistic learnings. Harold Laski's interpretation of equality finds clear reflection in such understandings. But what makes Vivekananda's stand on socialism unmatched is his spiritualization of the philosophy. The pre-condition which he had set forth for the actualisation of socialism is the resuscitation of spiritual ideas. Spiritualism was not to be identified with obsolete norms and practices and obsolete social precepts. It was comprehended in terms of the attainment of incessant principles, the vigour and inbuilt potential of which would usher in an integrated societal arrangement. Significantly enough Vivekananda's socialist speculations leaves no room for the hegemonistic placements of brahmans and kshatriyas in the Hindu caste arrangement. He called for the activation of real spiritual souls so that religious and political aversion of these dominant classes could be mitigated, thus paving the way for the demolition of all artificial barriers and actual social equality would take shape. His antipathy towards rigorous social conservatism stands out in clear and uncompromising terms as stringent social schism was staunchly rejected by him.

Vivekananda was a firm believer in the philosophy of moderation with regard to social configurations and reshuffling of social arrangements. Being a social realist he was aware of the need to reject and remove those forces in the society which sowed the seeds of decadence and in turn promote those forces that would strengthen the ingredients of social self-preservation. Atrocious social customs and regulations are not to be repudiated in a vehement manner said the great monk but a progressive and gracious approach is to be adopted in the annihilation of such unnecessary and outrageous elements in the society. Vivekananda was thus in favour of peaceful social transformation and avoidance of unnecessary social anxieties. Applying this logic in the context of Hindu religion, he was quick to confirm that the durability of this religion lay in its assimilative faculties and a constructive attitude. It may at times said he, have succumbed to aggressive postures but its strength lay in its inherent potential to embody and consolidate the best ingredients of the systems and processes with which it had to engage within the course of its protracted journey. He was thus always insistent on gradual but persistent and organic reforms as opposed to radical transformation of the social set up. He even did not approve of violent methods to achieve the aim of socialism. He was very much conscious of the political and economic exploitation being perpetuated on the lower castes in our society but his spiritual interpretation of socialist contemplations forbided him to advocate

a cataclysmic approach. Significantly enough Vivekananda never hesitated to proclaim that he would refuse to express allegiance to that God who is not in a position to provide bread to the poor. To decipher the economic problems of the poor he preferred to buttress the cause of materialist civilisation. This confirms the fact that the Swami though held religion in high esteem but his humanitarian and virtual blend of mind found eternal bliss in the actualities of our social arrangements.

Vivekanand's futuristic ideal society was not to be an inclusive one but it was to be founded on an amalgamation of the glories of Indian spiritualism and the positive elements of western material progress. The essential logic behind this synthesis lay in his firm conviction in the intrinsic unity of the universe, the divinity factor being the adhesive element. The junction between both the East and the West should consist of the realisation of social equality and liberty from the western world combined with a strong dose of Indian spiritual value system. Thus Vivekanand's strong belief in the universe being one also made him detest the idea of competition between individuals and also between nations. Admonishing the West for being strongly guided by the spirit of competition he was assured that an evolutionary track based on such an idea would thwart all possibilities of future human progress. This made him outrightly reject the element of competition in the path of societal evolution. Vivekanand's ideal society would thus be rid of any scope for contentions as it sows the seeds of skirmishes and conflict eventually leading to war. In close league to his call for strengthening the bonds of mutual understandings is his emphasis on the need for developing an altruistic approach which would go a long way in serving the cause of humanity and encourage individuals to involve themselves in the service of the society. In every living being is present the existence of God and serving them would amount to serving God indeed. Thus Vivekananda's ideal society was to be set within the broad framework of spiritualism and humanism. The central impulse of the national fabric was indeed to be religion.

Religion was to be the dominating force which would guide the course of action of his ideal society. He contemplated religion to be the overbearing constituent of India as a nation and this rationale was assiduously relevant for every nation. Vivekananda in fact was the chief protagonist of the religious doctrine of nationalism because "religion he stated had to be backbone of the national life". 2. He held that the past of a nation could not be disregarded as doing so would be tantamount to denying the very existence of the nation. The very being of a nation he said was built on the greatness of its past and to be ignorant of its antiquity would amount to injustice. In the past religion had proved to be a crucial guiding and binding force and it was in this spiritual arena that the creativity of our country found the most vivid manifestation. In the face of political disintegration and instability religion indeed proved to be a rehabilitory force. As such he asserted that religious determinants would serve to be the eternal principles guiding the life of a nation on its march to stability and greatness. It is however pertinent to note that religion or spirituality for him was not to be identified with obsolete norms and customs or ecclesiastical contemplations as it would rob the very synthesising potential of spiritualism. Religion enhances the possibilities of the initiation of social reforms which would be instinctively adhered to by the masses. Thus the future society of Vivekananda's dreams would be placed within the broad and enlightened framework of spiritualism as the ultimate guiding force.

Another notable characteristic of his ideal society is the assertion on the adoption both in spirit and deed of the philosophy of humanism. Himself, the greatest humanist of all times Vivekanand considered an individual both as a means and as an end but the overpowering principle is man being divine in nature. Closed on the heels of his broad spiritual outlook he upheld man as God and vehemently sought to discard all evils in the society. His spiritualistic

humanism rested on the divine assumption of each individual being pure and unerring in nature. He strongly desired that man should be treated for what he symbolises not in the manner of his outward manifestations. He was confirmed that the divine nature of man would ensure that his positive and good qualities overwhelms his errors and negative peculiarities. Absence of bondage and non-existence superficialities in a humanistic society would play a key role in ensuring an illuminated and enlightened existence of human beings. His humanism also seeks to promote the cause of rationalism as it redresses all aberrations and stands for emancipation from all subjections and misconceptions. It clearly indicates that Vivekananda's humanism will persuade the individual to reject inclusiveness and instead identify himself with the broader interests of the community of which he is an integral part. Thus humanism would pave the way for rationalism as an unblemished human temperament would open up possibilities of logical purity in both thought and deeds. His immense emphasis on rationalism in fact made him to submit that equality and liberty would become nonsensical unless rationalism is generated within the personality of the individuals in the society. His humanistic society thus leaves no space for impurity of human nature as such unwanted traits would make man selfish, abusive and fatalistic. Life would then become a curse as an impure human being would inculcate in himself a pessimistic attitude and would choose to live a dependent existence. All possibilities of human growth would be thwarted and society as a whole would face the brunt of it as it would move away from perfection and bliss. Vivekananda emphasises the notion of active humanism to be practised in his future perfect society and also as a whole in all arenas of human life. Man as an end in himself must illuminate in the glitter of his own divinity and as a means he must assist others to realise this divinity in themselves so that they can instinctively strive for all that is noble, good and pure. Idealistically speaking he urges individuals to become Gods and then play the role of social beneficiaries by making others take cognizance of their divinity. In other words the destiny of all individuals in the society would be determined by those who have devoted themselves to serve humanity and strive for all that is good. The maxim of his humanistic society would thus be pursuing the cause of functional and active humanism and helping or making others follow suit. Being a practical philosopher he wanted all men in the prospective ideal society to develop a feeling of animosity towards all forms of pain and sufferings as a true humanist philosophy is inspired and motivated by love and compassion alongwith a congruous outlook.

It is important to note that the ideal society of Vivekanand's dream was to be a democratic one. His democratic philosophy being inclusive in nature not only stood for the promotion of individual rights and preservation of his dignity but outrightly condemned vested interests as it would divest the masses of their lawful rights and suppress all possibilities of their growth. More than a mere political philosophy democracy for him was to be a mode of living characterised by the inculcation of the process of self-help, a vigilant outlook and an active participation of the individuals in the process of governance. A new and much enlightened version of man would thus emerge out of his democratic process. Abuse and misappropriation of power would be outrightly rejected and a non-violent change of the ruling authority would always be opted for. Thus Vivekananda's democracy and his vision of a democratically ideal society and state was to be qualitatively different with no leeway for governmental degeneration. However, Vivekananda was confirmed that a qualitatively different democracy would be possible only through the dissemination of education which would be sacrosanct and temporal in nature. Thus it was not to be an ordinary political and social disposition but a complete change in the mode of thinking and performance so much so that the ethical, social and political upliftment of the individuals is actualised.

Swami Vivekananda's political philosophy was never devoid of an emphasis on love, toleration and fellow feeling for all in the society. He was a steadfast realist persistently pursuing the cause of the spiritual, material and political upliftment of individuals in the society. He convincingly put forth the vision of an ideal societal arrangement which if put into actual practice would go a long way in overcoming the global threat of human annihilation. His socialist and democratic principles continue to draw admiration from the worldwide intellectual and political community as it is a retrospection of the urge and crave of the human beings for a just and compassionate society. Even though Vivekananda experienced a short span of life but he was undoubtedly one of the most distinguished philosopher in the chronicle of Indian political thought. The valuable treasures of his thought and vision stand relevant for all societies at all points of time. As long as a nation continue to draw inspiration from his unique combination of moderation, spiritualism, synthesis and progress it cannot deviate from the path of well-being, peace, amity and progress.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Radice William "Swami Vivekananda and the Modernization of Hinduism" (SOA'S, Studies on South Asia, New Delhi, Oxford University Press 1999), p 268.
2. "The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda" (Mayavati Memorial Edition), Part I, 1936, P.554.