

RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Mahatma Gandhi's exploration of global faiths was not scholarly but existential. The primary focus of his study of many religions was not an intellectual comprehension of their ideas. His earnest endeavour was to integrate their moral and spiritual tenets and amalgamate them with his own faith. This perspective was predominantly his own, and the subsequent points may elucidate his conception of religion. His faith is neither conventional nor sectarian; rather, he describes it as the foundational religion that underpins all others and connects us directly with our Creator. Vivekananda has reinterpreted Vedanta, integrating it with a belief in mankind. In India, several philosophical systems such as Dwaita, Vishishtadvaita, and Advaita have emerged, each attempting to elucidate the nature of humanity, the universe, and the divine, along with their interrelations. Vivekananda contends that it is unnecessary to elucidate these concepts to the general populace of India or to highlight the subtle distinctions. He focused on the present and believed that addressing the country's pressing issues did not necessitate discourse on fundamental philosophical questions. In this article, religious philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda: a comparative analysis has been discussed.

Keywords: Religious, Philosophy, Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda.

1. Introduction:

Religion is defined as a compilation of beliefs, cultural practices, and worldviews. Sometimes, people use the term religion interchangeably with faith or belief systems. Note that many languages have terms that translate to religion; however, their usage may vary significantly, and some languages do not have a specific term for religion at all. During the 1870s, four eminent individuals were born in India, whose renown extended beyond the nation's borders to encompass the entire globe. The evolution of religion has manifested itself in various forms across diverse societies. Certain faiths prioritize belief, whereas others focus on practice. Certain religions emphasize the personal experiences of the individual believer, whereas others prioritize the actions of the religious community. Some religions claim universality, imposing their doctrines and cosmology on everyone, while others limit their practice to a specific or limited community.

Public institutions such as education, healthcare, familial structures, governance, and political hierarchies often link religion.

Research Methodology:

A research methodology delineates the procedures and techniques employed to identify and examine data relevant to a specific area of inquiry. It is a method by which researchers structure their inquiry to attain their goals utilizing the chosen research tools.

Research Design:

The research design comprises the methods and tactics selected by a researcher for conducting a study. The design assists researchers in establishing successful studies and enhancing research methodologies pertinent to the subject matter. Qualitative research design entails the collection and analysis of non-numerical data to comprehend concepts, opinions, or experiences. This study utilized a qualitative research design. In this research, qualitative research design has been used.

Data Source:

A third party, apart from the user, collected secondary data. This signifies the availability and analysis of the data. Instances of secondary data encompass periodicals, newspapers, books, journals, electronic resources, and documentary proof. This analysis utilized secondary data sources. In this research, secondary data source has been used.

Methodology:

In this research, qualitative research design and secondary data source has been used. Also due to unavailability of statistical data, charts, graphs etc. the quantitative research design and primary data was not applicable in this study.

Analysis:

Descriptive research analysis is a methodological approach that aims to elucidate the features of an event or subject under inquiry. Descriptive research analysis is a crucial instrument for scientific inquiry, allowing researchers to observe, document, and examine the intricacies of a certain subject. This method offers a comprehensive and full elucidation that facilitates understanding, categorization, and comprehension of the subject. All disciplines extensively utilize descriptive research analysis to systematically observe and record all events and elements affecting the phenomenon. In this research, descriptive research analysis has been used.

Comparative Analysis on Religious Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda:

Mahatma Gandhi:

It is also possible to characterize Gandhi's view of religion as modernist. Tolerance and equality of religions were central to his teachings (sarva dharma samabhava). Religion, in Gandhi's opinion, is entirely subjective and infinitely varied, just like people themselves. Another way of looking at it is that he is totally behind the modernist movement's goal of reducing religion to ethics. His interpretation of this reductionist faith is unique to him. The pursuit of truth, which includes atheists, is at the heart of religion. Furthermore, modernists believe that religious groups should not get funding from the state. [1]

According to Gandhi, morality is the core of religion. Those who follow this faith cannot afford to stay oblivious to the social, economic, and political spheres. This is why he has found himself entangled in politics: to fulfill his commitment to truth. Those who claim religion is unrelated to politics fail to understand the significance of religion for themselves, he said quietly and without hesitating.

According to Gandhi, there is no such thing as a better or worse religion. The greater the number of religious groups, the greater the potential for appealing to the inherent divinity in every human being. A person's spiritual well-being is just as important as their physical health. Finding and keeping mental calm is challenging without spiritual nourishment. Deciding which religion is better is not religion's point. [2]

Gandhi's view, the world's major faiths should work together to build a paradise on earth by encouraging their adherents to live a life of moderation, sacrifice, unity, peace, and understanding. He was rather forthright in his belief that a new religion is unnecessary. The world needs brave believers who find the eternal and universal truths in their faith and live by trembling to Gandhi, every living thing is an aspect of the supreme spiritual truth. Realizing one's authentic self was one with ultimate reality was the pinnacle objective was to realize one's authentic self as one with ultimate reality.

Gandhi's idealist framework is based on religious and philosophical ideas from India. An illuminating eclecticism of a distinctive kind, encompassing idealism, realism, and pragmatism, is on display in Gandhi. Creating a formal philosophical tradition was not Gandhi's goal. In his trademark style, he was reacting to the educational demands of his day while simultaneously trying to come up with a practical solution and the essential reasoning for it. The Gandhian educational system, which has included other philosophical ideas, was built on the bedrock of idealism.

His philosophy boils down to this: it is essentially the philosophy of action. As far as human concerns are His influence extends vastly to human concerns bounded. It carries an ethical & carries an ethical tone and receives sanction from religion. life, it develops into a succession of actions that, taken together, form a continuity of actions. A philosophy of action like this considers both the individual and humanity as a whole. This characteristic sets human apart and makes them harmonious with one another. As a result, the notion of human activity as a separate entity falters. In time, it becomes an integral part of human life.

Spirituality and religion were important to Gandhi. All the world's major faiths shaped his perspective on religion. He was an exemplar of his words. The daily lives of a religion's adherents reveal its moral code and spiritual core.

Gandhi aspires for religion to serve as a guiding factor that alters one's character and influences their actions. He maintains that religion is fundamental to human beings and that even atheists recognize the importance of having a code of ethics. This recognizes a connection to a higher power. A connection with a divine being gives rise to not just morality but also delight. Gandhi, discussing the importance of morality in daily life, justified even irrational religious ideas if they elevate man's morality. [3]

Religion was a powerful motivator for Gandhi because of its central role in his life. In his view, religion interconnects with everything. Religion inextricably links with education, just as politics do. According to him, studying different religions with respect is an essential part of any liberal education. He held no low opinion of any of the world's major faiths. His view is that all effective education should centre on instilling a culture of the heart rather than a culture of the mind. The development of one's spiritual life, according to his educational philosophy, takes precedence above academic achievement.

Religious considerations-controlled Gandhi's entire approach to national movements, politics, economics, and social issues. His religious beliefs and practices shaped every aspect of his public life, guiding his involvements, ideals, and values. People frequently refer to Gandhi's faith as an ethical religion for various reasons. His discussion of ethics is thought-provoking. 'Ethical Religion' is a description that he uses more often since he focuses on moral concepts while explaining religion. To claim that his religion is based on purely moral considerations would be inaccurate.

The self-indulgence of a servant is non-existent. He will strive to provide flawless service to the best of his ability. When you serve, you receive a reward even though you don't receive payment for it. His basic needs must be met. Whatever one's occupation, be it cerebral or physical, it is important to develop a selfless attitude. The only way to ensure that no one goes hungry is for everyone to start making their own bread. Poverty and wealth are not illumination. differences. But the vast majority of men are helpless and rely on

others. One must serve others in order to earn one's own bread, according to Gandhi. Religion is an ever-present and nearly ubiquitous aspect of human society. Despite its casual use, the word "religion" is notoriously difficult to define accurately. Religion boils down to a set of core beliefs that are consistent with the eternal order of the cosmos. From the solitary contemplation of yogis to the chaotic social and political life of man, Gandhi pulled religion down from its lofty perch. But he also wanted to make the political fight more of a spiritual and moral battle.

Gandhi examines every aspect of human existence from a moral perspective. His primary goal is to make religion a dynamic force in people's lives and to bring it into parity with morality. Religion must incorporate all aspects of human existence related to morality. For many, the study of moral principles is ethics. Gandhi has brought together religious and ethical principles since, in his view, the former does not exclude the latter. Finding the truth and bravely following it, not following the trodden path, is true morality. [4]

Religion takes on purpose and significance when people can provide enough justification for their faith. Gandhi did not advocate for the suppression of reason. On some topics, there is no logical way to explain anything. Gandhi, however, refuses to let any understanding, no matter how well-intentioned, shackle him if it contradicts logic.

Islam, in Gandhi's view, is not a religion at all if it ignores and does nothing to address worldly problems. By making his presence known, Gandhi teaches his followers that they must seek God in all of God's creation and become one with it. Consequently, it is crucial to provide quick assistance to all people. To Gandhi, God was inseparable from all human endeavors. One must be able to love one's nearest neighbour as one's self if they want to meet the transcendent and all-encompassing spirit of Truth head-on.

It is more common to find God among God's lowest creatures, as Gandhi knows, than among his highest and mightiest. Accordingly, Gandhi cares deeply about the downtrodden and oppressed strata. If you oppress the innocent in God's name, you're committing the worst sin imaginable, in his view. When it came to serving the community, Gandhi was completely absorbed. The driving force behind this is his yearning for personal growth. God, in his view, can only be known by service, thus he transforms religion into a religion of service. When he serves, it is as a public service. One of Gandhi's spiritual teachers, Swami Vivekananda, said that helping the poor is helping God.

Gandhi's rejection of the moral paradigm and his emphasis on religion's practical application in society highlight the stark contrast between ends and means. Truth, in his view, is the ultimate aim of human endeavour. Sincerity, according to Gandhi, is not a set of dictated ideals but rather the ultimate human virtue,

echoing the views of the ancient Greek thinkers. We must carry out every activity solely in accordance with the truth.

The highest objective that Gandhi aspired to was the incorporation of the sound teachings of other faiths. Gandhi made this fact clear on multiple occasions. He thinks people should just stop talking about whose faith is better. He drew parallels between religious tolerance and the analogy of the husband and wife. Marriage is a commitment that promises eternal devotion to one another. Also, neither partner should look down on the other or give up their own interests because of a relationship. Similarly, according to Gandhi, a person should not blindly follow their own religion despite its flaws. On the flip side, it's important to have a thorough understanding of one's religion while also being open to the positive aspects of other faiths.

All faiths, according to Gandhi, are working toward the same end. He boldly declared that the Gita and the Sermon on the Mount, both found in the New Testament, provided him with the same inspiration. For him, the Buddhist idea of nirvana was an extension of our baser, more corrupt natures. It provides true contentment and joy for the spirit. According to Gandhi, the universally accepted teachings of the world's major faiths promote peace and unity among their adherents. Rather than rejecting the other religious perspective, many religions hold a similar outlook. Therefore, Gandhi's religion encompasses a wide range of ideas and practices drawn from many faiths.

Gandhi studied many religious texts, particularly the Bhagavad Gita and the New Testament, and he had serious conversations about religious issues with many different types of people, which helped him to stand up for the arguments of God's existence, even though he is not an academic or a system builder. The structure of the cosmos is predictable. There is an eternal rule that controls the cosmos and all its inhabitants. Since it cannot control the actions of living things, Gandhi argues that it is not a blind law. He calls the rule that controls everything God. In this context, cosmological and teleological arguments coexist. [5]

Gandhi uses the term "religion" in its broadest sense, implying self-knowledge or self-realization. He sought affirmation in the teachings of the ancient religions, particularly the Gita, and learned that renunciation was the pinnacle of religion, which fascinated him. This is to carry out one's responsibilities without caring about the outcome.

Gandhi discovered that all of the major faiths have useful teachings after studying them. Because they share the same origin and development, he stresses, all faiths should be treated equally. He believes that God inspires and validates all the major faiths of the world.

Gandhi believed that all religions, like branches of a tree, are flawed because human instrumentality interprets them.

Gandhi devoted himself entirely to serving the community. The driving force behind this is his yearning for personal growth. God, in his view, can only be known by service, thus he transforms religion into a religion of service. When he serves, it is as a public service. One of Gandhi's spiritual teachers, Swami Vivekananda, said that helping the poor is helping God. The realization of God is, according to Gandhi, man's highest aspiration. God's ultimate plan must be the centre of an individual's political, social, and religious endeavors. Only by being one with God's creation can humans find God, so they must serve each other immediately. 'Ism' does not describe religion. It is an inherent quality of the soul, not just information or faith in a system of concepts. Belief in a higher power helps us understand our place in the universe and how to treat other people rightly. It is essential that we are self-aware. True self-awareness, or religious enlightenment, is the goal of life.

The application of truth, love, and nonviolence by Gandhi is the starting point for any attempt to comprehend his philosophy. We need to understand the relationship he established between them as means to an end. Gandhian thought is primarily based on two principles: truth and nonviolence. In his ideology, Gandhi elevated truth to a higher status. The greatest way to get to the truth is via nonviolence, which is why the idea is so significant. As a goal in itself, truth is invaluable. The one and only thing that matters is truth and love, or ahimsa. When this is present, problems eventually resolve themselves. There is no way around this rule.

Truth is inherent in all things, according to Gandhi. This is the spiritual rule that governs the physical universe. This principle is paramount. The way he saw Truth was in harmony with God's. Everyone can accept the truth. Gandhi chose to proclaim that Truth is God. Truth should be revered, according to this saying. A man's highest calling is to do this. No one can mechanically adhere to Truth without faith, according to Gandhi. Because of this, Gandhi decided it was best to state that God is Truth. Furthermore, it should be noted that, apart from that, the concept of God is complex, and truth is but one of His qualities. Thus, it is fitting to state that Truth is God. Accordingly, truth is Gandhi's most sacred concept. By doing this, he could persuade even atheists to become seekers of truth. He believed that everyone was actively seeking the truth. It is the ability of a person to establish beliefs that are in line with reality and to adjust his actions to fit societal standards. This ability must provide him with a sense of morality and a purpose in life. Because of this, he regards honesty as paramount. After a lengthy search, he finally reached this position.

One of the faiths that had a significant impact on Gandhi's perspective on religion was Christianity. According to Gandhi, Christians believe in the truth that makes a human being transcend death and become a spiritual being with infinite power. The truth is never-ending satisfaction; it's also free and accessible at

all times. There is no other way, truth, or life except myself. Except through me, no one reaches the father. This ultimately led Gandhi to the definition of Truth and solidified his convictions.

Verdicts made by Jesus Himself greatly affected Gandhi. When Jesus says he is the way, the truth, and the life, he means it literally. Instead of claiming to be God or a man, He identifies as truth and life. Jesus himself plainly states that the truth will triumph over the world's deceitful thinking. The truth is inarguable, undeniable, and dubious in Winston Churchill's view. No matter how many times ignorance mocks it or wickedness attacks it, truth remains alone. The New Testament makes Jesus' teachings on truth very clear. For Christians, there is no higher authority than God's Word as revealed in the Bible. However, Jesus said that His Spirit will guide you into full truth when He arrives.

The most critical thing is that you might use one of these two truths to help you find your way to enlightenment. Depending on the audience's level of intelligence, Buddha would use either in his teachings. Gandhi wrote to his Burmese friend in 1919 and said, "When I became acquainted with the teaching of the Buddha, my eyes were opened to the limitless possibilities of non-violence." He continued by saying that the Buddha taught people to trust in the final triumph of Truth and Love and to defy appearances. Truth is commonly referred to as Jain dharma in Jainism. One of the world's oldest faiths, it has its roots in India. The writings of the Jain faith were penned over many centuries, and its tenets are based on everlasting, universal facts. Lord Mahavir was a follower of Jainism who built on the teachings of his ancestors, most notably the long-standing credo of Lord Parshva. That is why Mahavir was more of a preacher and reformer for an established religious organization. The philosophical principles and rules of behavior were rearranged by him to reflect his time, nevertheless. If we are to follow Gandhi's lead, we need to look to Buddha's concept of ultimate truth.

Due to its inherent partiality, Jainism maintains that one-sided perspectives are incapable of explaining the whole truth. For the whole truth, you must consider all angles. The term for this method is "Anekantvada" (relativity theory and multiple perspectives). The hallmark of Jain philosophy is Syadvada, or Anekantvada as it is most commonly known. One way of looking at the world that Lord Mahavir gives us is the anekanta philosophy, which is non-absolutism. It is a crucial tool in the search for truth and a popular metaphysical idea.

Jain devotees profoundly impacted Gandhi, as he was born into a region that openly practices Jainism. This paradoxical combination of holy detachment and actual political activity characterizes his life. He recognized the Jain principle of ahimsa, which profoundly influenced his political and personal choices. Global pacifists like Martin Luther King, Jr. found inspiration in his life's work.

A Jain "spiritual mentor" and ardent adherent of nonviolence, Shrimad Rajchandra taught Gandhi the important principles of Jainism while he was a young jewel dealer named Gandhi. Little was known about him; despite the profound impact he had on Gandhi. He was someone Gandhi looked up to as a spiritual guide who aided him in coming into his own. In the depths of his anguish, he conveyed his desire to change his religion in a letter to Shrimad Rajchandra after this incident. In his reply, Rajchandra urged him to start by looking within. A new perspective on religion emerged in Gandhi as a result of his spiritual mentor's response. After that, Gandhi frequently cited Rajchandra's Jain teachings as the primary source for his own lessons in nonviolence, truth, and self-improvement. Nonviolence is not just a theory; it is a way of life, Gandhi learned from Jainism. Refraining from violence is just the beginning; true regard for oneself is the first step toward a profound reverence for all life. In other words, we learn to value our life force, and our purpose in this world is to honour and share the wisdom it already possesses when we begin to treat our awareness (or life force) with the real respect it deserves, together with the body, mind, and emotions that support it. Caring for one's physical self is an integral part of nurturing one's spirit. For a variety of reasons, Buddhism also had an impact on Gandhi. He did not place a premium on religious traditions, rituals, or institutions, and that is the most important reason. He came to a similar conclusion about Buddhism, which developed from Hinduism as a reform movement and offers fewer ritualistic and deity-dependent teachings than Hinduism. Second, by its very nature, this perspective tends to elevate Buddhism to a more favourable status, painting it as the religion that assimilated Hindu ideas while avoiding Hinduism's darker sides. The caste system is discussed in relation to the bad parts of Hinduism. Thirdly, Gandhi was greatly inspired by Buddhism's rejection of caste systems, in contrast to Hinduism's perpetuation and embodiment of such systems. Finally, the Buddhist principle of ahimsa, or nonviolence, and its emphasis on equality helped propel Buddhism to widespread acceptance throughout Asoka's reign. The so-called firebrand revolutionaries who want to alter the world at once caught the eye of the great monarch, but Gandhi's social and economic views were more revolutionary. After that, Gandhi made a remarkable appeal that only he could have thought of, given his obsession with truth and nonviolence throughout his life.

For whatever reason, Gandhi found himself drawn to faiths other than his own. Reading his lectures and writings, however, one can see that Hinduism was the only religion that truly fulfilled him spiritually. He came to believe that Hinduism's ancient principles were sufficient for a faith that could satisfy the needs of the human spirit. As part of Hinduism's expansive umbrella, he embraced Jainism, Sikhism, and even Buddhism to a lesser degree. No other text had the same impact on him as the Bhagavad Gita. He saw the Gita as an eloquent metaphor and called it his "spiritual dictionary." The battlefield of Kurukshetra, where Krishna gave his sermon, represented, in his perspective, the human heart's inherent struggle between good

and evil. Krishna exhorted Arjuna to engage in a never-ending uphill battle against pride, cowardice, and ignorance.

The teachings of Jainism on nonviolence, Jesus Christ and His teachings on love, Islam's emphasis on brotherhood, and, most importantly, Buddha's instructions on how to overcome anger through non-anger—what he called "the supreme virtue of charity or love"—all had an impact on Gandhi. The ideal morality that Gandhi referred to as God, truth, and ahimsa, self-purity, sacrifice, and renunciation were all taught by the great Hindu reformer Buddha, in Gandhi's view. His teachings on humility, piety, selfless service, and the oneness of all life helped us come to terms with who we really are. Many consider Gandhi to have been a disciple of Lord Buddha.

Swami Vivekananda:

At the time of the British conquest, India was in the midst of an intellectual crisis as new Western ideas began to threaten the country's long-held beliefs and practices. At that time, Vivekananda first gained notoriety in India. Narendranath Dutta was born on January 12, 1863, to the religious Bhuvaneshwari Devi and the prosperous lawyer Viswanatha Dutta. His mother was a devout follower of Lord Siva. When he was a kid, Naren was just like any other energetic, healthy, and energetic boy: he loved to play pretend, was always up for an adventure, and had an insatiable appetite for learning about the world. He was full of life, always up for exploring new locations in Calcutta and enjoying gymnastics and play productions. But he was interested in meditation, unlike most guys his age. Because of his exceptional focus, he could read and retain information from hundreds of pages of books in a fraction of the time it would take a typical guy to read a few papers. He also had an extraordinary recall. His desire to live a life of cloistered contemplation dates back to his early years. Although he had a natural inclination toward cultivating one's spiritual side, he was a firm believer in reason, and from an early age on, he endeavoured to put all the doctrines that were supposedly based on infallible authority to the test of verification and actuality. The academic progress that Naren made was quite impressive. He was considered eligible to pursue higher study upon reaching the age of sixteen. He passed the First Arts Examination in 1881. Even though he met Sri Ramakrishna that year, he had numerous additional encounters with the spiritual leader during the course of his three years at university. During this period, Naren immersed himself in Western philosophy and logic, reading works by thinkers such as Hume, Auguste Comte, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and Stuart, as well as Herbert, Spencer, and Kant. These thinkers instilled in him a healthy distrust of authoritative figures and a firm belief in the power of reason, qualities that would eventually position him for equal engagement with Western philosophers. Brahmo Samaj's protests against orthodox Hindu practices, such as polytheism, image worship, and divine incarnation, significantly influenced Naren during his college years. His initial zeal for

Brahmo Samaj waned as he began to question the veracity of its teachings. Meeting Sri Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar helped Naren solve this difficulty. He became Swami Vivekananda as a result of this initial step in his search for God. [6]

Sri Ramakrishna, who was a spiritual teacher, provided Naren with the intellectual capital that allowed him to become a renowned global teacher of Vedantic wisdom and did much to help Naren reconcile religion with reason. Through his love and inspired teachings, Naren was able to understand the basic principles of Vedānta, and he enjoyed the unique joy of frequent interactions with Sri Ramakrishna. After Sri Ramakrishna's death on August 16, 1886, he entrusted Naren with his appointed mission. With a profound awareness of his purpose, Naren embarked on a journey to explore the region and meet the people he was meant to help, even though he was short on funds. As a result, he had intimate encounters with people from all walks of life as he travelled across India, from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari. The widespread misery and decay profoundly affected him. With the passage of time came the fragmented recollections of a glorious past. After visiting Rameshwar, Swami Vivekananda travelled to Kanyakumari, the site of his renowned vision of a united India. Seated on the final stone, he had felt the rush of sharing in the boundless variety of his fellow citizens' lives. The southernmost point, now known as Vivekananda Rock, reflected on Mother India for hours. While sitting in Mother Kumari's temple on the last bit of Indian rock, I had a revelation. There are so many Sanyasins out there teaching people metaphysics, and it's all crazy, he said. A hungry stomach impedes the practice of religion. Our collective loss of identity is the root of all evil in India. We must rally the masses." While at Kanyakumari, he had a mental image of the whole country he had just crossed. He had drunk deeply from the unity-flossing stream beneath the diversity rocks. Because of this spiritual journey, Naren became a condensed India rather than an individual, and he set out on a spiritual conquest under the name Vivekananda, bestowed upon him by the Maharaja of Khetri, who was so moved by the Swami's restraint that he wanted to honour him. During this period, he became aware of the upcoming Parliament of Religions in Chicago on September 11, 1893, and decided to attend. Most religious leaders from around the world were there, ready to claim their faith and doctrine as supreme. Swami Vivekananda's miraculous presence enlightened the previously closed minds of the audience to the noble duty of religious peace, rather than the exclusive supremacy of any one faith. This renowned Chicago address encapsulated the core of his message to the world. He had close encounters with locals in the United States and England during his lengthy travels. Some of his most illustrious followers came from England; Miss Margaret Noble, who would eventually become Sister Nivedita, was the most significant in this context. [7]

In 1897, Swami Vivekananda and his disciples established the Sri Ramakrishna Mission to unite their activities. The mission was to spread Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, which he preached for everyone's benefit, lived by, and encouraged others to do so with the goal of spiritual growth. The mission's sole purpose was

to promote spiritual and humanitarian objectives. Thus, the Ramakrishna Mission, which put Vivekananda's teachings into practice, evolved into a humanitarian organization whose only goal is to help people and end their suffering. To educate its adherents for the betterment of society, the Mission set up ashrams and mats across India and beyond. In order to spread the teachings of the Vedānta and incorporate its principles into all faiths, the swami established the Vedantic Society in New York. Additionally, he published the English newspaper "Prabudha Bharata" and the Bengali journal "Udbodhan" to promote Neo-Vedantism. At the age of 39, he peacefully passed away in the Mission Headquarters in Belur on July 4, 1902. His last words were if there were another Vivekananda, I would have known what Vivekananda had done. Just hours before his demise, we heard him contemplating these thoughts.

Swami Vivekananda's practical teachings are highly activist, dynamic, and primarily humanistic. Vivekananda's ideology contains a form of humanism that we can refer to as spiritual humanism. It is also known as humanistic Advaita or idealistic humanism. Swami Vivekananda's entire philosophical system is replete with the obvious consequences of humanism. To view things through the lens of humanity, or as a philosophy of man, is to practice humanism. It stresses the importance of helping others and serving mankind. The science of spiritual potential, or adhyatmavidya, is the source of his humanism. These latent potentials are the bedrock upon which all human progress rests. Swami Vivekananda's spiritual humanism posits that humans are inherently divine. "Every soul is potentially divine, and the aim is to realize this divinity," he asserts in his statement. It upholds the inherent goodness of humans, worships man as God, condemns societal, economic, and religious wrongdoing, and encourages faith and personal strength. An essential aspect of Swami Vivekananda's humanism is service to humanity. According to Swamiji, the highest form of devotion to God is service to people. Daridraya Narayana developed the idea of seeing God in the downtrodden, the naive, the frail, and the sick. Pray for them and renew their spirit so that they can worship God. [8]

Vivekananda's assumption of human purity elevates man's status in society and the cosmos. Every man has the right to freedom and equality in such a society. We can bring about global peace and an end to human misery by serving those who are suffering. It is the path to redemption through growth. It brings about a global sense of fraternity and equality. According to Vivekananda, we must revere man as God, love him, and serve him. God and man are one in a free stage. Humans transcend beyond their physical components.

While Swami Vivekananda does have some very idealistic and spiritual views in his philosophy, he is not opposed to the country's progress in material matters. He believes that only scientific and technological advancements can revitalize India. The downtrodden and impoverished are essential to him as a humanist. They are delicate and require particular handling. He held the view that discussing religious matters with a

man who was starving would be futile. To paraphrase, he was against religious dogma and superstition that led to evil and exploitation, and he refused to believe in a God or religion that could not alleviate the suffering of the poor.

Any activity a man does when he is aware that he is the infinite spirit will lead to good, according to Swami. With that kind of attitude, he can accomplish anything, and society benefits as a whole. Societal progress, both monetary and spiritual, can benefit from such understanding. This is the central tenet of Swami Vivekananda's spiritualistic humanism. According to him, spirituality was the sole path to social transformation, and the Neo-Vedānta, which professed man's inherent divinity, was the path that would ultimately benefit all humans. He advocated for a spiritual inundation of ideas in India prior to any socialist or political inundation. Along with the teaching of spiritual knowledge, he promised all the other kinds of knowledge we might ever desire, including secular knowledge. Ancient spiritual majesty and legacies were revived in the heart of India with the coming of Vivekananda after being covered in age-old corruption and darkness. He was an early trailblazer in the golden awakening that followed the east's cultural conquest of the west. His spiritual humanism significantly transformed the intellectual life of future generations.

Such a religion, according to Vivekananda, already exists. The external disputes of the religion engross us, causing us to miss its presence. The first thing he says is that faiths aren't inherently at odds with one another once you understand their basic principles. Actually, they work best when combined. Because religious truth is all-encompassing, various faiths tend to focus on narrower or more specific parts of religion. Every religion builds upon a specific facet of religion. Thus, every religion contributes in its own unique way to the evolution of religion and also adds to the vast variety that faith can generate. [9]

Second, Vivekananda wants to emphasize that opposite viewpoints on the same issue are possible. Taking pictures of the same subject from several vantage points guarantees that no two shots will be identical—and maybe even contradictory. However, they depict the identical item in the photos. Similarly, every one of us has our own unique perspective on the truth, which color our perceptions of it. Because of this, the divergent viewpoints are explicable and can lead to a split among humans. However, they all complement each other, as they fundamentally represent the same reality.

By adopting this outlook, Vivekananda is able to identify one aspect shared by all faiths, which may thus stand in for the core of religion as a whole. God is at the same point. Truth is God, says Vivekananda, since although various faiths speak of different parts of Truth, they are all parts of the same Truth. This unity, or God, is something that every religion is striving toward, whether intentionally or not. Therefore, we can view this as the realization of Religion for All's goal.

Swami Vivekananda argues that love and devotion are inherent to the human condition. The path to unadulterated love, or Bhaktimarga, is one in which the Supreme, rather than anything limiting or finite, is the object of devotion. The knowledge of everything's interconnection will serve as the foundation of this love, resulting in love for everyone.

According to Vivekananda, this is the best and most widely- used method. It comes naturally to humans and does not necessitate the specialized skills, knowledge, or materials needed for alternative methods. For the same reason, this seems to be the simplest option as well.

Vivekananda understands that this approach requires tremendous self-confidence and mental and physical fortitude, making it inappropriate for those with weaker hearts. The gradual acquisition of specific powers and excellences enables the yogi to eventually achieve union with the Divine through the practice of total concentration.

The four paths that Vivekananda lays forth are distinct from one another, but he insists that they all lead to the same destination. Thus, in his view, one can pick his own way. If one is really committed to following one of these pathways, he will eventually succeed. A strong sense of purpose and unwavering honesty are enough.

Swami Vivekananda had a profound grasp of religion's function in society. Religion and education were the weapons that Vivekananda employed to free the ordinary people from illiteracy, poverty, and other social ills. He advocated for the material well-being of his followers through education and spiritual growth through religion. However, he consistently prioritized the spiritual dimension of human existence. The monistic tendency of Sankara was the main impact on Vivekananda. Sankara developed a systematic Advaitavada based on the Upanishads' monistic tendency. He thought that God (Iswara), human souls (Jiva), and the universe (Jagat) were all just forms of Maya, an unknowable principle. He put a lot of weight on the truth of the pure (nirguna) Brahman. You can't say that Maya doesn't exist. According to Advaita philosophy, Brahman is the one and only Reality, and everything else is a delusion. In hardly half a poem, Sankara conveys the essence of his philosophy.

Vivekananda's own idea aligns with these two schools of thought. This third view, he argues, contains the real account of how religion came to be. According to Vivekananda, the fundamental essence of religion is the quest to transcend the limitations of nature. He elucidates that individuals visit these locations primarily for two purposes: firstly, to establish a connection with the deceased (i.e., to perceive what exists beyond death), and secondly, to understand the forces at play in the breathtaking wonders of nature. Whatever the case may be, he certainly strives to go beyond what the senses can see. For this reason, people respect their

ancestors and the natural world. Man is constantly evolving; he experiences life to its utmost before passing away. There was no way for the prehistoric inhabitants to explain this occurrence. Why? The afterlife continued to captivate his mortal senses. Wanting to see what remained after the body disintegrated was a universal human desire. The veneration of ancestors was a manifestation of such desire. As a result, nature-worship was also an effort to decipher the mechanisms underlying natural phenomena. Ancient humans lacked the sensory capacity to comprehend the power of nature. Therefore, in both cases, they endeavoured to surpass the realm of the senses. [10]

Vivekananda's religious conception in Vedanta connects to the principle of experiencing the oneness of the universe. He asserts that religion yields freedom, which individuals attain through knowledge that unites them with all humanity. He goes on to ask, "In what way are you innocent?" Every living thing has a divine creator. You can't be considered knowledgeable unless you know this. In what ways are they different? There is no difference. Perceive God in every person—God is at work via every hand, foot, and mouth—and you will have attained spirituality if you can perceive that every being is a temple of the highest. He thinks via every mind and exists in every being. He is obvious, and he is closer to us than we are. I pray that the Lord will grant us the faith necessary to recognize this as true. We shall be immortal when we experience that oneness.

The preceding demonstrates that the transcendental oneness of all living things is fundamental to Vivekananda's religious philosophy. The central principle of Vedanta, equality, is the foundation of his faith. Oneness makes him believe that all souls can be divine because they are all aspects of Brahman, the ultimate truth. It follows that in Vivekananda's worldview, there is no distinction between sexes or social classes. We are all expressions of the same truth. Everyone possesses the identical Brahman.

Religion is not everything that Vivekananda claims it is. Dogmas, beliefs, ceremonies, and rituals are not, in his view, essential to religion. Nevertheless, he refrained from flat-out rejecting them altogether. At the preschool level of religious development, he thinks these outside factors are useful. "Spirit as spirit" is the next level of human understanding that follows the "kindergarten" phase. Therefore, Vivekananda did not hold a theological perspective on religion. He has an entirely spiritual understanding of religion. Vivekananda developed a social philosophy based on this dynamic understanding of religion.

Religion is distinct from piety. Priestcraft, as Vivekananda reminds us, is fundamentally cold and callous. Wherever there is an increase in priestcraft, religion suffers. Indeed, Vivekananda argues that priestcraft is an irreligious phenomenon, as it completely lacks religious elements. The foundation of this is the assertion of superiority in the spiritual realm, which entitles one to special treatment. Therefore, according to Vivekananda, the goal of Advaita [Vedanta] is to dismantle all of these advantages.

Religion, according to Vivekananda, is not primarily about dogma. Christian teachings on original sin, salvation, heavenly rewards, and damnation to hell were only a few of the theological notions that Vivekananda questioned. Oh my! The world is filled with enchantments! You wicked! In one of his legendary remarks given at the 1893 Chicago Parliament of Religions, he said, "Calling a man that is a sin; it is a standing libel on human nature." Reciting the opening five words of the address, "Ye!" The world is filled with wonders! Who among us has committed sin? The five-word formula stunned everyone in the Parliament of Religions, according to Professor Binoy Kumar Sarkar. Sarkar asserts that the first four words conjured into existence the gospel of elation, optimism, vitality, independence, and virility for all men. However, he shattered the entire framework of concepts that degrade the soul, promote timidity, and are negative and pessimistic with the final word, which included a mocking query. The world was stunned when the little five-word formula dropped like a bomb. He travelled from the East with the first four words and the West with the last word.

Religion was more than just a set of creeds, according to Vivekananda. I differentiate between religion and creed in order to put Vivekananda on his feet. A person's creed is an aggressive and confrontational item. Every religion is based on the concept of the Self. Therefore, his criticism primarily targets those who merely have an academic interest in religion. His only observation was that religion is intellectual opium for these people. Curiously, Vivekananda shared Karl Marx's view that religion has the potential to become the opium of the masses. However, this situation arises when we reduce religion to mere dogma. Things change when it's relevant to real life.

Conclusion:

In making his decisions, Gandhi did not let his own interests cloud his judgment but rather looked to universal ideals. The key to his success was accepting that being genuine and nonviolent in all aspects of his life was the only way to serve. While serving one's community, one must also practice self-reflection and self-control. We most revere and honour him for his unwavering commitment to nonviolence and his profound humanity. His principles confronted the world, proving that nonviolence could be a powerful tool for social transformation. According to Vivekananda's view of religion, all religions are equally valid. Vivekananda strongly opposed the idea that one religion might thrive while others perished. Some people hold the view that pluralism is beneficial because it allows for more options, more freedom of choice, and, ultimately, more chances for individuals to express themselves and reach their full potential. Some view it as an honourable and practical approach to maintaining peace in a country like India, home to people of diverse faiths. People will either have to strongly believe that religions are true or learn to be tolerant of other people's religions by understanding the historical ties that connect them to the community. Either way,

humanity is at a crossroads in its present and future. In his formulation of unity, Swami Vivekananda made a distinctive contribution. Disputes in religion, says Vivekananda, are always over the husks, meaning that each person must absorb the essence of the others while still being true to themselves and developing in accordance with their own growth rule. Disputes arise between adherents of different faiths, and even within the same religion, when integrity and spirituality deteriorate in our faith. No one can impose their religion on others. Neither the Christian, the Hindu, nor the Buddhist should convert to the other faith. But every faith has to take inspiration from other faiths while staying true to itself and developing in accordance with its own growth law. From this, we derive the concept of religious tolerance.

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