Concluding remarks with relevant observations

At last I have come to my journey's end. It is a long strenuous journey full of pitfalls and beset with thorny ideas and enchantment of diversions and deviations. How far I have been able to fulfil that great task is anybody's guess. So far I am concerned I have devoted myself wholly and fully to the mission. Obviously I cannot be the judge of my own work. I am trying through the following lines to draw a chart of my path from its source to the destination with utmost care and clarity so as to offer you a guideline to wander through these forest of arguments and counter-arguments. drawn into the business.

The topic of my thesis - to refresh your memory is 'A study of the philosophy of Vivekananda with reference to Advaita Vedānta and great universal heart of Buddha.' The central idea of the topic demonstrates that Swami Vivekananda had two opposite pulls of thoughts in his mind. Basically he was a person of deep reason, contemplation and judgment. So whatever was thought illuminating, metaphysical and contemplative appealed to his mind as it gave his mental and spiritual
thought a sustenance. Plainly speaking these metaphysical speculations have little relation to gross reality of life. It does not solve the needs of daily life. Condition of suffering humanity has little relevance into this highly philosophic considerations. Swamiji was not all aloof from life's terrible reality. He had the bare eyes (as had also the divine vision) to see the plight of wretched beings undergoing burtal hardships, oppressions, neglect and hatred from the society of the affluence. His deep human spirit revoted like a blazing fire at this injustice done to the common men. His bleeding heart suffered with those who were suffering. He was restive and restless as to how to retrieve this humanity from the shackles of bondage of social oppression and injustice. In this quality of his heart he has an affinity with another great son of India - Gautama Buddha who was equally tumultuous and restless to see the agony of mankind. His heart was equally surcharged with the feeling of compassion for this suffering humanity.

Swami Vivekananda through his wide travelling in the realm of Indian history and culture met with this great soul of India and was overwhelmed with the upsurge of humanism and humanitarian feeling that raged in the heart of Gautama Buddha. He felt here was a man who had entire kinship with him in this quality of heart who felt and throbbed with the
pulsation of the suffering humanity and who tried to solve this problem of sorrows and wretchedness of mankind through his own doctrine of Karma.

Swamiji's spirit had many facets like those of a diamond; it had many splendoured beauty and brilliance. In one aspect of it he caught the reflection of Buddha's humanitarianism and the magnanimity of his heart. But through the other aspect of it which was perhaps far more predominating he caught the vision of Advaita Vedanta of Shankara.

Apparently these are irreconcilable ideas in the great realm of his spiritual being. Two aspects of his life—one caught through the brain and the other detected by his heart lay wide apart. He was bewildered and bemused by these apparent contradictory sentiments that were at war with each other in his heart. Often he lay bemoaning in sorrow. He could not find out a distinct path which could offer a perennial solution to all the various problems of life here and hereafter. He could offer no solution to life's misery nor could his spiritual being find any metaphysical answer to all these sufferings. He could therefore find no peace of mind and his spirit found no serenity. It was like the swaying surge of the stormy sea. His impetuous spirit could not sit idle and languish away. Here he met with his great Guru Sri Ramakrishna who offered
grist to his restless soul and directed his mind to the steady goal of spiritual illumination. This illumined soul could at once find a new solution to this divergent trends of life and thought. What his guru Sri Ramakrishna taught him was really the basic ideas of Vedantic doctrine. Yet at the same time it was full of love and compassion for all—even for the inanimate objects and trivial things of life. This soul-power of Sri Ramakrishna was in fact the combination of all thoughts and all feelings. Vivekananda's heart was reverberated with the sonorety and music of the heart of Sri Ramakrishna. The contradiction of head and heart as typified in Sāṅkara and Buddha which offered him a barricade and created a baffling problem to find an all-comprehensive and all-pervading philosophy of life was at once demolished. Swamiji was now in a position to set forth his ideas and philosophy of life in a chisel-curb—all its subtleties and obscurities were resolved through his philosophic outpourings.

It is not easy to set forth his ideas which bestride the two worlds of thought—Buddha and Sāṅkara like Apollo, the Sun-God. Yet he did this tremendous task successfully with the light of benediction of his great Guru Sri Ramakrishna. To a Vedantist who swears by Sankara, this mundane world or phenomenon world is more an illusion than any thing of substance. Sāṅkara could easily look at the sufferings of humanity
with this philosophic outlook that all these are shadows and this shadowy world is momentary and shall be vanishing away at last. So he could look at this passing phase of life with non-chalance and indifference. But Vivekananda could hardly acquiesce in with the fact that this world is a shadowy world or a quite insubstantial thing or that these sufferings of humanity, this bestiality and injustice perpetrated upon mankind can easily be swept away or can go unchallenged. Life is not really so meaningless. It has depth, dimension; it has quality and grandeur; it has joy and sorrow, delight and suffering. Men must enjoy it and feel the ecstasy of it through their veins. It is real, it is earnest and grave is not its end. So while his head was full of Vedantic thought and inspiration which looks down upon the pettiness of life’s problems, his heart refused to come in with this simplecist’s solution.

This life is to be dovetailed into the Vedantic concept. But then Śaṅkara offers no rightful position of this life into his scheme of thought. He can at best offer life a very minor position in his scheme of things. But Vivekananda shall have for mankind this life of mundane existence a dignified and glorious position in the world of philosophic thought. Advaita Vedānta must come out of its shell and advance with wide open heart and embrace the earthly men and the entire humanity vigorously and with deep cordiality. Nothing short of this
will satisfy Vivekananda however much he might have great devotion for the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta of Sankara. It is not merely a bare matter of logic or extension of metaphysics. It is the great spiritual realisation of Sri Ramakrishna that came to his rescue. He is the great teacher who taught Swamiji that Jiva is Shiva Himself. And that the worship of Jiva is worship of Shiva. In fact, Jiva is the real Shiva, It is nearer to man. It is tangible and visible. Why should we run after a visionary God renouncing the God objectified before us? Here the floodgate of Vivekananda's heart was broken asunder and the locked up, and fettered and enmeshed soul of Vivekananda hypnotised by Sankara's ratiocination was released by the magic touch of the greatest spiritual seer Sri Ramakrishna. At once the mystery of life and death, the contradiction and anomaly of the two worlds - the phenomenon and noumenon were resolved. The mist and bizzare that engulfed the entire philosophic world was lifted and the Sun-God Apollo shed his scorching light over all facts of the world. Swamiji at once started singing in a full throated and thrilling voice the music of life and the enchanting beauty of the Vedantic thought as illumed and extended by a touch of spiritual spark of his great Guru Sri Ramakrishna. He wrote and composed ever memorable rhyme -
'These are His manifold forms before thee
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
Who loves all beings, without distinction,
He indeed is worshipping best his God'

In it heaven is commingled with earth, divinity is
brought down to the humanity, yet not debased or denigrated
but magnified, glorified and made more exalted.

Shiva is here none other than concept of soul of Śaṅkara
incarnated. Śaṅkara had no scruple to admit that all created
beings are the soul in different stages of development, but they
are imperfect souls. The moment pragna will dawn, they would
merge with eternal soul. But Swamiji repudiated this concept
of perfection and imperfection of soul or the split concept of
soul. To him as to his Guru every soul is divine and the same
and it is identified with the Eternal Soul - the concept of
oneness of soul. Here is a great leap-forward in the Advaita
Vedānta philosophy and it is Swamiji who made this great advance-
ment in the concept of Vedāntic philosophy.

Wherein lies the advantage of this step-forward? It
actually transformed the entire picture of the world. Men are
no longer men in flesh and blood simply. They are not simply
our fellow brothers and sisters. They are ourselves in diff-
erent shapes and forms. If we are drawn to it, it is not
stimulated by any extraneous concept of brotherhood of man. It is because we are the same identical soul. This feeling injected through the entire humanity can at once dispel all hatred, all bickerings, all jealousy, baseness and fraud. Whom are we going to cheat? Whom are we going to hate? It is ourselves we are hating, it is ourselves we are deluding. This concept of oneness of humanity cuts across all barriers of casteism, religion, national and geographical boundaries, race, colour and climbs. It is universal in feeling and it is as true as the sun, the moon and the stars; it is as steady as the north pole; it is the truth itself.

In this quest for truth Swamiji made a long trek through the philosophical and scriptural writings of the world. But none could satisfy him till his Guru Sri Ramakrishna offered him the necessary spark of spiritual illumination. All was now clear and distinct like the blue sky without any rack of cloud flogging over it.

He now could easily preach his great doctrine of service and sacrifice to make his Vedantic philosophy practical and real. Service and sacrifice - work is worship - these are the great messages of Swami Vivekananda to the world. Liberation is thus assured.

How far Vivekananda's philosophy of life can hold its
own against the onrush of science and technology and against
the present day socialist view of life as advocated by Karl
Marx? Here is Swamiji's theory put to an acid test. He has
taken a spiritual or religious view of life and now is the age
of materialism and science. Swamiji saw the material prosperity
in full flush in America. A country who has attained top-most
advancement in material prosperity and scientific progress
can have little attraction for Swamiji's philosophy or religious
thought. Yet strangely enough, Swamiji moved the world by his
message of Vedánta particularly in his Chicago speech. No
less a person than Rockefeller dedicated a good sum for the
welfare of humanity at the instance of Swamiji. How this could
happen? It happened because in the message of Vedánta there
was an unction for the soul lacerated by the rivalry of
material world. One can have physical pleasure to one's field
but there is no peace of mind. Man has lost peace for ever in
this storm-tossed material life. Apart from jealousy and bick-
erings in social life, there is the constant rivalry between
one capitalist and another and the panic of international world?
How can all these be eliminated from this worldly life? It is
the teaching of Advaita Vedánta that can whittle down and
curb the longings of men for more and more pleasure. Pleasure
can never give satiety to pleasure. Vedánta holds out a promise
of peace on earth as it holds out a promise of liberation.
Yet Vivekananda never repudiated the claims of science and technology in this world. Men must be fed, advancement of knowledge should be achieved, conquest of nature and natural forces - all these are welcome achievement of men. Men must live heroically and brave the world. But these achievements of science and technology shall never be used as instruments of destruction or oppression or as special privileges. The fruits of scientific knowledge should be shared by all. There should be no privileged class and unprivileged one. It will be a classless society based upon a feeling of Kinness and love not comradeship as such as advocated by Marx, because our fellow-men are we ourselves, more than blood-brothers or comrades.

Here is Vedânta or true religion coming to the rescue of people bewildered in this world of material conflicts and rivalry. Religion as professed by Swamiji can never be called a poison to the people. It is the genuine path-finder or in other words, it is the path itself which all the travellers of the world shall tread along in order that they can live in happiness here on earth with no worries for the world hereafter because the moment the sense of oneness dawns in one he is set free from the travails of life. His soul becomes liberated. There should be no hankering for any other heaven beyond this world. Such a promise is there in the Advaita philosophy of Vivekananda.
Karl Marx who was a materialist philosopher tried to solve the problem of food and hunger by his Dialectical Materialism and the theory of class-war and class-struggle. A vision of a classless society as revealed through his concept of communism is a far-cry. Whether it is at all achievable is a controversial idea. Even if it is possible to achieve, the goal can only be reached wading through rivers of blood and violence at the expense of millions of people who are characterised as class-enemies. But there is no permanent yard-stick of labelling as to who is a class-enemy and who is not. For every change of leadership in the highest eschelon of Communist World there is the corresponding discrimination and re-levelling of populace even in the so-called socialist countries. An ideal communist of today may find himself pushed to the dust as a reactionary tomorrow. There is the constant shifting of faith in leadership, constant reorganisation and fear of orgies of new blood-path raising these lands of so-called socialist countries. Besides there is the constant threat of war pervading the entire world. Why this is so? Solely because we donot look upon the other man as ourselves. Thus identification of souls is lacking because the great aroma of Advaita Vedanta are not blowing through any soul.

Vivekananda had no reservation about the necessity of economic self-sufficiency of man. He knew more than anybody
else like his Guru Sri Ramakrishna that a hungry stomach can have no religion. So he exhorted education, he exhorted for all-round perfection of men in all fields of activities. Yet all these will be meaningless unless the stream of consciousness of Advaita Vedānta is made to flow through the society.

This is the image of Swami Vivekananda, the eternal spirit of mankind who left nothing out of ken of his observation, who rejected nothing, accepted everything, embracing even the lowly and the base, who stood for expansion, growth, progress and all-round perfection physical, mental and above all spiritual, who is the symbol of revolt against all injustice and oppression and privilege, who is the emblem of light like the Sun-God Apollo illuminating the entire world with the light of Advaita Vedānta. Here is a man who is not of the age but of all ages. Sooner the world accepts him as the leader of mankind, as the man of God, the better for the world.

He is the Future Man.

I hope I have fulfilled my mission and I have given a broad analysis of my line of argument in arriving at my conclusion, namely - 'A study of the philosophy of Vivekananda with reference to Advaita Vedanta and great universal heart of Buddha.'
The confluence of the Ganga and the Jamuna of Indian philosophy was effect in Vivekananda. Yet the great current that came out of this confluence is a new flow - which is not the Ganga flow nor the flow of the Jamuna.

Edifice of Indian philosophy is not monolithic. It has at least three massive pillars - Advaita Vedanta, Buddhism and the philosophy of Vivekananda. These trio hold fast in the big mansion of Indian philosophy. Yet Vivekananda is not a supporting pillar. It is the keystone of the arch, to use a different imagery. It sustains the whole structure.

Indian philosophy is three dimensional. The third dimension is given by Vivekananda.

What is the source and nature of that third dimension? It came through Sri Ramakrishna - He is the fountainhead of Vivekananda's philosophic thought. Vivekananda completes the arch of Indian philosophy which had its beginning in the Veda, the Upanisads, Buddha and Saṅkara.

I presume I have been able to make an impression upon your mind about my points of view. I suppose these are weighty arguments supported by authoritative excerpts, strengthened by long and strenuous studies of Swamiji's own writings as also writings about him and his philosophy by eminent authorities on Swamiji. It is up to your good grace to take a patient view of the entire thing and pass your judgment.