God, Man and Society, these three are basic points in the study of religion. The history of man always shows that men is always aware of the fact that he is a limited being and he has been keeping faith on some thing supernatural which is higher and mightier than himself usually, called God. God as supernatural entity is pervading in all major religions of the world. From the time immemorial men have urge to go beyond himself. The psychology of religion is powerfully supported by the holistic tendency in each organism and in human psyche and that holistic tendency achieves maturity in man's search for God. It was Aristotle who emphasized the place and importance of holism. He pointed out that, there is a holistic tendency in each organism by virtue of which it tends to become a whole and complete. However, it was Eduard Driesch (1897-1940) who emphasized the presence of holism, specially in the field of embryology. He found that if a part of embryo is injured, the remaining part of the organism compensates for the injured part in development of the full embryo. Later on K. Lashley demonstrated this presence of holism in the functioning of the brain. So we see that craving for wholeness and wholeness of psyche is maintained in man. The doctrine of wholeness has been further elaborated by G.C. Jung. "There is a holistic tendency in each human psyche. The first half of life, according to Jung, is spirit in making adjustment to the outer world, knows as life of house holder in Hindu view when the successful adjustment is completed in the first half, than there is the call of the inner psyche in the second half of life. There are four successive stages in the ascending order for making an individual complete and whole. These states are of shadow, Anima-Animus, Mana-personality and Mandala experience. The whole process of becoming a unified whole roughly corresponds to the culture of the soul, according to Advaitism and Buddhism."(1)
In Indian religious thinkers, the Upanisadic seers, Rāmānuja, Kabir, Sri Ramakrishna and many other thinkers of Vedānta, trend, also the neo-vedantist Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan, Rabindranath Tagore have pointed that God (Brahman) is the indwelling spirit in each man. This has been powerfully emphasized by Samuel Alexander, in his emergent evolutionism. According to Samual Alexander, there are two prominent tendencies in man, namely conatus and nisus. By virtue of his Conatus, following Spinoza, man preserves in his own being. But by virtue of nisus within men, he is driven towards becoming higher than what he is. This drive is towards his deity.

So men have naturally a urge to know mightier or higher reality which is called God, from religious point of view. As sun in the centre of the solar system, every planet moves round the sun, in its orbit, similarly God is the central point of religion around which various religious belief, theory, dogmas and practices move in their orbit. Conception of God may be different in every religion but every religion pre supposes it. Hence conception of God is postulate of religion. Vivekananda says, “All the hopes, aspirations and happiness of humanity have been centered in the word God.”

Negative attitude towards God, -is found in the writing of Feuerbach, Marx, in Indian materialism (Lokayatikas), 18th century naturalism. They uphold that, God is the product of human imagination or illusion. Marx speaks of religion thus, "Religion is the cry of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spirit less situation. It is the opium of the people....the abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for real happiness." Marx derived his ideas about religion from Hegel and his critic Feuerbach back as well as from the 18th century materialist. There are two basic premises in the approach. One is that religion is an illusion, it is unscientific and baseless. The second idea is that religion will become progressively unnecessary as scientific knowledge advances, man realizes his full potentiality.

For the theist or devotees, God being the object of worship and the highest object of religious devotion. He can neither be explained as construction of mind, nor an illusion. In between these two positions of believer and non-believer (theist and atheist) we find the agnostics like T.H.
Huxley, Leslie Stephen, Hamilton, Spencer. Agnosticism emerged in the form of skepticism in Greece in the philosophy of Pyrrho. But what may be various views toward God, the common theme is the idea of God. The idea of God is present in all the theistic as well as in the atheistic discussion. Dostoevsky wrote in 'The brothers Karamazov', "What would be marvelous is not that God should really exist; the marvel is that such on idea, the idea of the necessity of God, could enter the head of such a savage, vicious beast as man. So holy it is, so touching so wise and so great credit it does to man."(4)

Throughout human history different meanings have been attached to the concept of God, according to the different stages of development in civilization. Some time the word God is used for supremely powerful, perfectly moral, omniscient, omnipotent reality. Sometime it remains totally incomprehensible beyond finite intellect. Calvin says, "God treats sparingly of his essence. This essence is indeed incomprehensible by us. Therefore let us willingly leave to God to knowledge of his own essence."(5) God is the central concern of religion, theology and philosophy of religion. There is no unanimously accepted doctrine or definition of God. One conception is generally accepted by all is that, "God is the supreme being or the fundamental reality of the world. Janmadyasya yatah- that from which the origination of the world process."(6)

**IV. 1. Vivekananda's concept of God:**

Vivekananda is one of the greatest of the modern exponents of yoga and the Vedanta. Aurobindo praises him in the most authentic way, "Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one a very lion among men, but the definite work he has left behind us quite in commensurate with our impressions of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically. We know not well how, we know not well where, in something genuine grand intuitive up heaving that has entered the soul of India and we say ‘Behold Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his mother and the soul of his children."(7)
Vivekananda was influenced by Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara. But he accepted it with little modification from his part. In Vivekananda's philosophy we find a syntheses between Śaṅkara's Advaita and theism of bhakti cult which rigorously believe that God is qualified (with qualities) with innumerable good qualities and always with a relation of love and kind with the devotees. Like Śaṅkara he observed, "The infinite is indivisible, there cannot be any part of the infinite. The absolute cannot be divided." But Vivekananda never refuses the reality of this world. According to Vivekananda there is but one infinite being in the universe, and that Being appears as you and I, but this appearances of divisions is after all a delusion. He has not been divided, but only appears to be divided. This apparent division is caused by looking at him through the network of time, space and causation. He added when we look at God through the network of time space and causation we see him as material world." When I look at Him...a little highest, as a man, a little highest as a God, but yet He is one infinite being of the universe...I am that you are that not parts of it, but the whole of it."(9)

The Absolute is according to Vivekananda beyond the limitation of space, time and causation. The infinite Absolute can not be bound by such category of phenomenal world. For him, God, nature, soul and universe are all convertible terms. According to Vivekananda God is the reality and all individual selves are it's appearances. Vivekananda's philosophy in a very beautiful blending of ancient Upanisadic thought with his understanding with unique interpretation. The same essence is found in the very first hymn of Isopanisad, "Every thing animate or inanimate, that is within the universe is controlled and owned by lord."(10)

Vivekananda was a Hindu monk and devoted to the religion in which he was born and bought up. He tried to establish the Hindu religion on world pedestal. But here the point to be noted that Vivekananda was not satisfied by the term 'Hindu' as it was void of proper expression. The word Hindu is most likely the Persian origin and it is not found in any religious book. The trace of the origin of the word Hindu carries us back to the invention of peninsula by the Aryans tribes from the north to north east. The Aryan used the word Sindhu in order to name the great river India of West. Of course the Vedic
literature used the term 'Sindhu' as appellative noun for river in general throughout the Indian history. So it is quite possible that the word 'Indus' or 'Sindhu' a common term for the Aryans settlement in the Punjab was the seven river (Sappta Sindhua). The name of Hindu appears in the form of 'Hindu'in the inscription of the monument of Darius Histop of Persepolis. "Before the advent of Muslim in India, the term Hindu had no crucial connotation. Then it had a territorial significance. Till this day there is no precise definition of the term Hindu' available in any judicial pronouncement.\textsuperscript{(11)}

Again under the title 'Hinduism' is included diverse classes, values, belief, modes of life. "There was no religion called Hinduism just as there were no Indians belonging to the race or nationality regardless of their inhabitants of America, East Indies, West Indies or India."\textsuperscript{(12)}

Hence it is difficult to define Hinduism. Some recent writers have defines Hindus, "All native of Indian who donot belong to Jaina, Buddhist, Christian, Persi, Jew and other known religious of the world and whose form of worship intends from monotheism to fetishism and there theology is written in Sanskrit languages."\textsuperscript{(13)}

Vivekananda was also aware of the problem that it is very difficult to define the word 'Hindu'. He stated, "The word Hindu by which it is the fashion nowadays to style ourselves, has lost al its meaning. For this word merely meant those who lived on the other side of the river Indus (in Sanskrit, Sindhu). This name was turned into Hindu by the ancient Percians, and all people living on the other side of the river Sindhu was called by them Hindus. Thus the word has come down to us and during Mohammedan rule we took up the word ourselves. There may not be any harm in using the word of course, but as I have said, it has lost it's significance, for you may mark that all the people who live on this side of Indus in modern times donot follow the same religion as they did in word should be use then? The more appropriate name for us will be Vaidikas or followers of the Vedas, or better still vedantist or the follower of the Vedânta."\textsuperscript{(14)}
The germ of Hinduism is contained in Vedas Upaniṣads and Purāṇas. It is perhaps the oldest of living religion of the world. It has neither any definite date nor has it any definite founder associated with it. It is called 'Sanatana dharma' a religion coming down to people through eternity. K.M. Sen observes, "Hinduism is more like a tree that has grown gradually like a building that has been erected by some great architect at some definite point in time. It contains within itself the influences of many cultures and the body of Hindu thought thus offers as much variety as the Indian nation itself." (15) Vivekananda observed the fact that Hinduism is a complex religion admitting vast differences of belief and practices amongst its followers. It is all the same time polytheistic, monotheistic, monist and atheistic. An average Hindu seems to be a firm believer in God either in God ranges from polytheism through abstract monism to a concrete monotheism. Vedas are regarded as the most original source of Hindu faith and they are very clearly polytheistic in nature. They believe in various Gods of whom Varuna, Mitra, Agni, Indra its are very important. In later Hinduism these gods have hardly hold on the common mass, still polytheism with other Gods and Goddesses seem to be the dominant faith of average Hindus. But, a monotheistic tendency seems to be present in Hinduism right from the age of the Vedas themselves. Although apparently the Vedas speak of a host of God and Goddess, there is always a tendency towards monotheism involved there in. This may be seen in that fact that where ever there is praise in favour of any God or Goddess in the Vedas, it is so constructed of it, the God and Goddess in praise reigns supreme over all and others are just his various forms. Vedas declares, "Ekem sad-vipra bahudha Vedanti, the same one reality is called by various names. It is a clear indication towards monotheism.

Here we can quote a beautiful hymns addressed to these deities which implies a polytheism.

"O Mitra and Varuna, you are mighty ones and incourse the might, you hold the three celestial regions.

The three shinning worlds, and the three terrestrial worlds
O Mitra and Varuna, you are mighty ones and increase the might (of the devotees). 16

O Mitra and Varuna, it is under your command that the cows gives milk, the rivers gives sweet waters

And the three shining Gods (Agni, Vāyu and Āditya). Exist while carrying and raining waters 17

But even then we find some hymns which signify the unity of God head and asserts a hidden pathway to monotheism.

"The wise call then Indra, Agni, Varuna, that heavenly golden winged Garumant (Sun)

To what is one, sages give many a name, they call Him

Agni, Yama and Mātariśvan 18

"The great divinity of the Gods is one 19

Vivekananda is knocked by latent monotheistic nature of Vedic God.

All through his life he is inspired by it, which is ultimately gets maturity in his Practical Vedānta, which asserts oneness of all creatures. Vivekananda stated that Vedas teach us one in many, unity in variety, harmony and not discard in the perennial message of vedic Indian. In the famous Hamsavati Hymn,(R.V.40.5) it is mentioned that as light he dwells in the luminous sky, as vayu (air) he dwells in the mind-space, as fare he exists in men, as supreme entity he exists as right (rta), he exist everywhere. He shines in the sky, in water, in light, in mountains and in truth. In these montras rsi has synthesized all divinities in one principle, the supreme spirit or Paramatman.

Vivekananda was greatly influenced by the Vedas and Upaniṣads in his conception of God, which is always motivated by a tendency of oneness. For him so God, soul, nature and universe all are convertible terms. Here we can quite from the Brahdāranyaka Upaniṣad, “He who dwells in the earth, yet in within the earth, whom the earth does know, whose body the earth is, who controls the earth from within, he is your self, the inner controller, the immortal.”20 When the Upanisads speak of Brahman as the ruler and inner controller, the immanence of the supreme is stressed. Divine immanence is
stressed to such an extent that Brahman seems to dwell in all things of the world. The same truth shines and echoes when Vivekananda states, "The Absolute become the universe. By this is not only meant that material world, the mental world, the spiritual world-heaven and earth and in fact every thing exists."\(^{(21)}\)

It is impossible to discuss Vivekananda's concept of God or any other philosophical religious notions without reference to the Vedas and Upanisads. The essence of Vivekananda's philosophy is made by the Vedic and Upanisadic ideas.

The Upanisads speak of Para Brahman and Apara Brahman. The former is the higher Brahman. The later is lower Brahman. The former is indeterminate, unconditional and devoid of attributes (Nirguna). The latter is determined, conditioned and endowed with attributes (Saguna). The former is unqualified and incomprehensible. The later is qualified and comprehensible. The former is transcendent and non-phenomenal, the later is immanent in the phenomenal world. The former is non-spatial, non-temporal world, not governed by causality. The former is the transcendental Being (Sat) consciousness (Cit) and Bliss (Ānanda), which constitute the essence. The later is the infinite eternal omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe, the moral governor and the lord of law of karma. In Taittiriya upanisad as we find, "Brahman created the world, entered into it, and become the empirical world and the transcendental reality, the definable and undefinable, the grounded and ungrounded, the conscious and unconscious and the real and the unreal."\(^{(22)}\) In Brahdāranya upanisad it is stated that Brahman has two forms, formed and formless, perishable and imperishable, static and dynamic, empirical and transcendental.

Vivekananda asserts the same truth, "This Absolute has become the universe by coming through time, space and causation....Time, space and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen, and when it is seen on the lower side, it appears as universe."\(^{(23)}\) Vivekananda was also agree with the upanisad in respect of indefinibility, unconditionality and attribute less nature of Brahman which termed as Para Brahman. In Vivekananda's words, "It is impossible to express the nature of this supreme
and absolute idea of love in human language. Even the highest flight of human imagination is incapable of comprehending it in all its infinite perfection and beauty."(24) According to Vivekananda when one thinks of divine Absolute in his own human way, Absolute is expressed in our relative language on the pedestal of space, time and causation. Then it becomes mighty, and glorious lord of the universe. He is the creator, observer and destroyer of this universe. When we look Absolute through space, time and causation it becomes God. So human mind try to grasp reality by own way. Language originates from experience, hence human language is bound within our experience of space, time and causation. Every thing of this universe owes his existence through God. Like Sankara Vivekananda describes Absolute as Sat-Cit-ANanda. The concept of bliss (ANanda) is highly enriched by him. Partly under the influence of Buddhism and partly under the influence of Christianity Vivekananda makes 'love' the essential core of 'bliss'. He asserts that ANanda is in love. This reference to love takes us the consideration of the other aspect of Vivekananda's philosophy. Vivekananda asserts that the Absolute the Impersonal Brahman is looked upon by the mind as the creator, Ruler and the Destroyer of the world and it's complete cause. In fact, Vivekananda's believes that the religious urges and aspirations of man demand satisfaction, and that demand can be met only by a personal God. In Sankara's Advaita Vedanta also the concept of God has given place, but their God has been conceived as a product of ignorance and Maya, and hence it is not real from Paramarthika drsti. In Vivekananda's philosophy 'Absolute and 'God' are not two, that God is not a creation of Maya. The distinction surely arises on account of ignorance or our limited ways of apprehension, but knowledge means the realization of the irrelevance of such distinction. Metaphysically speaking, reality is 'Absolute Brahman', the same reality viewed from the religious point of view is God.

For Vivekananda God Himself is the highest goal of man. There is no higher reality than God. He states, "God Himself is the highest goal of men....we can never conceive any thing higher because God is perfection."(25) We try to understand and know God, but he is more than known. He states that God is more than what can be known about him. He is the witness of all
our knowledge. What ever we know we have to know through him. He is the
essence of our own soul. Vivekananda feels that it is possible to have a direct
realization of God, as Ramakrishna had a direct realization of God. In course
of his discussion, Vivekananda states, "The whole of nature at best could
teach them only a personal being who is the ruler of the universe, it could
teach nothing further. In short out of the external world we can only get the
idea of an architect, that which is called design theory." Like an advocate of
causal relation Vivekananda observed, "A stone falls and we ask why? The
question is possible only on the supposition that nothing happens without a
cause. It is the cause of certain things which come after it and is itself the
effect of something else which has preceded it. The causal series itself lead to
a final and ultimate cause that is God or Absolute." 

According to Vivekananda there is one universal truth in every religion,
that is realization of the God within every human being. Vivekananda writes,
"Man after his vain search after various Gods outside Himself, complete the
circle and comes to the point from which he started the human soul and finds
that, the God whom he was searching in hill and dale, whom he was seeking
in every book, in every temple, in church and heavens, the God whom he as
even imagining as sitting in heaven an ruling the world, in his own self. I am
He, and He is I. None but I was God, and this little I never existed." For
Vivekananda human body is the temple and living men is the image of divinity
and it is better to worship 'soul' by manifesting divinity. But why should the
soul take to itself a body? Vivekananda answered that ,for the same reason
as we take a looking glass-to see myself. Thus in the body, the soul is
reflected. The soul is God. Every human being has a perfect divinity within
himself. The fountain source of such idea is the Vedas and Upanisads, more
precisely the Vedanta which asserts Brahmin, the reality and the individual
selves and all other creatures are essentially one. This belief In oneness of al
creatures was so strong in Vivekananda that can be found in a poem
composed by him.

"Ye fools ! who neglects the living God, And
His infinite reflections

110
With which the world is full,
While ye run after imaginary shadows That
lead alone to fight and quarrels! Him
worship the only visible!
Break all other idols!" (29)

Here we observe a transition directly to worship 'Man' which he coined as living God. Vivekananda was convinced of the efficiency and need of this new path to worship man as God. Actually this was an aspect of his practical Vedanta.

In course of his discussion of the conception of God, Vivekananda sometime takes the help of analogy to derive the idea of God. Through the analogy of a painter or a poet or an artist, Vivekananda arrived at the conception of God. He asserts, "I never read any more beautiful conception of God than the following. He is the great poet, the ancient poet, the whole universe is His poem coming in verses and rhymes and rhythms, written in infinite bliss." (30)

According to Vivekananda, in a superficial view, of difference among man and women, cast and creeds arises in our minds. It is a mere delusion. Vivekananda tells us man is essentially divine. He shows to mankind the real unity of being, and that each one of us in the 'Lord God Himself, manifested on earth. "If you go below the surface, you find that unity between man and man, between races and races, high and low, rich and poor, Gods and men, and men and animals. If you go deep enough, all will be seen as only vibrations of the one and he has attained to his concept of oneness has no more delusion." (31) Thus observed Vivekananda.

Vivekananda had a holistic and divine mission to fulfill. Vivekananda said, "It may be that I shall find it good to get out side of my body to cast aside like a disuse garment. But I shall not cease to work. I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God." (32) Vivekananda was deeply conscious of his life mission and set out in right earnest to fulfill it. P. Parameswaran observes, "His mission too was a transforming mission. He wanted humanity to realize that it was not what it thought itself to be. Men
should realize that they were not just man, but men with capital M. They were divine. It is this knowledge that would enable them to solve the various problems. It was not to be more intellectual knowledge. It was to be an awareness, a realization of humanity’s identity with Divinity.\(^{(23)}\)

From the above closer view on Vivekananda’s concept of God it becomes clear that ‘God’ is unifying principle among the multidimensional world of experience. Again it has unified transcendental sphere with phenomenal sphere. God is essential unity of everything and hence it is all pervading. It is a harmony, because Absolute, God and Nature these are convertible terms.

**IV. 2. Concept of man:**

The term religion is invariably related with the term man. Among the all living being of the world human being has its religion as the pursuit of higher power than themselves. What ever definition or meaning we put to the term religion, religion pre-supposes the concept of man. Every definition of religion, it necessarily means that religion is an aspect of human life. Religion only survives in the human society. Religion originates in human society, has been surviving with it and will survive till the human society survives. From ancient Greek philosophy to present philosophical discussion, all through the long period, concept of man is prevailing as an important topic of discussion. As Greek philosophers consider that, philosophy began with wander, but the most wonderful thing of the world is wonderer himself, that is man. Kant observes that there are four fundamental question, in philosophy (i) what may I know (ii) what ought to do? (iii) what may I hope for (iv) whom\(\text{am} \) or what is \text{man}? Regarding this question, G.C. Khan observes, “The first question takes for granted as obvious that man is born for judgement or understanding, the second that he is born for action and third that he has a destiny. The fourth question purports to say that there is something special, an essence of it's own in men, which makes him, rather than anything else and which serves as a foundation of his life of understanding, action, hope and admiration.”\(^{(34)}\)
Kant's question reminds us again that possibility of knowledge, action, admirations all based on the transcendental subject that is man. The most fundamental truth of every religion, that must be stated here and that will find an almost universal acceptability is that, man is essentially a conscience being, a being of self aware light. His consciousness is personified. Infact the very question, "Whom am I?" shows that there is a 'self aware existence which asks this. This is a primal or basic truth which is a part of common heritage of almost all religions. It is now being recognized that consciousness is not an epiphenomenon of the brain or the body-chemistry or psychobiological function. There is now growing evidence to support that consciousness, by it's very nature, is non-physical or non-material., It thus an infinite small point of consciousness.

Man's prime interest is always man. This interest has been and still is the latent force behind every activity he does. Various objective sciences are ultimately motivated by welfare of human effort. No matter, what is his method, he is ultimately seeking to solve the riddle of himself. "All that the Rg. Veda wanted was the pious men should live out full life without premature death. After life the dead were received into abode which were to indeterminate to be called either heaven or hell."(35) Upanisadic seers seek immortality for mankind. Various vedic rituals were performed for prosperity of mankind.

Science and philosophy, theology and religion, aesthetics ethics all discourses come into existence, because there is men in this world. All values, ethical, religious or scientific whatever may be, derive their meaning because there is man in this world. Long before the Sophist had places men zenith of the series as they upheld, man is the measure of all things. Man is the master of world today, not because of his physical aspect but for his intelligent.

Man is the only being that seeks 'ought' or 'value'. Man is always in his constant attempt to achieve perfection. He is the being who seeks supreme power, namely God or he is being in constant effort to evolve God out of men.
Thus it is the wonderful spiritual heritage of men that Naciketa's would have from that 'Lord of death', in preference to the over lordship of three worlds offered to him. It is this heritage again that Maitreyi preferred to all the accumulated wealth which was offered by her husband, yajnavalkya. Again it is to inherit the kingdom that prince Siddhartha cast away his father's kingdom as worthless and put on the mendicant's robe, in preference to the royal crown. "This is the message of Jainism to mankind, "Be a man first and last, for the kingdom of God belongs to the son of men."(36) The same truth is proclaimed in unmistakable terms by the upanisadic text, 'Tat Tvaṁ asī' (Thou art that).

The term ‘man’ anthropologically is a bipedal primate mammal, individual of the genus 'Homo'. He is a being different from the animals by development of knowledge, speech and reasoning. The intellect of man makes it unique from other being. Animals or all other beings have only the senses. By intellect man can distinguish himself from all other sensible creatures. Aristotle had declared it long before that man is connoted with both animality and rationality.

Man is called 'Manushya' in Sanskrit and etymologically it is derived from the Sanskrit word 'manu' which means a thinking being, one who possesses a sense of discrimination which enables him to determine what is ethically good or what is ethically repugnant. Besides the intellectual quality, man is said to be endowed with a spiritual quality as a result he seeks his spirit (the innerself) and seeks it's unity with a higher divine principle. He wants to realize himself as a part of greater divine principle. This spirituality awakes in our mind from feeling of imperfection and searches for a perfect unity of which he is a part. The Lankavatra Sutra states –

"Abide not with dualism
Carefully avoid pursuing it,
As soon as you have right and wrong Confusion
ensues and mind is lost
One in all
All in one
If only this is realized
Human history began with the development of the men's self-awareness or self-consciousness. In the early stage of development men lived united with nature. He collected food from nature. His shelter was nature. He worshipped nature when nature became horrible. He lived in a kingdom of nature. Gradually intelligence developed and he started to define himself, his evolution, history and progress. Glory of man remains in fact, man has mind which enables him to accomplish all the wonders of the civilization. Along with the mind man has conscience which seeks values, 'should' and 'should not'. The stream of human history follows in a very interesting channel. To demote man from his special position in the world was Darwin. Copernicus has left man at the centre of things in the world, if not in the cosmos. Darwin dissolved the line dividing man from animals. Thus men were forced to accept that although they felt that they possessed divine souls, but it has no scientific proof. Gradually man proves himself master of the cosmos by his intelligence. His existence is at the zenith of the series, because of his highly skilled brain function. The presence of brain system in the body distinguishes man from every other species. It gives him a unique status in the world. Lokomanya Tilak asserts, "The organ of men urge him to behave like a beast and his intelligence pull him in the opposite direction. Those perhaps who redeem themselves by sacrificing the animal tendencies and are indeed blessed."^{38}

Regarding the nature of men and the account of the origin of men bring with it two factors. These two factors are Biological or physical nature and spiritual nature. In the first man possesses biological or physical nature which he has received from evolution. Secondly, he has within him a spiritual nature. It makes him unique and gives to him some amount of freedom. Dr. Radhakrishnan gives a spiritual interpretation to the modern theory evolutionary process. Spiritual evolution takes place after the emergence of man. The spiritual evolution brings a province of higher future development. In the same manner Aurobindo also uttered that spirituality of man to awake which is the most needful job to make our human life meaningful. He told, "The being of man is composed of three elements- the psychic behind
supporting all, the inner mental, vital and physical, and the outer...quite external of mind, life and body which is their instrument, of expression. But above all is the central being (Jivam) which uses them all for it's manifestation, it is portion of divinity."(39)

Psycho analyst, reduce man to an animal with instincts, impulses and emotions. Freud and Freudians, for example try to point a complete picture of man on the basis of their analysis of the unconscious urges and impulses. Sociologists try to explain the nature of man as essentially and basically a social creature. Apart from society he can not even exist. They emphasize the importance of social features and seek to reduce man entirely to his social condition.

IV. 3. Vivekananda's concept of man:

Vivekananda belongs to Vedanta tradition of Indian philosophy. Like all neo-vedantic philosophers Lokamanya Tilok, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, he was much optimistic about the concept of man and conceives man as a son of immortality; 'Amartashya putrah'. In Vedantism men is essentially a soul or spirit. This has been very clearly stated in one of the "Prasthanatraya" of Vedanta philosophy that is Bhagawat Gita,

"Na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nā yaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā va nabhūyah
ajo nityah śāśvato yam purāno
na hanyata hanyamāne sarīre."(2.20)(40)

"He is never born, nor does he die at any time, nor having (once) come to will he again cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, permanent and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain."(41)

The Upanisads make out that of finite objects the individual self has the highest reality. It comes nearest to the nature of absolute, though it is not the absolute itself. The whole world is the process of the finite striving to become
infinite and this tension is found in the individual self. It is stated in Chandogya upanisad "firewater and air said to constitute the jivatma or the individual soul, together with the principle of the infinite."(42)

Such a vedantic background has shaped Vivekananda's conclusion of man. Vivekananda believes the hidden or potential divinity of men. In a lecture delivered in New York on the topic "The real and the Apparent man" he stated that "Man therefore, according to Vedanta philosophy is the greatest being that is in the universe and this world is the best place in it because only here is the greatest and the best chance for him to become perfect. This is the great centre, the wonderful and wonderful apparently this human life."(43)

According to Vivekananda, the human body is the greatest body in the universe and a human being is the greatest being. Human body is the higher than all animals, then all angels, none is greater the man. Aspiration for perfection is the goal of human life. Vivekananda distinguished between the real men and apparent men. From the time immemorial men always in the mysterious light of mythology, voluntarily confound with the question, "Is this real or what is real?" All through our life through we are running after the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, but even in the time of death we are compel to ask ourselves, "Is this real". Impermanence of body and life and external world lead us to such a question.

Mythology states that man is a degeneration of what he was. Coming to the present times, modern research seems to repudiate it. Evolutionists assert that man is the product of evolution. Vivekananda stated Indian mythology of theory of cycles is able to reconcile both these position. He stated, "The Indian mythology has a theory of cycles that al progression is in the form of waves. Every way is attended by a fall in the next and again another rise. The motion is in cycles."(44) According to Vivekananda every evolution pre-supposes an involution. The modern science also tells that we can only get the amount of energy out of a machine which we have previously put into it. Some thing cannot be produced out of nothing. According to Vivekananda, the 'Real Men' therefore, is one and infinite, the omnipotent spirit. The 'Apparent Men' is only a limitation of the real men. The "Apparent Men" however great may be, is only a dim reflection of the real man. 'The
Real Men', the spirit, being beyond cause and effect, not bound by time and space. It must therefore, be free. He was never bound and could not be bound. The apparent men, the reflection is limited by time, space and causation and is, therefore bound. This is the reality in our soul. Every soul is infinite, therefore no question of birth and death.

By the 'Real Man' Vivekananda means the eternal self of every individual which is completely free from the phenomenal order of space-time-causation. After closer view on man's real nature we can state that the 'Divine' dwells in the inmost being of man. It cannot be extinguished. This 'Divine presence' is termed as atman.

Vivekananda was too much optimistic about the infinite potentiality of the soul which inheres in each human body. It is the God within our own self that is propelling us to look for Him, to realize Him. Vivekananda asserts that religion is the greatest motive power for realizing the infinite energy which is the birth right and nature of everyman.

The main ideas of Vedānta are the unity of existence, non duality of god, divinity of the soul and harmony of religions. As a Vedantist, Vivekananda tried to emphasize all four basic points of Vedanta. For Vivekananda every individual has to realize his divinity which paves the way to spiritual development. Without spiritually developed, no one can claim himself as civilized. The following beautiful lines will show how much Vivekananda was optimistic regarding the human nature, He states, "Man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box and that spring is trying to unfold itself, and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of the trying to unfold"(45) According to Vivekananda human nature is divine. By various social and spiritual practices human beings try to unfold it's inherent divinity. This limited mortal cage of human body is the mind of infinite power and divinity. Various competitions, struggles and evils are on the way to cultivation of divinity. But these dirt and dust can not touch the divinity of man. Vivekananda opined that nothing can stop the human march towards the cultivation of divinity.
Vivekananda stated not only in Hinduism, the fundamental basis of all most all religions is the belief in the soul, which he called real men. It is beyond mind and matter. For Vivekananda man is an organized unity of physical and spiritual. Spirituality means that, there is a spirit in everymen which asserts divine presence in every man. According to Vivekananda our spirit is spiritual that means, it is beyond all material qualities and hence it is eternal. But our error consists in that we always identify our self with the body. Body is a material product and hence it is subject to decay and destruction. It also produces ego. Following the Gita, Vivekananda describes the Atman or self thus, "It is the self beyond all thought, one without birth or death, whom the sward cannot pierce or fire burn, whom air cannot dry or water melt, the beginning less or endless, the unmovable, the intangible, the omniscient, the omnipotent Being, that is neither the body nor the mind, but beyond all of them." According to Vivekananda the soul neither comes nor goes, neither is born nor dies. He stated that It is meaningless to say that soul lives in a body. Obviously the question arises, how does unlimited self live in a limited space of body. Vivekananda gave the answer with a very beautiful smile, "But as a man having book in his hands reads one page and turns it over, goes to the next page, reads that turns it over and so one, yet it is the book that is being turned over the pages that are revolving, and not be he is where he is always even so with regard to the soul. The whole of nature is that book which the soul is reading." The reader again and again turns the pages of the book till it is finished. But the book remains the same. similarly the soul always remains perfect, having got all the experience of nature. Vivekananda compared human mind to a mirror. As the mind becomes clearer and purer the real majesty of soul is manifested to it.

As a Vedantist, Vivekananda identifies the true nature of Atman with Brahman itself. The basic fact to be noted is that unless the two are identified, the strict monistic character of reality cannot be mentioned. Soul cannot be said to be an aspect or a part of the one. Because in that case the soul will become composite having parts. Soul cannot be conceived also as expression or manifestation of the Absolute. Then it will become separate reality over and above the Brahman. So, there is only one way of conceiving
the relation between the two. They are basically identical and their difference is only apparent.

Vivekananda explains the differences between soul's real nature and its apparent nature. He clearly states that the apparent diversity in no way effects true nature of man. The self or soul is one all-comprehending existence. It only appears as manifold. He illustrates this with the help of various analogies. Upholding the vedantic analogy of 'pratibimba', Vivekananda says that sun may shine in it's reflections on water kept in different pots. But the different reflections are only apparent reflections of the sun; the real sun is always the one. "There is therefore, but one Atman, one self, eternally pure, eternally perfect, but one Atman one self, eternally pure, eternally perfect, unchangeable, unchanged, it has never changed, and all these various changes in the universe are but appearance is that one self." (47)

In spite of such description of the Atman, which appears to be exactly similar to the Vedanta, Vivekananda asserts, unlike Vedanta, that the finite aspect of man shouldn't be treated as completely false. So long as man ignorantly believes in the reality of the embodied state and in the plurality of selves, this aspect has a reality for him. Therefore, his upliftment would consist not in a complete annihilation of this aspect, but in it's being raised and perfected.

Vivekananda has optimum believe in the potential divinity of men. He reminded us to wake up us our divine potentiality which is within us. In his words, "Be like the pearl oyster. Thére is a pretty Indian fable to the effect that if rains when the star swati is in the ascendant, and a drop of rain falls into an oyster, that drop becomes a pearl. The oysters know this, so they came to the surface when the star shines and wait to catch the precious raindrop". (48) Vivekananda repeatedly reminds us to recover our hidden divine potentiality. We have to recognize and actualize our divinity. We have to develop the truth that divine exist within ourselves.

Vivekananda appeals us to give up all weakness and superstition which brings spiritual, mental or physical weakness. This is the first essential step to rise up our divinity. He writes that religion is the manifestation of the
natural strength that is in men. He believed that infinite powers is coiled up is inside human body. Inside this little body infinite power is spreading itself. As it goes on spreading body after body. If the body is found insufficient, it throws them off and takes higher bodies. According to Vivekananda this is the history of progress of man, religion and civilizations.

All through his life Vivekananda preached the divinity of man. As a corollary of this truth he insisted on service or worship of God in men. In this regard he was influenced by life and teaching of Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna, speaking on December 27, 1884 at Dakshineswar to a group of devotees gathered under the huge banyan tree, said, "If God can be worshipped in the image, why should He not be in man? It is but he who is departing in human form. Holliman serves all beings knowing that God reside in all". This was not a theory, but a realized truth, for Sri Ramakrishna. He was not a philosopher talking it from the intellectual stand point, but a saint who had seen and experienced the self both on the transcendental and phenomenal planes. Sri Ramakrishna identified Himself with every living creature and actually he identified himself with the suffering men.

Such kind of element is also found in Rigveda, "Pusura evedem sarvam yad bhoutem yachcha bhavyam" All that there is or will be is, but the supreme being. The idea of same spirit pervading the whole universe took the concrete shape in Vivekananda’s life. So convinced was Vivekananda of the efficiency and need of this new path to worship of God. He wrote a poem in Bengali on the very same topic. In translation it runs thus,

"From highest Brahman to Yonder Worm
And to the very minuets atom,
Every where is the same God, the All-love,
Friend, offer mind, soul, body at their feet.
Those are His manifold forms before thee,
Rejecting them, where seeks thou for God?
Who loves all being, without distinction
He indeed is worshipping best his God,"
The idea of transforming service to the suffering and ignorant into worship, brought a new dimension to his concept of man. In the latter part of his life Vivekananda in his conversations and dialogues uttered that service to jiva is service to God. In his words, "After so much austerity I have understood this as the real truth God is present in every Jiva, there is other God besides that who serves Jiva, serves God indeed".(61)

For Vivekananda human beings are highest temple of God. He wrote, "I would rather worship you than any temple, image, or Bible."(62) This was Vivekananda's own realization. After long search after truth and God, he found human creature is the living God. Tagore observed, "Vivekananda said that there was the pioneer of Brahma in every men, that Narayan (i.e. God), to have our services through the poor. This is what I call real Gospel. This gospel showed the path of infinite freedom from man's tiny egocentric self beyond the limits of all selfishness. This was no sermon reality to a particular ritual, now was it a narrow injection to be imposed upon one's eternal life. This naturally contained in it protest against untouchability. Not because that would do make for political freedom, but became that would do away with the humiliation of man—a curse which infect puts to shame the self of us all".(63)

Vivekananda’s search for God started with the Vedantic enthusiasm that presence of divine self in every man and finally this realization has made Vivekananda a true humanist. As a true lover of human beings he whole heartedly wanted to wipe the miseries of poor and sufferers. Vivekananda’s utterance for poor revealed his heart, his boundless love and compassion for his fellowmen. In spite of his rapidly deteriorated health after he returned from the west, he whole hearted helped people of Calcutta, which were victim of plague. He uttered that men are more valuable then all wealth of the world. The following lines will reveal the love and sympathy for mankind.

"I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan’s mouth. However sublime be the theories.................I do not call it religion as long as it is confined to books and dogmas. Move onwards and carry into practice that which you are very
proud to call your religion, and God bless you". So for Vivekananda, religion has a practical aspect. It is not just mere theories. The practical aspect of religion is revealed in its love and benevolence to fellow man.

Vivekananda reminded us again and again to keep faith in one’s own self. For him nothing is impossible for the human soul. If there is sin, this is only to think ourself weak or others are weak. He stated, “The history of the world is the history of the few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the divinity within. You can do any thing. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man or a nation loses faith, death comes.” In the light of Vivekananda’s concept of man, Swami Lokeswarananda writes, “Man is an enigma because, despite his evil, his goodness may reach up to a level where he behaves as he is God Himself. Divinity is already in men, it is inherent in him, it only remains hidden. It has to be brought to the surface, unfolded. When the process of unfoldment has gone for, man is more God than man, he is Godmen.” All other neo Vedantist Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan, Mahatma Gandhi are in agreement about the divine nature of men. In this regard Aurobindo writes, "Purified from all that is asubha (evil) transfigured in soul by his touch have to act in world as dynamos of that divine electricity and send it trilling and radiating through mankind...Churches, orders, the logicians, philosophers have failed to same mankind because they have busied themselves with intellectual creeds, dogmas, rites and institutions...and have neglected the one thing needful, the power and purification of the soul". Letter he added that a spark of the Divine is there in all living beings from the lowest to the highest. Like Aurobindo, Vivekananda also stated the Supreme Being is the source of all manifested existence. The purpose of the existence is that it shall grow increasingly in consciousness until it becomes wholly transformed. Even into the depth of its most material densities. Aurobindo like Vivekananda, accepts, the person as a centre of the divine spirit in the world. Aurabindo opined that individual soul has to withdraw itself from outward concentration in the ego.

After closer discussion about the concept of men, the question arises about the Human destiny. Humanity is in transition. "Assured system and inherited beliefs are being challenged. As we are praise to enter a new
millennium, the destiny of man seems to be uncertain. Where do we go from here? It is a crucial question that stares us in the face."(58) Thus observed by P. Parameswaran. Obviously the question arises, about the destined goal to humanity. If there is a predetermined destination, are there a set of laws which govern the process of that lead mankind towards that goal? There are some fundamental questions which have engaged the attention of the various thinkers and scholars, seers and saints. Religions have their assurances but they are vary from religion to religion. Mostly they look upon this world as an interim phase of trials and tribulations, powers and pleasures through which man is compiled to journey towards a world beyond this. They believe a world of eternal peace and happiness. Certain religions speak of the God's kingdom but it is not on this earth, but away in distant paradise.

According to Hindus, Men's destiny is well assured. He is the highest being. The end result of an endless chain of evolution covering innumerable species. His ultimate goal is to transcend this ephemeral world of dualities and attain salvation. The question of a transformation of the world from what it is, to something better or higher is not generally discussed. On the other hand, it is suggested that this world is unchangeable. It will remain always as a riddle. It is like a gymnasium in which man can strength himself and go beyond. A collective social evolution of man to a higher species or to a higher state of existence is considered impossible and irrelevant. Very often this temporal existence is dismissed as illusory, a dream from which men has to wake up to the reality.

In Vivekananda's view, the constitution of man is such that he cannot remain satisfied without answers, which vitally concern him. Hope for and faith in a great future are inherent in man. The entire struggle of man, throughout history, has been inspired by the hope. It is meant to bring it into the realm of actual experience.

There have been efforts in Vivekananda's part to systematically spelling out the goal of human history and to discover the pathways that lead to it. For Vivekananda every human being is consciously or unconsciously destined to struggle for freedom and to attain higher and higher perfections. According to Vivekananda, the source of freedom is in the Brahman cherished
by every man to woman. With every movement asserts his freedom, from highest thinker to the most ignorant men. Everyone knows that he is free. Individual allows freedom only when all the distinctions of disappear. When individual is one with Brahman. This is self-redemption, the end of human life. The whole humanity or whole universe in it's constant motion towards freedom. He not only advocate of spiritual freedom or emancipation from the bond of maya. But this freedom is the freedom in its totality-physical mental and spiritual which are the watch words of the Upanishads.

Vivekananda holds that it is only the (infinite) spirit that is the individual. No infinity can be divided. It is same one for ever. This is the individual men, the "Real Men". The apparent man is merely a struggle to express to manifest this individuality which is beyond. Evolution is not to the spirit. No perfection is going to be attained by 'Real Man'. It is already free and perfect.

To Vivekananda, the material world means laws and laws mean slavery. From this distinction Vivekananda come to the conclusion that the body, the material being, is subordinated to the laws of nature. The soul is caged in the material body. The soul as such is independent of the laws of the material world: It always aspires for freedom and rebels against the laws of nature. He says, "There is unconscious struggle of the human with the spiritual, of the lower with the higher mind...to preserve one's individuality"(69). He further stated, that goal of each soul is freedom. He means mostly freedom from the slavery of matter and thought. Vivekananda's concept of freedom applies to men and equally to the external phenomena that we perceive around. In his view consciously or unconsciously the whole universe is going towards the goal the goal of freedom. He observed everything has tendency of infinite dispersion. This dispersion is a hidden tendency to freedom.

According to Vivekananda ultimate freedom is only possible through spiritual knowledge. Spirituality is the true basis of all our activities in life. He does not agree with the saying that "ignorance is bliss". To him ignorance is deaths, knowledge is life. Vivekananda states, "Life is very little value, if it is a life in the dark grouping through ignorance and misery. Ignorance is the matter of all the evil and all the misery we see."(60) For the eradication of
misery from the world, spiritual knowledge is most essential. How and where the spiritual transformation will begin? Vivekananda was very clear and specific about it. India has to initiate the mighty movement. It is a destiny entrusted to her by the Divine. says Vivekananda, "This is theme of Indian life work, the burden of her eternal song, the back bone of her existence, the foundation of her being, the raison d'être of her very existence, the spiritualization of human race. In this her life course she has never deviated. For a complete civilization the world is waiting, waiting for the treasure to come out of India, Waiting for the marvelous spiritual inheritance of the race, which through decades of degradation and misery, etc has still clutched to her breast. The world is waiting for that treasure" (61) Therefore it is necessary for us to realize that time spirit beckons us to prepare ourselves for his great mission. In this regard we can quote some line from Sri Aurobindo which appears like Vivekananda's thoughts. He stated, "Our Endeavour shall be to prepare the path and to accomplish the beginning of a great and high change which we believe to be and aim at making the future of India. Our ideal is a new birth of humanity into the great spirit, our life must be spiritually inspired effort to create a body of action for that great new birth and creation" (62) That is India's unique role in shaping the human destiny.

From the close observation and analysis of Vivekananda's conception of 'man', we can regard him as a true humanist, whose whole life was a melody sung for the eternal glory of human being, ever pristine, ever shining glory of human soul. To be more specific Vivekananda was a spiritualistic humanist, the whole edifice of his humanism was built on Vedanta. For him man is the highest being in creation and hence alone attains freedom. "Man is the highest being that exists, and this is the greatest world, for, here can man realize freedom" (63) At last we can end our discussion by remembering his some inspiring words, "Never forget the glory of human nature. We are the greatest God, Christ, and Buddha are but waves on the boundless ocean with I am" (64).
IV. 4. Concept of society and Vivekananda's view:

Religion is practiced in human society. Without the reference of society, the study of religion is incomplete. Besides it, it is also needful to mention that man cannot be studied in isolation. Everyman is a centre of an infinite number of relations to others, which may be called generically social. Each individual of the universe is a member of society. In a simple society this relations are relatively few. In a larger and complex society they become exceedingly numerous and diversified. Social nature is natural or intrinsic in man. Long before Aristotle had declared that man is a social animal. According to Aristotle, "Social nature was determined by natural impulses which created family, which was the social unit or society at it's minimum." Within an amorphous tissue, however we easily discerns collections or pluralities of human beings whose relations to another durable and defined. Any such plurality constitutes what we may call society. The study of religion or man is not completed without the context of society. All these have to be studied in conjunction. Therefore historian like Arnold Toynbee has undertaken the study of human history with civilize societies as basic units.

Religion is also social, psychological and historical factors. This is the case because every religious phenomenon is in the final analysis also a human phenomenon, and the human phenomenon reveals itself in social, psychic and historic modes. This is observed by some thinkers that the religious phenomena deserve to be interpreted in religious terms. Sacred man of religion is closely a social, economic and historical being. He is also however a religious being, a being who has traditionally demonstrate that he must relate himself to an other dimension of reality in order to be a human. Religious things obviously meet social and psychic needs and fulfill certain social and psychic functions.

To a comprehensive study of Vivekananda's concept of religion it is necessary to study his view regarding society. In one sense, it is a matter of individual faith, but it's social significance cannot be ignored. Religion manifests itself in society in many ways. It shapes the domestic, economic and political institution. It is believed that religion is the central element in the life of civilization where every existence will endangered if religions fails.
Man is agreed universally as a social being. From very ancient times men has lived in some from of society. When many people live together for the same purpose, it is allied society. Social relationship implies reciprocal awareness between two or more persons in common. According to M Ginsberg “A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behavior which mark of them off from who do not enter into these relation or who differ from them in behavior” (68)

All through his life Vivekananda had discussed about the various fields, Vivekananda has occasions to learn about the concept of socialism, in it's different shades. He observed the terrible misery that he witnessed everywhere in India. “The terrible misery that he witnessed every where in India, the crippling poverty paralyzing slavery and the inhuman exploitation of the masses, the hypocrisy and priest craft all these made him look up to the philosophy of socialism as a probable ray of hope, if not as permanent sunshine.” (67) Among the various theories like individualism, socialism, organic theory and group mind theory regarding the relation between society and individual Vivekananda was in favour of socialism. He stated, “The other system have been tried and found wanting. Let this be tried if for nothing else, for the novelty of the ting. A distribution of pain and pleasure is better then always the same persons having pains and pleasures.” (68) With the deep knowledge about man and society, he knew well that there was no shortcut, no magic cure or simplest solution to the complex problem that confronted by humanity. Vivekananda was also aware of the fact that socialism was not perfect philosophy, no fool proof paradigm that could provide a real and lasting solution. He hoped that it could provide probably remedied the condition of the poor and down trodden to a limited extent.

Vivekananda observed that human society in turn governed by the four casts- the priest, the soldiers, the traders and the laborers. Each state has it's glories as well as it's defects. When the priest (Brahman) rules, there is a tremendous exclusiveness on hereditary grounds. The persons of the priests and their descendents are hemmed in with all shorts of safeguard. But the advantage of this period that it laid foundation of sciences. The military (Kshatriya) rule is cruel. But the glory is that, in this period art and social
culture attain their highest. The commercial (vaishya) rule comes next. Its advantage is as the trader himself goes everywhere, he is good disseminator of ideas collected. But culture begins decay.

According to Vivekananda's last will come the rule of labour. Vivekananda regards them as Shudras. It's advantages will be the distribution of physical comfort. It's disadvantage (Probable) the lowering of culture. He inferred that there will be great distribution of ordinary education, but extraordinary geniuses will be.

In Vivekananda's mind there was a dream about an ideal society or an ideal state, which is a synthesis of above four. In his word, "If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial, and the ideal of equality of the last can all be kept intact, minus their veils, it will be an ideal state". Vivekananda observed that Brahman, the soldiers and traders have had their days. None was able to workout an ideal society or ideal state. From our experience we realize that the picture has not changed even many years after India's independence. Always the urban middle class dominates. The masses hardly have much say in all that is going on in the country. In Vivekananda's new vision of India, he wanted that Sudras (this term he applied for the working people) should be on top. He said that he was a socialist, adding the same time, not because of socialism is perfect but better than other alternatives. Vivekananda wanted that the working people should have opportunities enough to catch up with the intelligentsia of the country. It is not that the intelligentsia has to go down to make room for the working people.

Before pondering over the concept of socialism of Vivekananda we should try to understand how he perceived the course of history. In a series of articles, contributed to the Bengali journal 'Udbadhan' and later compiled and brought out in book form with the title, 'Modern India' Vivekananda has presented his own analysis of history. He says, "From a careful study of the history of the world, it appears that in conformity to the law of nature, the four casts, the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra, do in every society, one after another in succession, govern the world". Here is a brief
account of Vivekananda's concept of social evolution, based on the four castes.

He stated that the Brahman caste, of priestly form of government, was the earliest. It was prevalent in all primitive societies. The priest was the spiritual mentor, and natural leader of society. The priestly order was based on the principle that knowledge is power. Their spirit of renunciation promoted social good and harmony. In course of time, the priestly order becomes degenerated. It indulged in the sense gratification and to build up exclusive privileges for itself. There by estranged itself from the mainstream of the country. As it hindered social progress, it was replaced by the Kshatriya, the royal power.

The king, who succeeded the priests, developed urban civilization. According to Vivekananda they Promoted arts and sciences and ruled thus people with paternal love. But later on kings too become selfish and ignored the interests of the community. According to Vivekananda when the society is strong, there soon follows a fierce contest between the king and his subjects. 

Vivekananda stated that the struggle between the king and the people resulted in that establishment of the Vaishya rule. The industrial revolution in England declared the vaishya supremacy. Kings become its puppets. The Vaishya established international contacts and spread the fruits of knowledge. But the vaishya power, as its predecessors, alienated itself from society and it will be replaced by the Shudra, the proletarian.

Rathna Reddy observes, "Vivekananda identified democracy with the rise of the shudras. He called this age the age of the Shudras and welcomed it, for it brings about mass awakening and progress the wanted to awaken them to shoulder their responsibility of self government. He was of the view that in spite of the numerical majority of the shudras, they always remained the subjects because of their 'neutral hatred'. But he was not dismayed. He hoped a time will come when there will be the rising of the shudras class with their shudra hood will again absolute supremacy in every society"(70).

The idea of Vivekananda has provided us with a concrete framework for social analysis. He asks us to view the historical process through the
concept of the four fold vedic social order known as 'chatur varna'. He describes it as the law of nature. Vivekananda was of course not in favour of rigid, orthodox and petrified classification as it is developed in past vedic India. When the social order lost it's dynamism and become fossilized. He accepted vedic social order as a tool for his comprehension and interpretation of social evolution. From careful study of the world he finds out that in conformity to the law of nature, the four castes, the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra in every society, one after another, in succession, govern the world. As Vivekananda accepts four fold order of the society as law of nature hence for him it is not just temporary phenomena, but a 'law of nature'. It is global in character. It was in this context that he spoke about the emergence of Shudra Raj in India and all over the world. He had in his mind the view, propounded by the Gita, that nature classifies human being into group or castes on the basis of predominance of gunas. Human functions are determined by human nature and human nature is determined by the three gunas Satwa, Rajyas and Tamas. The castes should carry on their function in accordance with their gunas or psychological nature.

Vivekananda was closely aware of the short coming of Sudra Raj. He recognized it as the first glow of dawn of this new power. He believed that this new power will begin to break slowly anarchism, nihilism and other like sects which are the vanguard of the social revolution that it follows.

IV. 5. Vivekananda and Marx on Socialism:

Both Marx and Vivekananda acclaimed socialism, but it will be erroneous on our part to treat Marx socialism and that of Vivekananda's socialism as if they were synonymous. Karl Marx who criticized the utopian in the Communist Manifesto, learnt a lesson from it's future and struggled how it could be changed in better one for the welfare of labour class. Socialism may be of different types and Marx declared his socialism as quite scientific, while the other types of socialism are just a pretension of bourgeois utopianism or simply bourgeois revisionism. We find that Marxian socialism is based on certain pre suppositions. They are (i) Dialectical materialism (ii) materialistic
interpretation (iii) history of class struggle in a historic necessity. Through class struggle is an inevitable, Marx visualized a classless society, where these would be equality of all people, equal right and privileges, with equal obligation, and duty elimination of all tyranny.

Turning to the socio-economic condition of India during the last part of 19th century Vivekananda opined that by virtue of the existing economic condition of the day; the poor were becoming much poor and the richer rich. Like Marx, Vivekananda's heart cried for the poor people of India. He stated, "The poor the sinner in India has no friends, no help, they cannot rise, however they may. They sink lower and lower everyday, they feel the blows showed upon them by a cruel society and they do not know where the blow comes."(71) Further he regarded that the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor priest power and foreign conquest have trodden them down the poor. According to Vivekananda socialism is the only alternative as all other alternatives are fake. He observed one class of men went on manufacturing article of utility and comfort within by manual or intellectual labour. A second class proceeded to exchange the thing. It is so happened that some middle men who were very clever undertook to take their things from one place to another and in the place of remuneration they look the major portion of the profits as their due. One plough the land, the second protected it from being robbed, the third took it to market and the fourth bought it. The production came to be known as the kind and person who took it to the market was the merchant. Both the persons profited most, without doing labour. The poor former who produced the articles had often to go without meal once a day. In the west Karl Marx gave the same idea when stated, "In the present day society, the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the capitalist class, the resulting dependence of the working class is the cause of misery and servitude in all its forms"(72). Vivekananda's move to socialism has been really summed up in his famous sentence. "I am socialist, not become it perfect system but because I believe that half a loaf is better than no bread."(73) Vivekananda was deeply moved by the misery of the vast masses of people, and he accepted socialism only to the context it would alleviate the misery. It is observed, "But he did not really work out all the
details of what I have called vedantic socialism. There can be no doubt that Vivekananda was far ahead of his times in his concern from social change, socialist change, and a new and rejuvenated Indian society. But he cannot be listed in the galaxy of Orthodox socialists, whether of the democratic or revolutionary political persuasion. His title to socialism or what I have called vedantic socialism, rest on the climate of change he wanted to bring about in Indian life, conduct and character and rousing of spirituality among his people through the new and practical interpretation he gave to the Hindu concept of Vedanta.⁷⁴

Marx’s socialism was essentially materialistic in concept. But materialism is quite contradictory to Vivekananda. Whole through his life he seeks divinity in every existence from human to the lowest warm. So Vivekananda could never be subscribed to such a brand. As V.K.R.V Rao puts it “The engine of social changes must have it’s proper fuel and this according to Vivekananda, could only come from spirituality and the Vedanta, which proclaimed the innate divinity in men and the sameness it gave all men as the basis for social ethics of non-exploitation and universal human welfare."⁷⁵ Therefore in his lecture at Madras on “My plan of campaign”, he emphatically stated that after preaching spiritual knowledge, along with it secular knowledge to be imparted. Thus he was more concerned with providing the intellectual and emotional fuel for social and economic change.

Vivekananda’s socialism is based on Advaita Vedānta that is rooted in advaita view of reality. On the other hand Marx’s socialism is based on materialism. The essence of advaita philosophy have in the expression “That thou art”, Vivekananda says, “Thou art are with this universal being, and as such every soul that exists in your soul and every body that exists, in your body and inheriting anyone, you heart yourself. As soon as the current of hatred is thrown outside, when so ever it hurts, is also hurts yourself, and if love comes from you it is bound to come back to you, for I am the universe, this universe is my body, I am infinite, only I am not conscious of it now, but I am struggling to get this consciousness of the infinite and perfection will be reached when full consciousness of the infinite comes."⁷⁶ Vivekananda raises the question is it practical and can it be practiced in modern society?
"Truth does not pay homage to any society ancient or modern. Society has to play homage to truth or die. Socialism should be moulded upon earth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society" (77). This is Vivekananda's clear-cut reply.

Vivekananda is probably the first Indian leader to recognize the role of the working class in building a new India. He even used the term 'proletariat' to denote them. He was conscious of the national sin, of having exploited poor for centuries. According to Vivekananda the working class has been working silently without even getting proper remuneration. There is difference between the socialism of Vivekananda and the socialism of Marx. Yet we have to keep in mind that, equally both great souls cried for the misery of the masses. P. Parameswaran has rightly observed, "But these socialist polemics apart, which is really significant in the intense concern which Karl Marx and Vivekananda expressed towards the tearing masses." (78)

Vivekananda's vision was of the working people coming to power. Their cultural and moral level going up with Indian as a result society would be classless and casteless. His favorite description of the society was that it would be "an Islamic body with Vedantic brain" The ideal society should also be one which would constantly strive for a higher level of moral perfection (which is called vedantic). He also suggested that, the ideal society was not only Casteless and classless but one which aimed at the kind of spiritual development. According to Vivekananda this classless and casteless society he symbolized by the term "Islamic body". The thirst for spiritual development is symbolized by "Vedantic brain".

After above close discussion on Vivekananda's concept of socialism we come to the conclusion that at no cost Vivekananda leaves spirituality from his thought. He observed that more advanced a society in spirituality, the more that society or nation is civilized. He opined that civilization never consists in increasing comforts of material life. Use of lots of machinery does not imply civilization. Vivekananda had high hope of human spiritual culture and remarked that his dream socialism can be established by spiritualizing human being. He remarked, "it is a change of the soul itself for the better, that alone will cure the evils of life. No amount of force or government are
legislative cruelty will change the condition of a race, but it is spiritual culture and ethical culture can change wrong tendencies for the better.\(^{(79)}\)

It was Vivekananda who first thought about the Indian masses realized their vital role in the regeneration of India and made others conscious of their duty. He coined the word 'Daridya Narayan' and gave the new montra 'Daridra Deva Bhava'. It is stated Gandhiji's Harijan Seva was only a continuation and extension in practice of what Vivekananda had initiated. Elevation of the masses had become his life mission. It should be mentioned here, according to Vivekananda everyone is seeking for the happiness but the majority seeks it in things which are not real. No happiness was ever found in the senses or material enjoyment. For him happiness is only found in spirit. Therefore the highest utility for mankind is to find this happiness in the spirit. It is our ignorance that we think infinite (soul) weeps and cries. Vivekananda asserts that ignorance is the mother of all misery. This is the basis of all ignorance that we have. The immortal, the ever pure, the perfect spirit, think that we are little mind or bodies. Vivekananda explained such, "As soon as I think that I am a little body, I want to preserve it to protect it, to keep it nice, at the expense of other bodies, then you and I become separate. As soon as the idea of separation comes, it opens the door to all mischief and leads to all misery. This is the utility that if a very small fractional part of selfishness, narrowness and littleness, this earth will be come a paradise tomorrow; but with the machines and improvements of material knowledge only, it will never be. These only increase misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of the spirit all material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire. \(^{(80)}\) So we find that spiritual knowledge occupies a unique position. To know our real spiritual nature is the steeping stone towards universal happiness. Here we can again remember how Vivekananda was inspired by his great master Ramkrishna Paramhansa to think for universal happiness. Once, Vivekananda said to his master that he wants to get merged in Samadhi continuously for five or six days like Sukdeva. Coming down only a little from that high level for the sake of preserving the body and then getting lost again in the highest of Samadhi. In a tone of reproof Sri Ramakrishna replied, ".......You have such vast potentiality, and you too

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speak thus! I expected that you would grow like a huge banyan tree under whose shade thousands of people would find shelter and here you are sitting out ought all that and hankering for your personal salvation. This is very low, unworthy aspiration. No my boy, don’t you aim so lower"(81). This very incident of reproof and refusal made him disconsolate, but it opened a new dimension in Vivekananda’s future mission.

So the basic difference between Vivekananda and Marx is their socialism is that, Vivekananda’s socialism is a kind of spiritualistic socialism and Marx’s one is materialistic socialism. To alienate his key was to teach human being his real nature. The whole society, not only the working class is under the spell of alienation. This is alienation from men’s true nature and not by mere rendering socio-economical order. The real nature of the man is spiritual. Vivekananda repeatedly declared, “Each soul is potentially divine.” Ignorance of his own divinity makes him feel miserable, weaker and helpless. So Vivekananda calls up every one to awake the sleeping soul. Power, goodness and purity will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self consciousness activity.

About the wisdom of Vivekananda in choosing religion not politics as the part of changes, V.K. Rao writes, “No amount of institutional change or legislative reform or proletarian dictatorship can being about the new society that socialist and communist dream of our experience of the last 50 years of people’s capitalism, democratic socialism and the transitional socialism of the communist regimes of the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe has all shown that behind any attempt, either to create or sustain, a durable, better society, we need the necessary spirit and emotional strength which will act as the fuel for it’s nation. Has not Vivekananda tried to give just that spirit and is that not enough to justify it being described as socialism”.(82)

Vivekananda’s solution was in Vedânta, to all socio economic disorder. Due to lake of spiritual basis all social system and economic system were in vain. If we all recognize our self with divine and if we all realize all are the just rays of same sun or reflection of one Brahman, then there will be no one to corrupt and no one will be corrupted. Vivekananda commented, “All social upheavalists, at least the leaders of them, are trying to find out that all their
communistic or equalizing theories most only. I have been told by several leaders, who used to attend my lectures that they required the Vedanta or basis of the new order of things."(83)

For Marx Religion was the opium of the masses. He was highly critical of religion and he stated that man has created religion for the exploitation of other human beings. He upheld that idea of god is the key stone of a perverted civilization. Marx believed that religion was the opium of mankind and that it must be done away within the interest of human welfare. But Vivekananda’s socialism is no way negation of religion. He stated, "Every thing gone to show that socialism or some form of rule by the people, call it what you will is coming on the boards. The people will certainly want the satisfaction of their material needs, less work, no oppression, no war, more food. What guarantee have we that this or any civilization will last, unless it is based on religion. On the goodness of men."(84) Swami Gambhirananda opined, “though the people had to be fed and their standard of living to be realized this was not to be achieved at the cost of religion. Besides, he (Vivekananda) found no incompatibility between social progress and spiritual advancement. He wanted the masses to rise with their spiritual heritage, intact”(85). His motto was elevation of the masses without injuring their religion.

By socialism Vivekananda means a pattern of life in which the individual act freely and spiritually for the good of the whole society. Vivekananda conceives the individual life is the life of whole. The individual’s existence is the happiness of the whole. According to Vivekananda apart from the whole the individual’s existence is inconceivable. He believes this an eternal truth, and is the bed rock on which the universe in built. Vivekananda wants to bound up the individual not only on the basis of social morality, but from inside the mind.T.S. Dutta observed, “He (Vivekananda) lays emphatic stress on the growth of the individual; where as Marx lays the entire stress on the growth of the our cumulative life. But ideal social life can not be achieved if the individual has to sacrifice his soul or individual existence.”(86)

At last after pondering over Vivekananda and Marx in prospective of social ideologies we can conclude by following the words of P. parameswaram, as he beautifully expressed, “Let us try to make an
assessment of the impact they have made on humanity. This is no doubt, a difficult and delicate task. Impact is both quantitative and qualitative. Marx is like a commander of an army, conquering and annexing territory after territory, whereas Vivekananda is like a divine messenger with his benign sympathy and love advancing step by step, surely and steadily. Marx impact is more outward, it is in the external boundaries of human existence. It transforms the economic and political scene around men. But Vivekananda's influence is unheard; it works in the inner realm of men's being. It deeply influences and permanently transmutes the inner nature of men". (87)

From the above discussion and observation we find that Marx's concept of man was itself a material being whereas Vivekananda conceived man as essentially a spiritual entity a soul embodied. As far India is concerned, the impact of Vivekananda was tremendous. Secularism, socialism, mass upliftment and mass power, women's liberation, abolition of untouchability, inclusion of social service as a part of religious worship. One of the earliest communist thinkers of India to realize the importance Vivekananda in evaluation of social thought in this country. K. Damodarm in his scholarly work. 'Indian Thought', has stated, "it must be specially mentioned that, two decades before the socialist revolution in Russia, this great man (Vivekananda) raised the slogan of socialism in India. There is no wonder that he became a great source of inspiration for the new generation." (88).

IV. 6. Vivekanandas view on Education:

Education is a social fact. We have known that a social fact is different from a fact of nature in the sense that the former is created by men out of the later. Without the discussion of the concept of education, discussion of society is incomplete. Besides, Vivekananda's view of society and his thought about the Indian masses necessarily pull us to his concept of Education. It was Vivekananda who first thought about the Indian masses, realized their vital role in the regeneration of India. He made others conscious of their duty towards the downtrodden. He found out there causes. For Vivekananda for
betterment of the society, particularly for the betterment of weaker and poor of India, parallel to religion another way of enhancement is education. Vivekananda had a feeling that the uplift of the poor might cause tumultuous upheavals. So he was for awakening them through masses education on positive lines.

In earlier society education was a means of social control, rather than social progress and development. Education refined both physical and mental health of the individual as a result society become sound. In ancient India, there was a fourfold organization of society and there were four classes or castes with their respective duties. The four castes were, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisyas and Sudras. For the upper three castes there were four orders or stages of life, namely the student, of the house holder, of the hermit and the ascetic in the woods. Student life was the first stage. The child at proper age was presented to the teacher for education. After initiation into the sacred formula and being invested with the sacred thread, the pupil began his duty. Brahmans started study or Brahmacharya at 8 to 10 years, Khetriya 11 to 14, Baishya at 16 years. They lived with a teacher and served him all possible ways. They studied the veda along with some subsidiary subjects. These subjects are namely Sikha (pronunciation) Chhanda (prosody), Vyakarana (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Jyotish (astronomy) and kalpa (sacrifice). Student life in ancient India was a strenuous sort of life with hard discipline. A strong moral and mental character was built and equally the spiritual (or metaphysical) teachings were given to them.

Indian philosophy, in which Vivekananda was nurtured, primarily is dominated by metaphysical interest. The thinker like Vivekananda and all others were not at all satisfied with superficial and transitory events. They rather seek transcendental and eternal essence. Vivekananda in his Jnana-yoga gave us analysis of what did he mean by spiritual knowledge, without which education is rootless. As upanisads state, 'So a vidya yaa vimuktay' or jnana or education for liberation. In the similar manner Vivekananda wrote in Discourses on Jnanyoga, "Without Jnana (knowledge) liberation can not be ours. It consists in knowing what we really one, that we are beyond fear, beyond birth, beyond death. The highest good is the realization of the self. It
is beyond sense beyond thought”\(^{(89)}\). This Jyana leads us finally to essence of Vedanta is that there is but one Being and that every soul is that Being in full, not a part of Being. Jyana demands that we look upon all alike, that we see only 'Sameness'. Key concept of Jnana yoga is that we have to realize our true nature of self and sameness of all creatures and finally we identify the we are one with Brahman. We know that all through his life Vivekananda gained his source of all thought from Vedanta which essentially spiritualistic. Hence his conception of education has a spiritualistic foundation. Vivekananda defines "Education means the manifestation of the divine perfection already existing in men."\(^{(90)}\). We have to realize and manifest the divine perfection. We are already divinely perfect but unconscious of it. Through the process of which we can realize and manifest our perfect divinity, that is education. This can be done through the yoga. The same view is delivered in the 11th verse of the 14th chapter, of the Gita.

"Sarvadvaresu dehe'smin
prakāśa upajāyate
Jñānam yadā tads vidyād
Vivrddhham Sattam ity uta."\(^{(14.11)}\)(91).

As it is translated and interpreted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "When the light of knowledge streams forth in all the gates of the body, then it may be known that goodness has increased....The light of knowledge can have a full physical manifestation. The truth of consciousness is not opposed to expression in matter. The Divine can be realized on the physical plane. The Divine can be realized on the physical plane. To divinize the human consciousness, to bring the light into the physical to transfigure our whole life is the aim of yoga."\(^{(92)}\) So, according to Vivekananda, like Gandhi and Plato, the primary aim to education is the nurture of the soul, the Atman. In his view, it is imperative that education promote self knowledge and self fulfillment. It is the development of character and the cultivation of the whole men, body mind and spirit. In the final analysis this is the kind of education that will lead to the upliftment of society as a whole. For Vivekananda education is a measure of character building and masses can be rescued through education. According
to Vivekananda they should receive special attention so that they could quickly overcome their initial drawback. He wanted education to reach out to them rather than they come to education. He had rightly diagnosed that making education free was not enough. A further initiative was necessary. Education should be available to them at their doorstep, not only should it be free. He opined that a working man's child should have five teachers as against one provided for a child from enlightened family. Vivekananda admits that through education comes faith in one's own self. Through faith in one's own self the inherent Brahman is walking up in them. Otherwise the Brahman remains dormant.

For Vivekananda every individual is a mine of infinite knowledge and education means the cover off his own soul by discovering the latent. He wrote that though we say a man knows, actually he discovers, by taking the cover off his own soul. Individual soul is a mine of infinite knowledge. Knowledge is inherent in man. No knowledge comes from outside. Vivekananda analyzed the process of knowledge to show that all knowledge inhere in human mind. He took the example of discovery of gravitation. According to Vivekananda all knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind. He regards mind as the infinite library of the universe. The external world is simply the suggestion or the occasion. Here Vivekananda forwarded the example of discovery of gravitation. The falling of an apple gave the suggestion to Newton. He studied his own mind. He rearranged all the previous links of thought in his mind. As a result Newton discovered a new link among them, which we call the law of gravitation.

Hence all knowledge according to Vivekananda, secular or spiritual, is in the human mind. In many cases it is not discovered, but remains covered. The covering is being slowly takes off, we say that 'We are learning.' The advancement of knowledge is made by actually by the advance of this process of uncovering. The man from whom this veil is being lifted is the more knowing man. The man upon whom it lies thick is ignorant. The man from whom it has entirely gone is all knowing, omniscient. That's why Vivekananda defines education as the manifestation of the purification already in men.
According to Vivekananda the only duty of the teacher is to remove all obstacles from the way of knowledge.

The primary purpose of education for Vivekananda is to know the self, the Atman, which is synonymous with God. This in turn points to the integral relationship that he conceives to exist between a religious orientation and self orientation. Real education is the knowing of Atman, perfecting the instruments and getting complete mastery of own mind. When we can become the master of our own mind, it is within our control. Vivekananda regards it as absolute necessary that every individual must become divine. It is possible when every individual has a absolute mastery over his own thought (the thought, the senses). The essence of morally strong character lies in the ability to control our senses.

Vivekananda finds out the objectives of education. In his view character building is the actual objective of education. By education he does not mean just the literacy. It does not consist in accumulating facts and figures or passing examination. It consists in developing character. According to Vivekananda education is not packing of unwanted information into the heads of students. So for Vivekananda education is not only a superficial change of attitude and activities. Rather it is a spiritual development and change which has changed the very essence of man. It gives a spiritual foundation, at last freedom of the soul. In this regard we can remind some lines from Gandhi, “It is spiritual development rather than study of English or literature, or a acquiring the ability to earn livelihood.” Also found in the writings of Balgangadhar Tilok. He stated that, education above all reveals quality of the spirit. It should promote man’s spiritual development. All these similar view is found in Vivekananda when he utters, education is not the amount of information. We must have life building, man making and character building assimilation of ideas. According to Vivekananda we want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one’s own feet. According to Vivekananda the education which does not help the common masses of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life is not education. Education brings out strength of character and moral courage. So education makes us a
man who is able to earn his bread and butter as well as a man of strong moral character.

In course of his discussion on education Vivekananda discussed the role of a teacher. The role of the teacher is to develop the faith of his pupils and to give them a push upwards. Vivekananda opined that a true teacher should convert himself to the level of his students. Vivekananda believed in personal contact with the teacher Gurugrihavasa of vedic India. Without the personal contact of a teacher there would be no education. In the present age this 'Gurugrihavasa is totally ended up. According to Vivekananda due to this reason the educational institutions are unable to produce one original man for a long time. He had faith in ancient Hindu Brahmacharya where there was close personal contact between the teacher and the taught. Pupils were directly motivated by teachers morality and firm character. It spontaneously brings shraddha(reverence) to their teachers. As such teacher could mould their pupils as they wished. Vivekananda stresses on the importance of self realization, or the true nature of the Atman. Realization of one with Brahman, prompts us to look again his indebtedness to religious and philosophical tradition in which he was nurtured. Vivekananda planed about religion centered education. He stated, “I look upon religion as the innermost core of education”(94) By religion he meant the spiritual knowledge. All religions bear the same and equal truth of Divineness of the spirit and oneness with God. In essence all religions are same but the method and way of expressions are different. Without the spiritual knowledge all other knowledge is fruitless. Though Vivekananda advocated spiritual education or spirituality must be basis of education, but he was liberal regarding other secular education. For him ideal education is a synthesis of Western science with Vedaanta. Brahmacharya as the guiding motto and also shraddha and faith in one’s own self. In a ideal society both science and religion prosper together and scientific and spiritual development couple with one another. Ancient India is the best example of both spiritual and scientific development.

Vivekananda was a person of fore sight who could see for ahead of his time. He could realize long before that present system of education did not enable a man to stand on his own feet. Education which can not produce skill,
it itself became unproductive and unproductive education is a threat for future generation. So he was true in his realization that the only alternative of present nation to cope with the unemployment and poverty, is to impart productive education which can give skill to earn his own bread and butter.

For Vivekananda education was a tool to fight against poverty, to eradicate misery of the masses. Vivekananda was true in his observation that due to lack of education poor and lower class of India is still the victim of superstitions. Even they are not able to realize that they are weaker and subject to corruption.

For Vivekananda Education is concerned with the development of the whole man, body, mind and spirit. His view is similar to Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi found two defects in our system of education. They were lack of nurture of the soul and the cultivation of man's skill. Like Vivekananda, Gandhi also puts importance on the spiritual and on the practical aspect of education. He insists that it would be a mistake to seek to cultivate the mind in isolation from the body and the spirit.

Vivekananda’s view is also similar to whitehead view. That the essence of education is that it should be religious. It follows that from Vivekananda’s point of view, education should be concerned not just with training a person for vacation. For him education does not mean concentrating on a narrow specialization, or promoting the acquisition of informed knowledge. Vivekananda believes that education is a process by which person’s outlook is transformed, the quality of life enhanced, and his understanding of the meaning and significance of life deepened.

Vivekananda’s philosophy of education echoes the teachings of many of the reformers of Hinduism in modern India among whom was Rammohan Roy, who has been described as one of the most creative of nineteenth Century thinkers in India. Vivekananda recognized, like Roy, the significant contribution of Western Science and technology could make to the material well being of the people of India. But Vivekananda was equally convinced that to progress spiritually it was necessary for western men to look to the East. One reformative aspect of Vivekananda’s view is that learning should not be
confined to the higher castes. Actually Vivekananda was a great reformer of education. Long before, our independence Vivekananda planned for the education of the masses or lower class, that it’s relevance is still more prominent. Presently national commission, like ‘Sabra-Sikha mission’, ‘Operation-black board’, all such are constantly trying to educate the masses, which was started by Vivekananda by his educated sannyasis, before our independence. He realized education must be at the door of the poors. Vivekananda started his mission with thousands of single minded, self sacrificing sannyasis, went village to village, to spread the both religion and secular knowledge. The main cause of India’s poor condition is his view, was that education had been monopolized by a small number of people. Vivekananda pointed out that if the country was to succeed in the future then reform in education was needed so that it could be made available to the lower classes in order to develop their lost individuality. The clear implication of his telling is that without education the potential of the mass of people could not be realized, and they would fail to be truly human. “Vivekananda is Kantian in his approach here for he sees that education has to do with our very identity as human beings and that without it we cease to be fully human. It was a demonstrable fact that little had been done for the masses in the past they had been so downtrodden that they had forgot His they were beings,”

This is observed by Gilym Richards.

The medium of instruction of education is of paramount importance. It does not need saying that the mother tongue is the proper medium of education. If the mother tongue is the medium in schools, the continuity of children’s usual mode of communication is not interrupted. Vivekananda alike other three great thinkers Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo advocated for the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. According to Vivekananda, creating an unnatural language to the exclusion of the natural one, is unnecessary and harmful. He observed, “The language in which you think out philosophy and science in your mind, and argue with others in public is not that the language for writing philosophy and science? .......The language in which we naturally express ourselves, in which we communicate our origin grief, or love etc.....there cannot be a fitter language than that.”

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Vivekananda is true in opinion that our mother tongue is natural to us like pure steel, it can turn and twist any way. Artificial language can never have the force and the brevity and expressiveness than mother tongue. Gandhi also pointed out the 'defect of the education of that time, that it is imparted through a foreign language". (97)

Before closing of our discussion obviously the question arises: should religious instructions form a part of the school curriculum? According to Gandhi religion is a personal affair and there should be no interference with it from outside. So there is no question of the state sponsoring a religion. In this regard Vivekananda’s position is specific, which he termed as spiritual teaching. He never opined to include a particular religion or religious teaching within school or educational curriculum. By spiritual teaching Vivekananda did not mean teaching of any particular religion. What he wanted to teach was real nature of man and to realize we are one with infinite power, what ever it may be called, Brahman, God, Allah or isvara. Vivekananda formerly believed that when we are spiritually strong no disease germ can infect us. When we are spiritually weak we are weak in all aspect social, moral, political and educational. He declared, the development of whole man is the aim of education. To harmoniously cultivate our soul it is true that we need a spiritual basis. It is necessarily an aspect of life. The lack of the moral and spiritual education tends to creep into the human race.

IV. 7. Vivekananda’s view about woman:

Women are integral part of a nation and society. Without the consideration of the matter of ‘women’ the discussion of the topic ‘society’ seems vague. So parallel to the discussion society we have to discuss Vivekananda’s attitude towards women. Though not by politics, Vivekananda had played a great role in the shaping of modern India. In his vast ocean of thought Vivekananda had left nothing untouched to discuss. He realized that the establishment of humanity would not be possible if the women folk to be ignored. In Indian society, woman’s status has always remains high. Powers
of God have been described in woman's form as wealth, knowledge and strength. But in spite of all these, practically woman's status in India has always remained lower than men's status. It is observed, "......denial of elementary right to women as human being legitimized in our society by religion, tradition and culture. Thus dependence becomes central to her husband's and society's welfare. This view of the 'social order' is focused in a most naked way in different religions scriptures of various nations. Manu who is extolled by the traditionalist as the greatest law giver of the world exploits the religious sentiments to achieve the patriarchal domination as imbibed in his codes. Rigid scriptures are imposed so that process is to smother the women's personality, and deny her true self."(98) Even Buddha who was a movingly and touchingly human and sane had adverse opinion regarding women and disallowed them as his personal attendant and disciple. "Women are soon angered, Ananda, women are full of passion, Ananda, women are envious Ananda, women are stupid. That is the reason Ananda, that is the reason, Ananda that is the cause why women have no place in public assemblies, do not carry on business and do not earn their living by any profession".(99)

Such scriptural injunctions are focused in the Bible too. Eve was second to be created and first to fall and was landed with a heavy curse-"I will greatly multiply the sorrow and thy conception....thy desire shall be thy husband and she shall rule over thee"(100). The old Testament legacy persists in the New Testament too-"Wife, submit yourself unto your own husband as unto the lord. For the husband in the head of the wife, even as Christ to the head of the church, and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ so let the wives, be to thus own husbands in everything."(101) The same view is also found in Islam, prophet Mohammed (570-632 A.D.) also confirmed the supremacy of men is a most unequivocal way-"Man stand superior to women in that God had preferred some of them over others, and is that they expend of their wealth and the virtuous women devoted, careful (in their husband) absence, as God has care for them. But those whose perverseness ye fear, admonish them and remove them into bed chambers and beat them, verily, God in high and great."(102)
Thus power and control is exerted through dominance. The women are imprisoned in the own prison of religious bindings. Religious junctures consolidated patriarchal authority. This is a global shade-back in the history of the human race. Such attitude to women is not belonged to any one particular religion or culture. In the name of religion, tradition and culture, women were exploited in all nations.

The great thinker Vivekananda went ahead of his time. He was a vedantic humanist. He analysed the downfall of our nation. He marked a great sin or cause of our downfall was neglect of womenfolk. For Vivekananda women is the symbol of ‘Shakti’ (power), god is omnipresent force in the universe and he sees in women the manifestation of that force.

Vivekananda had great respect and honor to womanhood. The ideal womanhood in India is mother which is symbol of unselfishness, all-suffering, ever-forgiving. For him women were visible manifestation of God in India and whole life was given up the thought that she as a mother and trying to be a perfect mother. His attitude to women has a philosophical basis. He was a humanist and his humanism is based on Vedanta, better to say Vedantic humanist. Vedanta believes that every human being has a self, eternal, pure and this self has no gender distinction as men and women. Vedanta believes in essential unity of all creatures through Brahman and even a small worm’s status is high to a dead matter. Because same divine unifying principle is expressed by these all. Women are to be respected as men, on the ground of common humanity." Until you learn to ignore the question of sex and to meet on a ground of common humanity will your women really developed. Until then they are play thing, nothing more."(103) All are human beings, more deeply the selves. Gender distinction is fake. He reminds us that we should not think that we are men and women, but only that we are human beings. He observed that in India there was difference of status between men and women from earlier days and he found himself it very difficult to understand the real cause of it. He stated Vedanta declares that one and the same conscious self is present in all beings. Vivekananda was revolutionary within passion for the betterment of humanity and his humanity never touched the gender difference. Vivekananda holds that the Nation which disrespect
women is like own grave diggers. He preached the monism of the Advaita Vedanta philosophy of the Vedanta and was convinced that only this could be the future religion of thinking humanity. Man is one with infinite Existence, the Brahman and he is inborn divine. To see God in men is the real God's vision, men is the greatest of all being. One single term is coined for all, that is 'man' and the question of sex does not arise. According to Vivekananda there is not any sex distinction in Atman. Without the difference between men and women all are Atman.

Women are integral part of nation and society and there is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women improved. Vivekananda believed in mutual corporation of both men and women for harmonize development of society. He noted, "it is not possible for a bird to fly, on only one wing" Vivekananda's outlook was very far seeing. He realized that until the condition of women would rise, the whole nation would remain backward for ever. He attempted for female education and opined that religion, art, science, housekeeping, cooking, sewing and hygiene all essential points of there subjects ought to be taught to our women.

Vivekananda believed that women are also competent for knowledge and devotion. Vivekananda also recognized the force of dominance from male's part (the priest) deprived women from knowledge and devotion. Vivekananda observes that in our scripture there are no statements that women are not competent for knowledge and devotion. In the period of degradation, when the priests made the other caste incompetent for the study of the Vedas, they deprived the women also of all their rights. Otherwise we find that in the vedic or upanisadic age Maitreyi, Gangi and other ladies of rich memory have taken the places of Risis through their skill is discussing about Brahman. In an assembly of a thousand Brahmans, Gargi boldly challenged Yajanalika in a discussion about Brahman. He believed that the degraded status of women which was prevailing in his time in India could be removed only through proper education of women. Educated women would be able to laid reformations necessary for themselves. Vivekananda identified the role of women in any noble action as women stand like a backbone but could not be easily seen. Women have been remaining as centre of all family which all
activities of family is centered from earlier days. All great thinkers recognize that success story of a nation, is based on good mother. In his view women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way.

Vivekananda's analysis of women problem and their solution was very fundamental. Not only education, along with it liberty is also necessary for development of women. No one can pave the way for the growth of women, unless women her selves pave the way. Education and liberty to apply this education in practical ground, both are essential for growth. Vivekananda again and again uttered that there is no distinction between sexes in the soul.

For Vivekananda women were living embodiment of Divine Mother whose external manifestation, appealing to the senses. But whose internal manifestation, such as knowledge, devotion, discrimination and dispassion are more valuable. Vivekananda planed a monastery for women on the side of the Ganga where unmarried girls or Brahmacharies widow would live. The elderly Sadhus of the 'Math' would manage the affairs of the Math from a distance. There he planed a girls' school for women of the'Math, in which religious scriptures, literatures, Sanskrit, grammar and even some amount of English would be taught. His vision was to give balanced-personality to the women so that they can cope in their life.

Vivekananda was in favour of abolishing child marriage. In his view mental and physical maturity should be attained before marriage. He thought at least the age of marriage for a girl must not be less then fifteen years. He observed that when girls were educated they enlightened the whole family. Family is the primary unit of society. If it is strong and healthy, then all society will be sound.

If we sum up Vivekananda's teaching we could say that he gave us one great mantra, to every problem encountered by nation. Faith on oneself and unity of all existence is based on that great upanisadic truth which declares, 'I am spirit. Me sword cannot cut, nor any weapon pierce, nor fire burn, nor air dry. I am omnipotent, I am omniscient, I am one with Brahman' This is the Mantra, that Vivekananda was constantly singing into the ears of his countrymen. In whatever he spoke and preached or thought this Mantra
was the of his gospel song. The distinction of caste, creed and sex all these are superficial phenomena. He realized how a mother a woman shapes his family and ultimately built the nation. It is said that quality of the cloth depends upon the thread. So also the character of the children depends upon the mother. Empowerment of women is now a burning topic in the developing countries. United Nations Organization first declared 1975 as international womens' year and later on declared the period, 1975-1985, as womens' decade, during which welfare of women was discussed. Politics were changed, new were adopted and women centers were established in the world. Raising the status of women is now a blazing trail throughout the whole world. All these attempts are made that the status of women remains equal as men, but still it needs recognition. Vivekananda was so far seeing that long before our independence he gave a clarion call for women to uplift their condition.

At last we can end up with a saying of Vivekananda to reflect his confidence and positive attitude towards women, "With five hundred men, the conquest of India might take fifty years, with as many women, not more than a few weeks." (105)

IV. 8. Vivekananda’s concept on Caste system:

In the course of the study of man and society, it is essentially needful to discuss one of the fundamental edifices of Indian society that is caste system. In every society we find social stratification or social gradation. Stratification means a process by which the people and the groups are classified in a hierarchy from the standpoint of social status. Every society classifies its members in many ways. Social stratification or social gradation gives rise to two questions, one is related to the question of social inequality and the other is related to the opportunity available to an individual to increase their social status. The second question is intimately related to what is known as social mobility. Every society offers some opportunity to its members so that they may effect change, either good or bad, in their social status. This type of society is called open class system. There are, however societies which does
not offer and favour any movement from one class to another. This type of society is known as closed class system. Hence, the social system is of two kinds open class system and closed class system. In a closed class system, there is no scope for movement from one class to another. The Indian caste system is an example of this type of social system. In a closed class system there is no scope for movement from one class to another. The Indian caste system is an example of this type of social system. In a closed class system, the social status of the individual is predetermined and individual gets the status by birth. Such class is closed caste. C.H. Cooley says that when a class is strictly hereditary, it is called a caste.

Before discussing Vivekananda’s concept of caste system we have look the origin of Indian caste system and ancient Varnasharma dharma of Hindu society. “Varnashrama” is a compound word and consists of “varna” and “asrama”. Varna means colour or class, and “asrama” a stage of life. And the word “Dharma” means duty or right conduct. The phrase “Varnasrama Dharma”, then means the duties of the different stages of life of the four classes of people. Historians tell us that originally the people of India had only two colours, fair and dark. The Aryan who had come to India from somewhere in Central Asia were fair complexioned, while the aborigines of the country were rather dark. Therefore if one colour signified one distinct class of people. There were originally two classes in India, the Aryans and the natives of the country, now called the Dasas. But ‘Varnasharma’ in its earlier use meant the different stages of life of the four classes of people Brahmana, Rajanya (kshatriya), vaisa and sudra, who together constituted society. In its later use, however, the word meant for four castes having these four names. These four fold organization of vedic society, later became the caste system of Indian society. We are told that the Dharma Sutra either presupposed the formation of the four classes into caste, or “witnessed the hardening” of the classes into castes. Each of four classes was determined by its peculiar social function. Thus one who was pure in heart and intellectuality alert could become Brahmana. One who was physically strong enough to share in the defence as well as administraton of the country became a kshatriya. Vaisyas were expert of trade and commerce. And it goes without saying that the labour (the
Sudras) represented the bottom of the ladder as he lived only by serving or only to serve the other classes.

This four fold organization of the Vedic society had a scientific basis that to organize society on division of labour. There was a stage of the Vedic people when there was no functional division among them. Even the Rig Veda points to this stage. At that time individuals, especially the heads of the families which are said to have been patriarchal in type, did all sorts of work, including production of food, family worship and defence of the homeland. But as the time went on, the circumstances in which they lived became increasingly complex. It became too difficult for one man to perform multifarious duties. Thus there arose the need to organize society on division of labour. Those who had the aptitude for earning wisdom and worship were grouped into one class and were called the Brahmins. Those who were fitted by their strength for defence of land were entrusted with this work and were called kshatriyas. A third class of people had their allotted task, that of producing food and wealth and were called the vaisyas. The fourth class was formed by the Sudras, aborigines absorbed in the Aryan society. They were just labourers and whose sole duty was to serve the three other classes. Then it was efficient socio economic order, based on division of labour. This four fold organization of vedic society was maintained also in order to avoid unnecessary competitions among the members of the society. "New individuals came into three upper classes in virtue of the requisite qualities they possessed. But now the classes petrified. The process of their formation by proper quality stopped since the emphasis was now laid upon birth. That to say, the class, on individual belonged to, come to be determined by birth, not as before, by quality....Historians paint out that hardening of the classes into caste took place when the Aryans moved from the Indus Valley towards the eastern region and settled down in the middle of the country in relative peace and society to spin out a web of complex social relationship."(107)

In the ninth book of the Rig Veda, some different crafts and occupations are mentioned. But it seems that they were not caste. In the tenth Book of the Rig Veda, however, there is an explicit mention of the four castes. In the purusasukta, the account of the origin of the castes runs as follows:-
“From the mouth of the supreme Being proceeded the Brahman, from his arm the Rajanya, from his thighs the vaisya, and from his feet the Sudra.”(108)

Vivekananda analysed the caste system by handling the source of its origin. He observed that, "No caste in Satya juga, all Brahmans. We read in the Mahabharatata that the whole World was one in the beginning with Brahmans, and that as they began to degenerate they became divided into different castes and that when the cycle turns round they will all go back to that Brahmanical origin. This cycle is turning round now, I draw your attention to this fact."(109) In origin all were Brahmans. He observed even after formation of four fold organization of vedic society, there was a organic relation between the upper classes, that one was incomplete or ineffective without the others. One class was higher then another, but not superior to another. The transition from class to caste could be effected only by shifting the emphasis from quality to, the accident birth that is making birth, the standard of social rank.

Vivekananda himself quoted the text from Bhagvadgita, to clear that classes or castes were created on the basis of quality and work. "The four classes were created by me according to the division of quality and work."(110)

According to Vivekananda caste system has created an efficient organization of society, but it must not create class frictions and factions. It must be based on the efficiency of the individual to adopt a particular trade. It must not be rigid which ultimately leads the society to untouchism. Vivekananda explained and analyzed all circumstances from the point of view of Vedanta. Vedanta states that we all are eternal spirit irrespective of our caste, class and sex. At bottom all are one. Caste system is ought to be avoided when it is based on birth.It rises to a setup that one class is superior to other. Superior neglects and hates the inferior.

Vivekananda is not in favour of total and permanent abolition of the caste system. According to Vivekananda total break down of caste system neither desirable nor practicable. Jati means creation. "I am one. I become many". Variation (vicitrrata), that is.According to Vivekananda one of the cause of India’s down fall is to give up the actual meaning and role of a caste to formulate a healthy society on the basis of inherent quality. He stated that
India it is a great evil, grinding the poor through caste. Vivekananda clearly states untouchism, restriction which is based on negligence and hatred in no way related to actual caste system. Caste system is a social organization for the development of the whole society. He opined, "the present caste is not the real Jati, but a hindrance to its progress. It really has prevented the free action of Jati, i.e. caste or variation". Vivekananda opined that liberty is the condition of growth and according to the quality of the individual each individual must have liberty to serve for society. Vivekananda never upholds that caste system is based on heredity. There should not be any privileges depending on heredity. What he accepts is the original four told division of labour of vedic period in accordance with quality of the individual. In his view India fall because it prevailed and abolished caste, from proper functioning.

Vivekananda warned us not to mix castism (in its deviate form) with religion to justify its validity. Vivekananda pointed out that no religious scriptures assert that some portions of human beings are inferior to others. All religions declare that all human being are divine, even divinity of animals or plant kingdom. We all are jives, reflection of Brahman. Caste is not a religious institution. Considering caste as religious institution is a great mistake. In this regard Jawaharlal Nehru had commented, "Passionately, Vivekananda condemned the meaningless discussion and arguments about ceremonials and especially the touch me-notism of the upper caste. Our religion is in the kitchen. Our God is the cooking pot, and our religion is "don't touch me, I am holy" Vivekananda declares, "Don't touchism is a kind of mental disease. Kick such custom out."

Vivekananda believed that real caste is individuality, a way to express its latent potentiality. It is not a predetermined factor by patriarchy. According to Vivekananda that forgetting the actual role and meaning of caste system we put a narrow sense to it. What Vivekananda believed can be compared to Plato’s ideal society. Plato in the Republic outlined his scheme of an ideal society or state organized on the principle of division of labour or the principle of “one man one trade, not on that of one man many trades”. Plato mentioned three cardinal virtues as excellences of character, namely wisdom; courage and temperance. Wisdom resides in reason, courage is the right and perfect
condition of the spirit and temperance results from the ordered functioning of
the appetities. And there is a fourth virtue, harmony of all the three virtue.
They are the guardians (rulers), the soldiers and the atrocious or craft man
(traders). In virtue of there classes the city is wise, courageous temperament
and just. Wisdom belongs to the rulers, courage to the soldiers, temperance
to the producers and justice in the city consists in harmony among the three
classes. Says Plato,

"But we have surely not forgotten
That the city was just by reason of three classes
Within it each doing their own work")

Both Vivekananda and Plato believed in the division of labour on the
basis of individual efficiency or quality. Labour his conception of an ideal city
without having an opportunity to put it into practice. The early Vedic society
was really a four fold organization in which the four classes discharged each
their proper functions and thus maintained order in society.

Vivekananda observed that the transition from class to caste in Hindu
society was a derivation from the path of reason. We think we can safely say
that towards the end of the Rig Vedic period the transformation of class into
caste was complete, that the status and rank of an individual was determined
solely by birth. Families were now fixed up as Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya
and Sudra families and individual born into them were respectively called so.
These castes, as they were called now, were put in a hierarchy with the
Brahman at the top and Sudra at the base, and every caste was considered
inferior to one or ones which were above it. In course of social evolution the
emphasis was shifted to difference rather than on the organic relation
between them, with the result that fourfold order ceases to be dynamic.
Vivekananda critically analyzed the whole process of transition from class
(based on division of labour) to caste (based on birth) and found out,
"Therefore our solution of the caste questions is not degrading those who are
already high up, is not turning a much through food and drink, is not jumping
out of our own limits in order to have more enjoyment, but it comes by every
one of us fulfilling the dictates of our vedantic religion, by our attaining spirituality and by our becoming the ideal Brahman".\textsuperscript{(115)}

From the above discussion we can come to the conclusion that Vivekananda's view on caste system is open to social mobility and social progress. It is quite scientific as it is based on efficiency of individual or efficiency based division of labour. It is no way related to any separation of high and low castes which ultimately lead us to untouchism. He stated, "If you look, you will find that I have never quoted anything but the Upanisad."\textsuperscript{(116)} But at the same time, he was particular about ensuring that old superstition did not return to the people. He said, "I disagree with those who are giving their superstition back to my people..."\textsuperscript{(116)} Vivekananda boldly declared that sound and healthy fourfold organization of society has turned and degraded to just a separation. According to Vivekananda it is out of spiritual tyranny of the priesthood and the ever increasing ceremonials. He fought against such separation and to pick up caste system as a mean for social mobility and progress. At last by following Vivekananda we can say, "Such is our ideal of caste, as meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realization of that great ideal of the spiritual men, who is non-resting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure and meditative. In that ideal there is God."\textsuperscript{(117)}
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