CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION

We all human beings are inhabitants of this fast planet where science and technology has its influence in every sphere of life. It makes our life more comfortable, by fighting against nature. Invention of efficient mechanism leads us to the state where human race is the king. But the question arises "Does science can remove fatigue of our soul?" On one hand, it is the age of prosperity of human race. On the other hand, it is the age of stress and strain. In the age of stress and strain human race is no more able to face the aridity of the gospel of science. We are connoted by both, animality and rationality. Our 'rationality' can't be satisfied only by our material progress. It is unable to give us inner comfort and peace of mind. Inspite the world is now a global village but the mind of every individual is becoming narrow. The World is divided into different parts, sects, races and religions. But there is no single force to hold all them together. Religion has almost lost its charm and every sect of religion becomes mere fanaticism and collection of rituals. The greatest fact on human civilization on earth is not the material achievements, the empire has built and broken. But growth of soul from age to age in it's search for truth and goodness. Those who take part in the adventure of soul, secure and endure place in the history of human culture.

The great men come and pass away but their good ideals and deeds last for ever for the sake of progress of human race. Great men shake and shape the world. Vivekananda (1863-1902), formerly known as Narendranath, is among those great men who made a better plane for the entire mankind. Narendranath was born in Calcutta, the second son of Viswanath Dutta, a successful lawyer and Bhubenseswari Devi, a highly religious woman and devotee of Lord Shiva. Vivekananda’s father “was a liberal and man with a synthetic mind”. In matters of daily life, he followed European customs like other gentlemen of the period. At the same time he never deviated from orthodox tradition. Narendranath’s boyhood was largely like that of any high spirited, vigorous and healthy young boy with extra ordinary interest in the acquisition of knowledge and acquired mastery in varied field of eastern and
western knowledge. His inborn quest for truth led him to almost all the
learned men of Calcutta, to whom he made earnest enquiries about God. This
took him to Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, who was then officiating as a priest
in the temple of Dakhineswar. Ramakrishna was highly known for his God-
realization. Narendranath’s first meeting with Sri Ramakrishna took place in
1881, when he was college student, just 18 years old. A rationalistic
intellectual that he was, Narendranath did not find intellectual satisfaction
with the illiterate and seemingly abnormal Sri Ramakrishna at first meet. But
Narendranath found a kind of magneticism in Ramakrishna which made him
compel to meet him again. Narendranath was not a person to accept anything
without questioning. It was after years of questioning and listening, which
went on till the guru’s last days that Narendranath finally became convinced of
his guru’s greatness. He became an initiated disciple to whom Sri
Ramakrishna imported his spiritual realization and whom he declared his heir.
After passing away of the master he accepted ‘sanyas’, as directed by guru.
He dedicated to carry on the mission entrusted to him by his master.

The India of Vivekananda’s time was also in a state of all round
ferment social, political, economic, religious and psychological. As
Ranganathananda has put it, “His (Vivekananda’s) life coincided with the most
dynamic period of modern transition in India, which resulted from the contact
of age old Indian culture and tradition with the youthful culture of modern
West. Out of that ferment arose modern India renaissance which had already
proceeded with uncertain steps for more then half a century by the time
Vivekananda appeared on the scene and which found in him, the most
effective representative and exponent.”(2)

After the passing away of the Master Sri Ramakrishna, in August 1886,
many of the young disciples gathered together in an old dilapidated house at
Baranagore under the leadership of Narendranath. Here in the midst of a life
of intense austerity and spiritual practices, the foundation of the Ramakrishna
brotherhood was laid. It was during these days that Narendranath, along with
many of his brother disciples, went to Antpur. They took there the vow of
‘Sannyās’.

A remarkable change of outlook came over Narendranath between the
closing of 1888. He first left on is temporary excursion, and 1890, when he
parted finally from his brethren and traveled alone. He began to assume various names in order to conceal his identity that he might be swallowed up in the immensity of India. He went first to Varanasi. Then Lucknow, Agra, Vrindaban, Rishikesh and returned to Baranagore. He met Sharat Chandra Gupta, who became his first disciple (Swami Sadananda). He revealed to him the mission entrusted to him by his Master, namely, the spiritual regeneration of India and the world.

In July 1890, he took leave of Sri Sarada Devi, the holy consort of Sri Ramakrishna, who was the spiritual guide of the young monks after the master's passing away. He also took leave of his brother monks with firm resolve to cut himself free from all this and to go into solitude of the Himalayas. In the words of Romain Rolland, "This was the great departure. Like a diver, he plunged into the ocean of India and the ocean of India covered his track. Among its flotsam and jetsam, he was nothing more than one nameless Sannyasin in saffron robe among a thousand others. But the fire of genius burned in his eyes. He was a prince despite all disguise."[3] His wondering took him to various places of pilgrimage and historical interest in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Hyderabad. Everywhere the glory of ancient India vividly came before his eyes. Misery of Indian masses stood out before him. He had traveled through the whole of India. In Kanyakumari he took the momentous decision to go to the West to seek help for the poor of India. Thus he gave shape to his life mission. Maharaja of Khetri promised to help him in his journey to West, in every possible way. He gave him the name 'Vivekananda', there after he was known by this name.

His journey to America commenced on 31 May 1893. He reached Chicago about the middle of July. The Parliament of Religions opened on 11 September 1893 at "Art institute". On the platform, every organized religion from all corners of the world had its representatives. When Vivekananda's turn came, he began his address with the words, "Sisters and Brothers of America". The appeal of his simple words reflected his great personality. Next day the newspaper described him as the greatest figure in the parliament of religion. The simple monk with a begging bowl had become the man of the hour. All his subsequent speeches were listened with great respect and
appreciation. All delegates spoke of their own religion, Vivekananda spoke of a religion which accepts all sects of religions. He seeks religion as faith that provides inner comfort, everyone lacks at present. He offered a religion that is intensely human, yet profoundly spiritual. He realized that religion can play major role in securing world peace. His whole idea of religion is based on Vedanta philosophy. He re-oriented Vedanta and dreamt it as future religion of whole mankind. He became "Neo-vedantist".

Before pondering over the Vivekananda's concept of religion it is necessary for us to know and discuss the meaning of the term 'Religion'. We should know views of various philosophers regarding religion. It will help our present study to be grounded on a broader perspectives. Besides, it is of fundamental importance to understand the term 'religion' before penetrating into ideals of a particular thinker.

Despite the great diffusion of knowledge, there are many who don't know the meaning of religion itself. Today the term religion has come to mean almost everything but what it should mean. The service of one's fellow men, is religion for some men. For some one, it consists in service to the state. In fundamentals of Religion, James V. Linden and William T. Costello wrote, "If we remember that the word religion is derived from the Latin word "religaree", we see that religion means a binding of man to something. Whatever it's etymology religion fundamentally means the recognition of man's dependence on God and living up the obligations that man's dependence on God imposes. Hence religion implies a reawakening of man to his relationship with God and binding of himself to God through the bonds of service and love."[4]

The derivation of religion has been in dispute since ancient times. Cicero maintained in De Naturaderum (II, XVIII) that the word comes from religree, which means to "treat carefully". Lactantius in his Divine investigation (iv, xviii) held that the term derives from 'religree' which means to recover. St. Augustine in his 'The City of God' favoured religion as 'to recover'. This etymology, St. Agustine subsequently abandoned in is Retractatius' (ixii) According to Lactantius it means the concept of binding man to God.
In the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy it is stated, "Although religions are typically complex system of theory and practice including both myth and rituals, philosophers tend to concentrate or evaluating religious truth claims. In the major theistic tradition, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the most important of the claims concern the existence, nature and activities of God. Such tradition commonly understood God to be something like a person who is disembodied, eternal, free, all powerful all knowing, the creator and sustainer of the universe, and the proper object of human obedience and worship."(5)

Western minds are generally theistic in their approach to religion. They usually regard religion as some form of theism. In defining religion the logicians accepted the view of Flint, according to whom anything more than theism is religion and anything less than theism is no religion at all. In other words according to William James and Flint the central topic of religion is God. William James defines religion as, "The feeling, acts and experience of Individual man in their solitude so far as they apprehended themselves to religion, to whatever they may consider the divine".(6)

Religion involves both elements. Element of feeling and element of faith, as Galloway defined religion as, "Man's faiths in a power beyond himself where by he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gains stability of life and which he expresses acts of worship and services."(7) Galloway, here asserts faith in a power beyond man as the essential feature of religion. This power is such that it includes the emotional satisfaction to man. In other words, this power responds man, or helps him in his hours of trouble. Naturally unless this power be personal in some sense of the term, it cannot satisfy emotional needs of man.

Professor E.B. Tylor, gave his definition of religion on the basis of his anthropological researches. Religion may be regarded as a principle of life. It is a feeling of living relation between human individual and supreme power. The faith on super being or the Supreme Being or higher self, pervades in all religions.
The member of every religion develops a religious attitude J.E. Mc. Taggart defines religious attitude as, "a conviction of harmony between ourselves and universe at large."\(^{(8)}\)

Some again define religion in terms of feeling or emotion. The most influential of all such definitions is the famous formula of Schleiermacher "The essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God". \(^{(9)}\)

Religion is a warm intimate, immediate awareness of the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the temporal, as sense of dependence on the whole. He rendered great service to religion by saving it from the barren intellectualism on the one hand. On the other hand he saved it from bare moralism. He revealed the mystic inwardness of religion as immediate awareness to God.

Rudolf Otto by his careful study of Eastern and Western religions, has established that religion is essentially non-rational. He calls religious experience as mysterious "numinous" feeling. By this Otto has put religion on a secure pedestal. If religious experience is non-rational, then, it cannot be rationally explained. The sense is that, the finite human understanding cannot apprehend it fully. The word 'numinous' is derived from 'Numen' which means divinity. According to Otto, the religious life is something absolutely specific and unique. Religious feeling demands a quite distractive category of interpretation. It cannot be interpreted in terms of good, the beautiful or the true. According to Otto, these are secondary factors of religious life. It's category of value is the holy. The idea of the "holy" has become predominantly an ethical one (the perfect good). So Otto coins a new term. This new term is 'the numinous'. The purely religious or numinous state of mind is irreducible to any other. The deity is felt as unapproachable mystery and irreducible to any other. Otto recognized character of the noumen or deity cannot be verbally or conceptually expressed. It can only be felt.

Coming to more recent attempts at defining the essence of religion, we may begin by to the remarkable definition given by M. Salomon Reinach. Reinach declares, "It Implies a limitation, without any material constraint, of individual volition or rather of human activity as far as this depends on volition. As there are great many religions, so there are a great many limitation and I propose to define religion as "A sum of scruples which impedes the free exercise of our faculties."\(^{(10)}\) He proceeds to say that the 'scruples' which he
has in mind are those of special kind which calls ‘taboo’, namely such scruple are purely irrational. The feature of this definition is that, it fastens on the negative aspect of religion, namely it’s restrictions and prohibition even these restrictions, which are not inspired by any practical reasons. But surely to reduce all religious belief into a system of taboos is to reveal on appalling lack of insight into the real meaning of what it is sought to define. It is true that restrictions often arbitrary and irrational have filled a large place in the religious life. But even in the primitive societies taboo could only survive in so far as they were believed to contribute to the positive needs of life and helped man in the struggle for existence. Primitive taboos have undergone a process of rationalization and selection. Only useful taboos were retained to primitive men. Harold Hoffding defines religion as the faith in the conservation of values. Further he states “The conservation of value is the characteristic axiom. In the innermost essence of religion is concerned not with the comprehension but with the valuations of existence”.¹¹

Alexander criticizes Hoffding’s view and defines religion “feeling of our going out towards something not ourselves, with which we are in communion, a feeling shown object is, not that of any of these subsidiary or suggestive process of universe aims at him and through the process of emergency it has been making approximate towards Him.”¹² For him God is not a finished being but an eternal becoming.

Auguste Comte, French sociologist, proposed for a new concept of religion, as religion of worship of humanity in the place of worship of God. He established a new Church to preach and propagate the religion of Humanity in place of religion of God. Later on the new religion took the form in ethical societies of Europe. Where as the Christian Churches preached the glory of great God, the ethical societies try to understand and find solution for the social and moral problem of humanity. For Comte it was impossible to accept the existence of supernatural God. Thinking, feeling, these qualities belong to man only. But we cannot worship a particular man. Human existence is possible through relation with other men in society. All human beings are in relation to a greater family through language, emotional belief. By synthesizing humanity Comte draws the idea of greater humanity. For Comte religion is synthesisization of our existence. According to Comte, we cannot
attempts to manifest what lies deepest in our being and tries to have contact
with that. The deepest layers of man's being are spiritual and religion traces
out these layers. To have notion of God is not enough for religion. It attempts
to transform our material experience into spiritual one in which we are
acquainted with the deepest layer. The deepest layer refers to ultimate reality
which lies in our existence. Religion is self manifestation of the ultimate reality
in men. A religion represent the soul of the people, it's particular spirit, thought
and temperament. It is an experience of the race, a record of its social
evaluation and integral element of society in which it is found.

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) a pioneer of India's freedom movement,
poet, seer and the exponent of integral yoga, visualizes the possibility of
humanity fulfilling it's evolutionary destiny through a process of
transformation. In the words of Aurobindo "Religion is the existence, idea,
activity, discipline in man which aims directly at the divine, while all the rest
seem to aim at it only indirectly and reach it with difficulty after such
wondering and slumbering in the pursuit of outward and imperfect
appearances of thought". For Aurobindo our whole life is a journey in
search of divinity but it may not be possible for all to measure the whole
journey in a single life. Aurobindo states, "To get at this (God as the end of
journey) as a spiritual presence is the aim of religion"

An enlightened home full of intellectual curiosity and artistic
perceptions gave to Rabindranath Tagore the direction of his thought. He was
greatly influenced by the ancient Indian classics, mediaeval Vaisnava
literature and Western romantic poets. Tagore belonged to Brahma Samaj
and he developed a religion which combines some element of Brahma Samaj
with some element of orthodox Hinduism, finally what he called 'the religion of
man'. Tagore believed that religion can not be combined to any group or sects
or tribes or nation. Men pick up various forms but in the final analysis religion
transcends all such particular form. Man has self awareness which reveals to
him the fact that he has a capacity of going beyond himself of constantly
pushing himself ahead towards higher and higher religion. Tagore stated, "If
there is any philosophy of religion in my writings, it amounts to realize the
relationship of perfect love between supreme soul and the soul of the created
beings …..this love that holds duality on the one side and non duality on the other, union as well as separation along with freedom."(16)

For Tagore, man’s religion is expression as the essential and inner aspect of man. Man posses an extra awareness that is greater than his material sense. Religion is the realization of oneness of the individual soul with supreme soul. This realization is a realization of love and joy. Explaining this P.T. Raju says that, “Just as wateriness in the religion of water, the supreme man is the religion of the finite man”.(17)

Mahatma Gandhi’s (1867-1948), concept of religion is highly practical. The conviction of Gandhi is that there is one reality; that is God, which is nothing else but truth. His religious ideas are also derived from the conviction that if truth is God, than sincere pursuit of truth is religion. Though Gandhi was lover of God, he had no attraction for any abstract entity called by the term God. “God to be God, must rule the heart and transform it. Religion means to accept God for life. Acceptance of God means to allow love, truth and reason to rule heart and remove selfishness, ill will, ignorance and unreason and all the passions like anger, greed and lust, that all follow there from.”(18)

Therefore, the essence of religion is morality. Gandhi never accepts religion as theoretical concept that seeks to satisfy intellectual curiosity and urges. It is for him a way of life, a practical affair. Gandhi feels that, a religion which has no account to practical affairs and does not help to solve them, is no religion. Though Gandhi was a lover of God, but he has no attraction for any abstract entity call by the very word ‘God’. In other words he never worships God as human being. Rama, Krishna, Christ all are for him imagination of a perfect incarnation, spotless in every sense of the word.

So, every thinker, every philosopher has tried to give a definition according to his own standpoint. All these definitions focus upon a particular aspect of religion. Some time a definition has changed in course of it’s discussion. Such as, for Gandhi held first ‘God is truth’, later on he proclaimed ‘Truth is God’. Hence worship of truth is his religion. Thinker like Kant emphasized the primacy of moral will and brings God only as a moral postulate, a higher form of Goodness. In Kant’s conception of religion, there is no room left for the mystic experience. M.J. Chorlesworth, explains Kant view, “Religion is a matter of the will, it being understood and identified with
practical reason, that is to say certain acts ought to be done as that certain attitude ought to be adopted." Similarly Bradley and Arnold have identified religion with morality. They believe that moral consciousness has an autonomy of its own and religions springs out of morality. In the nature of our moral consciousness there is a direct evidence for the existence of super human personality. But this theory does not appear to be quite reasonable as it is not applicable in the case of primary societies where there was no real connection between ritual system with its associated belief in super natural being and moral code.

Each civilization seems to have given some particular aspect of life. Ancient Greece was devoted to art, Rome to politics. But while these civilization and others pursuing similar ideals, perished and form new but dead chapter of history. India has stood like a 'rock of Ages', weathering many fierce storm because her foundation is based on eternal values of philosophy and religion. The great men of India have always been not distinguish statesman, but the messenger's of spirit, who appeal to fundamental unity of all creatures. Their message is not for a particular country or age but for the entire world and for all time. Such seer is Vivekananda, who have been the savior of Indian culture and custodian of human's latent divinity and path finder in cultivation of such divine heritage of entire human race.

Vivekananda recognized religion as a necessary aspect of life. He was conscious of the fact that no description of religion can be exact. The various definitions that have been given are not wrong, but they invariably mean one of the other aspect of religion. Therefore, according to Vivekananda the best way to appreciate the nature of religion is to highlight essential aspects of religion.

Realization occupies a vital part in Vivekananda's discussion of religion. At the end of 19th century, due to development of agnosticism and materialism, it was almost feared that religion came to end. But the rescue of religion has come from the stand point of comparative religion. By the study of different religions we find that in essence they are optimistic about human nature and uphold that every human soul is potentially divine. Vivekananda believed that, each soul is potentially divine and the goal of our life is to manifest our divinity, by controlling, nature, (internal and external). This can
be done by work or worship or psychic control and philosophy. For him religion is not, what we believe, but what we realize. The end of all religions, is realization of God in the soul. Vivekananda personally believed and represented a philosophy of India, which is called Vedanta philosophy. For him Vedanta is the ideal religion and he dreamt it as future religion of mankind, in the form of universal religion. He showed legitimate ground for it.

Now if we look to the origin of religion we find "civilization furnishes, no phenomenon so wide spread so far reaching in its consequences as religion. In Iranian documents, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, in the Cuneiform inscription, religion everywhere asserts its claim to be considered the chief and most influential factor in the lives of families and nations. In other words, the history of religion is the history of man. If once were to ask then; when did religion begin, the history would be forced to reply, "Religion began when man began". This is observed by Max Muller.

The question of the origin of religion was not scientifically studied until modern times. The origin of religion is studied in the light of Anthropology, Psychical and historical aspect. It will be worthwhile to our study to have a look to the theories regarding origin of religion, and Vivekananda's view regarding it.

The Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan theologies trace back religion, back to primitive or special 'Divine Revelation'. It has usually taken the form of a belief in a primeval monotheism of divine origin, from which polytheism in its many forms is a later relapse. Revelation explained the origin of religion as an intellectual and mechanical fashion. It makes revelation to be purely an act of God. It seems that religion, began with the importation to man of a set of ideas, which are ready made and poured into the mind of man.

The eighteen century English deists found the origin of religion in human reason. They found that fundamental truths of religion which are common to all religion, such as concept of God, immortality of soul, presence of moral law, these are truths of human reason. On other words, religion originates in human reason. But cunning priests, in order to exploit the masses, spread superstitious belief and ritual practices. Thus religion has two
fold origins (i) reason as the source of pure natural religion and (ii) willful deceit on the part of priests as the source of all the actual historical religion. This theory of the English deists, first propounded by Lord Herbert and John Toland, was adopted by a group of French thinkers during the later part of the 18th century, e.g. La Mettrie, D'Alembert, Voltaire.

Other anthropological theories to explain the origins of religion are the animistic theory of E.B. Tylor, pre-animistic religion and Ghost theory of Herbert Spencer.

The animistic theory of E.B. Tylor, may be stated to be the first theory of the origin of religion. It was based on thoroughly scientific study of the mind and habit of the savages. It first appeared in Tylor's monumental volumes, Primitive Culture (1st edition 1817) where it is shown that, at a certain stage of human culture man everywhere, attributed a kind of soul to the phenomena of nature-e.g. to tree, mountains, clouds etc. Primitive man regarded all he saw as possessing a life like his own. To the early man, nature was alive, filled with enumerable spirits. According to Tylor, it was on the basis of this animistic view, primitive men tried to establish a relationship between him and certain spirits around him.

Ghost theory of Herbert Spencer upheld that origin of religion in the worship of ancestors appearing in the form of religion. The totemism is much an extraordinary phenomenon that we cannot describe it in its complexity. A totem is a species of animal or plant. It is more rarely a class of inanimate objects, to which a social group (a clan) stands in an intimate and very special relation of friendship or Kinship. Frequently it is thought of as the ancestor of the clan-and which provides the social group with its name. The totem is not exactly a God, but a cognate being and to be respected. Totem is always the species and never an individual animal or plant that regarded as a 'totem'.

A new form has recently been given to totemism by the 'French sociological school'. Emile Durekhaim is the most distinguished representative of it. Durekhaim regards totemism as the most simple and primitive religion. Totemism upholds the faith on a mighty being. The reality behind the totem is, the might of tribal custom, emotion and thought. Primitive men felt that an
actual existing force weighing upon the each individual. To say more clearly, real God is the society.

1. Recent anthropology tends more and more to find the origin of religion is in common with magic. In pre-animistic stage of religion human being believed in the presence of a mysterious power. This power is designated by the term ‘mana’. Pre-animistic theory states that religion and magic have a common root. Mana is an all pervading super sensual power it operates in unnatural ways like magic. It is distinguished from natural quality. It is not totally personal or impersonal. But mana is more psychical than physical in character. Regarding this view there are three positions. The first view holds that, belief in supernatural was prior to the belief in magic. The second view holds that magic was prior to religion and that later evolved in some way out of the former. According to this theory primitive magic was the germ out of which religion developed later on. According to the third view followed by Marett, magic and religion had a common root in man’s experience of the mysterious force of the world. Both are concerned with mysterious power. But the attitude of religion is one of humility and submission in the presence of superior power. On the other hand magic is misleading. Thus we can think of that religion and magic as issuing out of common conditions. Both are more or less conscious experiments with unseen. In brief we can say religion as magic potentially distinct from one another in its principle and method. Yet we have to mention that they have common root. That is Primitive men’s emotional reaction to his environment.

Another approach to explain the origin and development of religion is psychological approach. One common statement to explain religion psychologically is that man has a religious instinct. The word ‘instinct’ has come to mean for something very definite and simple, the inborn, untaught tendency to react in a specific way to certain kind of objective or situation. It is independently of prior experience. But religion is not a simple, specific reaction to a simple, specific kind of impression. As W. Mc Dougall, has defined it as, "a very complex and diversified product of the co-operation of
several instinct, which bring forth very heterogeneous manifestations". Here term 'instinct' is used in a popular and unscientific sense. Yet it has certain element of truth that is religion is deeply rooted in human nature. It means that religion is the normal and natural thing for man.

Another psychological explanation states, religion has its origin in man's religious faculty. It is an old and easy method of explaining religious faculty functioning apart from the rest of mind. It ignores unity of human mind.

Some thinkers suggest that one single elemental emotion of fear is the root of religion. This view finds its classical exponent in the Epicurean philosophers and the Latin poet Lucretius who identified religion with superstition. In modern time Hume reverted to the position of Lucretius and emphasized fear as the motive to religious act. Though Hume was careful to add that fear of the gods was tempered by the hope of security their goodwill. One recent psychologist, Ribot has given his support to the fear theory. There can be no doubt that fear does play a predominant part in primitive religion. A vague terror of mysterious forces of nature provides in the life of the savages. This vague terror leads him to pay more attention to goods spirits to secure favour from them.

In order to trace historical development of religion Dr. Galloway divided it four ways 1 Tribal religion 2 National religion 3 Universal religion.

1. Tribal religion: The tribe is rudimentary form of social union and is the form in which all savage peoples live. It is an exceedingly small and limited social group, being merely an extension of the family. Blood relationship is one social bond, and the surrounding tribes are regarded as actual or potential enemies. "The tribe group is small, but very compact body. The group is all in all, it thinks and acts as one body. There is little or no sense of individuality. The individual is in the grip of complicated and rigidly enforced system of social customs, and not yet captain of his own soul. Any infringement of tribal custom is apt to be visited terrible punishment". Durkheim mentioned that the savage feels the weight of custom upon him like an actual objective force. Early religion naturally reflects this overwhelming tribal consciousness.
It is a group possession, a body of custom sanctioned by the authority of tribal tradition. The interest that underlies this religious custom as well as his other custom are those connected with marriage, birth, sickness, death, war, protection from the weather. Life is not yet departmentalized. The initiation ceremonies, for instance, are religion, morality, magic, law all in one.

2. National Religion: When a number of tribes are fused together and become a nation. Either through the pressure of the fear of a common enemy, or through the conquest of many tribes by a stronger, there is a great widening of man's mental horizon. The chief religion consists in the worship of many spirits. This spirit cannot be regarded as God. Because they have no personal history or personal character or individual names. Gradually the human faculties started to concretize the impersonal spirits. This does not mean that the spirits dwelling in trees or clouds were abandoned. These spirits were gradually promoted to the status of God. In course of time one single mighty God took place.

3. Universal religion: At the stage of its evolution, as national religion, religion is just an aspect of the national life. It is a department of the state. It has to do with the individual only in a secondary way. It is not so much a matter of individual choice or personal conviction. More over national religions showed little tendency to extend beyond their native boundaries. If the national boundaries are extended through victory in war, then the boundaries of the religion are extended likewise. The conquered, as a matter of course, adopt the religion of the conqueror. All the religions of the civilized world, ancient and modern, belong to this class. But three great universal religions or missionary religions are exception. Universal religions like Buddhism, Christianity and Islamism have a message of value to all mankind. Universal religion spreads all through the world through the great prophets.

Vivekananda is interested in the problem of the origin of religion and he draws the solution in his own way. Vivekananda observed thus “two views, though they seem to be contradictory, can be reconciled on a third basis,
which, to my mind is the real germ of religion, and that I propose to call the 'struggle to transcend the limitations of the senses'. Either, man goes to seek for the spirits of his ancestors, the spirits of the dead, that is, he wants to get a glimpse of what there is after the body is dissolved, or, he desires to understand the power working behind the stupendous phenomena of nature. Whichever of these is the case, one thing is certain, that he tries to transcend the limitations of the senses."(23)

Vivekananda states that if we compare the two views, we find that there is a common element in both of them, an element which is more fundamental then either of them. Vivekananda calls that element, 'the struggle to transcend the limitation of the senses'. There is a reason behind both ancestor worship and nature worship. Man remains active through out his life, and suddenly he dies. The primitive men could offer no explanation for these phenomena. Senses can not apprehend beyond the phenomena. Thus Vivekananda found that all available of explanation of religion, the animism, fetishism pre-suppose the basic fact: that is religion originates in man's attempt to go beyond the senses.

Here, it is an attempt to sketch a comprehensive view of Vivekananda's concept of religion. All through the study, attempt is made to maintain a sequence from Vivekananda's concept of religion, it's relation to man and society, his view of universal religion, finally the ground to establish Vedanta as universal religion. He was inspired by his master Ramakrishna and motivated by his noble zeal, to establish unity of religions to remove all strives and grieves of present world. He tried to cultivate in every man, his potential divinity and cultivation of divinity is the solution of every problem, faced by the world. He stated, "Our life-blood is spirituality. If it is right everything is right, political, social, any other material defects, even the poverty, of the land, will all be cured, if that blood is pure".(24) He applied and asserted it, not only to country men, but to the entire world. Study will observe the role of his view of religion, as pre-cursor to remove fanaticism, to establish oneness of humanity and to spiritual regeneration of everymen. The rationale behind this study is to embrace each one of fellowmen as our own relatives and to actualize the world as "Basudhaiva Kutumbakam" finally, spiritual oneness of all creatures.
References

3. Romain Rolland, as quoted in, Inspiring lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda, p. 44.
8. J.E. Mc Taggart, as quoted by J.A. Passmore in Hundred Years of Philosophy p. 76.
9. Schleirmacher in Caldecott and Makintosh’s Selection From The Literature of Theism p. 256.
10. M. Solaman Reniach, Orphesus p. 3.
12. Alexander, Space, time and Deity p. 373.


