Abstract

What had been unique in Indian Epistemology is the insistence that what ever one shall know by way of knowledge ought to affect the knower. Knowledge must affect, refine and perhaps re-make knower to become a better social being, and ultimately better citizen of the nation. This aspect need to be practiced in our teaching and researches, and this is one of the reasons that went into this research. The next task was to select some thinkers, who had said and practiced these, albeit all Indians perhaps follow this principle. Two thinkers were selected, one from immediate past, and another from distant past. The Mahatma, from immediate past is found to be perhaps the best to this end, as he was also a person who had practiced his thoughts. Buddha and his teachings were simple, far reaching, and was meant for every common man. Less complex, no custodians, and mother tongues of common people, all made Buddha’s teachings intelligible to perhaps every one. This made the possibility of making an investigation into the formation of Buddhism, and Buddha’s influence on the making of the Mahatma.

The genesis of the Buddha is taken into the second chapter, after the introduction. To this end, a survey into the Vedic context of the Buddha is conducted, and attempts had been made to demonstrate that the coming of the Buddha was inevitable, for reformatons and reparations to the then existing conditions of the Vedic society. Perhaps it was this Vedic context that made the Buddha possible, and Buddhism indeed. In the third chapter, attempts had been made to run through the Philosophy of the Buddha. Efforts were to touch all aspects of Buddha’s Philosophy, especially those directly spelt out by Siddhartha Gautama. Spread of Buddhism forms the fourth chapter, and here the chief journey of Buddhism from India to different lands are mentioned. Different sects, different personalities who were instrumental in the re invention of Buddha in different lands are also touched upon. Chapter five tries to look at the Mahatma through Buddha and show as to how and to what extent the Mahatma became another living Buddha. Like Buddha himself, the Mahatma also was people oriented, and he spent his entire life in making good individuals out of people in general. The Mahatma was indeed taking the entire Indian knowledge to common people and trying to create real human models for the entire world, which shall indeed go into the making of the ideal society. Chapter six deals with this aspect of Gandhian thoughts, taken to people. The conclusion suggests learning more from these models, and thus refining and bettering oneself, it also suggests that our education programme should take more care of these aspects.