At a time when the national movement had not gone beyond the stage of sending petitions and passing resolutions appealing to the good sense of the British government, Swami Vivekananda boldly gave a call to the people of India to free themselves from the shackles of alien rule and exposed the stark reality of foreign exploitation. At a time when the Indian people still largely thought of themselves as Hindus and Muslims, or Brahmanas or Kshatriyas, or Vaishyas or Shudras, as Maharattas and Tamils and Biharis and Bengalees and Oriyas and Assamese, Vivekananda upheld the concept of Indian nationhood and said that India is one from Kashmir to Kanyakumari despite all its diversities. At a time when a thick curtain of orthodoxy insulated India from the rest of the world, when the very idea of going abroad to the land of mlechhas was considered abhorrent, Vivekananda fearlessly traveled round the world and unfurled the banner of Indian nationalism, Indian culture and India’s moral and spiritual values. He did so not only in India but also in the very citadels of imperialism in Britain and America.

A nation is a group of people who share culture, ethnicity and language, often possessing or seeking its own independent government. A nation is not necessarily equated with country which is defined as the political entity within defined borders. Countries where the social concept of nation coincides with the political concept of state are called nation states. In some sense, terms such as ‘nation,’ ‘ethnos,’ and ‘people’ denote a group of human beings.

Etymologically, the origin of ‘nation’ is from Latin word ‘natio,’ meaning the idea of common blood ties. It is derived from the part participle of the verb nasci meaning to be reborn. Its Latin noun nationem means breed or race. Originally, natio meant a backward tribe. Civilized people, as of Greece
and Rome, called themselves *gens* or populous. Cicero's Philippics used the word nation contrasting the external, inferior nationes ('races of people') with the Roman civitas ('community'): *Omnes nationes servitutem ferre possunt: nostra civitas non potest.* ('All races are able to bear enslavement, but our community cannot'). At the beginning of middle ages, the word nation was used in Germany and France to designate the higher ruling class in opposition to the *volk* or people. The concept of nation is normally coupled with a historical doctrine taking as a principle that all humans can be divided into groups called nations.

A nation constituted on the basis of an ethical-political basis is termed as cultural nation and its members differ from others on the basis of cultural features like language, religion, tradition, or shared history. Marx and Engels considered nation states as a product of 'bourgeois revolution' and a further step within the logic of their theory of historical materialism because the nation states had a higher number of proletarians. A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in common culture. The idea of ‘ethnically homogeneous’ nation states formulated earlier, found its climax in the twentieth century with eugenics and ethnic cleansing, with the Nazi holocaust being the most important example.

Ernest Renan defined nation in a lecture at the Sorbonne in 1882, as a 'daily plebiscite'. Renan in Life of Jesus described that it is not race, religion, language, state, civilization or economic interests that make a nation. The national idea is founded on heroic past, great men, and true glory. Common experience leads to the foundation of a community of will. More than any thing else, it is common grief that binds a nation together, more than triumphs. A

4 An early example of the use of the word ‘nation’ in conjunction with language and territory is provided in 968 A. D. by Liutprand, bishop of Cremona, who, while confronting Nicephorus II, the Byzantine emperor on behalf of his patron Otto I, Holy Roman Emperor, declared, “The land which you say belongs to your empire belongs, as the nationality and language of the people proves, to the kingdom of Italy”.
6 Joseph Stalin, quoted in *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 20.
7 See, for example, the *Nuremberg Laws* (September 1935) signed by Adolf Hitler, found by the soldiers of the armies of occupation after World War II.
nation, therefore, is a great solidarity founded in the consciousness of sacrifices made in the past and on willingness to a plebiscite repeated everyday. Benedict Anderson argues that nations are imagined communities that are imagined as limited and sovereign. The imagination is made possible by extensive use of printing press, mass media and capitalism. Eric Hobsbawm opined that nations are invented tradition; include invention of education, public ceremonies and mass production of public monuments. There is strong tie between nationalism and modernization. It is nationalism, which engenders nations, and not the other way round.

Nationalism involves a strong identification of a group of individuals with a political entity defined in national terms, that is, a nation. Often, it is the belief that an ethnic group has a right to statehood or that citizenship in a state should be limited to one ethnic group, or that multinational in a single state should necessarily comprise the right to express and exercise national identity even by minorities. In some cases, the identification of a national culture is combined with a negative view of other races or cultures. “In brief, nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones”. Conversely, nationalism might also be portrayed as collective identities towards imagined communities, which are not naturally expressed in language, race or religion but rather socially constructed by the very individuals that belong to a given nation. Nationalism is a state of mind, an idea, which fills man’s brain and heart with new thoughts and new sentiments and drives him to translate his consciousness into deeds of organized action. Nationalism is sometimes reactionary, calling for a return to a national past, and sometimes for the expulsion of foreigners.

8 Hutchinson (ed), Nationalism, p. 17.
11 Anthony D. Smith, National Identity, University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1993, p. 64.
Before the development of nationalism, people were generally loyal to a city or to a particular leader rather than to their nation. *Encyclopedia Britannica* identifies the movement's genesis with the late eighteenth century American Revolution and French Revolution; other historians point specifically to the ultra-nationalist party in France during the French revolution.\(^1\)

The extreme form of nationalism is Ultra-nationalism, which can lead to fascism,\(^2\) authoritarianism and tight control over activities within the nation that supposedly will threaten the nation if left unchecked. It can lead to reduction or stoppage of immigration, expulsion, oppression, demagoguery, emotional aspects, talk of presumed real or imagined enemies, threat to survival, crack-down, limit of trade through tariffs, tight control over businesses and production, militarism, populism, propaganda and basically ‘us versus them’ attitude. Ultra-nationalism ultimately can lead to conflict within a state, as well as between states, resulting into war, secession, or genocide.\(^3\)

Critics of nationalism have argued that it is often unclear what constitutes a ‘nation’, or why a nation should be the only legitimate unit of political rule. Although nationalists argue that the boundaries of a nation and a state should, as far as possible, coincide.\(^4\) Philosopher A.C. Grayling describes nations as artificial constructs, “their boundaries drawn in the blood of past wars….there is no country on earth which is not home to more than one culture, different but usually coexisting culture. Cultural heritage is not the same thing as national identity”.\(^5\) In the liberal political tradition, nationalism is a dangerous force and a cause of conflict and war between nation-states.

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2. Fascism is a form of polygenetic ultra-nationalism which promotes national revolution, national collectivism, a totalitarian state, and irredentism or expansionism to unify and allow the growth of a nation.
5. *Class and Nation: Problems of Socialist Nationalism*, Political Science, Volume XXV, issue II.
William Blum has said this in other words, “If love is blind, patriotism has lost all five senses”. Albert Einstein stated that ‘Nationalism is an infantile disease... It is the measles of mankind’.

History is testimony that nationalism has been a continuous phenomenon since centuries. It has been a strong force for the liberation of people against oppression, tyranny and inhuman governance. Some of the elementary traits of nationality may be as old as humanity, but the more complicated phenomenon have gradually arisen at different times. Modern nationality saw its beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century was par excellence the century of nationalism. The characteristic content of European nationalism included such diverse elements as demands for written constitutions, emphasis on shared history, glorification of a cultural tradition, and faith in the creation of a self-sufficient economy and political institutions based on popular representation. All of these elements had a place in Indian nationalism, but added to them were others, including an impulse of unity that was deeply rooted in the Indian political and social tradition and a complex historical situation, unmatched elsewhere in the world. The conventional simplification of three periods—Hindu, Muslim, British, only hinted at the political palimpsest, for within each of them were forces that reached backwards and forwards. However, nationalism grew due to the manifestation of new phenomenon of modern nations and nation states.

Nationalism in colonial countries is considered a special category and in the context of subcontinent it is to be considered only as pan Indianism and anti-imperialism and, infact, polar opposite to communalism whether religious, casteist, ethnic, or linguistic.

The nineteenth century was the seedtime of modern India in the real sense. It witnessed the birth of a number of spiritual and intellectual giants,

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23 Jay Parkash Narayan, Nation Building in India, p. 305.
who breathed new life into the dry bones of our motherland. Each of them, in his own way, lent a hand in preparing the ground for the regeneration and ultimate liberation of India, tied to the apron strings of alien rule for centuries. The times, when Swami Vivekananda came, were one of the darkest periods in the centuries-old annals of the country. Inferiority complex and slave mentality of the Indians, coupled with their loss of respect for their own cultural heritage and traditions, had created a tragic situation. There was a vacuum in the national mind. Swami Vivekananda advocated nationalism for the Indians in the unique sense. He had a strong love for the country and its masses. It was his inmate love for India that restrained him from condemning its age-old institutions, for they served India well and their utility should not be judged from the present standards. He wanted a receptive and retentive India. The traditional past of India illuminated him; the present reflected her degradation and beckoned him to remould the future of India and even the world, which was afflicted with materialism, on a firm basis of spiritual unity of humankind. Swami Vivekananda knew that the political bondage was the root cause of a thousand evils. India's first duty is to secure her freedom as a condition precedent to her social well-being’. It needed not a little courage in the late nineteenth century India. If he was a lover of God, he was no less a lover of his country and fellow citizens as well. His patriotism, like all genuine patriotism, found expression in his profound love for the downtrodden people of his country, reduced to almost sub-human level through centuries-old oppression, injustice, and exploitation—social, political and economic. The fellow feeling for one's own fellow citizens and women was the first lesson to be learnt by a patriot.

The condition of Indians was very miserable. In Swami Vivekananda’s words, “A conglomeration of three hundred million souls, resembling men only in appearance; - crushed out of life by being down trodden by their own people and foreign nations … without any hope, without any past, without any future… of a malicious nature befitting a slave, to whom the property of their fellowmen is unbeatable; - licking the dust of the feet of the strong, dealing a

27 Quoted by Hans Kohn in History of Nationalism in The East, p. 373.
death blow to those who are weak, and hopeless of the future; without any standard of morality as their backbone; three hundred millions of souls such as these are swarming on the body of India, like so many worms on a rotten, sinking carcass; this is the picture concerning us, which naturally presents itself to the English official".  

The contrast with the denunciations of Hindu society, common in western writings of the time, is plain enough; but these same criticisms had been made, often with more sting, by men standing within the tradition—Keshab Chandra Sen, M. G. Ranade, and, in a very different way, but even more pungently, by Dayananda in *Satyartha Prakash*. Vivekananda's praise of India becomes at times a prose poem. In his speech at Colombo in 1897, ‘If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed *punya bhumi*, to be the land to which all souls on this earth must come to account for Karma, the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all the land of introspection and spirituality—it is India’. Perhaps no Indian before or since has spoken so movingly of his love for his country. Yet there is a vital element in Swami Vivekananda's emphasis on Hindu greatness that it was never exclusive and, above all, it was never anti-Muslim or anti-Christian. English writer Valentine Chirol, who contributed in 1910 a series of articles on Indian Unrest in *London Times*, wrote in one such issue, ‘The Mission of Swami Vivekananda to Chicago congress of Religions is in itself one of the most striking incidents in the history of Hindu Revivalism, but it is perhaps less wonderful than the triumph he achieved when he returned to India accompanied by a chosen band of eager disciples from the West. Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his own way had glorified the Hindu past, but, there is a note of exclusion in it, a rejection of the West, and all that the West meant in terms of cultural values. Swami Vivekananda demanded a full acceptance of

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the Hindu tradition, but his interpretation made possible an acceptance of other values and traditions.\textsuperscript{32}

The awakening of India began on the day Vivekananda set foot at Ramnad in 1897, and sang the song of her rejuvenation with the stirring rhythms of a \textit{Nataraja} Shiva, breaking the millennium old sleep of India: “The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awaking and a voice is coming to us ... a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold, the sleeper is awakening!... She is awaking, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet”.\textsuperscript{33} Romain Rolland wrote, “The storm passed; it scattered its cataracts of water and fire over the plain, and its formidable appeal to the Force of the Soul, to the God sleeping in man and His illimitable possibilities! I can see the Mage erect, his arm raised, like Jesus above the tomb of Lazarus in Rembrandt’s engraving: with energy flowing from his gesture of command to raise the dead and bring him to life”.\textsuperscript{34}

Vivekananda’s nationalism was neither insular nor parochial. He firmly believed that only a free India could play its rightful role in the comity of nations and that neither material nor spiritual advancement was possible for a people living in slavery. Vivekananda echoed the same voice which was heard ages ago in \textit{Aitareya Brahmana}, ‘Behold the beauty of the Sun who never slept since the beginning of creation—therefore move forward, move forward (\textit{caraiveti caraiveti})’.\textsuperscript{35} He visualized synthesis for an ideal society for India on the basis of co-coordinating the Hindu spirituality, the European energy and the Greek intellect. He had assimilated in his own personality the manliness of the West and saintliness of the East. He saw clearly the excellence and limitations of each of these two human legacies which he embraced as two

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\item \textsuperscript{32} Ainslie T. Embree, Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism, in \textit{Vivekananda: The Great Spiritual Teacher}, p. 476.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume III, pp. 145-46.
\item \textsuperscript{34} World Thinkers on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, 1983, p. 50.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Hiren Mukherjee, \textit{Vivekananda and Indian Freedom}, Replacement of Numeric Publisher Codes, Calcutta, 1986, p. 52.
\end{itemize}
integral elements of a total human culture and proclaimed the modern age as the era of their synthesis”.36

Vivekananda held freedom to be an inherent spiritual necessity for all forms of life, sentient or insentient. Where there is life there is the search for freedom. It is a product of struggle between the internal life and external nature. Everything is struggling towards freedom, from atom to man from the insentient lifeless particle of matter to the highest existence on earth the human soul. According to Vivekananda, man himself by nature is pure and free. He viewed individual freedom as a march from the lower to the higher life. ‘That ideal of freedom that you perceive was correct, but you projected it outside yourself and that was your mistake. Bring it nearer and nearer, until you find that it was all the time within you, if was the self of your own self. That freedom was your nature and this may never bind you.37 Freedom will be of little consequence to India unless her children recover the soul, the inherent spirituality of the race and rebuild their life on it that is the true meaning of India’s freedom’.38 The organization of human society tends to develop the altruistic element in man which makes for life and battles with and conquers asanaya mrutyu. It is, therefore, not the struggle for life or at least not the struggle for our own life, but the struggle for the life of others which is the most important term in evolution.39 Vivekananda was an exponent of the democratic humanistic type of nationalism and vehemently opposed the narrow nationalism.

Not only the nationalities in Vivekananda's opinion, every distinct group, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, etc., within a particular nation, also has the right to preserve their distinctiveness. He condemned the European policy which led to the destruction of such distinctive groups. He asked, ‘what country you have ever raised to better conditions? Wherever you have found weaker races, you have exterminated them by the roots, as it were. ... What is

the history of your America, your Australia, and New Zealand, your Pacific Islands and South Africa’? In this connection he points out the significance of the Aryan convention of integrating each weaker racial group into the nation body through the institution of Varna as is found in India. 'In Europe, it is everywhere victory to the strong, and death to the weak. In the land of Bharata, every social rule is for the protection of the weak’. Vivekananda held that Britain came to India not to fulfill but to destroy India’s national faith and institutions. Britain provided neither good government nor retained the well established local self-government but only offered on indifferent bureaucratic government. The spending by the British government on an English soldier was Rs.1001, while for a native soldier, it was Rs.362. Vivekananda confided his heart to American Miss Mary Hale in his fear-striking letter of 1899: ‘Indian labour and produce can support five times as many people as there are now in India, with comfort, if the whole thing is not taken off from them. Even education will no more be permitted to spread; freedom of the press stopped already, (of course we have been disarmed long ago), the bit of self-government granted to them for some years is being quickly taken off. For writing a few words of innocent criticism, men are being hurried to transportation for life, others imprisoned without any trial; and nobody knows when his head will be off. There has been a reign of terror in India for some years. English soldiers are killing our men and outraging our women - only to be sent home with passage and pension at our expense. We are in a terrible gloom - where is the Lord? Mary, you can afford to be optimistic. Suppose you simply publish this letter - the law just passed in India will allow the English Government in India to drag me from here to India and kill me without trial. And I know that all your Christian Governments will only rejoice because we are heathens. Shall I also go to sleep and become optimistic”?

Thirty years later in 1930, Will Durant confirmed Swamiji’s words: “And the more I read the more I was filled with astonishment and indignation at the apparently conscious and deliberate bleeding of India by England throughout a

hundred and fifty years. I began to feel that I had come upon the greatest crime in history".  

At Bombay Railway Station in 1900, where the Swami came after leaving his ship Rubattino, and was waiting for hours for catching the train to Calcutta, a Madras professor who had earlier heard him, identified him out in European dress and moving incognito. They began to talk. When the professor asked about his work in London, Vivekananda replied: “Until India becomes politically free, there is not the least chance that our religion will be appreciated by the English people. Not the slightest chance”.

When human beings are most clearly aware, most awake, they feel, that is some sense which cannot be clearly articulated. They are instruments for the expression of the spirit, vessels of the spirit. When they realize this, we outgrow individualism and espouse the cause of our fellow men because we and our fellow men are the expression of the same spirit. As long as individual is in a position to seek his own growth, outside intervention is destructive to individual freedom. It is only when individual growth is impeded, social assistance to individual is justified. Vivekananda considered society only as social agency which should not encroach on individual freedom as it existed for individuals and not the individuals for it. But at the same time, he condemned the privileges as baneful and tyrannical. Privileges are tantamount to social slavery and he identified slavery with tyranny. He was intolerant of human indignities based on privileges. Privileges – breaking and elimination of all propitiations constitute the mission of his Vedantic freedom in its social character”.

Vivekananda, however, despite his regard for individual freedom, did not place individual interests above society. He maintained an organic view of life. He regarded the individual as social and spiritual and wanted the union of the individual with society and not separation from it. B. G. Gokhale points out the significance of the social role of the individual in the following words: “While karma is social, mukti is individual and it is only when the social role

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45 S. L. Mukherjee, The Philosophy of Man Making, p. 207.
is played socially that individuality can find perfection".\textsuperscript{46} Vivekananda wanted to weaken neither the sphere of activity of society nor the freedom of the individual. He pointed out that man is individual, but at the same time universal. It is while reaching our individual nature that we realize even our national and universal nature. None deserves liberty that is not ready to give liberty.\textsuperscript{47}

Vivekananda’s liberal outlook which denounced social rigidity exclusiveness and narrowness paved the way for his enunciation of social synthesis.\textsuperscript{48} Swami Vivekananda was fully aware that the economic poverty had been a hindrance to the individual freedom because the material freedom and the individual happiness are interrelated. All the members of a society ought to have the same opportunity for obtaining wealth, education or knowledge. Avenues of employment were daily shrinking, because new masters were intent primarily on ‘blood-sucking’, in combing out our resources, and the only industry they left to us was procreation of children! ‘India, he said sarcastically, is a land of Janakas, not so many sage king Janakas, but in another sense of the word, prolific in producing children. The result was perpetual famine, for which he held the British responsible, because they had no interest in the prosperity of India’. Vivekananda was most outspoken against the British governance. At the end of August 1893, at the house of Professor J. H. Wright, he said, ‘India has been conquered again and again for years and last and worst of all came the Englishman. You look about India, what has the Hindu left? Wonderful temples, everywhere. What has the Mohammedan left? Beautiful palaces. What has the Englishman left? Nothing but mounds of brandy bottles’!\textsuperscript{49} If man cannot believe in the vengeance of God, he certainly cannot deny the vengeance of history.... the English have sucked the last drop of our blood ... they have carried away with them millions of our money, while our people have starved in villages and provinces. ‘Who are the men whom History, according to Vivekananda, might make the

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda}, Volume IV, p. 368.  
\textsuperscript{48} K. M. Panikkar, \textit{Essential Features of Indian Culture}, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, 1967, p. 23.  
instrument of its vengeance? According to Harold Laski, ‘The law of any given society is 'the expression of the push of the social forces in that society and we cannot explain its substance without regard to these forces’. According to Vivekananda also, a law enacted by the state reflects the pull of the existing social forces. In a society divided between the rich and the poor, law often seeks to safeguard the vested interests of the rich to the detriment of the interest of the poor. While writing about a shipping law, he said, “It was the rich’, he said, 'and influential men of the country who would appropriate the benefits of commerce, or ravage, or conquest of different countries, and the poor people were simply to shed their blood and sacrifice their lives—as has been the rule throughout the world's history”! Law are those rules of behaviour which secures the purposes of the society's class structure and will be, if necessary, enforced by the coercive power of the state’.  

It is true that economic freedom results in economic inequalities. As individual abilities differ, economic inequalities do come into existence. Vivekananda accepted human inequality on the basis of human nature. He was of the view that inequality is not eternal and absolute. As a follower of *Vedanta*, he believed in the gradual growth of the individual and condemned all kinds of privileges. He believed in the struggle for equality and also the necessity of limiting inequality. He was for bridging the gulf between human inequality and equality. Absolute equality, which is a state of uniformity, imply total death. Vivekananda did not advise the individual to give up his material wants, rather enjoined the individual to enjoy wealth in the name of the Lord. Wealth does not belong to anybody. Have no idea of proprietorship, possessorship. You are nobody, nor am I, nor anyone else. Wealth is for distribution. This stand of thought of Vivekananda is identical with the Gandhian theory of trusteeship. According to K. M. Munshi, “Gandhi wanted property to be held by the legal owner in trust for these who needed it”. The Bhagwad Gita too enjoins the same view: “The virtuous who partake of what is left after sacrifice are absolved of all sins. These sinful ones who cook food for

the sake of nourishing their body alone eat only sin”. He glorified neither poverty nor prosperity. Vivekananda’s concept of renunciation and service replaced unrestrained competitive economy by corporate economy. Vivekananda’s economic views to some extent are similar to those of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Mahatma Gandhi pointed out, “Civilisation in the real sense of the term consists not in multiplication but in the deliberation and voluntary reduction of wants.” But unlike Gandhi, Vivekananda did not glorify poverty. In this aspect, his views are nearer to those of J. L. Nehru who hated poverty and pleaded for multiplication of wants. Pandit Nehru wrote, “Personally I dislike the praise of poverty and suffering, I do not think they are at all desirable and they ought to be abolished. I understand and appreciate simplicity, equality, self-control, but not the mortification of the flesh”. Vivekananda was in favour of both rural economy like Mahatma Gandhi and longed for the emergence of New India out of the peasant’s cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper, and urban economy like Nehru, thus visualizing an industrial India. Pt. Nehru pointed out that real progress must ultimately depend on industrialization. Even to preserve our national independence and much more to raise our standards of living heavy industries are essential. He gave equal importance to ends and means and regarded them as inseparable.

Relevance of these ends and means does not stand in indirect proportion to the laws of obedience to nature. According to the history of human progress, it is disobedience to nature that has constituted that progress. He said, “I never saw a cow-steal. An oyster never told a lie. Yet these are not greater than man. This life is a tremendous assertion of freedom, excess of laws means death. This obedience to law carried far enough would make of us simply matter—either in society or in politics or in religion. The obedience to political and social laws also, just as in the case of natural laws, cannot be carried too far, it cannot be unconditional and absolute”. The purpose of social and political laws is to safeguard the freedom of the individual. If instead, they infringe

56 Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism, p. 64.
upon freedom, then they are not justified. Disobedience under such circumstances is rather justified. Vivekananda laid down this revolutionary thesis when the idealist thinkers were claiming unconditional and absolute obedience to the State and its laws. Those social laws which stand in the way of unfolding of this freedom are injurious and steps should be taken to destroy them speedily and those institutions should be encouraged by which men advance on the path of freedom.

By liberty, he did not mean absence of restraint like some of the champions of Individualism in the nineteenth century West. J. S. Mill's concept of liberty was a reaction against the absolutist view that individual enjoys their fulfillment in the state. Revolting against this concept of absolutism of the state, he insists that it is the business of the state to provide for the happiness of the individuals and it has the right to exist only when it fulfils this condition.  

Karl Marx also supported the absolutism of the State at the stage of proletariat dictatorship after a revolution. However, absolute state authority cannot guarantee happiness to the individual. Liberty is the first condition for happiness. Liberty does not certainly mean the absence of obstacles in the path of misappropriation of wealth etc; by you and me, but it is our natural right to be allowed to use our own body, intelligence or wealth according to our will, without doing any harm to others. Vivekananda said, “Freedom is the watchword. Be free! A free body, a free mind, and a free soul! That is what. I have felt all my life! I would rather be doing evil freely, then by doing well under bondage”.

His concept of 'liberty' is Vedantic, hence it is not purely individualistic, it is socialistic in content. At the same time, he wants the individuals to retain their identity. The individual's life is in the life of the whole, the individual's happiness is in the happiness of the whole. Exclusiveness is against the nature of the individual. Vivekananda wanted to weaken neither the sphere of activity of society nor the freedom of the individual. Man is individual at the same time universal. It is while realising our individual nature that we realise even our national and universal nature”.

Every individual is unique in his opinion and that uniqueness must be preserved for the benefit of the society. ‘By liberty means’, says Professor Laski, ‘the eager maintenance of that atmosphere in which men have the opportunity to be their best selves. Liberty, therefore, is a product of rights’. This is a realistic and positive concept of liberty emphasized long ago by Vivekananda who added a new meaning to the concept by expanding it to reconcile both the individualistic and the socialist stand points. Everything is conscious which rebels against nature.... Where there is struggle, where there is rebellion, there is sign of life, there consciousness is manifested. Right to rebellion was considered by him a matter of natural right which applies equally to men and societies. He did not believe in eternal laws even when they were laid down by Rishis or by the wise men.\(^6^2\)

According to Vivekananda, the two concepts of liberty and equality are complementary. Replying to the Maharaja of Khetri's address of welcome in 1895, he said, ‘Above all, follow this great doctrine of sameness in all things, through all beings, seeing the same God in all’. No man and no nation can attempt to gain physical freedom without physical equality, nor mental freedom without mental equality.\(^6^3\) That liberty without equality is no liberty, is proved in the capitalist countries with formal democracy, that equality without liberty is no equality, is proved today in the socialist states, where there is a cry for liberty and democracy. Vedanta made Vivekananda a liberal in heart and a socialist in content. He reconciled the liberal idea of freedom with the socialist fascination for equality by means of the spirit of oneness and love of Vedanta. Liberalism which stands for individual freedom and dignity provides the thought and socialism the means of a just society. Socialism is rootless without individual freedom and liberalism is growthless without accepting socialist concept of economic equality. Vivekananda improved socialism by emphasizing the modesty and necessity of the liberals’ concept of individual freedom and improved liberalism by infusing into it the concept of just economy based on equitable distribution of wealth.


Vivekananda ejaculated India’s self-respect and rejuvenated faith in her spiritual glory and unity. By involving the national ethos and touching the chords of her spirituality, he vindicated India’s spiritual unity and freedom spontaneously and effectively. None of the Indian reformers before him conceived the idea of common nation on the grounds of spirituality. A crucial aspect of the articulation of any nationalist ideology is the intellectual continuation of nation as a continuation from the past, through the present, towards the future that constitutes the identity of a people, the soul or the genius of a nation. Roman Rolland pointed out Vivekananda not only proved its unity by reason but stamped it upon the heart of India in flashes of illumination. Vivekananda stood foremost in pleading for India’s spiritual freedom. The reforming religious sects and reformation movements that were in the field were leading the country away from her traditions and genius. Their activities only convinced Vivekananda that they were accelerating the process of India’s degeneration and de-nationalism.

Vivekananda felt that enslaved India could be liberated neither by social reforms nor by political means but only by religious revival. In India, social reform has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual life the new system will bring; and politics has to be preached by showing how much it will improve the one thing spirituality that the nation wants. Social evils should be removed without attacking the national institutions and beliefs. The remedy for India’s degradation was not social reform but religion which encouraged individuals and national growth. ‘I claim that no destruction of religion is necessary to improve the Hindu society, and that this state of society exists not on account of religion but because religion has not been applied to society as it should have been.’ Vivekananda’s intense nationalism was the product of his innate religion. India’s religious disunity rather than diversity constituted a grave menace to national unity. The reforming religious sects in India suffered from schismatic outlook and prevented the growth of national unity. Religious conflicts must give place to concurrence, diversity for unity. In Europe, political ideas form the national unity. The unity in religion therefore, is

64 A .V. Rathna Reddy, The Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda, p 146.
65 G. Aloysius, Nationalism Without A Nation In India, p. 154.
absolutely necessary as the first condition of the future of India”. A common religion must incorporate the common principles of diverse religious sects. Religious unity could be achieved by accepting truth by all sects. There must be the recognition of one religion throughout the length and breadth of this land. Not in the sense of one religion as held among the Christians or the Mohammedans or the Buddhists. He conceded that the religious sects may retain their identity but they should not threaten national unity. He denounced sectarianism but not sects. Vivekananda wanted to strengthen the nation by infusing unity between the brain of a Brahmin and the heart of Buddhist, the Islamic body and the Vedantic brain; and an European society with India’s religion. His common religion provides for inclusive and lasting religious synthesis.

Not only religion, even the political ideas of Vivekananda are thoroughly Indian. It may also be said that it is Indian in orientation and European in environment. As a matter of fact, Vivekananda wanted exactly the same, but some blamed that Vivekananda was thoroughly influenced by the West. One of the brother disciples of Vivekananda protested that the Swami’s (Vivekananda) ways of preaching, such as lecturing and holding meetings and his ideas of doing works of public utility were rather Western in type and conception and incompatible with Sri Ramakrishna’s teachings”. Vivekananda was influenced by European Democratic thought when he said that everybody is Brahmin. Indeed, one may be tempted to point out that Vivekananda views on democracy, freedom, social equality, anarchism, socialism and his advocacy of mass awakening were inspired by the West. Sri Aurobindo aptly remarked that Vivekananda was the leading and powerful exponent of the principle of preservation by reconstruction”. Vivekananda was fascinated by the Western methods of discipline and organization and recommended them for India also. He looked to the west for India’s eternal growth. The impact of the West on Vivekananda, whether social or political, was confined only to the environmental development of India and it made no

67 Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume VII, p. 76.
68 The Life of Swami Vivekananda by His Eastern and Western Disciples, Volume II, p. 504.
69 V. Chidanandan, Sri Aurobindo, At Evening Talk, Mother India, 1971, p. 730.
inroads into the texture of his thought. Vivekananda stood for the combination of European environment and Indian organization. It can be stated in the language of biology as stress on the environment in the West and the organism in the East. Vivekananda wanted the synthesis of the manliness of the West and saintliness of the East, European energy and Hindu spirituality. In fact, the seed bed of his thought is India and he wanted India only to strengthen herself by learning science and technology from the West. The conflict between the thesis represented by the Anglican reformers and the anti-thesis represented by the reactionary Hindus was resolved by the synthesis propounded by Swami Vivekananda which has been accepted as the basis for the evolution of modern India. Vivekananda thought that no man is inferior to the other, no class has got special qualification than the other.

Swami Vivekananda advocated the concept of Karma for the rejuvenation of India. In his programme of social action, no distinction is made between sacred and secular and in his philosophy, life itself becomes religion and consequently Karma becomes the high road to moksha or rather freedom. Activity implies selfless service, worship of the individual, freedom and oneness of individuals. Romain Rolland pointed out that Vivekananda was energy personified and action was his message to men. ‘For him, as for Bethoven it was the root of all virtues’. According to Max Mueller, karma is of mere collective character. “This would lead to the conception of human race as one body or the family in which the whole suffers when any individual member suffers, for we are all members of one or another”. Lokmanya Tilak held the view that karma is applicable not only to individual but also to family, community or nation or even the whole universe. They cannot escape suffering the consequences of their actions. Slavery of India was due to the neglect of the masses and that we should blame ourselves for our misery and degradation, slavery and inequality. Selfless activity itself is the means and also the end.

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72 R. C. Majumdar, Vivekananda –A Historical Review, p. 139.
74 S.L. Mukherjee, The Philosophy of Man Making, p. 92.
Selfless activity and spread of spirituality among the masses would awaken them and enable them to regain their lost individuality namely inherent spirituality. The sight of the country's misery and the thought of its future do not let me remain quiet any more! Even samadhi and all that appear as futile, even the sphere of Brahma with its enjoyments becomes insipid! My vow of life is to think of your welfare. The day that vow will be fulfilled, I shall leave this body and make a straight run up! Utilitarians regarded pain and pleasure as separate. They subordinated pain to pleasure. But there can be no pleasure without pain. According to Vivekananda, an ounce of action inevitably brings an ounce of pain. Man must seek neither happiness nor misery but only freedom from both. Tilak noticed the weakness of utilitarianism and pointed out: “The greatest drawback of the theory of ‘the greatest good of greatest number’ is that it does not take into consideration the reason (buddhi) of the doer”.

Vivekananda could not brook any delay, at least no delay in the commencement of the process of man making. He called for 'a hundred thousand men and women' to go all over the land to preach 'the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality. This was the most courageous departure from the social norms of his time, a foreshadowing, one might even say, of Lenin's concept of 'cadres' for revolutionary work ('professional revolutionaries' in Lenin's phrase), a premonition, if not precisely formulated, of fundamental tasks of socio-economic transformation. No apostle of nationalism had exercised greater influence in the twentieth century than the Hindu monk Vivekananda. G. L. Mehta points out his impact on India as subtle. “Such influence as a man like Vivekananda exercised was subtle and imperceptible, for the work of a spiritual teacher is concerned with the minds and hearts of men, not with institution and laws. The foot prints which a great man leaves on the sands of time are not always visible to the naked eye”. If the generation that followed saw three years after Vivekananda death, the

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76 Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume VII, p.177.
78 Hiren Mukherjee, Swami Vivekananda and Freedom, p. 34.
revolt of Bengal, the prelude to the great movement of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, if India today has definitely taken part in the collective action of organizing masses, it is due to the………work done by Swami Vivekananda.\textsuperscript{80} Vivekananda pioneered the past and present, traditionalism and modernism to mould India’s future. In the words of Pt. J. L. Nehru, “Rooted in the past and full of pride in India’s prestige, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life’s problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present”.\textsuperscript{81} The eternity of the Vedas, the strength of Upanishads, the compassion of the Buddha and the spirit of equality of Islam found a sonorous echo in him in representing India’s renaissance. He proclaimed that an Aryan, a Buddhist, a Muslim, a dualist and a non-dualist Hindu were all Indians who inherited and enriched India’s spiritual legacy. According to Panikkar, “This new Sankarcharya may well be claimed to be a unifier of Hindu ideology. Travelling all over India he not only roused a sense of Hindu feeling but taught the doctrine of universal Vedanta as the background of the new Hindu reformation….It is Vivekananda who first gave to the Hindu movement a sense of nationalism and provided most of the movements with a common all India outlook”.\textsuperscript{82} In India, the message of humanism remained inchoate till Vivekananda came and restored people’s confidence in their own faculties.\textsuperscript{83} In a word, everything that Vivekananda proclaimed in India for the first time at the end of the last century facilitated the development of the qualitatively new humanism which played an important part in the greatest upsurge of national consciousness and struggle of the Indian people for independence.\textsuperscript{84} In a confidential report, the Police Commissioner Charles Tegart said that, not to speak of Vivekananda's followers, Vivekananda's own writings are 'pregnant with sedition'. This is a very correct estimate which will be acceptable to all, provided we are allowed to replace 'sedition' by 'patriotism'. Yet in spite of his patriotic fervour or even religious affiliations, he was very fair to Muslims and British, who poured from outside into India,

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{80} Romain Rolland, \textit{Life of Swami Vivekananda and The Universal Gospel}, p. 245.
\bibitem{81} Jawahar Lal Nehru, \textit{Discovery of India}, p. 323\bibitem{82} A.V. Rathna Reddy, \textit{The Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda}, p. 146.
\bibitem{83} S. L. Mukherjee, \textit{The Philosophy of Man Making}, p. 64.
\bibitem{84} E. P. Chelishev, \textit{Vivekananda- The Indian Humanist, Democrat and Patriot, Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume}, Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Committee, 1963, p. 508.
\end{thebibliography}
which was equally the homeland of Aryans and Dravidians, who, according to him, differed only in their language, for striving to rid India of 'privilege', which, according to him, is the bane of what is popularly known as Hindu religion and civilization.\footnote{Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, \textit{Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism}, p. 65.} Vivekananda's nationalism is so catholic that it is acceptable to men professing different faiths, inhabiting different regions, and speaking different languages. Yet it is distinctively Indian; it is as thoroughly Indian as the Ganga and the Narmada.

When India came under the British yoke, the people were dazzled by the splendour and might of Western civilization. There was a reaction against this tide of westernization, but no one held aloft the torch of Indian culture with greater vigour than Swami Vivekananda, who carried the war into the enemy's camp. He refuted the allegation that Indians were too much absorbed in their past by pointing out how they were too forgetful of their rich tradition, and by showing that though Indians might have much to learn from the West, they had more to give to the westerners, that the successive waves of immigration into India have always been a turning-point in the history of the nations that made incursions into this land from abroad. The Western nations were wealthier than Indians, but that does not mean that they were also superior in intellect or spiritual refinement. Ignorance and poverty are curses that should be eradicated, but the hoarding of material wealth may be and often is accompanied by intellectual arrogance and spiritual degradation.

Swami Vivekananda was able to draw a distinction between the Muslim and the European conquerors. The former, after the first wave of Turkish invasions, settled in India, and even when oppressive, ploughed back their plunder to enrich the country they had ravaged. But the British after establishing a firm administrative hold on India, only wanted to make it easier and seemingly more legal for them to take away India's wealth to Europe. It was possibly with reference to the exploitation of the East by the advanced countries of the West that Vivekananda made the cryptic comment that poverty would not be abolished as long as there was a disease called 'civilization'.\footnote{Ibid., p. 64.} Vivekananda resented being called a politician. ‘Those who ... want to prove that I am a political preacher, to them I say, “Save me from my friends”, he

\footnotesize{85} Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, \textit{Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism}, p. 65.  
\footnotesize{86} Ibid., p. 64.
wrote on 27th September, 1894 from America to Alasinga that ‘I am no politician or political agitator. I care only for the Spirit’.\textsuperscript{87} In 1896, he wrote: ‘You must not forget that my interests are international and not Indian alone’. All the same, his love for his country was intense and unparalleled: ‘My life's allegiance is to this my motherland’.\textsuperscript{88} The critics have criticized him for attempting at class-reconciliation, which according to them was a utopian idea. And for this attitude, he has been called a reactionary. According to the Soviet scholar E. P. Chelishev, ‘... the utopian striving to reconcile class-contradictions stemmed from a fervent desire to unite all the forces of the people for struggle against colonialism’.\textsuperscript{89}

He never intended to lead the ignorant masses like a horde of cattle to capture power and be involved in an order of violence since such an attempt could only install some upper class leader to power. He was the last person to give the upper classes this opportunity to thrive, capitalizing on the misery of the masses since he knew that it would only open a new avenue to the upper classes for exploiting the masses. Recently, as we have come to know, in China and Romania, some political leaders have made enormous fortunes. Even within the framework of communism, this has been possible! The Secretary of the Communist Party in China, who succeeded Xao-Xi-Yang, the former party Secretary, has admitted this in a press statement. Hence, Vivekananda insisted that 'everyone must work out his own salvation'.\textsuperscript{90}

Politics meant corruption, moral bankruptcy, hypocrisy, violence and strifes. ‘If you ever saw, my friend, that shocking sight behind the scene of acting of these politicians, that revelry of bribery, that robbery in broad daylight, that dance of the devil in man, which are practised on such occasions, you would be hopeless about man’!\textsuperscript{91} Politics debased man and it is never possible to do any good to any one, any society, by degrading man. Bertrand Russell argues that 'An unprincipled quest of power transforms all power, first, into a revolutionary power and then, by inevitable gradations, into naked

\textsuperscript{87} Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume V, p. 46.
\textsuperscript{88} Swami Chidatmananda, in Swami Vivekananda- The Great Spiritual Teacher, p. 436.
\textsuperscript{89} E. P. Chelishev, Vivekananda- The Indian Humanist, Democrat and Patriot, Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 511.
\textsuperscript{90} Santwana Dasgupta, Social Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda, p. 274.
\textsuperscript{91} Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume VII, p. 158.
power. Regarding the consequences of a violent political revolution, George Bernard Shaw observed, 'They have never lightened the burden of tyranny: they have only shifted it to another shoulder.' Our civilization in its dire peril has vainly invoked the spell of great words. right, liberty, cooperation, the peace of Geneva or Washington —but such words are void or filled with poisonous gas. Nobody believes in them. People mistrust explosives.

Toynbee observed: 'In the present age, the world has been united on the material plane by western technology. But this western skill has not only annihilated distance, it has armed the peoples of the world with weapons of devastating power at a time when they have been brought to point-blank range of each other without yet having learnt to know and love each other. At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way for salvation of mankind is an Indian way." 'The message of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is the message of peace. Such a revolution grows gradually and does not happen all of a sudden sporadically. Vivekananda, therefore, declared, 'I believe in growth and not in reform'. Spiritual and moral revolution takes time to develop, to spread, to envelop vast masses of people, to recreate their being. It is in the nature of things a time-consuming process. Unless this is granted, the orgy of violence that takes place in the name of a 'revolution' installs a regime of tyranny. Tyranny replaces tyranny. Gramsci, who attempted to remould Marxist doctrine to make it free from its shortcomings and contradictions, has therefore spoken of a 'passive revolution'. Solzhenitsyn has also re-examined the theory of revolutions, particularly the Marxist doctrine and given his verdict against it. Thus, no revolution can achieve its goals unless there precedes a moral and spiritual revolution, re-making of man.

The Vedantic foundation of Vivekananda's revolution gives it a universal significance; it presents to the world at large an ideal of perpetual revolution or a perpetual revolution for a perpetual progress. No revolution, political or religious, in the history of the world, was so rooted in such a

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92 R. K. Das Gupta, Revolutionary Ideas of Swami Vivekananda, p. 34.
93 Romain Rolland, The Life of Vivekananda and The Universal Gospel, p. 296.
94 Nanda Mukherjee, Sri Ramakrishna in the Eyes of the Brahmo and Christian Admirers, p. 112.
95 E. P. Chelishev, in Prabuddha Bharata, January 1989, p. 70.
comprehensive philosophy. His doctrine of ‘Divinity of Man’ is potent with much more revolutionary significance than the vague concepts of ‘natural right’, ‘liberty’, ‘equality’, and even of ‘socialism’. All these concepts have no root unless they are grounded on the doctrine of 'Divinity of Man'.

He was glad that the Congress had tried to take all Indians within its fold, but he did not like the westernized ways of the leaders and their sole gift of 'shouting' at public meetings, and he had no patience with their politics of mendicancy, their begging the foreign Government for crumbs of favour, and he knew, too, that most of these people had very imperfect knowledge of the Indian masses who form the vast majority of the population. All the same, Swami Vivekananda knew that the Congress formed the vanguard on the political front for the betterment of the nation. When an interviewer asked him, 'Have you given any attention to the Indian National Congress movement'? He replied, 'I cannot claim to have given much; my work is in another part of the field. But I regard the movement as significant, and heartily wish it success'.

A nation is being made out of India's different races. It will certainly end in the working out of India's homogeneity, in her acquiring what we may call democratic ideas.

Attempts have been made to establish that Vivekananda contemplated an armed revolution to free India from alien yoke. His own kith and kin and close followers pointed of that he believed in armed revolution. Vivekananda's brother Bhupendranath Datta revealed, “Very few people know that he had political revolutionary ideas in the beginning. He wanted to free the country from foreign yoke. But failed in his attempt, and seeing the cause of his failure, he tried a different remedy and deflected his attention to another channel”. On being asked by Sister Christine as to why he (Vivekananda) requested Sister Nivedita to keep aloof from Indian politics. Vivekananda answered, “What does Nivedita know of Indian conditions and politics? I have done more politics”. He believed in an ideal of a perpetual revolution for a perpetual progress. But it may not mean that he supported armed revolution engineered to capture state power. Vivekananda believed in some inherent principle of revolution in human history. He had no qualms, philosophical or practical,

about the use of violence. He was opposed to the policy of non-resistance. The talk of violence would not arouse any qualms of conscience in him, for he knew that a man has to kill millions of microbes if he has to breathe and several worms if he has to walk, and also millions of insects if he has to read the Gita by candlelight.100

Revolutions can be categorized in five categories: A. predominantly political, aiming for change in the political regime; B. predominantly socio-economic, for modification of the social and economic order; C. national and separatist, national independence or autonomy; D. religious upheavals, creation of a new kind of men and socio-religious transformations; E. upheavals with a specific objective. The main and the indispensable condition for an eruption of revolution, i.e., of internal disturbance is that the social system or the cultural system or both shall be unsettled.101 Lenin, in his 'State and Revolution', says that main features of revolution are: (a) class wars which are perpetual characteristics of society so long as it is based on class divisions; (b) the overthrowing of the existing regime with a violent uprising of the people. Lenin championed more a political revolution than a social revolution. Vivekananda recognized class struggle as a reality not only in the past but also in the contemporary period. The lower classes are gradually awakening to this fact and making a united front against this, determined to exact their legitimate dues. The masses of Europe and America have been the first to awaken and have already begun the fight. Signs of this awakening have shown themselves in India, too, as is evident from the number of strikes among the lower classes nowadays. The upper classes will no longer be able to repress the lower, try them ever so much”.102 Vivekananda definitely and clearly recognizes class struggle as a historical reality. But at the same time, he states that mere class-struggles and violent uprisings are not sufficient to attain the goals of revolution, that is, progress and prosperity. He gave more importance to 'Buddha revolution', which was religious upheaval but brought in far-reaching social changes, conferring on the people their legitimate rights and

100 Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, *Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism*, p. 73.
demolishing the exclusive privileges of the priests. 'With the deluge', he says, 'which swept the land at the advent of Buddhism, the priestly power fell into decay and the royal power was in the ascendant. . . . For Buddhism has shaken the thrones of all the oblation-eating gods and brought them down from their heavenly positions. . . . And to this Buddhahood, every man has the privilege to attain".103 These religious upheavals were, according to Vivekananda, in effect true revolutions since they caused far-reaching social changes as well as all round prosperity and progress.

No revolution is successful without mass participation, particularly if it is a revolution for their liberation and every successful revolution in history was preceded by a period of mass preaching. Vivekananda's programme of mass education and uplift was a right revolutionary programme. It differed from other revolutionary programmes only in this that this programme is completely dissociated from politics and is based on religious ideas. It did not aim at capturing power with the help of violent mass uprising and bloodshed, murders and killings on a mass-scale. The essence of 'political revolutions' was capturing state-power using violence as its chief instrument, throwing all the healthy moral values to the winds whenever necessary, and that the revolutionaries of today turn into worshippers of naked power tomorrow.104 Religion is of deeper importance than politics, since it goes to the root, and deals with the essential of conduct.105

His great triumph in the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago greatly helped the cause of Indian nationalism by raising the Indians from the slough of despair and despondency into which they had fallen, and awakened them to a sense of pride in their own greatness which lies at the root of Indian nationalism. Vivekananda barely 30, entered the Chicago Parliament, he was a volcano of burning patriotism. At times, he even expressed a great longing that the English government, would take him, and shoot him. “It would be the first nail in their coffin," he would say, with a little gleam of his white teeth”, and my death would run through the land like wild fire".106

103 Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume IV, p. 443.
The people of Ramnad echoed the voice of India, when they said in their address of welcome, ‘Your labours in the West have to a great extent tended to awaken the apathetic sons and daughters of India to a sense of the greatness and glory of their ancestral faith’. The people of Kumbhakonam were equally emphatic. ‘The success of your work’, said they, ‘has made us feel that we, too, as a people have reason to be proud of the achievements of our past ... the future of the Hindu nation cannot but be bright and hopeful’. For the first time in that formative period, India rediscovered herself once again; a certain pride in her own inheritance was instilled in her heart thence forward. That event also marked the beginning of India's influence on Western nations. Since then, the process has gone on paving the way for a respectful understanding of the all-comprehensive spiritual and cultural ideas and ideals for which India stands. Before Swami Vivekananda, no one had made such a deep impression upon the people of India—because not by words alone but by actual deeds he placed Hinduism on a high pedestal, and the Hindus from Colombo to Almora demonstrated, through their addresses, how they realized that their ancient universal religion of brotherhood bound them together by a sense of priceless common heritage of the past which was destined to make the Indian nation great and esteemed in the eyes of the world.107

Swami Vivekananda did not appeal to emotion alone. He taught the Indians the essential bases of nationalism, bases on which alone it could stand firm like a rock. The great factor in building up of nationalism was that it must be broadbased, both in ideal and scope. It must transcend politics of the type that was then in vogue, and embrace the teeming millions of India. Indian nationalist movement was one of the great moments of cultural confrontation, not, as it is so often stated, of the East and the West, but of modern, scientific culture with a traditional culture. At a time when some of the strongest voices in India were equating any accommodation with western ideas as an attack on the traditional religious values of India, Vivekananda argued that the science was neutral; it could enrich, not weaken Indian life. Compared to many other countries, where, as in the Belgian Congo, the attainment of national independence was sudden and dramatic, India's development takes place almost

in slow motion; nowhere else, perhaps, can the complexities and ambiguities of
the growth of modern nationalism be seen so clearly. J. N. Farquhar labelled
Vivekananda's work as 'religious nationalism'. However, Vivekananda's own
categorical imperatives made him soar far beyond the fantasies and follies of
‘fundamentalism’, Hindu or any other, which is so widely and dismally in
evidence at present.

Vivekananda did not only influence India's then rising freedom forces
indirectly but his direct contacts were equally important. A young student who
later turned into eminent writer-journalist, Nihal Singh, heard him at Lahore,
stood up inflamed, and said, “Words began to flow - words full of the fire of
inspiration. His speech lifted me up above the earth. His speech over, a young
professor at Lahore offered him a gold watch and prayed for his blessings.
Professor Tirtha Ram Goswami left his social life within three years only to
emerge as Swami Ramatirtha, and carried the same message of Vedanta,
following the footsteps of Vivekananda, to Japan, America, and then to India,
within a short life of 33 years and 7 months. Vivekananda was waiting for
sincere souls. He was the last man to see that Indians would turn out to be
'Europeanized, men without any backbone and just a mass of heterogeneous
ideas... unassimilated, undigested, unharmonised whose vehement vituperation
against the evils of certain social customs of India depended only on a few
patronizing pats from the foreigners.

The month long frenzied enthusiasm during the January of 1897 that
followed, Vivekananda's nation-stirring speeches, in South India through
Ramnad, Madura, Kumbhakonam and then finally for nine glorious days of
speeches at Madras, had its immediate impact in different parts of the
moribund nation, which was undergoing privation, exploitation and persecution
from its rulers. The whole of India during that period was in a way starving to
death. Will Durant, in his then banned book The Case for India showed by
statistics, that this starvation was forced on a whole nation, by its rulers: "I

108 Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, Vivekananda and National Awakening, in Swami
Vivekananda- The Great Spiritual Teacher, p. 472.
109 Hiren Mukherjee, Swami Vivekananda and Freedom, p. 25.
24-26.
have seen a great people starving to death before my eyes, and I am convinced that this exhaustion and starvation are due to not, as the beneficiaries claim, over population and superstition but due to most sordid and criminal exploitation of one nation by another in all recorded history”. Maharashatra, which was suffering through a long ranging plague, where between 1896-98, lakhs of people died, according to government report, was the first to rise up. In the name of plague-checking, British soldiers tortured innocent Maharashtrian villagers, searched the women naked on the streets, as a result of which two women committed suicide to avoid shame. Two Chapekar brothers of Pune killed the two English officers, Mr. Rand and Mr. Averst, who committed this offence. Chapekar brothers were hanged, and B. G. Tilak, thought to be a mastermind behind the uprising, was put unjustly behind the bars. Further, the trial and conviction of Tilak became a landmark in the history of Indian Nationalism. The martyrs replaced mere orators as acknowledged champions of liberty”. Tilak, who had earlier made an attempt to receive Swamiji at Colombo, now invited Vivekananda to visit Pune, where, once in 1892, as an unknown wandering monk, he was the guest of Tilak. Bad health forced Vivekananda to retreat to Himalayas for rest. Tilak’s papers however declared that Vivekananda would visit Pune in the coming rains.

In December 1901, during the Calcutta congress, many nationalists came to Belur Math and met Vivekananda personally. Unfortunately, Swami Vivekananda was away when Mahatma Gandhi came to see him on a visit to Belur Math. Tilak, however, met him. And this meeting, according to eyewitnesses, was highly inspiring. With folded hands, Tilak stood to receive Vivekananda who was coming down from the chapel after worship. Both embraced each other. Long talks followed. Swamiji humorously suggested to Tilak to accept Sannyasa and work in Bengal, while he himself offered to work in Maharashtra. Tilak, however, decided to remain as a householder and serve the nation. This last meeting with Swamiji left a deep impression on him.

Bhupendranath Datta has related how Vivekananda had spoken to Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, about his hope of seeing ‘the revolution in my lifetime’ and his knowing even several princes who could be of assistance. In 1901, Hem Chandra Ghosh, with a few select comrades, met Vivekananda, and listened to exposition of a composite cult of heroism, of humanism, of collectivism, of service to fellow-beings, of physical culture and a new synthesis in social living. Hem Chandra Ghosh wrote proudly that it was with the blessings of Bankim and Vivekananda on their heads that national-revolutionaries had started on their quest. Ghosh's testimony has special significance because in his own accomplishments and his acutely discriminating judgement of men and things, he was unique among his fellow-terrorists. It may sound surprising but Vivekananda himself said that he had ‘met Sir Hiram Maxim' and learnt how to use the gun named after the latter!  

Jatin Mukherjee, Upendranath Banerjee, Jadugopal Mukherjee and so many others down to Surya Sen and his comrades of Chittagong Armoury Raid (1930) fame have avowed their debt to ‘the cyclonic monk’. Vivekananda's glorification of the fighter queen of the Sepoy mutiny, Rani Lakshmibai, inspired nationalists. In June, 1902, a few days before Vivekananda's passing away, Bengali nationalists decided to celebrate a four day long Shivaji Utsav. Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, sub-editor of Hitavadi, came to request Swamiji to preside over the celebration, which was held in Classic Theatre in Beadon Street, Calcutta. Swamiji who was preparing for his great departure only a few days later declined to go. Naren Sen, the editor of Indian Mirror, presided at the words of Swamiji. Bengal was stirred.  

From the flames of that pyre that burned the physical body of Vivekananda came the conflagration of the entire nation. His words inflamed the budding nationalists dreaming of India's independence in a hundred thousand ways. They were committed to create a revolution to bring nation's freedom. People called them revolutionaries. In 1905, three years after his death, the first national movement sprang as a protest against the government's decision to divide Bengal. Pritilata Odedar, a brilliant student of Calcutta Presidency College, turned into an earnest devotee of Vivekananda. Sri

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Ramakrishna Biswas, a revolutionary who was going to be hanged in gallows, wrote to Pritilata, a few hours before his hanging: “I believe I had seen a monogram of Swamiji attached to your blouse. I liked it so much. Will this respect to the Teacher of our Age (Yuga Guru) enlighten you all your life? You love him so much! I too love him so deeply! ... How much have we been able to understand his greatness? The Westerners called him Cyclonic Hindu. In my opinion, he is the moral and spiritual force of India... Has anyone loved man so deeply as man”?\textsuperscript{118} A year later Pritilata led an armed struggle against foreigners at the Chittagong Railway station, stood mortally wounded by the bullets, and finally took her own life by consuming poison. Hemendranath Dasgupta wrote: “Within a span of five years, Vivekananda inspired Indian youths to such an extent that youth movements in India became the primary movement in Indian freedom struggle”. Vivekananda’s indirect impact on the militant nationalist activities in Bengal at any rate was deep and wide.\textsuperscript{119}

Revolutionary Naren Das, who was a member of the well known Anushilan Samiti, the breeding and training centre for Bengali revolutionaries, and the Joint Secretary of Congress in undivided Bengal, wrote: ‘To free India from the clutches of British slavery was the religion of the revolutionaries. Swamiji’s chief disciple, Nivedita, brought this emotion in their minds. The revolutionaries turned into Karmayogins and ascetics for the sake of nation's freedom. To observe celibacy and purity of life like other seekers of god was compulsory with them. In the initial stage they had to study the works of Swami Vivekananda, especially \textit{Karma Yoga}, \textit{Bhakti Yoga}, \textit{Virvani}, (a collection of thoughts of Vivekananda). The second and third chapter of the \textit{Gita} became the \textit{Vedas} of their dedicated life.\textsuperscript{120} Swami Vivekananda told young people in distinct language: “Our primary need is political freedom ... What right the British have to rule our country? They shall have to go back to England. It is our birth place”.\textsuperscript{121}

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\textsuperscript{119} Nihar Ranjan Roy, \textit{Freedom Struggle and Anushilan Samiti}, 1979, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{120} Sankari Prasad Basu, \textit{Vivekananda-o-Samakalin Bharatvarsha}, Volume VI, pp. 192-95.
\textsuperscript{121} Swami Jitatmananda, \textit{Swami Vivekananda Prophet and Pathfinder}, p. 163.
\end{flushright}
Similarly, Surya Sen, the great leader known popularly as Master Da, gave his last message on 11.1.1934 from the Chittagong Jail, hours before he was hanged, ‘Death is knocking at my door. My mind is soaring towards eternity. This is the time for sadhana’.\textsuperscript{122} Jatindra Nath Mukhopadhyaya, known as Tiger Jatin or Bagha-Jatin, was the first great young Indian to die in a direct armed-struggle with the British on 9th Sept. 1915. At the age of 18-19, Jatin met Vivekananda who engulfed him, according to an eyewitness, with a divine fire and an equally divine love. Long talks followed between Swamiji and this rare devotee. Jatin also met and got the blessings of Holy Mother who saw in this blessed son ‘fire itself’.\textsuperscript{123} A Bengali freedom fighter, Motilal Roy, who received love and grace from Swami Brahmananda, Saradananda, Premananda and others, wrote in his memoirs of 1944: “The new race of India which will grow centering round Belur, had its birth in the holy dust of Dakshineswar. Belur will have to take the responsibility of upbringing and educating this new race”. The fiery writings of front-ranking revolutionary, Sri Debabrato Basu, printed in the Bangla daily \textit{Yugantar}, inspired many Bengali youths. Another revolutionary Barindra Kumar wrote on the impact of Debabrata's writings: "After reading \textit{Yugantar}, the fire of freedom began to burn in our veins. The lightning-like writings of Debabrata Basu, brought current of new hope in our hearts”. Debabrata Basu and Sachin Sen, who were jailed for Alipore Bomb-case, later on became monks of the Ramakrishna Mission and were known as Swami Prajnananda, and Swami Chinmayananda. Debabrato, 'a born ascetic and yogi', in the eye of his friends, became the third president of Mayavati Advaita Ashrama. Sachin died of tuberculosis - his chest ribs were broken by British soldiers.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122} Sankari Prasad Basu, \textit{Vivekananda-o-Samakalin Bharatvarsha}, Volume VI, p. 183
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 146. Jatindranath used to speak about Swamiji: “Who can understand the greatness of Swamiji? India's greatness will exceed all limits if She follows his words." In the same encounter with Britishers, other revolutionaries who faced death were Chittapriya Bandopadhyaya, Manorajn Sengupta, and Virendranath Dasgupta. Amalendu Dasgupta wrote in 1947 :"That ideal which inspired the service activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, attracted many youths like Chittapriya and others to revolutionary activities and service to the nation. The same Gita were in the hands of the monks and nationalists".\textsuperscript{124} Swami Jitatmananda, \textit{Swami Vivekananda -Prophet and Pathfinder}, p. 165.
On the other side, the role of extremists was taking a different turn in Indian political struggle. Extremism, or Nationalism, as Aurobindo preferred to call it, stands, for the motto and methods of that school of politics which aimed at complete independence of India, to be attained by non-violent means, if possible, and by violent means, if necessary.\textsuperscript{125} Fiery nationalist Bipin Chandra Pal said, “He is indeed the greatest preacher and prophet of Indian nationalism”. Lala Rajpat Rai wrote that under the influence of Swami Vivekananda, Bengal nationalists who were both Vedantists and Mother-worshippers had elevated patriotism to the practice of religion.\textsuperscript{126}

It was only when Mahatma Gandhi took charge of the moderate Congress movement and pledged himself to non-violence that it was possible for the Indian National Congress to adopt a resolution pledging itself to the attainment of ‘\textit{Swaraj}’ by peaceful means. C. F. Andrews, a Christian Missionary and a lover of India, who refused to accept Vivekananda's rejection of Christian doctrine of sin, could not but admit Vivekananda's paramount importance in the birth and growth of national movement. He wrote: “Vivekananda's intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the nationalist movement throughout India.... Even without being connected with the congress, he very largely shaped its policy and promoted its evolution. He was an Indian nationalist years before the coming of the great national movement”.\textsuperscript{127}

Indian newspapers glorified the influence of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in the rise and growth of Indian nationalism. \textit{The Mahratta}, (July 17, 1910) wrote: “If the national and religious awakening which the teachings of Vivekananda have brought about in India, is to be traced to its fundamental source, it must flow from the life of this Paramhamsa Saint of Dakshineswar”. On January 14, 1912 \textit{Mahratta} described Swamiji as the ‘Real Father of Indian Nationalism’. \textit{Mysore Times} wrote: (March 8, 1911) “What Vashishtha and Vishwamitra were to the Ramayana period, what Vyasa was to the Mahabharata age, what Vidyaranya was to Vijayanagaram upheaval and what

\textsuperscript{125} Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, \textit{Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism}, p. 69.
\textsuperscript{127} C. F. Andrews, \textit{The Renaissance in India, Its Missionary Aspect}, p. 46.
Ramdas and Tukaram were to Mahratta rising- that Ramakrishna is to the India of today”. To be willing to die for one's own country has hitherto been regarded as a virtue, and Swami Vivekananda's lectures are not yet branded as seditious. However, the gentleman is in custody”.  

Inside the Alipore jail was confined Sri Aurobindo. Bengal police chief, Tegart, came to investigate, and found a clod of earth in the room of Aurobindo. When questioned what this clod of earth was, Aurobindo answered there were the ingredients of the real bomb; they were clods of earth from Dakshineswar, culled from the holy soil charged with the epoch-making spiritual practice of Sri Ramakrishna. Aurobindo, now fully inspired by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda wrote: 'The going forth of Vivekananda, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer ..."We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, “Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children, “The visit of Swami Vivekananda to America and the subsequent work of those who followed him did more for India than a hundred London Congresses could effect. That is the true way of awakening sympathy, - by showing ourselves to the nations as a people ... who still possess ... something of the genius and character of our forefathers, have still something to give to the world and therefore deserve freedom, by proof of our manliness and fitness, not by mendicancy”."  

Vivekananda's exhortations were more general and more forthright. Swami Vivekananda's message was that we must die, let us die for a good cause. The true man is he who is as strong as strength itself and possesses a woman's heart.  

Principal Kamakhya Mitra was absolutely correct when he wrote in 1930, that I do not know a single self-sacrificing Indian worker of the present century who has not been influenced more or less by his thoughts, words, and example.

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129  *World Thinkers on Swami Vivekananda*, p. 36.  
Vivekananda became the ideal of the revolutionaries of Bengal and his works were very popular with them. Vivekananda's photographs and works were looked upon as dangerous objects by the minions of law and order. The Ramakrishna Mission, a purely spiritual, humanitarian, and non-political institution founded by Vivekananda, and its sympathizers fell into the bad book of the bureaucracy. Lord Carmichael, the Governor of Bengal, declared in 1916 that terrorists had been joining the Mission to achieve their objects with greater ease. After this culmination of the all-powerful provincial satrap, a ban on the Mission seemed to be a foregone conclusion. The danger was, however, averted only through the efforts of the Mission's devoted English and American friends in high places, who defended it in a long memorandum dated January 22, 1917.\textsuperscript{131} C. A. Tegart, the special Superintendent of Police, Intelligence branch, of the British government, prepared an extensive report (dated 14th May, 1914) on the Ramakrishna Mission and the nationalists and revolutionaries of the day. The report began with these lines, "The teachings of the Hindu saint Sri Ramakrishna as expounded by his favourite disciple Swami Vivekananda have attracted in recent years a great deal of attention in India as well as in Europe and America". The report further said, "In reply to an address of welcome presented to him (Vivekananda) on his arrival in Calcutta, Swami Vivekananda urged his hearers to wake up. "Awake," he cried, "arise and stop not till the desired end is reached. Young men of Calcutta, arise, awake, for the time is propitious, already everything is opening out before us; be bold and fear not ... Arise, awake, for your country needs this tremendous sacrifice. It is the young men that will do it - the young, the energetic, the strong, the well-built, the intellectual-for them is the task and there are hundreds of thousands of such young men in Calcutta". It might be noted here that the highly revolutionary liberty leaflets which have been circulated broadcast over the greater part of India during the last year commence with this watchword of Vivekananda - "Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached."\textsuperscript{132} Tegart's assertion was true. Vivekananda's thoughts, especially his


\textsuperscript{132} Swami Jitatmananda, \textit{Swami Vivekananda Prophet and Pathfinder}, p. 166. The Tegart Report even suspected Mayavati Advaita Ashrama in the far Himalayas,
interpretation of *Vedanta* as a gospel of manly strength and not fatalistic
despair, of man and not God as a maker of destiny, his message of 'an
aggressive Hinduism' and not a passive religion of helpless surrender to the
beatings of a tyrannizer, deeply influenced even the great thinker Tolstoy. On
June 5, 1908 Leo Tolstoy told Makovitsky: "Since six in the morning I have
been thinking of Vivekananda, yesterday, read Vivekananda whole day. There
is a chapter on justification of violent means of resisting the evil, very
talentedly written".133

James Cambel, personal assistant to Criminal Intelligence Department,
wrote in his book *Political Troubles in India (1907-17)*, “A society which aims
at restoring the supremacy of Hindu religion naturally also glorifies the
political status of the Hindus in the past and the teachings of *Vedanta* society
tend towards nationalism in politics. Swami Vivekananda himself generally
avoided the political side of the case, but by many Hindu nationalists, he is
regarded as the guru (religious preceptor) of the movement”.134

Chief Secretary of the British government Mr. Stephenson in his report
to then English government probably best described the power and purity of
purpose behind the purely philanthropic and spiritual outlook of the Mission.
He said, “It is not for a moment suggested that these men are revolutionaries
because of their connection with the Ramakrishna Mission, but I think that here
is reason to suppose that in many cases they belonged to the Mission because
they were revolutionaries. It was the Ramakrishna Mission atmosphere of
social service and self-renunciation based on idealism (whether religious or
not) that attracted them and it is by reason of this very atmosphere that they
would naturally find the Ramakrishna Mission a suitable recruiting ground”. In
1915, government tried to ban the letters of Vivekananda (*Patravali*). The
standing counsel for legal action, S. R. Das, defended the 'letters' with a seven-
page report as not something encouraging 'sedition'. English government

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133 *Swami Vivekananda Studies in Soviet Union*, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute
retreated. Had Vivekananda been alive he would, as Holy Mother Sarada Devi once said, be imprisoned in English jail.\textsuperscript{135} 

At that time, when the Indian life was shabby and spiritless, it may not be right to expect Vivekananda to give a call to the people to rally under some political banner. Nothing was so simple as all that, and one should not wonder that the Rules and Regulations of Ramakrishna Math laid down: ‘One belonging to the Order can have no "connection with politics".’\textsuperscript{136} Vivekananda's vision carried, however, a different dimension: ‘there, before you, are your successors, the India that is to be’.\textsuperscript{137} There was a certain mysticism, no doubt, in Vivekananda's composition but he was never the complete mystic who does not wish to return to real life from the repose of what Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan called ‘unitary experience’, and even when he does return, it does not mean much for the world at large. Vivekananda was a great and gorgeous liberator, a man with whom indeed we can match our mountains and the sea.\textsuperscript{138} 

Even the liberals or moderates like Mahatma Gandhi were highly influenced by Swami Vivekananda. Mahatma Gandhi came to the Belur Math and addressed, “I have come here (Belur Math) to pay my homage and respect to the revered memory of Swami Vivekananda, whose birthday is being celebrated today (6 February 1921). I have gone through his works very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand fold”.\textsuperscript{139} Vivekananda was, in fact, the forerunner of Gandhi in more respects than one. They covered much common ground. Both inculcated fearlessness, which, according to one of his biographers, is Gandhi's principal legacy to India. To the one as well as to the other, the service of downtrodden humanity was the best worship of God. If the untouchables were ‘Harijans’, i.e. the Lord's own ones, to Gandhi, the downtrodden Indian masses were ‘Daridra Narayanas’ to Vivekananda. Vivekananda's conception of non-resistance—it was actually non-violent resistance or non-acceptance—is not different from Gandhiji's non-violent non-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{135} Swami Jitatmananda, \textit{Swami Vivekananda Prophet and Pathfinder}, p. 168.
\item \textsuperscript{136} \textit{Letters of Sister Nivedita} (ed), Sankari Prasad Basu, Volume I, 1982, pp. 38-39
\item \textsuperscript{137} \textit{Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda}, Volume VII, pp. 327-28.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Hiren Mukherjee, \textit{Swami Vivekananda and Freedom}. p. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{139} \textit{World Thinkers on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda}, p. 44.
\end{itemize}
co-operation. Self-help emphasized by the Swami Vivekananda was the objective aimed at by the gospel of the spinning wheel and the whole constructive programme prescribed by the Mahatma. Even the spiritual and intellectual life of Aurobindo Ghose had been strongly influenced by the life and teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. He is never tired of showing the importance of Vivekananda’s ideas. Romain Rolland writes: ‘It is permissible to presume that in him are united and harmonized the two currents of the Brahmo Samaj (transmitted by his father, the Maharishi) and of the neo-Vedantism of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.... There is no doubt that the breath of such a forerunner (as Vivekananda) must have played some part in his evolution’. 140 Rabindra Nath Tagore said to Romain Rolland, “If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative”. 141 Jawaharlal Nehru said, “He was, I think, one of the great founders of the national modern movement of India ... I pay my homage to this great son of India who was instrumental in putting a new life in our people. His writings are as fresh and as valuable today as when they were written. I am sure that they will continue to inspire not only the present, but coming generations also” 142

As a young man Netaji Subhash came to join the Ramakrishna Mission, as a monk. Swami Brahmananda and Swami Saradananda sent him back with a blessing that he had other great destiny to fulfil. Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna remained his life long inspiration. Subhash Chandra wrote on Swamiji: “A Yogi of the highest spiritual level in direct communion with the truth, who had for the time being consecrated his whole life to the moral and spiritual uplift of his nation and of humanity, that is how I would describe him. If he had been alive, I would have been at his feet”. “The foundation of the present freedom movement owes its origin to Swamiji’s message”. 143 Romain Rolland writes, “This greater India, this new India, whose growth politicians and learned men have hidden from us and whose striking effects are now apparent, is impregnated with the soul of Ramakrishna. The twin star of the

140 Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, Vivekananda and National Awakening, in Vivekananda- A Great Spiritual Teacher, A Compilation, p. 469.
141 Prabuddha Bharata, July 1932, p. 352.
142 Prabuddha Bharata, February 1963, p. 46.
143 World Thinkers on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, p. 47.
Paramhamsa and the hero, who translated his thoughts into action, dominated and guides her present destinies. Its radiance is the leaven working within the soil of India and fertilizing it. The present leaders of India: the king of thinkers, the king of poets, and the Mahatma - Aurobindo Ghosh, Rabindranath Tagore, and Mahatma Gandhi - have grown, flowered, and borne fruit under the double constellation of the Swan and the Eagle - a fact publicly acknowledged by Aurobindo and Gandhi.”  

His passion for India's freedom was born out of his prophetic vision that India has got a historic responsibility to fulfill, to save a materialistic sensate civilisation of the future, by preaching the saving gospels of Vedanta - the essential divinity of life, and the essential unity of all religions. India must be free, and free to emerge as the world teacher. That is why he declared: "If India lives who dies, if India dies who lives".  

His first duty in India, was to make the nation more spiritual, and more united through an understanding of Hindu culture, history, and tradition. That would restore confidence, and that would arrest the tempo of denationalization which was in evidence everywhere. Every nation, every man, and every woman must work out their own salvation.  

"You must not depend on any foreign help. Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism. If a nation cannot do that, its time has not yet come. It must wait."  

It must have required a prophet's vision and a lion's courage to realize such a truth and give expression to it in the closing years of the last century.

Vivekananda's writings on nationalism have made a more powerful impact than those of other writers because they have a broader base and also because they stem from a philosophy that might be called perennial. Although he was a Hindu monk, preaching a certain form of Vedanta. His message was so catholic that men of all faiths, including atheists and agnostics, may draw inspiration from it. An important feature of this comprehensiveness is his discovery of the similarity between his philosophy or religion and other faiths, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam and his frank criticism of them

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144 Romain Rolland, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda and The Universal Gospel*, p. 239.
Vivekananda envisages national unity within international unity. He envisages also the unity of the diverse races and heterogeneous linguistic, religious and ethnic groups within a particular nation. His call was also for unity of action, reason, love and work and unity within the vast ocean of all religious thought and all rivers past and present. With unity of all these and, unity of thousand sects of Hinduism, and unity of every man and woman, Vivekananda sought to bring national awakening in India.

Emphasizing that narrow nationalism is a fruitless pursuit for solving human problems and that only internationalism holds the key to this solution, Vivekananda observes, ‘. . . in politics and sociology, problems that were only national twenty years ago can no more be solved on national grounds only. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can only be solved when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. International organizations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day. ‘Every nation, every man, and every woman must work out their own salvation’. Narrow nationalism leads to war and other disastrous effects. In the present times a huge wave of nationalism is sweeping over Europe, where people speaking the same tongue, professing the same religion, and belonging to the same race want to unite together. Wherever such union is being effectively accomplished, there is great power being manifested, and where this is impossible, death is inevitable.

Vivekananda dreamt of 'one world' with a multiplicity of nations, small and large, enjoying equal rights and each working out in its own way the betterment of human life. He embraced in equal love the India of the Hindus, the Mohammedans, and the Buddhists. He made Buddha the subject of magnificent eulogy, when he said, ‘I am the servant of the servants of Buddha’.

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148 Subodh Chander Sen Gupta, *Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism*, p. 61. In 1898 Vivekananda wrote to Mohammed Sarfaraj Hussain, ‘Advaitism (= Monism) is the religion of the future enlightened humanity. The Hindus may get the credit for arriving at it earlier than other races.... Yet practical Advaitism, which looks upon and behaves to all mankind as one's own soul, was never developed among the Hindus universally.... my experience is that if any religion approaches to this equality, it is Islam alone.


out towards unification of humanity. Vivekananda's concept of nationalism is an integral part of internationalism gradually converging into universalism. A distinctive characteristic of Swami Vivekananda is the comprehensiveness of his vision. He had in his view all types and grades of human beings, takes into account the various aspects of human life, and dwells on the basic problems of human existence. In Vivekananda, the universal spirit has found a loving, dynamic, and all-encompassing expression, which is rarely to be found elsewhere.152

The keynote of Vivekananda's nationalism is universalism and he considered the sense of national integration as 'a unity in variety and individuality in universality' most valuable for development of the society.153 National integration is not a perfect assimilation. No society is ever perfectly integrated, but some amount of integration is a requisite for the very existence of a nation, and this it experiences all through its life span. The integration of the country does not entail the loss of social identity by any of its cultural sub-groups. India's many peoples and cultures are already integrated and unified on sublime level. Only our duty is to re-discover and to acknowledge it in our thoughts and actions and make it viable in our day-to-day life.154

Vivekananda had a two-fold mission, as his Irish disciple Nivedita realized, nation making and world moving. He alternated between intense nationalism and broadest internationalism. He raised protest against the unjust treatments meted out by English imperialism, or American Missionaries. At the same time he had the highest regard for the integrity and self-respect combined with obedience, as he saw in English people. He said, “There is no other in the world who understands, as does the Englishman, what should be the glory of man”.155 He said to his American disciples, “You are living Vedantins”. Nivedita wrote, “One characteristic of the Swami was the habit of attacking the abuses of a country or society openly and vigorously when he was in its midst, whereas after he had left it, it would often seem as if nothing but its virtues

were remembered by him. Both in India and the West, he stood out as a Man without frontiers. India was certainly the Queen of his adoration, yet his vision was always universal”. Girish Ghosh, the dramatist - devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that when Naren says ‘I’, his ‘I’ encompasses the whole universe and the Maya can never bind him. On 23 August, 1894, he wrote to mother George W. Hale, “Whose India? Who cares? Everything is His ... We do nothing. We are not. The world is not. He is. He is. Only He is ... That is religion, Mother, There is God. There all the saints, prophets, and incarnations meet”.157

On October 5, 1893, Free Press in U.S.A. reported on Vivekananda in the Chicago Parliament of Religions: Our Visitor from India, Vivekananda is a representative from India to the World’s Parliament of Religions. He, more than any other of the eminent scholars, has attracted universal attention. Vivekananda is not a Brahmin, is not a Buddhist, is not a Parsee, is not a Mohammedan. He may be said to represent the best in all of these. He speaks for universal truth or the unification of all truth.158 A Christian, who heard him in Los Angeles in 1899, wrote: “We had a lecture on Christmas day from the Swami entitled, ‘Christ's Mission to the World’, and a better one on this subject I never heard. No Christian minister could have presented Jesus as a character worthy of the greatest reverence more eloquently or more powerfully than did this learned Hindoo”.159 “Swami Vivekananda belonged to the eternity, equality”, said Josephine MacLeod. She heard him once speak on ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, and found him to radiate a white light from head to foot, so lost was he in the wonder and the power of Christ.160 His passion was for suffering humanity, anywhere and everywhere. To Nivedita who wondered at his strange respect for Negroes or Tartars, he answered, “If I am grateful to my white-skinned Aryan ancestor, I am far more so to my yellow skinned Mongolian ancestor and, most so of all, to the black skinned Negroid”!161

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157 Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume IX, p. 35.
158 Prabuddha Bharata, October 1997, p. 52.
To his brother disciples in India he wrote from America in 1894, that everything must be sacrificed, if necessary, for that one sentiment, Universality. Whether I live or die, whether I go back to India or not, remember this specially, that universality-perfect acceptance, not tolerance only - we preach and perform. Even during the days of all-out missionary antagonism against him in the West, he wrote to E. T. Sturdy: “Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clear. What is India, or England, or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called Man. He who pours water at the root, does he not water the whole tree? There is but one basis of well being, social, political, or spiritual - to know that I and my brother are one”.  

Long before the League of Nations or United Nations was conceived by humanity, Vivekananda first gave to Indians in 1897 his futuristic vision of the emerging international culture, based on harmony of nations, and harmony of religions: “The problem of life is becoming deeper and broader everyday as the world moves on. The watchword and the essence have been preached in the days of yore when the Vedantic truth was first discovered, the solidarity of all life. One atom in this universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it. There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake, and it is becoming every day clearer that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial, or national, or narrow grounds. Every idea has to become broad till it covers the whole of this world, every aspiration must go on increasing till it has engulfed the whole of humanity, nay, the whole of life, within its scope”.  

There is no doubt that some jingoistic fanatic nationalism tried to threaten the world peace, but the international organizations, the international combinations and the international laws are the cry of the day. This he prophesied in 1897. Today after the two devastating world wars, we see the onset of globalization, when all nations are forced to work in an international atmosphere, with World Trade Organization, World Health

164 Chander Shekhar Talwar, Interview, (Appendix-E of the present thesis)
Organization, United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization and United Nations in its totality influencing the lives of various nations. Vivekananda's thoughts even echo in the thoughts of the great thinkers of modern times. Pierre Teilhard De Chardin wrote, “The age of nations is now over. The time has come for men to shake off their ancient prejudices and turn as one Man”. Kenichi Ohme, Japan's management guru writes in his book *The Borderless World*, “That nations today should sign a treaty not of independence but of interdependence”. Lester Brown, American politician, recently wrote in *State of the World*, “The world is one, humanity is one. The powerful nations can no longer pursue aggressive self-interest”. Global communication through one language has become common. English, though a language foreign to 92 percent of the people in the world, is now the lingua franca.\(^{166}\)

A century ago Vivekananda advocated to his Indian disciples, English and modern science, along with *Vedanta*, as essential means for progress for India. Vivekananda’s nationalism had no narrowness or exclusiveness in it. Though intense was his love for his country, yet his love was not confined to his country alone. There was nothing chauvinistic about his patriotism. His heart was large enough to take within its embrace the whole of humanity. His ultimate ideal was internationalism and brotherhood of man. He was sure that unless India gains freedom there cannot be any welfare of the Indians.

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