Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

India is a land of multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-socio-economic people. The history of India has been shaped by a number of reformers, movements and freedom fighters. These personalities played a key role in shaping the socio-political structure of India. Swami Vivekananda was one of such reformers. He was one of those important figures who fiercely fought ideologically to restore the values and importance of *Vedanta* in India during the period of colonial subjugation. His rhetoric initiated the trend of national awakening.

Swami Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863. His earlier name was Narendernath Datta, popularly called as Bileh. His mother was Bhuwaneshwari Devi and father Bishwanath Datta. He got traditional *sanskaras* from the family. Vivekananda received English education and had sharp intellect. Before coming to Ramakrishna Paramhansa, he was a member of Brahmo Samaj. He was of firm belief that God cannot be seen or realized in human form. At that time, the situation of India was very pathetic. Many inhumane practices, superstitions and social evils were prevalent. It is imperative to review the socio-political milieu to study the times of Swami Vivekananda and his place in it.

The second half of the nineteenth century India witnessed the beginning of historically radical changes in almost every sphere of life, i.e. social, religious, cultural, economic, educational, industrial, agricultural and even administrative. On one side, the social evils like caste, creed, *sati*, sanctions on widow remarriage, infanticide and social ostracism were the order of the day. On the other side, the priests misquoted religious works like the *Vedas* in favour of these evils. Even the sanction to *Sati* and other superstitions and rites were traced back to the *Vedas*. Many unwanted and burdensome social ceremonies, rites and rituals were imposed on the people under the banner of revealed scriptures. Caste prejudices had been prevailing for many centuries, resulting in the maltreatment and inhuman behaviour with the low caste people.

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The widows were not allowed to remarry. Though some schools of Hindu law (like that of Banaras) were not giving any right to a widow without a son yet Bengal school of thought based on Daya Bagh gave some rights even if a widow was without a son. The condition was in no way different in case of sati and other evil practices deep rooted at that time. An Englishman, Thomson, counted that during a given period there had been a thousand and a half cases of sati in Banaras- the seat of Brahmanical orthodoxy and such cases in Bengal within that period numbered three thousand and a half. Similarly kulin marriages among Brahmans were also a blot on the society. The situation had grown more alarming with the activeness of Christian missionaries who were hammering the Hinduism by all means. The western education created a huge gap between Indian minds and their past glorious heritage. As D. S. Sharma points out, “The inrush of a totally different civilization put an end to all creative work for a time and an uncritical admiration of all things western took possession of the mind of the educated class coupled with contempt for things of native origin”.

During the nineteenth century, some thinking minds made laudable attempts to awaken the masses to think critically, particularly in socio-religious spheres. The pioneer of socio-religious movements in India was Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833), the founder of the Brahma Samaj. He advocated reforms in various fields like social structure, religion, education and customs. Rammohun felt the necessity of scientific western education to help the Hindu society to get rid of superstitions and unnecessary rituals. He took lead in 1818, and created a public opinion against the most cruel and gruesome practice of self-immolation by the widows. Rammohun succeeded in getting the abolition of sati by an act of legislation initiated by Lord William Bentick in 1829. For him these evils were impediment to pursue political agenda. He wrote to his friend James Silk Buckingham, “I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well

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calculated to promote their political interests". In 1823, he fought for the freedom of press and sympathized with the freedom movements of foreign countries. He celebrated the establishment of constitutional government in Spain in 1821 by giving a public dinner at town hall. The defeat of revolutionaries in Naples disturbed him. Certainly, he laid the path for the emancipation of conscience and the faith of the Indian renaissance. However, the extreme monism advocated by Brahmo Samaj later on weakened it.

When Dabindranath Tagore became leader of Tattvabodhni Movement, the Brahmos started moving away from general Hindu race. As pointed out by Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan, the rejection of Vedicism 'led to neglect, on the part of the Brahmos, of our ancient scriptures and was thus discouraging scholarship and causing spiritual sterility'. Because of it, many Brahmos refused to call themselves Hindus and ceased to take a just pride in the glorious literary and spiritual achievements of the Hindu race. However, through the British Indian Association (1851), Dabindranath Tagore succeeded in awakening the all India political interest for the first time and thereby contributed to the growth of political nationalism, which was evolving side by side with Hindu nationalism.

With the emergence of Keshab Chandra Sen on the scene of Brahmo Samaj, a comprehensive programme of social reforms was launched for renaissance. His social reform movement included besides widow remarriage, female education, castelessness, and education for the working classes and cheap literature for their enlightenment. Helping the downtrodden in an organized way to help themselves and diffusion of sympathy for them were his other significant contributions. Though Keshab was not complete in his concept of emancipation, yet he wrote a number of articles in his Sulav Samachar indicating his passion for alleviating the distress of the downtrodden. Practically, he championed the foreign domination, calling British rule a Divine dispensation. Thus, it was a retrograde step from the

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point of view of both national and individual emancipation. In 1870, when he went to England, Queen Victoria and Gladstone cordially received him. Others present were the known celebrities of the time such as Max Mueller, Francis Newman, Dean Stanley and John Stuart Mill. His influence did not last long. He, by building around him a personality cult in the later years, practically acted against his earlier mission of absolute freedom of individual conscience from the bondage of social customs and conventions. It caused another schism in the Brahmo Samaj and the majority seceded to form Sadharan Brahmo Samaj (1878) of which Swami Vivekananda in his college days was an ardent member.

Another activist of the period of renaissance was David Hare (1775-1842). The new education which was largely instrumental in ushering renaissance in Bengal owes its origin very much to him. Besides the establishment of Hindu College, Hare was associated with institutions such as Hindu Free School and the Academic Association of the Derozians. He encouraged in every way the native female education. Light more light appears to be the motto of his life. To Swami Vivekananda, he was a Karamyogin.

A movement, which came with rationality as the basis was Young Bengal Movement or Derozians as popularly called by the name of its leader (Henry Louis Vivian Derozio-1809-31). Its followers held up the motto, “He who will not reason is a fool and he who does not is a slave”. They were very much critical of Hinduism. His disciples were not only undermining the orthodoxy by bringing rationalism to the broad section of middle class; they even assailed the actions of the government in vitriolic language. Ram Gopal (a student of Derozio) started political agitation against the government. “We

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9 R. C. Majumdar, (ed), The History and Culture of Indian People, British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Volume X, p.90.
do not want the domination of white Brahmans”, was the cry of this group. His celebrated lecture in support of what was called as Black Act (1849-50) by the Europeans made him famous. He was called the Demosthenes of India.11 The one more thing that speaks highly of this group was that, instructed by Derozio, they never had the laxity of morals in their daily life. Those who entered the government service were strictly against bribe.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91) was a man of principles. While facing the problem of compromising the principles, he declared, “I would rather sell vegetables to earn my bread than serve any institution against my principles”.12 He revived the dormant institution of social reform after a lapse of years and raised issues that stirred society once again but in a larger scale. His most remarkable crusade was against widow-remarriage. He was incapable of group action as he had supreme faith in his own ability and personal infallibility. Though this trait is important as it signifies emancipation of rugged ego of the individual yet it has the limitation of not making use of the techniques of social betterment, which were to be applied collectively. His contribution is that he chalked out a programme of reform and growth in the true renaissance pattern, without a shadow of servility either to the past or to the glamour of the present. Vivekananda too admitted it.

Prarthna Samaj was established in Maharashtra. This movement was initially a social movement directed against the evils of caste, child-marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage and seclusion of women in the Hindu society. Later on, Prarthna Samaj leaders were found eager to relate their movement to the past claiming it to be a continuation of the protestant movement of the Maratha saints like Dyandev, Jnandev, Eknath, Namdev, Tukaram, Ramdass and others. The hymns of these saints were used in its services.13 This tendency became pronounced when Mahadev Gobind Ranade, (1842-1901) popularly known as Justice Ranade, assumed the leadership of the Samaj. Besides associating himself with Prarthna Samaj he started a social conference, founded the Saravjanik Sabha of Poona (1870), and carried an agitation for industrialization and the use of vernaculars. He was of the

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11 Bhupendranath Dutt, Swami Vivekananda Patriot-Prophet A Study, p.55.
13 J. N. Farquhar, Modern Religious Movements In India, p. 78.
opinion that the Hindu community is no doubt conservative but this conservatism is its strength. He further declared that growth could only come from within by linking the present with the past. This past is not, of course, our degenerate past against which our battle is, but our heroic past. Reform is the liberation from unhealthy inhibitions alone.

Arya Samaj Movement of Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824-83) was a healthy movement as a protest against the superstitions of orthodox Hinduism. It gave a new life to the masses by giving a call, ‘Back to Vedas’. This movement was very much instrumental in encouraging the Hindus to have faith in the past glory and the true Vedic religion. It attenuated itself through extremism. By its complete repudiation of Puranic mythology, uncompromising objection to idol worship, total rejection of other sacred works except the Vedas and the vehement opposition to anything seemingly alien, the Arya Samaj got itself completely divorced from the general body of Hindu tradition. Dayananda ignored that Hinduism or the religious concepts of the Indo-Aryans had an evolutionary basis and that evolutionary process is still continuing. Thereupon the occidental savants have classed Hinduism as an anthropological religion. He thus ignored the dialectical changes in every age of the Indo-Aryans’ religious experiences.

The Theosophical Society was founded by Colonel Olcott and Madam Blavatsky. When Mrs. Annie Besant joined the society, it became a powerful force in socio-religious movement. Mrs. Besant landed in India in 1893. This movement enabled the Hindu intellectuals to shake off partially their feeling of inferiority on religious score and to take courage to face other religions on equal footing. This liberation from inferiority complex further affected by Arya Samaj paved the way for Swami Vivekananda’s preaching of Hinduism on the world forum as a universal faith. It should be remembered that Theosophy was one of the faiths represented at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893.

14 R. C. Majumdar (ed), The History and Culture of Indian People, British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Volume X, p. 256.
Among the Muslims, Aligarh Movement was started under the leadership of Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan. He started the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College, Aligarh to educate the Muslim youth of North India. On one hand, people like the poet Hati were for going back to the past, to the days of pristine glory of Islam. On the other hand, Professor Azad, the author of *Abe Hayat*, was completely for English education.\(^{17}\) Thus Muslim awakening through western education began under the garb of medieval revivalism.

On the eve of revolt of 1857 and thereafter, we find that national consciousness had permeated the intelligentsia. A few stalwarts like Harish Chander Mukherjee, Rajnarain Bose, Bhudev Mukherjee, Nabgopal Mitra and Jyotirindernath Tagore had taken up the programme of its promotion and diffusion. Harishchander Mukherjee was earliest in this field. He started his renowned paper *The Hindu Patriot* in 1853 with the object of a fair and manly advocacy of the interests of the country and impartial exposition of social and political evils by which she was afflicted. Similarly, Rajnarain Bose founded a ‘Society for the Promotion of National Feeling among the Educated Natives of Bengal’,\(^{18}\) in the prospectus of which he held out before the people of Bengal a complete and comprehensive picture of nationalism, touching almost every aspect of life. Nabgopal Mitra who was one of his associates took his ideas up still more seriously. Nabgopal, in cooperation with Rajnarain and others, started in 1867 the famous *Hindu Mela* or *Swadeshi Mela*. Since people from other parts of the country participated in this, it adopted an all India character. Nabgopal’s nationalism was purely Hindu in spirit and he had no hesitation in making an open declaration to that effect. The word national seemed to have cast a spell over him. He started a national school, a national press, a national paper and a national gymnasium. So he came to be called as National Nabgopal or National Mitra. In his boyhood days, Swami Vivekananda is said to have come into close contact with him.\(^{19}\) Bankim Chandra contributed more to the national and patriotic feeling, first through the famous patriotic song *Bande Matram* and secondly

\(^{17}\) Bhupendranath Dutt, *Swami Vivekananda Patriot-Prophet A Study*, p.71.
\(^{19}\) R. C. Majumdar, (ed), *The History and Culture of Indian People, British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Volume X, pp. 478-79.
through his novels like *Durgesnandini, Mrinalini, Sitaram, Anandmath* and *Devi Choudhurani*: the last two, which pointed to the country ‘the way of salvation and gave it the religion of patriotism’. Dinbandhu Mitra’s *Nil Darpan* also made an impact.

Till the third quarter of the nineteenth century, many provincial level political associations had come into existence. The *British Indian Association* (1851), the *Mahajan Sabha of Madras* (1884), the *Bombay Presidency Association* (1885), the *Saravjanik Sabha of Poona*, and the *Indian Association* (1876), were some of these political associations. Ranade’s association asked for the ‘gift of responsible self government’ on the auspicious occasion of Delhi Durbar of 1877. According to Bipin Chandra Pal, these were local bodies representing more or less limited provincial or class interests. Till 1890’s, the national movement was more or less Hindu in character. It was largely fostered by Bengali literature, which glorified the achievements of the Sikhs, the Rajputs and the Marathas but not of the Muslims.

During this period many a celebrated journalists like Sisir Kumar Ghosh contributed significantly to the movement through vernacular journalism. Another important personality was Surendranath who after being dismissed from Indian Civil Services for a technical reason plunged into politics. He first organized a Students’ Association and then through the Indian Association started the campaign for political emancipation. His later imprisonment in 1883, during the Ilbert Bill controversy, which brought into being the powerful Hindu reaction, made him an all India hero and helped forward his movement for Indian unity through Indian Association.

At this point of time *Indian National Congress* was founded in 1885 by the eminent personalities like A. O. Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji, Fakhruddin Ali Tayabji, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee, who were called moderates. A. O.

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21 There are different theories behind the establishment of Indian National congress. Hume expressed that ‘A safety Valve for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action, was urgently needed, and no more efficacious safety-valve than our Congress movement could possibly be devised. C. F. Andrews and Girija K. Mookerjee, *Rise and Growth of Indian National Congress*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1967 p. 77.
Hume, a retired Indian civil service servant of the government, played a crucial role in the founding of this organization. With this, a new phase of national movement started, the aim of which was to get more constitutional rights through constitutional and peaceful means. At the same time, Aligarh Movement regarded the Congress as inimical to true Muslim interests and helped to develop anti Hindu bias among the Muslims. First through the efforts of Mr. Beck, the Principal of Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College, a friend, philosopher and guide of Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, an organization called United Indian Patriotic Association was set up in 1888 for carrying an anti-Congress propaganda in co-operation with the Hindus whenever available. Soon, however, they discarded the idea of joint Hindu-Muslim endeavour and changed its name to Mohammedan Anglo Oriental Defence Association for providing the Muslims with a political platform. Its object was ‘Anglo Muslim Cooperation for fighting the Hindu Congress’.

Thus it stood in the way of unity of the national movement. The Indian renaissance came to face a crisis. It is not that the Hindu reformers were not aware of it. Raja Ram Mohan Roy had said with respect to the religious bigotry and proselytisation of the Muslims that “We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries”. Dwarkanath Tagore, by no means an orthodox Hindu, wrote in a letter to The Englishman, on 06-12-1838, “The present characteristic feelings of the natives are a want of truth, a want of integrity, a want of independence. These were not the characteristic feelings of former days, before the religion was corrupted and education had disappeared. It is to the Mohammedan conquest that these evils owe and they are the invariable results of the loss of liberty and national degradation”.

In Maharashtra, Bal Gangadhar Tilak with his few friends started two newspapers- the Maharatta in English and Kesari in Marathi. He adopted

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22 If the founder of the Congress had not been a great Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that the authorities would have atonce found some way or the other of suppressing the movement. This feeling also probably influenced the organizers of the National Conference in Calcutta to merge it in the Indian National Congress. The History and Culture of Indian People, British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Volume X, p. 533.


24 R. C. Majumdar, (ed), The History and Culture of Indian People, British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Volume X, p. 5.
various methods for providing a common national platform for all classes of the Hindus, the chief of these being the organization of Ganpati and Shivaji festivals in 1893 and 1895 respectively. Tilak advised the people to carry an agitation for famine relief provided in Famine Relief Code. He through his Kesari and emissaries urged the people to be self reliant and courageous and not to pay taxes by disposing their lands and cattle. Tilak’s fame was kissing the sky when Swami Vivekananda appeared on the scene. At this time thousands of young minds started turning their backs to Brahma Samaj and their faces towards politics and national movement towards the close of the nineteenth century. Indian nationalism was given momentum, first by the deteriorating and humiliating condition of Indian migrants in other countries because Indians started thinking that this was due the fact that they were subjects and not free country and secondly by the meteor like rise of Swami Vivekananda who placed Hinduism on the cultural map of the world.

A vast corpus of primary and secondary works exist for the study of various aspects of Swami Vivekananda’s life and a critical review of the same is necessary to understand the contribution of the present work to fill certain gaps left unattended by the earlier works.

In *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda by His Eastern and Western Admirers*, published by Swami Gambhirananda, different articles of thirty admirers, all of them his contemporary, has been collected. His college friend Narendernath Gupta points out the general difference between other reformers of the nineteenth century and Swami Vivekananda. The method followed by other reformers was that of dilettante, touching the surface of great problems, but seldom attempting to probe deeper while Swami Vivekananda tried to hit the roots. In the Parliament of Religions which was a parliament not filled from hustings and polling booths, but from the Temples...
and the Pagodas, the Synagogues and the Churches and the Mosques of the world, he was the only representative who was there more by sufferance than by the right of any achievement to his credit and that is why only one name is remembered today and that is the name of Swami Vivekananda. Even in America and the West, he had a deep concern for the masses of India.

In the views of Haripad Mitra, Swami Vivekananda’s views cemented religion and science. He says that Swami Ji always tried to see positive and good in everything so much so that even in the practice of helping the beggars. He was so intelligent that he always threw a fresh light with fresh similes and illustrations that it seemed altogether a fresh subject and a fresh way of explaining it.

K. Sunderam Iyer throws light on the importance of self-dignity for Swami Vivekananda and his plain speaking whether praise or rebuff. Swami Vivekananda praised the Gaekwad of Baroda of all the Hindu Princes he met, for his capacity, patriotism, energy and foresight and even admitted the high qualities of the Rajput king of Khetri. Iyer also elaborates the lectures Swami Vivekananda delivered during the sojourn in Madras, which were fixed on the themes of My Plan of Campaign; The Sages of India; Vedanta and its Relation to Practical Life; and the Future of India, so as to reveal his means and methods for renovating the national spiritual life of India in accordance with its altered conditions.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri conveys the pain felt by Swami Vivekananda for the poor and the miserable people. He says that Swami Ji was a lover of Upanishads and Bhagwad Gita. “Swami Vivekananda advised me to read as well as said that there are four key words which you must remember; viz, abhaya (fearlessness), ahimsa (non-violence), asanga (non-attachment) and ananda (bliss) because these four words sum up the essence of all our sacred works”.

A. Srinivasa Sastri narrates the humanistic behaviour of Swami Vivekananda whether on the dining table or replying the disparaging remarks by a protestant missionary European lady regarding the enforced celibacy of a Sannyasi’s life. He said, “In your country, madam, a bachelor is feared but here you see they are worshipping me- a bachelor”.

Cornelio Conger recalls that Swami Vivekananda used to be sad remembering the condition of India. On one occasion he became sad thinking that little Indian girls did not have in general the chance to have as good an education as American children. Swami Ji was so much a dynamic and attractive personality that many women were quite swept away by him and made every effort by flattery to gain his interest which would trouble Cornelio Conger’s grandmother who used to caution him.

Sister Christine has explained the typical parable style of Swami Vivekananda. The parable of a lion born in a sheepfold and thinking himself sheep and fearing from wolves until a lion comes and make him realize that he is a lion. The lion becoming conscious of his nature let out a mighty roar. So he conveys the message of realizing the divinity in man. Organization was of great importance for him, but not at the cost of accepting the conditions of financially helping persons. Christine also mentions prophesies of Swami Vivekananda regarding a new epoch coming from Russia or China.

Josephine McLeod too says that his power lays, perhaps, in the courage he gave to others and it changed many personalities like Goodwin who was very expensive and was engaged to take down his lectures. After the first week, he refused to take money and followed him round the world the whole life. Mary C. Funke also testifies Swami Ji’s fun making as merry type. Sometimes he will start cooking for his disciples.

Sister Nivedita who was one of his most blessed disciples throws light on the aspects of salvation and man making. For Swami Vivekananda, union was greater than love. He will say the great defect in Hinduism has been that it offered salvation on the basis of renunciation only. For householder, renunciation is nothing. However, scientifically renunciation is the whole law.

In his article, Swami Vimalananda brings forth the love and respect of Ramakrishna for Swami Vivekananda. In America, he did not allow one of his lectures on Ramakrishna to be published because he felt that he had done injustice to his master as his master had never criticized any body or any thing while in his lecture he had criticized the Americans for their dollar worshipping spirit.
Manmothonath Ganguli hints at the Japanese Mikado’s request to Swami Vivekananda to come to Japan to talk on Hindu religion, which he did not accept due to ailing health.

Ida Ansell has depicted Swami Vivekananda’s quality of telling the deepest truths in normal way. When some pickle juice ran out on his arm, he put his finger in the mouth and started licking off. Edith objected. Swami Ji replied that, “this is the trouble with you. You always want this outside to be very nice”. Reeves Calkins considers him a patriot much more than a philosopher.

In these articles, we get the first hand information of his views about different topics, narrated to different persons at different places of different countries. As most of these views are related to his foreign visits, very less is covered regarding his interaction with Indians in India. Seemingly some exaggerations are there, possibly as these are the views of his admirers and disciples.

Romain Rolland’s work, *The Life of Vivekananda and The Universal Gospel*,\(^{28}\) shows that Vivekananda’s thoughts had great impression on the mind of Romain Rolland who has presented a fascinating and impressive account of Swami Vivekananda’s life and message. His style is as per his caliber and reputation. Regarding Vivekananda’s journey of India he considers it as a great departure in 1891. Like a diver, he plunged into the ocean of India and the ocean covered his tracks. He was a prince despite all disguises with fires of genius burning in his eyes. His vast spirit never for a single day failed to widen its knowledge and its experience. Ultimately having a big cry at Kanyakumari, for the welfare of his poor countrymen, he decided to participate in the World Parliament of Religions, though he had no invitation letter. Romain narrates that Swami Vivekananda asked his friends to contact a religious society for this purpose, but the chief of the society sent the reply, “Let the devil should die of cold”. The devil neither died of cold nor give up. So much so even in the Parliament of Religions, amongst them all, it was the young man who represented nothing and yet every thing – the man belonging to no sect rather to India as a whole.

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An interesting aspect at the time of his first visit to America has been discussed by the author. This is the impact of his visit on America as before him Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman were there with the spirit of Asia. Rolland says that for Vivekananda the task was a double one to take to India the money and goods acquired by western civilization; to take to the West the spiritual treasures of India. The author advocates that Vivekananda wanted a new type of Sannyasin, always ready to go down to hell if need be, to save others. Parallels to his work of social mutual aid, education and Vedantic preaching were undertaken and he was able to write, “The movement is begun. It will never stop”. He inculcated the feelings of obedience, service and devotion by personal example.

Some light has also been thrown on *Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Janana Yoga,* and *Raja Yoga* pointing out the difference in naming them so. In the West, *Bhakti Yoga* has been designated as mysticism while Vivekananda implies it as for *Raja Yoga*. His terminology has been accepted as more true as in the feminine, the mystic is the study of spirituality. Vivekananda called it *Psychological Yoga* also, since its field of action is the control and absolute mastery of mind. For this, five conditions – *ahimsa, truth, chastity, non-courteousness* and *purity of soul* -were laid down.

One of the chief and most original features of Swami Vivekananda’s work was the discovery and declarations of the unity of Hinduism. He made the great men of India like Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghosh and Rabindranath Tagore feel for the poor and work for them. While comparing the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Vivekananda, the author says that the latter, being a great intellectual which Mahatma Gandhi is not in the slightest degree, could not detach himself from the system of thought as Mahatma Gandhi has done. Similar comparison of thoughts of both the personalities with respect to politics has also been discussed.

Many of Swami Vivekananda’s events of life are illustrated in an interesting style. Vivekananda did not hesitate in using harsh words. He asked the Christians not to have false propaganda and go back to Christ and he paid great respect for the virgin mother. When one of the disciples gave him the image of Sistine Madonna to bless, he refused in all humility and piously touching the feet of the child, he said, “I would have washed his
(Christ’s) feet, not with my tears, but with my heart’s blood”. This work also marks out the different approach of Swami Vivekananda towards America during his second visit. At this time, he wished to show them a Brahmin rather than a warrior. He formulates his views on scientific grounds. He puts life into the thoughts, which in science remain a piece of mechanism.

However, this work does not cover why eastern thinkers fully accepted the west as spiritually bankrupt and why with the dominance of materialism spiritual values were not prominent. How India even at that time in spite of all social and other evils like poverty and slavery was able to keep spiritual values intact and preserved. The author terms Vivekananda’s first visit to the West as a failure as far as the urgent help he had gone to get for the poor millions of India. It needs to be checked whether he had gone to collect money or to arouse the feeling of sympathy for the Indians among them.

*Swami Vivekananda– A Historical Review* 29 by R. C. Majumdar highlights impressively many views of Swami Vivekananda regarding whom he has written that he could not think of any other person who had a greater claim to be regarded as a true friend, philosopher and guide of the young generation of India in the complexities of life with which they are faced today. To the youth of India, this work explains the difference between heart and intellect in the views of Vivekananda. As the latter says that it is the heart that is of most importance. It is through the heart that the Lord is seen and not through the intellect. The intellect is only the street cleaner, cleaning the path for us, a secondary worker, and the policeman. However, he does not overrule the importance of intellect altogether. For him, intellect is necessary, for without it we fell into crude errors.

According to the author, Principal Hastie pushed the scientific mind of Swami Vivekananda towards deep trance of Ramakrishna while explaining Wordsworth’s poem *Excursions*. He moulded Vivekananda who after the Guru’s demise left the monastery life for Himalayan tours with words ‘I shall not return’. But every time he did return. If he had chosen to live a life of a recluse in the Himalayas, as he ardently desired and might easily have done, he would have merely added to the number of great ascetics who had never

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been wanting in India, but there would not have been any Vivekananda, as we know him today. Fortunately, for humanity he triumphed over the lure of the Himalayas and turned his gaze to the people of India. He permanently left in February 1891. During his Indian journey, he visited the cottages of the poor and the untouchables as well as the palaces of the ruling chiefs. Many Rajas like that of Ramnad accepted him as his Guru.

Ultimately at the southern end, at the feet of India at Kanyakumari, he plunged into a deep meditation and had vivid glimpses of India that was, India that is and India that he envisaged for the future. In England, not only he had brought out his feelings but he also succeeded in establishing a golden relation between England and India. Even hundreds of people seceded from Christianity. This work elaborates the role played by Sister Nivedita during plague of 1898 at Calcutta and the similar work by other brother monks and disciples at different times at different places. During his stay at Srinagar, the Maharaja of Kashmir, in token of his respect and reverence for Swami Ji, offered to establish a monastery and a Sanskrit college but the proposal was vetoed by the British government.

The author says that two things are especially remarkable during his second visit to the West. First, he was gradually detached more and more from the external world and his bearing was one of complete indifference to his surroundings. Secondly, his opinion changed about American civilization. He saw that the commercial spirit was composed, for the most part, of greed, selfishness, and a struggle for privilege and power. He also saw there the social vices and arrogances of race, religion and colour. Even so, he said that America would not be the instrument to harmonize the East and the West.

In the matters of religion, author advocates that Swami Vivekananda stood for the catholicity of Hinduism, which accepts every religion, as only, ‘evolving a God out of the material man and the same God is the inspirer of all of them’. While giving the vision of universal religion he says that the Hindu may have failed to carry out all his plans, if there is ever to be a universal religion it must be one which will have no location in place or time. His ideal of nationalism was based on the four solid rocks, that is, awakening the masses, development of physical and moral strength, unity based on common spiritual basis and consciousness of and pride in the ancient glory
and greatness of India. A broad outline and short authentic account of
different aspects of the life of Vivekananda has been presented. It mainly
deals with the past historical role played by him. Appendix I and II include
the excellent works of Swami Vivekananda’s poems and Bangla prose
writings.

*Hints on National Education in India*, written by Sister Nivedita, is
an important source of information to understand the educational scenario of
early twentieth century in India. Education as the development of the self has
always been a part of Indian tradition. However modern education should
reach out to every one is the main objective and element of present
civilization. The education should not only enable a man to compete but also
motivate him to look beyond one’s individuality or family towards sociality.
The concentration of Indian minds should be on Indian problems and Indian
people. The writer opines that to feel nobly and to choose loftily and honestly
is a thousand times more important to the development of faculty than any
other single aspect of educational process. The need of the hour is that
education should be nation making. The importance for the youth must lie
outside the family. They should be ready to make sacrifices for their country.
This book enumerates three ideals for the reconstitution of a nation. These
ideals are country or religion, people and the national mind.

Until and unless the education is extended to women, no national
progress can be possible. Let the women be educated, resourceful, and strong
and fit for moments of crisis, the nation will naturally grow. This work
ponders over the purpose of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda schools. The
education should not curtail the freedom and must be based on arguments and
new thoughts so as to spread free and living knowledge. Similar emphasis has
been made on kindergarten schools in India and mutual training as a part of
general education in India.

K. L. Miglani’s edited work *Swami Vivekananda- Man, Message and
Mission*, mainly consists of three parts for the general understanding of the

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30 Sister Nivedita, *Hints on National Education In India*, Udbodhan Office,
life and personality of Swami Vivekananda. The first part covers
Vivekananda’s life, work and personality through the articles written by
eminent writers. R. C. Majumdar in his essay: ‘Prophet of New age: Life,
Thought and Work of Swami Vivekananda’, throws light on his early life,
rationality, erudition, knowledge and taste of fine arts. It covers, though
briefly, the Vedantic philosophy expounded by Swami Vivekananda in his
own style that is in everyday life. Vivekananda was of firm view that the best
approach to Hindu mind was through religion. Its fulfillment is the service of
the masses. His thoughts on strength, patriotism and education have also been
examined. Romain Rolland laid emphasis on Vivekananda’s views on the
universality of religion and ultimate goal of human mind. Justice V. R.
Krishna Iyer’s article ‘Liberators of Humanity: Swami Vivekananda and Karl
Marx’, draws similarities and comparison between these two great
personalities. Second part covers the views and message of Vivekananda on
aspects like the goal of life, Bhakti, Karma, Vedantic thought and India.
Third part encloses the homage paid by great personalities like Mahatma
Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose
of modern India towards Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Ranganathananda’s ‘Philosophy of Service—An Approach To
Human Development in India and The Problems of Our Working Class’, deals with post independent social, economic and political context and mainly
concentrates on human and inter human traits. For the author, the panacea of
all human problems is the philosophy of service. Renunciation of little self
with a view to manifest the higher self and spirit of service are the twin ideals
of India. Man must grow not only physically or intellectually but also morally
and spiritually. The concept of evolution in man has been dealt with both on
the social and biological levels.

Swami Ranganathananda opined that India of today needs character
efficiency. All the institutions have to be built on the basis of character and
ethics. Only then character efficiency will flow. There is a tremendous
responsibility on all of us. We must become sensitive to our country’s

32 Swami Ranganathananda, Philosophy of service, An approach to Human
Development in India and The Problems of Our Working Class, Advaita
problems and nation must survive. Every head and mind should be stirred by the philosophy of service. In his second lecture, the author deals with the problems of working class. Vivekananda was the first to point out that poverty is not a crime in India. What India needs is the economic development of the poor people so as to put an end to their exploitation by the rich classes. Unless the individuality to common people in India is restored, reforms will not yield the required results. Human dignity and self respect must be retained at all costs.

Swami Vivekananda’s Vedantic Socialism authored by R. K. Das Gupta has tried to examine the Vedantic thought and Socialistic approach in the context of Swami Vivekananda’s views. Though Vivekananda never claimed his Vedanticism as socialism, still this book critically examines his views in the contemporary context. Shankaracharya’s Advaita raised the question of the reality of the world. Radhakrishna considers Shankara’s Advaita as escapist from the world and as such does not agree to it. Quite contrary to it, Vivekananda declared that ‘know through Advaita that whomsoever you hurt, you hurt yourself.’ Author finds in Vivekananda new interpreter of Advaita. Vivekananda explains the two principles of Advaita philosophy; the world of the finite is death and realization of the infinite is life.

Vivekananda advocated Advaita as a social ideal and his socialism is not an economic or social doctrine. He was opposed to capitalism and to money power in society but did not invoke any philosophy of dialectical materialism. He always paced ideals above institution and never thought in terms of seizing of political power by the masses. Vedantic socialism’s cardinal principle is freedom,- a free body, a free mind, and a free soul. This book also analyses Swami Vivekananda’s views on morality and his role in the Parliament of Religions along with his ideas about two great souls Shankara and Ramanuja.

Amiya P. Sen written *The Indispensable Vivekananda – An Anthology of Our Times*,\(^{34}\) highlights the circumstances in which Vivekananda was born and lived. Among the thinkers, scholars and reformers of nineteenth century, Vivekananda was more prominent in acquiring and retaining pan Indian and pan Hindu resonance. He was able to make the Indian intelligentsia more aware of its social and historical role. On the issues of women, the author does not rule out the possibility that Vivekananda’s conservative ideas put the women question back some years. Vivekananda did not see religion in isolated individual sphere rather his view of religion varies from salvation to socialism. Moreover, he advocated ethics and service of the poor more important than *Vedanta* philosophy in its religious form. This book examines the *Raja, Janana* and *Bhakti yoga* of Vivekananda in different perspective.

The second part of the book reproduces the views and letters of Vivekananda on various topics ranging from the nature of the British Rule in India, womanhood, caste problems in India and reforms. Similarly, his views on religion, concept of God, universality of *Vedanta* and commentary on the *Gita* have been reproduced as such.

Ajeet Jawed’s book *Swami Vivekananda An Iconoclastic Ascetic*,\(^{35}\) deals with the life and message of Swami Vivekananda who did not follow the traditional rules neither socially nor as a *sannyasi*. Even in abroad, he neither will do nor hesitate moving freely or blowing cigars in the company of women. He was outspoken against social evils and wanted to remove these from the roots without disturbing the social fabric. He held priests responsible for these evils. He himself flouted caste rules many times. It has been substantiated with examples. He was having complete faith in the ability and capability of Indian women and wished them to be equally independent as the western women. Author regards his views on religion as rational. Vivekananda declared that religion and God should not be believed without reasoning and self experience. Like a scientist he believed in evolution. For him, superstitions are sign of death. He defended neither fraudulent *Sadhus*

\(^{34}\) Amiya P. Sen, *The Indispensable Vivekananda – An Anthology of Our Times*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2006.

nor occultism. He was opposed to orthodoxy, sectarianism and fanaticism. This book also elaborates the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda in comparison to that of Swami Dayananda. It also points out Dayananda’s criticism of other faiths and as such it is helpful in comparing the thoughts of thinkers of the nineteenth century. Vivekananda saw unity in the ultimate aim of religion. He inspired the young men and women to love and make sacrifice for their country. Many examples of impact of his utterances have been included.

In the work of Christopher Isherwood, *Ramakrishna and His Disciples*, Ramakrishna has been called a phenomenon because phenomenon is always an experience and Ramakrishna’s life was a living example of experiences. This work provides an insight in the basic and fundamental life of common Indians, particularly the Hindu, in comparison to that of the Christian or the English. It is one of the rare books which deal with the life and message of Ramakrishna exclusively. His family background and the spiritual experiences of his parents point out that Ramakrishna inherited his spiritual experiences from them. Though the western scholars repudiate these claims. The first lessons of *sanskaras* for Ramakrishna started at home. Gadadhar (the original name of Ramakrishna) was restless and free boy ready to be friend of each and everyone. His early childhood details have been discussed in an interesting and meaningful way. Gadadhar had spiritual experiences even before he was initiated for Upanayana ceremony. His journey to Dakshineshwar and his early days there had an interesting passage. At Dakshineshwar he had a vision of Kali in 1856. He used to meditate so intensely that he often got completely immersed and will not allow any one else to distract his mind away from the Mother Kali or God. Even Rani Rasmani (who built the temple of Kali at Dakshineshwar) was not spared for this act of her. His devotion to divine Mother was so great that external forms of worship were of no use for him. He was married to Saradamani in 1859. This book is an important source of information to understand the life and thoughts of Ramakrishna as it includes the narratives of his guru Totapuri, his contemporaries like Keshab Chandra Sen, and his disciples including Naren (Swami Vivekananda).

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J. Krishnamurti, in his book *Freedom From The Unknown*,\(^{37}\) throws light on man’s inherent nature and its evolution in the universe. He has tried to explain man’s search for the truth in a different manner. Man designates himself a code of conduct for himself for his living in the society. These codes and outer bondages put man away from the reality. Since times immemorial, man in order to discover the reality or truth adopted two approaches. One is traditional, that is from periphery inwards and the other from the centre outwards. Immaturity lies in the total ignorance of the self or denial of the two. Author opines that to be free of all authority is to die to everything of yesterday, so that your mind is always fresh because all authority is destructive.

To learn about yourself, you must understand yourself. Understanding is not an intellectual process. Acquiring knowledge about yourself and learning about yourself are two different things. This book gives us new insight to decondition ourselves from the social or individual prejudices. By becoming aware of conditioning, one can understand the whole of consciousness in which the thought functions and relationship exist. This book is an important philosophical expertise in relation to terms and concepts like pleasure, desire, joy, fear, violence and thought. All these terms are interrelated. To be free from all these is the goal of life and true living. The author advocated that through complete negation alone, which is the highest form of passion, comes into being.

Satish K. Kapoor in his work *Cultural Contact and Fusion: Swami Vivekananda in the West (1893-96)*\(^{38}\) deals with the first visit of Swami Vivekananda to Europe and America. He was very well received at that time, perhaps more than any body else. The author has tried to locate the historical background of the study of Vivekananda among the three-view points-devotional, cynical and pedagogical. Passing through the stages of Brahmo Samaj, a rational thinker, he was able to see the ultimate light at Dakshineshwar at the feet of Ramakrishna Paramhansa. The transformation in


Swami Vivekananda was not immediate even at Dakshineshwar but after many trials and tribulations as he was not to accept any theory simply because the other accepted it. After the death of his master in 1886, Vivekananda tried to resort to wanderings many times. With the blessings of Sarda Devi, he left Baranogore monastery in July 1890 to see the miserable bleeding India and the rich cultural heritage. While pondering over all this, he went into a state of \textit{Samadhi} at Kanyakumari and is said to have received enlightenment.

In this work, Vivekananda has been shown as a very popular figure in America after the Parliament of Religions in which people were representing different religions with different mindsets. Vivekananda struck the note of universal toleration and acceptance as characteristic of the Hindu thought. The American press described his speeches as hit of the day. He defended the all-embracing character of Hinduism and the \textit{Vedantic} thought.

The author says that he was able to get the support from many Christians when he put forward the most pressing problems of the destitute people of India. Bishop Keene remarked regarding pretended charity of offering food to the hungry Hindus at the cost of their conscience and faith as a shame and disgrace to Christians. Though Vivekananda discussed a vast variety of topics ranging from the Indian philosophy and the Hindu social system to role of missionaries, the regeneration of the masses always remained his primary concern. In one of his lectures at Boston, he disapproved the tendency of the westerners to criticize everything in Indian society and religion. One’s religion cannot be judged by the standards of others’.

An interesting aspect of this work is that Swami Vivekananda wanted his work to continue even after his departure to India. So he formed a society in November 1894 to establish a center for his work. His exegesis of \textit{Vedanta} revolved around three main pillars, that is, the absolute dualism of Madhva known as \textit{Dvaita}, the qualified monism of Ramanuja, known as \textit{Vishishtadvaita} and non-dualism of Shakaracharya better known as \textit{Advaita}. In England too, his lectures were very popular. His classes in England were very successful and popular, so much so that even the Queen wondered how the Swami had been able to attract so many people in a materialistic city like London. During his second visit to the city, he met with Max Mueller a great
Sanskrit scholar, Professor of comparative philosophy at Oxford University. Later on Mueller wrote a work *The Life and Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*. At Kiel he met with Paul Deussen, Professor of Philosophy at University of Kiel, who was well versed in Sanskrit and was the only Oriental scholar in Europe who could speak it fluently.

*Swami Vivekananda- Patriot Prophet, A Study* by Bhupendernath Datta is an important source of information, particularly covering the scenario of Swami Vivekananda’s days and just after his death, in the first few decades of the twentieth century. While tracing the history of nineteenth century in Bengal, it is mentioned that in *Navadwipa Brahmans* used to get ostracized from the society by the touch or smell of Mohammedans, though this thing did not happen in other provinces and further the reason assigned is that *Brahmans* were doing so against Brahmans for the sake of money from Muslim rulers. However, the situation changed with the coming of the English as they did not allow this and we do not get more families with *Jvana dosas* hereafter. All sorts of evil practices and objectionable rites were current in the name of religion. The author throws light on various *Bhakti* movements of Hindus with caste basis. In this background of the society, renaissance took place in India in the nineteenth century. The first main reformer being Raja Rammohun Roy whose greatness consisted in overcoming these incrustations of beliefs and customs and arriving at rational theism. His successors Dabendranath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Sen continued this movement but slowly and slowly their influence started declining. Another movement, Young Bengal Movement by Derozio had one salient feature that this group never had laxity of morals in their daily life as well as when they were in government service. His student Ram Gopal Ghosh started political agitation against the government. He was called Demosthenes of India after his speech against the Black Act. Besides these reformist movements and movements like the Arya Samaj, the Atmiya Samaj, and some counter revolutionary trends were also there along with the Aligarh Movement started mainly to awaken the Muslims.

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While discussing the family pedigree, this work gives the details of the background of caste Kayastha that it related to migration and earlier it was an occupational one and later on it became a caste and had a class conflict with the Brahmins. Sir Herbert Risley formulated a theory of nasal index that higher the nasal index, lower the caste status. However, the author finds that in United Province, Brahman has the lower nasal index while in Bengal the Kayastha. So race system is different to that of caste system in India. Family background of Vivekananda is being traced to Dereton, called in the land settlement account Datta Dariatona. Dattas there were a local landlord family. Family shifted to Calcutta in the seventeenth century. Being holders of good posts, they lived a prosperous life. Vivekananda’s grandfather also turned a monk. His father Viswanath was not treated better in childhood, rather neglected and uncared for. He became attorney in 1866. He was a liberal man and he had an impact on Vivekananda also.

Narendernath Datta (Swami Vivekananda) in his early days joined Sadharan Brahma Samaj and then afterwards met Ramakrishna for never to lose. After the Guru’s demise, Vivekananda went on a journey as a monk, traveling through India; he went abroad to participate in the Parliament of Religions, where he emerged as the champion of orthodox Hindus.

Vivekananda wants to establish the Shruti and not the Samriti and later grown religious ideas. He was confident that if we were proud of our past, our future would be still more glorious. He justifies the Varnashrama and says that it developed into a rigid form in the Puranic age. This work shows that Vivekananda was excellent in literature also as he set up a new style in Bangla literature. Regarding his Bangla writings, Swami Vedananda says that the work Prachaya O Paschaya has been an unparalleled presentation. Talking about his national ideologies, this work notices that he was an intensely patriotic and he wanted to reform India through spiritual means. He wanted a physically strong race ready to renounce and work on the basis of mutual aid. Some light has also been thrown on Swami Ji’s anthropological and sociological views.

The impact of the age and the contemporary waves prevalent at that time is easily discernible. In this work, the author has tried to see too much
through Marxian ideology and class struggle whether the matters or issues were sociological, religious, or nationalistic. While mentioning the constitution of Independent Indian Republic, it is narrated, “one adult person, one vote is its motto”. Indian constitution does not admit hereditary social grouping, class or tribal distinction, and creed or colour difference in the body politic of India. As a result Indian Hindu society is neither moving as wished by Swami Dayanand nor as suggested by Swami Vivekananda.

Suruchi Thapar Bjorkert’s book *Women In The Indian National Movement – Unseen Faces and Unheard Voices, (1930-42)*,\(^40\) deals with the role and contribution of Indian women particularly of Hindi speaking heartland, in the later part of freedom struggle. Though more emphasis is on middle class women, the role of elite class women has also been acknowledged. As far as national movement is concerned, Cambridge School and nationalist historians both consider Indian nationalism as an idealist venture in which the indigenous elite provided the lead to freedom movement. Subaltern thought is important to understand both oppression and exclusion of the masses and their role. This work provides an interesting information how the women faced both colonial structures and traditional social structures boldly and intelligently. In the freedom struggle, the role of women was diversified but the means were mainly non-violent. The matters related to political scenario of that time in relation to women has been elaborately dealt with. Some families supported the women’s role in the national movement while others allowed only males to do so. Even when women were not allowed to actively participate, they contributed with the help of elderly women. For these acts of daring they paid a heavy price both within and outside their families. Gandhian views on women have been discussed. Long separation from their husbands who were busy in their nationalist roles increased the strength of will and steadfastness of purpose among women and ultimately they too assumed the role of absent men. However, this book lacks in dealing with the period prior to civil disobedience movement. Thus, to analyse the dimension of impact of Swami Vivekananda in this sphere and period is difficult to judge.

Ramakrishna and Vivekananda- New Perspectives,\textsuperscript{41} by Arvind Sharma, includes different essays related to different aspects of teachings of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Hindu tradition. The range of these essays varies from the mystical experiences of saints to spirituality. Ramakrishna Paramhansa’s mystical experiences have been discussed to establish the unity concept of mysticism. Ramakrishna was more a \textit{bhakta} than a \textit{janana}. For him the \textit{bhakti} was intimacy and \textit{janana} ultimacy. In one of the essays, a comparison between Ramakrishna and Shankara, two great pillars of Hinduism, has been drawn. The writer concludes that both after experiencing the highest spiritual truths came back to the world. Though Shankara descended from the high altitudes but not his philosophy, while Ramakrishna came down too, and came down with an adequate philosophy for coming down.

This book put forward new area of research for modern scientists regarding the experiences of Ramakrishna and his versions whether these are of physical nature such as redness of breast related to breathing or of supernatural such as transmitting of energy or telepathy in the modern terminology. Whether literate or illiterate, a mystic can absorb elements of modernity visible around him. In the same context the mystic experiences of Swami Vivekananda have been discussed. However, these experiences and relatives were put in contrast to religion, but not to social or national perspectives.

Swami Harshananda’s \textit{An Introduction to Hindu Culture (Ancient and Medieval)},\textsuperscript{42} deals with various aspects of Hindu culture and tradition. It not only gives us the basic understanding of Sanskaras, society, politics and economics of earlier times with respect to Hinduism but also throws light on the justice, religion, science and various forms of art in India and its impact on other countries. To define the concept of Hindu religion, quotes of Vivekananda were described. Religion as \textit{adhyatmavidya} was the basis of Hindu culture. Swami Vivekananda said, “Hindu does everything in religious

\textsuperscript{41} Arvind Sharma, \textit{Ramakrishna and Vivekananda- New Perspectives}, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1989.

\textsuperscript{42} Swami Harshananda’s \textit{An Introduction to Hindu Culture (Ancient and Medieval)}, Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore, 1999.
manner. He eats religiously; he sleeps religiously; he rises in the morning religiously; he does good things religiously; and also does bad things religiously”.

Indian or Hindu culture has been an excellent example of all absorbing characteristics. The different aspects of different religions were not existing in a disintegrated way but were an integral part of the whole, though with their own existence. This blending of tradition and rituals is more discernible in the form of architecture, paintings, music, dress codes and general administration. Indian culture spread in other parts of the world not with the power of sword but by the power of wisdom and universal brotherhood.

In the work *Vivekananda- The Warrior Saint* by Hansraj Rahbar, Vivekananda has been depicted as a thinker of unparalleled stature who played the same role as played by Hegel in Germany. To understand Vivekananda, one must know his whole life from his childhood. Priya Nath Sinha who was one of his fellow students in those days writes that they lose the track of time listening to his reasoned arguments or singing or playing on musical instruments. He was more inclined to read the works on literature, philosophy and history. Even before he passed the F.A. examination, he had read all about the egoistic philosophy of Descarte, skepticism of Hume and Wasine, the theory of evolution propounded by Darwin apart from Herbert Spencer’s theory of survival of the fittest.

This work narrates the conflict between Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the trials by the one of the other. Ramakrishna never enforced his views. He considered himself as an equal among his disciples. He was like a comrade, a brother to them. Slowly and slowly Narendra’s mind gave way to Ramakrishna’s spirituality. Soon after the latter’s departure, the disciples had to vacate Kashipur Ashram and shifted to Baranagore. It was very difficult for them to banish all family problems from their minds. Even for Vivekananda, it was not possible to do so at one go. They surrendered under the active supervision of Vivekananda, who went on a pilgrim to India in 1891. In this work, some light has been thrown on some of the incidents of his journey in which he saw many faces of India from huts to palaces and

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from scholars to criminals. During this time he made up his mind to go to America to participate in Parliament of Religions at Chicago as a representative of the poor of the country. In this parliament he established the supremacy of Indian thought and gave a rational interpretation of *Vedantic* philosophy and even attacked the basic concept of Christianity that original sin committed by Adam led to the fall of Adam and Eve on the earth and thus the beginning of the creation.

According to dialectical materialism, everything gets divided into two parts after coming into existence. The unity of the clash between the two opposites leads to continuous progress. It is an independent law, which governs equally nature, society and social process. Vivekananda played the historical role by adding the theory of development to the philosophy of *Vedanta*. This concept has been further elaborated that man’s consciousness takes shape according to the social situation. Privileged people conceive of heaven and warn the deprived of going to hell if they indulged in evil deeds (theft, dishonesty). Vivekananda divides the capitalist age into three parts; based on learning, arms and wealth; then he says that the next stage will be of *sudras*. This Vivekananda could say so much before Hobson-Lenin. This work defines *Bhakti* movement of the medieval age as a reaction to the attack by foreign Muslim rulers who claiming to free *Kafir* idolaters from superstition attacked our national pride and culture. Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, Chaitanya, Tukaram protected the common masses from this attack. This work exhorts the Marxists to look beyond the study of only the Marxist-Leninist and the Maoist literature. This work also shows Einstein’s *theory of Relativity* in the views of Swami Vivekananda. As he says that the matter cannot exist without motion and it gets into motion through space and time. Likewise, space and time cannot exist without matter.

Swami Vivekananda was a towering personality, not confined to one period only. His ideas transcend space and time. During the first half of the twentieth century, prime goal of the leaders and masses was to get India free from foreign yolk. A spark of nationalism was required for this purpose. This feeling of nationalism could be strengthened only by socio-religious cohesiveness. Swami Vivekananda’s life and teachings proved vital and
inspired the moderates, extremists and revolutionaries alike to achieve the historic target on 15th August 1947, though with a bitter taste of communal politics and riots resulting in the unfortunate partition of the sub-continent.

After independence the makers of India thought that to raise the nation to the path of glory, it is must that an atmosphere of social equality, communal harmony and love towards the country with open mind should prevail. Country should rise above the caste, creed and regional biases, mutual jealousies and hatred. For this it was essential that youth of the nation must be prepared, inspired and guided accordingly because youth is the spine of the country. Though Indian society has progressed a lot but still a lot has to be done in the fields of poverty, unemployment, communalization and other social evils. During the last two decades not only our country but also the whole world has been undergoing revolutionary change. We term this phase as globalization. Social structures are moulding, position of women is progressing towards equality, relevance of caste is being debated vis-à-vis dominance of a caste over the other is changing and this happens in terms of sub-castes. Religious rituals, ceremonies and sect culture are also in a new shape and existing as a major force in India. Moral values are seen in different perspective. A great number of Indians have migrated to other countries and this trend is still on which is also acting as a catalyst for change in every sphere whether social, religious, or political.

All these changes are putting forth new challenges. There are so many aspects of his ideology, which has been analyzed further from new angles and perspectives. This becomes even more necessary when today people are attracted towards western materialistic ideas and on the other side, religion and society of India are moulding and having new trends in new shapes. The present work endeavors to answers to these questions.

The present thesis covers the different aspects of Swami Vivekananda’s ideas in the context of national awakening. The study is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter, ‘Introduction’ reviews the existing literature related to the subject.

The second chapter, Cultural Changes in The Nineteenth Century and Swami Vivekananda, discusses the cultural trends in the nineteenth
century India. In this chapter the mind set of the British governance vis-à-vis the reaction of the Indians has been discussed. The introduction of English as a way of education was the turning point in the new set of British government as well as initiating the period of renaissance in India. The Christian missionaries with the backing of the government used English education as a tool to establish the Christian supremacy over the Indian faiths and thus getting more and more converts. At the time of transfer of power from East India Company to British Parliament the Hindu religion was almost overwhelmed by superstitions, dogmatic practices and misquoted scriptures by selfish Brahmins. The social evils prevalent in the nineteenth century made the society hollow and further vulnerable to Christian missionaries. The crisis in the socio-religious and political fields gave birth to various movements reformist or revivalist, with multifaceted perspectives in different parts of India. At the advent of Swami Vivekananda, various socio-religious and political organizations were already contributing for the upliftment of the people of the country. An attempt was made by various social reformers like Raja Rammohun Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Ishvar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Jyotiba Phule, and others to get the society out of these evils. However, it was for Ramakrishna Paramhansa’s beloved disciple Vivekananda to give a new direction and platform to Indian renaissance. He was the chief architect to revive India’s spiritual legacy. He could establish more clearly and firmly the dominating characteristics of Indian culture.

The third chapter, The Making of Swami Vivekananda: Dakshineshwar to Belur, will include the early life of Swami Vivekananda (Narendernath Datta at that time). Historical background of the family and its place in the society has been studied and how Swami Vivekananda was being taken care of in the family and the impact of family atmosphere on the mind of Swami Vivekananda. Born of a broad-minded father and religious woman, he got the initial sanskaras at home. Being a rare combination of intellectuality and spirituality, his longing for the religious pursuits started at home, leading him to Sadharan Brahmo Samaj; starting from practicing meditation in front of Hindu idols to Nirgun God. Naren’s contact with Sri
Ramakrishna Paramhansa and his moulding from ardent *Nirgun* follower to multifaceted concept of God was deliberated upon. Ramakrishna could see the strong desire of Naren to realize the ultimate truth. The long journey from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari acquainted Vivekananda with the hard realities of life of the Indian people and he was well prepared to understand them too as he himself had already faced. This sojourn gave him the name ‘Vivekananda’ and the mission to go to the west as a representative of Indian thought and culture. Returning to India he devoted himself to implement the experiences of the west, that is, established Ramakrishna Math at Belur, Calcutta. From here he left for his heavenly abode.

The fourth chapter, *Indian Heritage: Vedanta’s Encounter with the West*, elaborates the role and place of Indian culture among the world civilizations as viewed by Swami Vivekananda. When the West was bent upon to prove that there is nothing great in anything named Indian, even the very name as a nation is the contribution of the British, Vivekananda built upon his argument right from the origin of the Aryans. His arguments encompassed the ancient social and scientific achievements of the ancestors, continuing its legacy of universality of thought and finally the future role of accommodating all in its own fold as its own that only India can play. In this chapter it has been studied that no nation can live or survive in its isolation. East and West will have to learn from each other on equal and respectable basis without undermining the greatness of the other. His attack on the West was to yield two fold purposes, one to challenge the superiority complex of the West and the second inculcating self-confidence among the Indians by feeling proud of their cultural heritage. Vivekananda deliberately used religion as a means to arouse the countrymen. While doing so he did not ignore the current scientific accomplishments. He tried to postulate that the Hindu scriptures are the findings of the great *rishis* on the path of truth, which is also the goal of modern science though in different fields. By putting the *rishi* and the scientist on the same level he advocated his new version of Vedanta which combined both dualism and non-dualism as well as other theories of reality. This concept he named as ‘universal religion’.
In the fifth chapter, **Indian Regeneration: Poor and Downtrodden**, Swami Vivekananda’s concern for the masses has been deliberated upon. For him the main cause of the downfall of India was the maltreatment of the masses for centuries, socially as well as economically, sanctioned on the basis of priestly religion. What is the concept of class and caste and how it led to the deterioration of the lower strata of society was an important feature, which Swami Vivekananda tries to put forward in the global perspective. Caste in Indian perspective was occupational in its genesis, but at later stages became hereditary and even got the religious patronization. Swami Vivekananda delinked the caste as social entity from its religious mask. Here he differed from his contemporary social reformers who in order to eradicate the evils related to caste hit the religion hard. He neither advocated the abolition of the caste system as a whole nor believed in caste struggle. The longer duration of power in the hands of a single social group is bound to lead to misuse of power, so the change of power in different social groups is the natural outcome. He was for the total upliftment of the *sudras* not only politically but also socially. He was sure that the next rule would be of *sudras*. In the social sphere, he went to the extent of serving the poor as a means of realization of God. First service of the downtrodden and then salvation was his call. As a socialist, he was moved by the frequent famines and fatal epidemics occurring in different parts of the country. He declared the labourers as the spinal cord of the society. If it is broken, nothing will survive. As a remedy, he was supportive of industrialization on scientific basis along with indigenous industry.

Sixth chapter, **Empowerment of Indian Women**, deals with the issues related to women in the context of nineteenth century scenario as well as gender issues, which dominated the last century. Nineteenth century witnessed the atrocities on women in the form of *sati* (burning on the pyre of dead husband), ban on widow remarriage, pre-pubertal marriages, female infanticide, etc. These evils were the weapon of the Westerners to symbolize the superiority of their culture over the Indians. How a nation can grow without proper respect and honour and place in the decisions of society to women. Swami Vivekananda highlighted with pride the basic ideals of Indian
womanhood and in equally vocal terms condemned the maltreatment meted out to them. He countered the western criticism by holding the position that these evils were the outcome of the historical contexts, not the part of Indian religion or society. Indian civilization portrays the woman as mother in contrast to western concept of woman as wife. In Indian civilization women were priests and even rose to the level of *rishis* by way of their learning and character. The situation changed in the later Vedic times which took the worst shape in the medieval and modern times. Vivekananda found that in the Hindu scriptures both condemnations and praises were mentioned while in other scriptures one found only criticism. Inspite of her subjugation to man, she was the lord of her house and Hindu laws granted her right to wealth and property too. This chapter studies the difference in the approach of Swami Vivekananda and other reformers in relation to women’s emancipation. Vivekananda was more interested in raising the contribution of women in the society than starting a movement against the evils. He advocated equal rights and liberty for women, but favoured the Indian concept of women as a symbol of motherhood too. He advocated education of women as remedy for the growth of the nation.

The seventh chapter, *Education: National Character*, studies that for Vivekananda education was the solution of all India’s problems. For him prevalent education of the nineteenth century was not appropriate as it was devoid of national spirit. Education includes all the aspects of learning and knowledge and it must be linked with mind, body and brain all. It must act both as means and end to arouse the national consciousness. It needed to be related to the development of mind and heart. Education should lead to strength and vigour. The education India required was to have national roots with scientific knowledge of modern times so as to compete with the changing times. To regenerate the country and face the challenges of poverty, hunger and backwardness, thrust should be on the technical education. He encouraged research in India. The education equips the person to face the struggles of life. Education should not be the prerogative of a selected few but it must go to the door steps of each and every one. This education must be positive beyond the materialistic life; otherwise, it would spoil the whole
fabric of society. The ultimate aim of the education is to know one’s own self. For this, a teacher should be qualified and have moral values. The spiritual practice empowers the teacher with the qualities of dedication, intelligence and honesty. Swami Vivekananda’s aim was to motivate the resourceful persons to spread education among the masses in the interests of India.

The eighth Chapter, Indian Youth: National Strength, studies the faith Swami Vivekananda had in the younger generation. How countries can awake if the people are not ready to respond to its problems and the youth is not equipped to tackle these issues head on? To bring the Indians out of slumber, frustration and mental slavery, it was necessary to inculcate faith in them. Swami Vivekananda even advocated meditation or spirituality only for them who had faith in themselves. This faith becomes more immense when practiced for others’ welfare. That is why, Vivekananda declared renunciation as a national ideal. He was sure that no scriptural knowledge will be useful if the Indians are not strong enough to grasp the concept of strong and weak. He pointed out very emphatically that the only message, which the Upanishads gave repeatedly, is fearlessness. Instead of blaming the fate, one should follow the path of belief in man’s divine potentiality. Only cowards fear failures and mistakes. Strength of individual is as important as of the nation. For this, the devil of fear must die. He asked the countrymen not to think of their body alone. They should always feel that they are the soul immortal. It is man’s nature to be free and act or rationalize the things. In this chapter the role of sannyasin and householder has also been analysed. He exhorted the youth to shed off the superstitious rituals and not to waste energy on the silly issues like whether one should be vegetarian or non-vegetarian. Rather he asked them to be broad minded. Indian youth must learn from the West the art of mechanics, but should not sacrifice their character for it. The greater the good impressions in one’s mind, the better will be character. He cautioned the Indians not be blind followers of the West.

In the ninth chapter, Cosmopolitan Nationalism: Indian Struggle For Freedom, Swami Vivekananda’s ideas of nationalism and their impact before and after independence of India have been examined. When he
emerged on the scene, India was a slave country. Still he managed to establish its recognition in the Parliament of Religions. Was it due to a mere luck or his intellect or his great love for his country? How far his visit to the West was able to arouse the feelings of love among the common people towards their country? These issues have been discussed in this chapter. His views of nationalism were akin or equally suitable to moderates, extremists and revolutionaries. His patriotism was not of narrow nature but of inclusive spirit. Nationalism was not to be used as a tool to instigate the citizens to subjugate others, but to promote the feelings of oneness and common ancestry among the fellow citizens. Swami Vivekananda was in favour of full acceptance of Indian tradition and his visit to the West was a stepping-stone in this direction. His love towards his country was unparalleled. His nationalism and internationalism are often interlinked and interdependent. India has her own role to play in the global sphere and it can not be possible without freedom. Swami Vivekananda advocated synthesis not only in India but also in its universal form. He gave equal importance to equality as per socialism and liberty as per capitalism. How India’s multifaceted religious sphere and social elements could be united for its rise and the way self respect could be inculcated among the Indians and the impact of the message of Swami Vivekananda on them have been deliberated in this chapter.

The present work is based both on the primary sources and secondary works. The primary sources consist of ‘The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda’ in nine volumes; ‘Letters of Swami Vivekananda’; ‘Complete Works of Swami Abhedananda’; ‘Swami Vivekananda In The West– New Discoveries’ by M. L. Burke; ‘His Eastern and Western Admirers, Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda’; ‘The Life of Swami Vivekananda by His Eastern and Western Disciples,’ in two volumes. The secondary works include dissertations, books and articles. I have visited various libraries located in Punjab, Haryana, and West Bengal to collect the data. Talks have been held with Swami Jitatmananda Ji, Swami Vivekananda Ancestral House, Kolkata Brahamchari Atul Ji (Brahamchari Vishawatma Ji), Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, New Delhi. Interviews conducted with Swami Brahmeshananda Ji, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Chandigarh
and Chander Shekhar Talwar, I. A. S. Special Secretary, Finance, Punjab Government, Chandigarh, are provided in the appendices for better understanding of the work.