CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A question of an integrated nation is very significant not only for the present time but also for the years to come. This is not just a political question, it is a question pertaining to all other fields as well. Our experience amply demonstrates the shrinking of world into a Global village. In the world politics, economic, as well as in international relationship, strength of a nation assumes extreme importance. It is going to be something like survival of the mightiest, not just fittest. Powerful nations will dictate terms and conditions and weaker nations shall be compelled to humble. The real strength of a nation ought to come from within. It is wrong to believe that mere economic strength as the so called substructure can make nations mightier. What really counts is the oneness of citizens in a country. If the citizens of a country are united and together, then that shall be the strongest nation in the world. Together when they stand, all other aspect shall spontaneously develop. Thus an integrated Nationsociety becomes the prerequisite of a strong and powerful nation.

Somebody may ask the question that why should there be Nation state at all? Statelessness and one global society may be a romantic dream; but as on today this dream cannot be realized even through speculations and conjectures into envisageable distance into future. This
has umpteen number of reasons, an inventory shall be much space occupying. One's existence, identity, authenticity and ability to stake a legitimate claim solely depends on one's might in international relations as well as situations. I shall shun criticisms levelled against powerfulness of nations as trivial.

Accepting the view that strong nation is an existential imperative, it needs an analysis to understand the concept of strength. I already stated that real strength ought to come from within itself. Hence the need for national integration.

India is a Nation with many specialties. This had always been a land of diversities. Diverse languages, diverse food habits, diverse faith systems, diverse rituals and rites, diverse dress patterns, diverse music and art as well as diverse particular cultures. Apparently to an untrained mind India might look like a Pandora's Box with so much and so many multiplicities and pluralities. Yet experience from thousands of years of Indian culture reveals the oneness of this Nation through such diversities. Even when there were numerous princely states quarreling one another from time to time there was always the concept of Akhanda Bhārata as well as Āsethuhimāchalaḥ. In the vedic religion the person who performs havāna or making an offering used to reveal his identity through speaking out his address. For example, if I am the person who performs the havāna, the wording is "of Jumbu Dvēpa, of Bhārata Varṣha, of Dakṣīna Patha, Śivakumāra Sharma, Son of Vāsudēva Sharma, makes this offering". The
concept of Bhārata Varṣha is explicitly demonstrated through this. From this I would like to argue that the concept of Bhārata Varṣha is not just a political concept alone. It is a cultural concept. Political divisions of Bhārata into many princely states makes no difference at all to the cultural oneness of Akhanada Bhārata. It may be interesting to note that no matter how India was divided into many political units, the Dharmaśāstras, Nītiśastrās, Dharma as well as culture remained one transcending particular diversities. Indeed this constituted the concept of Akhanda Bhārata.

I would like to see this phenomenon with India as a fortune. It had been possible for this divergent nation to remain one through its cultural oneness. The concept of unity in diversity speaks nothing different; it is indeed cultural unity through diversities. The diversities are distinct but they are not differences. There is no principle of contradiction, conflict etc that makes the diversities different and contradictory to one another. The cultural unity lies beyond these varieties, transcending them.

It now becomes important to look into the principles of such cultural unity. In a word, everything could be included in the concept of Dharma. To make things easy to western categories and modern minds, let me call this ‘Spirituality’. Indeed spirituality must be taken as an essential characteristic of India. Naturally; people the world over call India a Spiritual land.
For Indians spirituality is transcendental. It is the central point around which everything else is placed. Thus Dharma assumes a bearing up on everything. And the oneness of the Nation becomes spontaneous. Indeed India is naturally integrated into one unit. This is the case when the external factors do not create puckers and disturbances to the tranquility of oneness.

External factors did create puckers. Tranquility did get nearly destroyed. Invaders raided this land and later settled in as rulers. It lasted for long period and thus oneness of this country which was natural started to become alien. But then the land is indeed gifted to produce great minds from time to time to perform acts of spiritual and cultural resurgence. Isn't the Gita saying the same thing?

"Paritranāya Sadhōonaṁ Vinaśāya Chadūṣkṛutha Dharma
Samsthapanārthaya Sumbhavami Yuge yuge."  

(When there is dharmonic decadence there shall be Avatāras to make repairations) Perhaps it is only through such great sons of India that this Dharma, culture and spirituality survived against all odds to this day.

India did survive the test of time but is still undergoing very difficult period. On the one had we are becoming lesser and lesser aware of what we actually are and on the other hand we have to resist challenges from without. Politically we are struggling to put up with the powerful nations, economically we are struggling for self-reliance, and we have many
mouths to feed. With all these it is imperative that India must be a strong nation if we have to have any say in tomorrow's world.

This justifies the question of thinking in terms of national integration for today as well as for the future. We have to adopt a model and source to this end. It is evident that national integration in the context of India presupposes a cultural resurgence which in turn presupposes spiritual awakening. I chose Swāmi Vivekānanda as a model, not forgetting personalities like Chaṇākya, Tilak etc. But Vivekānanda indeed represents all of them. Moreover he had to face colonial India and depressed Indians. Swāmi Vivekānanda had to face situation where he had to practically awaken Indian minds through strengthening their spirituality and culture. This indeed can develop into a new methodology for cultural resurgence and national integration.

Objectives of the Study

(1) To understand the need for powerful nation.

In the modern scenario only powerful nations can pursue their national interest according to their will. 'Might is right' is the rule. Independent existence in the international community depends on the force under the command of each and every nation. The downfall of Iraq and Afganistan and the survival of Israel are good examples in this regard. Whatever may be the differences and diversities, in order to be powerful a nation must be internally strong. This internal strength may be based on ideology, culture and tradition, religion or language. Whatever
may be the base, the requirement is that there should be internal cohesiveness. The disintegration of former USSR is an illustration of the lack of internal cohesiveness of the ideology they pursued. There was no unifying factor in former USSR. Thus internal integrity is necessary for the survival of the nation state.

2) To understand the source of power or strength in India:

The key to India's ancient civilization is to be found in the four fold goals of life (Purushartha): (1) Dharma or absolute righteousness; 2) Artha or 'Material possession'; (3) Kama or fulfilment of desires; (4) Moksha or release. Dharma according to Mahabharatha is as follows:

"It is the divine and transcendental Justice, Truth and Law which upholds Universe, mind and people."

Thus Dharma or absolute righteousness is the cardinal principle of Indian civilization from time immemorial. This Dharma is the highest ethical principle governing the society and the individual. Duties of individuals and rulers are prescribed by the Dharma.

This divine and transcendental justice have universal application throughout the territory of India commanding obedience from the rulers and the ruled alike. Thus unlike in western countries, where political obligation was based on the force under the command of the state, in India the subject obeyed the Raja because both the rulers and the ruled were under the supreme ethical law of Dharma and this law is absolutely
spiritualistic. The old inclusive terms for religion in India was Ṛṣya Dharma. It is an ethical concept which includes the moral code, righteousness, and the whole range of man’s duties and responsibilities. Ṛṣya Dharma would include all the faiths (Vedic and non-Vedic) that originated in India. It was used by Buddhists and Jains as well as by those who accepted the Vēdas. Thus the main source of power and strength in India is the belief in Dharma which stands for the material, moral and spiritual well being of all.

3) To understand the role of Spirituality and Culture in the National Integration of India.

Just as there is an individuality in every man, so there is a national individuality- each nation has a destiny to fulfill, each nation has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish. Pursuit of spiritualism constituted India’s way of life. According to Swamiji, spirituality constituted India’s individuality.

“As India was spiritual, he felt that its social and political institutions must be national and spiritual. It was for that he advocated India’s spiritual nationalism.”

The religion Hinduism had a powerful unifying effect. Hinduism is something more and different than a religion. It is a mix of customs, traditions, social behavior, rituals, metaphysical speculations, cultural and value orientations. There is no duality of orthodoxy and heresy in Hinduism, because there is no defined and closed faith, no established church based on the foundations of a divine scripture revealed by a divine
being to divinely ordered prophet/prophets. Hinduism has a flexibility and resilience and a traditional base wide enough to cover the syndrome of Indian culture. That is why sometimes the revivalism of Hinduism take the form of revivalism of the ancient culture, symbols, values, idiom and traditional pattern of living. Hinduism's religious content has been generally referred to as Brāhminism, while the term Hindu (adopted from Sindhu, i.e., the inhabitants in, around and beyond to the east of the river Indus/ Sindhu), which was used by ancient Persians, Greeks, and later by Arabs and central Asian people, referred essentially the ethnic geographic identity of the inhabitants. In this sense, irrespective of belief and religion, language or culture, every Indian is considered Hindu by the Arabs, the Iranians and the Turks and most other foreigners. In the Words of Jawaharlal Nehru.

"The word 'Hindu' does not occur at all in our ancient literature. The first reference to it in an Indian book is, I am told, is in a Tantrik work of the eighth century AD, where 'Hindu' means a people and not the followers of a particular religion. But it is clear that the word is a very old one as it occurs in the Avesta and in old Persian. It was used then and for thousand years or more later by the peoples of western and central Asia for India, or rather for the people living on the other side of the Indus river. The word is clearly derived from the world Sindhu, the old as well as present name for the Indus. From this Sindhu came the word Hindu and Hindustan as well as Indus and India. The famous Chinese pilgrim Itsing, who came to India in the seventh century A D writes in his record of travels that the 'northern tribes', that is the people of central Asia, called India Hindu (Hsin-tu) but, he adds, 'this is not at all a common name and to the most suitable name for India is Noble Land (Āryadeśh). The use of the word 'Hindu' in
connection with a particular religion is of very later occurrence. The old inclusive terms for religion in India was Ārya Dharma. Dharma really means something more than religion. It is from a root word which means to hold together. It is the inmost constitutions of a thing, the law of its inner being. It is an ethical concept which includes the moral code, righteousness, and the whole range of man's duties and responsibilities. Ārya Dharma would include all the faiths (Vedic and non-Vedic) that originated in India; it was used by Budhists and Jains as well as by those who accepted the Vēdas. Budha always called his way to salvation as the 'Ārya path'.

Thus spiritualism and culture are the basis on which unity and integrity of India has been conceived from time immemorial. This unity is expressed in Viśnu Purāṇa as follows.

"Uttaraṁ Yatsamudrasya Himādeśhchaiva dakshinal Varṣamtād
Bharatam nāma Bhārati Yatra Samatatiḥ."\(^5\)

(The country bounded by the seas on the south and the Himalayas on the North is called Bhāratam. There live the progeny of Bhārata).

4) To understand the impact of foreign invasions on Indian culture:

Foreign aggressions on India started with Alexander and continued till 15th August 1947. They all shook Indian culture considerably and left long and deep impacts. The Muslims came to India as Plunderers and later as settlers. Then came the Europeans with nefarious ends. India had to take all these and for a long time, and yet: we remained.

Prithviraj Chauhan is the point of break where Indian culture and religion getting attacked from outside. Apart from the brutal cruelty
imposed on the Hindus by the early invaders, the Mughals, to some extent adopted a policy of give and take in cultural matters. Of course there was also rulers like Aurangzeb showing extreme intolerance to the other religions and following a policy of religious orthodoxy. Among the foreign conquerors, the Europeans inflicted the most severe damage on Indian culture. Portugal, France and Great Britain were the major European conquerors. Out of these, the British rule, the longest and severest, caused much disintegration and distortion to Indian culture. The main tools of cultural destruction are: Aryan Invasion theory; Encouragement to refutation of Indian culture; Alienation of Brahmins and encouragement to Hindu Muslim rift and conversion to Christianity by education and translation.

By Aryan Invasion theory the Europeans tried to wrest the cultural heritage of India by declaring that they were the forefathers of Hindu culture (Aryan culture) and therefore their right to rule is 'natural'. In the words of Paliakov.

"According to this new theory it (Aryan race) was not the whole human race but one particular race, a white race which subsequently became Christian which had descended from the mountains of Asia to colonize and populate the west"6.

The Britishers thought that Christianisation of India would really go a long way to maintain the colonial rule and they used all the available means for this purpose. Missionaries with their proselytizing interest were
happy to join the plot with the ruling authority. Apart from these, the Hindus and Muslims were divided into enemy camps. So Hindu Muslim rift, anti Brahminism, near total freedom to Christian missionaries etc have their direct political links to British colonial rule over India.

The prestigious Boden Professorship of Sanskrit at Oxford University was endowed by Colonel Boden specifically to

"... promote Sanskrit learning among the English, so as to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian Religion."

Macaulay (1800-1859) firmly believed that converting Indians to Christianity would make the colonial rule stranger. He adopted two ways to achieve the target – Euro centric Christian biased English education and translation of Indian ancient Scriptures into English in such a way that by reading these books, the Hindus will leave Hinduism to join Christianity. In 1836 Macualay very enthusiastically wrote to his father.

"It is our belief that if our Plans of education followed up there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence."

Max Muller, the so called lover of India, whom Macualay entrusted the work of translating ancient Indian scriptures, wrote to his wife about the translation of Rg Veda in 1866 in the following words.

"..... this edition of mine and the translation of the Veda, will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of Millions of
souls in that country. It is the root of their religion and to show them what the root is, I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that has sprung from it during the last three thousand years."

Macaulay's letter to his father and Max Muller's letter to his wife clearly indicate the purpose of their work, that is, conversion of Hindus to Christianity. Gospels were printed and given free to English learners. In Kerala, southern part of India, this went a step ahead by making church and School always together.

Thus the Europeans, especially the Britishers, provided the necessary infra-structure for the cultural destruction of India and the destruction process is ongoing still.

5) To analyse the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda in the then existing socio-political context.

India before Swamiji was a land that had lost all erstwhile glory, it was a land ruled by aggressors from outside, and a bunch of spiritually confused people. Time had treated this great nation very badly. Colonial rule resulted in the pauperization of peasants and recurring famines. Christianization efforts of the missionaries and the government support to the process resulted in large scale conversion to Christianity. Above all the English educated Indians also blamed the Hindu religion for the existing social evils. According to Swamiji, colonial British rule must end for the progress (both spiritual and material) of the country and it's religion. Indians must organize and push the invaders out from the mother land. If this has to happen, then each Indian must first realize his own
greatness through realizing the greatness, culture, religion, spirituality and even epistemology of this land. Spirituality had always been the strength of this nation, which is rather dormant due to Western begotary and influence. Vivekananda desired to kindle the dormant spiritual strength of Indians and fortify Indians to stand up to the British and ask them to quit.

Through his electrifying lectures, he raised his countrymen with an urgent sense of duty to the country and its religion.

“He exerted them to lead a life of dedication and sacrifice. He aroused in them a fiery sense of pride in Hinduism, to which he gave a timely interpretation and added a new dimension.”

To consolidate his and his followers activities Swamiji founded Sri Rāmakrishṇa Math and Sri Rāmakṛishṇa Mission and placed the objective of ‘Ātmano Mōkṣarthatam, Jagat Hīthaya Cha’ (for the salvation of the self and for the welfare of humanity) before the members of the Math and the Mission. Service to humanity, according to him, was to be considered equal to the worship of God. Thus he added a new dimension to the age-old institution of Sanyāsa.

The Complete Works of Swāmi Vivekānanda provide as the glimpses of his philosophical ideals. His philosophy is based on spiritualism. For example, he interpreted history in terms of spiritualism. His concept of freedom which is all inclusive is spiritualistic. His ideal of equality stands for gradual growth of individual, his philosophy of nationalism, his views on democracy, anarchism, internationalism are all
based on spiritualism. The philosophy of Swami Vivekananda was moulded to some extent by his social background, but mainly by India's spiritual lore. His social upbringing revealed to him the environmental weakness of India, like social authoritarianism and exclusiveness. In his opinion religious orthodoxy too had suffocated the growth of society. He was therefore determined to improve the social and political environment of India by liberally interpreting the Indian scriptural ideas.

6) To examine the contribution of Swami Vivekanand in the Nationalist movement and National integration of India.

The British colonial rule and their deliberate attempts to destroy Indian culture resulted in the degeneration of Hindu society. The widespread economic poverty and ignorance of the masses moved him to tears. He was shocked to see that India was forgetting its national individuality, spiritualism, by imitating the west in a servile way without discrimination. Thus the problems he confronted in India were many and he bestowed his thought and activity in overcoming them by devising the ends and means of national reconstruction on spiritual and cultural basis. After the Chicago Parliament of Religions (1893) Vivekānanda became confident of his spiritual mission and determined to reorganize society on the basis of Neo-Vedānta. In his triumphant march from Colombo to Almora he spoke loudly of his social and political views on the Indian society and wake it up from long hibernation. The effort of Swāmiji was to strengthen the spiritual unity of India and to emancipate the individual from the diehard society and to a large extent he succeeded in his effort.
Swāmiji was a unifying force in Indian spiritual renaissance and thereby the national revival.

"The eternity of the Vedas, the strength of the Upanishads, the compassion of the Buddha and the spirit of equality of Islam found a sonorous echo in him in representing India's renaissance"\(^{11}\)

In the words of Sardar K.M Panikkar,

"This new Saṅkarāchārya may well be claimed to be a unifier of Hindu ideology. Travelling all over India he not only aroused a sense of Hindu feeling but taught the doctrine of Universal vedanta as the background of new Hindu reformation...... it is Vivēkānanda who first gave the Hindu movement its sense of Nationalism and provided most of the movement with a common all-India outlook."\(^{12}\)

Thus Vivēkānanda's role in nation building is beyond any doubt. He was the soul behind the nationalist movement, particularly the extremist nationalist movement. The threat to Hinduism from missionaries and rulers like Macaulay were successfully prevented and defeated by him. At the same time his Vedantic humanistic ideas provides for social coherence and religions tolerance. In the words of Sri. C. Rājagōpālāchāry.

"Swāmmy Vivēkānanda saved Hinduism and saved India. But for him, we would have lost our religion and would not have gained our freedom. We therefore owe everything to Swāmī Vivēkānanda. May his faith, his courage and his wisdom ever inspire us so that we may keep safe the treasure we have received from him."\(^{13}\)
7) To understand the significance of Swamiji's philosophy in modern times.

The Philosophy of Swāmiji is significant in modern times too. Western materialism and individualism are still threatening the spiritual basis of our culture. Education without due recognition to the cultural tradition results in creating individuals interested only in amassment and enjoyment. Terrorist organizations in some parts of the country like Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and North Eastern states are threatening the integrity and unity of India. Swamiji's concept of common religion is of much significance in the modern context. His concept of common religion incorporates the common principles of diverse religious sects. Swamiji is not opposed to religious sects. He conceded that religious sects may retain their identity but they should not threaten national unity. His concept of common religion is based on equality and coordination of faiths.

"Thus Vivēkānanda wanted to Strengthen the nation by infusing unity between the 'brain' of Brāhmin and the heart of Buddhist, the Islamic body and Vedantic brain, and an European society with India's religion."14

In the words of VKR Rao

"Secularism, socialism, mass uplift and mass power, women's liberation, abolition of untouchability, inclusion of social service as part of religious worship, Hindu-Muslim unity, universal literacy and informal education - all these constitute the contribution of Śwāmi Vivēkānanda to the building of modern India."15

We must add that his ideas on all these issues are of immense significance in modern time.
Significance of the study

Only strong nations are heard by others. India must become stronger in order to meaningfully exist in the world. Strength of the nation comes from integration. In Indian context integration implies strengthening of spirituality and Indian culture. The methodology of Swamiji can be best used for this purpose for today as well as the future.

Hypothesis of the study

Spiritual and cultural awakening is the prime source for national integration given Indian context. This has been proved by Swami Vivekananda and he had contributed significantly to the spiritual and cultural integration of India. The methodology adopted by Swamiji for spiritual and cultural integration of India is of immense relevance today as well as tomorrow. But the ideas of Swāmī had not received the due academic attention it deserved.

Area of the study

The main area of study is the philosophy of Swāmī Vivekānanda. Culture, religion and politics also comes under the study since most of the ideas of Swāmī are a reaction to the then existing social, cultural, religions and political situation of India.

Limitations of the study

The philosophy of Vivekānanda is mostly direct or indirect manifestation of many Indian schools of thought, mainly the Vēdanta school. It is always not possible to establish a one to one correspondence
with what Vivēkānaṇḍa says and what a particular school of thought holds. Mostly Vivēkānaṇḍa’s thoughts are synthetic, blending the principles. Since the study is essentially conceptual, empirical data supporting arguments do not mean much. What is at the level of concept cannot be demonstrated empirically. Finally, Literature is in abundance with divergent interpretations that can confuse. It is difficult to always be consistent with what Swāmī Vivekānaṇḍa ought to have said, if one attempts to make conjunctures.

Findings

Findings of the study are the following

1. There is absolutely no doubt that we should remain as a proud nation in the world.

2. The way to become strong in Indian context is through spiritual awakening and cultural resurgence as proved by Swami Vivekānaṇḍa.

3. Although the philosophy of Swāmī Vivekānaṇḍa is of very much significance today, authorities are not giving due regard to it.

4. Salvation of India lies in following the spiritual path shown by Swāmijī. Undue materialism, westernization and individualism, as well as perception of differences instead of varieties are the major threats to the culture of our ‘Noble Land’
5. We have to reorient ourselves not only in academic world but also in all walks of life in terms of strengthening ourselves on the basis of spirituality which is the 'Life blood of this nation'.

Chapterization

Chapter I

Introduction

In this chapter a general introduction to the study, purposes, hypothesis and limitations of the study are included.

Chapter II

Cultural India up to the period of Prithviraj Chauhan

This chapter deals with the basic concepts and characteristics of Indian culture before being conquered by the foreigners. Indian and alien meaning of the term 'Āryan', cultural unity of India as mentioned in Purāṇās and cultural syncretism caused by early Muslim invasions are also included in this chapter.

Chapter III

Cultural India from Prithviraj Chauhan to Jwahararlal Nehru

This chapter deals with foreign invasions and their impact on Indian culture. Invasions by Muslims and Europeans and the instruments used by them to destroy and disintegrate Indian culture were examined in this chapter.
Chapter IV

Swami Vivekananda and His Philosophy

In this chapter the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda is explained. His philosophical ideas having direct impact on national integration and national resurgence were analysed in detail. The formative influences that shaped Swamiji's philosophy were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V

Contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the National Integration of India

In this chapter the impact of Swami Vivekananda on Nationalist movement is analysed. His contribution to the unification of Hinduism and the influence of his philosophy on militant nationalists were also discussed in this chapter.
References


5. Vishnu Purāṇa II.3.


