

1. MAHATMA GANDHI

➤ BACKGROUND

Gandhiji outlook was shaped by the various Indian religions, as he was influenced by the ethical ideals of Jainism, Christianity and Islam. Sometimes, he called himself an orthodox Hindu because:

- He believes in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures, avataras and rebirth
- He believes in the Varnashrama Dharma
- He believes in the protection of the cow
- He believes in idol worship.

Though Mahatma Gandhi has not propounded any philosophical system in the academic sense, yet in the depth of his writings and speeches, beliefs and actions, we find a consistent world view or philosophy of life. If “philosophy” means a comprehensive study of life, understanding of the deepest problems, aims and purposes of life, the evaluation of the essential principles that govern life and their organization and practical application in both individual and social spheres, then Gandhi was undoubtedly an authentic philosopher in the best of Indian tradition.

Gandhi occupies a unique position among the philosophers. His philosophy is mainly concerned with the individual who will live and die for the ideal and with the non-violent way that will lead him to it. Like any other philosopher of civilization and culture, Gandhi tried to understand the nature of man, society, civilization, religion and host of other important concepts. Gandhi was alone who made sincere attempts to make a fruitful combination of theory and practice. He was not only a thinker but a devoted worker. He tried to practise whatever he preached.

➤ GANDHIAN TEACHINGS

I. On Religion :

- “Life without religion is life without principle, and life without principle is like a ship without a rudder.”
- Gandhi’s philosophy is largely based on morality and religion and his philosophy and political technique were only corollaries of his religious and moral principles.
- Gandhi describes religion as a mighty tree that absorbs its sap “from the moral height of those who profess that religion.”
- Despite the ever-present overtones of religion in Gandhian thought, concern for human needs lies at the core of Gandhian teaching

II. On God:

- Gandhi expressed his deep faith in the reality of God. God occupies the supreme place in Gandhi’s philosophy.
- Gandhi was essentially a man of religion.
- His ultimate aim of religion is self-realisation, which presumes faith in God and constant pursuit of truth.
- The concept of God is the most important, most universal concept of religion. The Hindu conception of God is so subtle and comprehensive that it is not easy to specify it.
- Though infinity perfection, absoluteness are constantly predicated of Him, but at the same time it is clear that God is beyond all predications.

Therefore, God as a supreme person with three-fold aspects as creator, preserver, destroyer of Hindu's popular view cannot be ruled out.

III. On World:

- According to Gandhi the world is a reality and God is its creator. To him, the world, the Nature is the expression of God. It is an evidence of the all-pervasive reality.
- All the religions of the world, except Buddhism and Jainism, believe that God is the only creator of the world.
- They also generally believe that God brings the world to an end at his own sweet will.
- Gandhi sometimes calls himself a follower of Advaita, but he cannot be regarded as follower of Advaita of Samkara, because the world is not a mere appearance to him.
- He never conceived the world to be an illusory and unreal Maya. The Upanisads deny the independent status of the world, which cannot exist apart from Brahman.
- In the Upanisads, Brahman stands for the whole reality including the world, without which, the world remains unexplained. So, to explain the world, Brahman is necessary.
- The concept of dissolution of the world in the Upanisads indicates the impermanency of the world.

IV. On Correlation between *God, World and Man*:

- As a True Upanishadic follower, Gandhi finds no contradiction between man and God and between man and lower order of creation.
- Gandhi declared that "the individual is the one supreme consideration." In Gandhi's philosophy man occupies an important position.
- He views man in his wholeness. Man is a complex being. His body is a part product of Nature, where it grows and decays according to the laws of Nature.
- Gandhi has a firm belief in the evolution of man from the lower grades of animal to higher levels of humanity, guided by love, peace and harmony etc.
- He remarks, "That we have become man by a slow process of evolution from the brute. We were thus born with brute strength, but we were born men in order to realize God who dwells in us. That indeed is the privilege of man, and it distinguishes him from the brute creation."

V. On Non-violence (*Ahimsa*):

- Literally ahimsa means non-killing. Non-violence is the greatest and the most active force in the world to him.
- Gandhi uses the word 'non-violence' in order to bring out the true meaning of ahimsa.
- He practiced non-violence in every walk of life.
- Gandhi said, "Non-violence is the Law of our species as violence is the law of the brutes."
- Gandhi absolutely differs, with Darwinian principles of "struggle for existence" and "survival of the fittest." Because in his books "The Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man", Charles Robert Darwin formulated the evolutionary hypothesis that man evolved for his animal ancestors by "natural selection" in the "Struggle for existence" and deduced the law of "survival of the fittest."
- Anyone who objected to non-violence as the creed of the coward was admonished by Gandhi. He clarified, "Ahimsa is not the way of the timid and cowardly. It is the way of the brave to face death. He who perishes with sword in hand is no doubt brave but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching is brave."
- "Violent man is self-alienated man who does injury to his own being". Thus, Gandhi gives a new individuality to man an authenticity hitherto unknown to the earlier thinkers of Society.

VI. On Truth:

- Among all the moral principles, Gandhi placed truth as the first and foremost. He called it “the sovereign principle”, which included numerous other principles.
- It did not merely imply truthfulness in speech, but in thought also “and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the absolute truth, the eternal principle, that is God”.
- He equated God with truth, as he says, “I worship God as truth only. I have not yet found him, but I am seeking after him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest.... Often in my progress, I have had faint glimpses of the absolute truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that the above is real and all else is unreal.”
- Gandhi’s conception of truth has obviously not the common meaning attributed to it for there were divine and philosophical dimensions to it. It can perhaps be said that the predominant factor in moulding his vision of truth was his deep attachment to the epic like Ramcharitmanas.
- The reflection of Gandhi’s concept of truth in his social action is found in his persistent emphasis on the purity of means to attain desired ends. His propagation of the methods of non-violence, civil resistance and honourable cooperation exemplify this.
- The message for revolutionizing the social order with these means was relevant not only to India, but the whole world. Gandhi’s conception of truth as God and the universal reality stands as a refreshing challenge and alternative before the world.

VII. On Ethics and Morality:

- He equally emphasized and valued ethics, morality and religion.
- As per Gandhiji- morals, ethics and religion are convertible terms.
- He quoted “A moral life without reference to religion is like a house built upon sand. And religion divorced from morality/ethics is like 'sounding brass' good only for making a noise and breaking heads.”
- A true religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other.
- Gandhi’s ethics has an inseparable bearing on social life. Liberation did not signify isolation from the society and leading the life of a recluse.

VIII. On Society and Sarvodaya:

- Gandhi never advocated the idea of closed Society, where human love perishes and man is isolated and frustrated.
- According to him man requires a society where everybody will feel drawn to everybody because all are essentially spiritual. Man is a social being who is in search of peace, justice, harmony and happiness throughout the ages.
- Man cannot live without society. Gandhi wanted a classless society, wherein every individual got equal opportunity for his or her all round development.
- Gandhi’s conception of this ideal society can be summed up in one word, 'Sarvodaya' means all round development of all people in which love, non-violence, truth and justice and ‘service to all’ would be the ideal of each citizen.
- Gandhi was interested in the reformation of society. He wanted a samaj called 'Sarvodaya Samaj' in place of the stale which is an instrument of oppression.
- The structure of this Samaj built upon moral principles, humanitarianism and equality.

2 RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

➤ BACKGROUND

Rabindranath Tagore was a great philosopher, poet, novelist, dramatist and a prophet. He was born on May 07, 1861 in Calcutta in an educated, rich and respected family. The responsibility of his education remained mainly on the shoulders of his father Mahrishi Devandranath Tagore. He provided Rabindranath with education of Sanskrit language, Indian philosophy and astronomy

For higher education, Rabindranath was sent to Bengal academy. Soon he was fed up with the rigid and lifeless education imparted there. Thus, he developed aversion for the prevalent dull education and he left the Bengal academy. In 1877, Rabindranath was sent to England for receiving education in law. There too he got fed up and returned to India without obtaining any degree.

As such, Tagore got his education mostly at home through tutors and private readings. He had started writing articles for Bengali magazines very early in life. Gradually, love of learning increased by leaps and bounds in him and he wrote many stories, novels and poems which earned repute and appreciation for him.

➤ HIS TEACHINGS

Tagore had keen observation about existing world order and reality, therefore, had vast knowledge about varied discipline. He is known as the advocate of humanism, love, harmony and fellowship. His ideas transcended the barriers of ethnicity and nationality. His literature or ideas or philosophy touched all aspect of Indian life, out of which few are enumerated below:

A. Patriotism

- As per Tagore, patriotism is understood as love for one's motherland.
- Every human being has a moral responsibility to work for the remedial of injustice.
- His patriotism was very broad, and not necessarily linked to a particular nation. He was an admirer of humanism.
- He opined that every person as a member of the human society, and not as a citizen of a country.
- He related the cause of his country in the context of universal freedom.
- He firmly believed that nationalism is the right of the people to freely live in their own special way, following the beliefs and ideas of their history, and developing them as a special culture.

B. Humanism

- The humanism was inherent in his world outlook. Even his concept of God was influenced by it. The centre of Tagore's philosophy was man of god.
- Love of God was extended to love of human.
- The supreme reality thus according to Tagore, essentially human and could be realised only through love of man.
- Tagore in fact sought the origin of spiritual aspirations and the concept of god in the spirit of the unity expressed by the primitive man.
- In a philosophical discourse with Einstein, he said, if there is any truth absolutely unrelated to humanity then for us it is absolutely non-existing. Tagore thus firmly believed that truth could be realised only in human society.

C. Education:

- Tagore emphasized greatly on importance of education, as the basis of truth, to acquire the complete knowledge of life and its various dimensions.
- Aim of education should be individual development.
- Absence of education creates shackles for the growth of a person. He believed that the education of a child is the most integral part of his/her life.
- Education helps individual to learn about values like freedom, justice and fraternity.
- He wanted to establish a just social order through education. This concept of education sprouted from his dutiful reverence for humanism.
- A wrong and misguided education can never help in reconstruction of our character.
- True education is the prerequisite for just action and karma.
- He advocated for open-air classes with in the lap of nature. As moving mind has a better capability to assimilate facts and to gather knowledge from the outside world.
- Tagore wanted to inculcate a spirit of inquiry among the people, through education.
- Educational institutions were to be the centre for knowledge.
- An educational institution should not exist in isolation, but should have a close contact with the socio-economic conditions prevalent in the society.

Summarily, Education can mould the emotions, intellect, feels and attitude of an individual. He elaborated that Indian historical tradition and quoted that India always represented the synthesis of various philosophies and was very much broad-based. Therefore, he was firm believer in constructive efforts to revive our ancient Indian teaching along with development of modern scientific institutions.

D. Political ideas

- According to him adopting the policy of decentralisation of authority and giving more powers to local self-government institutions will lead toward true freedom.
- He was ardent critic of the prevailing trend of British rule which was impersonal in character and which denied freedom, spiritual, economic and political, to the vast majority of the Indians.
- He believed that each nation and individual must have certain rights and through those rights he should be in a position to 'develop oneself'.
- Also, advocated that people should have power and strength enough to realise their rights as without that strength it was impossible to retain rights even if delegated by the sovereign.
- He believed that States existed for the individual and its activities should aim at giving maximum freedom for attaining that liberty i.e he gave primacy of individual over state.

He proposed that political, cultural, social and economic institutions should develop simultaneously. He had grounded his faith in social order and belief in ancient Indian culture and civilization. As political life was only a specialised aspect of social life so both could not be divorced from each other.

3. BHIM RAO AMBEDKAR

➤ BACKGROUND AND LEGACIES

- Ambedkar's legacy as a socio-political reformer had a deep effect on modern India. In post-Independence India, his socio-political thought is respected across the political spectrum.
- His initiatives have influenced various spheres of life and transformed the way India today looks at socio-economic policies, education and affirmative action through socio-economic and legal incentives.
- His reputation as a scholar led to his appointment as free India's first law minister, and chairman of the committee for drafting the constitution. He passionately believed in individual freedom and criticised caste society.
- His accusations of Hinduism as being the foundation of the caste system made him controversial and unpopular among conventional Hindus. His conversion to Buddhism sparked a revival in interest in Buddhist philosophy in India and abroad.
- Ambedkar's political philosophy has given rise to a large number of political parties, publications and workers' unions that remain active across India, especially in Maharashtra. His promotion of Buddhism has rejuvenated interest in Buddhist philosophy among sections of population in India.
- Mass conversion ceremonies have been organised in modern times, emulating Ambedkar's Nagpur ceremony of 1956. Followers of the Navayana regard him as a bodhisattva, the Maitreya, although he never claimed it himself.
- For his actions towards the salvation and equality of mankind, his followers and the Indian people started respectfully addressing him as "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar", since sometime between September–October 1927. "Babasaheb" is a Marathi phrase which roughly translates, literally as "Father-Sir" (baba: father; and saheb: Sir) or "Respected Father" because millions of Indians consider him a "great liberator". Ambedkar is also known as "Bhim".
- The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru said that, "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of the Hindu society." In 2004, Columbia University honors Ambedkar in the course of its 250th birthday celebration. The University also referred him as "the founding father of modern India".
- Outside India, during the late 1990s, some Hungarian Romani people drew parallels between their own situation and that of the downtrodden people in India and converted to Buddhism.

➤ AMBEDKAR'S VIEWPOINT

- In his philosophy self-respect and human dignity had a pivotal importance.
- Babasaheb Ambedkar had envisaged a society where there would be no Caste; no inequality; no superiority; no inferiority; no suppression; and no exploitation; all persons are equal.
- To him, the new society should be reorganized on the basis of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.
- He espoused the noble cause of equality of status and opportunity to every Indian, assuring the dignity of the individual and unity of the nation.
- He sacrificed his whole life for the dignity and uplift of the poorest of the poor and was committed to the cause of those who suffered from slavery, injustice, and inhuman exploitation.
- His vision of Independent India would be free from the cultural and social inheritance of Varnashram Dharma and built on the Buddhist principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.
- During the decisive phases of India's freedom struggle, Dr. Ambedkar had fought for a correlated but different freedom struggle, one for the liberation of the most oppressed sections of Indian society. This was a liberation movement wider and deeper than that of fighting colonialism; focusing on the kind of new nation that was to be built. It was understandable that Ambedkar, emerging from the

lowest section of India's Caste-oppressed gained an education that few could equal, would take a stand not as a proponent of a revitalized, Vedic and Vedantic-centred tradition but of revolution, the revolution of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' first echoed in the French Revolution and that he found in the message of the Buddha proclaimed thousands of years before.

➤ AMBEDKAR'S INITIATIVE

Ambedkar's work took three directions to deal with social disability:

- i. the most visibly successful was the awakening and organizing of the Untouchables- through newspapers of their own, social and cultural institutes, and widely attended conferences, then called 'Depressed Classes' Conferences.
- ii. He also participated in every opportunity to petition the British government for political representation for Untouchables, and these opportunities were many: the Southborough Committee on Franchise, the Simon Commission to evaluate the reforms and the famous Round Table Conferences at London. Ambedkar also served in the Bombay Legislature in which his efforts had won token representation for the Untouchables.
- iii. The third direction his work took was that of encouraging education among the lower classes, first by exhortation and founding of hostels so that they could have a place to stay while attending school, and eventually by establishing a still-growing network of colleges under the Peoples Education Society.

➤ AMBEDKAR'S SOCIAL HUMANISM

- The inherent idea of his thought is that man is the measure of all things, i.e., the true measure of man is worth, not birth.
- The entire philosophical, ethical and religious reflections of Ambedkar are grounded in humanism, because the proper object of his study is man, the empirical man, who lives and behaves in society.
- The social humanism of Ambedkar contained following principles:
 - i. equality among human beings;
 - ii. every human being as an end in himself;
 - iii. right of every human being to social, economic, political and religious freedom;
 - iv. to make every human being free from want and fear;
 - v. to maintain liberty, equality, fraternity, and to strive to secure redemption from oppression and exploitation of man by man, class by class, and of nation;
 - vi. to stand for a democratic society under a Parliamentary system of government;
 - vii. to believe in non-violence as an instrument of social change and adopt peaceful and persuasive methods to avoid class conflicts and possibility of civil war;
 - viii. to avoid any 'ism' or any theory or dogma in its extreme aspect;
 - ix. need for spiritual discipline;
 - x. firm foundation of universal love, equality and human brotherhood that the Buddha taught

➤ MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE

Ambedkar's messages to his people, "whatever I have done, I have been able to do after passing through crushing miseries and endless trouble all my life and fighting with my opponents. With great difficulty I have brought this Caravan where it is seen today. Let the Caravan march on despite the hurdles that may come in its way. If my lieutenants are not able to take the Caravan ahead, they should leave it there, but in no circumstances should they allow the caravan to go back. This is the message to my people."

4. JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU

➤ INTRODUCTION

Jawaharlal Nehru, "The Builder of Modern India", dominated the Indian political and Administrative scene for nearly half a century. He was one of the few popular leaders India produced during her relentless struggle for freedom against an oppressive alien rule along with Gandhi and others,

Nehru fought and struggled for the freedom of India. After Independence, he was bestowed with the gigantic task of nation-building out of a strife-torn population. He became the first Prime Minister, and was in that positions till his death.

Nehru remained, in a way, the leader of the public Administration in India. His democratic, secular and socialist ideals for United India, his science and technology policies, and planning for economically self-reliant and industrially developed India, his non-alignment and peace policy for the security and stability of the country, were unique and outstanding contributions to the modern Indian polity.

His concern for equality, justice and the socio-economic welfare of the people was well known. He desired to achieve these goals by establishing a 'socialistic pattern of society' in India.

➤ NEHRU KEY VIEWPOINTS

The five paths stuck by Nehru are: *peace, democracy, socialism, science and secularism.*

i. Nehru's view on Science, Religion and Secularism:

- Nehru believed that secular spirit is essentially a scientific spirit. It was in this sense that he sought to establish secularism in this country of many religions and many gods. He did not despise religion. He believed in the equal status of all religions and complete religious freedom. He respected the great teachers of all ages.
- His religion was the service of India, and thereby of humanity "I am trying to serve my country. If service to my 28 country is religion, I am religious. If it is not, I am not."
- To him, dams and steel plants were the new temples, work was worship, and he put science and spirituality above religion and ritual.
- However, he believed in ethical values. His association with Gandhiji left an indelible stamp on him as far as moral values were concerned.
- Nehru held science as the greatest revolutionary force in the modern world. He taught men to think in a rational way and not be afraid of discarding anything or accepting anything if there were sufficient reasons for doing so.

ii. Nehru's Humanism: Apart from rationality and open-mindedness, one more part of Nehru's personality was his intense humanism. The world in which Nehru moved and had his being was a real world to him. That is why he did not believe in renouncing the world, but in improving it. Thus his interest in human happiness and in humanism

iii. Communalism: Nehru accepted Gandhi's views on communal harmony. He was free from caste, religious or communal virus.

iv. Nationalism: He opposed narrower view of nationalism. He had a sense of history and interpreted India's national movement as a part of social and political processes taking place in the world.

For him the aspirations of the Indian people merged with the aspirations of the people of the world. Many times, he made it clear that mere nationalism was not enough and that a policy of social transformation was needed

- v. **Internationalism:** Nehru's contribution to the international environment was no less significant. He was consistent advocate of peace and security of the world and worked for the detente and disarmament. He was the architect of *Panchsheela* and the policy of *non-alignment*.
- vi. **J. L. Nehru on Democracy**
 - According to him, first and foremost, democracy meant individual freedom.
 - Secondly, democracy necessarily involved representative Government;
 - The third essential aspect of democracy was in Nehru's view economic and social equality.
 - Fourthly he believed that no democracy could run without self-discipline.
 - Fifth aspect in democracy proposed by Nehru is that Sovereignty in a democracy had to be exercised through elected representatives functioning on the principle of the majority.
 - Finally, in the units which constitute the democratic state and its citizens. He was fully aware of the importance of an opposition to the adequate functioning of a parliamentary system of government.

➤ NEHRU'S ADMINISTRATION AND POLICIES

As a well-trained administrator, Nehru never ignored public opinion and he was always open to the happenings in and around India.

- His fascination for socialism emanated from the successful economic transformation in Russia at mid-20th century.
- He accepted the introduction of village *Panchayat* system because of his broad understanding of *rural ethos*.
- A good administrator will always have the quality of honouring the public opinion and will have sympathies with their basic requirements.
- He was representative of the new world order and as a spokesman of the international conscience. His foreign policy, as manifested by *Panchasheel and Non-alignment*, though there were a few initial set-backs, proved to be all time panacea to international problems.
- The decisions regarding public health, public works, education, the development of natural resources, transport, care of the handicapped, population etc., are a few examples of his Long-term perspectives.
- His idea of modern India was based on modern technology, research and development. Atomic energy and ship-building industry are a few illustrations of Nehru's modern speech to the problems of developing countries

5. VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda is the greatest social reformer of the 20th century India. He dedicated his whole life in the name of social reform and service to humanity.

➤ HIS PHILOSOPHY: “PRACTICAL VEDANTA”

- The basic thought behind every word and actions of Swamiji is his belief in the essential unity of everything and what he has done was always in the light of this belief.
- Practical Vedanta is the application of the basic principles of Vedanta in solving the problems of everyday life. The central idea of Vedanta is oneness of everything.
- Vivekananda, being greatly influenced by this oneness of Vedanta, works assiduously for the upliftment of the toiling masses of India.
- Morality occupies a very important place in the philosophy of Swamiji. In fact, he has made moral upliftment of the individual as a necessary pre-requisite for the development of the nation.
- The kind of morality that Swamiji demands is that Buddha possesses.

It seems that Swamiji, like Buddha, was in favour of altruistic service for the betterment of all. For him, the more selfish a man, the more immoral he is.

While delivering his lecture on *practical Vedanta* in London on *17th November, 1896*, he says, “I would like to see moral man like Gautama Buddha, who did not believe in a Personal God or personal soul, never asked about them, but was a perfect agnostic, and yet was ready to lay down his life for anyone, and worked all his life for the good of all, and thought only of the good of all...He did not go to the forest to meditate for his own salvation; he felt that the world was burning, and that he must find a way out...Do you think we are so moral as the Buddha?”

➤ VIVEKANAND ON WOMEN EMANICIPATION

He says that the downfall of Indian society is due to the continuous negligence of women and masses. Swamiji says that the country or the nation which does not respect the women has never become great, nor will in future. Therefore, he always puts emphasis upon the equal empowerment of women along with their male counterparts in every sphere of life.

- In Swamiji’s agenda of social reconstruction programme of Indian society, emancipation of women and upliftment of masses occupy the important place.
- *Appo Dipo Bhava*: He applies Buddha’s scheme of salvation through one’s own effort to the empowerment programme of women. He feels that women themselves should initiate the effort required for improving their conditions. He believes that Indian women are capable of elevating their conditions and as such no one can or ought to do this for them.

➤ VIVEKANAND ON SOCIAL EMANICIPATION

For the upliftment of the toiling and downtrodden masses, he was moved by the Vedantin idea of oneness of life. This idea of oneness is based on the idea of the divine present in everyone.

According to Vivekananda:

- As man is essentially divine, so we should serve others in the spirit of worship. Service can be done in various ways such as by giving food, clothing, medicine, shelter and the like.
- The highest service involves sacrifice; the sacrifice of one’s personal comforts, times and resources for the benefit of others.
- He made ‘Tyaga’ and ‘Seva’ as two inseparable notions in his philosophy.

➤ VIVEKANAND ON RELIGION

He wants to establish *universal love and brotherhood* among mankind and thereby promotes peace and prosperity on earth. Few key takeaways from his teachings are:

- **Abstain from Dogmatism**: It is very clear from his interpretation of religion, especially his notion of universal religion. Keeping himself apart from the so-called dogmatism and blind faith, He prepared a new and unique scheme of religion within which every individual can satisfy his religious craving by being a member of any faith without affecting the world peace and prosperity.
- **To Refrain from Exclusivist view on Religion**: Religion has always become the cause of conflicts among mankind. People continue to fight and even kill other in the name of religion. The reason behind such conflict is the attitude of one's thinking one's own religion alone as true, perfect and valid.
- **Quest for Universal Religion**: Swamiji's religion is free from such a narrow attitude. Following the footsteps of his master *Ramkrishna Paramhansa*, he welcomed all religions with equal value, status, love and respect; he always kept himself apart from criticizing other religious faiths; all religions are sacred to him. His concept of universal religion is a broad, truly universal concept which embraces all the religions of the world which is based on universal principles and reconciles the contradictions found among religions.

Swamiji was the great paradigm of universal love, brotherhood and tolerance which are reflected to the fullest extent in his religion too.

6. RADHAKRISHNAN

Dr. Radhakrishnan was a versatile genius who rendered services not only as a philosopher but also an intellectual reformer and a clear farsighted statesman. His service to philosophy has been recognized equally by the West and the East.

He succeeded happily in evolving a mean between the oriental and western thinking. He rendered a great service to the cause of philosophy, right thinking and realized that in war-weary and confusion-stricken world, only a wholesome thought and philosophy could restore a happy, intellectual and emotional harmony which would serve as an edifice for an adequate political, economic and cultural regeneration of mankind.

For him wisdom and power went together. The world knows him as a philosopher, statesman, world teacher and cultural ambassador. Indian nation was enriched in having him as a President. He served India in a most dignified way and was very popularly known as *Philosopher-Statesman*.

➤ EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF RADHAKRISHNAN

Dr. Radhakrishnan occupies a prominent place in India as well as at international level. Being a great teacher, he wanted the education system to be so designed that it would equip the rising generations to preserve their soul, their honour and integrity.

Purpose of Education:

- i. Education should aim at the universal brotherhood to establish a classless society.
- ii. Education should aim to develop the attitude of simple living and high thinking.
- iii. Education should aim at attracting or motivating individuals towards spiritual joy instead of seeking material happiness.
- iv. Education should aim at moral development of children at the highest level.
- v. Education should aim at development of the spirit of democracy.
- vi. Education should aim to cultivate sentiments for honesty and integrity.
- vii. Education should aim at the emotional integration among the youth.
- viii. Education should aim enable young men to become conscious of the values and vitality of their great heritage and enable them to discard whatever has been injurious to them in their history.
- ix. Education should aim at forward looking and critical thinking attitude in teachers as well as pupils.
- x. Education should aim at developing the spirit of social service in pupils.
- xi. Satisfactory system of education should aim at balanced growth of human personality.

He was of the firm view that the purpose of education should be to promote the spiritual resources of mankind believing that the slum of human mind-superstitions, greed, fanaticism, selfishness and ignorance can be cleared through the right type of education.

He stressed on the spiritual aspect of education. He hoped that general enlightenment about universal citizenship and universal culture can be brought through education. He emphasized individuality of child, self-consciousness, faith in one's culture and inculcation of sense of duty and citizenship. He also pleaded for incorporation of different ideals of democracy in education, such as feeling of brotherhood, truth, unity, justice, love and freedom, suppression of violence and war.

➤ MORALITY AND NATION BUILDING

- He rightly pointed out that the fate of a nation depends upon character of its people and a country whose people have low character can never become great.

- To build a great nation, we should educate more and more young men and women in such a way that they may strengthen their character.
- For *moral character*, he placed world fraternity as the *highest virtue*. His aim of education is humanistic and internationalist

Dr. Radhakrishnan also puts emphasis upon ethical discipline. Love and self-sacrifice occupy important place in his ethical scheme. He says,

“Every individual must subdue his senses which make for self-assertion; pride must give place to humility, resentment to forgiveness, narrow attachment to family to universal benevolence.”