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2

Anudhyan An International Journal of Social Sciences (AIJSS)

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Studies on Some Historical Sites in Midnapore

Author's names and affiliations

Maity, Jayanta[a] ; Ghosh, Subhra[b] and Pal, Dilip[b]*

[a] Vidyasagar University, Address, Phone Number/Mobile, email

[b] University of Calcutta, Address, Phone Number/Mobile, email

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From the Desk of the Editor

It is a matter of great pleasure that *Anudhyan An International Journal of Social Science* sees the daylight sustaining its continuity which is a prerequisite of publication of any journal. In this issue the journal has focused a fresh light on some new areas of Humanities and Social Science. Sarbasree Bandyopadhyay in her essay tries to study the history of independence of Bangladesh through cinematic lens and she uses two documentaries "Muktir Gaan" and "Muktir Kotha" to carry out her study. Tapati Dasgupta's article 'Environmental Crisis and Adivasi Challenge against Colonial Rule' is worth mentioning. The tradition of re-reading the philosophy of universal religion promulgated by Swami Vivekananda never dies. Gargi Medda's paper on it is a new addition on this vast field of philosophy. Alak Pal and Victor Palit carry out their works on medical field. It is a high time that the women from the different corners of the world in general and India in particular are raging their battle cry against all social prejudices and superstitious beliefs around menstruation. At this time Iti Ckaraborty's article 'Influence of Menstrual Cycle Phases on Health Related Physical Fitness Components of Players' will surely draw the attention of serious readers. Other papers on different fields of Humanities and Social Sciences are written after competent research work.

The editor is indebted to many, whose names are not mentioned always, for their assistance at different stages of the publication of the journal. Dr. Jayasree Laha, Principal of our college, always extends her able guidance which works as the goading spirit behind the publication of the journal. Thanks are due to all members of the Editorial Board and Reviewers for their meticulous scrutiny of each and every article submitted to this journal. We also gratefully thank all the authors who submitted their articles to this journal for publication.

Contents

War and Art: From *Muktir Gan* to *Muktir Kotha* – A Historical Appraisal

Sarbasree Bandyopadhyay

ABSTRACT

This paper is an intense effort to study the history of independence of Bangladesh through cinematic lens. While the terrible war between East and West Pakistan was going on in 1971, Lear Levin, the American Film maker captured moments and these footages were hidden from the world. One day, Tareque Masud and his wife Catherine Masud came to know this fact and with a deliberate effort to restore these footages they decided to make a documented story, which they named 'Muktir Gaan' followed by 'Muktir Kotha'. The directors were aroused with a different kind of curiosity which led them to unfurl the voice of Nation's past. This paper concludes with specific understandings i.e. History of Independent Bangladesh can't be understood without admitting the role of populace in this regard. And secondly, as the populace of the-then East Bengal characteristically belonged to the third world country, its history cannot be centered in elitist approach only; the oral history, in addition, can be considered as an another source of history.

KEY WORDS: Bangladesh; film; Liberation War; Oral History; women.

Introduction

This paper intends to trace the history behind the two documentaries namely *Muktir Gan (1995)* and *Muktir Kotha (1999)* directed by Tareque Masud and his wife Katherine Masud, made on the Liberation war (1971) of Bangladesh. In its continuous process of becoming, history is no more limited to written evidences, but has drunk every moment in forms of conversations, witnesses, stories to develop itself into a grand narrative. While this has been a consistent process, media too has subverted the very meaning of walls, and has contributed to the continuous process of 'becoming' History. The reputed scholar Panna

*Dr. Sarbasree Bandyopadhyay, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Pingla Thana Mahaviyalaya, Maligram, Paschim Medinipur.*email: medhashrimahanty@gmail.com. Mobile: 9475891268

11

Shah (1950) appreciates cinema as 'an immense force which [.....] molds the opinion of millions in the course of its apparently superficial business of merely providing entertainment'.

While cinema has formed an important tool in understanding and tracing the emotional history, documentaries too have become indispensable. In this regard, the film critic Ladly Mukhopadhyay (2011) believed that presently the world is extremely conscious to preserve and record facts and documents, to be acknowledged in the future for understanding the socio-cultural history. So, it is seminal to point out the fact what Mr. Masud (Masud 'a'), in an interview with the film critic and scholar Jakir Hossain Raju, said that political leaders of Bangladesh before elections massively used the video cassettes of *Muktir Gan* in favour of their party campaign. The said films are not simply limited to offering gratitude to all the people who fought and sacrificed for their mother tongue and freedom of native land (to make it Bangladesh- the land for the Bengalee, from East Pakistan) but also to make the present generation aware about the significance of 'Mukti Juddho' (War of Independence) hoping for imbedding in them the spirit of a warrior that claimed back what was rightfully theirs. The directors of film *Muktir Gan* (Songs of Freedom, released in December, 1995) have acknowledged that this film is based on footages filmed by the American film maker Lear Levin in 1971 and different archival footages from around the world.

Bangladesh was born in 1971. Thus, the birth right of the Bengalee was established in Purba Bangla (then it was named as East Pakistan) and their fight for Bengali language was finally honoured and earned recognition as the national language of Bangladesh. Yet the history of Bengal is vast and full of numerous facts and fictions, here we are mainly concerned with the history of 'Mukti Juddho' and its reflections on the said films. We, the people of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh know what happened in 1947. India wins freedom at the cost of dividing India and betraying its traditional spirit of secularism. On the eve of India's freedom, Pakistan was created on the basis of giving priority to the demand of Muslim people for a separate state (Bandopadhyay 2007). After partition, the dream of Muslim people was broken down owing to the arrogance and rigid attitude of certain leaders of Pakistan who never supported the people of East Pakistan to live, following their own tradition and culture. Maximum people of East Pakistan were Muslim in religion, but culturally there was a gigantic gap between East and West Pakistan. In addition to this fact, a strong socio-cultural bond was made amongst the people of the East Pakistan itself and between the

12

people of East Pakistan and West Bengal (keeping in mind that those two halves of Bengal were religiously dominated by Muslim and Hindu people respectively). The state power of Pakistan could not approve the fondness of East Pakistan towards Bengali culture or proximity with West Bengal (and India). So the people of East Pakistan had to think once again. The authority of Pakistan considered this venture as trial for separation but the people of East Pakistan thought it as a question of existence - quest for liberation.

Behind the screen of *Muktir Gan*: How far was the middle class leadership connected with the common people?

Film maker Lear Levin's camera captured different experiences and activities of 'Bangladesh Mukti Songrami Shilpi Songstha' (Bangladesh Freedom Struggle Cultural Squad), a cultural squad of young people of East Pakistan in 1971. The eleven core members of this group were Mahmudur Rahman Benu, Shaheen Samad, Nayla Jaman, Lubna Moriom, Swapan Choudhuri, Bipul Bhattacharya, Sharmin Murshid, Debabrata Chaudhury, Lata Chaudhury, Dulal Chandra Shil and Tareque Ali (Rafiq 'a'). Mr. Tareque Ali becomes the narrator of the film. The directors tried to incorporate their statements in the process of making *Muktir Gan*. Mahmudur Rahman Benu, the Cultural Squad Leader, informed us that they used to learn and practice singing at 140 Lenin Street, Dharmatala in Kolkata at that time. Prof. Wahidul Huq, Cultural Squad director, taught the members patriotic songs of Rabindranath Tagore and others regularly. In this connection he acknowledged his deep indebtedness to the people of India and West Bengal respectively with special reference to Mr. Dipen Bandyopadhyay of West Bengal, who was the Chief Architect of the Cultural Squad. We come to know from Shaheen Samad that they themselves were identified by the term 'Word Warrior'. Lubna Moriom expressed her grief with a statement that nobody remembers the martyrs – the young people embraced death for freedom. She expects that the present generation of young people must understand the significance of War-71 for not to experience the same once again. Sharmin Murshid felt that till now war is continuing and as the war is not over the next generation is liable to carry on the mission until the crisis stops. Thus, if we need to ponder over the social character of this group, we will come to realize the fact that though this group was basically formed by middle class people, but how and when the women of East Bengal had come out breaking the conservative ideas and values imposed on them and joined in all processes for liberating the country. Actually it was achievable as

13

the women of 1971 of East Pakistan or East Bengal carried the legacy of freedom movement against the colonial British power when innumerable women were used to participate in this process and it was just the continuation of this process (Begam 2011). According to Anupam Hayat (2011), an eminet film critic in Bangladesh, the Mukti juddho women weren't simply victims of the war, who were 'just' raped, murdered or lost their lives. They fought back, and in their individual ways, they underwent the transformation from the imbibed idea of the 'woman' to 'soldier' or 'joddha'. Now it needs mention that huge number of women of the then East Pakistan, raped in the course of Liberation war have been recently recognized as *'Muktijoddha'* instead of only *'Birangana'* coined by Bangabandhu Mujibar Rahman.

Here it is seminal to point out how the idea of liberation was felt by the populace of Bangladesh. *Naeem Mohaiemen (2011) working at HBO Interactive Media, New York* evaluates the liberation war as a middle class phenomenon—'the only class that was truly "liberated" in 1971'. Is it acceptable completely without raising a contradictory observation? It is undeniable that freedom of Bangladesh could not completely liberate people from political and socio-religious anguishes, but it will be an over-estimation to tag a 'middle class' label on people's war, though it was basically led by the middle class people (as represented in the forming of mentioned *Bangladesh Mukti Songrami Shilpi Songstha*) and hence the directors wished to find out the connection of the middle class leadership with the common people.

The workers of this organization started their journey with a great determination of promoting the Mukti Joddhas of East Pakistan and supporting the helpless war-affected people of refugee camps settled near the border and liberated zones. The war-affected people of East Pakistan had to stay and spend their dark days like 'animals' in different camps. Every body of the camp had a story of terror and pain. Also beside those refugee camps, make-shift hospitals were being made to nurse those injured in the war. The members of *Bangladesh Mukti Songrami Shilpi Songstha* performed patriotic songs, arranged puppet shows and staged dramas to inspire the freedom fighters and to lift the spirit of war affected people. This bunch of culture promoting group visited the camp, where the guerrilla fighters were being trained by the prominent freedom fighter Gyashuddin Chowdhury. Levin in his quest for film followed the activities of these people, and recorded what became a twenty-hours-long-footage, and later, a prime ingredient for the making of *Muktir Gan.*

14

The directors weren't making just a documentary, but they were weaving their own narratives into the film, which somehow became a documented story of Bangladesh Liberation war. This subtle weaving created an inter-textuality that paved a more eloquent way for the proceeding of history that the film wanted to show.

In '*Making of Muktir Gan'* Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud have acknowledged their indebtedness to them (BMSSS), without whom this project would not succeed. This part is very significant in understanding the film *Muktir Gan* because it explains the making of the film. Lear Levin tells the story of his adventure in collecting the footage and his views on them, whereas Dina Hossain (Asst. Editor of the film) and the directors inform us that to make this documented story they needed to face different challenges and how successfully they overcame those demands. Junaid Halim ('*Making of Muktir Gan'*), Unit Member, communicated us that how he collected the footage of 7th March speech of Banga Bandhu from Bangladesh Department of Film and Publications Archives.

It is also interesting to note the way the directors incorporated certain elements in the films in connection with the original footage to suit their needs. Mr. Masud collected a footage of Mukti Juddho from Film Division of India where the 'joddhas' were seen in a position of listening to the radio but the footage had no audio effect, so according to Mr. Masud, 'We thought that here we could use the radio announcement by Ziaur Rahman' and finally it was collected from Germany Deutsche Welle Radio Archive with the help of Abdullah Al-Farooq, who was working there. The Director, Mr. Masud was highly impressed with another footage of Levin's material where some 'joddhas' were waiting anxiously, due to heavy rains and thus their delay in the action. This footage had no sound but he wanted to use this footage with proper historical implication. To make it meaningful the director needed some radio shots of 1971 which would merge with the said footage as the warriors of the field were listening to the radio programme '*Songbad Parikroma'*, offered by the-then eminent news reader Debdulal Bandyopadhyay. It was not an easy task because the original scripts of that time were not found in the archive and finally it was collected from Pranabesh Sen. Radio shots with some low-lit images were taken by Baby Islam. The original script of narration written in English was translated by Alam Khorshed, into Bengali. Even a list of songs was incorporated (which was not part of Lear's materials) in the film for harmonizing the narrative with the images. Another important footage was collected with silent help of

15

Bangladeshi writer and official of United Nations, Hasan Ferdaus and used in the film where we face Prime minister General Bhutto of Pakistan announcing that United Nations' help is inessential in the context of declaring war against newly born Bangladesh and restoring Pakistan's prestige. This incorporation needs to be judged separately as it could stimulate the audience, now when they watch it.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muktir_Gaan. http://www.filmsouthasia.org/film/muktir-kotha-words-of-*Muktir Gan*freedom/*Muktir Kotha*

It needs to be mentioned here that often the young generation feels an 'alienation effect' when they watch the documentaries. They are alienated not because they have forgotten the sufferings of their parents and relatives, but because the process of moving forward has rendered most of them desensitized to their past, amidst the delirious chore of surviving in a country like Bangladesh. Some footage of genocides, atrocities (e.g. Reuter Television Library-Production number 7006/71, 13859/71, 3367/72) and war fields (from Gita Mehta's film) were collected from different commercial archives and incorporated in the film for making it historically consistent and credible. In this connection, the directors rightly thought on including a scene depicting Guerrilla fight, without which liberation war would have failed to succeed. There was no real footage of Guerrilla fight as it happened secretly in night. So the directors had to take certain rigorous night shots with spontaneous help of local energetic youth, including some original warriors to launch Guerrilla ambush operation.

16

Liberation War as represented on the screen

The film needed a proper sequence of history, so the film started with the encouraging speech of Bangabandhu Mujibar Rahman, containing an energetic appeal to the mass. 'Turn every home into a fort. […]This time our struggle is for freedom' said Bangabandhu at Polton Maidan Dhaka on 7 March, 1971. As the film proceeds, the affluent terror of Pakistan becomes more vivid as is the conjoined effort of the people to fight against it. The devastated people of East Pakistan (especially the Hindus) could not dare to stay there and started walking for miles in search of a safe shelter towards India. Allen Ginsberg, one of the famous Beat generation poets, visited Bangladesh at such a crucial time and composed his magnificent poem, 'September, 1971'. *Muktir Gan* also exemplified the fact (mentioned before) that Prime Minister Julfikor Ali Bhutto of Pakistan in question of disgraceful surrender of Pakistan army on 15 December, 1971, repudiated the support of the Security Council and there he avowed that after going back to Pakistan he will declare war again on East Pakistan or newly born Bangladesh. While the film proceeds to show these brutalities, it also charges the viewers with the popular songs such as 'My Golden Bengal' or Jyotirindra Maitra's song, 'Come on, Comrade of Freedom, Come —Keep marching forward'. People were also greatly cheered up with the words and lyrics of Moshad Ali of Rajsahi, and thus *Muktir Gan* becomes what it intended to be in the end - a cultural weapon against the fascist machine-gun, that was Pakistan (Rafiq Monis"b"). Film critique Mr. Sushil Saha (2013, p.71) believes that watching *Muktir Gan* is *important* for us as it basically tells a story of patriotism with a brilliant blending of memories. He also added that like 'Ganonatyo Andolon' in British India, which was reflected in the film *Komol Gandhar*, the young participants of *Muktir Gan* conceived a new thought.

Muktir Kotha: Continuation of *Muktir Gan*

Muktir Kotha(Words of Freedom)- Can it be considered as the second part of the film *Muktir Gan*? The concept of *Muktir Kotha* emerged when *Muktir Gan* was being shown in different parts of Bangladesh. A group of young people underwent several experiences while putting up shows in various regions of Bangladesh from 1996 to 1999. People who experienced Mukti Juddho for the first time could identify themselves with *Muktir Gan*-they remembered past with tears and promised to be united for the rest of life against the terror that Pakistan embodied, they also urged for justice and punishment of inhuman cruel

17

soldiers of Pakistan and their collaborator Rajakars (On Line, Wikipedia). While the young organizers were thrilled with the overwhelming audience, they also encountered another reality. Many of the spectators complained that they felt happy to see the documentation and reflections of the Liberation War for the first time in *Muktir Gan* but it failed to include the involvement of others, whose claims seemed to be natural and logical as far as the nature and scope of Mukti Juddho is concerned.

Muktir Kotha appeared with two effects, it united the people of Bangladesh once again- the scattered, forgotten memories were aroused and it dared to tell a story of freedom struggle for the present generation with documentation, on the other hand it contained in itself, a larger history of nation- which was not talked about in *Muktir Gan*. *Muktir Kotha* is a fascinating pattern of documenting and representing oral history in a wider sense as it signifies the worth of others, mainly the marginal people —people who contributed a lot but had not been properly recognized in written history of nation making.

Muktir Kotha also divulges the fact that *Muktir Gan* succeeded in making the urban people—mainly the middle class people of Bangladesh conscious about Liberation War. The people of rural areas identified themselves as the characters of the war too, but they had a different story and a perspective so they needed to add more and more to complete the saga of nation. Smritirekha Biswas could identify herself in time of watching the film *Muktir Gan*. In *Muktir kotha*, she states that while watching *Muktir Gan* she suddenly saw her little brother of four years on the screen and could remember her childhood, and of the time, when she was about twelve years and her family like others was bound to join in a long unending journey for refuge (Chakroborty Sudeshna, 2000) in India. Hakimuddi of Sherpur village lamented on the loss- the memories haunted him and he said that even his family itself could not recognize him as they felt that the dream of independent Bangladesh failed to bring justice and prestige for the liberators of the country (Sahadujjaman"a"). Mohiful of Nagorkonda who lost her husband in Liberation war made the spectators think when she asked if passing on the responsibility to Bangabandhu's daughter and Prime Minister Shekh Hasina could really usher in better days in independent Bangladesh(Sahadujjaman"b"). *Muktir Kotha* revealed the contribution of the aboriginal people of East Pakistan in the *Mukti Juddho*. They did a lot by all possible means to combat with the opposition, even before proper formation of 'Mukti Bahini'. Bhupendra Manna,

18

Korno Jhorar, Krisokra Sonan belonging to Garo subcaste in Muktir Kotha, could remember and state their role in liberation war from the pick of hills of Mymensingha. We are informed of the people in Kodalia village in Faridpur. They go on to state the tragedy of those eighteen women of Kodalia who were killed in 1971 by the Pakistan Army, their pain bursting into rage –as they not only lost life but they could not protect their women and children against the army. A woman from Kodalia said, 'I don't think they were Muslims. How could Muslims kill others this way? They raped the women, they found alone in their homes.'

Narir Kotha: A little place for women

The last part of the film *Muktir kotha* includes *Narir kotha* —Women and War (Trauma and triumph of Women in '71). It opens with a painful question and as a society, we feel ashamed listening to the particular song with a charge of disrespect and lack of proper recognition of women's contribution to the cause of independence. The after-war situation was more shocking and dreadful for the women survivors. Many of them had to face scandalous situation, it was another war now, against a society that was patriarchal. *Muktir Kotha* exposed the fact that the women of East Pakistan had an enormous role in Mukti Juddho though some facts have been repeated in *Narirkotha*, which could have incorporated others. Besides, in *Narirkotha*, we meet reverend Sufia Kamal, stretching helping hand towards the torched women, sculptor Firdousi Priobhasini, first woman who gave a public statement of rape/gang rape during war time and after independence she said, 'I felt I was no longer acceptable in my own society', group of women giving slogan for independence in public meeting, women- nursing the wounded soldiers and the women getting preparation for war.

Narir Kotha also alerts us as we recognize the involvement of indigenous people in the history of Bangladesh. We observe Mazlibala, an *adibasi* woman who describes her experiences of probable dishonoring by the Pak soldiers and we become surprised when she asks, 'Is there any difference between dishonor and attempt to dishonor?' These aboriginal people went to fight with bow and arrows. In the village Chotopaitkandi women and men together defended their village against the invading army with bamboo spears and shields. What is important to look at this juncture is probably the way patriarchy (with no alternative, as it is) shapes the eyes of the society that is plundered by war. The women, who survived the rape and atrocities have been colonized because of their gender and is treated as an outcast by the 'Big Other' that operates the society. On the other hand, women

19

belonging to the lower caste were being doubly colonized, because of their caste. This marginalization along with the awareness of the victims was a marvel to watch.

Let us listen, visualize and understand the story of Liberation war

As the films end, and the past merges with the present, the audience while feeling deranged and alienated also gets the prick of not remembering, if not completely forgetting their history. The directors incorporated a neo-realist (Kuhn Annette and Westwell Guy, 2012) discourse while telling their story- a simple narrative dealing with the tragedy and fear of living with terror. We may conclude with the fact that partially the above discussed films were attached to the filmic discourse of Neorealism. These films completed a journey blended with different songs, audio-visual documentations and interviews of different persons— from distinguished personality to general people— in a rhythm of storytelling. In this regard we may believe in Mr. Masud's understanding when he declares that he required telling a story of nation; and viewers are not passive component hence they actively participated in this process of film making. Accordingly, Mr. Masud wanted to come out from the hypocrisy of traditional written history where marginal people never get the needed space (Masud Tareq"b"). These films with their limitations did succeed in decoding not just the national history but merging it with the many histories of the people that was slowly getting lost in the thoroughfares.

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4. Halim Junaid,('*Making of Muktir Gan'*),The audio of the speech was missing. Here it needs mention that former MP and film producer Abul Khayer published the record player of7[th]March speech by the name of 'Joy Bangla' from Gramophone Company in Kolkata and Mr. Khayer supplied that record player

5. Hayat Anupam (2011, 1st Edition), *Bangladesher Muktijuddho Bhittik Cholochchitra,* Dhaka: Bangladesh Film Archive, p.148

20

6. Kuhn Annette and Westwell Guy (2012), *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, p. 281

   'A body of socially conscious films, made on small budgets and shot on location using non-professional actors, that emerged in Italy between the mid 1940s and early 1950s; the films dealt with the everyday lives of ordinary working people in the aftermath of war and subscribed to the ideals of a post-Fascist popular social renewal'.

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21

Environmental Crisis and Adivasi Challenge against Colonial Rule in 19ᵗʰ and 20ᵗʰ Century India

Tapati Dasgupta

ABSTRACT

The Adivasis in India had expressed their deep-set mourning and grievances through armed insurrections against the long term exploitation of the ruling Zamindars and the Colonial rulers in different pockets of India in the 19th and 20th century in an environmental background. The tale of anguish and agitation focused by the Adivasis shaped the course of the National Movement in India in a different dimension.

KEY WORDS: Adivasis, Agitation, Environment, Colonial, Zamindar, Tribal, Uprising Exploitation, Grievances, National Movement.

I

Introduction:

From time immemorial India has been a labyrinth of rigid caste and varna system. In Manusamhita, there is the description of the evolution of four varnas from Brahma's face, hand, knee and feet. Accordingly, *Brahmins*, *Khastriyas*, *Vaishyas* and *Sudras* have been evolved in India. From this Varna system itself, the conception of caste has emerged and the tribes are again the sub-groups of the castes. Actually, castes and tribes are very much inter-linked with each other and these castes and tribes identify some typical social groups. According to M. N. Srinivas, "A socialist would define caste as a hereditary, endogamous, usually localized group, having a traditional association with an occupation and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes."[1] Senart, Max Weber and Jayaraman are of opinion that it is a kind of 'close corporation' or 'close status group.' In the opinion of Dipankar Gupta, stratification is the keynote of caste and tribe pattern in India. He says, "Stratification spontaneously signifies a multi-layered phenomenon."[2] Caste and tribe are inter-dependent on each other from both religious and economic view point. Hitesh Ranjan Sanyal in his

Dr. Tapati Dasgupta, Consultant at Department of Architecture & Regional Planning, IIT Kharagpur, & Guest Faculty of History (PG) at Midnapore College (Autonomous) and at Netaji Subhas Open University History (PG)

book *Social Mobility in Bengal* has shown that the *Varna* system was evolved in India with the coming of the Aryans. According to him, there were originally three varnas — *Brahmins, Khastriyas* and *Vaishyas*. The Aryans defeated the aboriginals or the people of Dravidaland in India and established themselves mostly in northern part of India. In old Sanskrit texts these people have been described as *Dasayus* or *Dasas* or Anasa. They were quite different in their cultural values from that of the Aryans. From the very beginning, these non-Aryans or *Dasas* were looked down upon in society and later this group came to be known as Sudras and they completed the fourth category of the 'Çhaturvarna' system.[3]

The Caste and Varna system in India form a very complex pattern in the societal structure. Sekhar Bandopadhyay holds the opinion in his book *Caste Politics and the Raj* that the entire society was structured according to division of labour, which again formed the backbone of the tribal system. Stratification of society ranked these non-Aryans or Sudras in the lowest layer of society. Louis Dumos in his book *Homo Hierchicus* has expressed the opinion that religion (Hinduism) was solely responsible for this rigid and complicated stratification in society.

The Adivasis divided into nine groups – 'Nava Sakha' are mostly belonged to low professions and low status. They form the rank and file of the population and obviously they are the most poverty – stricken people, dependent upon the whims and orders of the upper ranks of people. They are ruthlessly exploited and tortured in society.

The tribals or the Adivasis live in different quarters of India – right from South West Bengal to Bombay, Andhra and other places. The Adivasi discontent is simmering with the passage of time. The brutal treatment of the upper caste people upon them gives them adequate incentive to change their religious beliefs, for example from Hinduism to Christianity or Islam or Vaishnavism. They also try to come out of their tribal antiquity to better cultural identity through the process of 'Sankritization,' which became a popular vehicle of socio-cultural assertion as described by M.N. Srinivas.

This sort of merger of 'Identity Crisis' coupled with the hatred against local rulers and the White Colonialists creates a platform for the explosion of agitations mostly in the form of agricultural revolts. The Adivasis, sometimes find their age-long agony articulated by a single religious hero or sometimes by 'religious syncretism' which give them enough impetus to fight and sustain.

23

Environmental crisis takes an acute turn in some parts of India – Jungle Mahal region in South-West Bengal, Thane region in Bombay, Guntur region in Andhra Pradesh. The poor forest Adivasis, who are so long enjoying the forest resources for their living, are now deprived of all forest riches which are plundered and utilized for the greater benefits of the local Zamindars and the selfish interests of the Colonialists. The vandalism becomes so acute that the Adivasis are compelled to hit at the roots of British edifice in India. This article shows how environmental crisis instigates the Adivasis of these regions to raise their hands of protest against alien rule and how they have poised a challenge against the White Overlords. This article unleashes the fact how the Adivasis (the Dasas or the Sudras) shapes the foundation of peasants' revolts in India which gradually paves the path for the great National Movement in India.

II

From the inception of the Colonial period, i.e. in the 18th Century, it is observed that the grievances of the masses, particularly of the lower rank people no longer remained mute. In the opinion of Gail Omvedt, there was a fundamental structural change in society from the late 18th century.[4]

One of the most terrible movements that gave a thunderous blow to the British edifice was the Santal Rebellion of 1855-56. This rebellion did not occur all of a sudden. The virulent discontent of the Santals was surging in the South-West quarter of Bengal for ages. It eventually takes the shape of the Rebellion.

There are many theories that have been raised for the Santal Revolt of 1855-56. Captain Sherwell has observed that the torture and exploitation inflicted upon the Santals by the Mahajans were the glaring reasons behind this revolt. One indigo merchant namely Charles Berner, Pareshnath Bhattacharya, the Atornee of Queen Khemasundari of Pakur, Gopal Singh, the ruler of Maheshpur have shared the same opinion. Rev. Draese, one missionary from Church Mission Society expressed the opinion that excessive amount of land rent imposed by the Mahajans and the East India Company coupled with the torture of the English railway officers gave enough stimuli to these poor Adivasis to raise their arms against the exploiters. Pareshnath Bhattacharya, Gopal Singh and others also are of opinion that the disrespectful behavior of the English railway officers towards some Santal women flamed

24

the fire of rebellion in this region. Many other historians are of opinion that religious fanaticism instigated the Santals to come out of their age-long slumber; the deep anguish which lay dormant in the thousand souls found expression in the divine message that was declared by the Santal leaders —Sidhu and Kanu. Both of them were treated as messengers of a new dawn — who would help them to get freedom from shackles of bondage. E. G. Mann has summarized all the above-mentioned reasons and come to the conclusion that these reasons had created the platform of the Santal Rebellion of 1855-56.

Apart from the exploiter–exploited relationship that existed between the Adivasi Santals and the Zamindar–Mahajan-Company, environmental crisis was a burning cinder which actually shaped the course of the rebellion. The original dwellers of the Jungle Mahal region were the Paharias. They did not know the art of cultivation with spade. Very often they used to come to the plateau region from the hills and they plundered and looted and again left for their hilly abode. The situation underwent a big change with the beginning of Company's rule, especially with the initiation of the Permanent Settlement in 1793. The Adivasi Santals were now engaged for the task of cultivation of these rugged lands. The Santals put their hard labour to turn these lands into fertile tracts. They settled in this region, increased the level of production and made land–settlements with the help of their village heads or Majhis. They came to believe that these lands were God gifted and they had the capacity to exercise their supreme control over these lands. These lands close to the Raj Mahal hills were called the Damin– i-Koh. The following table shows the level of Santal concentration in South West Bengal. Swapan Dasgupta in his article 'Adivasi politics in Midnapore – 1760 – 1924' has given an account of tribal population concentration in the Jungle Mahals.[5]

Adivasis	Jhargram	Binpur	Salboni	Garbeta	Gopiballavpur
Bhumijas	5.25	5.65	5.65	6.74	0.57
Kurmi	25.52	8.94	21.68	2.86	6.13
Santal	23.88	31.17	15.58	16.92	21.32

Source: Compiled from *Bengal District Gazetter*, Vol-B Midnapore District Statistics, 1900-01; 1910 – 11.[6]

When Mr. Pontet was appointed as the Superintendent of the region, the rate of land

25

rent turned to Rs. 2,611 which was quite an exorbitant amount for the Santals. During 1854 – 55 this amount increased to Rs. 58,033. The local Zamindars always sought the opportunity of exploiting these Adivasis. Whenever a piece of land became fully fertile, they used to utilize the crop production for their own use and increased the amount of land tax upon the Adivasis. The Santal leader Sidhu declared that their revolt was targeted against the ruling Zamindars, not against the Company. The Adivasis received greater range of exploitation from the Mahajans and the Businessmen and the poor Adivasis knew no way out to get rid of these lusty Mahajans. The desperate, poverty–stricken Santals used to borrow food crops from these Mahajans. As a result, the Mahajans regulated two methods for meeting these loans:

1) **Kamiyati Method –** According to this regulation the Santals had to put their labour in land till they could meet the loan.

2) **Harwahi Method –** According to this method, the loaner Santals had to plough the Mahajans' lands and had to do all kinds of works as dictated by them. In return, they used to get one seer of paddy on daily basis from the Mahajans. As a result of this, the Santals became their – serfs, because they could never pay back their loans. This was a permanent source of exploitation on the Adivasi Santals.

In this way, the Adivasis were suffering from these environmental hazards for a long time. Added to this, was the exploitation done by the railway officers. This resulted in the outbreak of the Santal Rebellion of 1855-56 in a wide scale. Dr. Ranajit Guha has commented in his book *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* that the above-mentioned two reasons proved to be crucial for the outbreak of the rebellion.[7]

The insurgents firstly tried to cope with the situation by pleading and requests. Secondly, when they found that the Company itself was totally immune to their grievances, they chose the path of armed rebellion. Under the leadership of Sidhu and Kanu, 19,000 Adivasi Santals assembled at the Bhagnadihi Maidan and a big procession proceeded towards Calcutta, where they intended to place their plea for urgent solution of this kind of environmental hazards. This was a rare instance in the 19th century annals of history. Their designs being frustrated, they once again assembled at Bhagnadihi in thousands and declared the Santal Rebellion. Sidhu himself killed the cruel Mahajan Mahesh Dutta; the next victim was Dindayal

26

Roy. The Santals declared their bloody determination as '**Hul! Hul!**' which meant revolt. There followed a bloody debacle between the Company and the Santals. The Santals were brutally tortured. Sidhu and Kanu were arrested due to their rebellious impetus and both were put to death.

The dream of the Adivasi Santals and the dream of Sidhu and Kanu to establish an independent Santal dominion came to a tragic end. But the triumphant trumpets of the Santal revolt could not be smothered so quickly. The contemporary journals and magazines like *'Sambad Pravakar'*, *'Sambad Bhaskar'*, *'Somprakash'*, *'Calcutta Review'* etc gave a vivid description of the events of the Santal Revolt. The Karmakars, Carpenters, Kumbhakars, Teli and all other people of the lower brackets of society joined hands with the Santals. They said they wanted justice from the White Rulers, which proved to be futile. Instead, they were killed ferociously like jungle wolves.

The Santal Revolt was put to an end for the time being. The fire of protest and the aspirations of the lower rank of people found echo in the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Indigo Revolt of 1859 and many other Peasants' Revolts in the coming years which gradually made the path of Independence to be carved on a granite foundation.

III

With the establishment of Colonial rule in India, Colonial imperialistic lust became exposed in every corner of the Sub-Continent of India. From the very beginning, the Colonialists with the help of the ruling Zamindars and Mahajans exploited the peasants and artisans in order to grab enormous amount of wealth from the Indian agricultural sites.

Thane district of Bombay Presidency was one of the victims of this imperialistic lust. A deep sense of agony was slowly being fomented by the forest–dwellers of this region. The Adivasis of this region, namely the Warlis, Thakurs, Katkaris were totally dependent on forest resources for their daily living. The '*Dalhi*' custom was prevalent among them for a long time. According to this system, the Adivasis used to divide the hilly tracts among themselves and each of them used to receive one acre of land at the rate of 8 annas. There was of course no hard and fast rule in this system. They used to burn the trees and collect the crops. After utilizing the particular land for once, they used to leave that tract and that tract could not be used for seven years. The collected crops were sold through the medium

27

of barter system. The forest fruits, roots and other parts were the main food items of the poor Adivasis. Hunting was another medium through which they could survive.

The Colonial administration promulgated the regulation in 1860 that the Adivasis would have to abandon the shifting or hoe cultivation. This was also called *Jhum* or *Podo* Cultivation. Instead, the Adivasis were required to accept the proper cultivation methods. In 1878, more strict regulations were imposed upon the poor Adivasis. They were expected to cultivate lands for the interests of the Company; there was of course no concern on part of the Company whether the Adivasis were deprived or not.

The Adivasis of Thane region tried to place their plea before the White Colonialists for redressing their acute grievances. Along with this policy of plea and requests, there followed what James C. Scott says, "Everyday forms of peasant resistance." The Adivasis used to express their protest by 'Jungle Gherao', bribed the forest-keeper and continued to collect the forest resources by putting fire in the forest resources. Every time they were resisted and every time they continued with their slaughter, because environmental resources were the only sources of their living. The agonized Adivasis were desperate with their remorse which knew no redress.

According to 1878 Forest Regulation, wide tracts of forest lands began to be measured and the forest lands were being demarcated as Reserve Forests. The Adivasis began to be severely punished for utilizing the forest resources. The Forest Department placed the Report that "there is too much taken up for forests and is scarcely enough left for cultivation." Actually, forest trees of these lands of the Thane region were being utilized for railway purposes. From 1843 onwards wide tracts of jungles were cut down for making of railway lines. In 1853 the first railway line was established by Lord Dalhousie between Bombay to Thane. But the Adivasis were quite unaware of all these developments; their despair and anguish became boundless. The Thane Forest Association and Poona Sarvajanik Sabha took attempts to reduce the pressure that was forcefully imposed upon the Adivasis. This news was flashed in the newspapers from 1879 onwards. It was found that the cattle-rearing lands also came under the control of the Colonialists. Not only that, entry of cattle in these protected lands was severely restricted. From the Statistical data of 1887, we come to know that the number of arrested cattle became 3346 from 212 and during 1892-93 the number raised to 4917.

28

Another reason for the grievances of the Adivasis was that the British Forest Officers declared '*Rab*' Cultivation no more to be practiced. But E. C. Ozanne, Director of Agriculture himself declared that '*Rab'* Cultivation was very much necessary for increasing forest wealth in the '*Barka'* or '*Sindad'* (unfertile) forest lands. The life of Adivasis in forest was drastically damaged for stopping this cultivation. In 1885, a Deputation Committee headed by Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Dadabhai Naoroji, P. M. Meheta and others went to meet Lord Ripon for redressing the grievances of the forest Adivasis of Thane region. But their pleading was fruitless. In 1894, the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha criticized the British policy in vehement words, but that too was in vain.

In 1896, 4000 Adivasis comprising of Kathodi, Thakurs, Katkaris and others of the forest-mountain regions went to meet the Collector of Thane and requested him to dismiss the strict British regulations. When they failed, they violated the forest regulations and collected forest fuel forcibly and sold them at Basin Taluk. This time, they devastated the tent of the Divisional Forest Officer and had beaten up the Habildar. Palghar Taluk became one of the vigorous symbols of protest. The Adivasis demanded rent reduction not only from fuels, but from all forest goods. The Deputy Collector was compelled to write down this regulation on Stamp Paper. But, at the same time they were suspicious about the actual intentions of the British. Nearly 5000 Adivasis assembled in front of the Collector's Office and 2000 of them declared revolt at Mahim Taluk. Police firing followed; 40/45 persons were injured and 2/3 persons were killed. According to Indra Munshi Saldanha, "The poor, in particular tribal, through combined forms of appeal, evasion and confrontation, carried on the struggle against the mighty imperial state of its agents."[8] The then Collector declared, "The agitation spread from class to class." The Mangelas, Vadwals, Kumbis and Bhandaris gathered in different places of Basin and Mahim Taluk and expressed their agitation. The village Patel or the Sardars also joined hands with the agitators. In spite of famine and plague epidemic being prevalent at this time, the revolt spread like volcanic eruption from village to village, forest to forest. The Adivasis gave a real violent challenge against this environmental crisis and their protest was targeted mainly against the poisonous peril that was stimulated by the Colonial Overlords.

Very soon, the Colonial Government brought the situation under control. Strict police control was imposed at Basin and Mahim Taluk and all Patels were kept under strict police

29

control. In order to appease the aggressors, the regulation on head load was minimized to a certain extent. The revolt was severely crushed, many of the local officers were dismissed, and many of them were transferred. From the Report of the Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay Revenue Department, Vol. 30, it is known that the Colonialists kept a permanent vigilance on the 'Sarvajanik Sabha' of Maharashtra, which was established by Balgangadhar Tilak. The Britishers believed that the activities of this Association had a close link with the revolutionary programmes of the forest Adivasis.

In the opinion of Indra Munshi Saldanha, the role of the middle class and the upper middle class in this Adivasi revolt is quite unknown. But the desperate, desolate, exploited mass from all quarters of the Thane region joined in this revolt to unfold their age long agony and tears. The Adivasi Revolt of Thane region of 1895 was probably a revolt of a small scale, but this was a bloody confrontation which made a passage for the national consciousness of the exploited grass- root people, who could share their grievances with the greater Nationalist Movement of the time.[9]

IV

Just like Forest Revolt of Thane District of Bombay, Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh became another seat of violent protest in the early half of the 20th century. From the literary texts of the 16th century it is known that all the kings of Andhra region had followed a very well-planned forest policy. From the literary text called *'Aamuktamalyada'* composed by Raja Krishnadeva Rai of Vijayanagar Kingdom, we come to know that how he was concerned about the well-being of the forest-dwellers and how the borders of the forest region were well-kept.

In 1783, Colin Mackenzie, Surveyor General of India, was entrusted with the responsibility to survey all the villages adjacent to the forests and to take both geographical and historical accounts of the region. From Enugula Veeraswamy's *'Kasiyatra Charitra'* (1830-31), Kola Seshachalkeavi's *'Nilgiri Yatra'* (1831) and Julia Thomas's account (1836-39) we get a beautiful geographical description of the combination plateau, pasture and forest lands of this region.

Unfortunately, Andhra Pradesh could not escape the trap of the imperialistic prey of the Colonialists. Here also, lustrous environmental beauty was totally shattered due to the

30

cruel encroachment of the Britishers. From 1760 to 1800 onwards there was terrible demand of teak wood by the Britishers. The detailed account of this colonial encroachment is found in E.P. Stebbing's *Forests of India, Vol-I*. In the beginning, Madras Government took active part in meeting the tremendous teak wood demands of the Colonialists. But from 1860 onwards, a massive environmental change took place in the Krishna-Godavari coastal region due to the introduction of anicut system, which was a very effective means of irrigation, through which river-side crop production became double. According to T. Vijay Kumar as a result of this anicut system, Coastal Andhra was rapidly transformed from subsistence to market-oriented or commercial agriculture. The forest lands and wide tracts of barren lands were turned into fertile agricultural lands. But as a result of this, deforestation started which finally led to some tragic circumstances. As soon as the Colonial Govt. saw that profitable source could be accrued from these agricultural riches, they ordered that the entire forest region could come under the control of the Colonial Govt. In 1882, Dr. Brandis placed the Report "It is now recognized that there are no communal forests as distinct from state forests in the Presidency of Madras."[10]

The forest-dwellers or the Adivasis of the region were drastically deprived of their forest rights at the cost of the profit of the company. 1) They were deprived of the opportunity of shifting cultivation or *Jhum* cultivation. 2) They were deprived of the right of using the Minor Forest Produces (MFP). They could no longer collect fuel, leaves or twigs for their daily living. Even cattle-rearing was totally stopped. Special rents were imposed for cattle-rearing purposes. They had to take permission in every step— either for collecting wood or even for making a plough or cattle-rearing.

The Guntur Adivasis of Andhra, just like the Thane Adivasis of Bombay, burst into agitation during 1920-22 through an *'Aranya Satyagraha.'* E.P. Thompson said that this revolt was a conflict between users and exploiters. Atluri Murali thinks: "these class perceptions and interests were articulated within a nationalist ideological discourse."[11] The Adivasis were not only aggrieved with the Colonialist Regulations, but they nurtured their deep hatred against Colonialist exploitation. G.N. Thomassen, on behalf of the American Baptist Telegu Mission reported "I presume that it is hatred, because people look upon the forest as their own. They cannot get fuel wood and cannot take a single stick without being handed over to the Magistrate."

31

The anguish and discontent of the forest Adivasis of Andhra found expression through a massive revolt during 1920-22. Guntur, Nellore and Anandapur districts were the main seats of explosion of unrest. It was during this time that the all Indian Non-Co-operation Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had taken a concrete shape. It was Gandhi's movement which provided the major inspiration to the aggressors. In the opinion of Atluri Murali, "It was this colonial, judicial and socio-economic context which shaped popular perceptions of Colonial rule as unjust, alien and immoral. Such perceptions and their context were the ultimate basis for radical agrarian and tribal movements in Andhra during 1920-24."[12]

This revolt of the Andhra region was suppressed in a firm hand by the Colonialists. They did not hesitate to take cruel and severe steps against the *'Aranya Satyagrahis'* and very soon the flames of the revolt were dampened. This Adivasi revolt, which was aggravated in the Andhra region, had some common trends with the Thane revolt of Bombay. The environmental crisis poised almost a similar pattern; the stopping of shifting cultivation, cattle-rearing, collection of MFP etc show the forest Adivasis in both the regions suffered same kind of exploitation multiplied with age-long pathos and pain. In both fronts, people from lower brackets of society demanded justice, honesty and a minimum standard of living. From historical point of view, the Guntur Revolt of Andhra region was more closely linked up with Gandhi Movement of early 20s and in that way it had a tremendous impact in shaping the Nationalist Movement of India in the after years. But the novelty of the Thane Revolt was no less important – this revolt, which was fought in the late 19th century helped to develop amongst the poverty-stricken Adivasis a definite self-confidence which was a milestone for the future course of agitations engineered by the poor mass of India.

<div align="center">V</div>

Conclusion:

The famous social thinker Douglas Deal once said "The proletariat's existence heralds the development of capitalism in the countryside as some or most of the peasants lose their land to larger and more commercially inclined owners responding to national and international market forces. This process of proletarianisation has itself been one of the major causes of agrarian revolution in the modern world."[13] The above-mentioned agrarian revolts volunteered

<div align="center">32</div>

by the proletariats or the down-trodden people portray the same picture of merciless exploitation upon them by the rising capitalistic force focused by the imperialists.

In the opinion of Suresh Singh, "From about the second half of the 18th century, tribal agrarian order in many parts of the Indian sub-continent disintegrated under the pressure of the land hungry British aliens. The movement of non-tribal regions was accelerated by the establishment and consolidation of British administration in those areas. The tribals reacted to these developments through a series of uprisings, in a bid to throw out the intruders from their homeland."[14]

India had about one tenth of its population as of tribal origin and according to the latest Census, tribal constituted about 7.5% of the total population – the figures that give indication of the magnitude of the problem concerning the people. The gnawing discontent of these people had at times burst out into vigorous political movements and sometimes into open hostilities. It drew the attention of the politicians, administrators as well as scholars who began to think seriously since Independence as to the nature and root cause of the tribal in general, which however had different projections in different regions.[15] The study of tribal or Adivasi unrest has been a patent phenomenon in modern India, which has injected a new complicating element in the socio-economic history of India.

"On numerous occasions", as Madan C. Paul observes, "there were riots, revolts, uprisings etc against Colonial rule and its exploitative socio-economic networks. In almost all pockets of India, tribals were surging with resistance of this sort against the deprivation of their lands and forests."[16] Surface observation of this phenomenon may lead us to categorize them as 'scattered events or episodes' and not as movements. But these events of resistance by the tribal people were centered on the issues affecting their existence itself. In the opinion of Karl Marx, it is the awareness of the contradictions in the material condition of life which provide sufficient reason and impetus to fight it out. The tribals' reaction was due to hindrances to religious beliefs, economic interests, political freedom and social hierarchy.

The above-mentioned historical tales unravel how the Adivasi humiliation, frustration and poverty of South-West Bengal, Thane Region of Bombay and Guntur region of Andhra Pradesh for long years had provoked them to burst forth into devastating debacles against Colonial rule. In every sphere, it is found that when either the land scenario or the forest

33

scenario, which had given them food, shelter and clothing for ages had posed obstacles and the daily living of the tribals of the areas were at stake, they showed their displeasure and despair in violent forms of agitation. The Colonial overlords wanted to replenish their own coffer with the environmental riches of India in different pockets, but they made no solution to the problems which the aboriginals of these regions were facing due to this stubborn environmental crisis. The violence which the tribals showed through their uprisings were turned from individual to general hatred and from general to national repulsion against Colonial rule.

The tribals or the Adivasis, who were always looked down upon in society from the ancient ages, now learnt the art of coming out from a critical situation and this environmental crisis slowly imbued them to raise a challenge against oppressive Colonial rule in India. These uprisings, undoubtedly paved the path for the nationalistic upsurge in India. Though they were not intellectually polished, but the mass support and awareness of the lower brackets of society created a granite support to shape the Independence Movement in India, which was a greater struggle to free India from the shackles of 200 years' of alien rule in the Sub-Continent of India.

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34

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35

Swami Vivekananda's Philosophy of Universal Religion

Gargi Medda

ABSTRACT

One of the Swami Vivekananda's greatest contributions to mankind is 'Universal religion' – a new religious ideology. It is not a new religion with a new scripture, but it is a new approach to religion, a new spiritual temper. It not only enjoins tolerance, it urges acceptance of other religions as true there by making religions a principle of human unity. Universal religion is a discovery of universality in all religions excluding the particularities of creed, dogma, beliefs, rituals and convention of them (religions). A believer in universal religion has an enlightened understanding of and respect for all the religions without losing the sense of belonging to his own religion with its belief and practices. In his Chicago Addresses *in 1893 Swami Vivekananda gave importance on the validity and universality of all religions. He mentioned that every religion is able to create purity, sacredness and kindness in human mind. So, he accepted the validity of all religions. He appealed to all that everyman must keep up his oneness in the sphere of religion and accept all that is good in other religions. To him, a religion which is capable of giving satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect can be granted as universal religion.*

KEY WORDS: Universal Religion, religious ideology, Hinduism, Vedanta.

Introduction

Swami Vivekananda's contribution in the domain of religion was immeasurable. He rejuvenated Hinduism and Vedanta as his religion. He found that, in Hinduism, which was, to him the Advaita Vedanta Philosophy of religion, the approach to the highest truth was psychological. According to him, the different philosophies of Dualism, Qualified Monism and Monism represent the same truth from different angles according to the temperament and capacity of their aspirants. There is no contradiction among them. Each religion expresses

Gargi Medda, Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Raja N.L. Khan Women's College, Gope Palace, Midnapore, Paschim Medinipur, India. Mobile: 9475213863; Email: gargimedda13@gmail.com

the highest truth in its own way. Here we do not get the truth from error but from truth to truth. We reach higher truth from lower truth. So, there is no need for fanatical quarrel over religion. The harmony of all religions was the central theme of his teachings.

According to Swamiji, real religion is the realization of the Divine within by every soul. This divinity is latent within each one of us and the religious practices only bring it to our conscious level. When one has realized one's Divinity as a direct experience one has no fear of anything not even death itself. He must realise this divinity in his thought and selfless actions. Religion is not the matter of imagination; we must apply religion to our practical world and life.[1]

The great master, Sri Ramakrishna taught men to transcend the barriers of his own little self and to live for enlivening the life of others, knowing that all are but that one in many forms. The religious orientation and realization of Sri Ramakrishna found its finest expression in the life of Swami Vivekananda.

Like his master, Vivekananda also cherished the world-view based on Advaita Vedanta view of unity-in difference. As a Karma-Yogi, he did not stand for any abstract religion but for the religion of work with detachment or work for impersonal ends as the highest expression of the religious life.

Swami Vivekananda learnt from the life and saying of Sri Ramakrishna that true religion is universal religion. He got support of his master's teachings from the 11th verse of the 7th chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita "ye yatha mann prapadyante tamstathaira bhajamyaham/mama vartma-nuvartante manushyah partha sarvashah" (who ever comes to me, through whatever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me).[2]

In all his addresses and writings, Vivekananda aimed at the establishment of universal religion for the betterment of the universe as a whole. But Vivekananda made his surviving statements on the idea of universal religion in his first address at Chicago Parliament of Religion on 11th September, 1893 of the many statements we may remember only two for the present purpose:

   (a) "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance".

   (b) "We believe not only in universal tolerance but we accept all religions to be true".[3]

37

Though he was proud to belong to Hindu religion, he accepted all religions as true. This is his universalism of religions. So we see his address on Hinduism on 19th September 1893 at the same place he presented his idea of Universal religion. The one watch word for universal religion is acceptance. Acceptance is not just tolerance. Tolerance is negative in its import. It implies that something is being allowed in spite of its being wrong. Swamiji recommends positive acceptance.

Swamiji said, there have been many religions. They have been quarrelling among themselves, each religion claiming that it is superior. In spite of the conflicts the major religions have managed to survive.

The conflicts instead of weakening them have added vitality to them. The new thoughts arise only through that conflict. In a stagnant water there are no whirlpools. These are seen in a living running stream. In the same manner conflicts awaken new thoughts.[4]

'Universal Religion' as suggested by Swami Vivekananda, is not a new addition to the existing list of known religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hebraism, Hinduism, Islam, Laninism, Sikhism, Taoism and Zoroastrianism. It is neither a separate religion nor an alternative caption suggested for any particular religion. Normally one may expect that as a Hindu and religious preacher he has glorified his own religion by claiming it to be a universal religion. But it is clear that while talking about universal religion Swamiji's intention has not been concentrated in glorifying his own religion, rather the emphasis seems to have been concentrated the universality aspect of any religion so that bad effects of the religiosities can be avoided.

As we have learnt that universal religion is not a new religion, it is important to make it more specific, what is meant by universal religion. Here it can be pointed out that something can be treated to be universal when it keeps its gate open to every individual one might born from parents of a particular religion but he must have the choice to adopt any one. The choice of the individual is of prime importance. It is the mark of universality. Further a religion if capable of giving satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect can be treated to be universal. The religion should appear reasonable to the people of other religious sects in order to be universal. When we shall throw away the narrow out-looks, non-humanitarian considerations from the religions, they all will become universal by nature. So, every religion is potentially a universal religion.

38

According to Swamiji, diversity or plurality is a fact of life. Truth maybe expressed in a hundred, thousand ways and each of these ways is true. The same thing can be viewed from a hundred different stand points and yet be the same thing. If one man belonging to one religion does not think of himself superior to other men belonging to other religions, then the diversity of religion will not lead to any conflict. Religion never contradicts with one another. They are really supplementary. All religions are directed towards the same good through different paths. So harmony should be the basic feature of religions. Suppose a man is undertaking a journey towards the sun and as he advances he takes a photograph of the sun at every stage. When he comes back, he has many photographs of the sun which he places before us. We see that not two are alike but we cannot deny all these photographs of the same sun. Because these photographs are real photographs of the same sun.[5]

Swamiji said, truth may be expressed in a hundred ways and that each of these ways is true. Suppose we all go with vessels in our hands to fetch water from a lake. One has a cup, another jar, another a bucket, and so forth, and we all fill our vessels. The water in each case naturally takes the form of the vessel carried by each one of us. The goal of all religions is also the same in essence. The goal of all religions and all mankind is re-union with God or with the divinity which is every man's true nature.[6]

Harmony is the keynote of Swamiji's religious teachings. He explores that amidst the chaos there is a note of concord and he who is prepared to listen it will catch the tone. By harmony Swamiji meant unity and not uniformity. Harmony cannot be obtained by a combination of different views about God. We cannot make all conform to the same ideas. If we all thought alike we would be like Egyptian mummies in a museum looking vacantly at one another's faces. When religions are dead, there will be no more sects; it will be the perfect peace and harmony of the grave. But in reality, sects and variation of thought is the sign of life and it must be there. So, one of the natural characteristics of the universal religion is based on universal toleration. The universal sympathy humanizes one sect of religious activity with the other in spite of their internal and external conflicts. It adds vitality to them and enables them to expand and to live.

By Universal Religion he did not mean any one Universal philosophy or any one universal mythology or any one universal ritual held alike by all. Because he knew that this world must go on working wheel within wheel, this intricate mass of machinery, most complex, most wonderful. We can only make it run smoothly, we can lessen the friction, and we can

39

grease the wheels as it were. We must recognize the natural necessity of variation. Variety is the first principle of life. Perfect balance would be our destruction. The unity of sameness can come only when this universe is destroyed otherwise such a thing is impossible.

From his spiritual point of view Sri Ramakrishna realized that there is no existence of more than one religion. Only the one infinite religion exists. This religion expresses itself through different forms in the different countries i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism in India, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam is western countries, Taoism, Confucianism of China, and Shintoism of Japan. So, we must respect all religions. We must try to accept all of them. This establishes the philosophy of universal religion.[7]

Vivekananda's universalism is essentially a creative religious tolerance which accepts all religions. Vivekananda's ideal of universal religion does not mean a universal church and a universal scripture. He never thought that Hinduism had achieved the universality. But he thought that it had the potentiality to mature into such a broad and catholic faith. He looked upon religion as a growing, dynamic spirit, unfettered by any sectarian injunction. This capacity to expand gives a religion its universality and makes it friendly to other religions. Religions must be inclusive, and not to look down with contempt upon one another, because their particular ideals of God are different. So 'Religion' for Vivekananda is synonymous with 'universalism' of the spirit.[8]

Religion is universal. Individual religion is particular. Universal includes particular. In other words, particular exists in universal. Vivekananda realized truth of universal religion and truth ultimately lead to man's spiritual life. He practiced both Christianity and Islam without renouncing his ancestral faith. Individual religion varies one form of expression to other form of expression. But universal religion co-ordinates or unites varied sects of religion and declares that the philosophy of universal religion is based on the philosophy of humanism. It is above the identity-in and through difference.

Universal religion must open its gates, to every individual. It must admit that nobody is born with this or that religion, whether he takes to one religion or the other must ultimately be left to his inner likes and choice. In this sense by individualizing religion we really universalize it.

The universal religion must honour to every religious sect. A really universal religion must be able to give satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect. So, universal religion has a

40

broader perspective. One religion should pay due honour to other religion. That is good. But, better is to harmonize one religion with other through spiritual interaction. Vivekananda believed in a plurality of religions. Humanity, sympathy, tolerance and other related terms are the distinguished religious segments for catering the universal religion.

Universal religion would consist in various ways of approach to the religious objects. It gives perfect liberty to the individual in this regard. Religion comes out of life. It can never be divorced from it. The purpose of life is to realize God. That is to say, religion is based on realization. It cannot be hypothetical in outlook. One cannot prove it in a laboratory. So, Vivekananda wanted to establish a unity of religion. Good God is the ultimate unity of the universe. Realization of this unity is God. This may be said to represent the ideal of Universal Religion.

Universal Religion is a search for power to overcome the evil side of life even more than its concern for understanding what life as its centre or depth means. Religion has an element of feeling with its rich overtones. It is all pervading. It is all comprehensive. It pleads for unity of humanity. It makes a happy harmony between religion and religion. It needs universal service. It is a human activity. It believes the fundamental of all living faiths. Universal religion is basis for universal peace and co-existence. It brings up a sense of socio-cultural relation in the world; and keeps the humanitarian service for living and leading a peaceful co-existence in the human society of the world.

Swamiji has also a practical plan of realizing harmony of religions. According to him, in first place he would ask mankind to recognise this maxim that do not destroy humanity and secondly take man where he stands and from there give him a lift. All religions are directed towards the same goal along different paths. He uses the metaphor of different radii leading to the same centre. And at the centre, where all radii meet, all the differences will cease. Each of us is naturally growing and developing according to his own nature, each will in time come to know the highest truth. Your duty is to afford opportunities and to remove obstacles and there your duty ends. Each man's master is his own soul. Each has to learn for himself. Each has to make himself. Therefore help, if you can, but do not destroy.[9]

One common element of the universal religion is God. There is a unity in all things. We see man and woman are different but they are human beings. Different religious talk of different aspects of truth still they are one. Truth is God. Every religion is struggling towards the realization of the ultimate unity or God. This is the ideal of the universal Religion.

41

A religion is universal religion when it is universally accepted by all. It is above the caste, creed, sex and nationality. The universal religion must open its gates to every individual. It must honour to every religious sect. It gives satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect. So, universal religion has a broader perspective. One religion should pay due honour to other religion.

Swamiji, wants to establish a religion that will be equally acceptable to all minds. It must be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic and equally conducive to action. This combination will be the ideal of the nearest approach to a universal religion to become harmoniously balanced in all these four directions in his ideal of religion. And this religion is attained by Yoga or union with God. 'Yoga' means "Yoke" to join, that is, to join the soul of man with the supreme soul or God. Swamiji wanted a total development of all the four Yogas. Hence he advocated a combination of all the four Yogas. To the worker it is union between the men and the whole of unity. To the mystic, it is union between his lover and higher self. To the lover, it is union between himself and the God of love. To the philosopher, it is the union of all existence.

The ultimate goal of each Yoga is the same that is realization of the supreme self. Each of four Yogas represents the development of one particular mental faculty that is reason, emotion or will. The spiritual practices prescribed by these Yogas build up character.

Universal religion is a discovery of universality in all religion. Swamiji thinks of the possibility of bringing together all religions of the world under one umbrella. The dream of Vivekananda was to propagate a universal religion based on the spiritual synthesis. The aim of the universal religion of Swami Vivekananda is to glorify the universe with peace and harmony by overcoming the apparent contradictions and fictitious differences among the different religious faiths.

The main aim of Universal Religion is just to teach us the knowledge of the divinity of the soul, the non-duality of God-head, the unity of existence and one greater thing, that is, universality or harmony of all different religions. "All religions are true". The important thing is to reach to roof. One can reach it by stone stairs. One can reach it by wooden stairs. One can reach it by bamboo steps. One can reach it by a rope. One can also climb up by a bamboo pole. It depends upon one's sincerity and earnestness of faith on God. It is God alone who is called 'Satchidananda Brahma' in the Vedas, 'Satchidananda Krishna' in the Puranas, and

42

'Satchidananda Shiva' in the Tantras. It is one and the same Satchidananda. One can realize it after a long period of earnest quest. Where it comes, it shakes the very foundation of the personality of the seeker. It is like a huge elephant entering a small hut. The house shakes to its foundation. Perhaps it falls to pieces. It is the question of state of realization. The state of Brahman – realization is not Philosophy. It is a matter of spiritual attainment.

Vivekananda is an Advaitavadin. His philosophy of Universal Religion teaches us that to love God and realized the Ever-living God and feel that "All are one" is the true spiritual mark of understanding religion. It regulates the human life. If there is no inner life there is no religion either. Religion is a matter of the inner life. Religion intervenes human conduct. One should not make any distinction between a Bihari, Bengali and Kualite, Pratestants and Catholics. He should realize his oneness with other followers of various other religions. All distinctions differences and dualism will be blotted out. Man cannot live without religion. It is rational and very deeply intellectual. This is all about what Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of Universal Religion. It has great socio-philosophic relevance to built up the world peace in the modern times. In other words, religion will be prominent enough to guide the scientific world.

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National Health Service in England: What can we learn from history?

Alak Pal

ABSTRACT

National Health Service in England is a centralized, publicly financed system which provides cradle-to-grave care for all citizens, free at point of delivery. It has been subjected to many reforms, not all of which have been successful. The experience of the NHS in the area of cost containment is fairly clear. New radical health reforms promise to reduce bureaucracy, improving efficiency and quality of care, providing more choice for patients. The NHS is far from perfect but important and relevant lessons could and should be learnt from it.

KEY WORDS: NHS, History

Background

On 5th July 1948, Sylvia Beckingham was admitted to Park hospital in Manchester (today known as Trafford General Hospital) to be treated for a liver condition. Doubtless this was a big event in her life; but it was an even bigger event in British history. Sylvia, 13, was the first patient to be treated on the NHS.

When it was launched by the then minister of health, Aneurin Bevan, it was based on three core principles: that it meet the needs of everyone, that it be free at the point of delivery and that it be based on clinical need, not ability to pay. Since its launch, the NHS has grown to become the world's largest publicly funded health service. It is also one of the most efficient and most comprehensive.

With the exception of some charges, such as prescriptions, optical services and dental treatments, the NHS in England remains free at the point of use for all UK residents. This currently stands at more than 64 million people in the UK and 54 million people in England alone.

Dr. Alak Pal, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, North West London NHS Trust, United Kingdom

The NHS in England deals with over 1 million patients every 36 hours. It covers everything, including antenatal screening, treatments for chronic conditions, transplants, emergency treatment and end-of-life care.

Health services before the NHS

Before the establishment of the NHS in 1948, the provision of health care was inextricably bound up with religion and controlling the poor. What is clear that capitalism has never been able to pro-vide health care for working people and they have been forced to rely on charity and philanthropy?

Much of the early care for people who were ill was provided by religious communities where care was provided by monks and nuns attached to monasteries.

Scale

The NHS employs more than 1.5 million people, putting it in the top five of the world's largest work-forces, together with the US Department of Defence, McDonalds, Walmart and the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Funding

Funding for the NHS comes directly from taxation. When the NHS was launched in 1948, it had a budget of £437 million (roughly 15 billion in today's value). For 2015/16, the overall NHS budget was around £116.4 billion.

Early years 1948-1969

The original structure of the NHS in England had three aspects.

Hospital services: 14 Regional Hospital Boards were created to administer the majority hospital services.

Primary Care: General Practitioners (GPs) were independent contractors. Dentists, opticians and pharmacists also generally provided services as independent contractors.

Community services: Maternity and Child welfare clinics, health visitors, midwives, vaccination and ambulance services were the responsibility of local authorities.

1952 – Charges of one shilling (5 pence) was introduced for prescriptions and a flat rate of

45

one pound for ordinary dental treatment was also brought in on June 1 1952. Prescription charges are abolished in 1965 and remain free until June 1968, when the charges were reintroduced.

1953 - DNA structure revealed.

On April 25, James D Watson and Francis Crick from Cambridge University described the structure of a chemical called deoxyribonucleic acid in Nature magazine. DNA is the material that makes up genes, which pass hereditary characteristics from parent to child. Knowing the structure of DNA allowed the study of diseases caused by defective genes.

1954 - Smoking and cancer link established

In the 1940s, the British scientist Sir Richard Doll begins research into lung cancer after incidences of the disease rise alarmingly. He studied lung cancer patients in 20 London hospitals and expected to reveal that the cause was fumes from coal fires, car fumes or tarmac. However his findings surprised him and he published his study in the British Medical Journal, warning that smokers were far more likely than non-smokers to die of lung cancer. Doll gave up smoking two-thirds of the way through his study and lived to be 92.

1958- Polio and Diptheria vaccinations programme introduced

One of the primary aims of the NHS is to promote good health, not simply to treat illness. The introduction of the polio and diphtheria vaccine is a key part of NHS plans. Before this programme, cases of polio could climb as high as 8000 with cases of diphtheria as high as 70,000, leading to 5000 deaths.

THE NHS in the 1960s

1960- First UK kidney transplant

The first UK kidney transplant takes place at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on October 30, 1960 and involved an identical set of 49-year-old twins. The procedure was a success with both the donor and recipient living for a further six years before dying of an unrelated illness.

1961- The contraceptive pill was made widely available.

The launch of the contraceptive pill played a major role in women's liberation and contributed to the sexual freedom of the so called Swinging Sixties. Initially it was available to married

46

women, but the law was relaxed in 1967. Between 1962 and 1969, the number of women taking pill rises dramatically approximately 50,000 to 1 million.

1962- First full hip replacement was carried out by Professor John Charnely.

Charnley began to devote his energies to developing full hip replacements from 1958. He asked his patients if they minded giving back the hip post-mortem. Apparently, 99% of them agreed, so his team would regularly collect the replacement hips to check wear and tear, and aid research. He improved his design, with a low friction hip replacement and in November 1962, the modified Charnley hip replacement became a practical reality.

1967- The Abortion act

It made abortion legal up to 28 weeks if carried out by a registered physician and if two other doctors agree that the termination is in the best mental and physical interests of the woman. In 1990, the time limit is lowered to 24 weeks. The act does not extend to Northern Ireland.

The NHS in the 1970s

1968 - Britain's first heart transplant

South Africa-born surgeon Donald Ross carried out Britain's first heart transplant at the National Heart Hospital in Marylebone, on May 3 1968. Ross led a team of 18 doctors and nurses to operate on the unnamed 45 year old in the seven hour procedure. The patient died after 46 days from an associated infection and only six transplants were carried out over the next 10 years for fear of failure.

1972- Computerized tomography (CT) scans revolutionized the way doctors examine the body.

CT scanners produce three-dimensional images from a large series of two-dimensional X-rays.

The first CT scanner was dreamt up in England in 1967 by Godfrey Newbold Hounsfield, becoming a reality in 1972.

He won Nobel Prize for his concept alongside the American Allan McLeod Cormack, who developed the same idea across the Atlantic.

47

Since then CT scanners have developed enormously, but the principle remains the same.

1978- The world's first baby was born as a result of in vitro fertilisation (IVF)

Louise Brown, the world's first test-tube baby was born on July 25 1978. Her parents Lesley and John Brown failed to conceive because of her mother's blocked fallopian tubes.

Dr Patrick Steptoe, a gynaecologist at Oldham General hospital and Dr Robert Edwards, a physiologist at Cambridge University, developed a new technique to fertilise an egg outside a woman's body before replacing it in the womb. More than a million children worldwide will go on to be conceived in this way.

1979- The first successful bone marrow transplant on a child took place.

Professor Roland Levinsky performed the UK's first successful bone marrow transplant on a child with primary immunodeficiency at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children.

The NHS in the 1980s

1980s - Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans introduced.

MRI scanners proved more effective than earlier equipment in providing information about soft tissues such as the brain. MRI provides very detailed pictures, so it is particularly useful for finding tumours in the brain. It can also identify conditions such as multiple sclerosis and the extent of damage after a stroke.

1980s - Keyhole surgery

Keyhole is used for the first time in an operation to remove a gall-bladder. The technical name for it is laparoscopic surgery, after the instrument that is used to perform the surgery. The procedure will go on to be one of the most common uses of all kind of surgeries.

1986 - First AIDS health campaign

After a number of high-profile deaths, the AIDS advertising campaign set out to shock, using images of tombstones and icebergs. It was followed early in 1987 by a household leaflet carrying the slogan "Don't die of ignorance ".

This campaign was in line with the original NHS intention to improve health and prevent disease, as well as offer treatment.

48

1987- World's first heart, lung and liver transplant

Professor Sir Roy Calne and Professor John Wallwork carried out the world's first liver, heart and lung transplant at Papworth Hospital in Cambridge. The patient survived for a further 10 years after the procedure. Her healthy heart was donated to another transplant patient.

1988 - Breast screening introduced

Mammogram was started in women over the age of 50 to reduce breast cancer deaths. A mammogram works by taking an X-ray of each breast. These X-rays show changes in tissue that might otherwise be undetectable. This means that any abnormalities show up as early as possible, making treatment more effective.

Together with drug therapies, including tamoxifen and herceptin, screening will help reduce the number of breast cancer deaths by more than 20%, a trend that looks set to continue.

The NHS in the 1990s

1990 - NHS community Care Act

Health authorities will manage their own budgets and buy health care from hospitals and other health organisations. In order to be deemed a provider of such health care, organisations will become NHS trusts - independent organisations with their own managements.

1991 - First 57 NHS trusts established.

New NHS trusts will aim to encourage creativity and innovation and challenge the domination of the hospitals within a health service increasingly focused on services in the community.

1994 - NHS Organ Donor Register was set up

The NHS Organ Donor Register was launched in October 1994, following a long campaign by John and Rosemary Cox from the West Midlands. In 1989 their 24-year-old son Peter died of a brain tumour. He had asked for his organs to be used to help others. The coxes said that there should be a register for people who wish to donate their organs.

1998 - NHS Direct launched

This service will go on to become one of the largest single e-health services in the world handling more than half a million calls each month. It is the start of a growing range of convenient alternatives to traditional GP services including the launch of NHS walk-in centres.

49

The NHS in the 2000s - The new millennium

2000 - NHS walk-in-centres were introduced. You do not need an appointment or to be registered to visit a walk-in-centre. Most centres are open every day of the year and are situated in convenient locations, giving patients access to services outside regular office hours.

2002 - The four hour target to ensure that no patient spends more than four hours in accident and emergency department from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge is set in the NHS Plan in 2000.

2006 - NHS bowel cancer screening launched

Today, all men and women aged 60-74 are invited to carry out a faecal occult blood test at home. An additional one-off test called bowel scope screening is gradually introduced from March 2015.

2007 - Smoking was banned in restaurants, pubs and other public places in England.

2008 - A national programme to vaccinate girls aged 12-13 against human papilloma virus (HPV) was launched to help prevent cervical cancer. There is also a three year catch-up campaign that will offer the HPV vaccine (also known as the cervical cancer jab) to 13 to 18 year old girls.

The NHS in the 2010s

The NHS is undergoing major changes in its core structure, including who makes decisions about NHS services, service commissioning and the way money is spent. so far, the 2010s have seen great medical breakthroughs and health innovations, the NHS was celebrated at the London 2012 Olympic Games and marked its 65t anniversary on July 5, 2013.

Then and now: Advancement

Life expectancy

In 1948 the life expectancy for men was 66 and for women, 71. Today those figures are 79.1 and 82.8.

Deaths

Over the past 70 years the proportion of all deaths caused by cancer has risen, from 16.9

50

to 28 percent. Those caused by heart disease have fallen from 35.4 to 26 percent ; but stroke have fallen from 11.5 to 7 percent; by bronchitis and other respiratory diseases have fallen from 10.4 to 0.7 percent ; and from tuberculosis have fallen from 4.7 to 0.7 percent.

Childbirth

When the NHS was born, there were 34.5 perinatal deaths for every 1000 live births. Today they are just 2.8.

Vaccinations

The average child in 1948 would receive just two routine vaccinations, smallpox and diphtheria. By 2008 that list had grown to seven, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough, influenza, MMR and meningitis C.

Smoking

In 1948, 65 percent of Britain's male population smoked. By 2016, the number had dropped to just 20 percent. Among women, the figure has fallen from 41 to 17 percent.

Budget on Drugs

In 1948 £31.7 million was allocated to spend on drugs. Today that figure tops £11 billion.

Cost per head

In 1948 the annual cost of the NHS per head, per lifetime was was £200. Now that figure has risen by more than 800 percent to £1700.

Patients

The NHS now sees and treats more patients than ever before. Last year, on an average day, 50,000 people were seen in Accident and Emergency department alone.

Prescriptions

In 1948, prescriptions were free. Today they cost £8.40 per item.

Staff

The NHS was launched with a total hospital staff of 68,013, not including doctors. Now NHS as a whole employs more than 376,370 nurses and thousand more doctors, healthcare

51

assistants and ancillary staff.

General Practitioners (GPs)

In 1950 there were approximately 21,450 GPs in Britain. By last year that number had grown to 33,360.

What are the main challenges facing the NHS

Some of the key challenges currently facing the NHS are :

- An ageing population

- A growing population

- Evolving healthcare needs, such as the increase in cases of obesity and diabetes, orantibiotic resistance.

- Medical advancements save lots of lives every year, but push up costs considerably. It isestimated that progress in medical technology costs the NHS at least an extra £10 billion a year.

- Closure of local services due to centralisation drives.

- An increase in reliance on privatised services.

Lessons learnt

Almost 68 years after its creation, the NHS's founding principles remains intact: it continues to be funded from general taxation and free at the point of use.

NHS tax funding has meant that health matters are far more sensitive in the UK than in insurance-based countries. Politicians have tried to find solutions to the problems of health care delivery in relentless reorganisations of the service or in the establishment of central targets.

The original NHS was a doctor-dominated service and negotiations between GPs and the government continue to take centre stage, as seen in the recent rise in GP pay and the conflict over surgery opening time.

A system such as the NHS depends on queuing (waiting lists) for access of care, as

52

well as postponing, or simply not providing, certain services. The NHS devotes considerable resources to high-return services as prenatal and infant care.

To the populations served and to the larger public concerned with equitable provision of care, the universal nature of the service is beneficial. New radical health reforms promise to reduce bureaucracy, improving efficiency and quality of care, providing more choices for patients. The NHS is far from perfect but the UK health care system is not the evil being painted by some opponents of U.S. healthcare reform. Important and relevant lessons could and should be learnt from it.

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53

Problem Based Learning (PBL) in Medical Education

Victor Palit

ABSTRACT

Since 1969 PBL (Problem Based Learning) has grown in popularity for teaching students especially Medical students across the globe. It uses problem based scenarios to improve critical thinking and involves four components – Inference, Recognition, Deduction & Interpretation. Contents can vary from basic sciences to clinical scenarios. PBL by definition is a problem solving, rather than information gathering & empowers the students with their own learning process. Curriculum design involves a skilful blend of various educational strategies including PBL designed to help students achieve the curriculum outcomes

KEY WORDS: PBL, education, spices

Introduction:

Since its adoption at McMaster University, Canada, in 1969, problem based learning has grown in popularity. PBL starts with problem scenarios which stimulate student learning. In a student-centred problem-based curriculum, students learn by actively solving problems rather than by passively absorbing information. In so doing, students arrive at general principles and concepts which they can generalise to other situations.[1]

Framework of the PBL course:

Needs in relation to the product of the training programme-

Despite the spread of PBL, there is continuing confusion about whether it can effectively replace the conventional curriculum. By contrast, virtually everyone in higher education is familiar with subject-based learning. The shift to specifying vocational and professional education in terms of the outcomes and competences expected of the graduate has led to a wider use of problem-based teaching and learning in higher education, including the health

Dr. Victor Palit, Consultant Urological Surgeon, University Hospital of North Tees & Hartlepool, United Kingdom

professions. Essentially, students are not treated as empty vessels that need filling. In a student-centred problem-based curriculum, students learn by actively solving problems rather than by passively absorbing information. The PBL uses a problem as the starting point for student learning. New medical schools throughout the world have adopted PBL as the educational and philosophical basis of their curricula and traditional schools have included it within their portfolio of teaching methods or have converted their undergraduate programmes to PBL.

Aims and objectives-

Primary goal of PBL is integration and synthesis of knowledge, skills and attitude into effective critical thinking. Components of critical thinking, in the context of PBL, can be outlined as follows-

- Inference (discriminating among degree of truth or falsity of inferences drawn from a data)
- Recognition of assumptions (recognising assumptions not overtly stated in given statements)
- Deduction (determining whether certain conclusions necessarily follow from the information)
- Interpretation (weighing evidence and deciding whether generalisation, based on the given data, are warranted)
- Evaluation of arguments (distinguishing between 'relevant and strong' and 'irrelevant and weak' arguments).

In all stages of PBL, clear objectives must be defined and understood by all concerned.

Inclusion of contents-

Contents can vary from basic sciences to clinical thematic block. For example, PBL may contain items ranging from sepsis, anaemia, wound healing etc., to abdominal pain, alteration of bowel habit, loss of weight etc.

Contents should be relevant to the stage of learning, and can be set in conjunction with needs of students. Such flexibility has allowed PBL to be 'fun', compared to traditional teaching.

55

Organisation of contents-

In traditional medical education, basic sciences provide a foundation for the study of medical disciplines, followed finally, by disordered function of the body.

PBL allows work back from disordered function, explaining it in terms of deviation from the normal. Different steps involved in achieving such a 'reverse' learning is given below-

Process	Outcome
1. Interpret situation	• Definition of terms and clarification of meaning·
	• Recognition of key features·
	• Situation is described by learners in their language
2. Generate explanation	• Product of existing relevant knowledge
	• Presented by group members
3. Define problems	• Statement by learners of the problem that the group decide to take on board
4. Identify a strategy for the enquiry	• Identification of the additional information and understanding needed
5. Decide a strategy for the enquiry	• A plan which details how answers to questions will be sought

The enquiry

6. Pool and test new knowledge	• Individual knowledge contributions integrated· Conceptions and misconceptions resolved
7. Reflect on adequacy of answers	• Learning gain of content
	• Recognition of when a return to step 4 is needed
8. Reflect on the group	• Learning gain (of process)

Educational strategies that should be adopted -

Educational strategies relevant to PBL, in light of SPICES model, are described below[3]-

i)   Student-centred / teacher-centred

56

PBL is student centred. Students are actively involved in the learning process, such as, active processing of information, activation of prior knowledge, meaningful context, opportunities for elaboration or organisation of knowledge etc.

However, teachers do play important roles in carrying out PBL, as outlined below-

a) Task function- setting task, explaining, suggesting, discussing, pulling ideas together, diagnosing issues preventing progress, ensuring progress made by all members, questioning unclear contributions, summarising outcomes

b) Maintenance function- encouraging contributors, preventing domination, helping to ensure clarity, listening, building up trust between members, commenting on how the group is working, relieving tension and conflict, being available to individual members.

ii) Problem-solving / information-gathering

PBL, by definition, is problem solving, rather than information gathering. Problem acts as a stimulus in further learning. However, once the problems are identified, students may need to gather information (from appropriate sources) in order to make progress.

iii) Integrated (multidisciplinary) / speciality (discipline based).

PBL encourages integrated (or multidisciplinary), rather than speciality (or discipline based) approach. Questions raised by particular problem may need input from various disciplines.

iv) Community-based / hospital-based

PBL can be either community or hospital-based.

v) Elective / standard

PBL encourages an elective, than standard approach. Students define unknown terms and concepts, identify the problems and relevant facts, generate hypothesis of causes and mechanisms, rank hypothesis, test hypothesis by using current as well as new data and knowledge, re-rank hypothesis and manage problems. It is up to students which aspects of the problem they wish to focus on.

vi) Systemic (planned) / apprenticeship (opportunistic)

57

PBL follows the systemic approach as it plans the teaching and learning framework. However what experience exactly the students are going to have depends entirely on them, which is a reflection of apprenticeship. Therefore, PBL stands somewhat in between these two approaches.

Teaching method to be used-

Teaching methods used can be variable and may include, newspaper clipping, study guide, audiotape trigger, videotape, textbook, lecture, computer-based materials, clinical sessions, etc. A tutor or facilitator's role is to provide appropriate supportive resource materials. Other students in the group, by virtue of PBL framework, can also facilitate the teaching method.

PBL requires an equality and uniformity in approach. Therefore, the chairs are set in a circle, allowing students to face each other, providing a balanced layout.

Assessment process-

Assessment should be designed to test the individual student's ability to fulfil the curriculum outcomes or objectives

The factors important for assessment can be outlined as follows-

- Reliability, validity and feasibility of the procedure
- Tutor-student relationship
- Tutors having understanding of PBL, knowledge of course and curriculum, personal qualities and expertise in content area, are in a good position in assessing students.

Communication of details of the curriculum-

The details of curriculum should be communicated to learners as well as teachers in advance. This can be done through syllabi, timetable or other methods (e.g., intranet). This course under consideration may be communicated via intranet, allowing easy and distant access.

Fostering of educational environment or climate-

PBL encourages environment of co-operation, participation and probity. In order to maintain the environment, it is important that teachers identify individual student's educational difficulties, ensure that all students are involved in PBL, modulate the challenge and manage group dynamics effectively.

58

Students also have the responsibility in maintaining the environment. They should ask- what is going on? What does the finding mean? Do I have all the facts? Do I have the complete picture? Have I faced something similar in past? Have I considered all the possibilities? What knowledge do I already have that can be used? What more do I need to know? Am I right? They should ask themselves and others.

Management of the process-

Local infrastructure dictates the exact framework of management. For example, this course can be conveniently administered by a course committee, under the auspices of the undergraduate medical education committee.

Comments:

Problem-based learning allows reversal of traditional teaching, namely, principles first and examples next. PBL features as one of the educational strategies, as described in SPICES model. In the case of PBL, the extremes are problem-based learning and information-oriented learning. It is helpful for an educator to recognise the location of the current educational strategy in SPICES continuum.[3] The continuum is based not on quantitative differences or the proportion of curriculum time devoted to PBL, but on qualitative differences that occur as one moves along the spectrum between information gathering approach at one end of the SPICES spectrum to problem solving at the other end.

Curriculum design involves a skilful blend of educational strategies designed to help students achieve the curriculum outcomes. PBL may make a valuable contribution to this blend but attention needs to be paid to its appropriate implementation.

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59

Influence of Menstrual Cycle Phases on Health Related Physical Fitness Components of Players

Iti Chakraborty

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to compare Health Related Physical Fitness Components of Cardio-respiratory endurance, Muscular Strength, Muscular Endurance, Flexibility and Body Composition among Menstruation Cycle Phases. The subjects Menstrual Cycles were counted form the first day of menstrual flow and divided into four phases, namely phase A (Menstrual phase – data collected on 3rd day), phase B (Follicular phase – data collected on 9th day), phase C (Ovulation phase – data collected on 14th day) and phase D (Luteal phase – data collected on 25th day). Fifteen subjects were selected randomly from Basketball and Volleyball games. One way repeated measure of ANOVA was employed and result of the study proved that there were significant differences between different menstrual phases among players in the selected health related physical fitness variables Cardio respiratory endurance, Muscular Strength and Muscular Endurance. However there was no significant difference in health related physical fitness variables, Flexibility and Body Composition.

KEY WORDS: Universal Religion

Introduction:

Women have certain physiological and anatomical differences, which may affect their performance in sports when compared with men. Many factors were different between men and women such as body build, body composition, strength, endurance, motor ability etc. The main factor is menstruation. The menstrual cycle is a recurring cycle of physiological changes that occurs in the females. The average length of the menstrual cycle is 28 days.

Iti Chakraborty, Whole Time Contractual Teacher, Dept. of Physical Education, Raja Narendralal Khan Women's College, Midnapore, West Bengal.

The length of the menstrual cycle is calculated from the first day of the period to the day before the next period begins. The menstrual cycle may be divided into several phases and the length of each phase varies from women to woman and cycle to cycle. The research scholar in the present study has made an influence of menstrual cycle phases on health related physical fitness components of players.

Menstrual Cycle and Length of Phases

Name of the Phases	Days
Menstrual Phase	1 to 4
Follicular Phase	5 to 13
Ovulation Phase	14
Luteal Phase	15 to 28

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences in Health Related Physical fitness components, namely Cardio respiratory endurance, Muscular Strength, Muscular Endurance, Flexibility and Body Composition during Menstrual Cycle Phases.

Methodology

Fifteen basketball and volleyball players were selected as subject form Bolpur Town club, Bolpur Santiniketan, West Bengal. The age of the subjects ranged between 18-22 years.

Assessment of Health Related Physical Fitness

To test the Health Related Physical Fitness of the subjects, the standard tests were used. The administration of each item is described below.

a) **Three minutes Step-Up Test:** The purpose of this test was to measure aerobic capacity, Cardio respiratory endurance in mass testing situation. A twelve inches high bench, stopwatch and stethoscope were used to conduct this test. The subject steps, up, up down, down were explained by researcher before the performance. The subject listens to the instructions to become familiar with the instruction and begins when ready and the time started. These continue for 3 min. Every minute there were alert by tester. After the final step down, the subject allowed sitting down and immediately the heart

61

rate was counted for 15 sec. Timing of 15 sec was converted into 1 min. One minute heart rate was the score of the test.

b) **Push-Up Test:** The purpose of this test was to measure the strength of the upper body. Gymnastic mats were used to conduct this test. The subject took prone lying position on the ground with the hands under the shoulders and fingers stretched, legs straight and parallel with comfortably apart and the toes tucked under the feet. On the command 'go' the subject performed push ups with arms and extended it completely. Then the subject lowered her body using the arms until it come to 90 degree angle and upper arms were parallel to the ground. The action was repeated as many times as possible. Total number of correct push-ups was recorded as the score of the test.

c) **Sit-Ups Test:** The purpose of this test was to measure the abdominal endurance. Gymanstics mats were used to conduct this test. The subject took supine lying position with bent knees; feet flat about 18 inches from the buttocks and the hands touching the side of the head. A partner hold the subject feet as the exercises performed. The subject touched the elbow to the alternate knee with the each sit-up. The subject performs as many sit-ups in one minute as possible. The number of correct repetitions in one minute was recorded as the score.

d) **Sit and Reach Test:** The purpose of the test was to measure the trunk flexibility. Yardstick and measuring steel tape were used to conduct the test. Place the yardstick on the floor and put an 18 inch piece of tape across the 15 inch mark on the. The tape should secure the yardstick to the floor. The subject sits with the 0 end of the yardstick between the legs. The subject heel should almost touch the tape at the 15 inch mark and 12 inch apart with the legs held straight. The subject bends forward slowly and reaches with parallel hand as far as possible and touches the yardstick. The best of three score was treated as final score.

e) **Percent Body Fat Test:** The purpose of the test was to measure the subject's percent body fat. Skin fold caliper was used to conduct the test. Skin fold measurement of three sites of the body was taken- the triceps muscles. The second one was the medial regions side of the navel part. And the third one was the suprailium. All were taken in the relaxed condition. Each skin fold was measured three times and the medium value was recorded

62

as the score. The fat percentage was calculated by applying the formula :

$$\% \text{ Fat} = 0.41563 \text{ X (sum of 3 sites)} - 0.00112 \text{ X (sum of 3 sites) 2}$$

$$+ 0.36661 \text{ X (age)} + 4.03653$$

Menstrual Phases

It the following four phases, test was conducted during middle period, which is given in Table II

Phases	Name of the Phases	Day	Testing Period
A	Menstrual Phase	1 to 4	3rd day
B	Follicular Phase	5 to 13	9th day
C	Ovulation Phase	14	14th day
D	Luteal Phase	15 to 28	21st day

Statistical Procedure

To analyze the data, repeated measure of ANOVA was computed. Scheffe's post hoc test was used to analyze the paired means significant difference.

Discussion

Regarding Cardio respiratory endurance

The result proved that there was significant differences existed between selected menstruation cycle phases on health related physical fitness and Cardio respiratory endurance. The post hoc analysis showed that there was a significant difference noted between phases menstruation and ovulation, and lutual, while other comparisons were not significant.

Regarding Muscular Strength

The results proved that there was significant differences existed between selected menstruation cycle phases on health related physical fitness and muscular endurance. The post hoc analysis showed that there were significant differences noted between menstruation and follicular, menstruation and ovulation and menstruation and lutual, while other comparisons were not significant.

63

Regarding flexibility and Body composition

The result proved that there was no significant differences existed between selected menstruation cycle phases on health related physical fitness-Flexibility and Body Composition.

Conclusion

1. There was significantly improvement of Cardio respiratory endurance is noticed during ovulation phase o menstruation cycle in comparison to the other phases.

2. On the other hand, significantly improvement of Muscular strength is noticed during lutual phase of menstruation cycle in comparison to the other phases.

3. There were significantly improvement of Muscular Endurance is noticed during follicular, ovulation and lutual phases of menstruation cycle in comparison to the other phase.

4. Lastly no significant improvement of Flexibility and Body Composition is noticed during different phases of menstruation cycle.

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64

Towards Empowerment of Dalit Women –A Brief Outline

Md. Reja Ahammad

ABSTRACT

Do the dalit women really live in a world much different from the world of the so called 'mainstream society'? It is a fact that, half of the people are women in the total population of India, and inspite of that, women are neglected, exploited and deprived of politics. Mainly men, especially the men of higher caste, are more powerful in the field of politics. The same scenario is noticeable not only among the political parties or institutions, but also in the field of socio-economic organization. But, the situation has change after 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992). After this Amendment, women can get space and raise their voice within male dominated society. This paper tries to sketch the empowerment of dalit women in recent years in India.

KEY WORD: Dalit, Mainstream Society, Politics, Empowerment, Constitutional Amendment.

The issue of women empowerment has become a crucial agenda which is discussed throughout the world including India. It is a fact that, half of the population in India comprises women. They are neglected, exploited and deprived of politics at the national, state and grass-root level. Mainly men, especially the men of higher caste, are more powerful in the field of politics. The same scenario is noticeable not only in the political parties or institutions, but also in the field of socio-economic organization. The situation is more alarming when we think about women belonging to the marginal communities, especially the dalits.

In short, empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation to greater decision-making, power and control and to transformative action. The most conspicuous feature of the term empowerment is that it contains the word 'power'. To sidestep the philosophical debate, it may be broadly defined as control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology (Batliwala 1995)[1]. The material assets over which control can be exercised may be physical, human or financial, such as land,

Md. Reja Ahammad, Dept. of Political Science, Raja N.L. Khan Women's College

65

water, forests people's bodies and labour, money, and access to money. Intellectual resources include knowledge, information and Ideas. Control over ideology signifies the ability to generate, propagate, sustain, and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs[2].

The ancient Indian society stratified on the 'varna' and caste. Thus, social system creates a demonic disorder like untouchability. Untouchable persons are considered to be a part of Hindu society. Untouchables are such people of Hindu community as are separated from the society and this differentiation is followed by the society from generation to generation. Even the society ill-treats them. Now, these untouchables are known as 'Dalit'. The Word 'Dalit' is derived from Sanskrit where it is used both as noun and adjective. It has its root in "dal" which means to crack, to split open etc. The category 'Dalits' was first used by Jyotiba Phule in the 19th century. The Dalits not only belong to lower caste category, but also belong to the lower class category of the Indian society. Gandhiji called them 'Harijan' while some people describe them as depressed communities. They have been exploited and tormented most often for a long time by the higher caste people. To eliminate the practice of discrimination, various type of movements have been organized in different times in different parts of the country. These movements reached to a height when Gandhiji adopted the removal of untouchability as one of his political agenda and philosophic vision. And with this, a reservation for dalit people takes its position in the 'Poona Pact'. Some social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Shri Narayan Guru, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, E.V. Ramswami, G. N. Mudaliar and others played an important role in resolving the problem[3]. But it was Babasaheb Ambedkar who indeed gives birth to a movement that gradually spread throughout the country to engulf all the aspects of human society. The social reformers tried to save the dalits from the 'Brahmins'. They tried to reduce the domination of higher castes and increase the ratio of entry of lower castes in the spheres of education, service and politics.

To eradicate the difference among the castes, the Constitution of India has incorporated certain provisions. Even articles have been included in the Constitution for gender equality to provide some rights for every men and women. The Constitution grants equality to women and also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The principle of 'gender equality' is enshrined in the 'Preamble', 'Fundamental Rights', 'Fundamental Duties' and 'Directive Principles' of the Constitution. As the Dalit women are highly neglected and oppressed in our society they should be safeguarded and

66

upholded by the Constitutional mechanism. To achieve this goal they can be provided some special protection under Article-14 of the Constitution, though Article-14 forbids any class legislation. So far the provisions of Article-14 are concerned some reasonable classification may be done for the neck and vulnerable section of our society. Classification to be reasonable must fulfill the following two conditions- i) the classification must be founded on an intelligible differentia which distinguishes persons on things that one grouped together from others left out of the group and ii) the differentia must have a rational relation to the object sought to be achieved by the Act[4] . Article-15 of the Constitution forbids discrimination on grounds of caste, religion, sex, race and place of birth, whereas Article-16 ensures equal opportunities in employment for all. Article-39 guarantees equal pay for equal work for both men and women; promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity and provides free legal aid by suitable legislation or scheme or in any other way to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities. Article- 42 says "the state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief". Article 46 provides that "the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". Article- 47 states that "the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health". Article-51A(e) promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women. Article 243 D provides that: seats are to be reserved for scheduled castes, and scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population. Out of the seats so reserved not less than 1/3 seats shall be reserved for women belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes, respectively. Not less 1/3 of the total number of seats to be filled by direct elections in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women[5].

The Constitution makes special provisions for the administration of certain areas called 'Scheduled Areas' in States other than Assam or Meghalaya even though such areas are situated within a state or union territory [Art. 244 (1)], presumably because of the backwardness of the people of those Areas. The tribal areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram are separately dealt with [Art. 244 (2)] and provisions for

67

their administration are to be found in sixth schedule of constitutions.

Besides, there are certain specific provisions for special representation and the reservations of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the legislatures. The Constitution has reserved seats for the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in both the Houses of Parliament as well as in the state Legislatures under Article-330, 332, 334 of the Constitutions. Article- 335 says that the claims of the members of the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the union or of a state. Under Article 338 a special officer for the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes is to be appointed by the president of India. Under Article 340 of the constitution the president may by order appoint a commission to investigate the condition of socially and educationally backward classes [6].

We have various laws, plans and programmes to safeguard women and their interest in different sphere. It includes: The Employees state insurance Act -1948; The Plantation Labour Act-1951; The Family Courts Act-1954; The Special marriage Act-1954; The Hindu Marriage Act-1955; The Hindu Succession Act-1956; Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act-1956; The Maternity Benefit Act-1961(Amended in 1995); Dowry Prohibition Act-1961; The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act-1971; The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition)Act-1976; The Equal Remuneration Act-1976; The Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment)Act-1979;The Criminal Law (Amendment)Act-1983; The Factories (Amendment) Act-1986;Commission of Sati (Prevention)Act-1987;The Marriage (Amendment)Act-2001;Protection of women from Domestic Violence Act-2005; Protection of women's Against Sexual Harassment Act of Work Place-2010 etc.

The theorists have pointed out three aspects on empowerment of women such as economic, social and political. These three aspects of empowerment are on one side separate and on the other side their closely co-related. Some countries take some decisions to improve women's economic empowerment. For the example, we can name of the Gramin Bank of Bangladesh, Self-Help group in India, different model of Micro Finance in some countries etc. These economical programmes have contributed much to make women work autogenously in economic sphere. Three economic models of the world including south Asian

68

countries become very popular like South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and Community Development Fund (CDF). These economic programmes have increased the matter and manner of economical empowerment of women.

Another important issue is that women's economic empowerment is heavily dependent on social and political empowerment. In the social sphere, some social diseases are living still now like dowry system, child marriage, killing of female embryo etc. We should prevent the practice of such diseases from our society. Then, it will begin to pave the way of social empowerment for women.

In the social sphere women are also subject to several limitations viz. decision about family matter, going outside home without permission, mother's approach to her sons and daughters, employment issue, social communication and so on. Now, the modern society is still remaining a male dominated one where women are neglected, subjugated. One thing must be mentioned at this point that even amidst the male dominance, various kinds of initiative have been taken at present by several countries regarding the voicing forth of women. But still we should pay our sincere attention to the fact how Dalit Women are facing problems and tortures due to the rooted superstitious beliefs inherent in the society.

Dalit women are neglected in political arena to a great extent. Their position have greatly been denounced though, they had a great contribution in the freedom movement. Being inspired by the Gandhian philosophy they left no stone unturned to free our motherland. Not only that, these women took part in the movement for the rights of women to cast vote, and it received success when for the first time they had been acknowledged with such right in 1917. Then, the constitutional reforms of 1919 left the matter to the discretion of the elected legislatures in the provinces and finally they got their right's to vote in 1921.This right to vote, however, was subjected to certain reservations: women could not vote only if they possessed qualifications of wifehood, property and education. The Government of India Act of 1935 increased the number of enfranchised Indians, the proportional suffrage right of women and relaxed some of the previous qualifications. Afterwards all women having fulfilled the conditions of property and education, over the age of 21 are allowed to vote[7]. After the independence, all women got their rights to vote in 1950.

69

It is well known to all that some advantages have been provided to the women in our constitution, but in reality they encounter various problems. Panchayat system started in some states in 1960. But the Dalit women were neglected in the political participation. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (1992) has changed the situation to some extent. This Amendment Act provided for 33% reservation for women including Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes women. Through this amendment a great chance was created for dalit women for their political empowerment. However, a few states have gone beyond the mandated 33 per cent and provided more reservation for women. For instance Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and West Bengal have reserved 50% seats for women in Panchayats and Sikkim has reserved 40 per cent seats for women. The Constitution's 110th Amendment Bill 2009 provides reservation for women from 33 per cent to 50 per cent in panchayat. The Bill seeks to amend the Article 243D to enhance the quantum of reservation for women from one-third to one-half of the total seats in Panchayats. Similar reservation shall be provided among the total number of offices of chairpersons. It can surely be opined that though the process of empowerment of dalit women is functioning slowly; in the near future it will get more impetus from which we shall be benefited more and more.

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70

Jhargram and Few Endangered Folkdances

Ajoy Kumar Mandal

ABSTRACT

Since the hoary past, Jhargram is the nestling place of folk cultures. This tradition continues till to the date through various festivals. The paper tries to give a detailed description of the folk dances (which are the part of folk culture) along with their present problems. These folk dances are Chhau Dance, Kathinach, Chaang dance, Pike Dance, Bhuang Dance, Ranpa Dance, etc. The young generation should be aware of their indigenous tradition and should take initiative to preserve it for their own sake.

Jhargram is the nestling place of folk cultures. Since the hoary past, this tradition continues till to the date through various festivals. But it is a matter of regret that many folk cultures have been extinct or on the extinction. In this essay, I am going to highlight on such folk dances which are the part of folk culture. I would like to mention that maximum tribal people of Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur live in Jhargram and its surroundings. Their beliefs, this customs medical treatment and education are all their own indigenous. Various folk dances are able to maintain the subject matter, theme of their dances with the same zeal and Passion.

Chhau Dances of Jhargram deserves to be mentioned at the very onset. This is basically the best presentation and entertainment for the people who live in the lap of forest in Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The district town of Jhargram is greatly influenced by this folk dance. 'Actor', 'Interesting subject matter', 'Musicians' and 'Mask'— these are the four fundamental aspects of folk dance. However, in many places, the actors do not put on the mask while performing the dance before the spectators. It is really difficult to say when this

Ajoy Kumar Mandal, Dept. of History. Gourav Guin Memorial College, C. K. Road, Satbankura, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal, India. & Research Scholar, Vidyasagar University, Dept. of History, Mob: 8001694232

71

Chhau Dance came to Jhargram. But when the Kings ruled over this province, a king of Chilkigarh fervently requested king of Mayorbhanj, Orissa to bring over there a *Chhau Dance* group.[1] *Chhau Dance* which was exclusively performed in the royal courtyard, has now been merged with the blood of the people of Jhargram. At first / Initially beginning *Chhau* was performed as the 'Gajan' dance of Lord Shiva.[2] But now a days, it is performed almost in every festival. *Chhau Dance* which was Jhargram. Initially *Chhau* was performed as the 'Gajan' dance of Lord Shiva[2], but now it is performed almost in every festival of Bengal. The main theme of *Chhau Dance* includes mythology and war, political and social. During the freedom movement, the tribal people including the Kurmi, Mahato, Bagdi, Bagal, Munda—used to form *Chhau Dance* groups and Presented Sepoy Mutiny, Sannyas, Santal Rebellion, Munda Rebellion and Kol Revolt in the dramatic way to arouse the sense of a nationalism in the heart of common masses. So, it is not only now a days a mere dance form but it has taken the most prominent place of entertainment in the lives the common people. But it is a matter of regret that people who have taken this folk dance as their profession are forced to find another profession to survive.

Kathinach is the cultural tradition and prestige of the tribal people of Jhargram sub-division in the district of Paschim Medinipur. 'Majhi', 'Bhumijo', 'Bagal', Bagdi—mainly these four communities go on with this tradition. This dance form is generally performed dancing in the autumnal festivals. But in such localities as Rohini, Kultikri, People Perform *Kathinach* collectively during the immersion of Tusu (a tribal festival with folk music) no woman participates in this dance. Only the male dancers can take part in it. They take two coloured sticks and move anti-clockwise. They sing and dance 'Jhumur' with the symphony of 'Tamak' (Drum), 'Tumda', 'Sakwa', 'Dhak', 'Banam', 'Tiriyo'. Male dancers often dress in the guise of female dancers. Though the separations of Ram and Sita, and Radha-Krishna are the Subject-matters of this dance form this describes their struggle for existence as against the evil external forces. At present, though this folk-dance is arranged during 'Durga Puja' and 'Kali Puja' for fun but it has lost its past glory. There is no doubt that the indifference of the government is also responsible of this alarming situation. At present state govt. has undertaken various steps regarding restoration of this once upon a time popular culture. Some schools have started 'Bratachari' as optional paper of class X which is a sophisticated form of folk dance.

'*Chaang*' is the folk dance of the endangered community Lodha. Lodhas are the successors of the traditional communities.[3] They live in the small huts of the remote villages in Jhargram sub-division. Basanta Buri (Goddess Sitala) and Barham are their saviours. They make a special large musical instrument, called 'Changu' (a woolen instrument with the hide of animal over it). They sing rhythmically with it on a special day of worshipping of their deities. Generally the Lodhas and Shabars sing with the symphony of it and the musicians and the singers hold it in one hand slap on it in a particular rhythm and dance with it. Rhythm is of primary concern of 'Chaang dance'. Lodhas, Shabarsh Khariyas – all these backward tribal people express their weal and woe, ups and down of their life to their worshipped deities. Some scholars think *Changu Dance* as the Dance of Hunting.[4]

In the field survey, it has been found that this folk dance form does not deal with any kind of Deities. Last year (2015). During field survey (Chaitra Sankranti) I have witnessed the actual dance form of '*Chaang*' in those villages of Nayagram chiefly inhabited by the people of Lodha communities.

Pike Dance is another type of extinct folk dance of Jhargram. During the British rule, not only Jhargram but the whole Jangalmahal, was under the possession of the local feudal Kings. They ruled over the said land. They used to patronise a troop of soldiers as who were called Pikes. They used to guard the boundaries of the property of their master. Their artful presentation of various feats of gymnastics were known as '*Pike Dance*'. This was quite laborious. During the British Raj, this folk dance form was the special attraction on various festivals held at Rajbari. They came on the stage with 'Tamak', 'Tumda', 'bow and arrow', 'Shield'. The kings have gone, with them have gone the royal Decorum and grandiloquence. British government abandoned the policy of employing pikes by the Zamindars, hence the lost their bread as well as culture. There by the great 'Pike Rebellion' stormed Bengal. They are occasionally called for performing in the govt. programme. The dancers of this folk dance form are found performing their marvelous feats of performance in front of the procession of various inaugural programme. They put on the masks of tiger, bear and others while walking on the roads of villages and towns. This folk dance form is now at the verge of extinction.

Bhuang / Vuang is the favourite folk dance form of the people of Adibasi communities. *Bhuang* is actually a musical instrument. The Santali youths perform this *Bhuang Dance* in

73

accompaniment of this particular musical instrument. In earlier days, they used to dance leisurely with 'drum', 'bhuang', 'Kedra' on various festivals. They were found dancing with the symphony of musical instruments in some parts of Jhargram. Now-a-days, this dance form is not so much in vogue as it was earlier. Yet, this folk dance can be seen in some places in the district of Paschim Medinipur, like—at the temple of Lord Bhairav at Orhgoda, Binpur and on the auspicious day of Vijaya Dashami at Chatinasole, Gopiballavpur. There is a folklore behind this folk dance presentation on Vijaya Dashami. According to this folklore, a powerful Santal hero named Hujur Durga was killed brutally on this auspicious day of Dashami. He was murdered by piercing spear into his heart without caring much for the art of war. The Santali youths perform *Vuang dance* in honour of their Hero to express their deep mourning for this lamentable death.[5] But it is a matter of regret that this traditional folk dance is also about to lose away.

There are various other forms of folkdances of Jhargram that were performed with proper dignity like '*Ranpa Dance*' (in the village of Maraikhuti, Midnapur and Garhbeta in North Midnapur), '*Langaru Dance*' (in the Santal Parganas of Paschim Medinipur during the Makar Sankranti), *Sarul / Saharul Dance*, *Leaf Dance*, *Dangrhe Dance*, *Nachni Dance* and so on. All these folk dance forms are receding fast day by day not only from Jhargram and other tribal areas of Midnapur, but also from every part of Bengal.

The artists of the *Chhau Dance* are living a centrifugal existence. The singers of Jhumur, a kind of folk-song, are decreasing at an alarming rate. People have been losing their attitude of singing folk music throughout the night in regard of Tusu. The Santali youths who at a time were actively involved in such dance performance in fairs and festivals, are now more interested in various T.V. programmes, Facebook, Internet and other developed technological amusements. These modern technologies distract the young minds of the Santal Communities from their indigenous tradition.

Another reason for the extinction of the ancient folk culture may be the disintegration of the austere, punctual and orderly of the Adivasi Communities. In earlier days, the young people used to follow the instructions of *Majhi* (Chief of the village) *Paranik* (assistant of the chief), *Jagmajhi* (director of the youths) and dared not to disobey them. But, now the youths, being educated in modern education have started living in the town for their profession. They get involved into marital relationship with out castes. As a result, they are

74

forgetting their own culture and heritage. It is, therefore high time to re-evaluate their approach to their own culture and come back to their roots. In fact, it is their responsibility to preserve their own culture heritage for the next generation.

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75

A Child

Prabhakar Sengupta

It has been recognized by almost all the child psychologists that a child lives a life which is full of secrecies and unknown traits which the adults can hardly understand in its entirety. As a result, an adult does not have the capacity and intelligence to understand the variegated potentialities of a child. And here arises the great problem. A child can neither nurture itself wholly after its birth nor it can fully depend on others who can understand him fully and provide atmosphere for his total growth. There is abundant ignorance among the adults to understand the various physical and mental activities of the children. In the different structures of the society, there should have some arrangements for social, economic, educational and psychological studies of the children so that social consciousness about the children could be increased for better protection of them. We should take such steps which can take care of the baby when it is in the womb of the mother. With the full protection of the children in all its faculties, peace can be restored to a great extent in a family and in a society.

There are some international rules and regulations recognized and accepted by a majority of states for the better protection of the children of the world. It has been emphasized that a family is the best institution which can provide suitable environment for the child's natural growth. Consequently, it is urgent and necessary that member of the family should play a very careful and responsible role. The adults of the family and the society do not fully understand the behaviors, thought process, imagination, memory, sensations, perception and feeling of a child in true perspective. An adult sometimes, behaves with the child rather irrationally due to his infinite ignorance of the child-mind. Sometimes, an adult's behaviors become unsocial and immoral in the society of children.

In spite of all the problems and challenges, it has been said that parents are the best persons for proper upbringing of the children. The primary responsibility of the parents is to protect and nurture the child in the best manner possible. The child has also his fundamental

Prof. Pravakar Sengupta, Former Principal, Raja N.L. Khan women's College, Midnapore.

rights to get care and protection of his being from his parents and other adults. It is a big role to protect the dignity of the child. It is found that adults are generally indifferent to the dignity and honor of a child. They do not have perception of it properly.

In case deviation is found in the parents in their proper thought process and behaviors, it will be the duty of the family & the society to rectify. But no body, no organization should humiliate the parents in any way and in any circumstance. Parents are the highest property of the children, therefore no children should be kept away from the parents unless the parents themselves decide properly.

I will remind all of a story regarding Swami Vivekananda who was mercilessly beaten by his class-teacher in the class when his teacher noticed that Naren was not giving proper answer to his question. Naren told his Master repeatedly that he was speaking the truth, but his Master did not agree and continued to beat Naren. I think the teacher could not tolerate the personality of Naren. Naren came to his mother Bhubaneswari Devi and told her everything. Bhubaneswari Devi told Naren not to cry telling Naren that truth was more powerful then the teacher's punishment. You are more powerful-she told. Naren later told that his education was result of a great contribution of his mother Bhubaneswari Devi.

There is a National Policy in India and it has been said in the policy that children are the highest & best property of the country. Children should be nourished very carefully, so that his potentialities could be properly manifested. Infinite qualities are there in a Child's mind and it is the Nation's duty to protect them from various types of impediments and hardships. The adults should also understand that children should not be compelled to live according to the whims of the adults. Maximum freedom & dignity should be provided to the children for the growth of civilization, Science, Arts, Culture and Religion which are universal in character and which continue to develop depending upon the proper growth of the children in all variegated ways.

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77

Trend and Pattern of Development in Education in the Blocks of Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal during 2005-06 to 2014-15

Sanjoy Kumar Pattanayek, Debasish Mondal

ABSTRACT

Education is one of the fundamental indicators of social development as well as human development of a society. Development in education cannot be judged by a single dimension. The UNDP from its Human Development Report (1995) used the combined enrolment ratio and the adult literacy rate as the two basic dimensions of development of education and combined them in an education index by using arbitrarily 1/3 and 2/3 weights to the above two dimensions respectively. The present study examines the trend and pattern of development in education in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in West Bengal, India over the period 2005-06 to 2014-15 through the construction of Education Index (EI) by using Iterative Correlation Method (ICM) to attach proper weights to dimensional indices i.e., Enrolment Index (ENI) and Adult Literacy Index (ALI).

Introduction

Education is one of the concerning perceptual aspect leading to economic development in particular and human development in general of a country, state or region as human skill and gradual knowledge is sectioned as the consistent agglomerated part of economic development leading to population's efficiency to work more for gradual human and social

Sanjoy Kumar Pattanayek, Faculty, Raja N. L. Khan Women's College, West Bengal, India.
Dr. Debasish Mondal, Professor of Economics, Vidyasagar University, West Bengal, India.

development. Knowledge is crucial for economy's development because of its multi-facilitation properties that enlightens human capabilities and enlarges human opportunities. It not only imparts knowledge and skills that enable individuals to raise economic productivity but also furnishes values, ideas, attitudes and aspirations which act as the agents of economic and social recast. Presently education also orients a functional stage in improving personal skills, overcoming constraints, widening existing compilation of objectives and options for improving standard of living. As education is growing in a diversified way it professes a difficulty to sermonize achievement of knowledge by a single variable. It can be reflected by a number of partial achievements or procurements like enrolment ratio, dropout rate (inversely), transition rate, instructional days, working hours for teachers, literacy rate, adult literacy rate, female literacy rate, literacy rate of the weaker sections etc. and a number of instruments or accomplished means like availability and access to schools, pupil teacher ratio, teacher school ratio, student school ratio, student classroom ratio, proportion of professionally qualified teachers, male-female teacher ratio etc. and availability of basic amenities or infrastructures like classrooms, safe drinking water facility, proper toilet facilities for both boys and girls, ramp, kitchen-shed, library, computers, play-grounds etc. Keeping in mind the above mentioned issues tworeliable and available indicators used by the UNDPhave also been persuaded here to identify present status of education in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in West Bengal, India over the period 2005-06 to 2014-15.However, to attach proper weights to the above two indicators we have used Iterative Correlation Method for the assessment of educational development of the study area.

Government of India has adopted numerous education programmes during the plan period where The National Education Policy (NEP, 1968) was the first official document evidencing the India Government's commitment towards school education. The NEP went through a couple of amendments thereafter. A key milestone in the history came in possession for achieving access to education through the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act that was passed in December 2002 making education free and compulsory and a fundamental right for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. The Right to Education (RTE) aims to improve education in India by focusing primarily on increasing funds for schools, mandating certain infrastructures, maintaining prescribed student teacher ratio, attendance of teachers and students and creating a variety of accountability mechanisms. Within RTE, children are treated as right holders rather than duty bearers. The act specifies that the compulsion

79

component is the obligation on the government rather than on children to ensure admission and enrolment of children in education providing a vast development to future generation and economy.

Objectives

In this paper we want to address following two basic objectives:

a) To develop a suitable methodology for constructing a composite Education Index (EI) (composite of Enrolment Index (ENI) and Adult LiteracyIndex(ALI)) in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District during the period 2005-2006 to 2014-2015. Under this objective, proper weights of dimension indiceswill be determined by usingIterative Correlation Method (ICM).

b) To examine the trend and pattern of development in education across the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal over the time period from 2005-06 to 2014-15. Through this we shall be able to determine the relative ranksof the blocks of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal with respect to development in education over time.

Description of the Study Area

Paschim Medinipur, located in the southern part of West Bengal, has been carved from the erstwhile Medinipur district, then the largest district of India. It came into existence in the present form in January 2002 during the period of 10th Five Year Plan.It is situated between 22^0 57' 10" and 21^0 36' 35" North latitude and between 88^0 12' 40" and 86^0 33' 50" East longitude. It is bounded by Bankura district on the north, Purba Medinipur district on the east and south-east, Hoogly district on the east, and the states of Orissa and Jharkhand on the west and south-west. Located in the south-western part of West Bengal, Paschim Medinipur is one of the country's 250 most backward districts. Geographical area of the district is 9295.28 sq. km. There are29 community development blocks and 8 municipalitiesdistributed in 4 (four) sub-divisions in the district. As per Census of India, it ranks 2^{nd}in the state in terms of geographical area (9295.28 sq. km.), next to South 24-Parganas (9960 sq. km.). Literacy rate of the district has been increasing at rapid rate over thecensus years. In 2001, literacy rate of the district was70.41 per cent, which was higherthanthat of the State (68.64 percent).Again, in 2011 the district showed up higher propagation of literacy rate to 79.04 per cent as compared to that of the State (76.3 per

80

cent). In case of SC and ST, the literacy rates in the district were also higher than those in the whole of the State. Gender gap in literacy rate (i.e., difference between female and male literacy rates) is, however, substantial and higher in Paschim Medinipur district than that in West Bengal as a whole. The gender gap in literacy tends to increase in some blocks of the district. The work participation rates in this district across all castes are found to be higher than that of the State as a whole. Examining the demographic and socio-economic characteristics, the district presents a unique opportunity to understand and illustrate the issues associated with different aspects of development in education. Moreover, a block level study in this districtin terms of education attainment and construction of education index has hardly been explored out.

How EI & EDI are Constructed

(a) Education Index (EI): The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its Human Development Reports (HDRs), has introduced the concept of Education Index (EI) as a part of Human Development Index (HDI) to evaluate the level of educational attainment of different countries since 1990. In the first report (1990) adult literacy was the only variable in educational attainment. In the report of 1991 the mean years of schooling was added as a second component with 1/3 weight leaving 2/3 weight for adult literacy.From the report of 1995 to 2009 the mean years of schoolingof the children from 6-14 years was replaced by gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education.It combines the indices of these two indicators through a weighted average 1/3 weight to gross enrolment ratio and 2/3 weight to adult literacy. From the report of 2010 onwards the adult literacy was replaced by mean years of schooling and gross enrolment ratio by expected yearsof schooling. From 2010 to 2013, HDR used Geometric Mean (G.M.) method of aggregation in Human Development Index (HDI) as well as Education Index (EI). From the year 2014 onwards though geometric mean is used as themethod of aggregation in Human Development Index (HDI) a simple arithmetic mean of mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling is used in the construction of education index.In the National Human Development Report of India (2003) only the general literacy rate was used for the calculation of educational attainment index because neither the enrolment ratios nor the adult literacy rates are available for the states of India. In the Human Development Report of West Bengal (2004) two indicators, viz., the general literacy rate and the percentage of children in the age group 6 to 14 years attending school were used for the calculation of educational attainment index

81

by attaching 2/3 weight to general literacy rate index and 1/3 weight to attendance index.

(b) Education Development Index (EDI): The UNESCO has developed the Education for All Development Index (EDI) in order to scrutinize each country's progress over time with regards to the EFA's goals set in the set in the Dakar Framework for action since 2000. The composite EDI measures four of the six EFA goals, selected on the basis of data availability which are evaluated using a specific indicator, and then each component is assigned an equal weight in the overall index. Thus EDI for a given country is the arithmetic mean of the four indicators i.e., (i) total primary net enrolment ratio (ii) adult literacy rate (iii) survival rate to Grade V and (iv)average of three gender parity index for primary education, secondary education and adult literacy. In India, the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), New Delhi, through its District Information System for Education (DISE) and the Government of India (MHRD, Department of School Education and Literacy) have introduced and calculated a composite Educational Development Index (EDI) across state and district separately for Primary and Upper Primary levels of education and also a composite index for the entire elementary educationsince 2005-06. The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) apprehended a composite Educational Development Index (EDI) (composite of Assess Index (AI), Infrastructure Index (II), Teacher's Index (TI) and Outcome Index (OI)) across state and district separately for Primary and Upper Primary levels of education and also a composite index for the entire elementary education based exclusively on the DISE data by using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). From the time period 2005-06 to 2011-12 NUEPA and MHRD have identified 23 indicators,then from the period of 2012-13 onwards approached for 25 indicators for computing EDI.

Data and Methodology

In the present paper we articulatedIterative Correlation Method (ICM) for calculation of EI across the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District. We procured three reliable sources for data i.e., Census of India for population related data, District Information System for Education (DISE) for education related data and District Statistical Hand Books for general data.Further, we professed only two indicators to capture all aspects of development in education by assimilating proper weightage to Enrolment Index (ENI) and Adult Literacy Index (ALI) in Education Index (EI) through Iterative Correlation Method (ICM). As DISE data are available only from 2005-06 we construct EI from 2005-06 to 2014-15. Absolute

82

enrolment figures given in the DISE data are of no use unless we have the number of potential children for primary, upper primary education in different blocks in the relevant years. On the other hand, the Census data provide information on general literacy in the age group six years and above and do not provide reliable data on adult literacy rate.

By using Census data on rural population, literacy rates and age-wise distribution of the rural population we have calculated projected population in the age-group of 5 to 14 years and in the age group of 15 years and above. To calculate projected population, we have used the following log quadratic equation $Log Y = a + b\,t + c\,t^2$, where Y stands for population in a particular block and t stands for time. a, b and c are calculated by using population for the block in the years 1991, 2001 and 2011. Population in any other year is then estimated by taking the antilog of the calculated value of $Log Y$ for corresponding value of t. Enrolment ratio is then calculated as the ratio between the enrolment figures obtained from DISE and the projected population in the age group of 5 to 14 years. From this the number of children never attending school is subtracted and the subtracted value is subtracted from the projected literates for the said years to arrive at an estimate of adult literates. Adult literacy rate is calculated as the ratio between this and projected population in the age group of 15 years and above.

These two rates are combined for arriving at the EI by using the Iterative Correlation Method (ICM). Before combining, they are normalized to the index values by prospering functional projection from the concerned year as before and after 5 years and then they are fixed for meaningful trend analysis of the EI. With goalpost made fixed from future projection, the cross-section analysis became less meaningful than that with goalposts determined by observed maxima and minima, and the inter-temporal analysis becomes dependent on the time span and method of projection. But if maxima and minima, is not observed in a particular year but over all the years for which the comparison is desired, then this cross-section and inter-temporal analysis can be made meaningfully. The maximum and minimum values for enrolment rate have been taken as 100 (Keshpur, 2014-2015) and 19.06 (Kharagpur-II, 2000-2001) whereas for adult literacy rate maximum and minimum valueshave been taken as 90.57 (Daspur-II, 2019-2020) and 50.14 (Nayagram, 2000-2001).

The choice of weights is the most crucial problem in the construction of EI. This study offers an alternative measure for estimating EI and its dimension indices which is based onIterative Correlation Method (ICM). It proposes the weights of individual components

83

that are proportional to the correlation with the final index. This method is able to attach proper weights to the groups. The detailed methodology is as follows:

Let, I_1, I_2 and I_3 are the three indices of a composite index to be developed on the basis of I_1, I_2 and I_3. We propose that the weight of any dimension index should be proportionate to its correlation with the final composite index. As the final index cannot be calculated unless the weights are determined and as the weights (or the correlations) cannot be calculated unless the final index is determined, they are calculated simultaneously through an iterative process. The process starts with some arbitrarily fixed weights of the individual indices, preferably equal weights for all. On the basis of these weights a development index is determined. In the third step correlations of the individual indices with the development index are obtained and these are used as weights to arrive at the new development index. In the next step new correlations and new weights and so another new development index is obtained. The process is repeated until the correlations converge to their earlier values and the final weights along with the final development index are obtained. Thus for the calculation of education index we pertain 58.1% weightage to adult literacy rate index and 41.9% weightage to combined primary and secondary gross educational enrolment ratio index.

Results and Discussion

6a. Trend of Education Index (EI) in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District during 2005-06 to 2014-15

We procured our assessment on overall position in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in West Bengal on the basis of the composite Education Index (EI) (with 41.9% weightage of Enrolment Index (ENI)and 58.1% weightage of Adult Literacy Index (ALI)) over the period 2005-06to 2014-2015 in Table 1.

84

Table 1: Trendof Education Index for the blocks of said district during 2005-06 to 2014-15

Block	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	% of Growth	P-value
Jhargram	0.445	0.460	0.492	0.492	0.634	0.651	0.670	0.674	0.698	0.723	5.95	3.1E-05
Binpur-I	0.395	0.413	0.449	0.432	0.556	0.561	0.567	0.540	0.597	0.622	5.10	1.0E-04
Binpur-II	0.404	0.423	0.443	0.444	0.590	0.613	0.637	0.642	0.648	0.673	6.40	6.2E-05
Jamboni	0.412	0.423	0.440	0.429	0.545	0.549	0.558	0.623	0.640	0.655	5.82	7.3E-06
Nayagram	0.258	0.279	0.302	0.320	0.520	0.501	0.525	0.539	0.550	0.582	9.94	1.3E-04
Sankrail	0.448	0.466	0.487	0.475	0.656	0.669	0.662	0.677	0.692	0.714	5.82	2.0E-04
Gopiballavpur-I	0.297	0.317	0.337	0.356	0.469	0.495	0.502	0.528	0.577	0.606	8.44	2.0E-06
Gopiballavpur-II	0.412	0.430	0.451	0.457	0.537	0.549	0.581	0.592	0.628	0.669	5.52	1.5E-07
Salboni	0.469	0.490	0.511	0.530	0.676	0.684	0.688	0.638	0.736	0.753	5.45	1.3E-04
Keshpur	0.468	0.492	0.515	0.539	0.716	0.723	0.738	0.723	0.772	0.790	6.36	8.8E-05
Garbeta-I	0.458	0.477	0.498	0.518	0.695	0.713	0.715	0.686	0.738	0.768	6.23	1.6E-04
Garbeta-II	0.483	0.503	0.541	0.531	0.644	0.673	0.684	0.665	0.695	0.736	4.78	3.4E-05
Garbeta-III	0.438	0.455	0.474	0.459	0.653	0.682	0.710	0.687	0.721	0.733	6.72	2.1E-04
Medinipur	0.362	0.383	0.404	0.406	0.569	0.579	0.621	0.628	0.652	0.681	7.82	2.6E-05
Debra	0.617	0.630	0.647	0.661	0.786	0.809	0.796	0.758	0.840	0.866	3.90	1.4E-04
Pingla	0.704	0.715	0.741	0.732	0.828	0.853	0.858	0.864	0.903	0.925	3.25	5.7E-06
Keshiary	0.493	0.514	0.539	0.556	0.585	0.632	0.668	0.702	0.737	0.770	5.14	2.4E-10
Dantan-I	0.448	0.462	0.463	0.464	0.644	0.655	0.646	0.615	0.696	0.733	5.89	2.6E-04
Dantan-II	0.597	0.614	0.635	0.624	0.821	0.835	0.813	0.783	0.864	0.889	4.75	3.6E-04
Narayangarh	0.537	0.552	0.569	0.585	0.777	0.803	0.811	0.809	0.842	0.857	6.02	1.2E-04
Mohanpur	0.621	0.633	0.663	0.641	0.758	0.774	0.772	0.769	0.811	0.834	3.45	4.9E-05
Sabong	0.715	0.733	0.750	0.752	0.858	0.866	0.876	0.860	0.881	0.902	2.74	1.2E-04
Kharagpur-I	0.558	0.516	0.451	0.391	0.524	0.549	0.571	0.548	0.599	0.623	2.54	9.4E-02
Kharagpur-II	0.481	0.498	0.524	0.504	0.666	0.678	0.672	0.655	0.715	0.767	5.28	1.1E-04
Chandrakona-I	0.562	0.581	0.598	0.615	0.710	0.717	0.725	0.716	0.781	0.827	4.21	4.7E-06
Chandrakona-II	0.458	0.482	0.506	0.501	0.621	0.643	0.651	0.690	0.740	0.787	6.21	8.9E-07
Ghatal	0.610	0.626	0.640	0.652	0.720	0.735	0.735	0.719	0.785	0.805	3.06	9.1E-06
Daspur-I	0.652	0.670	0.689	0.675	0.748	0.754	0.773	0.792	0.820	0.846	2.96	7.4E-07
Daspur-II	0.741	0.751	0.762	0.769	0.785	0.792	0.797	0.802	0.811	0.817	1.08	6.0E-08

Source: (i) Government of India, Census of India, 1991, 2001, 2011
(ii) Government of India, DISE-2005-06 to DISE-2014-15.

It shows that the growth rate of Education Index (EI) is highest in Nayagram (9.94%) with higher level of significance at 1.3E-04 level followed by Gopiballavpur-I (8.44%) and the lowest in Daspur-II (1.08%) preceded by Kharagpur-I (2.54%). However, Jamboni and Sankrial illumine same rate ofgrowth in EI by5.82 % with different level of significance within the block. Further it's been enunciated that blocks with higher initial value of EI show low percentage of growth rate and the blocks with lowerinitial value of EI are gradually proposing higher growth rate so as to satisfy the convergence hypothesis over time. The said EI for all the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District taken together is 0.630 which implies

85

that rural area of concerned district has attained 63.0% success in education (a more than 3/5th success) and the remaining 37.0% is yet to be achieved. Analysing the absolute values of the EI, we observe that 4 blocks in 2005-06, 6 blocks in 2006-07, 7 blocks in 2007-08 and 2008-09, 19 blocks in 2009-10, 21 blocks in 2010-11, 22 blocks in 2011-12 and 2012-13, 24 blocks in 2013-14 and 25 blocks in 2014-15 had absolute value of EI greater than 0.630(average EI of all EI) which implies an overtime improvement in the district.

Table 2: Relative Ranks in the blocks of said district in EI during 2005-06 to 2014-15

Block	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Jhargram	21	21	18	18	19	19	17	17	18	20
Binpur-I	26	26	24	24	24	24	26	27	27	27
Binpur-II	25	24	25	23	21	22	22	20	23	23
Jamboni	23	25	26	25	25	26	27	23	24	25
Nayagram	29	29	29	29	28	28	28	28	29	29
Sankrail	19	19	19	19	15	17	19	16	21	21
Gopiballavpur-I	28	28	28	28	29	29	29	29	28	28
Gopiballavpur-II	24	23	23	22	26	27	24	25	25	24
Salboni	15	16	15	14	13	13	14	21	15	16
Keshpur	16	15	14	12	10	10	9	9	11	11
Garbeta-I	18	18	17	15	12	12	12	15	13	14
Garbeta-II	13	13	11	13	18	16	15	18	20	17
Garbeta-III	22	22	20	21	16	14	13	14	16	18
Medinipur	27	27	27	26	23	23	23	22	22	22
Debra	6	6	6	5	4	4	6	8	5	4
Pingla	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1
Keshiary	12	12	12	11	22	21	18	12	14	13
Dantan-I	20	20	21	20	17	18	21	24	19	19
Dantan-II	8	8	8	8	3	3	3	6	3	3
Narayangarh	11	10	10	10	6	5	4	3	4	5
Mohanpur	5	5	5	7	7	7	8	7	7	7
Sabong	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2
Kharagpur-I	10	11	22	27	27	25	25	26	26	26
Kharagpur-II	14	14	13	16	14	15	16	19	17	15
Chandrakona-I	9	9	9	9	11	11	11	11	10	8
Chandrakona-II	17	17	16	17	20	20	20	13	12	12
Ghatal	7	7	7	6	9	9	10	10	9	10
Daspur-I	4	4	4	4	8	8	7	5	6	6
Daspur-II	1	1	1	1	5	6	5	4	8	9

Source: From Table 1

86

6b. Relative Ranks in the Blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in Education Index during 2005-06 to 2014-15

Here the assessment proposes an explanation based on the pattern showing the overall concerning situation through their respective ranks in the blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in West Bengal on the basis of the Education Index (EI).
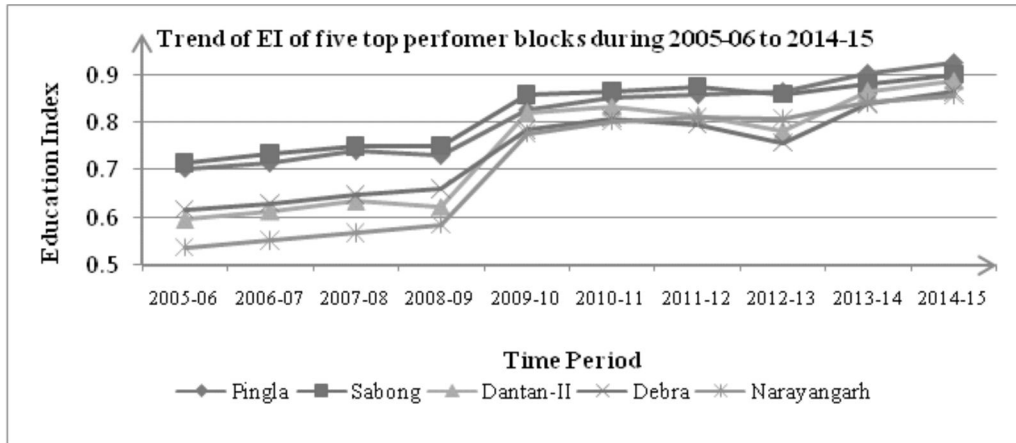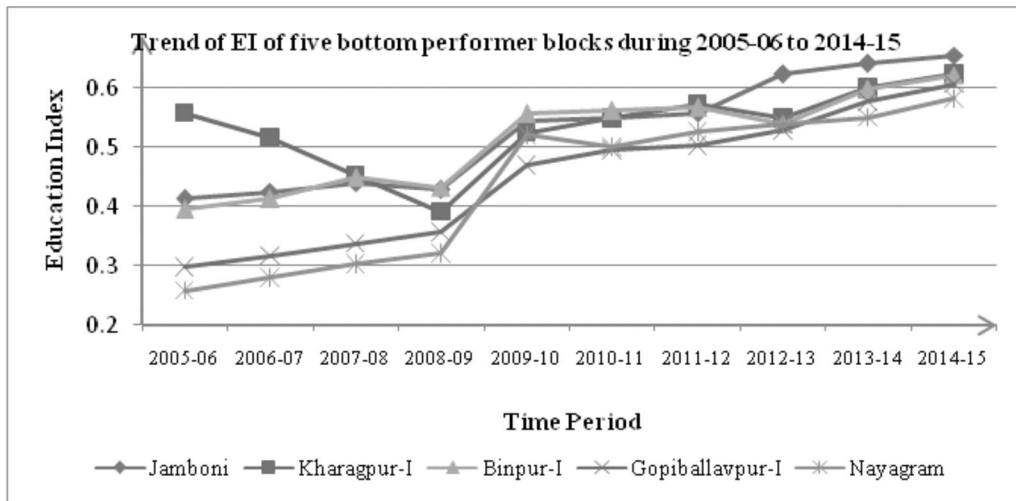

Figure 1

Figure 2

87

Here the study contradicts the rank-wise variation in the assessed blocks where Daspur-II showed a positive proposition at first but suffered a gradual decrement in 2009-10 which preceded its position 9th in 2014-15 whereas Pingla gradually attained an increment from 3rd place to 2nd place and reached to 1st position in the 2014-15. In the same observed years we propounded that Nayagram has been continuously prospering a bad attainment towards education oscillating between last two positions trying to develop over-time whereas Sabong profuse a constant position throughout till 2008-09 then it attained 1st position showing a gradual improvement in education allotment and again attained 2nd position in 2014-15.Gopiballavpur-I in reverse to Nayagram showed a gradual slight improvement oscillating between last two places i.e. on 28th position till 2008-09 afterwards attaining 29th position till 2012-13 and again propelling to 28th position. Kharagpur-I here invigilates a radical behavior by gradually perceiving a decrement in its educational status throughout the assessing year i.e., variating its position from 10th in 2005-06 to 26th position in 2014-15. Here we consideredfive top performer blocks and five bottom performer blocks to show trend of EI during the time period 2005-06 to 2014-15 for assessing growth rate in EI.

In figure-1 we contradict trend of EI of five top performer blocks during 2005-06 to 2014-15 where we adrift that Pingla premating second position continuously occupied 1stposition abruptly for the time period 2013-14 and 2014-15 consecutively reprimanding Sabong which was continuously rising till 2011-12 obscured2ndposition in the same time span. Narayangarh here showed improvement overtime by rising gradually but failed to apprehend above 5th position.

Similarly, we can archive comprehensible concept of the five bottom performer blocks from the time period 2005-06 to 2014-15 in figure-2. Here Nayagram had occupied 29thplace from the bottom with gradual striking crest and trough showing gradual increment in education statusover the time 2005-06 to 2014-15 whereas Kharagpur-I proposed an accidental decrement in 2008-09 from a sensual position in initial year and kept on shrinking showing declining education prospects but around 2014-15 it is suppressed to improve its educational scenario. Binpur-I initially propelled a constancy showing sudden rise in 2009-10 again maintaining constancy showing equal educational attainment as Kharagpur-I.

Conclusion

In this study we have constructed a suitable Education Index (EI) (composite of Enrolment

88

Index (ENI) and Adult Literacy Index (ALI)) by using Iterative Correlation Method (ICM) to attribute proper weight to the twodimension indices of development in education inthe blocks of Paschim Medinipur District in West Bengal, India over the period 2005-06 to 2014-15. Among the blocks Pingla, Sabong, Daspur-II, Daspur-I are the overall top performers and Nayagram, Gopiballavpur-I, Binpur-I, Jamboni are bottom performers in attainment of education. Our study further reveals that most blocks of Paschim Medinipur District have achieved improvement in respect of attainment in education over time.

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Is Vedanta a Religion? An Analytical Study

Dr. Tapan Kumar De

ABSTRACT

The Vedanta Philosophy, specially, the Advaita Vedanta has a profound role in the field of philosophy. The Advaita Vedanta is not only a philosophy, it is also a religion. There is true foundation of universal religion in Advaita Vedanta. The universal religion as presented by the Vedantins is neither dogma nor creed of any kind. Vedanta does not believe any kind of critical attitude towards other religions. Rather it shows its assimilative attitude to all the special religions, such as Buddhism, Jainism, christianism, zorartrianism etc. Vedanta, with its universal attitude, binds all the special religions just like a thread that weaves them together into a garland of flowers. According to Swami Abhedananda, like an impartial judge, the religion of Vedanta gives the proper place to each of these sectarian religions in the grand evolution of the spiritual thoughts and systems of the world.

It is the accepted truth that the Advaita Vedanta is the main tradition of the vedantic thoughts which declared clearly and distinctly that only Brahamana is the reality. The Advaita Vedanta is the non dualistic tradition. Besides this non-dualistic tradition of Samkara there are other traditions also.

All the different Vedanta systems have one common psychology, and that is the psychology of the sankhya system. The Vedanta and the Sankhya philosophy are very little opposed to each other. The Vedanta God developed out of the Sankhyay's Purusha. All the systems take up the psychology of the Sankhya. Both the Vedanta and the Sankhya believe in the infinite soul; only the Sankhya believes there are may souls. According to the Sankhya, this universe does not require any explanation from outside. The Vedana believes that there is the one soul, which appears as many. [1]

Dr. Tapan Kumar De, Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy and the Life-world, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore, W.B.

90

In this chapter I am going to explain the nature of the Vedanta as religion. Educated people have found in Vedanta the true foundations of universal religion. The universal religion as presented by the Vedantins is neither dogma nor creed of any kind. And at the same time it does not criticize any sect of religions, rather it shows its assimilative attitude to all the special religions, such as Buddhism, Jainism, christianism, zorartrianism etc. Vedanta, with its universal attitude, binds all the special religions just like a thread that weaves them together into a garland of flowers. According to Swami Abhedananda, like an impartial judge, the religion of Vedanta gives the proper place to each of these sectarian religions in the grand evolution of the spiritual thoughts and systems of the world. [2] He again says that having no particular founder, it Hands upon the eternal spiritual laws that have various sages and seers of Truth of all countries and of all ages and which have been described in the different scriptures of the world.[3]

From the above excerpt it is proved that Vedanta is a religion. It has the criteria to be a universal religion. Before discussing the nature of Vedanta as religion, I want to give a short description of religion pointing to its definition. The world 'religion' is derived from the Latin word 'religio' which means the respect for what is scared, reverence for the gods, obligations, the bond between man and the gods. [4]

In the ancient and medieval age the word 'religion' was used to designated only to individual virtue of worship. The concept of doctrine or institutional framework was completely absent from the ancient medieval usage.

But in the modern age the concept of religion has changed its sphere and elevated from individual sphere to the sphere of abstraction. It appeared, in the modern age as sets of beliefs. In this way it has became doctrine. Particularly, from the 17th century the concept of modern religion received its modern shape. It is also said that in the 19th century the term 'Buddhism', 'Hinduism', 'Taoism', and 'Confucianism' emerged. [5]

'Religion' is defined by thinkers keeping focus on various things. That is why it is not possible to offer a universal definition of religion. Hegel defined religion as "the Divine spirit becoming conscious of Himself through the finite spirit" [6] Edward Burnett Tyler defined religion as "the belief in spiritual beings" [7] Willam Janes defined religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so for as they ampersand themselves to

91

stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine." [8] Durkheim defined religion as "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to scared thing " [9]

Elifford Geertz defined religion as "[~ ~] system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order or existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" [10]

According to the MacMillan Encyclopedia of Religion, "[…] almost every known culture [has] a depth dimension in cultural experiences […] toward some sort of ultimacy and transcendence that will provide harms and power for the rest of life. When more or less distinct patterns of behavior are built around this depth dimension in a culture, this structure constitutes religion in its historically reorganization of life around the depth dimension of experience—varied in form, completeness, and clarity in accordance with the environing culture" [11] In all these definition we find a sense of superpower except the last one. Hegel, Edward Burnett and Durkhuim offered the definition of religion from the superpower angel and they find the basis of religion on the belief of super consciousness without any justification of the beliefs prevailed in the society from the very beginning.

Anthropologist, Clifford Geertz also defined religion like the above mentioned thinkers. There he gave some importance on moods and motivation by which the concept of religion has been shaped. The last definition given by the Macmillan Encyclopedia of religions offered the definition of religion from the base of culture.

The concept of religion has been presented in Indian philosophy from a difference angel. The word 'Dharma' is used in Indian philosophy instead of religion. The word 'Dharma' comes from 'Dhri' dhatu after the unification of the Pratya 'Man'. Its meaning is 'which Contains'. Dharma contains the life of individual; it also contains the whole society and also contains the whole cosmos.

The etmological meaning of 'Dharma' has three dimensions. In the life of individual its plays a profound role to him or her to lead a spiritual life with morality. Three are some general principles to be followed by an individual to manifest his inner qualities, so that he or she can prepare the mselves to be a social being. Socialization of Dharma is the next phase. There is Barnashram Dharma to bind the society in a systematic manner. The order of the

92

society is based on Dharma. I am not here going to explain the above said aspects of Dharma as I have to do the other job.

The third ideal of Dharma is cosmic ideal. The whole cosmos is based on Dharma. There is an invisible order that binds the cosmos. Here, again we can say that it is Dharma who binds the whole cosmos like a thread to offer a rhythmic sense. It is the universal aspect of the concept of Dharma. In contemporary Indian philosophy this aspect of Dharma has been described by the modern thinkers with a humanistic flavor. Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest modern thinkers rightly pointed out the universal nature of Dharma or religion. He presented the concept of the universal religion keeping in centre the Vedanta philosophy. So, it may be called the Vedantic universal religion.

Now I am going to explain the concept of universal religion. Universal religion is different from that the special religious. Special religious have a founder and have scriptures. As for example, there is the 'Tripitak' for Buddhist, the Zend-Avesta for the Parsees, the old Testament for the Jews, the Bible for the Christians, the Quran for the Mahammedans etc. But the Vedanta is not like them. Having no particular founder, it stands upon the eternal spiritual laws that have been discover by various stages and seers of Truth of all counties and of all ages and which have been described in the different scriptures of the world. [12]

Specifically, it can be said that universal religion is one which is structured out of universals. As Plato perceived it, universals are purged of the specification and limitation of particulars and particulars participate in the universals. The universal religion involves no specifics and does not suffer from limitations of particulars. [13] Keeping focus on the concept of universal it can be said that a universal religion is universal as it has no limitations like any other specific religions and it is more than them. In this sense Vedanta can surely be called a universal religion. All the special religions are embraced in it and all the spiritual laws of different scriptures of different specific religions are there in the religion of Vedanta. So, it can be said that the Vedanta is the true foundation of universal religion.

According to Swami Abhedananda, The religion of Vedanta is like a huge structure, the foundation of which is laid, not upon the quicksand of the authority of any particular booker personality, but upon the solid rock of logical and scientific reasoning, and the walls of which are not made up of the clay of superstitious dogmas, but are built with the stones of spiritual

93

experiences, placed one upon another by the artistic hands of the great seers of Truth of ancient and modern times. [14]

He again says that the roof of this superb structure is not confined within the celestial domain of the anther pomorphic God of a personal religion, but it extends beyond all the heavens of different religion, and, rising above all the various planes of relativity, reaches that infinite and eternal abode of being, intelligence, love and everlasting bliss. [15]

The nature of God as expressed in Vedanta is also a prove for its universality, God, according to the Vedanta does not exist outside our inner world. God is the soul of our souls, life of our lives. We live, more and die within God. Those who feel this and those realize that we are children of had, that souls are inseparable parts of that one stupendous whole, the infinity Being, worship on the second floor of this superstructure of the religions of Vedanta.[16]

The God of Vedanta is beyond all limitations; through it has may names and aspects without any particular form. The God of Vedanta is personal without confinement to any particular personality. The God, at the same line persona and impersonal and beyond both. In this way the God of Vedanta goes beyond any kind of limitations life the God of other particular or specific religions.

God in Vedanta is sexless, and the moment we rise above the ideas of any sex and personality we have become divine and will be able to understand the sexless entity of God. In this way carefully and scientifically Vedanta transcends itself from any kind of dualism. Dualism resides in specific religion and that is why no specific religion has the capability to be a universal religion. The highest truth remains us under certain of dualism in specific religions. But in Vedanta, in universal religion, dualism has nothing to do the highest truth, the absolute truth manifests itself.

The concept of absolute spirit is also a mark of universal religion. The structure of the Vedanta is beyond to all relativity. It is transcendent in nature. According to Swami Abhadananda, those who have gone beyond relativity, who have transcended phenomenal existence, and who have reached that state of divine communion which manifests the eternal, absolute oneness of the supreme spirit can realize the universal character of the religion of Vedanta. [17]

94

Indivisibility is the character of that absolute spirit. Abhadananda says "That Being cannot be divided into parts, but He is one stupendous whole, indivisible. He is finer then space, and as space cannot be divided, so God cannot be divided into parts. That is the absolute spirit, the infinite Being." [18]

That infinite Being is addressed by various have by various thinkers. According to Abhadananda, "In Vedanta it is called the Brahamana , parematmana or over soul; but it is the same as the Good of Plato, the subtantia of Spinoza, the transcendental thing-in-itself of Kant, the will of Schopenhauer, the unknown and unknowable of Herbert Spencer. The substance of Ernst Haeckel, the Science of Matter of the Materialists, the Real Entity or Spirit of the Spiritualists. It is also the same as Christ. He is also the same as Buddha and other prophets." [19]

He again says, "The religion of Vedanta is inseparable from true science and from true philosophy. Why? Because all sciences and all philosophies are nothing but so many attempts of human minds to grasp some particular phase of the eternal Truth or the infinity Reality. As Truth is the goal of all sciences and all philosophies, the same truth is the goal of Vedanta; and as Vedanta attempts to lead all human minds to the realization of that absolute truth of oneness, so, it embraces all the philosophies of the world." [20]

So, it can be said that the Vedanta as religion is absolutely unsectarian and universal in nature. The concept of universal religion preached by our great Swamiji is based on the structure of Vedanta.

Before going to discuss the concept of universal religion as depilted by Swami Vivekanada, I want to explain the definition of religion as given by Swamiji. Swamiji says "Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man." [21] From the metaphysical point of view this definition can be described as the presupposition of the divinity in man. Each soul is potentially divine—is the main metaphysical assertion. The nature of the soul is to manifest. The manifestation of the potentially divine soul depends on human being. One who is able to Cantrell the –external nature as well as the internal nature is capable for the manifestation. So, divinity is there in man and this divinity is not unknown and unknowable like Komte, rather there is possibility of manifestation. Why is there divinity in human being? From metaphysical point of view it can be said that we all are nothing but the manifestation of the highest soul, i.e.

95

Paramatma. So, from the very beginning of the existence of our soul, it is divine. To manifests this divinity is the aim of religion. This assertion goes beyond sectarianism, fundamentalism, and any kind of ism. All residing souls have the tendency to manifest. That is why this definition is called the definition secular universal religion.

There is another side of the definition, i.e. practical side. How can this manifestation be possible? To answer this question it said that the possibility of the manifestation of the divinity already in man is possible through controlling the outer and inner nature. Here again a question may arise. It is possible to control the outer world and inner world nature? The answer of this question is affirmative. There is every possibility to control them. They can be controlled either by work or by worship or by psychic control philosophy or applying any two or all of them simultaneously. So, with these two sides, i.e. Metaphysical and practical sides Vivekananda presented a comprehensive definition of religion.

You must bear in mind that religion does not consist in talk or doctrine or books, but in realization; it is not learning, but being'[22] It is our culture to have a faith in true religion , to have proper realization, to be a true learner so that the process of spiritualization be inspired.

In this sense that India understood religion; and it is this idea of religion that Swami Vivekananda expounded in the west and East through his powerful voice. The end and aim of religion, as our ancient teachers put it, is the experience, anubhaba of God, through the steady growth in man's spiritual awareness. That is the touchstone of religion. There is such a thing as the spiritual growth of the individual, step by step. We experience this growth, just as we see a plant growing, or a building rising up step by step, brick by brick.

When we live the life of religion, strength comes to us, consciousness becomes expanded, sympathies grow and widen, and we feel that we are growing into better men and women. A religious man alone has the strength and wisdom to convert the chaos of life into a pattern of peace and happiness and general welfare.   If religion is taken away from human society what will remain? It is simple barbarism. And today this barbarism in religions rules this society. We have to fight against this barbarism with a strong and powerful weapon. This weapon is nothing but the concept of Universal religion of Swami Vivekananda or the science of values.

He further says that religion is a form a life. A true religious man must have a head to think,

96

a heart to feel and hands to work. In other words, a religious man should have a vision of unity among the diversities, feeling of love and compassion for other. Cardinal values like unity, tolerance, compassion and love etc. must be inculcated in this life. Swamiji thinks of the possibility of bringing together all religions of the world under one umbrella. The dream of Vivekananda was to propagate universal religion which must be the spiritual synthesis. For him, the vedantic Since he was a rationalist, he was emphasizing on the glorified universe with peace and harmony so that the apparent contradictions and fictitious differences among the religions must vanish.

So, the Vedanta as universal religion offers a broad concept of religion itself. I think that the Vedanta with its assimilative nature wants to sweep away all the sectarianism resides in particular religion. Truly it wants to articulate the concept of religion as the religion of all with the essence of religion. The so called religions are fighting with each other to have supremacy over others as they are on the wrong conception of the religion. The Vedanta, as universal religion, will appear as true remedy of all kinds of sectarianism and miss conceptions.

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97

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98

Dr. Saradabrata Laha, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Bengali, Raja N.L. Khan Women's College, Midnapore, West Bengal, India.

99

100

101

Thing-in-itself   will
Permanent Possibility of sensation

102

Natural selection   Survival of the fittest

Struggle for existence

103

104

105

106

107

108