

Views, Role and Perspectives of Swami Vivekananda's Philosophy towards Universal Religion

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Abstract:

Contemporary Indian philosopher Swami Vivekananda has articulated a distinctive interpretation on the concept of religion. He advocated for the imperative of a global religion or the embrace of religious diversity. He asserts that religion transcends mere discourse on concepts or theories, and is not synonymous with sectarianism. It is a connection between the soul and the divine. He elucidated that religion is not comprised of constructing temples, creating churches, or participating in communal worship. Religion is not defined by adherence to a specific doctrine or belief but by spiritual enlightenment. Swami Vivekananda was inspired by and affected by India's ancient culture and philosophy, which is evident in all his messages and teachings, as they are fundamentally based in the philosophy of the Upanishads. He extracted numerous concepts from Vedanta philosophy, which encompasses not only metaphysics but also possesses social and practical ramifications in human existence. Universal religion can be described as the most comprehensive idea that elucidates the inherent oneness and distinctive essence of all global faiths. The fundamental essence of all world faiths is identical. Universal religion articulates the uniformity of the foundational ideas and doctrines inherent in all global religions. Swami Vivekananda posits the existence of a global religion. Just as the worldwide brotherhood of humanity exists, so too does a universal religion. It should be noted that Universal religion is neither the result of divergent comprehension nor a synthesis of the essential components of other religions. It is the recognition that various religions are manifestations of a singular fundamental truth. In this article, views, role and perspectives of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy towards universal religion has been discussed.

Keywords: Swami Vivekananda, Universal Religion, Philosophy.

INTRODUCTION:

Swami Vivekananda is a prominent person in 19th century Indian history. He is not just a commendable figure in Indian history but also an institution unto himself. His teachings impart countless messages for our nation that are advantageous not only in contemporary times but also hold profound value for present-day society. His conception of religion is entirely derived on Vedantic philosophy. Religion is a notion that plays a crucial part in our society and cannot be overlooked. Even in the present context of the twenty-first century, where science and technology are advancing daily worldwide, the significance of religion remains universally recognized. Fundamentally, an in-depth examination of religion reveals its essence as a principle of integration and harmonization, as indicated by its etymological meaning of binding individuals within society. Vivekananda's ideas are fundamentally grounded in Vedānta philosophy, seen in both his works and the lessons he imparted to the world. All his thoughts and notions presented to the world are profoundly grounded in Vedāntic philosophy, particularly the non-dualistic interpretation advocated by Sankara. He reinterprets such concepts through contemporary perspectives to render the teachings of the Upanishads readily comprehensible to modern intellects. All his teachings and sermons to the world emanate from his non-dualistic perspective and are rooted in Vedānta philosophy. Numerous religions exist in this universe, although no universal religion is present. A multitude of distinct faiths exists, although no religion is universally acknowledged by all peoples globally. A significant portion of the populace has begun to contemplate, in profound disillusionment, whether it is not prudent to renounce the practice of religion if it fosters distrust and animosity rather than love, empathy, and harmony. In one regard, religion is universal and singular, whereas the specificities and doctrines of various religions are irrelevant to the fundamental nature of religion. In any religion, the universal aspect is operational, and we must identify the essential and fundamental elements. No specific world faith is required to function as a universal religion. Religion, when accurately comprehended, is inherently universal; so, our pursuit of a world religion should aim to uncover the essence of religion itself, which, upon revelation, will manifest as the singular universal faith envisioned by numerous idealists.

VIEWS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS UNIVERSAL_RELIGION:

Swami Vivekananda articulates multiple views on the definition of religion, acknowledging its complexity and the challenges inherent in encapsulating its diverse parts. Although he demonstrates an inability to define religion, he yet articulates the concept through numerous means. Consequently, Vivekananda's conception of religion is

expansive, including psychological, philosophical, sociological, and other dimensions of human existence. The realm of religion extends beyond mere spiritual elevation; it encompasses moral, psychological, and sociological ramifications for individuals and society as a whole.

Religion is an essential component of human society and belief systems. In the modern world, religion is not merely an idea but serves as a vital societal institution. The role it occupies in society is both influential and ambiguous, encompassing several facets that contribute to diverse functions within any community, exhibiting both positive and bad implications. The influence of religion is elucidated by Vivekananda, who asserts that religious thought is integral to human nature, rendering it difficult for individuals to abandon religion without relinquishing their mind and body, ceasing thought and existence. As long as humanity engages in thought, this conflict will persist, necessitating some form of religion. Consequently, we observe diverse manifestations of religion across. He elucidates the significance of religion in our lives, as it represents one of humanity's most fundamental impulses, encompassing various dimensions of human existence from life to emancipation, sacred to profane, and beyond. One cannot disregard the influence exerted by religion in our life, both positively and negatively. It serves as a cohesive force in society, uniting individuals by transcending various divides via a shared religion. Religion significantly reinforces the concept of morality, as each faith imparts lessons on values and ethics to guide our lives. The rationale for this concept, as articulated by various individuals, appears essential for fostering harmony, advancing peace, and cultivating a sense of brotherhood among people to enhance societal functioning globally.

Swami Vivekananda's concept of universal religion serves as a fundamental solution not only to the issue of religious exclusivism but also to various problems stemming from religious conflicts worldwide, as it embraces the diversity of culture, perspectives, ideologies, and religions. Vivekananda thinks that universal religion is the solution to all religious conflicts that have emerged globally. Religion is a significant component of human culture and values. However, it assumes an equivocal function in our lives and society. While its primary mission is to cultivate, maintain, and advocate for peace and love worldwide, it can, via deviation, become a potent source of violence. Vivekananda contends that the belief in the unique right to existence among many world religions engenders bloodshed. He posits that although faiths differ in numerous respects, they are not contradictory but rather complementary to one another. He characterizes religion as the acknowledgment of divinity inside ourselves and contends that the primary objective of all religions is to attain this realization, which constitutes the singular universal religion. The

fundamental principle of universal religion is that to love humanity is to love God. Thus, the universal religion he advocated warrants significant attention and may serve as an optimal solution to religious discord, since it embraces all cultures, perspectives, and paths through which humanity seeks the only ultimate truth.

Comprehensive investigations examined the theoretical feasibility of a universal religion. However, that does not address our practical issue, which is the fundamental concern. In our current practical plans, the situation appears to be somewhat complex. The fundamental issue at hand is whether those committed to a specific religion will ever be willing to abandon their faith for another. Religion is a delicate matter, and the connection one feels to their faith is primarily internal rather than external. To achieve this, we must examine the fundamental components inherent in any religion to which its adherents are bound by a sense of internal devotion. We must also assess if it will be feasible and emotionally viable for adherents of a specific religion to relinquish the fundamental tenets of their faith and embrace the doctrines and practices of the newly established universal religion. Furthermore, it has to be determined the specific shape or nature of the global religion that an individual may be anticipated to embrace in lieu of their own faith.

A universal religion is one that may be developed anew and embraced globally as a shared faith by all individuals. If a universal religion emerges, it will merely constitute one additional faith among the numerous pre-existing ones. No founder or prophet of a new religion has ever desired his faith to be exclusive to a particular tribe. He has expressed a desire for it to be a universal religion for all humanity. It is an ironic twist of fate that whenever a prophet endeavors to establish a new universally accepted religion, it invariably leads to the emergence of an additional religion alongside those already in existence. If a universal religion emerges as an entirely new faith, it will encounter the same destiny. The alternative to the feasible implementation of a universal religion is likewise untenable.

A universal religion will encompass the beliefs of all religious individuals, rather than being confined to a certain group or community. Consequently, it will become the internationally acknowledged religion. It is believed that the establishment of a universal religion will eradicate all religious conflicts, allowing religion to serve as a unifying force among humanity in the spirit of universal brotherhood. Variation is crucial for the development of life. The diversity of faiths has enhanced the spiritual realm, rendering it inclusive for all individuals. Due to our inherent differences, the same approach can seldom be uniformly applied to any two individuals. Some are highly

emotional, some are philosophical, while others adhere to various ceremonial forms. It seems improbable that all of these employ the same procedure. If there were a singular path to attain truth, it would result in the demise of all others who are not similarly constituted. Once more, we cannot compel everyone to adhere to a certain ideal. Thus, adhering solely to the aforementioned alternatives or any singular possibility of a universal religion does not suffice to build a worldwide religion. It is feasible only when all individuals comprehend that fundamentally, all religions are analogous as they ultimately guide us to the same conclusion. (Irlenborn, B., 2010) This fact is consistently articulated by Swami Vivekananda and various other religious scholars.

Swami Vivekananda promoted the idea of Universal Religion derived from Vedanta Philosophy. He asserted that Vedanta Philosophy possesses the capacity to reconcile the multiplicity of religions and unites them through a common thread. A really Universal Religion must fulfill at least two criteria. Firstly, it must welcome all individuals, acknowledging that no one is inherently born into a specific religion; ultimately, this decision should be left to personal preference and choice. Secondly, Universal Religion must provide satisfaction and solace to every faith denomination. Consequently, a universal religion must be sufficiently expansive to nourish all these intellects. Universal Religion is not a novel entry among the established religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. Swamiji emphasizes the importance of focusing on the universal aspects of any religion to mitigate the negative consequences associated with religious sects. It signifies universality. When we exclude restricted perspectives and non-humanitarian elements from faiths, they will inherently become universal.

In Universal Religion, he did not refer to a one Universal Philosophy, a singular Universal Mythology, or a singular Universal Ritual uniformly embraced by all. Vivekananda posits that this world operates as a functioning wheel within a wheel, an elaborate and remarkably complicated gear. Everyone can facilitate its operation, reduce friction, and lubricate the mechanisms, so to speak. All individuals should acknowledge the inherent requirement of variance, since diversity constitutes the fundamental principle of life. Swami Vivekananda maintains that all many religious factions inherently exist, and their proliferation poses no concern. These distinctions provide us with diverse methods and avenues to attain our spiritual objectives in life. A universal religion will encompass all religious individuals rather than being exclusive to a specific societal group. Consequently, it will become the internationally acknowledged religion. The fundamental concept in Vivekananda's life and teachings was religious universalism. From the perspective of universalism

proponents. No distinctions existed among the adherents of various religions. All religions are universal, equitable, and valid. Vivekananda believed that a universal religion truly exists. We are so preoccupied with the exterior disputes of faiths that we fail to recognize their presence. He illustrates this in a very clear manner. He asserts that a fundamental understanding of the many religions will reveal that they are not inherently conflicting. They are, in reality, complementary to one another. The essence of religion is so extensive that various religions focus just on one or a limited number of characteristics. Each religion contributes to the diverse tapestry of religious expression and fosters the evolution of religion in its unique manner. Its interpretation may be incomplete; yet, as Vivekananda asserts, it evolves not from error to truth, but from truth to truth, advancing from lower truths to higher truths. Secondly, Vivekananda aims to clarify that there may exist different perspectives about the same subjects. Photographing the same objects from various perspectives will yield distinct images. They may provide contrasting impressions; nonetheless, they are images of same items. It will differentiate between individuals, clarifying the contradictory nature of various perspectives. However, they essentially represent perspectives of the same reality and are therefore complementary to one another. The Universal Religion already exists. The Universal religion is the Universal fraternity of humanity. (Puradkar, R.A.B., 2018).

ROLE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS UNIVERSAL RELIGION:

Swami Vivekananda, a contemporary Indian philosopher, has revealed a new rationale for the concept of religion. He contended against the acceptance of religious diversity and advocated for a universal religion. He asserts that religion encompasses more than mere discourse on ideas and theories or sectarianism; it is not confined to sects and civilizations. It pertains to the relationship between the soul and God. He elucidated that the practice of religion does not necessitate the establishment of temples, churches, or engagement in public worship. Furthermore, it is absent from literature, discourse, lectures, or institutions; instead, religion entails the recognition of the connection between the finite self and the infinite. Religion is the recognition of one's spiritual being rather than the compliance with a certain doctrine or belief system. Spiritual awakening constitutes a form of religion. He underscored that each individual globally engages with spirituality distinctively. He also stated that humanity is inherently divine in its current state. That divinity is obscured, however. The acknowledgment of this divinity constitutes the essence of existence, serving as the foundation of religion. Consequently, religion is an exceedingly personal matter in an individual's life. Consequently, religion is essential to human

existence and exerts a significant motivational impact on all aspects of an individual's life, encompassing their social, economic, and political domains. Vivekananda's novel interpretation of universal religion can be characterized as a global brotherhood or love.

Vivekananda's notion of universal religion originates from Vedānta philosophy, which he believes possesses the capacity to fulfill individual spiritual aspirations while transcending religious differences and conflicts. Thus, the concept of universal religion ultimately arises from Vivekananda's non-dualistic perspective rooted in the Advaitic interpretation of the Upanishads. He believes that Vedānta's responsibility is to reconcile these desires and to reveal the shared foundation across all religions, regardless of their stature. He asserts that Vedānta, and Vedānta exclusively, has the potential to serve as the universal religion for humanity, contending that no other belief system is suitable for this purpose. He asserted that Vedānta philosophy possesses the capacity to reconcile religious diversity and interconnect them through a unifying thread. Consequently, he formulated the notion of universal religion, reflecting his nondualistic perspective, as it is entirely grounded in Vedānta philosophy and imparts the principle of non-duality. (Sharma, S., 2020)

The plurality of religious beliefs is essential for the development and progression of religious thinking and discourse. Otherwise, in the absence of distinctions, religious discourse will stagnate and become static; hence, to achieve the intended objectives of religion, these variances of thought are essential since they stimulate more contemplation, resulting in a more refined understanding. Vivekananda contended that religious diversity is essential for the advancement of religious thought. Otherwise, it will lose its momentum and become stagnant, devoid of whirlpools in lifeless water. All religious groups hold significant significance since they provide many pathways to realize the divinity within ourselves, and we should select the one that is most suitable for us. Vivekananda asserts that the existence of diverse religious groups is not problematic; rather, sectarianism is the fundamental source of problems among various faiths. Sectarianism is an extreme sentiment that serves as the primary catalyst for fanaticism, leading to religious discord rooted in these disparities. While sects are inevitable, sectarianism is not necessary. While sectarianism does not enhance the world, the existence of sects is important for progress. He repudiates the notion of sectarianism, which engenders extremism; the existence of diverse sects is not inherently problematic, as it provides multiple alternatives and pathways to attain our objectives in life. However, when extremism is linked to religious ideology, it precipitates

numerous challenges and serves as the fundamental cause of religious disparities, conflicts, and violence.

These distinct religious sects are founded on varying concepts that constitute their ideology. Various ideologies have imparted distinct methodologies for living and attaining our objectives. They are convincingly dissimilar from one other's perspectives and occasionally contradicting. However, such disparities do not alter the singular foundation present in all religions, that one eternal and non-dual truth. The variations among them are merely superficial and outward, contingent upon the many interpretations of a singular reality within one's religious beliefs. The myriad religions of the world present a multitude of ideas and distinct elements, making it challenging to identify a common component shared by all of them uniformly. Vivekananda highlighted these distinctions in his perspective, noting that Islam emphasizes international brotherhood, Hinduism focuses on spirituality, and Christianity advocates for self-purification to attain the kingdom of God. Comparing these is challenging; so, the principles of universal religion would not represent a shared characteristic among all religions. He asserts that it is challenging to mold each religion into a uniform structure; nonetheless, there exists a distinctive characteristic common to all religions: the singular ultimate reality at the core of each, which encapsulates their essence uniformly. Despite the distinctions among religions, there exists a potential to highlight the universal appeal inherent in each faith.

Vivekananda asserts that all many religious sects should fundamentally coexist, and their proliferation poses no concern. These distinctions provide us with diverse methods and avenues to attain our spiritual objectives in life. The greater the religious opposition, the more our synthesis will be refined, aiding us in attaining our ultimate objective. However, these disparities should not escalate into any kind of confrontation or violence. Otherwise, they will forfeit their objective.

Vivekananda articulates the concept of contradictory ideas and divergences among various religions by illustrating that capturing a photograph of the same object from different perspectives results in dissimilar images, which may even convey opposing impressions; nonetheless, they represent the same object. In this example, Vivekananda illustrates the differences as photographs of the same object captured from various angles; the object remains constant, representing the divine reality that transcends all and constitutes the essence of each religion, situated at the core of the world's diverse faiths. The contradictions and disparities we observe are contingent upon our perspective about the acceptance and comprehension of a singular reality, which has been articulated

and elucidated in diverse forms throughout all religions. The eternal, infinite reality and genuine essence that remains unaltered across all temporal dimensions: past, present, and future. (Ramchiary, U., 2022)

Religion encompasses more than mere belief systems, rituals, and practices; it embodies a dynamic energy that compels individuals to fulfill their intrinsic spiritual search. Each individual contemplates the nature of reality and truth in their life, seeking to transcend the phenomenal world. Men's urges stem from their spiritual aspirations and the pursuit of ultimate reality and eternal truth; to satisfy these spiritual yearnings, they must turn to a kind of religion that may fulfill these wants. This is why all religious factions are evolving continuously. Vivekananda asserts that none of the major world faiths has perished; moreover, each one is advancing. Indeed, all faiths exhibit numerous distinctions across various dimensions; nonetheless, they together assert their capacity to fulfill human spiritual needs and have a fundamental commonality: the belief in a superior reality, manifested in diverse forms, which is eternally true and represents the ultimate truth. He asserts that a singular reality emerges from several religions: the existence of an Ideal Unit Abstraction, presented to us as either a Person, an Impersonal Being, a Law, a Presence, or an Essence. The fundamental objective of each religion is identical, as they all assert their purpose is to guide us toward the ultimate reality we aspire to attain in our lives. Vivekananda asserted that the ultimate objective of humanity, the purpose and culmination of all faiths, is one – reunification with God, or equivalently, with the divinity inherent in every individual's true essence. The concept of global religion illustrates the fundamental unity among all faiths.

Each religion articulates and delineates the ultimate reality uniquely, assisting individuals in fulfilling their spiritual quest. Vivekananda elucidated the spiritual pursuit of humanity, asserting that no desire is more cherished by the human heart than the one that reveals divine illumination. During that process, any individual of any faith progresses from the most fundamental truth to the highest truth. In each endeavor, they strive to comprehend the ultimate truth, and with every second of their trip, they become nearer to their desired objectives.

Vivekananda asserts that no singular religion can be deemed the only and correct road to attain ultimate reality, as each religion has its unique method deemed appropriate for realizing the supreme truth. Therefore, the notion of religious exclusion is erroneous, and to protect society from the detrimental consequences of such exclusion, we must adhere to the teachings of the Upanishads, which provide a solution to prevent these issues through the concept of universal religion.

The concept of universal religion is fundamentally rooted in a philosophy that advocates for the universal acceptance of all world religions.

The concept of global religion assigns equal significance to all religions, asserting that each one presents a distinct model that influences both the religion itself and its members, ultimately benefiting society and humanity as a whole. The fundamental theme of the Islamic teachings, as noted by Vivekananda, is the brotherhood of all individuals. Likewise, Hinduism possesses a more spiritual and idealistic quality. Christianity possesses a distinct set of principles.

The concept of universal religion asserts that the ultimate reality, pursued globally by diverse methods across numerous faiths, resides inside us. We must rediscover the divinity inherent within us, and religion serves as a way to facilitate this introspective journey. Vivekananda introduces a pivotal transformation through his concept of universal religion, which not only addresses the disparities and disputes among other faiths but also offers an exemplary framework for the improved sustainability of the planet. The concept of global religion transcends the confines of all world faiths while simultaneously encompassing them, offering the most effective means for the comprehension of ultimate reality. In other words, universal religion surpasses all world religions while simultaneously including them all.

The concept of universal religion conveys two significant principles: first, the respect for all religions worldwide, and second, the acceptance of the religious variety that exists in the world. These two elements are essential for the building of peace and harmony globally. The concept of universal religion posits that there is not a singular method to articulate truth and reality; rather, it can be conveyed through numerous avenues. All religions articulate the same truth through various means and expressions, yet they ultimately point to a one entity. The perception of that ultimate reality, as filtered via our own minds, will vary among us, yet it remains singular and unified. He represents the ultimate reality; only our perceptions differ. The universality of various religions can only be acknowledged through the concept of a universal religion, which is its primary aim. Vivekananda presented a non-dualistic perspective on religion based on the teachings of the Upanishads. His vision is not merely academic; it possesses significant pragmatism, offering an exemplary paradigm to reconcile religious diversity and transcend all religious discord. Its utility and pertinence extend beyond contemporary times, holding considerable significance in today's society as we confront several issues stemming from religious discord; a universal religion may offer an optimal solution to these challenges.

The fundamental Vedanta principle asserts that humanity is divine and that all phenomena in the world stem from this divine consciousness. Every soul possesses the potential for divinity, and the aim is to illuminate this divinity by influencing both internal and external nature. This encapsulates the essence of religion. His concept of a global religion is predicated on the notion that all individuals possess inherent equality in a basic sense. It constitutes the basis for his religious ideology. It is an idea that is essential and necessary in the contemporary global context. The relevance of its application in contemporary multicultural culture, where materialism is stressed and must be fulfilled at whatever expense, is essential. Consequently, virtues like as tolerance, compassion, love, and brotherhood are diminishing, while conflicts across races, castes, and religions are escalating. Vivekananda's philosophy of Universal Religion is regarded as the sole solution for addressing these difficulties and fostering global peace.

The most urgent and important discourse globally currently is around the concept of religious plurality. It is now evident that instead of persisting in the discourse about religion, we must implement this concept into contemporary society. Consequently, we may infer that there exists a singular solution for our multicultural and religiously varied society. Embracing Vivekananda's concept of a singular universal religion, which emphasizes the acceptance of religious pluralism rather than the conversion of adherents from various faiths, would eliminate hatred, jealousy, conflict, and warfare; instead, it would foster a unifying bond of love, ensuring that the progress of one does not hinder the advancement of others. This universal ideal, founded on the principles of unity and humanity, aims at human self-realization and is not exclusive to any specific religion; it allows for the celebration of the beliefs of mystics and humanitarians, and can be embraced by both adherents of various faiths and non-believers alike. This comprehensive global perspective can serve as the foundation for harmonious coexistence and assist us in achieving the ideal of a unified global family. The most urgent and important discourse globally currently focuses on the concept of religious plurality. Consequently, we may infer that there exists a singular solution for our multicultural and religiously varied society. Embracing Vivekananda's concept of a singular universal religion, which advocates for the acceptance of religious pluralism rather than the conversion of adherents from various faiths, would eliminate hatred, jealousy, conflict, and warfare. Instead, individuals would be united by a common thread of love, ensuring that the progress of one does not hinder the progress of others. This universal ideal, founded on the principles of unity and humanity, aims at human self-realization and is not exclusive to any specific religion; it allows for the celebration of the beliefs of mystics and humanitarians, and can be embraced by both adherents of various faiths and

non-believers alike. This comprehensive global perspective can serve as the foundation for harmonious coexistence and assist us in achieving the ideal of a unified global family. (Lalung, H., 2022)

Swami Vivekananda says that a defining trait of global religion is the acknowledgment that diverse methods exist to attain religious objectives. The individual must be granted complete autonomy. Individuals from all religious communities ought to honor the doctrines and tenets of other faiths. Respect for others' work entails acknowledgment rather than mere tolerance. One must engage in prayer and service alongside individuals of all faiths. He ought to pray to God in temples, mosques, and churches. He asserts that the myriad objects, humans, animals, and plants in this diverse world are all manifestations of the same entity. Those who comprehend this truth are not at fault.

PERSPECTIVES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS UNIVERSAL RELIGION:

Swami Vivekananda's goal for a universal religion is a compelling notion that aligns with his spiritual principles and the pressing necessity for global unification and reciprocal respect. Vivekananda, a pivotal figure in the spiritual renaissance of India and the contemporary world, championed a global religion grounded in spiritual enlightenment. This religion would surpass the limitations of any specific faith tradition, emphasizing universal truths that unite all individuals in their common spiritual pursuit.

Central to Vivekananda's conception of a universal religion is the notion that authentic spirituality transcends the material realm. He asserts that religions have to prioritize the inward spiritual experiences of individuals instead of being limited to exterior rites and rituals. Vivekananda maintains that the core of religion is the recognition of the divine within oneself. This comprehension surpasses geographical, cultural, and historical distinctions that frequently separate individuals. Through spiritual enlightenment, humans can attain a transcendent truth that is not confined to any particular religion doctrine. Vivekananda contended that all faiths share a singular objective: to guide individuals toward the awareness of the divine. Regardless of adherence to Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, or any other faith, all religions eventually endeavor to address the same inquiries regarding the essence of existence and the purpose of life. In this context, the distinctions among religions are perceived as merely superficial manifestations, rather than as conflicting entities. Vivekananda conceptualized a universal religion that would encompass various forms, provided they culminated in the recognition of the same fundamental truth. Vivekananda's teachings underscore the

significance of tolerance and empathy in religious engagements. He regarded these attributes as fundamental for the advancement of both persons and societies. Vivekananda posited that by emphasizing the intrinsic spiritual experiences of individuals, rather than external rituals or ideas, people from all religious traditions could unite in a spirit of collaboration and mutual comprehension.

Swami Vivekananda's advocacy for a universal religion transcended mere philosophical abstraction; it was a pragmatic method for comprehending and engaging with religion in contemporary society. He believes that a balanced approach incorporating the intellectual, mythical, and ritualistic dimensions of religion is crucial for attaining spiritual progress. These three dimensions, albeit appearing distinct, all serve essential functions in the religious experience and should not be seen as conflicting or opposing components. Vivekananda regarded the philosophical dimension of religion as paramount. Philosophy offers the intellectual basis for comprehending the essence of existence, the self, and the divine. It provides a platform for individuals to examine their spiritual essence through rational thought and introspection. Vivekananda posited that a religion devoid of philosophy is deficient. He urged individuals to immerse themselves in the philosophical doctrines of their own traditions, pursuing knowledge and insight to navigate their spiritual paths. Philosophy establishes the academic framework, but mythology functions as the imaginative and symbolic lexicon of religion. Myths provide narratives that facilitate individuals' connection to profound realities that are challenging to express solely through rationality. Vivekananda acknowledged the capacity of mythology to incite devotion, elicit emotions, and impart moral teachings. He contended that myths, when accurately interpreted, disclose the underlying spiritual truths that underpin all religious traditions. Ultimately, rituals are integral to Vivekananda's vision of a global religion. Rituals manifest the external representations of a person's inward spiritual ambitions. They foster a sense of sanctity and veneration in everyday existence. Vivekananda acknowledged that rituals may occasionally become devoid of meaning or mechanistic; yet, he contended that they possess the capacity to enhance individual consciousness when executed with appropriate intention and comprehension. Rituals need not to be perceived as ultimate objectives but as instruments for connecting with the divine and promoting spiritual development. Vivekananda regarded self-realization as the paramount objective of religion. He asserted that every person has the ability to encounter the divine directly through their own inner experience. This concept is fundamental to his notion of a universal religion. Vivekananda posits that authentic spirituality transcends the adherence to external regulations or rituals, focusing instead on the recognition of

one's inherent divinity. This insight cannot be acquired solely by intellectual understanding; it necessitates direct, personal experience. Vivekananda asserted that the journey to self-realization is accessible to all individuals, irrespective of their background, social standing, or faith. He urged individuals to acknowledge their intrinsic divinity and accept their fundamental connection to the cosmos. By engaging in disciplines such as meditation, self-discipline, and devotion, individuals can attain an elevated state of consciousness and perceive the unity of all things. Vivekananda posits that the direct experience of the divine constitutes the actual substance of religion, and it is this collective experience that underpins a universal religion. (Chattopadhyay, I., 2015)

Swami Vivekananda's conception of a global religion was not merely academic; it was profoundly pertinent to the issues of his era. During the late 19th century, India and the global landscape experienced profound social, political, and cultural transformations. Vivekananda was profoundly preoccupied with the challenges of social reform, colonialism, and religious intolerance affecting India and the global community. He posited that a universal religion, rooted in spiritual enlightenment and reciprocal respect, could mitigate these challenges by cultivating a feeling of unity and shared purpose among individuals from varied origins.

Swami Vivekananda's advocacy for a universal religion was a reaction to the increasing materialism and scientific rationalism of his era. He regarded the emergence of contemporary science and technology as significant progress, although cautioned that such improvements should not undermine spiritual values. He believed that the contemporary world required a spiritual foundation to direct it towards peace, harmony, and human advancement. His conception of a universal religion aimed to reconcile the material and spiritual realms, providing a harmonious framework that recognizes the significance of both dimensions.

CONCLUSION:

Swami Vivekananda asserted that truth may be articulated in various forms, each of which is valid. Although the doctrines of religions vary, their fundamental objective remains consistent. The aspiration of all religions and humanity is the reunification with God or the divinity that constitutes each individual's true essence. The principal religious doctrine is harmony, which serves as the central theme of Vivekananda's teachings. Universal religion represents the concept including all forms of religious discord. It intertwines religious diversity into a cohesive thread of oneness. The notion of universal religion applies to the contemporary global landscape. This comprehensive global perspective can establish the basis for

harmonious cohabitation among all individuals worldwide, enabling us to realize the aspiration that 'the entire world is one family.' Universal religion has no tolerance for intolerance, bigotry, conversion, persecution, bloodshed, or emotions of superiority that create divisions among religions; it fundamentally embodies the principle of non-dualism, which fosters a sense of oneness. The concept of universal religion is profoundly significant and indisputable; it represents an ideal framework that embraces varied perspectives, beliefs, and cultures, fostering respect for difference to cultivate peace, promote fraternity, and enhance the functioning of human existence and society. Swami Vivekananda posits that several religious sects inherently exist, and their proliferation poses no concern. These distinctions provide us with diverse methods and avenues to attain our spiritual objectives in life. A universal religion will encompass all religious individuals rather than being confined to a specific societal group. Consequently, it will become the internationally acknowledged religion. The essential theme in the life and teaching of Vivekananda was religious universalism. In the view of those who believed in universalism. No distinctions existed among the adherents of various religions. All religions are universal, equitable, and authentic. The universal religion is the framework proposed by Swami Vivekananda that presents a non-dualistic perspective on religion. It is the thought that might supply us answer for all forms of religious dissensions. The beauty of this very thought is that it doesn't submerge the individuality and characteristics of any single religion rather it appreciates and embraces the multiplicity of religions, while at the same time it weaves the religious diversity into a golden thread of unity. The concept of a universal religion has the capacity to mitigate the various religious conflicts that cause significant societal turmoil. It is something that is beyond the ideas that is held by many world religions on the basis of which so many discrepancies occur between religions since it doesn't have any particular rituals, practices, scriptures, prophet and also the feeling of dominance. Emphasizing the differences among religions based on their external aspects perpetuates religious conflicts. However, recognizing the unifying thread that connects all religions, which constitutes their core essence, naturally dissolves these differences and conflicts. So, there is no space for any form of bigotry, hatred, conversion, persecution, slaughter and the feeling of superiority in universal religion that causes disparities between religions, it is simply based on the expression of non-dualism that teaches us the feeling of oneness. The cornerstone of this thought lies on the concept that is the service of humanity is the service of divine supreme truth as it views the true nature of man which is divine. It conveys that every individual possesses inherent divinity and spirituality; our primary objective in life is to realize this divinity. It sanctifies the interaction among individuals, aiding

in the prevention of human degeneration while imbuing life with meaning and rendering it worthwhile. The concept of universal religion is profoundly significant, and it is indisputable that it represents an ideal framework that embraces diverse opinions, beliefs, and cultures, fostering respect for diversity to cultivate peace, promote brotherhood, and enhance harmony for the optimal functioning and sustainability of human life and society. Swami Vivekananda's goal for a universal religion is a striking reminder of the oneness that resides underneath the superficial diversity of human faiths. Vivekananda aimed to foster a society in which individuals might surpass sectarian divisions by highlighting the common spiritual goals of all religions and promoting mutual respect, empathy, and comprehension, thereby facilitating a more profound and universal spiritual experience. His advocacy for a harmonious synthesis of philosophy, mythology, and rituals, along with his focus on self-realization, presents a route to spiritual unification that is both enduring and profoundly pertinent to contemporary issues.

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