

Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and M. K. Gandhi in the Context of Religious Pluralism

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Abstract : Inter-religious dialogue and understanding are possible without losing one's own identity. We find a unique blend of tradition, reason and human values in contemporary Indian thought. On this point, we may take note of the similarity between views of M. K. Gandhi and the religious discourse of Swami Vivekananda, i.e., all religions as different paths to God realisation but their unity lies in their goal, which is attainment of God, who is One. This enrichment guided us towards a kind of religious pluralism of John Hicks, who gives a solution to the problems of co-existence of diverse religions without undermining any religion. The plurality percolates into different spheres of Indian society and regarded as a chord with discord in a wonderful music. Swami Vivekananda believes that to serve man is to serve God. Both M. K. Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda were non-dualist and believed in the essential unity of man. Gandhi believes in the many foldedness of reality. Swami Vivekananda's attitude towards religion is in principles of co-existence and acceptance. These principles have been accumulated in such a way that gave us a different world-view. The concept of unity, tolerance, equality, etc. can be achieved only by a spiritual attitude. Dynamism of spirituality stands in between man's empirical existence and his spiritual destination and manifests itself in the different aspects of life including religious understanding. It is a movement towards pluralism. It is the fusion of spirituality with plurality which characterizes the concept of religious pluralism. This re-visited religious pluralism will open a new horizon of love and tolerance in our society. M. K. Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda paved the path for new horizon for a resurgent world. So the Indian spiritualism re-vitalised the concept of pluralism and stimulated its progress towards a new world.

Keywords : M. K. Gandhi, religious pluralism, Swami Vivekananda, worldview

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