

INTRODUCTION

Religion is the instrument which can bring together with divine revelation in nature and history can prepare the path for the world unity for which the present world is longing so much. Religion is the spiritual adventure and not a mere intellectual conformity or a gathering of some ceremonials. In this spiritual adventure, man finds fulfilment of his life where he has the experience in which his whole being is raised to its highest peak. To have a chance of this experience he needs a rebornness in his consciousness and understanding. He has to undergo a total inner evolution by which he will be regenerated and in this regenerated soul the currents of universal life will flow down incessantly. He will then be free from all types of hatred to any man. Religion in this sense will be the binding force which will deepen the solidarity of human being. The world scene has seen so much of blood sheds as because of dogmatism. This dogmatism guards the door of true religion for which we may not have the fresh breath of religion. Religion is the reflection of both God and man. Religion is a life to be lived. It is not a theory to be accepted or a belief to be adhered to though it allows scope to varied approaches to the Divine. But we should not surround ourselves with a shell of frozen articles of faith and vain presumption of castes and classes. If we do so then we shall stifle and surpass the breath of the spirit.

Our true religious attitude should be expressed in love and at the unity of mankind. Our religious rituals can not and do not cleanse the heart of man as service to our fellow being does. The goal of world unity is to be achieved through this fellow feeling and love for fellow being. This is insisted by each and every religion of the world. There are similarities in religious experience of mankind which indicates that a common humanity reacts to man's encounter with the Divine. But the crusading spirit has spoiled the scene of religion. The world over misery and fear can be eradicated if the different religions strive to attain the common ideals and seek to root out the misunderstandings with sympathetic attitude. The conviction of superiority should be converted to the appreciation of other faiths and then there should be a healthy interchange among them. This religious reflection will gain its stimulation by the knowledge of its friendship of other different religions which will give birth to universal ethical standards.

The practically - minded man wants to realise his divine nature by the performance of duty and social service and it will be possible if we break the shackle of selfishness, which walls off from the greater world. If we identify ourselves with larger ends, we can then develop and nourish the love which disarms all types of hatred and bitterness. In our love for man, we become conscious of our unity with him regenerating the feeling of brotherhood.

Now we need a rethought about the obstacle that stands in the way of achieving the dream of one world which is full of peace and good will.

This new world gives a call to us for which we have to remake and refashion ourselves do readjust with this new order of the world. Religiously disciplined nature of man can have the glimpse of the inner self and can change and transform ourselves. This discipline cleanses ourselves from the baser nature and by which we can reach the higher plane. Man's progress is to be judged not by his power over the forces of nature but by his restrictions over the ~~brute~~ plane of his heart. It is true that there is a gulf of difference between the actual human nature and the ideal and perfect nature of man.

We have to cultivate the system of training and disciplining the nature of the individual man. This system of disciplining is a code of conduct supported by the conscience of the mass people. It gives training to man instead of dictating them to be virtuous. This code of conduct is known as dharma which is enlivened in response to the progress of the Society and sustains all living beings with a string of harmony. This dharma is two faced - one is individual and the other is social. The prime goal of the individual life is the realization of an ideal which includes self-abnegation and much sufferings. This notion of dharma which is Indian in its origin distinguishes four stages in the life of man - that is Brahmacharya, Grhastha, Vanaprastha, Sannyasa. In the stage of Brahmacharya, man has to undergo a process of thorough discipline and in the second stage man becomes an integral part of the society accepting all the rights and duties. In the third stage one has to cultivate

the practice of renunciation and in the fourth stage he becomes a lover of humanity by serving humanity without his self-interest. He then finds his union with the Universal Reality.

The uniqueness of the individual man lies in Sradharma which should be realized in and through his work. Much striving and sacrifices are needed to regenerate a holy and perfect character. The supremacy of the moral end is to be admitted without any doubt. On the belief that human life is an integral part of the divine reality, it has nourished religious hospitality. The Psyche of the individual man has to grow and expand and religion will help us to grow and to expand to a life of harmony and of love and freedom. From the beginning of history, religion is an inward transformation towards spirituality which will overshadow all the discords from the world scene. By this spiritual exercise we awake from division and conflict into an all enveloping love for mankind. We have to kindle the flame of the spirit and this will be through religious experience affecting our whole being and abolishing our disquiet and anxieties and the sense of our meaninglessness of our fugitive existence. Each and every soul is seeking the same goal though under the different labels of religions. Now the silver lining is peeping as every religion is passing through the ordeal of self-analysis and self-criticism. It is now nourishing the tendency which is sympathetic to other religions. Religions are now going to be more liberal because of the sky-scraping victory of Scientific knowledge and is attempting to

find out the fundamental worth of life. The process of self-understanding and self-criticism of religion makes way for spiritual exchange which is now paving the path for the deep fellowship of the spirit. This fellowship of the spirit will make us to treat one another as spiritual brothers.

But at the height of our technological might we are now face to face with an intellectual crisis which is moral and spiritual at the same time. We are unable to overcome our moral blindness. We are unable to remake and refashion our inner nature which makes the spirit to accept the values of justice, equality, creative living, and freedom. Man has re-created his spirit to appreciate the values of love, justice and equality and must prepare his mind to think of the human family as one. The frontiers of geography should be expanded towards the world-wide boundary and this expansion will be determined only by our attitudes of minds. This broadened boundary will result a free, just and friendly world-promoting racial harmony.

In this modern era we are attempting our best to take our foot steps from the region of nationalism towards internationalism and this is the fate of history. In this international world we have to shape a better future for mankind where we are led into new fields of attainments and new realization of destiny. Our technological might is both a challenge and an opportunity. We have to avail this challenge and opportunity for the upbringing of human being. We have to abandon discord and

have to be fashioned with peace which guarantees justice and liberty for all. For enduring peace we have to eradicate wars from - this world and should recognize our common humanity by our feelings of integrity, patience, understanding and an all enveloping towards humanity.

This is not only verbal for us. We have to actualise this in life. We can do it as for man, to live indicates his immense possibilities. In every moment of our life we make ourselves by choosing from the future which is nothing but the realm of the possible. In every act where we are free to choose, we try to unveil what we potentially are. For sartre, man alone is for himself. As man has no nature but has a history, so with his past history he has to create his future history of love, integrity, patience and understanding. He is to be escaped from his suffering of a radical insecurity of being'. This 'radical insecurity of being' is the root of all discords of this universe. According to Heidegger, all existence is infected with the character of time and historicity. We must make it possible to find out a ground for our existence and a certainty which will guarantee to gain a profound tranquility for our souls. It will certainly be possible as we are in the process of becoming a man by our religious quest. In this religious quest we have to encounter with non-existence, meaninglessness which are our psychological states and we have to overcome these states of our psyche as we are unique, original and creative spirits without any bindings of space and time world. Man has the freedom which

indicates that he possesses an element which is not subject to any type of regulation. The employment of this freedom can raise man to the plane of divinity. We have to employ our gift of free choice in the right direction by which we will be lifted in the higher plane. We must not abuse the fact of freedom as the abuse of freedom will lead us to the plane of fear and anxiety which is for Soren Kierkegaard "Sickness unto death". We must be with Sartre when he says that the whole essence of man is his existence and man is which he makes of himself. We must have to make ourselves with a new orientation of mind where no fear, no anxiety can trespass. Then our mind will be wholly merged into the ocean of peace, tranquility and love. We should on the same platform with Sartre to protest against any form of determinism and should affirm that we are absolutely free in the sense that our each and every act is purely original finding its sole justification in man's projection of himself in the future which is continuous in its nature. For Sartre our all free acts are commitments on behalf of all. Man is not a secluded identity. He is involved in relationship with other members of the world. Sartre thinks that when our choices are sustained for becoming an integral part of our being then these free choices become significant. He thinks then that we should exercise our free choices which are appropriate to all other human selves who are situated in the same positions. As our nature is gifted with immense possibilities so we have to actualise these possibilities by-exercising our free choice in the right direction. This free choice gives us light by which we will dispel all the darkneses of insecurity, anxiety and fear.

We have to refashion and remake the world. Our striving to remake the world will consciously direct the process of human evolution. Man can not for long remain in his secluded solitude. He must come out from his solitude to be united with the whole of humanity with all his love, patience and integrity. As the **history** of man is not closed chapter so we must have to make a history of victory over our anguish, anxiety, lust for power. The only tool or power in our hand should be love, patience sympathy for the others. We have to mould our future in a new fashion with all our courage and determination. We are to be the redeemed souls where God-consciousness and self-consciousness should be expressed with all its radiation. We have to be reborn which will relate us to the inward man in us. The present state is only whispering the truth which is to be actualised by us in near future. The whole Indian philosophy is charged with the law of Karma. This law of Karma does not in any sense means any determinism. It embraces the truth that we are the free choosers to make ourselves perfect with our Karma or action. It indicates that we can lift our plane of finitude to the plane of **infinity**. The plane of Divinity is not a fiction. It wholly depends on us. We choose the heaven. We can have that heaven on earth by our action or Karma. Nothing else but our own Karma is the sole determiner whether our earth will be heaven or be a earth full of lust, anxiety, meaninglessness, nothingness, jealousy and hatred. For this all we need is to be a dwija which means reborness of the heart and soul.

It is not Christ but for the priesthood which preaches the teaching of Christ which is the main cause for which religion is

blamed in this era and religion is to be ashamed. The priests interpret the teachings of Christ in their own styles and fashions which have its impact on Christ. But Christ remain as pure as ever with all his glory and radiance. It is true in all aspects of life that one small fact can ruin or marr even the grandest hypothesis. The hypothesis of Christ is ruined by the dragons which guard the door of church. Though the hypothesis of Christ is the grandest hypothesis of religion yet the small factors of the creeds and dogmas and the guardianship of the priests destory the heavenly domain of Christ for which we, the common mass, are accustomed to think in the manner that religion itself is the reason of all evils in the world.

The language of religion is not an evil. The interpretations given by the priest may work as evil deeds for which the Roman Catholic Church had denied Darwin and it takes only one hundred and fifty years to agree with Darwin. Galileo had to face a stern attitude of the Church as he claimed Copernican theory as true and in our modern time, Freud has faced the same fate. But the silver lining of hope is showing its face as the Church has agreed with Galileo since the last four years. These facts exemplify how the Church determines Christ. Christ is not to be blamed as he is pure and above any anguish and hatred against any development of Science, culture, philosophy or art. Instead, it is the burning spirit enflaming the spirits of Science, art, culture or philosophy as religion is the indomitable spirit of quest for the invincible regions of life. Religion itself in

its pure form remains unchanged with all its purity and cleanliness though the concepts about religion undergo changes with the different types of interpretations given by the different interpreters at different times. These interpreters can change and can mould the main theme and tune of religion and can make the genuine religion to be manifested in a perverted form for which religion has to shoulder much risk factors which it should shed off.

Bertrand Russell is perfectly right when he thinks that the power of the thinker lies not so much in the uniqueness of ideas rather more in his skill to defend his views against all possible criticisms. Whether the above idea of religion is unique or not matters less than the fear of criticisms which this idea may have to face in the near future for which this idea needs refuge. This refuge will surely be granted by religion as religion will be the source of all courageousness which will give continuous backing to this idea.

Religion renders unto us love, sympathy, mutual appreciation, integrity of the soul. But we see that instead of infusing these temperaments into the soul, it nourishes the temperament of injustice, hatred, diversity. This is due to the misrepresentations of religion. Religion has the distaste for these temperaments. It should tear off its old traditional coat and be cleansed off from the dirt and dusts which are consumed by it through the long ages it has travelled and be manifested with its reborn nature. It must awake and be resurrected from the graveyard and should give the proclamation that though

its body may be dead yet its soul is much alive to make enliven the broad aspects of human life. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is just an example which the human life should repeat in his life. Man's body may be dead but his soul should be alive with the help of religious discipline which man should exercise all through his life span. This world should be a vast religious gymnasium and each and every man should undergo this practice of this religious gymnasium.

The Indian soil should not be ashamed for its caste system as this system does not degrade man. This caste system only gives location of human beings in accordance with the actions which he subserves in his society. All provisions and paths are open for him to be uplifted or degraded. He determines his caste by his own karma. The perverted forms of caste system is prevailing now in India. So we should not have any misconception of the Indian caste system. This caste system too is indicating the supreme reign of the law of karma. By karma or action we can be upgraded. On the perverted form of caste system takes the form of social injustice. If the redeemed soul revolts against this social injustice and raise himself into higher status of the society then it will be the right answer for the injustice that is done against him. Religion then will flow with its own radiance to glorify this earth.

Man and religion : a critical survey is not an antique subject for discussion. From the prehistoric era it upholds the

Starata of prime importance. The relics of Mohenjadoro in India the relics of the pyramids in Egypt, the caves of Ajanta and many other relics of the different parts of the world show the commands of religion upon the life of man.

Religion is the basic topic of Ramanya, Mahabharata, Vedas, Upanishads, Manu Samhita, the Gita, the holy Scriptures of the Hindus of India. The Bible for the Christians is such an example. The holy Quran for the Muslims also presents the same truth. These holy scriptures enriched the literature and culture and ethics, economics, politics, Sociology, other than being merely the holy Scriptures. These works of literature depicts that religion subserves the platform of literature, ethics, politics and much other domains of human culture. It enriches dance, drama, music of Indian culture. Kuchipudi, Bharatnatyam, Odessi, Manipuri, Choudances of India are based on religion. Meghnadbadh Kabya is a beautiful example of drama which signifies how religion engulfs the dramas. Not only this drama but also there are many other dramas in the world which are charged with religion and the examples of these dramas will only need more pages which will give more load to this short volume of the discussion.

Shayma Sangeet, Brahma Sangeet and in the most songs of Rabindra Sangeet, religion forms the core of the heart. The folklores and the songs of the Bauls indicate the same truth. These folklores are not captivated by India only as these can be found in all the varieties of the other parts of the world.

We can not deny the past as the past forms the background of the present. The difference between the past and the present is knife-edged. This past of religion has arisen from its graveyard to show that it is not dead but most alive being the backbone of all the spheres of human life whether it is politics, economics, art, science and ethics.

The logical positivism, Agnosticism Scepticism, Humanism, Communism exhibit their missionary zeal of a particular age to dethrone religion and at last became only attempts to be the substitutes of religion. These zeals have proved themselves to be defeated. Their combatant zeal only presented some 'isms' and theories which attract our attention to have a different taste. But alas these can not subserve the purpose of religion. Religion with its redeemed radiance comes into the world scene and shows that though its body may be dead yet its soul is alive. This is the reason for which in Russia, (the Mecca of communism) St. Petersburg comes throwing away Leningrad the 'isms' which tried their best to be the substitutes of religion only act well as theories but can not be the substitute of religion. Religion claims, absolute devotion towards the beyond which is an unquenchable thirst of metaphysics. Communism is hostile towards religion as it is itself wants to be a religion. It professes to be a consistent development of the values of liberalism. But this demand to change our social structure is a logical corollary of the religious principle that we are the children of God. No doubt Marx has the burning indignation against social wrongs and he has his earnest concern for the poor and the oppressed. Yet Marxism lacks that absolute devotion which is the main tune and theme of religion.

Man can not be departed from his religious standpoint as it is his inner craving for the ultimate Reality for which he has crossed a long journey and yet a long path is waiting for him to be crossed to fulfill his inner sense of value. No other can be a substitute of his sense of value. Man's consciousness of his individuality, society and of the universe is totally dependent upon his expansion of the temporal knowledge. This expansion and the depth and the types of his temporal knowledge expands into the whole society which brings forth social ethics which each and every individual man consciously or unconsciously follows.

Logic, Ethics and other Normative Sciences exceed all types of verifications. So the natural question is - now can man live in a world which is totally devoid of ultimate sense of values which are in all probabilities static or eternal?

Here in this crucial juncture we can have a glimpse upon religion, the web of which we can not shed off. History shows that after seventy five years of communist regime, religion comes in Soviet Russia and Yugoslavia and all the blood shed which are going on in those states is only for religion though not in its true sense.

All the violent and ruthless battles which the world scene has the **occasion** to perceive so long, are fought only for religion. India was divided into two on the ground of religion no doubt.

So it can be concluded primarily that in any case we have

no escape from the clutch of religion. If we want to avoid religion then it will be like the ostrich which has its face beneath the sand at the time of the whirl of the sand .

If we look towards Science then it is revealed that Science does not believe in Icon and it does not create Icon as Science as realism but it lacks Iconism. But the vast region of art, culture and philosophy has that luxurious expansion. This expansion is the gift of religion enriching each and every field of human culture. Modern Science is now creeping towards this luxurious expansion.

The sense of value is the production of man's existence and this sense of value is the standard of the good and evil, should and should not be, honesty and dishonesty. The question now which haunts us is - who or what will determine it.

This value - consciousness can not depend upon economical gain or loss or upon the satisfaction coming out from the economical conditions. If we want to go deep to realize the truth then we find it depends upon life - consciousness and upon the success of life - consciousness. Man's life - sense wants answers to the questions such as - what is this world, what is the universe, why he has to die in this world in which he lives. These questions haunts him in his conscious or unconscious moments. Man's life-sense, ethics and value-sense are established upon some simplified explanations of these questions.

There are two paths by which answers to these innate questions can be sought - one is Science, specially physics and astronomy and the other is religion and God.

From the earliest stage of science, religion is in the backward step in proportion to each step of progress of science. This story goes on continuously without any recess from Copernicus to Galileo and to Newton and then to social determinism of Marxists to Einstein.

But the modern science does not stand at that platform where it was in the past as pure Mathematics and pure physics is proceeding towards the explanation of the mysteries of the universe. The Science of the laws of Macro Cosmos and the Micro Cosmos is on the verge of disclosing the two great complicated mathematics of "General theory of Relativity " and "Quantum Mechanics".

With these two theories and with other informations coming out from the observations of the universe, grand Unified Theory (GUT) is on the making.

By this theory we shall understand all the mysteries of creation of the universe, the expansion of it and the future of the universe.

It is above denial that the world has advanced too much with the assistance of science. Yet some different and unknown factors are emerging, the cause of which remains shadowy. We are now capable to answer the question - what is this universe but the why of

this universe eludes our answers and remains unanswered.

If, it is possible to answer all the questions of the physical world with any theory of science, then the natural question which shows its face is - this theory so well equipped to explain the diverse emergences of life, of biological evolution and of the emergence of consciousness.

The consciousness made out of the dust of this world, discovered the theory of mechanics. Now the question which flashes into the mind is - how is it possible for it to do this and why it has performed this unique job.

Now the problem which science is now facing is - pure mathematics which is the vehicle of physics has reached that summit from where its complicated philosophy is losing its own identity as this is on the verge of mingling up with feeling. The theory of the incompleteness of Godel and the question of how the shape of the infinity can be brought into mathematics - (these incomprehensible questions) come almost nearer to feeling.

It is above any denial that each forward step in advancement which is taken by science is a sign for the backward step taken by religion yet religion always has its existence in the light and shadows.

A never ending conflict is going on continuously between physics and metaphysics and in this war where physics gets puzzled in solving any problem metaphysics then comes forward. This is the story of many countless ages.

But to-day, from the corner of the mind and from the feeling, these two are coming too nearer to meet in one point.

Stephen Hocking thinks that if we imagine the world in a quantum state then in its Imaginary Time, the world may be finite yet time and verification will go on. But now the problem is - who will ascertain - what is the right answer.

In the Puranas, we find a clear difference between the cosmic time and the Terrestrial Time and the task of standardization is done through astrology. These Puranas speak of the interrelationship of Space and Time though not in the style of Einstein. It is true at the same time which can not be denied that these Puranas had not given any proof to prove their own theories.

Indian spiritualism is firmly established upon world-unity, upon indifferent attitude and upon humanity. We can not ignore this great tradition which is interwoven with our culture. This spiritualism supplements Science and creativity without any contradiction.

If we are wholly concerned with proofs then we have to concentrate upon particle physics which is explained in terms of genetic structure and in terms of cellmembrane which is the simplest chemical process exceeding any conception of explanation.

But this does not suffice to falsify the Sciences of Biology, physiology and medicine. At this juncture we can say that Vedanta has trembled the world in such a manner that if any one

who is conversed with the poem "If" written by Rudyard Kipling, they must have to agree with the vast expansiveness of the Vedic knowledge.

The spiritualism is incessantly judged at the alter of Scientific verification. The whole world is looking towards science with the hope that science will be secular in its outlook and will be motivated with the ethics of spiritual world - unity. Then it will not be wise for us to neglect religion with our educated intellectuality. We must not have to sidetrack it in the bylane of ignorance.

Uptill now man is not capable to construct any firm, solid and permanent foundation of creative value-consciousness other than religion. Even Maughm, Einstein, Huxley believed in the value-consciousness and of the unity of all humanistic spirituality. In this context it will surely be superfluous to mention Sri Rabindra Nath Tagore whose Jeevan debata and life-sense is mingled into one unity by breaking all fencings if any bifurcation is really be there.

True Scientist like Bertrand Russell, do believe in the expansion of imagination and emotion which exceeds Scientific verification. Full and complete belief can broaden the sphere of verified truth which continuously depends upon verification.

Till then as pragmatists, the invaluable social value of this spiritual feelings of religion can not be surpassed and specially we have to think that this feeling does not contradict science. Religion should now come in the parallel line of science to create spiritual morality and creative civilization. This religion with its total devotion for love of humanity and for the cause of

humanity will reign supreme where there will be no line of demarcation between man and religion. We then have no scope for a critical survey of the relationship between man and religion. As long as this long cherished kingdom of man is not achieved by man, we shall be engrossed in the work of the critical survey of this particular and unique relationship between man and religion.

In this world of nothingness, we become helpless being conscious of our meaninglessness. All over sufferings, pangs and the anxieties have the grip over our minds. Religion is the only domain where we seek refuge to be removed from the fear of the dread of the feeling of nothingness and meaninglessness. Religion should now come forward tearing off its hard shells of rituals and customs to serve the humanity. Humanity is now crying for religion which has now shed off its old coat of conventionalism. This is the reason for which world wide religious movements like T.M., R.M.S, ISKON, BAHA and many other such religious movement are in wildfire. The modern era is trembling with these movements. None but this modern era has perceived much publications and circulations of religious bulletins to give religion a fresh turn to be on the side of man and be an ally of man. This alliance will meet all the challenges given by the dragons of religions. These dragons are none but the creeds and the dogmas which prevent us to enter into the pure and holy domain of religion. Religion must have the decree over these dogmas and creeds and this decree of religion will end the chapter of all the blood sheds from the world scene and will **begin** a new chapter in the history of mankind radiating all the spheres of human activities. Then and there will

be the resurrection of the human souls which will not be very special to Jesus Christ and will ring the death toll of the inferno of Hitler. We are earnestly looking forward for this chapter of human history which has no need for renaissance as it was in France and it will have no story of Jerusalem, Karbala. Our bodies then may be dead but our souls will be more alive than ever. This fact has shown its face on various papers on religious problems in almost every issue of Journal of value Inquiry and Mind . Rediscovery of William Palay, an eighteenth century theologian is a significant event in recent years which is a pilgrimage towards the pure and holy domain of religion. The missionary Zeal of the institutions like Ramkrishna Mission, Bharat Seva Ashram Sangha, Iscon which primarily motivated with religion is too well known to the world.

The project will be worked out in the form of Chapters in the following orders:

Chapter - I. Various concepts of man will be stated and the arrangements advanced for their viability are to be examined.

Chapter - II will be devoted to understanding the phenomenon of religion. Various definitions of religion, various types of religion, origin of religion, pre-historic religion, and search for family resemblances and trails of religion are the topics of special interests.

Chapter - III will take account of the different classifications of men in accordance with their religions and the relations between religion and different aspects of human life.

Chapter - IV will discuss Marx and Science to clarify the opposition that seem to have among science, Marx and religion. It will attempt to solve the question - Is there any difference among the existent religions of the world?

Chapter - V will take account of the question - can religion concern itself with the ultimate Reality? It will discuss the impact of the new physics of relativity and quantum theory which though mechanistic yet religion which gives the understanding of everything in the universe in an unitive attitude is also the goal of science too.

Chapter - VI consists of the concluding Section of this critical survey of the relationship between man and religion.