Introduction: The present work attempts to study the selected ideas of the French philosopher and theorist Jacques Ranciere with a view to comprehend his key ideas concerning the concepts of democracy, philosophy, and self-emancipation, in relation to contemporary life and letters in the wake of Indian philosophy of Jeevan Vidya of living at four levels of existence: individual, family and societal and nature’s level. This theory talks of co-existence at all the levels of existence, ranging from existence at the level of individual; which in itself is the co-existence of the body and soul, to the existence at the level of the family and then moving to the co-existence at the societal level which leads to the sublimity of the existence at the level of nature where the life co-exist in wholeness. This is divine way of life, existing in mutual co-existence. These concepts are re-visited with a view to tracing their relevance in our times especially to gauge their efficiency in weeding out the unethical in the contemporary society. Institutions like democracy need to be reappraised for synchronization, with the needs and requirements of today. In an effort to find a consequential and long lasting solution, Plato’s cave simile and his concept of Philosopher king has been used as a vital ingredient to come to some logical conclusions. Interestingly, Ranciere has presented rather novel philosophical conclusions. This faculty assures that all encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all levels of existence. When at the level of I, an individual is able to find some similarity only then respect and right evaluation is possible. Program of action and potential of I is same in all. The capacity to think, desire and understand are same, we all have same natural acceptance. One may lack competence in spite of best intentions but the difference lies in our attentiveness towards the activities of I. We only vary in our ability to activate these capabilities. This ability is called competence.

One should not under evaluate the other person as ignorant or stupid who know nothing. This state in terms of Jeevan Vidya is under evaluation of other and over evaluation of self. The communication with such a preconceived notion is will be automatically from inequality towards ideological illusions of equality-a mirage, a blunder.

Content: Rancierian idea of intellectual emancipation is that ‘there is always some point of equality … there is a relationship of equality but it can work only if the master supposes that the students can simply understand the explanation… (for him intellectual emancipation is) process of going from what is already possessed, to further knowledge of new possession’. It seems that such-called ignorant is not fully ignorant because an ignorant ‘always knows something, always asks something and always has the capacity…’ (1). Thus, treating others after adequate and thoughtful assessment and analysis, Sri Nagaraj terms it as the right evaluation of the person. Respect and right evaluation are very strongly co-related. Respect, or Jeevan Vidya baptizes it, Sammana is “naturally acceptable to us” (2). Who would like to be disowned or disrespected by others? None. If a person is under evaluated he will get less respect than he deserves,
thus leading to unpeaceful state of mind and discord in the relations, disorder and turbulence in the society. So does an over evaluation, which will lead to utter chaos and turbulences. Rights evaluation of others with right understanding will allow one individual to give deserving respect to the other person. This will lead to harmony and equality.

It is here we see breaking of an ice. The amalgamation of these two philosophies has immense power to change the conceptions about equality and democracy forever. Ranciere states; "I tried to subvert the debate, to state precisely that all those people are looking for is the best path –from inequality to equality, but the only good part is to move from equality to freedom." Ranciere opines that the rational state of Philosophy or light of knowledge is hard to attain but worth it. Living without the light of knowledge and philosophy is like living in the dark cave with mind and soul chained with ignorance, in the company of meaninglessness shadows. Ranciere’s ideas are reminiscent of Plato’s Simile of the Cave (10) expressed in The Republic. Plato expects highly from The Philosopher Ruler, and says “that there will be no injustice in compelling our philosophers to have a care and providence of others” (11). Plato also said that philosopher is one who has glimpsed the light of knowledge, but then he can’t go back to the dark caves of ignorance and be in harmony within himself after receiving this light of knowledge. He won’t even think of relinquishing philosophy or to surrender his quest for truth, even if it consequent vitalizes to their public criticism or mockery or the sacrifice of their prestigious position of being the smartest amongst the most ignora nce, foolish or naive people trapped in their dark caves of ignorance.

Philosophy, as Joseph J. Tanke observes is more than ‘a force that creates possibilities’ as it invents and creates after imagining; where imagination is ‘the power or capacity’ of ‘making possible’ or ‘able to do’ (12). This is reminiscent of Coleridge’s Biographia Literaria where in chapter 13 and 14, he discusses imagination at length differentiating it from fancy, and later seeing a distinction between Primary and Secondary Imagination. Primary Imagination is the ‘power of receiving impressions of the external world through the senses’ (13). Hence, the ‘power of perceiving the objects of the senses’ It is ‘universal, possessed by all’ (14). He has further described Secondary Imagination as a ‘typical trait of the artist… It makes artistic creation possible. It is active and conscious. It requires effort of will (15). Primary Imagination is the ‘raw material’ which ‘reshapes and remodels the objects of beauty’. Thus imagination is ‘a magical and synthetic power’ (16). Coleridge details features and characteristics of Secondary Imagination. It is esemplatic, co-adunating and assimilate diverse experiences to create the text as an ‘organic whole’ (17).

Tanke’s observation weighs heavily when he observes ‘one can say that the imagination composes infux of the sensory information into discrete units, while also providing the bridge between the sense and the reason’ (18). Tanke further observes that ‘for better understanding, and to enrich oneself with the wisdom one must be nourished by his imagination. In the attainment of knowledge, the imagination serves the understanding. It provides it with the unified representations’ (19). Imagination is a crucial force which brings transformation or-rather or metaphorisation to produce the finest form of arts or creations. It is one of the highest mental faculties as it creates entirely new ideas, finest images and wonderful works. It amalgamates two entirely different or even opposite ideas to create an entirely new entity. Fan cy, on the contrary is mental or rather mechanical process in which memory, sensual pleasures and sensory impressions are assembled together to create an unrealistic visionless and chimerical idea. It is passive activity with its own fictitious.

Somewhat similar ideas are expressed by Ranciere in his The Politics of Aesthetics (2004) where we find him favoring the ground of ‘aesthetic pleasure brought about through non-identification with one’s identity’ (20). He is concerned with the ‘aesthetic acts as configurations of experience that creates new modes of sense perception and inducs as novel forms of subjectivity’ (21). Further elaboration of these ideas can be seen in his next work Disagreement: Politics and Phi losophy (1999), where he co-relates imagination with politics and philosophy. According to Ranciere, politics means to imagine, envision and to create. It’s the ‘distribution of the sensible’ and disruption of a certain aesthetic organization of a sense experience’ along with ‘the eruption of a distinct aesthetics’ (22). The same ideas are echoed by Tanke when he declares that for ‘attainment of knowledge…imagination serves understanding’ (23). This work would be incomplete without reference to Plato’s noteworthy ideas on the issue. He says:

It may be that the saint or philosopher, who is best fitted, may also be the least inclined to rule, but necessity is laid upon him, and he must no longer live in the heaven of ideas. And this will be the salvation of the state… For those who rule must not be those who are desirous to rule; and, and the only life which is better than the life of political ambition is that of philosophy, which is also the best preparation for the government of State (24).

This philosopher need to make and manifest a commitment to help others have the right understanding of and live in harmony at all the four levels of existence. A philosopher, as suggested by Jivan Vidya is an individual, with Right Understanding (Samaadhana) at individual level and at his four levels of existence. Jivan Vidya identi fies three traits Dhirata (Perseverance), Virata (Bravery) and Udarata (Generosity) in a man of right understanding. Persever ance (dhirata) is, being assured that all encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all levels of existence, living with this commitment without any perturbation. The Bravery/Virata is, being assured that all the encompassing solution is to understand. This is the commitment to help other have the right understanding of the harmony and living at all the levels of existence. In nutshell an individual is ready to help other to have the right understanding. Jivan Vidya further sheds some light on this while redefining the concept of Generosity/Udarata. It is being assured that all encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all the four levels and is ready to invest myself, my body, my wealth to help the other have the right understanding.

To have assets of Perseverance, Bravery and Generosity at Dhirata, Virata and Udarata of Jivan Vidya will serve to fulfill and materialize the true equality and democracy. According to Ranciere’s idea, ‘a typical trait of the artist… It makes artistic creation possible. It is active and conscious. It requires effort of will’ (25). Primary Imagination is the ‘raw material’ which ‘reshapes and remodels the objects of beauty’ (26). Thus imagination is ‘a magical and synthetic power’ (27). Coleridge details features and characteristics of Secondary Imagination. It is esemplatic, co-adunating and assimilate diverse experiences to create the text as an ‘organic whole’ (28).

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Thus, role of philosophy and philosopher – a man of right understanding, in the attainment of self-emanicipation in the lives of contemporary people; especially the proletariat becomes all the more important. Ranciere stormed the world of politics, philosophy, literature, and sociology and took the scholars by a sudden shock when he declared that ‘the Politics is not the exercise of power’ [21]; quite contrary to the popularly accepted concept that politics is the exercise of power. Politics does not intend to exercise power or to possess power to identify politics with these things is to do away with power [22]. It's not the theory of power; it's the mode of thinking. It is high time to delve into the role of politics and democracy in bringing equality and emancipation in the society. Even Aristotle in Book I of Politics says that political rule is the ruling of the equals and it’s different from all other kinds of rules. In Book III, Aristotle defines the citizen as the one who partakes in the fact of ruling, and the fact of being ruled.

The role of a philosopher is aware person is regarded as crucial in improving the state since the philosopher conceptualizes the existence, he invents new modes of being and new sensible configurations. The ‘pleasures, which are approved of by the lover of wisdom and the reason are the truth’ [23]. Asjeevan Vidya proposes, the comprehensive goal at the societal level is fearlessness (abhaya); the awareness and right understanding at an individual level, prosperity at family level will serve as a germinating ground for fearlessness in society. Jeevan Vidya further proposes that when there is harmony in relationships and prosperity has a stronghold, the mutual trust and fearlessness will flourish. An individual with the right understanding is at harmony with himself and his surroundings; this brings the power of right assessment of an individual as well as the family’s needs. It enables an individual to learn the skill for nurturing family and producing more than family needs. This is prosperity. When there is right understanding in an individual and prosperity at the family level, there would be harmony and trust in the society. If every soul is at harmony and every family has sufficient to fulfill their needs the society would be fearless. An emancipated man or a man of right understanding will not exploit nature rather he would be in harmony with nature and will co-exist peacefully. Thus, the pleasure of a philosopher or a man of right understanding (bhushan) and sublime harmony at all the levels of existence. This proposal offered by Jeevan Vidya weaves and kneads an individual with himself, his family and relations, his society and the nature which surrounds him.

Humans have a tendency to be corrupted by power. Rancier suggests that one can arrive at the truth if he makes self assessment and does right evaluation. This self churning will lead to self awareness – needs. The right understanding of the facts enables us to stand our needs and requirements, see our goals, learn various methods and practices to achieve the desired goal disperse our confusions and enable us to practice equality as intrinsic quality, live in harmony and co-exist peacefully. This would be the sublime form of self emancipation.

Ranciere’s The Philosopher and His Poo[1983] was inspired by the experiences of an early 19th century teacher – Joseph Jacobot, a post-Revolutionary philosopher of education Ranciere sought to rethink over the idea of the pedagogy, to look at how all forms of ignorance are also conditions of knowledge. Ranciere articulates Jacobot’s theory of emancipation and stultification. He adroitly analyses the after effects for Marx, Sartre, Bourdieu and Plato’s admonition that workers should do nothing but their own work. It offers ‘innovative readings of these thinkers’ struggles to elaborate a philosophy of the poor.’ [24] Ranciere’s underlines that even the most ignorant, with no degree or formal education can, with the right understanding, work for self liberation and emancipation from the ignorance. His, these ideas are also echoed in his popular work The Nights of Labor: The Workers’ Dream in Nineteenth-Century France (1989). Ranciere declares that Gauny ‘self taught’ nineteenth century philosophy had ‘given’ philosophy the ‘same conceptual heart as Plato’. This means Plato – the great philosopher, a reckoning philosophical light and Gauny – a self taught carpenter converges on the same fact that: ‘the worker is not primarily a social-func than a certain relationship with the logos and that he is assigned to certain temporal categories’ [25]. In one of his articles- Who is the subject of the rights of the man (2004) He has raised his voice over the role of the international human rights organizations thus pressing for the need for emancipation of the humankind especially the proletariat class. The life has grown today indefinitely - ly vast, without any propert linkages to hold it together from falling down. It is only philosophy, equality and democracy directed by the classes that lead society to right direction. This study of Jacques Ranciere’s ideas on democracy, equality, and philosophy, through the lens of Jeevan Vidya’s concept of right understanding is an effort to identify the fact that the world today is dehumanized by being deprived of the true spirit of democracy and equality thus pressing for the need for the light of the philosopher. In the current scenario democracy is being cursed as it has horribly gone astray. Wolf digs into its literal meaning to bring home the point that democracy is the rule by the demos, where demos can be understood as ‘the people’, and as ‘the mob...the unfit’ [20]. As, Wolf argues, that ‘Making political decisions requires judgment and skill’ [21]. It is here, that Plato’s philosopher king finds his relevance. Plato glorifies the philosopher as virtuous of the virtuous, the sole master of wisdom and possessor of knowledge. He is aligned in all the forms of the good and divine. Plato counts on the philosopher as a virtuous because he with all his might, wisdom and faculties strives toward truth, his other desires are weakened. He has no real drive toward money, honor, pleasure or other selfish motives. He has none of those raw or basic desires that can lead him to immoral behavior. He cannot be convinced to steal, tell lies, boast, and act slavishly, as he has made self assessment of his needs with precision. He, in terms of Jeevan Vidya do not serve his body rather his body is the tool which serves to fulfill his goals at all the levels of existing.

Most of Ranciere’s works operate from the humble motto that the cobbler and the university dean are equally intelligent!” [22]. He has freely compared works of such luminaries as Plato, Aristotle, Gilles Deleuze with relatively unknown thinker like Joseph Jacotot and Gabriel Gauny. He has raised his voice over the role of the international human rights organizations thus pressing for the need for the light of the philosopher. In the current scenario democracy is being cursed as it has horribly gone astray. Wolf digs into its literal meaning to bring home the point that democracy is the rule by the demos, where demos can be understood as ‘the people’, and as ‘the mob...the unfit’ [21]. As, Wolf argues, that ‘Making political decisions requires judgment and skill’ [21]. It is here, that Plato’s philosopher king finds his relevance. Plato glorifies the philosopher as virtuous of the virtuous, the sole master of wisdom and possessor of knowledge. He is aligned in all the forms of the good and divine. Plato counts on the philosopher as a virtuous because he with all his might, wisdom and faculties strives toward truth, his other desires are weakened. He has no real drive toward money, honor, pleasure or other selfish motives. He has none of those raw or basic desires that can lead him to immoral behavior. He cannot be convinced to steal, tell lies, boast, and act slavishly, as he has made self assessment of his needs with precision. He, in terms of Jeevan Vidya do not serve his body rather his body is the tool which serves to fulfill his goals at all the levels of existing. He has freely compared works of such luminaries as Plato, Aristotle, Gilles Deleuze with relatively unknown thinker like Joseph Jacotot and Gabriel Gauny. He has observed that his views on equality are different from the ideas prevalent about equality. Equality in his opinion is not an end to arrive at, but the point of departure. According to Ranciere, in an interview with Lawrence Liang, everyone leads an intellectual life, but he recognizes that material and economic differences (which unfortunately is our parameter of gauging one’s competence) decides our ability to perform in this intellectual life. Concerning attempts at attaining equality, in this interview, Ranciere says: “…the idea of starting from the inequality to reach equality; it is impossible because in the very process, you ceaselessly recycle practices of inequality, you go towards equality, but must start from equality...” [20]. These findings of Ranciere weighs heavily as the intellectual emancipation can come
to any mind who willfully does the right assessment and right eval-
uation. The right understanding is the base of peaceful coexistence.
Through this study of Jacques Ranciere’s selected above mentioned
ideas and its amalgamation with the key concepts of Jeevan Vidya,
an effort has been made to identify world today is being dehu
manized by being deprived of true spirit of democracy and equality
because of the paucity of right understanding. Thus pressing for ur-
gent need of light of philosopher through which we can do the right
evaluation of our self and procure the right understanding. OurNatu-
ral Acceptance is to be in harmony, to co-exist with the people inside
and outside our family. Sometimes, one may fail in competence but
the intentions are always grounded for happiness of all. We wish that
all in our social web be it our colleagues, our co-workers, our teach-
ers or even the strangers should be happy. No one would be happy to
be a part of a society which has mistrust, suspicion, fear, insecuri-
ty, inequality and violence all around. An individual needs to doself
assessment to do theiright evaluation. This self churning will lead to
self awareness and right understanding. The ‘assurance of right under-
standing in individual and prosperity in the family and understand-
ing of human relations leads to harmony, trust and fearlessness in
the society’. 

Conclusion: Though Ranciere has discussed about his goal to
achieve equality and self emancipation and invoked all the help of
philosopher, but there are some shortcomings too in his theory. His
theory, like N number of short sighted western theories focuses on a
individual’s existence or existence at the family level. If they are more
generous they may evolve theory for the societal level of existence.
But, Indian philosophy of Jeevan Vidya talks of peaceful co-exist-
ence at all the levels of existence, ranging from existence at the level
of Individual; which in itself is the co-existence of the body and soul,
to the existence at the level of the family and then moving to the co
existence at the societal level which leads to the sublimity of the ex-
istence at the level of nature where the life exist in wholeness. This is
divine way of life existing in mutual co-existence.

The biggest loophole in Ranciere’s theory is that from where are the
philosophers going to come? Are redefines the aliens from some far
of planet? Or gods and goddesses are going to descend from heav-
en? Are there some very superior brains whose intelligence is unques-
tionable. It would be the classic case of extra ordinarily intelligent brain hegemonising the inferior
brain. If the answer is no, then we should not wait for a magic wand
or a miracle to do the wonders. The effort has to start from an every
individual’s end. The beauty of Indian philosophy of Jeevan Vidya
is that it is purely realistic, practical and offers solution to all the prob-
lems of every existing individual ranging from anger, fear, and un
happiness to terrorism, drought, floods and global warming. It is here that
Jeevan Gyan plays the role of a nucleus. The concept of right understand-
ing after self assessment and right evaluation can enlighten us. Jeevan Vidya
asks every individual to shed the cloak of selfishness and adopt the intrinsic qualities of Perseverance, Bravery
and Generosity or Dhirta, Virata and Udarata. The inheritor of these qualities can either be a man of right understanding of Jeevan Vidya or a Philosopher King of Plato. The right understanding
after the careful assessment and self exploration leaves an individual with little requirements which are basic in nature. Such an individu-
al is free from millstones like greed, attachment, amassing of surplus
wealth, etc. As he treats all his subjects as equal. Plato declares such
a philosopher as a person fit to govern the state. And Ranciere says
that only such people should be asked to come forward and eman-
cipate rest of the mankind from the dark caves of ignorance and bring
them on platform of equality of intellect. Thus, we end where we be-
gin. The journey from inequality to equality is pointless and futile. We
have to begin from equality itself. The ultimate goal is not to come out
of the dark caves of ignorance alone like a selfish, self centered
individual but to bring our brethren out of those dark caves. Without doubting theintentions we should work for enhancing our as well as our brethren’s competence. All the western qualities, queries and grievances are addressed by the concepts of Jeevan Vidya. All that is left unanswered by Ranciere, is addressed well by Jeevan Vidya.
Ranciere has raised some crucial issues like Equality and emanipa-
tion which are addressed in detail by concepts of Dhirta, Virata
and Udarata and the concepts of Intentions and Competence of
Jeevan Vidya.

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