



INDIAN THOUGHT OF HUMANISM ANSWER FOR CHEERFUL HUMAN LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Humanism as a pragmatic theory was first conceived around 200 B.C in India. 'Man the measure' is the earliest declaration of humanistic outlook. Humanists confirm that man is the maker of his own destiny and social change. Humanists enjoy the open-endedness of a quest and the freedom of discovery. The human progress depended on progress in the direction of liberty and truth, with change human mind. The social-change with nonviolence in the 20th Century is the way for cheerful human life

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

Humanism is an approach to life based on reason and our common humanity, recognizing that moral values are properly founded on human nature and experience alone. When people are free to think for themselves, using reason and knowledge as their tools, they are best able to solve this world's problems. Appreciation of the arts, literature, music and crafts so on which reflect our heritage from the past and of the creativity that, if nourished, can continuously enrich our lives. Accordingly as humanist, every one work to defeat proposed laws and eliminate existing laws that infringe our freedom.

The American Humanist association believes that cultural exchange, cooperation, peaceful conflict resolution, and diplomacy through multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations, are the most appropriate ways to respect human rights and make the world a safer place for all of its inhabitants. Humanists enjoy the open-endedness of a quest and the freedom of discovery. Humanists seek to understand the universe by using science and its methods of critical inquiry-logical reasoning, empirical evidence, and sceptical evaluation of conjectures and conclusions-to obtain reliable knowledge. Humanists affirm that humans have the freedom to give meaning, value, and purpose to their lives by their own independent thought, free inquiry, and responsible, creative activity. Every humanists stand for the building of a more humane, just, compassionate, and democratic society using a pragmatic ethics based on human reason, experience, and reliable knowledge-an ethics that judges the consequences of human actions by the well-being of all. Humanism says people can find purpose in life and maximize their long-term happiness by developing their talents and using those talents for the service of humanity. Humanists view this natural world as wondrous and precious, and as offering limitless opportunities for exploration, fascination, creativity, companionship, and joy.

The International Humanist and Ethical Union opined that, "Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance which affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. It stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethics based on human and other natural values in a spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities."

The meaning humanism which it is signifying, by Greek as kind of friendly spirit and good-feeling towards all men without any distinction. The fellowship between man and man which has been the principle of development, social and moral, is not dependent on conceptions of what is not man,

As a political philosophy, Humanism emphasizes individual freedom and responsibility, human values and compassion, and the need for tolerance and cooperation, and it rejects authoritarian beliefs. It affirms that we must take responsibility for our own lives and the communities and world in which we live.

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It has an ultimate faith in humankind, believes that human beings possess the power or potentiality of solving their own problems, through reliance primarily upon reason and scientific method applied with courage and vision.

The doctrine, of humanism affirms that the dignity and worth of all people and their ability to determine right and wrong purely by appeal to universal human qualities, especially rationality. It searches for truth and morality through human means in support of human interests, and focuses on the human capacity for self-determination. It also rejects the validity of transcendental justifications, such as a dependence on belief without reason.

History of Humanism:

Humanist thought can be traced back to the time of Gautama Buddha (563 - 483 B.C.) in ancient India, and Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.) in ancient China, although the term "humanism" is more widely associated with Western Philosophy. In ancient Greece, Thales, who is credited with creating the maxim "Know thyself". Other influential pre-Socratics is Protagoras known for his famous dictum "man is the measure of all things."

Renaissance Humanism was a movement in Europe, roughly covering the 14th and 17th Centuries. Humanism as a philosophical and literary movement originated in Italy in the Second half of the 14th Century and diffused all over Europe. As an atheistic theory it was conceived in 17th century by French philosopher. The revival of the study of *Latin* and Greek, and the resultant interpretations of Roman and Greek texts, affected the whole cultural, political, social and literary landscape of Europe. Humanists were opposed to the dominant Scholastic philosophy of the day (derived from St. Thomas Aquinas), and this opposition revived a classical debate which referred back to Plato and the Platonic dialogues. Renaissance Humanists promoted human worth and individual dignity, and believed in the practice of the liberal arts for all classes.

THE ORIGIN OF HUMANISM IN INDIA

But as a theistic-pragmatic theory it was conceived indirectly around 200 B.C. at the time of *Vedas* and *Upanishads* in India. The Prayer begins with "*Sarvatra Sukhinah Santu Sarve Santu Niramayah*," means that "Let all be happy here and let all enjoy full health" of Vedic Sages echoed this Universal welfare. The earthly life constitutes the central concern for the Vedic Aryans. The sacrificial fire-rites which were evolved during Vedic period had social welfare as its motto, the motive was to prepare the land for agriculture for abundance and welfare of human race.

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed Hindu Renaissance pioneered by Brahma Samajam of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Arya Samajam of Dayanand Saraswati, finally blossoming into Vedantic Hinduism of Vivekananda. Vedantic Hinduism, stresses the importance of service to the weak and the needy as its practical aspect. "That society is the greatest where the highest truths become practical. Humanism has undergone significant development assuming variety of forms in the West and in the East. Western Humanism is atheistic in content because Christianity conceives of God as the Creator, unlike Vedantic Humanism which is not atheistic.

Gandhian Humanism:

Gora writes of Gandhi: "In essence he was not a Hindu. He was basically a Human. In the sea of humanity, a human is a rarity. Cut up by labels of race and nationality, class and culture, caste and religion, humanity has become highly sectarian.

Gandhi's great contribution to Humanism consists in conceiving a religion that centres almost wholly around man and his life here in this world. Religion, according to him, should pervade all our activities, it cannot and ought not to be pursued in seclusion from one's fellow beings and in separation from life's other activities. The equivalent for Religion is "Dharma" in Sanskrit which means moral obligation and connotes individual's integrity as well as social Solidarity. Gandhi understood religion completely from that point of view. His Humanism is integral, discussing all the aspects of human life and has rationalist attitudes which differ from Romantic Humanism as well as Radical Humanism and yet synthesizes the two.

In Gandhian Thought

The Problem of free will is discussed by almost all renaissance humanists. 'Man the measure' is the earliest declaration of humanistic outlook. Humanists confirm that man is the maker of his own destiny. Gandhi also gave great importance to freedom. His whole life was spent for the individual's and national freedom. However for him free will not mean slavery to desires of our mind but freedom of 'rational self'. Once you condition yourself with 'rational self' you are free to move within those restraints. In the words of Emerson, "A man is free to speak the truth not to lie, free to serve, not to exploit, free to sacrifice himself but not free to kill or injure". Gandhi's whole philosophy of wants and needs was conditioned by self-control. Gandhi has respect for and faith in the individual. To him, the individual alone is real; the Society and the state have little meaning apart from the individual

The Importance of Morality in Humanism by Gandhi:

Renaissance Humanist accorded the privileged position to poetry, rhetoric, history, ethics and politics on the conviction that these disciplines alone educate man as such and put man in a position effectively to exercise his freedom. Like other humanists, Gandhi gives importance to Social Sciences. Having an ethical approach to life Gandhi sought to unite the mankind in common pursuit of justice and establishment of a moral order in world-society. Morality for him was not a matter of outward conformity but of inward fulfilment, of deep conviction accomplished by right action. Hence famous Socratic dictum 'Virtue is knowledge', implies that right thought must result into right action. For Gandhi action was his domain. Gandhi's greatness lies in translating one's noblest thoughts into action which is the highest achievement of man.

The Integrated Vows For Society As part of his moral religion, Gandhi introduced eleven vows in his Community centre, to his followers. These are also called "Asrama Dharmas". They are 1. Non violence, 2. Truth, 3. Non-stealing, 4. Chastity or celibacy, 5. Non possession, 6. Bread labour, 7. Abstemiousness in diet, 8. Fearlessness, 9. Tolerance or Equality for all religions, 10. Self-sufficiency in respect of the use of indigenous products, 11. Elimination of untouchability. All these vows have integral implication of moral, Social, Political and Economic Values. Gandhi

attached special importance to these vows, not in a ritualistic manner, but as a way of entering more deeply into the truth.

Ahimsa (Non-Violence): The Universal Love: Gandhi described "Ahimsa" to be the law of life; he identified "Ahimsa" with universal love. To him "All well constructed societies are based on the law of Non-Violence that the families are bound together by ties of love and so are groups in the so called civilized society. Only they do not recognize the supremacy of the law of non-violence. Gandhi transformed "Ahimsa" from a passive attitude to an active and dynamic factor by welding renunciation and action into one force. Even "Satyagraha" is conceived by Gandhi as non-violence in action. Ahimsa being the law of love, it consists not in claiming but in giving. 'Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself, it is self-suffering.' Gandhi used non-violence not only at the individual level but also on the social level. On the political level he brought about liberation without the use of violence. Einstein believed that the problem of bringing peace to the world on supranational basis will be solved only by employing Gandhi's method on a large scale. Gandhi firmly believed that non-violence must be lived in day to day life. "It is not like a garment to be put on and off at Will. Its seat is in the heart and it must be an inseparable part of our life, it should become a creed rather than a policy; and to be a creed, Non-violence has to be all-pervasive. In the course of this work, Gora wanted to dissect a frog to demonstrate the phenomenon of heart-beat to the nurses class which I was teaching. The nurses objected to the dissection on the ground that it went against the principle of non-violence (ahimsa)". (Ibid., p. 40). The issue was placed before Gandhi. Gora writes that Gandhi replied: "Dissect the frog, if that is the only way to explain the heart-beat" (Idem). He adds: "And I dissected a frog". (Idem).

M.N.ROY & His new Humanism :

Another humanist in India is Manavendra Nath Roy, the original name was Narendra Bhattacharya, well known as M.N Roy in his book "New Humanism", which proposed a scientific, materialist, humanist philosophy. He traced morality to its biological roots and suggested that human progress depended on progress towards liberty and truth. Roy had envisaged a scientific, rational, democratic, egalitarian and humanist Indian society. But for the few emancipated minds, the country was not open to his cosmopolitan approach towards life. Technology and its dramatic innovations were yet to influence the lives of the people. Roy was much ahead of his times and refused to compromise with scientifically irrational or ethically unsound tenets of practical politics. He paid a heavy cost for this and was neglected in Indian politics. He failed to become a populist leader of the masses. Roy was too early an experiment for them.

CONCLUSION

We live in an age where production is sumptuous but distribution is partial; where science has conquered irrationality but religion is propagating myths and superstitions where technology has brought humanity closer but nationalism is instigating wars and terrorism.

Philosophers and thinkers have contributed to the refinement of human knowledge; science and technology have given facilities of comfort and ease to human existence but frauds and deceptions have tried to spoil true human progress in all areas of the world's living humanity.

The pursuit of peaceful and non-violent strategies for resolving the world's most dire conflicts of centuries which often result in genocide, war, and autocracy, is paramount for human coexistence and progress. The Indian philosophers contributions of humanism is the only way to the worldly problems, In this is way the Indian philosophers aimed at "sarve jana skhono bhavanthu" which means Let all be happy

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