



UNITY IN DIVERSITY: A PHILOSOPHICAL OVERVIEW

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Abstract: Our multifarious world is actually unified. 'Unity in diversity' plays a big role in the whole world to build up a peaceful society. The individuals of the whole world is different from each other physically and mentally both. But they all have deep-rooted respect to each other. It is the inner sense of 'Unity in diversity'. It has been tried in this article to show how unity belongs in variegated world. It would be discussed specifically in the light of philosophical perspectives.

Keywords: Advaita, Diversity, God, Integration, Philosophy, Unity.

Introduction

The characteristic feature of Indian culture is 'unity'. India is such country which is the trusting-place of all human-beings who belong in various religions and castes. So, we feel that, 'unity in diversity' is our affecting the marrow. Actually, it plays a big role in the whole world to build up a peaceful society.

We have to clarify the concept and meaning with regard to the two terms like 'unity' and 'diversity'.

The meaning of the term 'unity' means 'integration'. It also may be known as 'uniformity'. The meaning of the term 'uni' is 'oneness' and the term 'form' means 'commonness'. Hence, we can say that, when there is something common to all the people then it would be known as 'uniform'.

On the other hand, 'diversity' means 'differences'. In this sense, the 'difference' may be of various kinds like linguistic, biological, religious and so on.

The individuals of the World are different from each other physically and mentally both. They have variations in cultures, castes, religions etc. Someone believe in God; again, someone who doesn't believe in God and so on. But, they all have deep-rooted respect to each other. It is called 'unity in diversity'. The 'unity' is the heart-felt need of the whole human-society.

Let us now turn our attention to the discussion about 'unity' in Western Philosophical perspectives in brief.

Rene Descartes said that, "the unity is the high perfection, characteristic of God".¹ Spinoza pointed out in this regard that, "God is the single...in the nature of things, only one substance exists and this substance is absolutely unfinished".² Leibniz said that, "only God is the first unity or eternal simple substance".³ Again, 'unity' is recognized by Immanuel Kant that, "the unity is 'Me' of the transcendental apperception".⁴

Now, we have to confine our discussion about 'unity' in the light of Indian Philosophical point of view.

It has been tried in this present paper to show how unity belongs in variegated World. It would be discussed specifically in the light of Ancient Vedanta versus Swami Vivekananda.

The Vedānta Philosophy always teaches us to show the absolute self exists in all of the elements. The Vedānta says that, we have to feel the existence of God to all the elements. By dint of this way it would be possible to establish the 'unity' in the whole world. Through this thinking we would be able to feel that, the supreme entity or God exists in our enemies also. Consequently, we can feel from malice in this way.

The self-created divine entity creates our sense-organs as worldly mindedness. Hence, the human-beings set their eyes on the physical world, they don't see on their inward spirit or internal entities. Some wise men set their eyes on inward spirit or own selves. We have seen that some *ācāryas* tried to know the absolute truth through the discussion about the external world. But, once upon a time they can understand that, it would not be possible to know about the real nature of the absolute truth through the searching as to the external world. But the question may be raised that, what is the way for gaining the real nature of the absolute truth? The answer is that, it would be possible through casting our eyes on the internal spirit. Actually, it would be vain for attempting to know the infinite ultimate truth through the limited sense-organs. Our own internal self is only one infinite entity in accordance with the Advaita Vedānta. Our bodies, mind, sense-organs etc. the whole external world even our thinkings would not infinite. Because, these



all are created by time and also destructed by the same. Only the ultimate self can't created and also destructed by time and space. It is actually infinite. So, we have to know the absolute self for the sake of searching the ultimate truth.

We can see that, the sufferings always come in our world behind the enjoyments. The sufferings and the enjoyments always stay together. Because, actually these are not contradictory; these are the various forms of only one entity. This only one entity has been revealing as the sufferings-enjoyments since age after age. The only one thing sometime creates enjoyment of anyone and it creates sufferings of others. There is no anything which gives enjoyment equally to all. The first step of *Vedānta* Philosophy is the establishment unity between the enjoyments and sufferings which have been appearing through different centuries in various forms.

The *Vedānta* says that, we have to give up the evil and good both. A question may be raised in favour of such argument that, which being would be acceptable for us? According to the *Vedānta* Philosophy, there is a being behind the enjoyments and also catch such being. Such being is actually our own nature. Our own nature or internal spirit is appeared as good and evil also. The nature is seemed to be as infinite but, actually it is just a drop of the ocean. *Swāmiji* says that, 'you are the ocean by nature'. All of us have to go forward to the one being; that is our own self.

Understanding about the nature of our own self is the ultimate way to realize as to the existence of unity in this variegated World.⁵

References

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