



---

## **Rabindranath Tagore And Swami Vivekananda's Thought In Indian Philosophy With Special Reference To Education And Religion**

**Kaleswar Barman** Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Dewan Abdul Gani College, Harirampur, Dakshin Dinajpur, West Bengal.

---

### **ABSTRACT:**

Among the world's greatest educators are Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore. They advocated educational ideals through philosophy that are of significant significance to the entire humanity. They understood the value of education in contemporary India. One of the most influential people in India today is regarded as Rabindranath Tagore. Although he wasn't a philosopher in the traditional sense, his brilliant works and spiritual outlook offer profound insights into this field. His understanding of humanism is polished or flavoured by Vaishnavas teachings. The religion he espoused is referred to as the poet's religion. Rabindranath Tagore was the greatest poet of modern India. The core of his religion is the meaning of life. God is seen by Tagore as the result of variety. For Vivekananda, religion is the living pursuit of truth and the soul of a man. Hinduism is a religion whose fundamentals are neither a dogma nor a declaration of belief. Finding some things that all religions have in common or that are universal is hard because each religion is different. The religious ideal given by Tagore and Vivekananda is very important in our modern times to lead a proper ethical and peaceful life. So, this article highlights about the Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda's thought in Indian philosophy with special reference to education and religion.

**Keywords:** Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Indian, Philosophy, Education, Religion

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The finest educators in history include Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863–4 July 1902) and Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861–7 August 1941). They advocated educational ideals that are of significant significance to the entire human race. They understood the value of education in contemporary India. By virtue of their extraordinary personalities, they not only enlightened India but the entire world. They were fundamentally patriots, but they were also receptive to all the positive impacts coming from the developed Western nations. They wanted India to study Western science and technology and adopt Western political and economic systems, but they also wanted India to maintain its ties to the East and its traditional knowledge. One of

the most notable pioneers in introducing the concept of a global religion into modern Indian philosophy is Rabindranath Tagore. Through his influential book "Religion of Man," he introduced the idea of a universal religion to the public and the field of philosophy. His approach to religion is wholly anthropocentric. One can come to understand that he is the absolute, his highest self. In "Sadhana: The Realization of Truth," an outstanding book by Tagore, he makes the case that the Sanskrit word dharma, which is typically translated into English as "religion," has a deeper meaning in our language. Dharma is the latent truth, the essence, and the innermost nature of everything. The ultimate goal that is active within us is called dharma. We claim that our genuine nature has been distorted whenever any wrongdoing occurs. In Vivekananda's worldview is a strong adherence to Advaita Vedanta, and he acknowledged the purity of Vedanta as a religion. Vedanta never clashes with any other faith. He said that this section of the Vedas is known as the Upanishads, Vedanta, the Aranyakas, or Rhasya.

### **RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S THOUGHT IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS EDUCATION:**

According to R.N. Tagore, education frees us from the shackles of dust and bestows upon us a richness that is made up not of material possessions but rather of inner light, love, and the ability to communicate the truth. According to Tagore, the highest education is one that transforms us into harmonious members of the human race rather than just imparting knowledge. Tagore consistently emphasises the importance of a child's freedom. He aimed to liberate kids from boring professors and institutions like schools. Through the availability of freedom and an open educational atmosphere, he hoped to remedy this situation. The youngster, according to him, should be as liberated as a bird that soars over the broad sky without any obstacles. He was sure that young children were less free within the four walls of the classroom based on his own experiences attending school. He compared the typical school to a prison. He believes that education is a constant component of the journey through life. It is not like receiving painful treatment to cure students of their ignorance-related illness; rather, it is a feature of their mental well-being and the way in which they express themselves naturally. The manner in which education is set up to be career-oriented and focused on earning a living was criticised by Tagore. According to Tagore, village people should receive this type of education from the very beginning so that they may understand what mass welfare entails and become practically efficient in every way when it comes to securing their subsistence. Learning from nature and life was central to Tagore's pedagogical concept. Similar to Vivekananda, Tagore placed a high value on tapasya and sadhana. It is a deceptive presentation of Brahmacharya as a method of genuine life education in education. Similar to Vivekananda, Tagore emphasised that education should be for the ideal man. The holistic, harmonious development of the individual should be the goal of education. The culmination of manhood is this level of harmonic development. The novelty of Tagore's approach to teaching resides not in his goals but rather in the activities he chose. In order for children to take into account the organic

integrity of human personality, economic self-sufficiency through self-employment, and the development of human capabilities, he suggested a set of activities. One of the most important practises and requirements is mother tongue instruction. Other important practises and requirements include freedom of work; the practise of simplicity; austerity without poverty; self-help; self-discipline; corporate living; respect for guests, elders, and women; and a close relationship with nature, teachers, and society. Aside from the standard disciplines, elective students also participate in campus cleaning, daily prayer, gardening, crafts, music, dance, and theater, as well as games. Self-governance is a necessary stage for reaching full masculinity. Contrary to what Tagore believed, education should be used by men as a tool to accomplish their personal goals in life. In many instances, Tagore stressed various educational objectives. Education, according to Swami Vivekananda, is the expression of human completeness. He supported the idea of self-learning. The teacher only inspires or encourages the pupil and aids him in discovering the knowledge that is already concealed inside of him. Swami Vivekananda recognised that the concentration on science and technology was rapidly reducing people to the position of machines. Fundamental tenets of civilisation are being disregarded, and moral and religious values are being eroded. Through education, Swami Vivekananda attempts to address all of these societal and global ills. He supported the idea of self-learning. The teacher only inspires or encourages the pupil and aids him in discovering the knowledge that is already concealed inside of him. Only a high-quality education can bring out all of a person's hidden abilities. Humanity, the foundation of a man's character and the true indicator of a healthy personality, is something that must be fostered as part of true education. Through education, a person should become adaptable and equipped to handle the challenges of a shifting social environment. The goal of education is to help children grow spiritually, mentally, and physically. It was Swami Vivekananda who fought for universal education. Education should promote a sense of human solidarity and brotherhood. Education should help us see this and do it by teaching us that serving the masses is serving God. Education shouldn't consist of pupils studying from books, playing roles, or receiving a tonne of material. We need to have the kind of education that fosters the growth of a person's character, assimilation of ideas, and overall well-being. For him, education is the process that develops moral integrity, mental fortitude, and intellectual acuity so that one can stand on one's own two feet. Vivekananda thought that education was not complete without teaching about beauty or the fine arts. Self-sufficiency is one of the main goals of education in India. Along with traditional, religious, and cultural courses, the individual should receive training in practical skills and terminology. Vivekananda aimed to make education completely self-sufficient. To advance the nation's economy, Western engineering and technology should be taught in schools and institutions. Every child's education should include the vocational disciplines. Cooking, needlework, child-rearing, economics, and psychology should be taught to girls in school.

It is true that the learner needs to be capable of facing challenges in life. He must also be conscious of the importance of having a good character, cultivating a spirit of charity,

and practising traits like honesty, sincerity, duty, responsibility, and so forth. A student may hold a high position in their field, but he or she cannot be elevated to the status of a responsible citizen who must have love for their nation and its citizens. The only information-giving educational system that our nation supports and nurtures can never be successful in enhancing human beings' noble traits. The function of a teacher is extremely important in developing a student's sense of ethics, perfect character, honesty, honour, justice, uprightness, and virtue. According to Vivekananda, a teacher should serve as a student's philosopher, friend, and guide, as well as a skilful character builder, knowledgeable mind trainer, sincere intellect developer, and unselfish wisdom promoter. While studying western science, a student should also acquire the core principles of Vedanta by heart, practise perfect Brahmacharya, and develop the habit of confidently showing respect to both others and oneself.

### **RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S THOUGHT IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS RELIGION:**

Rabindranath Tagore always had good intentions for others and worked to rid them of superstitions based on their respective religions. He worked to make people more logical thinkers and displayed the unique tenets of modern Indian philosophy. From a very young age, Tagore was greatly inspired by the teachings of the Upanishads, which served as the foundation for the development of his philosophical outlook. Along with the Upanishads, Tagore was profoundly influenced by Vaishnavism, the Brahma Samaj, and the Bhagavat Gita. Other factors, such as Christianity, the humanist ideology of the Brahma Samaj, Vedic thought, etc., appealed to his intellectual or philosophical development as well. His perspective on Hinduism was a synthesis of the Brahma samaj and the Hindu orthodox system. One of his life's most enduring effects was the Brahma Samaj. The greatest Buddha and Raja Ram Mohan Ray are two figures that had an impact on Tagore's life and work. As a theistic philosopher, he is regarded. He views God as reality or God as reality. He holds that God is not an idea that exists in transcendental seclusion from the rest of the universe. But he is both transcendent and immanent. My idea of religion is the religion of a poet, wrote Tagore in his well-known book, *The Religion of Man*. "My faith is basically a poet's religion," he said. Its influence comes to me through the same oblique and erratic pathways that give my music its inspiration. My spiritual life has developed along an enigmatic path similar to how my poetic life has. Throughout their lengthy betrothal ceremony, they managed to keep their marriage to one another secret from me. 1978's (Tagore, p. 5) God is the principle of oneness and the creator. He cannot be captured by reason or logic since he is immanent by nature. The manifestation of Him, or the Divine, is His creation. The human race reflects God's likeness. The harmonious coexistence of nature and the human self is described by Tagore in his philosophy. The source of this cosmos and our existence is God. Tagore pays close attention to God as a personality who appears as a human. For him, God is the entity who is inextricably linked to either man or human life. He also respects the Vaishnavite idea of Bhakti as a path to realising God. God stressed

the importance of personal realisation since we can sense his existence. He claimed that although man might perceive the infinite's presence, he could not actually obtain it. In his view, man is the supreme being, the ultimate source, and the essence of the unity of nature. This is a similar fact that both nature and people express. The main idea of Tagore's religious philosophy is love. He also adheres to the idea of Vaishnavism's spiritual realisation, which is made possible by the virtues of love and devotion. Everything in life may be attained through love. He argued that, at his core, man is a lover rather than a slave to himself or the world. With this permeation of his existence, he is joined with the all-pervading Spirit, who is also the breath of his soul. Love, another word for perfect comprehension, is where he finds freedom and fulfilment. A man gets cut off from that spirit when he strives to surpass everyone else by shoving and jostling for position in order to establish some sort of distinction that makes him feel superior. Because of this, the Upanishads refer to people who have attained the purpose of human life as "peaceful" and "at-one-with-God," implying that they are in complete harmony with both nature and man and, consequently, are in undistributed oneness with God. (1915, Tagore) Love is the utmost happiness a man can have because it is the only way he can completely understand that he is more than just himself and that he is one with everything. Tagore (1915), page 65. On the other hand, vice or evil manifests as a result of our limited understanding of our true nature. He always worked to give individuals a sense of religious freedom. Without God's love, according to him, life is filled with pain, despair, and other negative emotions. Therefore, the fulfilment of God's love ought to be man's highest aspiration. He holds the opinion that although one can imagine the supreme man, that entity cannot be created. Our true selves are divine and are not apart from God. God is a component of our limited selves and is infinite. God bestowed all of his abilities on man, making the human person his most perfect creation. Within us, we hold the Divine within ourselves. He acknowledges that every human being possesses the necessary traits to become Abraham. The concept of man serves as the foundation for Tagore's entire religious philosophy. The phrase "Jivana Devota" is one of Tagore's most well-known and original philosophical expressions. He refers to the God of life, who dwells in the human heart, as "Jivana Devota." This phrase denotes a strong awareness of God's unique and personal name, who once more transforms the individual. The humanism of Advaita Vedanta, which holds that God constantly exists within the human being, is akin to Tagore's conceptual conception of God. Gods are present in every human heart. Jivan Devota is the highest aspect of man and God in human form. The Infinite Absolute is not precisely indicated by Jivan Devota. God is known as Universal Man and goes by many names. Vedic philosophy also had an impact on him. He was a person who genuinely loved and respected other people. He believes that the most revered or important pilgrimage site for humans is nature. According to Tagore's religious philosophy, the Absolute or Brahma and Man, as well as Nature and Man, are in a very clear and favourable relationship. He was a humanist philosopher. Tagore's primary approach to a personal God is supported by Gita philosophy. He once more adhered to the central tenet of Vaishnavism, which holds that love is the bridge that unbreakably unites the finite and the infinite. Both of them are dependent on one

another and are inseparably linked. In his religious philosophy, Tagore identified the Supreme Self as Paratman or Brahma. In the words of the legends, our self is Satyam, where it realises its essence in the universal and infinite, in the Supreme self, Paratman. It is maya where it is just individual and finite, where it considers its separateness to be absolute. Tagore (1931), page 57 Brahma is, therefore, the highest soul. Another significant subject in Tagore's life and thought is self-realization. He had a strong belief in the capacity of man to achieve self-realization. For him, worshipping a guy is like worshipping a god. In other words, serving others is equivalent to worshipping God. He did not imprison religion in any caste, institution, or group. Being a Hindu, Muslim, or Christian is a matter of opportunity, he claims. It is a truth that every man is born into a particular family and is raised in that family according to certain customs and social norms. A Hindu, for instance, abides by the rules and customs of a Hindu family. But that person does not actually practise that religion. Due to following those guidelines, the person might not be able to achieve self-realization. The essence of authentic religion is the acceptance of one's own self-importance, the development of self-awareness, and the provision of freedom. My family was among the first to revive a religion founded on the sayings of Indian sages in the Upanishads in our nation. However, because of my peculiar temperament, I was unable to embrace any religious teaching simply because the others around me thought it to be real. I was unable to convince myself that I practised religion just because I thought it had merit. 1978's (Tagore, p. 5) According to Tagore, a person must have the freedom to choose his or her religion, or else he must first have the opportunity to get to know him. Realizing oneself is considered to be realising one's manhood. Man is naturally creative, and this creative capacity is referred to as his true religion. Through his religion, man communicates the inherent reality of existence. It means that he has the capacity to recognise himself as a spiritual entity. Realizing oneself also means realising one's manhood. As is well known, creativity is a part of man's nature, and this creativity serves as his dharma, or real religion. In many ways and on many different levels, Tagore was a universalist. He advocated for the global, egalitarian dharma of truth and ahimsa instead of the militant, hierarchizing dharma of his Hindu faith and his own nationalist compatriots. He fought against the sectarian identities of nation, religion, caste, race, region, and ethnicity while subtly referencing a "politics of Otherness" in opposition to this politics of identity. He aimed to build his ethics and politics on empathy rather than legalism or group narcissism. (Hogan & Pandit, p. 17, 2003). Tagore had a profound understanding of the concept of creation. He believes that it is only by perpetual self-surrender to the cosmos that creation has been made possible. And the divine creation of man constantly maintains separation from the individual units. This spiritual growth is more difficult than physical growth in the corporeal world. According to a verse from the Upanishads, the absolute unity that permeates this universe of constant motion is the reason why satisfying one's greed would never lead to true happiness. Instead, happiness can only be attained by the surrender of the individual self to the universal self. (Vivekananda, pp. 20-21, 1931) Regarding his life philosophy, there are two perspectives, to paraphrase Radhakrishnan. He is a Vedantin, a thinker who is inspired by the

Upanishads, if one side of the argument is to be believed. Though we believe the other, he is a supporter of a theism that is similar to, if not exactly Christianity. (Radhakrishnan, 1918, pp. 2–3). The following is what Swami Vivekananda said regarding the influence of religion: "The greatest cohesive drive ever brought into play amongst human units has been served from this power." All social organisations work with this distinctive energy in the background. (2015) Vivekananda, p. According to him, every notable religion is founded on three ideas, which are, respectively, philosophy, mythology, and rituals. Vivekananda described universal religion as an eternal manifestation of human religious consciousness in his first notion of religion. Religious awareness of various religions can be observed in various locations. He draws comparisons between all religions and science and asserts that they are one and the same. In the second notion, he defined universal religion as a spiritual religion. In the third idea, he emphasised the dynamic nature of religion and said that a worldwide religion is one in which various religions from across the world can freely communicate with one another for the welfare of the entire human race. Vivekananda also evolved into a humanist philosopher in this way. At the Chicago Parliament of Religion, Swami Vivekananda first presented and spread his concept of religious harmony to the West. He also added three corollaries. There is no need to switch from one's own religion to another because the religions of the world are mutually complementing, not antagonistic. Instead, the best course of action is to accept and assimilate the best aspects of other religions while remaining faithful to one's own. (Bhajananda, 2008, p. 36–37). Though social scientists have viewed religion as a universal phenomenon, Swami Vivekananda has offered a very high conception of religion as a universal phenomenon, but their conception of religion is extremely low and is centred on mythology, rituals, institutions, etc. He connected religion to man's pursuit of transcendental spiritual consciousness and his subsequent encounters with it. Swamiji referred to this human spiritual consciousness as the Universal Religion. In 2008's Bhajananda (p. 41), Vivekananda held Hinduism and religious diversity in the highest regard. But he never asserted that Hinduism is superior to other faiths. Christians placed emphasis on self-purification, while Hinduism placed emphasis on spirituality. In this religiously varied globe, it is our obligation as human beings to work toward harmony. They differ in some aspects, but they also share some characteristics. For instance, every religion mentions the supreme entity known as God. Again, even though we are all human, there are categories for men and women. Swamiji's vision is broad and truly universal, in contrast to the limited notion of universal religion. The philosophy of Swamiji incorporates all major global faiths. It resolves the conflicts between religions and is based on universal principles. However, it is not well known that Swamiji presented three ideas for a universal religion. p. 39 of Bhajananda (2008). In Vivekananda's religious philosophy, religion is referred to as the human mind's highest motivational force. This spiritual vitality, which enables one to comprehend the limitless, is unparalleled. Swamiji did not associate the term "universal religion" with any one religion, such as Hinduism (although he did make Hinduism a universal religion by opening his arms to all people wherever on the globe), but rather with the shared





teach now. Vivekananda and Tagore's respective religions diverge from conventional notions of religion in some ways. However, both of them emphasised humanity while stressing their realistic, active, and practical viewpoints in various ways throughout their works. As a result, each thought has merit from a variety of perspectives. These two legends offer ideas about religion that, from a practical standpoint, are highly important in the present day. No particular group is defined by Tagore's description of religion. His faith is founded on all of humanity. It is both the essence and outward manifestation of the human condition. Despite being a Universalist, Tagore's view on religion is wholly anthropocentric and individualistic. He views religion as a means of realising the absolute and as having the capacity to promote world peace. In his opinion, man must understand the entirety of his existence and his place in the infinite. He also needs to understand that no matter how hard he tries, he will never be able to produce honey inside the hive's cells because the source of his nourishment is always available outside their walls (Tagore, 1915). In his religious philosophy, which is mostly based on Vaisnavite doctrine, Tagore reflects his understanding of humanism. He demonstrated the worth of people and how the absolute is related to the ego of the individual. He was a peace seeker. He wished for people to appreciate nature and strive to improve themselves as people. If you want to live peacefully in the modern, materialistic world, his faith is ideal. Swami Vivekananda's perspective, on the other hand, is wholly universal. His conception of religion is the ideal response for the nation, where numerous religious and cultural groups are present. Both religious believers and non-believers can practise universal religion. Everybody in the world is free to practise any faith. His theological philosophy is extremely pragmatic, active, and logical. He means by "global religion" that the world must continue to function as a wheel within a wheel. He makes an amazing and complicated comparison between this and machinery. One of the fundamental ideas for creating trust and peaceful coexistence among all peoples in the world is found in Vivekananda's religious philosophy. In his opinion, the religious aspirations of the future must incorporate all that is now in the world that is good and magnificent and, at the same time, have boundless opportunity for future development. The history must be preserved in its entirety, and the doors to the current store must remain open for any future expansions. Additionally, because different religions have distinct conceptions of God, they must be inclusive and refrain from treating one another with contempt. (Vivekananda, 2015).

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Ahuja, N.P., Theory and Principles of Education, ANMOL Publication Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.
- Chakrabarty, Mohit, Philosophy of Education of R.N.Tagore , Atlantic Publishers.
- Dalton, D. G. (1982). Indian Idea of Freedom: Political Thought of Swami

Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghose, Mahatma Gandhi, and Rabindranath Tagore. The

Academic Press: Gurgaon, Haryana.

- Das, S. (1991). *Vivekananda, The Prophet of Human Emancipation: A Study on the Social Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda*. Sm. Bijaya Dasgupta: Golf Green, Kolkata.
- Ghose, R. (2017). *Aesthetics, Politics, Pedagogy, and Tagore: A Transcultural Philosophy of Education*. Palgrave Macmillan: UK.
- Green, T. J (2016). *Religion for Secular Age: Max Mullar, Swami Vivekananda, and Vedanta*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group: London and New York.
- Gregg, S. E. (2019). *Swami Vivekananda and Non-Hindu Tradition*. Taylor & Francis Group: London and New York.
- Gupta, K. S. (2005). *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. ASHGATE: USA.
- Gupta, N.L., R.N. Tagore: *An Educational Thinker*, ANMOL Publication.
- Hogan, P. C & L. Pandit. (Ed.) (2003). *Rabindranath Tagore: Universality and Tradition*. Rosemont Publishing: New Jersey.
- Maitra, Subhransu, *Education as Freedom, Tagore's Paradism*, Niyogi Books Publishers.
- Nikhilananda, S (1953). *Vivekananda A Biography*. Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York: New York.
- Radhakrisjnan, S. (1918). *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. Macmillan and Co. Limited: London.
- Rathna Reddy, A. V. (1984). *The Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda*. Sterling Publishers Private Limited: New Delhi.
- Sharma, J. (2013). *A Restatement of Religion: Swami Vivekananda and the Making of Nationalism*. Yale University Press: New Haven & London.
- Tagore & Swami Vivekananda on Education in the Present Scenario; Published by Reader's service.
- Tagore, R (1922). *Creative Unity*. The Macmillan and Co. Limited: New York.
- Tagore, R. (1931). *The Religion of Man*. The Macmillan Company: New York.
- Tagore, R. (1978). *Angel of Surplus*. Calcutta: Visva-Bharati.
- Tagore, R. (1915). *Sadhana: The Realisation of Life*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

- Tejasananda, S. (1995). A Short Life of Swami Vivekananda. Advaita Ashrama: Kolkata
- Tuteja, K.L & K. Chakraborty. (2017). Tagore and Nationalism. Springer: Delhi.
- Vivekananda, S. (2015). Jnana Yoga. Prabhat Prakashan: Delhi.
- Vivekananda. S. (1931). The Science and Philosophy of Religion. Swami Atmabodhananda: Kolkata.