CHAPTER-III

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

Social reconstruction is the process of reforming and upgrading the existing pattern of a social setting with the noble aim of collective betterment. It is a combination of both material and value based strategies that aim at eradicating the prevailing odds and hopes for an upgraded and harmonious collective existence .In this process; it identifies many traditional social dogmas that need to be addressed to create healthy societies. For the well-being of a society, social reconstruction is of urgent necessity. This includes two approaches. First- 'it directly addresses the legacy of violent conflict through inter and intra-group reconciliation. Secondly- it indirectly builds social links by promoting reconciliation through community-based development and co-operation'.[1]

Every human society of the world, from the very beginning, was in a flux resulting in threats to peace and stability of society and the conditions of mass poverty, superstition, starvation, exploitation, and widespread violence. Similarly, 'the ecological imbalance and environmental pollution endangering the health and personal life of the people also threatened the civilized human life.'[2]The philosophy of social reconstruction is the response to such challenges that confront humanity. 'As a

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[1] United States Agency for International Development.(2007). *Community- Based Development in Conflict Affected Areas: An Introductory Guide for Programming:* USAID, Community Based Development> accessed on 08/10/2018.

[2] Dayal, Parameshawari (2006).*Gandhian Theory of Social Reconstruction*. Preface.

discipline, the major objective of the social reconstruction philosophy is to improve the socio-economic- politico and religious condition and value system by the reconstruction of new ones.'[3] Hence, Social reconstruction as a philosophy believes that a healthy and harmonious society can be possible, where all the members obey and imbibe moral and ethical values such as love, sympathy, compassion, tolerance, and sense of duty, etc. and only such values can ensure mutual aid and cooperation in the social life. The growth and development of a man in a society would not be possible unless these values are upheld. Therefore, in a society, people should firmly internalize these ethical and moral values in their lives, and inculcating these values into their daily lives builds a healthy and progressive human society. But, it is also true that in every human society 'the destruction and reconstruction is an inevitable process. Everything in this world seems to be born to die by a struggle of forces.The principles progress by creating new things and destroying the old ones in an unending series of cycles leading towards a higher and higher goal, because there is no construction without destruction, where, the law of nature is creation and preservation by destruction.'[4] Thus, a major significance of the concept of social reconstruction theory is to ensure greater solidarity, harmony among different forces, unity and fullness in the life of the community and all-round development of the complete human being.

The social reconstruction philosophy of Śaṅkaradeva and Karl Marx are significant because it adheres to two different ideologies. Śaṅkaradeva's social

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[3]   Dayal, Parameshawari *op.cit*. p. 113

[4]   *Ibid*. p.113.

reconstruction is based on spiritualism and *Kṛṣṇa bhakti*, while Karl Marx's philosophy is based on dialectical materialism and economic determinism. Both are products of two different times and different socio-cultural roots .In both these societies social inequality and oppression prevailed and the general masses were exploited by the privileged few and their fortune depended on the whims of feudal lords or kings and exploiting class i.e. capitalist. To fight against inequality and to constitute a progressive society, Śaṅkaradeva gathered his ideals from religious scriptures ; whereas Karl Marx adopted dialectical materialism for the well being of society through the economic equilibrium of all downtrodden people.

3.1: Society and its Theoretical Meaning:

The word Society comes from the Latin word 'Societas' derived from the noun 'Socias', used to describe a bond or interaction between parties. .In Sanskrit the synonym for society is –*Samāja,* where civilized and cultured people live in friendly group. The word *Samāja* is derived from the root words-*Sam+Aj+Ghañ*. It can be translated as an organization, which is dynamic. Literaly, society implies the process of many people living together for some common goals and purposes. Thus, Society consists of social relationships by which human beings are interconnected with their fellowmen.

3.2: Evolution of Society:

The evolution in human society is highly important. Thousands and thousands of years have passed in the history of social evolution. A group of social scientists tried their best to find out some clues of this evolution. Luis H. Morgan (1818-1881)

in his *Ancient Society* (1877) classified the division of social evolution of humankind. Following Morgan's research, Friedrich Engels composed a significant book on human evolution titled *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). Friedrich Engels pointed out three steps of social evolution, i.e Savagery, Barbarism, and Civilization. Friedrich Engels also believed that the principal elements of human evolution are labour and struggle as it arouse the conscience in human beings. This conscience makes the human being different from other animals. Engels said that the stage of humans being of nature dependent was known as the stage of Savagery. Based on labour, the better livelihood stage was known as Barbarism, where human beings used iron, bricks and had the skill of constructing houses. They even knew to prepare boats, ships, and chariots for movement. Later, thousands and thousands of years of labour made the human being self –sufficient and enterprising. It also made the people selfish and competitive for a better way of living. With the gradual development of humankind, the process of private property ownership ascended creating a privileged group, which automatically dominated the weaker section of the society. Simultaneously, with the development of science and technology human beings were classified in the division of 'haves' and 'haves not'. Thus, Friedrich Engels in his work- *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* forwarded an extensive discussion of ancient society, where he described the major stages of human development. Therefore, etymologically the evolution of society is very important at the age of savagery or state of barbarian culture.

Again, to save lives from ferocious jungle beasts, human beings started to live together for the sake of security and safety. This group system of livelihood gave birth

to the idea of social ideology. Social groups always strived for the best way of livelihood, better food, and shelter. At this stage, human beings had to follow some rules and regulations for unification and safeguard. Thus, social change among the barbarians came during this time, when they discovered fire and started saving seeds owing to the invention of agriculture. After production, the idea of private property and ownership arose. Thus, it is an ongoing process of changing the mindset of human beings. Engels believes that 'the dynamism of thinking of the barbarians evolving social change.'[5].

The group or assemblance of animals or beasts cannot be considered as a society. Family is the first and primary factor in the formation of a society. The expansion of a family paves the way for forming a society. This society might not be sanguinary. To run this society, the general people make some rules and regulations for unity and relationships. The greater extension of a society leads to the gradual reconstruction of the character of a society based on ethics. Changing the social system is, therefore, dependent upon the social ethics of a society and it has both positive and negative aspects. Thus, the formation of modern society is the outcome of thousands of years of evolution.

3.3: Society and Human Being :

Man is a social animal. Man lives in social groups, as a community, and in society. Human life and society almost go together. Man cannot live as a man without society. Man is biologically and psychologically equipped to live in groups of society.

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[5] Engels, Friedrich.(2010).*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Chapter IX. p.195.

In the book -*The Politics* , the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) remarks that 'man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath that precedes the individual. Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to and therefore does not partake of society is either a beast or God. Man has a natural tendency to live together. Man is not happy to live alone.'[6]Man has a natural tendency. As a social animal, man is endowed with special characteristics. There are no differences between human beings and other beings in the primitive stage. But, because of the physical structure and nervous composition, human beings are different from other species. Due to their physical compositions and characteristics, human beings are transformed into beings with emotions and feelings. Human beings succeeded to climb in the ladder of evolution because of these qualities possessed by them. They like other beings, survive on feeding. Like animals, human beings too live in groups. But, the group of human beings is called society. After being physically satisfied by food, human being then requires mental foods like dance, songs, literature, art, and culture.

In society, man is a cultural entity. To 'fulfill the needs of daily requirements as social beings, they created and arranged various tools and implemented and evolved certain norms and values for an organized and disciplined social life'[7].Other species could not climb through the ladder of evolution as they lack emotion and rationality. That is why they could not go for such norms that bind a social setting .The species having a backbone is endowed with a brain or thinking mechanism. But, unlike a

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[6] Aristotle (384-322 BC).(1890). *The Politics*- On the Constitution of Athens (Part of Politics): Quotation no-125393>accessed on 08/10/2017.

[7] Mellville J.Herskovites.(1969).*Cultural Anthropology*. p. 114

human being, no other species can stand on their feet and work for applying its mind and intellect. Thus, these special characteristics of humans empowered them to be rational. The famous poet of the last part of the 18th century, William Cowper (1731) said in the poem *Solitude of Alexander Selkirk*[8] that-

> *society friendship and love*
> *divinely bestowed upon man;*
> *oh, had I the wings of a dove*
> *how soon would I taste you again?*

It means- society, friendship, and love are divinely bestowed on humanity. This divine bliss is realized and accomplished through culture and these elements are social constructs. By climbing the evolutionary ladder, human beings succeeded in defeating every obstacle and could establish themselves as a rational being. These are the special qualities of human beings and are the product of society.Thus, the 'society originated simultaneously with the arrival of man in this globe.Man has created the society for the fulfillment of his various needs and make life worth living. Society has to become an essential condition for human life to arise and to continue. The relationship between individual and society is ultimately one of the most profound of all problems of social philosophy'[9].

Society is an ongoing process and it is inconstant change. In every society, culture, customs and traditions are constantly changing because the 'society changes in a ceaseless flux and flow, and this societal change is a process responsive to many types of changes in the manmade conditions of life, to change in the attitude and

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[8] Cowper,William.(1731).*Solitude of Alexander Selkrik*, www.bartleby.com: Great Books online, verse.10>accessed on 20/9/2018 at 11.29AM.

[9] Rao,C.N.Sankar. (2000).*Sociology Primary Principle*. p.155

beliefs of man and to the change that goes beyond the human control to the biological and physical nature of things'[10]. Man's social life is not free from regulation. It cannot progress properly without control over behavior. It has to bear in mind the consequences of their action upon other people. 'In order to bring the individual to the right path, the society has to exercise certain restrictions upon the individual. These controls of human behavior are exercised through restriction, mores, folkways taboos, laws, and norms. Society desires that all its members behave in such a way that is consistent with tradition, mores, and folkways of their own society.'[11]

3.4: Society and Cosmology: The Views of some Classical and Modern Western Thinkers:

The pre-sophistic Greek philosophy began with an inquiry into the essence of the objective world. It was first interested in external nature and gradually turns its eye inward on man. The pre-sophistic period started from 585 BC to the middle of the 15th century. As a naturalistic philosophy, its attention was directed to nature, which is hylozoistic and conceives nature as animated or alive. Thus, the pre-sophistic Greek philosophy was ontological and inquires into the essence of things. The pre-sophist Greek philosophy was developed by the Ionian Physicists or natural philosophers like the Pythagoreans (580-570BC), Heraclitus (535-475B.C), The Eleatics, Empedocles, The Atomists (495-435B.C) and Anaxagoras. On the other hand, the period of the Sophists in the 15th century was a transition age. It shows a growing distrust of the power of the human mind to solve the world problems and a corresponding lack of

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[10] MacIver, R.M & Page, Charls. (1949). *Society*: *An Introductory Analysis*. Pp.483-84.
[11] Kar, P.K. (2003).*Conflict and Society*. p. 3.

faith in traditional conceptions and revolutionary indifference or antagonism to the metaphysical speculator.

The pre- sophist Greek philosopher-Pythagoreans (580-570 BC) have fixed their attention not so much upon the sense but upon perceived substances. This was the relation existing between things, order, uniformity, or harmony in the world. The Pythagoreans believed that the numbers make entities of numbers conceiving them as the primary cause of things.

Heraclitus (535-475B.C) born in Ephesus believed the world is in constant change. According to him, everything is in a state of flux. There is no real permanence in things. Heraclitus brings out the idea that there is a reason in the world controlling its happenings. He asserted that the fundamental thought of the cosmos was the universe, which was in a state of ceaseless change.

The Atomists (495-435BC) like Empedocles (495-435 B.C) and Democritus (460-370 B.C) believed that the four elements i.e. earth, air, fire and water and certain moving forces as love and hate are presupposed numberless minute and indivisible particles of matter known as atoms, which are mere elementary than the earth, air, fire water and conceive motion, as inherent in the atoms themselves. The Atomists agreed that absolute change is impossible, where reality was in its essence, permanent, indestructible, and unchangeable.

Plato (427-399 B.C) in the age of reconstruction attempts to explain the origin of nature. Plato presents a cosmology that is sought through many mythical elements. Plato believed that the world, which is composed of the four material elements the earth, air, fire, and water with soul and life. These souls of life are compounds of the

indivisible and divisible identity and changes of mind and matter so that it might know the ideal and perceive the corporeal. He believed the word soul was the intermediary between the world of ideas and the world of phenomena and the cause of all laws, mathematical relations, harmony, order, and uniformity of life, mind, and knowledge. It moves according to fixed laws of its nature, causing the distribution of matter in the heavenly spheres as well as their motion.

Classical thinkers like Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704), and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) elaborated on the nature of society and believed that before the existence of any society, men lived in a pre-social state known as the state of nature. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) has not admitted to the existence of any gregarious instinct in man as virtue but believed that the instinct of self-defense has urged the man to become powerful and create a society. He asserted that man in the state of nature was in perpetual conflict. Man's life in such a state of nature was solitary, nasty, brutish, and short. Hence, to form a society man decided to make contact, i.e. 'absolute sovereignty' with their fellowmen and live in peace with everybody.

John Locke (1632-1704) on the other hand believed that man in the state of nature was enjoying ideal liberty. There was no social restraints, strife, and conflict. All men were abiding the natural laws and they lived very peacefully. Jhon Lock analyzed that in the natural society, no people living in the state of nature was punishable even if they disobeyed the natural laws. But, it created several disorders in this natural society and people differed among themselves in explaining the real meaning of natural laws. As a result, people in the state of nature, to ensure the

exercise of their liberty, entered into a social contract through 'limited government' and the natural rights of life and property remained in the hands of the individuals.

Jean Jacques Rousseau's (1712-78) views regarding society and state were different from Thomas Hobbes and Jhon Locke. Rousseau believed that man in the state of nature is a noble savage. This state of nature was a kingdom of heaven and man lived in peace. But the growth of the numbers of men and the consequent quarrels arising among themselves concerning the right over individual properties compelled them to make a social contract, i.e. 'general will' with their fellowmen in virtue of everyone that all remains as free as before in the society.

Baruch (Benedict) de Spinoza (1632-1677) book-*Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1677) writes about the origin of society. Spinoza's view was that 'everybody has a dread of a lonely life. Lonely men have defended themselves against any intruder, where self-preservation necessitates men to take the help of others. For these reasons man feels the need to form a society.'[12]

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) believed strife to be an indispensable factor, which was the root origin of society. He believed that struggle and strife are not wholly evil but this strife remained confined to a particular limit.

Charles Darwin in his work *The Origin of Species* (1859) explained the idea of survival of the fittest in society. Darwin said that 'the most fundamental truth of the natural society is that there exists a natural selection of favourable variations and a fierce struggle for existence and survival of the fittest.'[13]

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[12] Spinoza, Baruch. (Benedict).de. (1977). *Tractatus Theologics Politics*.p.23

[13] Darwin, Charls. (2006). *The Origin of Species*. Preface.

Herbert Spencer's (1820-1903) concept on the evolution of society was based on the terms of biological laws, which was found in his works–*First Principles* (1862).Spencer mentioned that evolution is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which matter passes from a state of indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to the state of definite and exhibits a gradual growth or development from simple to complex existence. Spencer remarks that everything in the world breaks through causal chains to two fundamental factors namely matter and motion and these are the two aspects of the force. The history of human society reveals that all its associations, institution are constantly evolving or developing with the appearance of new circumstances and problems as well as the appearance of the new association and institutional adaptations.

The thinkers like Henri de Saint Simon (1760-1825), Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and Henry Maine (1822-1888) gave currency to the concept of evolution of society. All of them argued that all social systems pass through certain definite stages in the process from simple to complex form. But they believed that human desires are infinite and to fulfill these desires man created a complex society. Henri de Saint Simon elaborated on the three different stages of the evolution of a human society that is based on the mental activity of human beings. These are - Conjectural, the Mi -Conjectural, and the Positive. Auguste Comte (1798-1857) known as the father of Sociology provided for the first time an organized foundation on the field of social thought. Comte elaborated on the law of three stages of human progress. These are theological, metaphysical, and positive, which were related to the evolution of society. Comte believed that the

evolution of the human mind led to parallel evolution of the individual mind and society. The contributions of Augusto Comte are found in his works -*The Formation of Law of three Stages, Positive Philosophy* (1834-1835), and *Religion of Humanity*.

Lewis Henry Morgan, Haddon Clark (1902-1985), and Friedrich Engels (1877-1895) also held the view that the evolution of societies passes through three stages i.e. Savagery, Barbarism, and Civilization. These theorists visualized four stages of developments experienced by the different social systems, such as 'hunting, pastoral, agricultural, and industrial stages. These thinkers also endeavored to establish that, various institutions of human society, such as marriage family religion, property law, government, etc undergo the various stages of development.'[14]

3.5: Society and Cosmology: Views of some Classical and Eastern thinkers :

Manu (1900-1800 BC) is regarded as the father of ancient Indian political thoughts. Manu is known as one of the most fascinating law-givers of Hinduism. Swāmī Vivekānanda, Swāmī Dayānanda Saraswatī, and Srī Aurobindo recognized him as the greatest lawgiver of the ancient world. In the *Ṛgveda*, Manu was known as the father of the human race. In the *Purāṇa*s, *Manusaṁhitā* of Manu is known as *Bhārgava Saṁhitā.* In the *Manusaṁhitā,* Manu depicts the creation of mankind, religion, and politics, and offer his own views on social evolution and structure. Manu states that in the beginning, God fashioned a social structure for the smooth functioning of His creation and created four classes of people. These were- *Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas,* and *Śūdras.* Manu wrote-

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[14]   Kar, P.K. (2003).*Conflict and Society*. p.303

> *manumekāgramāsīnamabhigamya maharṣayaḥ /*
>
> *prati pūjya yathānyamidaṁ vacanamabruvan /*
>
> *bhagavansarvavarṇānāṁ yathāvadanupūrvaśaḥ /*
>
> *antaraprabhavāṇāṁ ca dharmānno vaktumarhasi//* [15]

Thus, according to Manu, the social composition is based on the principle of *Varṇāśrama dharma* or the division of the society into four *Varṇas* with respective duties (*Dharma*).The four *Varṇas* were created by Lord *Brhamā* representing the dominance of one of the three elements *(Guṇas)* –*Sattava* (Knowledge) *Rajas* (Power and action) and *Tamas* (desire for material pleasure).Manu believed that four ends of life were *Dharma* (virtue) *Artha* (wealth) *Kāma* (desire or pleasure)and *Mokṣa* (salvation). For every human being there were four stages or *āśramas* of a lifetime. These are *Brahmacarya, Gārhasthya, Vāṇaprastha,* and *Saynnāsa.*

Later on, this philosophy of Manu wasexplained by the Greek philosopher Plato in his thought, namely the nature of justice, where he divided the society into three classes - the producers ,the auxiliaries and the guardians .The guardians are also known as philosopher kings. Along with Plato, Aristotle the disciple of Plato also justified his views on the theory of slavery as a natural institution. Aristotle's theory of slavery is the manifestation of the general rule of nature of the subordination of the inferior to the superior or of the body to the soul or of appetite to reason. Both Plato's and Aristotle's classification of society is related to Manu's composition of society.

But, Śaṅkaradeva's views on the social composition of society was different from the *Varṇāsrama dharma* of Manu i.e. *Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas*, and *Śudras.* He believed that this culture is a mere tradition and said that to get spiritual

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[15]   Shastri, Jagadishlal. *Manusaṁhitā.* Chapter -1, Vv.1-2.

knowledge of Lord *Kṛṣṇa,* there should be no barriers of caste and creed and all are to be considered equal. He writes in the *Kīrttana-ghoṣā* --

> *cāṇḍāle kariche hari kīrttana /*
> *buliyā ninde yiṭo ajñajana //*
> *tāka sambhāṣaṇa yijane karai /*
> *ājanmara puṇya tekhane harai //[16]*

 English Translation- only a fool may denounce the singing of *Hari's Nāma* as the outcaste's nuisance. If a man shows honour to a fool, he loses all the virtues acquired since birth.

Kauṭilya in his work *Arthaśāstra* was not directly concerned with the society and its organization, but also provided references to the social order and life prevailing in the society. According to him, political life has no existence outside the society. In *Arthaśāstra*, Kauṭilya specifies the duties of four *Varṇas* in society. These were *Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya,* and *Śūdra*. He believed that a healthy and beneficial society requires for its existence four duties of *Aśrāmās*that are directly related to society and social reconstruction. These duties are [17]-

- Life of celibacy for perfection in education. (*Brahmacarya)*

- Married life to fulfill divine intention of procreation. (*Gārhasthya*)

- Retirement (*Bāṇaprastha)* and

- Renunciation to attain salvation and redeem the cycle of rebirth (*Yati* or *Sannyāsa*).

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[16] *Kīrttana-ghoṣā, Pāṣaṇḍa Marddana*. v. 88

[17] Chande, M.B. (1998). *Kauṭilyān Arthaśāstra*. Pp.35-36.

In contemporary Indian philosophy, the social reformer like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) eloquently elaborated on the concept of the goodness of the almighty in society. Roy is not accepting the metaphysical spiritual monism of the *Upaniṣads*. His central concept of philosophy is the unity of Godhead in society. Roy accepted the reality of being omnipotent and full of infinite goodness. Roy said that the substance was as much dependent on the possession of quality or qualities for its existence as a quality on some substance. It is impossible even to imagine a substance diverted of qualities. Like, Plato's philosophy, 'Roy accepted the value of the contemplation of the eternal and infinite attributes of the supreme real in the society.'[18]

Bhagawan Das (1869-1959) of Vārānasi is one of the renowned Indian thinkers who upheld the theory of absolute monism and accepted a spiritual view of reality in society. He believed in *Paramātmā* or spirituality, all- including and all-pervading complete supreme absolute. He said that the world is not the actual creation of a monotheistic godhead in time. It is neither the universe nor the actual transformation of Godhead. Being influenced by theosophical cosmology, he believed that the world is also included in the being of God. Putting the scheme of social evolution, he believed in the long past of the society, where there was an instinctive group of life and primitive communism and uncivilized tribes. But, he said that at present, phases are intensely competitive, reparative, egoistic, individualistic and back to deliberate conscious.

Rabindra Nath Tagore (1861-1941) and his thoughts on society adhere to the concept of *satyam śivam advaitam* of the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad*.As an aesthetic integral

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[18]   *Tattvabhuṣaṇa,*Sitanath.(1909).*Tattvabhuṣaṇa.* Pp.6-7.

monist, Tagore, believes in the 'supreme creativity of a super spirit, which is the fullness of love in the society. Tagore regards nature and history as the expressions and revelations of the boundless creativity of the eternal spirit of society.'[19]Tagore in his thoughts believes that the cosmic process is permeated with the divine being. The universe is the sport (*Lilā*) of God. Tagore accepts the philosophy of the world and life-affirmation because there is no moral justification of escape from a divine sport and believes that the creation is an expression of God's personality. Tagore believes that the tempest and the Ocean, the Sun, and the Moon, the Hills, and the Earth are outbursts of divine joy.

Swāmī Vivekānanda (1863-1902) advocated the monism of the *Upaniṣads as* systematized by Bādarayana and Śaṅkarācārya. The world for Śaṅkara is the *Vivarta* of *Brahma*, which is found in the western philosopher thoughts of Spinoza's (1632-1677) theory of 'mode' of one infinite, eternal, immutable, self-subsistent and substance. According to Śaṅkarācārya, God and creature of the universe are inseparable elements. God is none other than creatures (*Jīva*).Therefore, Śaṅkarācārya wrote –

ślokārdhena prabakṣāmi yadutkaṁ granthakoṭibhiḥ /

brahma satyam jaganmithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ//[20]

English Translation- I can say the actual truth in half a *Śloka* that, lakhs and crores of religious books that reveal the fact regarding the Soul and *Brahma* (God) that, *Brahma*

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[19]   Tagore, Rabindra Nāth.(1931). *Religion of Man*, (A Compilation of Lectures). Pp.126-128.

[20]   Śaṅkaracharya.*Vivekacuḍāmoniḥ.*Ādvaita   Āśarama,   Swami   Madhanananda,   cited   in   www.sanskritdocuments.org.v-20,2017>accessed on 09/11/2017.

(God) is the real truth and the world or universe is false or transient. However, the soul is none other than *Brahma.*

But, Vivekānanda does not wholly deny the reality of the cosmos and is inspired regarding cosmos as the motherhood of the governing principle of the universe. As to the evolution of the cosmos, Vivekānanda's theory is related to Charles Darwin's formula. Swāmī Vivekānanda admitted Darwin's theory to be sound enough to a certain extent and it assails with the greater theory that of the filling in of nature.[21]

3.6: Śaṅkaradeva's views on the theory of Evolution and Society:

Śaṅkaradeva's view on the theory of evolution is found in one of his unique literary works –*Anādipātana* a creation of the third *Skandha* of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. In the *Anādipātana,* Śaṅkaradeva discusses in detail, his theory of evolution. The saint deals with cosmology and cosmogony. Here, 'Śaṅkaradeva regards the world of nature as evolve *Prakṛti* or *Māyā* produced by God, which is based on Sāṁkhya philosophy with a little modification.'[22]

.The Sāṁkhya philosophy founded by Kapila advocates the ontological dualism of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. It believes in the evolution of the cosmos including matter, life, and mind out of the eternal *Prakṛti* to serve the ends of the infinite number of individual souls. The dualism of *Prakṛti* and souls is the fundamental doctrine of the Sāṁkhya system. It recognizes unconscious finality in the evolution of *Prakṛti* and vehemently criticizes the *Nyāyā* theism and strongly advocates atheism. Thus, the Sāṁkhya philosophy enumerates the metaphysical principles of reality, in which the

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[21] Vivekānanda, *Swāmī* (1972). Vol.2. p.747.

[22] *Anādipātana , Sṛstililā* . Pp.269-276.

word Sāṁkhya means perfect knowledge. The system gives perfect knowledge of the self (*Puruṣa*) as quite distinct from *Prakṛti* and its body, sense organs, mind (*Manas*), intellect (*Buddhi*) and egoism (*Ahaṁkāra*) which annihilates all kinds of sufferings. But, in the Śaṅkaradeva's philosophy of evolution, the *Puruṣa* of Sāṁkhya concept takes place of God and this God produces *Prakṛti*from himself. According to Śaṅkaradeva, before the creation of the eternal, the *Brahma* existed alone and *Prakṛti* or *Māyā* with fourteen worlds was placed by *Brahma,* when *Brahma* felt the loneliness of presence and thought of creating the world through *Prakṛti* in a sportive spirit. He produced *Prakṛti* or*Māyā* out of himself and manifesting himself as the conscious spirit (*Puruṣa*) produced vibration and impregnated *Prakṛti*. Therefore, Śaṅkaradeva writes in the *Anādipātana-*

> *prakṛtiro īśvara puruṣa svatantara /*
>
> *nāhi yiṭo brahmara bāhira abhyantara//*
>
> *jagatara jīva udarate diyā bāsa/*
>
> *kevale īśvara kṛṣṇa karanta prakāśa //*[23]

English Translation - *The Puruṣa*, who is the root cause of nature, is none other than *Brahma*. All creatures in the universe are sheltered in this womb; which is the incarnation known as *Śrīkṛṣṇa.*

Śaṅkaradeva believed that the *Prakṛti* is not an independent entity. He describes Prakṛti as the energy of God or *Puruṣa,* only in the sense that the former has no separate existence. But, after creation or at the time of dissolution *Prakṛti* gets

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[23] *Anādipātana.* v.39

merged in God. This thought of Śaṅkaradeva was favoured by Mādhavadeva, the chief disciple of Śaṅkaradeva who writes-

prakṛti puruṣa duiro niyantā mādhava/
samastare ātmā hari parama bāndhava//[24]

English Translation- *Mādhava* i.e. *Īśvara* is the creator and controller of the both material world and the individual souls and God (*Hari*) is the soul of all creatures and He is the best friend.

Regarding Cosmology, Śaṅkaradeva believed that when God or *Puruṣa* longed for creation as His will *Prakṛti* or *Māyā* came out of Him. Śaṅkaradeva writes-

aneka sahasra yuga ehimate gaila/
dunāi īśvarara sṛṣṭika icchā bhaila //[25]

English Translation - Thousands and thousands of years were passed by the supreme soul i.e. God who desired to create the universe again.

Again he writes-

māyāra hātata karāo jagata prakāśa/
karo sṛṣṭilīlā āve binoda bilāsa//
ehibuli meli padma nayana anante/
māyāka kaṭākṣe cāhilanta bhagavante//
jaḍa prakṛtito karilanta jīva dāna/
aṣṭa guṇa teja ṣolla guṇa baila prāṇa//
sṛṣṭi karibāka īśvarara icchā kāja/
puruṣara parā mahāmāyā bhailā bāja//
anādi rūpiṇī īśvarara ardhakāya/
byakta bhailā mahāmāyā sṛṣṭika upāya //[26]

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[24] *Nām-ghoṣā*. verse.405.

[25] *Anādipātānā*. verse.41.

[26] *Ibid*. Vv. 43-45

English Translation - The Supreme soul i.e. God advised nature i.e. *Prakṛti,* that she must come forward to create the universe with His help and enjoy love. As per the desire of creating dormant Prakṛti, she came out from the body of the *Brahma* and as the better –half she gave the consent of creation.

Thus, in the *Anādipātana,* Śaṅkaradeva says that when *Māyā* or *Prakṛti* being inseminated by God, consequently gave birth to *Mahat,* the first evolutes of *Prakṛti.* Śaṅkaradeva explains it in the following verses-

> *mahataro tini putra bhailā anupāma/*
>
> *śuniyo tiniro kaho yāra yibā nāma//*
>
> *tini guṇe tini tattva bhailā avatāra/*
>
> *tāmasika rājasa sāttvika ahaṁkāra//*
>
> *ehi tini putra tāna jagate prakyāta/*
>
> *śunā yāta hante yibā sṛṣṭi bhailā jāta//*[27]

English Translation – *Mahat Tattva* out of its three *Guṇas* yielded three *Ahaṁkāras.* From the *Guṇa* of *Rājas* came *Rajāsika ahaṁkāra*, from *Sattva* the *Sāttvika ahaṁkara* and from *Tamas* came *Tāmasika ahaṁkāra.*

Śaṅkaradeva again said that after creation, the *Tāmasika ahaṁkāra* gave rise to five subtle elements (*Tanmātras*)-i.e.*Śabda* or sound, *Sparśa* or touch, *Rūpa* or colour, *Rasa* or taste, and *Gandha* or smell. From these five *Tanmātras,* five material elements (*Mahābhūtas*) were created.Thus from *Śabda* was created *Ākāśa*; from *Sparśa Vāy;* from *Rūpa, Agni;* from *Rasa, Jala* and lastly from *Gandha* came out *Pṛthvī* or earth. Śaṅkaradeva writes-

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[27] *Ibid.*Vv.52-53

> *tāmasata hante śabda guṇara prakāśa/*
>
> *śabadaro putra bhailā nāmata ākāśa//*
>
> *ākāśata hante paraśara utapati/*
>
> *paraśara putra bhailā vāyu mahāmati//*
>
> *vāyu hante rūpa nāme putra avatāra/*
>
> *rūpara tanaya bhailā agni camatkāra//*
>
> *aganira putra bhailā rasa mahāmati/*
>
> *rasa guṇa hante pāce jala utapati//*
>
> *jale utapati bhailā gandha guṇa nāma//*
>
> *gandha guṇa hante basumatī anupāma//*[28]

In his theory of evolution, Śaṅkaradeva said that *Prakṛti* is not an element distinct from God, rather it is an integral part of body. Śaṅkaradeva writes-

> *śuniyo prakṛti eko guṇe nohā hīna/*
>
> *tomāre āmāre kiñciteko nāhi bhina//*
>
> *mora nija śakati sākṣāte dekho prāṇa/*
>
> *sattvare kariyo māyā jagate nirmāṇa//*
>
> *tomāka jagāilo āmi ehi abhiprāya/*
>
> *jāniyoka bhāile tumi mora ardha kāya//*
>
> *tomhāre āmhāre kicho nāhi bhinnābhinna/*
>
> *mote yāto līna yāhā ehi mātra hīna//*[29]

English Translation- you are my power and I regard you as my vital power. Please create the world as soon as possible. I have brought you into existence for that purpose, and know it definitely that you are half of my body(*Ardha-kāya*). There is

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[28] *Ibid*. Vv. 54, 55-56.

[29] *Ibid*.Vv.49-50.

neither difference nor non- difference between you and me. You are rather interior to me in the sense that you would get yourself merged in me at the time of annihilation.

According to Śaṅkaradeva, after the world is produced, Lord *Nārāyaṇa* placed within it as the pervading reality. It was narrated by Śaṅkaradeva in the *Anādipātanā*. One of those lines is the following one -

<p style="text-align:center">paśilā bhitare tāra deva nārāyaṇe/ [30]</p>

English Translation - God *Nārāyaṇa* entered the womb of him.

Thus, the theory of evolution or evolutionary process narrated by Śaṅkaradeva was influenced by the creative process of evolution described in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. However, Śaṅkaradeva not only explained the theory of evolution but also mentioned the concept of society. It is scattered in his different writing, where he said that the society of Assam was bound by equality. In his writings it is found that the *Kirāṭa, Kachāri, Khāci ,Gāro Miri, Yavana, Kaṅka, Gowāla, Kuvāca ,Mleccha* and *Cāṇḍāla,* - all these castes and communities inhabited in ancient Assam in a harmonious manner. Thus, Śaṅkaradeva says in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* book II, verse-53 as followes-

<p style="text-align:center">kirāta kachāri khāci gāro miri</p>

<p style="text-align:center">yavana kaṅka govāla/</p>

<p style="text-align:center">asama maluka dhobā ye turuka/</p>

<p style="text-align:center">kuvāca mleccha cāṇḍāla//</p>

3.7: Karl Marx's views on the theory of evolution and society :

Karl Marx has furnished a scientific explanation of the origin of the society and state, its essence, and its role in social life. Marx believed in the law of evolution in

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[30]   *Ibid.* verse..81.

human history and said that mankind must first of all eat and drink, have shelter, and clothing before it can pursue politics, science, religion, and art, etc. 'Marx along with Engels asserted that the historical act of individuals distinguishes them from animals. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence.'[31]According to Marx, whatever the social form of production might be, the labourers, and means of production always remains a factor. But, in a state of separation from each other, either of these factors can have potential. 'For production to go on at all they must unite. The specific manner in which this union is accomplished distinguishes the different economic epochs of the structure of society from one another and other species.'[32]

Marx believed that the existence of a highly organized living creature is a biological pre-requisite for the emergence of society it arises on material production. This organized society was not the result of biological process but of historical development. It means the social relationships in society redevelop during the process of material production. Therefore, Marx's remarks on the productive relations are a major feature of any society. Marx assumed that the concept of society and socio-economic formation is an objective of material production relations and the development of society takes place by a natural historical process. This thought of Karl Marx was supported by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and he opined that -'Marx established the concept of the economic formation of society by the development of a process of natural history'.[32]

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[31] Marx, Karl. & Engels, F. (1964). *Selected Works.* p.31

[32] Marx, Karl. (1961). *Capital-* Vol-II. p. 34.

[32] Lenin, I. V. (1977).*Selected Work.* p.142.

3.8: Theoretical meaning of Social Reconstruction and Social Change :

In social sciences, the study of social reconstruction has always been an interesting area of investigation. As a philosophy it heavily emphasizes on social questions and questions about society to create a better environment for a more successful society. Again as a philosophy, it advocates for an environment of tolerance and peaceful co-existence, gains and social cohesion through acceptance of identity that transcends individual, sectarian and communal differences and resolves disputes non-violently. In the process of reconstruction of the society, 'social reconstruction aims to transform the economic and political structure, social and cultural value system, human relations and thereby, revolutionizes the human motivation from egocentric to altruistic and spiritual.[33] Thus, social reconstruction philosophy aims at social control for the betterment of the larger section of the society , upholds the glory of human dignity and self-respect and wants to rebuild the society on the principle of justice and equality. Therefore, the concept of social reconstruction vouches for the establishment of the egalitarian order and to ensure the functionality of democratic rights. This functionality of democratic rights becomes a movement for social reconstruction.'[34]

Society is dynamic but not static. Man is the cause of changing society. Man's social life is not free from regulation and cannot progress properly without control over its behaviour in society. In society, an individual behaves just in the manner of wishes. It has to be born in the mind of the individuals regarding the consequence of

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[33] Dayal, Parmeshwari. (2006).*Gandhian Theory of Social Reconstruction*. p.196.

[34] Kumar, S. (2013). *Encyclopedia of Modernity and Social Change*. p. 173.

their actions upon other people. Hence, 'this control of human behaviour is exercised through restriction, mores, folkways, taboos, laws and norms, where the society desires that all its members behave in a way of consistent with traditions, mores, and folkways of their own society'[35]. In every society, change is the law of nature. A human being is part and parcel of nature and society as any other part of the universe is also subject to constant change. For social change, the terms revolution, evolution, development and progress are related to society.

The sudden and very fast changes in the social system might affect all aspects of social life. This type of change is known as revolution. The change of power structure, economy, way of living, norms, and beliefs are related to the revolutionary changes. It is the outcome uprising and mobilization of masses, new discovery and inventions. It is felt abruptly at a given point of time. Similarly, any perceptible change is the outcome of the cumulative effect of many imperceptible changes. It transforms the old and simple forms of social life into new and complex forms. This change has been related to the biological sciences. It uses the analogy of the evolution of plants and animals for explaining the pattern of social change. Thus, 'the social change is variations or modifications of any aspect of social process, social patterns, social interaction, or social organization, emanated from the variations of the accepted mode of social life. In other words, it is a change in the establishment of law, customs, or practice or normative structure of society.[36]Regarding the inter-relationship between the social change and social reconstruction of society, Rabindranath Tagore said that

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[35] Kar, P.K. (2003). *Conflict and Society*. p. 3.

[36] Kar, P.K .*op.cit* .p. 301.

society as such has no ulterior purpose and end in itself but spontaneous self-expression of man because they are a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships so that men can develop their ideals of life in co-operation with one another in the society and reconstruct it.'[37]

3.9: Some important components of Social Reconstruction:

3.9.1. Co-operation:

Co-operation is the most basic, pervasive, and continuous process of society. In a society, co-operation is the basis of social existence and social reconstruction for the pursuit of a common goal. It implies regard for the wishes, needs, and aspirations of other people. Thus, in every society, co-operation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common good. For the social reconstruction of society, the role of co-operation is universal and continuous, making social life possible and livable. Similarly, co-operation helps society to progress which is the benefit of the co-operative activity. In Sanskrit dictum, it is held as –*saṁhatiḥ kāryasādhikā.*

3.9.2. Settlement of Conflict:

Conflict is a human instinct that arises out of mind when'the desire of a person is not fulfilled. Conflict might be vested on self, but it arises in comparison with the persons in the society sharing with materialistic benefit'[38] It is a process of seeking to possess a reward by weakening or eliminating all rivals. Conflict or clash is universal in nature. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Saint Simon, and other social thinkers

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[37] Tagore, Rabindra Nath. (1931).*The Religion of Man* (A Compilation of Lectures). p. 143.

[38] Gillin, J.L. & Gillin, J.F. (1950) *Cultural Sociology*. p.561, cited in Rayat H.K.(2010). *Sociology – Basic Principles*. p. 255.

emphasize on the role of conflict as a fundamental factor in the social life of human being. Therefore, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels said in the first line of the *Communist Manifesto* (1948) that the history of the hitherto existing human society is nothing but the history of class struggle. This dictum of Karl Marx and Engels indicated that the pattern of conflict always changes resulting changes in values, ideals, goals, religious notions, attitude, and ideologies and reconstructing society from one stage to another.

3.9.3: Accommodation:

'Accommodation is a natural issue of conflict.'[39].The relevance of accommodation is found throughout the lives of man, who has to face many conflicting situations. Therefore, it is clear that without accommodation, social life hardly goes on. It checks conflict and helps human beings and groups to maintain co-operation. It also helps to carry out life activities together with conflicting interests. Thus, it is a means of resolving conflict and reconstruction of society.

3.9.4: Assimilation:

'Assimilation is a social process for social reconstruction, whereby individual or groups come to share the same sentiments and goals'[40]. In a society, assimilation affects culture, language, customs, and tradition. For example, a powerful tribe might engulf a weaker tribe, impose their culture and tradition on the captive tribe and assimilate them with the former one. Thus, it is the manifestation of force. Again, assimilation is one of the types of interaction. Like accommodation, it is also a form of

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[39] Park, R.E & Burgess., E.W. (1921).*Introduction to the Science of Sociology,* cited in H.K.Rayat.(2010) .*Sociology –Basic Principles*.p. 238.

[40] Park, R.E & Burgess. E.W(1921).*op.cit.* P. 238.

social adjustment. It is concerned with the absorption and incorporation of one culture by another. In a society, it provides a solution to intergroup disputes and differences, which is highly needed for social progress and reconstruction of society.

3.9.5: Social Interaction:

Social interaction is fundamental to a society. Without interaction, there will be no group life and social progress in the society. In a society, interaction is the basic social process. By interaction, ideas, phoilosophies, rules, customs, traditions are made and maintained .It is the dynamic of social relationships. Therefore, social interaction is the basic condition of the social existence of every society. Society exists only when a large number of persons are interacting with one another. It is the process of development for human nature and the social structure of society.

3.9.6.: Community Sentiments:

A community is essentially an area of common living with a feeling of belongingness. Community sentiment means a feeling in a society, where human beings are aware of their togetherness, sharing a common life. In a society, every member develops a sense of community feeling. It means a kind of identification with other groups. Without a sense of identification, a sense of awareness, a sense of living, and sharing some common interest in life there cannot be any social change and social reconstruction.

3.9.7: Religion and Morality:

Religion and morality are like two sides of one coin. Both are complementary to each other. According to Indian classical philosopher, Acārya Manu- religion is a unifier of people to a certain belief. It helps people to live together, work together, and

think together. Thus, religion indicates human behavior with spiritual conduct and belief. On the other hand, morality implies doing something within the ambit of social conduct. The relationship between religion and morality is found in the following dictum of *Subhāṣita* –

āhāra nidrā bhaya maithunañca: sāmānymetat paśubhirnarāṇām/

dharmo hi teṣāmadhiko viśeṣaḥ dharmeṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ //[41]

In every human society, religion plays an important role in social reconstruction. In society, man is not only a social animal, but also a religious or spiritual being. Therefore, the institution of religion is universal. Thus, religious aspects in society have influenced economic endeavours, political movements, property dealings, educational tasks, ideological fervours, scientific inventions, and artistic developments. Simply, religion is a finite idea and a provincial attitude of human beings. In a society, religion is closely associated with morality and has elaborate rules of conduct. Like religion, morality is one of the fundamental social institutions. The word morality is often equated with moral code. It prescribes good behaviour and prohibits the vice versa .Though not written, they are transmitted from one generation to another. Therefore, moral values are the most dynamic, creative, and important driving forces behind human actions and endeavours. The concepts like-justice, honesty, fairness, righteousness, conscientiousness, disinterestedness, prudence, incorruptibility, freedom and mercy, etc are purely moral concepts and represent the moral values, which are deeply influencing the course of society. Thus in every society, religion and morality prescribes and controls human behaviour, where

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[41] *Surabhāratī*. p.25.

religion is fear of God; and in morality, it is the pressure of conscience. For societal change and reconstruction of society both are important components.

3.9.8: Social Control:

'Social control means to describe all the means and processes whereby a group or a society secures its members in conformity to its expectations.'[42] The attainment of individual happiness is the main aim of social life but the survival and smooth functioning of the society is possible only when there are social harmony, social solidarity and social order. In every society, group welfare or societal welfare is possible only through social control, where society exercises its force or control through different means of social control like tradition, convention, religion, law, legislature, etc over the individual members and their pleasure. Thus, social control refers to the control of society and the individual for the reconstruction of a good society and welfare of all.

3.9.9: Social Norms and Social Values:

Both social norms and social values are important for the social reconstruction of every society. 'Social norms constitute the very foundation of the social structure.'[43] Social norms refer to a group to share standardized generalization concerning expected modes of behaviour. It is based on social values and a parameter, which determines, guides, controls, and predicts human behaviour. Without the norms of the society, the individuals face the problem of decision at every moment and it makes social relation

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[42] Horton, P.B.& Hunt, H.P. (1964). *Sociology*, cited in Rayat, H.K. (2010). *Sociology –Basic Principles*. p.317.

[43] Marshall, G. (1094). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*, cited in Rayat, H.K. (2010).*Sociology –Basic Principles*. p. 83.

haphazard, chaotic, and dangerous. But, social norms give social order, stability, and predictability of social life. It is a truth that where there are no norms, there is no society and foundation of social reconstruction.

'Social value is a belief that something is good and desirable.'[44]In every society, the social value forms an important part of the culture of the society. Social value accounts for the stability of the social order. It provides general guidelines for social conduct. In society, social values are the criteria, which are used by the people in assessing their daily lives, arranging their priorities, measuring their pleasure and pains between alternative courses of action. Thus, the social value provides general guidance for the behavior of the people. The social values like- respect for human dignity, fundamental rights, private property, sacrifice, helpfulness, co-operation, social equality, religiosity, individual enterprise and privacy, etc guide human behaviour for the social reconstruction. Thus, the values 'are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning or socialization and that becomes subjective preferences standards and aspiration.'[45]

3.9.10: Culture:

Culture includes ritual performance, which is a process of refinement. Thus, 'it is the set of rules and procedures together with a supporting set of ideals and values'.[46] Culture is one of the most important elements of society. Culture and society both go together. In every society culture is present in all walks of human life, modes of

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[44] Horton, P.B.& Hunt. H.P (1964). *Sociology*, cited in Rayat, H.K. (2010). *Sociology–Basic Principles*. p.93.

[45] Rayat, H.K. (2010). *Sociology –Basic Principles*.p.93.

[46] *Ibid*. p.79.

behaviour, philosophies, and ethics, morals and manners, customs and tradition, religion, politics, economy and other types of activities. Thus, Culture includes all that man has acquired in individual and social life. A society is composed of people who are interacting on the basis shared beliefs, customs, values, and activities through culture. These common patterns of interactions make up the culture of society and social reconstruction.

3.9.11: Social Development:

Both social reconstruction and social development are inter-related .Social development is an organic concept which necessarily involves the harmonious development of the constituent members of society. Harmonious social development includes all-round development of individuals as well as social institutions and associations. Social development does not rest on the element of constraints in social life but on the element of co-operation resting on mutual need. The real nature of social development involves energy, organization, and harmony, which are essential for the reconstruction of a society. Thus, social development is the process of planned institutional change to bring about a better adjustment between human needs and aspirations. As a process of restructuring society, social development declares war on poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, inequality, and irrationality and oppression pervaded in a society. It aims not merely at uplifting the weak, the underprivileged, and disadvantaged people but, also at improving the quality of life of all citizens in a society.

3.9.12: Common Interest:

In every society, social solidarity is due to the common interest of individuals. There is cohesion between the members of society on account of common interest in certain social ends. Every organized group of society, in seeking its own preservation or expansion endeavours in various ways to cultivate the common interest. No association can ultimately survive unless its members are to some degree remain bound together by indivisible social bonds with a common interest. Therefore, the common interest is essential for the reconstruction of every society.

3.10: Some Historic events of Europe and its significance in Social Reconstruction:

3.10.1: The Early-Middle Ages (Dark Ages) :

This period came after the fall of the Roman Empire in 476-AD, when the so-called Barbarians (Germanic Tribes) forcefully took over areas that had been under Roman control. This period is known as the 'Dark Ages' because there was very little writing on science or culture. After the end of Norman Conquest, there was a revival of learning in different areas.

3.10.2: The Middle (Medieval) Ages :

This age was very significant. Most of the people believed in an all-powerful God, responsible for bringing order and prosperity in the society, and the Church was very influential and wealthy. During this age, many great Cathedrals and Monasteries were built. It was a great age of learning and the first universities were founded in Bologna, and then Paris and Oxford. During that period the medieval thought was

based on universalism. It assumes the existence of a single universal society for the wellbeing of the people.

3.10. 3.: The Renaissance:

The Renaissance began in Italy during the 14th century and spread to Northern Europe in the 17th century. It was known as the revival of learning. The nomenclature of renaissance comes from the French word for rebirth, where people looked back to Greek and Roman ideals in arts, architecture and sculpture at that time. The renaissance was marked by people in progress and personal achievement. The play-wrights like William Shakespeare and artists Leonard Da- Vinci were born during this time. The famous litterateurs of the renaissance in different European states are- Dante (Divine Comedy), Petrarch (Founder of Humanism and known as the father of Humanism), Boccacio (Decameron) and Machiavelli (The Prince) of Italy, Cervantes (Don Quixote) of Spain, Cameos (The Lusiad) of Portuguese, Erasmus (In the praise of Folly) of Dutch, Rabelais (Pantagruel and Gargantua) and Montaigne (Essais) of France, Thomas Kempis (The Imitation of Christ) of Germany and Clauser (Canterbury Tales), Spencer (The Faerie Queen), Bacon (The Advancement of Learning), Shakespeare (Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, and Macbeth) and Thomas More (Utopia) of England, etc has great contribution to change society through their literary works.

3.10.4: The Reformation:

It was a social movement started by Martin Luther in Witten burgee of Germany in 1517 through a public protesting against the sale of letters of indulgence termed as a passport to heaven. This movement was against the Roman Catholic

church. The result of this movement was the division of western Europe between the Catholic and protestant countries of Christianity. Therefore, began in the 16th-century,this phenomenon   was historically known as a religious movement, since the introduction of Christianity. On the one hand, it was a protest against the abuses of the church, and on the other hand it was a demand for reinterpretation of the contemporary status of Christianity by the return to scripture. In European history, this movement was not a political, philosophical or literary occurrence, but a religious and moral regeneration of the people and society. The leaders like Erasmus, Martin Luther King started Protestantism and strived for its split from the Roman Catholic Church. In the field of religious thought and experience, this reformation opened the gates to a new religious world.

3.10.5: The Glorious Revolution (1688) :

This revolution was known as glorious because in this revolution the social ideology changed through a bloodless uprising which focused on securing the freedom of worship from Catholicism. The Glorious revolution unified the Whigs and Tories of Anglican church against the Roman Catholic ruler James –II, and it signified the importance of social reconstruction.

3.10.6: The Age of Colonialism (1492) :

The age of colonialism or imperialism has great significance in the world history. During that time, Britain became one of the most powerful colonizing powers of the world. It gained thirteen (13) colonies in North-America, Latin Africa, and Asian continents. As a whole, this country impacted and influenced the social composition of these countries.

3.10.7: The Industrial Revolution (18th to 19th Century) :

The Industrial Revolution was the process of change in the earning of livelihood by adopting an industrial process rather than agriculture. The industrial revolution began with the invention of steam power and steam-driven machinery in the 18th century in Britain with technological inventions, spinning Jenney and power loom. But, this revolution negatively led to the growth of child labour and a widening divide between the rich and the poor and changed the class structure of the society.

3.10.8: Independence of United States of America (1776) :

Independence of United States of America is a milestone in the process of social reconstruction. Since immediately after the independence thirteen colonies made declaration of some fundamental rights to be granted to citizens that are irrevocable.

3.10.9: French Revolution (1789) :

The French people were not satisfied with the ongoing system of governance, especially about the manner of the use of the political power by the monarch and the landowning aristocracy. It first led to their dissatisfaction then to an organised revolution. The violent periods that followed became known as the reign of terror of King Louis XVI and many other members of the ruling class were gelatinized. The French revolution resulted in the abolition of the French monarchy and the slogans of liberty, equality, and fraternity emerged as rights of every human being. Thus, the slogans of liberty, equality, and fraternity became a landmark of the human rights for every state and society for social reconstruction.

3.10.10: Russian Revolution (1917) :

The Russian revolution was based on Marxian (Karl Marx) ideology. The rule of the Russian royal family led by the Tsar ended with the October revolution in 1917.The revolution was triggered by problems such as food shortages and Russia's involvement in World War I. The result of this revolution was the formation of an egalitarian, socialist society.

All the above mentioned historic events, particularly in Europe, had tremendous impact on the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious life of European society. It, directly or indirectly, helped reconstruction of the social composition with new thinking, perspectives and outlooks.

3.11: Social Processes of India with special reference to   Social Reconstruction:

3.11.1: Pre- Historic Periods of India:

The pre-historic period in India is divided into three ages. These are the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. The Stone Age is known as Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic. The Paleolithic Age is also classified into the lower, middle and upper parts. In the lower Paleolithic age, the people used to eat fruits, birds and raw animal's flesh. The tools were usually made of hard work. The greater part of the area was covered by ice. In the Middle Paleolithic age, changes occurred in the shape of the tools made of stones or bones, and in the Upper Paleolithic Age, the humans lived as nomadic hunter-gatherers. The Mesolithic Age was an intermediate stage in the Stone Age and it ended with the introduction of agriculture. In the Neolithic Age, tool making became an important profession, and a variety of polish tools were manufactured. People learned the art of pottery and discovered the art of producing

fire by the friction of stones and wheel, which was an important discovery for social change during this age. The Iron Age is associated with the painted grey wares. The adoption of Iron brought various changes in society including agricultural practices, religious beliefs, and attractive artistic styles.

3.11.2: Indus Valley Civilization:

It was a unique Bronze Age civilization and one of the most ancient civilizations of the world. This civilization flourished around the Indus river basin and its tributaries consisting of modern Pakistan and northwestern India. The major ports of this civilization were Lothal, Balakot, Suktagender, and Allahdin (Pakistan) in the cities of Harappan civilization .In this civilization, women were given high honour in society. Families regulated in the name of the mother. The Indus Valley civilization had four different socio-economic classes i.e. scholar, warriors, businessmen, and labourers. The people used irrigation-based agriculture system. Hinduism and worship of the Mother Goddess, Paśupati *Śiva*, sacred animals, and trees were the main religious rituals during this period. The chief excavators of Indus valley sites are- Harappa (1921)-Dayaram Sahni, Mohenjodaro (1922)- R.D. Banerjee, Sutkagender (1927)- George Aurel Stein, Dulesamri (1929)- M.G. Majumder, Chanhudero (1931) M.G. Majumder, Rangpur (1931)-M.S. Vats, Kot Diji (1935) Fazal Khan, Dabarkot (1935) Maichke, Kili Ghul, Mohammad (1950)- Fairservis, Kalibangon (1935) A.Ghose, Roper (1953)–Y.D. Sharma, Lothal (1957) S.R. Rao, Sukotada (1964)- Jagatpati Ghose and Dholvira (1967) J.P.Joshi. (Goyal, Tarun. 2018: 22)

3.11.3: The Vedic Period:

The Vedic period or the Vedic age refers to the period when the Vedic Sanskrit text was composed in India. The *Ṛgveda* (1500-1000 BC) with 1028 hymns, *Gāyatrī Mantra* from *Ṛgveda*, *Sapta Sindhu* (the Sindhu and its Tributaries), *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* (1549 hymns), *Atharvaveda*, *Āraṇyakas* (write mainly for the hermit and the jungle living), the *Upaniṣadas* (anti- ritualistic discussing about the relation between *Brahma*(God) and *Jīva*(Creature), *Vedānta* (towards the end of the Veda), *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (consist of 108 upaniṣada), *Sabhā and Samiti*(popular assemblies also known as two daughters of Prajāpati), *Vedāṅga* ,composed during post Vedic period, like-*Śikṣā*(phonetics), *Kalpa*(rituals), *Vyākaraṇa* (grammer), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chanda* (metrics) and *Jyotiṣa* (astrology), *Upavedas* ,composed after *Vadāṅgas*, like-*Āyurveda* (medicine), *Gandharvaveda* (music*), Dhanurveda* (archery) and *Śilpaveda* (craft and wealth), *Purāṇas* (18 *purāṇas*), *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (the first grammar of the world written by Pāṇini), the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* (the two great epics), *Darśana,* it is known in the Indian philosophy as *Darśana* like- *Nyāya Darśana* (Akṣhpāda Gautama), *Vaiṣeṣtka Darśana* (Maharṣi Kaṇāda), *Śaṁkhya Darśana* (Kapila Muni), *Yoga Darśana* (Patañjali), *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* (Jamini) and *Uttara Mīmāṁsa* (Bādarayaṇa Ṛṣi) had great impact on the social composition and social reconstruction in India.

3.11.4: Later Vedic Period (1000-500 BC) :

In the later Vedic period the society was divided into four *Varṇas*. These are *Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya,* and *Sudra*. The entire three higher *Varṇas* share one common featureknown as *Dvija* (twice-born). The fourth *Varṇa* was deprived of the

sacred thread ceremony and with it began the imposition of disabilities on the *Śūdras*. In the later Vedic period, the women were generally given a lower position. In that period, the four *Āśramas* were founded.These *Āśramas* are *Brhmacārī* or a student, *Gṛhastha* or householder, *Vānaprastha* or partial retirement and *Sanyāsa* or full withdrawal from the world. The *Prajāpati* became the creator and he came to occupy a supreme position in the society.

3.11.5: Religious Movement and Social Reconstruction:

The ancient religious movements of India had great impact on Indian society and social reconstruction. These religious movements are found in the forms of the religion of Jainism and Buddhism. Ṛṣbhadeva (first Tīrthaṅkara) was the founder of the Jaina religion. The Jaina religion is divided into two sects- *Swetāmbaras* and *Digambaras*. The principles of Jainism, which is based on five doctrine –*Ahiṁsā* i.e. non-violence, do not speak a lie, do not steal, do not acquire property, and observe continuance *(Brahmacary*a). The fifth doctrine *(Brahmacary*a) was added by Mahāvīra.The three gems of Jainism (*Ratnatraya*) have significance for social composition and it deeply impacts the followers of Jainism.These are –right faith (*Samyak viśvasa*), right knowledge (*Samyak jñāna*), and right conduct/character (*Samyak caritra*). As a religious movement, Jainism had a great impact on the social reconstruction of Indian society.

Buddhism, as a religion, has been divided into three main sects. These are- *Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna*. This religion was founded by Gautama Buddha. The real name of Gautama Buddha was Siddhārta. In Buddhism, there exist three *Pitakas-Vinay piṭaka* or scriptures (rules and regulation, which is promulgated by

Buddha), *Sutta piṭaka* (discourses delivered by Buddha) and *Abhidhamma piṭaka* (religious and philosophical discourses of Buddha).Buddhism means being enlightened or the awakened or the wise one. The *Nirvāṇa* principle of Buddism means to blow out or extinguish fires of greed, hatred, and delusion. The followers of *Hīnayāna* believe in the original teaching of Buddhism.It does not believe in idol worship and the heavenliness of Buddha. *Mahāyanas* sought a solution through the grace of Buddha. It believes in the idol worship and on the otherhand, *Vajrayāna* believed that salvation is attained through magical power, i.e. *Vajra or Yantra.*

3.11.6: Gupta Period-The Golden age of Ancient India (320-467 AD) :

The founder of the Gupta Empire was Sri Gupta. The rulers of Gupta Dynasty were- Sri Gupta-1 (270-290AD), Ghaṭotkaca (290-319AD), Candragupta –I (319-335 AD), Samudragupta (335-370 AD), Candragupta- II (370-414 AD), Kumāragupta-I(415-455AD) and Skandagupta (455-467ad).The Gupta period is also known as the Golden age of Ancient India. Because, during that period were produced the literary works of high standard. The literary contributions of Gupta period may be classified under the following heads-

Epics:

- *Raghuvaṁśam, Ṛtusaṁhāram, Meghadūtam-* Kālidāsa

- *Rāvaṇavadham-*Bhaṭṭi

- *Kāvyādarśa* and *Daśakumāracaritam-* Daṇḍin

- *Kirātārjunīyam-* Bhāravi

- *Nītiśatakam, Śṛngāraśatakam, Vairāgyaśatakam-* Bhartṛhari

Dramas :

- *Vikramorvaśīyam, Mālavikāgnimitram, Abhijñanaśākuntalam-* Kālidāsa *Mṛcchakaṭikam* –Śūdraka.

- *Svapnavāsavadattam* and *Pratijñāyaugandharāyaṇam—*Bhāsa (13 nos. of dramas of Bhāsa)

- *Mudrārākṣasam* and *Devīcandraguptam-*Viśākhādatta

Eulogy :

- *Prayāga-Praśaśti-*Hariṣeṇa.

Philosophy:

- *Sāṁkhyakarikā* (based on *Sāṁkhya* philosophy*) -* Īśvara Kṛṣṇa

- *Padrāthadharmasaṁgraha (*based on *Vaiṣeśika* philosophy*) –* Ācārya Praśatapāda

- *Vyāsa bhāṣya* (based on *Yoga* philosophy)-Ācārya Vyāsa.

- *Nyāya bhāṣya* (based on *Nyāya* philosophy) – Nyāyasūtra of Maharṣi Gautama.

Religious works:

- *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* were given the final shape in this period.

Grammar & Lexicography:

- *Amarakoṣa- Amaraisiṁha*

- *Chandravyākaraṇa-*Chandragomin.

Narrative Story :

- *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopodeśa-* Viṣṇu Śarmā.

Smṛtis :

- *Yājñavalkyasmṛti, Parāśarasmṛiti, Bṛhspatismṛiti, Nāradasmṛiti*

and *Kātyāyanasmṛiti, Āryabhaṭīya* - Āryabhaṭṭa

- *Bṛhatsaṁhitā, Pañcasiddhāntikā* – Barāhamihira
- *Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta-* Brahmagupta

Miscellaneous Works:

- *Nītiśāstra-*Kāmandaka.
- *Kāmsūtra-*Vātsāyaṇa.
- *Kāvyālaṁkāra-*Bhāmaha.

Along with the above mentioned literary works, the Nalanda University was also built by Kumāragupta during that period. During that period the Sanskrit language and literature started getting a very respectful and developed status. The famous poets Kālidāsa, Daṇḍin, Viśākhādatta, Śūdraka, and Bhāravi- all belong to the Gupta age who made great contributions to the reconstruction of the society through their literary works.

3.11.7: Early–Medieval Period and Religious Movement-*Bhakti* and *Sufi* Movement:

The Early- Medieval period was famous for its *bhakti* and Sufi Movements, which deeply impacted the social composition and social reconstruction. In this *bhakti* movement, *bhakti* refers to the personal devotion to God.It stresses on the union of the individual with God. This *bhakti* movement in the early medieval period originated from Southern India between the 7th and the 12th century. During this period the *Ālvars* of Tāmilnadu worshipped Lord *Viṣṇu* and preached the idea of *bhakti*. Along with the teaching of Rāmānuja, which is based on *Upaniṣads* and *Bhagavad Gītā*. Rāmānanda,

the disciple of Rāmānuja was the first reformer to preach *bhakti* in Hindi. Kabīra was an ardent disciple of Rāmānanda. His philosophy believed that *bhakti* creates unity between the Hindus and Muslims and spread the message that both Hindus and Muslims are the children of God. Nāmadeva, originally a waterman composed hymns in Mārāthī for *bhakti*. Nānaka, Caitanya, Mīrābai, Chatrapati Shivaji, Tukāram, Tulsidāsa, Sūrdāsa, Dādudayala, Eknāth, and Śaṅkaradeva of Assam spread the *bhakti* concept not only for social change, but also for the social reconstruction of society.

The Sufi movement emerged in India in 11th to 12th centuryAD.Sufism is a religion searching the truth of life.The mystics of 'Islam' are known as Sufis.As a socio-religious movement, the Sufism mainly emphasized on establishing brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims. The founders of the Sufi movement were Sufi lineage Chisti, Suhrawardi, Qadiri, Naqshbandi, which originally came from Central and West Asia. Prominent Sufi saints like- Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, Ganj-e-Shekar Fariduddin, Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Hamuuddin Nagori and even in Assam, Ajan Fakir made great contributions by spreading spiritualism in society for social reconstruction.

3.11.8: Sanskritization:

The process of Sanskritization reflects an attempt on the part of the Indian masses to achieve some amount of social mobility within and outside the framework of society. In Indian societies, the social status of the people makes them suffer from superiority and inferiority complexes. The high caste people enjoy superiority over the lower caste people and the lower caste people suffer from the feeling of inferiority. This complex makes the high caste people incorporate the lower caste people through

religious ceremonial promotion. Sanskritization is a process whereby a person of lower castes collectively tries to adopt upper caste practices and beliefs. It indicates a process of cultural mobility that is taking place in the traditional social system in India.This term Sanskritization was first introduced into Indian sociology by Prof. Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas. In the beginning, Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas used it as the term 'brahminisation and later it was replaced by the term sanskritization'[47]According to Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas'Sanskritization is a process by which a low caste or a tribe or other groups changes its customs, rituals, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently, twice-born caste.'[48] In Indian society, this process of Sanskritization had great significance for societal reconstruction. Through this process, the lower caste tries to imitate the lifestyles of the upper caste in their attempt to raise the social status. Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas asserted that 'the process of sanskritisation was not a new phenomenon, as such sanskritization has been a major process of cultural change in Indian history and it has occurred in every part of the Indian sub-continent. It may have been more active in some periods than others and some parts of India are more sanskritised than other, but there is no doubt that the process has been universal.'[49]

It is a truth that as a process of social reconstruction and social change, sanskritization does not denote a basic change in the structure of the Hindu society but

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[47] Srinivas, M. N. (1971).*Religion and Society among the Coorgs*, cited in Rao Shankar, C.N. (2000). *Sociology Primary Principles*. p. 310.

[48] Srinivas, M.N. (1971).*Social Change in Modern India*, cited in Rao, Shankar, C.N. *Sociology Primary Principles.* (2000). p. 31I.

[49] Srinivas, M.N.(1971).*Social Change in Modern India*, cited in Rao, Shankar, C.N.(2000). *Sociology Primary Principles*.p. 311.

a significant development in the realm of material culture accelerated the process of sanskritization, industrialization, occupational mobility, mass media communication, the spread of literacy, advent of Western technology and improvement in transportation have speeded up the process of sanskritization. Above these, the inductions of the parliamentary system of democracy and universal suffrage have also contributed to the sanskritization process in Indian society.

3.11.9: Westernization :

The role of westernization has been very significant in understanding the socio-cultural processes and social reconstruction of Indian society. Through this process, British rule shaped radical and lasting changes in Indian society and culture. The British brought new technology, institution, knowledge, beliefs, and values. This has become the main source of social mobility for the individual as well as groups of Indian culture and society. According to Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas - 'Westernization as a process refers to the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule and the term subsumes changes occurring at different levels-technology, institution, ideology, and values'[50]

The major significance of this process is that it influenced the social, economic, cultural as well as the political aspects of the social life of the Indian community. Again, M.N. Srinivas asserted 'there are many interesting contradictions of modern Hindu social life and castes are taking up customs, which the Brahmins are busy discarding.'[51] Thus, westernization as a process pervades political, educational,

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[50] Srinivas, S.N. (1971).*Social Change in Modern India*.p. 55.

[51] Srinivas, M.N. (1971).*Caste in Modern India and other Essays*.Pp-54.55.

and the social field of Indian society.It has given birth not only to nationalism in India but also to revivalism of communalism, casteism, heightened linguistic consciousness, regionalism, etc. in Indian society.

3.11: The Process of Social Reconstruction through different Religious Cults during the times of Śaṅkaradeva of Assam:

Assam during the time of Śaṅkaradeva was not a tranquil one. It was full of ethnic rivalries, political instability, social repressions, natural calamities, and frequent famines. The whole land was divided into small territories ruled by different ethnic groups like –the Kachārīs, the Kochas, the Āhoms, and the Bhūñās. These groups often engaged themselves in bloody feuds that took many lives. Śaṅkaradeva has faced several such feuds and had to flee from one place to another. According to *Katha Guru Carita,* the farming and grazing lands of the Bāra-Bhūñās fell under the Kachārī territory. The Kachārīs who were addicted to alcoholism, tempted many Bhūñā youths into the habit of alcoholic consumption. Moreover, there were frequent raids by the Kachāris in their intoxicated state. Unable to tolerate the harassment of the Kachāris, the Bāra- Bhūñās hatched a plot to avenge them and taught them a lesson which they would never forget. They invited some Kachārī families to a feast, surrounded them, and massacred them. Śaṅkaradeva, unaware of the terrible incident, happily engaged in discussions about the Kachāri chieftain with his followers. Then some of the Bhūñās informed him of what they had done. Contrary to their expectation, 'Śaṅkaradeva instead of praising them reproached them for their dastardly act and said the Kachāris would now retaliate and kill them. Śaṅkaradeva pondered over what to do next and declared that they should leave that place immediately.'[52]

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[52]   Lekharu, Ch. Upendra.(Ed.).(2011).*Katha-Guru Carit*. Pp.33-34.

During the time of Śaṅkaradeva, famines were one of the major problems of society. Mādhavdeva, the chief apostole of Śaṅkaradeva, was a victim of such famines in his younger days and had recourse to begging.From *Guru Carit Katha* it is found that 'once having nothing to eat, Mādhavdeva, along with his father had to go without food for three meals at a stretch'[53]. Before the emergence of Śaṅkaradeva, the religious condition of the societies was in the grip of various Aryan tribes and the *Śākta-tāntricism*, the *Śaivism* and*Vaiṣṇavism* practices. The *Śākta-tāntricism*was established as fertile ground and the entire land was the habitat of heterogeneous groups of people known as *Kirātas.*Their society was matriarchal. It was explained in *Yoginītantra* in the following manner-

kairātāja mātā-siddesi yoginīpīthe dharmaḥ kairātaja mātā.[54]

Again, *Kālikāpurāṇa* says-

anyatra viralā-devī kāmārūpe gṛhe gṛhe.[55]

English Translation - Mother Goddes is rare in other places, but she resides in every house of *Kāmarūpa.*

Thus, in Assam, there are innumerable temples and shrines for the worship of the *devī* in different sites, where she assumes different names. For example, she was known as *Mālinī at* Lakhimpur, *Kecāikhāiṭī* at Śadiyā*, Gaurī* at Sivasagar, *Kāmākhyā Ugratārā* and *Bhuvaneśvarī* in Kamrup and *Tukreśvarī* in Goalpara.'The rituals observed in all those temples are more or less of the same nature.'[56]The *Śākta-*

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[53] Neog, Maheswar.(Ed.). (2006).*Guru Carit Kathā.* p. 196.

[54] *Yoginītāntra* .verse.2/9/18.

[55] *Kālikāpurāṇa.* verse.2/2/6.

[56] Barman, Sivanath (2013).*Tradition to Modernity-* Essay on Assam.Pp.18-19.

trāntricism worship is still found in the *Ambuvācī* festival of Kāmākhyā in Assam. The *Pañcamakāra*, which was related to the *Devī* worship of prostitution, the *Kumārī Pūjā* and *Durgāpūjā* festivals also exist in Assam. Regarding *Kumārī Pañcamakāra Pūjā*, *Yoginītantra* says –

yadī kāmī bhavet ko'pi vaikuṇṭhaṁ paramaṁ vrajet [57]

It means - while worshiping her, if the worshiper becomes sexually excited, he would attain heaven.

The festival of *Durgāpūjā,* as stated in the *Purāṇa*, mentions that –*Devī* becomes angry with those who do not worship her during the festival (61/13).Again it is explained by *Tāntric yantra* in the following manner-

saratobhadrā maṇḍala/[58]

It means - drawn in front of *Devī image* is the symbol of fertility.

Again in Assam, the significant feature of the *Śākta -Tāntric* ritual was the sacrifice, which was made before the *Devī*.The sacrificial objects were of innumerable kinds-Ducks, Pigeons, Goats, Sheep, Pigs, and Buffalos.Even during this time, human beings were sacrificed every year in the temples like *Kāmākhyā* and *Tāmreśvarī*, and the man chosen for the sacrifice was known as *Bhogī*.Thus*, Śākta- Tāntricism* played a major role in the religious and social life of the people of Assam before Śaṅkaradeva.Even the ancestors of Śaṅkaradeva also belonged to this religion. Caṇḍībara, the forefather of Śaṅkaradeva was a staunch worshiper of the *Devī*.

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[57] *Yogini tantra.* verse.1/1/54.
[58] *Tāntric Yāntra.*verse.61/31.

Caṇḍībara was offered the title of *Devīdāsa* (servant of *Devī*) by the Kamatā King Dharmanārāyaṇa.In *Guru Carit Kathā* it is mentioned in the following manner-

<div align="center">

durgāka sākṣāta kare pūjāta (Caṇḍībore)

devidāsa nāma di rājā bole [59]

</div>

Śaṅkaradeva's father Kusumbara was also an ardent devotee of the *Śaiva-Śākta* cult. Mādhavdeva, the chief devotee of Śaṅkaradeva was a *Śākta* before he met the saint. During the pre- Śaṅkaradeva period, along with *Śākta –tāntricism*, the traditional *Vaiṣṇavism* also existed in Assam. *Vaiṣṇavism* got mixed up with various orgiastic beliefs and practices and was later known as *Tāntric Vaiṣṇavism.* It is found in the writings of Mādhavdeva, where he writes-

<div align="center">

anna yonī kicho   nakare vicāra

jātikula bhaila bhraṣṭa/

vaiṣṇavara veśa   dhariyā phuraya

vedapantha   kari naṣṭa // [60]

</div>

It means - they discriminate neither food nor women and have degraded the caste system. Spoiling the path paved by the *Vedas,* they move around in the guise of *Vaiṣṇavas.*

Śaṅkaradeva has also mentioned about *Śākta-Tāntricism* in his literary work*Anādipātana*, where he writes—

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[59]   Neog, Maheswar. (Ed.). (2006).*Guru Carit Kathā.* p.165

[60]   Madhavdeva,*Nām- ghoṣā.* verse.295.

> *caidhyaya bhūvana hṛdayate dilo ṭhāi|*
>
> *prakṛti devīyo āchā garbhate lukāi||*
>
> *sṛṣṭī karibāka īśvarara icchā kāja|*
>
> *puruṣara parā mahāmāyā bailā bāja||*
>
> *anādirūpiṇī iśvarara ardha kāya|*
>
> *vyakta bhailā mahāmāyā sṛṣṭika upāya||[61]*

English Translation - It believes that there are fourteen worlds in this universe, including *Māyā*, I have kept them all in the belly and desired to create a universe, the lying dormant *Prakṛti* came out from the body of the *Brahma* and as the better –half, she gave consent of creation.

Again, Śaṅkaradeva, in his work *Niminava-Sidha-Saṁvāda* writes about *Śākta –Tāntricism-*

> *anādi puruṣa kṛṣṇa jagata kāraṇa|*
>
> *srajilā māyāka laiyā mahā bhūtagaṇa||*
>
> *māyāye upāye prāṇīsrajilā aśeṣa|*
>
> *tāte antaryāmī rūpe bhailanta praveśa||[62]*

English Translation - Infinite is the *Kṛṣṇa*, who is the cause of the universe and created this universe with all species like *Uḍana* (flying species), *Buraṇa* (species underwater), *Gajana* (species those sprouted from land) and *Gamana* (movable species).

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[61] *Anādipātana.*Vv.42- 45.

[62] *Niminava-Sidha-Samvāda.*Vv.108-109.

In ancient Assam, another religion was also prevalent   known as *Śaivism.*As the title refers ,this religion was grounded on one's devotion to Lord *Śiva* - one of the most followed and most popular gods of Indian cultural psyche .In this religion, Lord *Śiva* was considered to be the major power and was worshipped as God.   Verse 50/127-28 of *Kālikāpurāṇa* states that Lord *Śiva* was the one who covers his body with tiger skins, takes in each of his ten hands tridents and other weapons, rides a bull and has matted hair on his head. Śaṅkaradeva in his literary work *Rukmiṇiharaṇa kāvya* mentions the role of Lord *Śiva* in the following manner-

> *gāvara vastra siyo vyāghra carmma//*
>
> *hāte laiyā ohlāya śūla ḍambaru/*
>
> *ghara bāhire eka guṭi garu//*
>
> *sarpara kinkiṇī sarpara hāra/*
>
> *sakala gāve sarpa alaṁkāra//*
>
> *śirata āche ardha candra kalā/*
>
> *manuṣyara muṇḍe gāndhicho mālā //*[63]

Thus, the influence of Lord *Śiva* was conspicuous on the works of Śaṅkaradeva as mentioned above. Even, Kusumbara, the father of Śaṅkaradeva has made offerings to *Śiva* in expectation of a son. It was depicted in the *Kathā Guru Carit* that Kusumbara, who was convinced that Lord *Śiva* was present in Gopeswar, went there with an offering of flatted rice, milk and curds, to pray to the Lord for the boon of a son.'[64]

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[63] *Rukmiṇiharana.*Vv.771-773.

[64] Lekharu, Upendra. Ch. (Ed.). (2011).*Kathā-Guru Carit.* p.12.

Like *Śākta-Tāntricism* and *Śaivism*, the *Vaiṣṇavism* made a powerful impact on Assamese society during that time.The dominance of *Vaiṣṇavism* in ancient Assam was found in the two *Tāntric* scriptures- *Kālikāpurāṇa* and *Yoginītantra*.These two scriptures mention the name of *Viṣṇu* as worthy of worship. According to *Yoginītantra-*

> *kāmarūpe yatra, viṣṇuḥ sarvaśreṣṭho maheśvaraḥ/*
>
> *kāmrūpa pīṭhe devīpūjā sarvottamā smṛtā //[65]*

English Translation - In Kāmrūpa, *Devī* worship is best; *Viṣṇu* is the worthiest of all gods to be worshiped.

The Vaiṣṇavite studies were prevalent in ancient Assam.The influences of Vaiṣṇavism can be felt to be spread   by the writings of Hema-Sarasvatī, Mādhava Kandali and Harivara Vipra .Their creations had a great impact on ancient Assam including Śaṅkaradeva in the later part.Hema Sarasvatī's- *Prahlādacarita,* Mādhava Kandali's- *Rāmāyaṇa* (Assamese version) and Harivara Vipra's *-Lavakuśar yuddha* describe the glory of *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇa*.These books had a great impact on Śaṅkaradeva to preach Neo –vaiṣṇavite movement in Assam. Thus, the different religions and religious cults like *Tāntricism, Śāktism, Śaivism*, and even traditional *Vaiṣṇavism* deeply influenced the Assamese society and its social composition before and after the advent of Śaṅkaradeva in Assam.

3.12: The Concept of Spirituality and Social Reconstruction :

Spirituality is a conscientious approach to life inherent with a system of ethical and moral values. It is an evolving approach and by acquiring it people strike an

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[65] *Yoginītāntra*. verse. 2/6/49.

affinity with all lives including humans, animals, birds, plants, and so on. In true sense, spirituality is a practice of inviolable principles of truth and non-violence and all lives are considered a unified one. In Indian philosophy i.e. *Bṛhadārayṇaka Upaniṣad* there has been a meaningful dictum of spirituality, which is related to the universal brotherhood of humanity as mentioned in the following-

<div align="center">

sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ sarve santu nirāmayāḥ/

sarve bhadrāṇi paśyantu mā kaścit duḥkhabhāg bhavet//[66]

</div>

English Translation -Let all (creatures) be happy in this world, let all (creatures) be free from ailments, let you be engaged for doing good to all and never (you) be the cause of sorrow of anybody.

Thus, spirituality consists of the total orientation of human personality away from ego and selfishness and it directs towards the good of all, to the sharing of joys and sorrows of humanity. According to spiritual thoughts, 'every creature of the world is born free and never obliged to anybody. Again, they are not answerable to anybody and loiter according to their own will. It moves towards the good of all living beings and sharing their joys and sorrows. This would provide happiness and tranquility to the heart'[67]. Therefore, Jesus Christ said that 'love the enemy, do good to them that do harm to thee'[68].

Regarding the concept of spirituality on social reconstruction, Rabindra Nath Tagore (1861-1941) asserted that human being is the actual truth of worldly wisdom. Tagore in one of his unique poems *Jīvan Devatā* writes-

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[66] *Bṛhadārayṇaka Upaniṣada.*verse.1.4.14.

[67] Dayal, Parmeshwari.(2006). *Gandhian theory of Social reconstruction*.p. 61.

[68] Ratan. R.(Ed.). (1981). *A Biography ofJesus Christ*. Biography Series.

Thou who are the innermost spirit of my being

Art thou pleased

Lord of my life.[69]

Thus, Tagore believed that the infinite eternal creativity called *Jīvana Devatā* delights in its ceaseless self-revelation to man. Man in the multiple creations of art responds to the supreme person. Thus, the greatest truth is the revelation of the infinite spirit of humanity. According to him, there are two aspects of truth –the self-expression of God in multiplicity and the ascension of the finite into the unity and bliss of God. Similarly, this philosophy of spiritualism was explained by Caṇḍīdās, a medieval poet of Bengal, as-

sabāre upare mānuṣ satya/

tāhāra upare nāi//[70]

It means- above all is humanity, none else.

In every society, there are various steps of spirituality for social reconstruction. The first step towards the evolution of spirituality is to reduce one's material needs and wants to the minimum. There can be no spiritual progress so long as one remains attached to material gains and has not given up worldly desires.

The second step in that direction is to extend the bonds of concern beyond the narrow circle of self, family, and relation to the wide world of humanity and all other living species. In favour of the second step, Śaṅkaradeva of Assam writes-

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[69] Tagore,Rabindra.Nath.*Jivan Devata,*cited in Verma,V.P.(1961)*Modern Indian Political Thoughts*.p.79.

[70] Candīdas (1408CE), cited in Sharma, Devnath.(2012*).Chandidas in Islam*: Natinal Encyclopadia of Bangladesh ,Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

kukura sṛgāla garddabharo ātmārāma/

jāniyā savāko pari karibā praṇāma//[71]

It means- souls of dogs, jackals, and asses are the particles of God. Hence, they are also to be worshiped by people and this is the real character of the actual devotee.

The third step of spirituality for social reconstruction is to cleanse one's heart and mind of all propensities like lust, greed, hatred, fear anger, aggression jealousy, prejudice, vengeance, and all such other tendencies. It is possible only if the mind is controlled and sense organs are also controlled and disciplined. This is achieved through consciousness and conscious efforts of the will in such a way that one acquires the state wherein one thinks, speaks, and acts with a pure mind in tune with moral and ethical values.

3.13: The Concept of Materialism:

Materialism holds that 'matter'is the ultimate reality from which all things in the world have evolved, including life, mind, and consciousness. Matter and motion are sufficient for the production of the world and the object.The creation of the world is mechanical. It is not teleological. The world is the creation of lifeless material atoms, which fortuitously combined with themselves to produce different objects. In the materialistic philosophy, there is no place for God. Materialism, thus defines life as a compound of certain chemical elements. Mind or consciousness is not a mysterious evolution. It is an epiphenomenon of the brain. In the materialistic concept, there is no place of religion; it believed that humanism is the true religion. Therefore, materialism asserted that welfare of human beings is the religion and it is fulfilled by the society

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[71] *Kīrttana-ghoṣā, Śrikṛṣṇara –vaikuṇṭha- prayāṇa.* verse.1823.

based on scientific laws. Thus, materialism gives a practical picture of the world. According to this philosophy, in a world, there is nothing else except matter in motion. As a thought, materialism has been and remained the world view of the society that interacts in the progress of mankind in society's socio-economic, political, and cultural development.

3.14: Materialism in the Indian Philosophy:

In Indian philosophy, materialism seems to be prevailing from very old time. The Lokayāta of Cārvāka has historically been used to denote the philosophical school of Indian materialism. Cārvāka is said to be the chief disciple of Bṛahaspati. Another synonym of Cārvāka is *Lokāyata*. Literally *Lokāyata* means the philosophy of the people or a man's life and unrefined taste. The terms were first used by the ancient Buddhists until around 500 B.C.E to refer both a common tribal philosophical view and a sort of the worldly philosophy of nature's law.

'Nāstika Siromaṇi or an arch-heretic is another name for a materialist. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, they are called fools, who think they to be wise and who are experts in leading people to doom and ruin.'[72]These concepts were also found in 'the *Mahābhārata* and the *Manuśāṁhitā*'[73].In *Mahāyāna* (*Maijhima Nikāya*) *Nikāyā* of Buddhism mentions Ajitakeshakambalin, a materialist, who believed on the thought that man with a blanket and mule.'[74]

Thus, Indian materialism has been found in the Cārvāka philosophy. Cārvāka and Ajitakeshakambalin has established Indian materialism as a formal philosophical

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[72] Rāmāyaṇa, *Ayodhyākāṇḍa.* verse.100

[73] *Śāntiparva.* Vv.1414, 1430-42 &*Manusaṁhitā* III, Vv. 150, 161, *Manusaṁhitā*IV. Vv.30, 61,163.

[74] https://en.m.wikipedia.org-*Tāttvasaṁgrāhā*-1864,Sātaraksita>accessed on 08/10/2017

school. But originally Bṛahaspati was its founder. The *Bārhaspatyasūtra* is evident for it. Therefore, Indian materialism is also named as Bārhaspatya. Bāṛhaspati (*Bāṛhaspatya)* adopted the doctrine of *Svābhāva*, which is significant to the rejection of the theory of causation and the notion that there is a good and evil consequence of moral actions. Thus, Svābhava enhanced *Bārhaspatya* by providing a metaphysical framework. The term *Svābhava* in Sanskrit translated to essence or nature.Bāṛhaspati used the term to indicate the rejection of super nationalism and super naturalist ideologies. 'In contrast to naturalism, it rejected the existence of the immaterial realm and suggested that all reality is encompassed by nature'[75].Some *Sūtras* of Bṛhaspati's philosophical writings are-

- *pṛthīvyaptejovāyuriti tattvāni* (earth, water, fire and air are the elements)

- *tatsamudayā śarīrendriyaviṣayāsaṁjña* (bodies, senses, and objects are the results of the different combinations of elements)

- *kinvādibhyo madaśaktivad vijnānam* (consciousness arises from matter like the intoxicating quality of wine arising from fermented yeast)
- *caitanyaviśistaḥ kāyaḥ puruṣaḥ* (the soul is nothing but the conscious body)
- *kāma evaikaḥ puruṣārthaḥ* (erotic enjoyment is the only end of human life)
- *maraṇamevā pavargaḥ* (death alone is liberation)

The Cārvakas, the materialist philosophers in ancient India have maintained that everything existing in the world consists of four elements-fire, air, water, and earth. The entire living creatures, including man, have been formed from these elements. Cārvāka's philosophy believed that there is no God and held that the world

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[75] Chattopadhyāyā, Debiprasad. (1990).*Lokayata: A Study in Ancient Materialism*.p.20.

is developed by virtue of its own nature and own internal causes. In favour of it, the *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* gives the following summary of the Cārvāka system-

'There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in another world: nor do the actions of the four castes, orders etc, produce any real effect. If a beast slain in the *jyotiṣṭoma* rite will itself go to heaven, why then does not the scarificer forthwith offer his own father...If beings in heaven are gratified by our offering the *Shrāddha* here, then why not give the food down below to those who are standing on the housetop? While life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on *ghee* (clarified butter) even though he ruins indebt: when once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return here? (all the ceremonies) a means of livelihood (for) *Brāhmaṇas*.The three authors of the *Vedas* were buffoon's knaves and demons.'[76]

Again, the ethics of Cārvāka philosophy are mentioned in the following dictum-

> *yāvat jjīvet sukhaṁ jīvet/*
>
> *ṛṇaṁ kṛtvā ghṛtaṁ pibet//*
>
> *bhasmībhūtasya dehasya/*
>
> *punarāgamanaṁ kutaḥ//*[77]

English Translation - The Cārvāka regards sensual pleasure as the sommun- bonum of life. Eat, drink, and merry, for once the body is reduced to ashes; there is no hope of coming back here again.

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[76] *Sarvadarśanasaṁgrah.* Chapter -I

[77] https://Sanskrit.org.com-Acharya *Bṛhaspati before nomenclature as Devaguru*>accesed on 08-10-2017.

According to Cārvāka there is no other world. There is no soul surviving death. Religion is the means of livelihood of the priest. All values are created by a diseased mind.

Thus, the ethics of the Cārvaka is a crude individual hedonism; the pleasure of the senses in this life of the individual is the sole end. The four human values are *Dharma, Artha, Kāma*, and *Mokṣa.* Only *Kāma* or sensual pleasure is regarded as the end and *Artha* or wealth is regarded as the means to realize that end, while *Dharma* and *Mokṣa* are altogether rejected. Again, the materialist's concept is contained in the doctrine of the *Sāṁkhya, Nyāya*, and *Vaiśeṣika* of ancient Indian philosophical thoughts. This materialistic thought of Indian philosophy is also found in the writings of Acārya Kāmandaka. He writes-

> *bubhukṣitair vyākaranaṁ na bhujyate/*
>
> *na pīyate kāvyarasaḥ pipāsitaiḥ/*
>
> *na vidyayā kenacit udhṛtaṁ kulaṁ/*
>
> *hiraṇyamevārjaya niṣphalāḥ kalāḥ//*[78]

It means a hungry man cannot get rid of his hunger through grammar, a thirsty cannot satisfy his thirst by the taste of the poem. One cannot rescue his claim by earning knowledge, so earn money; art and literature will do nothing.

Similarly, the materialistic thought of Indian philosophy was also reflected in the writings of Kālidāsa. He said-

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[78] htttps://archive.org.Acharyā Kāmandaka*, Auchitaya Bicār Carcā* with Vyākhyā of Braj Mohan Jha Chowkamba series uploaded by Susmatrangration, 2018>accessed on 23/4/2017.

darīdṛśya guṇāḥ sarve/

bhasmācchādita vahnivat//

tanna cintāḥ camatkārāḥ/

kātare kavitā kutaḥ//[79]

It means- the good qualities of a poor man are like fire covered by ashes, because he has to struggle for his bread and butter, hence, how he can create literature.

Not only Kalidāsā, regarding materialistic thoughts, Bhartṛhari, the famous writer of Maurya dynasty also said in his famous work *Nitiśataka* that-

tanīindriyānyavikalāni tadeva nāma/

sā buddhirapratihatā vacanaṁ tadeva//

arthoṣmaṇā virahitaḥ puruṣah kṣaṇena/

so'pyanya eva bhavatīti vicitrametat//[80]

It means –these are all the same senses, the same action, the same intellect undiminished; the same voice. But though a man may remain exactly what he was yet when deprived of the warmth of wealth, he becomes someone altogether different. This is wonderful

Again, Bhartṛhari writes –

yaddhātrā nijabhālapaṭṭalikhitaṁ stokam mahadvā dhanaṁ

tatprāpnoti marusthale'pi nitarāṁ merau tato nādhikam|

taddhoro bhava vittavastu kṛpaṇāṁ vṛtti vṛthā sā kṛthāḥ

kupepaśyapayonidhāvapi ghaṭo gṛhnāti tulyaṁ jalam||[81]

It means, if almighty has determined prosperity in your luck, you would even get it in the desert, but if it is not in your luck, you would not get it even in *Meru Parvata*

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[79] https://www.speaking tree .org. *Kālidāsa's* famous quotations by Santanam Swaminathan: Londan,2015>accessed on 07/05/2017

[80] Bhartṛhari, *Nitiśataka*,Sanskrit document,org, Translated by –Atul Narkhade, August-20,2017, verse.40>accessed on 05/06/2017

[81] Bhartṛhari *op.cit.* verse.49

which is full of wealth. So, be patient, do not be a miser. Look, though the well is full of water, you can only fetch a pot of water with a single pot from the well, not more than that)

. In Indian philosophy, 'materialistic thoughts are also found in the religion of Buddhism. Buddhism is an offshoot of Hinduism. It denies the authority of the *Vedas,* but there are obvious signs of the influence of the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣad*, where it succeeds in presenting itself as a purely ethical and spiritual religion against the extreme polytheism and ritualism of the *Vedic* tradition'[82].Thus, Buddhism is indisputably a separate religion and philosophy, which has exerted immense influence over the religious and philosophical thinking of the world. The founder of Buddhism was Gautama who was born in a royal Hindu family. Gautama was very much concerned about the unabated sufferings of man throughout his lifetime.In his life, he regarded the birth, various diseases, old age, and death as signs of sufferings and wanted to find out a permanent cure for all these sufferings of man.

The enlightened Gautama or Buddha pointed out that the birth was at the root of all sufferings and therefore, it was to be avoided. The way how people generally live and work in the world is a sign of their ignorance regarding the real nature of the world. All their works are guided by attachment to the world, which is only impermanent and fleeting. This attachment is the real cause behind man's suffering and ignorance (*Ajñana).*To remove this ignorance, men can attain a state which is called the state of *Nirvāṇa*. For the attainment of this state and removal of ignorance, Buddha recommended eight paths (*Aṣṭāṅgika mārga).*This eightfold path is neither

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[82]   Tiwari, K.N. (1983).*Comparative Religion.* p. 53.

one of complete indulgence nor one of complete asceticism. It is a middle path, i.e'(1) right faith view (*Samyag dṛṣṭi*), (2) right resolve (*Samyag saṅkalpa*), (3) right speech (*Samyag vāk*), (4) right action (*Samyag karmānta*), (5) right living (*Samyag ājīva*), (6) right effort (*Samyag vyāyāma*), (7) right thought (*Samyag smṛti*) and (8) right concentration (*Samyag samādhi*)'[83]

Simply, Buddhism in its original form is a practical religion of pure ethical discipline. It does not believe in any God and therefore no ritualistic act finds any place in it. It is a man-centered religion, humanistic in its outlook, approach, and aim. The eightfold path of Buddhism transcends the man's miserable condition and attains to a life which is completely free from all kinds of sufferings. Every man is a light unto himself (*ātma dīpo bhava*) a savior of himself. It clearly indicates that the religion of Buddhism is based on materialistic thoughts.

Like Buddhism, Jainism is also regarded as an offshoot of Hinduism. 'Jainism arose on the Indian soil as a reaction against excessive Vedic ritualism but is not free from the essentials of Hinduism'[84]. Lord Mahāvīra is known as the founder of Jain religion, although the Jainism believes that there have been twenty-three religious teachers before Mahāvīra has contributed to the foundation and development of Jain religion. Among these, Mahāvīra preached a non-theistic religion of moral purity and excellence in which man is at the center. Jainism finds the world eternally existing, which does not need any creator to create and sustain it. The moral world is governed purely by the law of *Karma* and does not require any divine retribution. Thus, Jainism

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[83] Sharma, Chandradhar .(1987).*A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy.*p.74.

[84] K.N Tiwari, (1983).*Comparative Religion*. p.84.

is an atheistic religious philosophy believing in no God behind the world order. As there is no creator or God in Jainism, the world is taken by it as eternally existing, which works by its own inherent laws. The concept of man in the philosophy of Jainism indicates that a physic-spiritual being has got within their physical body an eternal conscious substance known as the *Jīva* (soul). It infected all living beings to have souls within them and only the soul of man is the most developed one because consciousness in it is most evident. Thus, Jainism believes that consciousness is the essential quality of the soul substance and it is like a light that enlightens the whole body, embodiment of the soul which is capable of attaining infinite power, infinite knowledge, infinite faith and infinite bliss (*Ananta ehatusthaya*).

However, as a materialistic religion, Jainism does not believe in any creator or God. It has no creation myth. It believed that the world has not come into existence at a definite moment of time. It tries to explain the material world with the help of five substances-*Dravya* (substance), *Dharma* (motion), *Adharma* (principle of rest),*Ākāśā* (space) *Kāla* (time) and *Pudgala* (matter).To explain conscious being it adds a sixth substance-*Jīva*(soul).Matter is composed of atoms (*Pudgal*).These atoms form the fundamental bases of the material objects. Material atoms possess the qualities to touch, taste, smell and color. Space gives room for the *Pudgals* (atoms).It is infinite. Jainism believed that the time effects change of *dharma* and *adharma* and they are the principles of motion and rest respectively. These two principles of Jainism make the explanation of the world very scientific and materialistic.

Not only in the philosophy of Buddhism and Jainism, but even in some writings of Śaṅkaradeva of Assam, materialistic thoughts are found to be imprinted in

a lighter vein. For example, in the *Prahlāda caritrā* of *Kīrttana -ghoṣā* ,Śaṅkaradeva writes -

> *manuṣyara āyu śata variṣa saṁkhyāta/*
>
> *ardheka viphale yāi jānibā nidrāta//*
>
> *viṁśati variṣa āra yāya omalante/*
>
> *neya daśa bariṣa dhanaka upārjjante//*
>
> *vṛddha kāle yāya śeṣa variṣa viṁśati/*
>
> *eko kārya sādhibāka nāhike śakati* [85]*//*

Meaning of the above *Padas* i.e.-Man's life –span is of one hundred years; but half of it goes away in fruitless sleep, twenty years go away in childhood play, ten years go away in earning money; next, twenty years roll away in old age. Thus nothing substantial can be achieved in life.

3.15: Social Reconstruction based on Spirituality and Materialism: Karl Marx versus Śaṅkaradeva:

According to Śaṅkaradeva society is to be restructured based on spiritual values. Love is the way of winning the hearts of the people and building a peaceful society. All human efforts are directed towards rebuilding a society based on spiritual values of love and tolerance. Thus, spirituality means to love and work for the well being of human society because society is based on spirituality that differs from the materialistic human society.

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[85] *Kīrttana -ghoṣa,Prahlāda Caritrā.* Vv.355-356.

As a founder of scientific socialism, Karl Marx set political and economic principles for the social reconstruction. Karl Marx understands the problems of human society through historical analysis and treats history as a process of conflict between antagonistic forces and classes. This conflict arises from the faults in the mode of production in which one class comes to gain ownership and control of the means of social production and compels the other class to work on terms and conditions dictated by itself. This conflict makes the clash between two classes and it is resolved through a revolutionary overthrow by a dictatorship of the proletariat, placing all means of social production like land, mines, building, forest machinery and capital under social ownership and control, enforcing universal labour and ensuring the full development of the forces of production.

On the otherhand, Śaṅkaradeva's Neo-vaiṣṇsavite movement of spiritualizing has great significance in the field of social reconstruction. It was a more simplistic religious school where devotion or *bhakti* is given the highest position. But for offering *bhakti*, nothing much is needed. Śaṅkaradeva simply lays down the goals, principles, and processes for uplifting human society to the heights of religion, which is based on rationality, and was viable and practical. It is marked of a man with soul-force and wants the reconstruction of a classless and casteless society. In Assam, Śaṅkaradeva's movement of social reconstruction provides a new vision and space for the people to live sustainably, to share nature's resources equitably, to live without violence, fear, believed oppression or alienation and exist in spiritual harmony and peace. Therefore, Śaṅkaradeva's philosophy of spirituality is a blueprint for the healthy development of a human society based on the religion of ethical and spiritual

values, freedom, and universality. Again, Śaṅkaradeva's social reconstruction movement synthesizes the material, spiritual, individual and collective aspects of life. There is no inherent conflict between society's real material interest and the fundamentals of morality and spirituality. Śaṅkaradeva believed that society could not survive without moral and spiritual values. He asserted that the moral decay of people had always preceded the physical and mental degradation.

Śaṅkaradeva and Karl Marx are adherents of two different ideologies, but they have coverage at a certain point; and subsequent chapters will study where they agree and where do they disagree. Śaṅkaradeva's tenets of social reforms were based on spiritualism, while Karl Marx's philosophy was based on materialism. But, both of them were products of different times, where inequality and oppression prevailed in their respective societies in the name of natural order. General masses were exploited by a privileged few and their fortune depended on the whims of economically and religiously strong group. To avert this inequality and to constitute a progressive society, Śaṅkaradeva adopted the ideals from spiritual, economic, religious, and cultural viewpoints, while Karl Marx vouched by materialism for well being of society through the ideology of equitable opportunity and income.