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Radhakrishnan: Prophet to India

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RADHAKRISHNAN: PROPHET TO INDIA

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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

In the Carey Lectures of 1956 delivered at Syampore, India, Dr. R. Pierce Beaver pronounced a warning to the Christian world. Christianity should be highly sensitive and conscious of the radical changes and innovations that are occurring in the non-Christian religions.[1]

India is renowned for its position as a sleeping giant among the nations of the world. Yet, with a struggle that has been almost imperceptible to the world, India is seeking to rouse itself from its sleep and stand upon its feet as a nation among the nations. No little credit must be attributed to India's religious interpreters. A. C. Bouquet, in his book, Comparative Religion, states that the ninth period of India's history, the period of European influence, is marked by three obvious features. The first is the impact of Christian missionaries and Western civilization. The second feature is the rapid growth of a series of religious reformers. The third feature is the development of a number of prophets and leaders, who, while remaining

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[1] R. Pierce Beaver, The Christian World Mission (Calcutta: The Baptist Missionary Press, 1957).

Hindus, have attempted to draw Hinduism into a new mold. The last prophet mentioned is Radhakrishnan.[2]

Sri Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is one of the most prolific and dynamic representatives of the school of prophets and reformers. His task has been two-fold. The first task involves his determination to establish a world religion. His second, to act as a prophet and interpreter of Hinduism to India, is important for the purposes of this study. His general purpose is to bring about a metaphysical basis for an ethic for India.

The purpose of this study is to determine what the basic concepts are which Radhakrishnan has reinterpreted for modern India. His foremost concern is to wake India from an apparent unconcern for social development. As he says in his Karmala lectures,

> Life is not life unless it is continually thrusting into new forms. If we rest content with what our fathers have done, decay will set in. If we shirk the difficult task of improving the tradition of our culture by inertia and laziness, civilization will suffer. For some time past there have been signs of an almost general fatigue of spirit, varying in degree in different parts.[3]

There is an autobiographical note when Radhakrishnan says,

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[2]A. C. Bouquet, Comparative Religion (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1954), pp. 148ff.

[3]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Religion and Society (2nd edition; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1949), pp. 117-118. Hereafter the work will be referred to as R&S.

> The great regenerators of Hindu life have often been in opposition to the common life of the day . . . the new emphasis on the dignity and freedom of man demands a reshaping of the social order.[4]

The Validity of the Study

Within the framework of Christian Missions, the cases are numberless in which the propagator of Christian truth has discovered himself to be guilty of making claims about another's religion which, being received by the listener, have been thoroughly unacceptable to the listener; and, as the listener would claim, were not true about the religion itself. As a consequence the Christian missionary is burdened with a double task when he seeks to speak to a member of another religious belief. First he must be thoroughly grounded in the historic thought world and tradition of the religion itself. Secondly, he should be as familiar as possible with the changes that occur and exist in the present. As to the study of the history of religions itself, this is important. Communication between two persons often breaks down due to the ignorance of the one or the other toward the other's beliefs. The oft-heard cliches of western Christianity that she alone possesses a religion of grace, salvation, and forgiveness also substantiate the basic validity of study and research into the growth and development of the religions of the world.

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[4] Ibid., p. 119.

Secondly, there exists the personal problem. Every Christian missionary ultimately is forced to answer the question of the relationship between Christianity and non-Christian religions. He must establish an approach or approaches to the non-Christian religions. Is Christianity superior as a religion? Is it unique? Is it exclusive? Exactly what is it about Christianity that seems to establish it as a religion that is the universal religion of the world?

Thirdly, there is much disagreement within the Christian Church itself concerning Christianity as the only religion. As a consequence, the Christian missionary as a Christian theologian must speak to those who would be apt to say that Christianity is another way of expression of the religious need and feeling in man. Some of the questions still asked by such men are: Does the superiority of Christianity lie in its comprehensive character, in the fact that it was the one surpassing all others in its peculiar ability to incorporate the most sublime and dynamic of religious ideas? Does it exist because of the loftiness of its moral teaching and the social re-adjustments that it brought about? Is Christianity superior because it is the religion that is best fitted to combine with culture? What is the essential nature of Christianity? Obviously this is a question which every Christian seeks to answer. One of the problems inherent in the general tenor

of such questions, which is probably the basic problem that pervades the entire approach, is that it seeks to discover the similarities between Christianity and the non-Christian religions. After finding the supposed similarities, then the judgments and evaluations are established.

In conclusion, the Christian missionary is confronted by three avenues of questioning. The first is his approach to the non-Christian. The second is his answer to his own problems. The third is his witness to the Christian Church. Far too often have the second two aspects been by-passed, and as a consequence the witness of the first area has been weakened. Understanding and scholarship need not be totally divorced from certainty and solidarity as a witness to the Truth, that Jesus Christ alone is Lord and Savior.

In this fascinating age of advances in nearly every field of human endeavor, in an age when the world is shriveling to the extent that peoples no longer exist beyond the imagination of the mind, in an age when the non-Christian religions are experiencing a renewal of life and are becoming missionary conscious in their approach to the world, a world in which the West is a ripe field waiting for the harvest; it is imperative that the student seeking to enter the holy ministry is well acquainted and certain of his position as a member in the Church of Jesus Christ, is well versed in the new problems that shall appear perhaps on his own street with a non-Christian religion, in

order to witness mightily and intelligently to the world of men to whom God has spoken in His Son, Jesus, who is the Christ.

Limitation of the Problem

In an attempt to determine the area which has received the new exegesis of Radhakrishnan, the scope of the problem has been limited to four basic concepts: maya, moksha, karma, and dharma. This limitation has been established due to the concern for the establishing of a metaphysical basis for a social ethic by Radhakrishnan.

The general thought world of Radhakrishnan is presented to show briefly and clearly how he has attempted to employ his new exegesis toward a world religion, toward a development of social consciousness in India, and finally, to direct attention toward three additional areas of research which might prove valid and useful for the student of the history of religions and Christian missions.

The method employed to structure the paper has been two-fold. The first is simply a systematic presentation of the religious philosophy of Radhakrishnan. The second restates the historic backdrop of orthodox Hinduism, which thus contrasts the re-interpreted concepts of Radhakrishnan noted above.

CHAPTER II

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF RADHAKRISHNAN

Professor Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is a hesitant and uncooperative autobiographer. He prefaces his most serious autobiographical undertaking by saying,

> In my present account it is not my intention to speak of my personal life, my parents and ancestry, my marriage and family, my likes and dislikes, my struggles and disappointments.[1]

His reluctance to lay bare his soul is born of a natural reticence of spirit. He prefers not to succumb to the ego's natural proneness to show itself in the most favorable light. He would prefer to let his writings reveal his innermost being, for they clothe his ideals and hopes in a garb more palatable to such a sensitive taste as his own. As he says, his writings are nothing more than "fragments of a confession."[2]

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was born of Telgu Brahman parents on September 5, 1888, in Tiruttani, of Chitoor District (of what was at that time Madras Presidency). Though by caste he belonged to the highest strata of society, yet economically his home was a humble one. Like all homes in

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[1]Paul Arthur Schillp, editor, The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1953), p. 5.

[2]Loc. cit.

the upper caste of orthodox Hinduism, and especially of the Telegu Brahman, the whole tenor of his home life was centered around religion.

The location of his home heightened and sharpened the atmosphere and the activity of the religious observances. It was situated in one of the most revered pilgrimage places in that part of India. It is almost impossible for Westerners who have never seen or experienced it, to evaluate the importance of religion as it is conveyed to the mind of India's youth through the observance of the pilgrimage and the communal participation in the religious festivals and ceremonies. The old phrase, "religion is caught and not taught," portrays the atmosphere of the religious life under which Radhakrishnan grew up. If this is understood it is easier to gather the import of what is meant when Radhakrishnan says:

> I spent the first eight years of my life (1888-1896) in a small town in South India, Tiruttani, which is even today a great centre of religious pilgrimage. My parents were religious in the traditional sense of the term. . . . Thus I grew up in an atmosphere where the unseen was a living reality. My approach to the problem of philosophy from the angle of religion as distinct from that of science or of history was determined by my early training.[3]

Radhakrishnan acknowledges that from his early youth he was interested in the "thing itself" that lay behind the phenomenal world. He was conscious of the relation of faith

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[3]Schillp, op. cit., p. 5.

to the Unseen World though obscured by the flux of life. It came to him early in life that the Reality of the Unseen World is not to be apprehended merely by sense perception, but by some higher powers of mind.

The mystical bent of his mind made contemplation a natural part of his being. In furtherance of the trend early in his life, there developed a certain love of loneliness in order to realize his oneness with Ultimate Reality. Another quality that seemed to thrust him out into the quest after truth was his inquiring mind. This search made the thinkers of his own culture his valued friends. An increasing company of literary friends enriched his life and powerfully stimulated his thinking processes toward the formation of a creative philosophy.

Radhakrishnan attended the Lutheran Mission High School, Tirupati, 1896 to 1900 and later was a student at Voorhees' College, Vellore, 1900-1904. He then attended Madras Christian College 1904-1908. It would be interesting to know the process of reasoning which led his orthodox Hindu parents to send him to Christian schools rather than to the state or other privately sponsored Hindu institutions of learning. In the atmosphere of the Christian colleges, he was brought to a new stage of mental awareness by his contact with Christian professors and their views of religion. Hindu by birth and traditional training, he found himself in conflict between two sets of alleged

absolutes in religion. Such a situation, however, greatly accelerated the vigorous mental processes then developing in the potential philosopher. Concerning his Christian teachers and their effect upon him, he makes this comment:

> My teachers in Christian missionary institutions cured me of this faith and restored for me the primordial situation in which all philosophy is born. They were teachers of philosophy, commentators, interpreters, apologists for the Christian way of thought and life, but were not, in the strict sense of the term, seekers after the truth. By their criticism of Indian thought they disturbed my faith and shook the traditional props on which I leaned. . . . A critical study of the Hindu religion was thus forced upon me.[4]

As a young student of seventeen years in Madras Christian College he pondered the choice of a principal subject, mathematics, physics, biology, philosophy, and history; however, when his older cousin, having completed his degree, handed on the text books in philosophy, there was no longer any doubt about the matter. Radhakrishnan studied philosophy. The study of philosophy was not an accident.

> But when I look at the series of accidents that have shaped my life, I am persuaded that there is more to this life than meets the eye. Life is not a mere chance or chain of physical causes and effects. Chance seems to form the surface of reality, but deep down other forces are at work. If the universe is a living one, it is spiritually alive, nothing in it is merely accidental. . . . When however, I entered a domain which sustained me both intellectually and spiritually all of these years, it was the study of philosophy that became my life's work. My construction and

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[4] Ibid., p. 9.

> conception of a philosopher was in some ways similar to that of Marx, who had proclaimed . . . that philosophy had hitherto been concerned about interpreting life, but that the time had come for it to change life. Philosophy is committed to a creative task.[5]

While under Christian teachers, he became convinced that there was some direct causal connection between the low estate in which he found his mother land and the Hindu religion. This view sharpened in his mind and the questions were persistent: Could the disintegrated status of Indian culture be due to a decadent Hindu religion? Is there some inadequacy within Hinduism? Does that deficiency gradually work itself out in the social order? Is there a relationship in the social order, so intimately fabricated with Hinduism and the seeming stagnation and frustration prevailing on every hand?

Some of the problems that Christian theology revealed left their mark upon Radhakrishnan. The two most important problems appeared to be (1) as a religion, Hinduism was intellectually incoherent; and (2) it lacked a sound basis for an ethic that the complex, modern society required. It is here noted that both the theoretical propositions as well as the practical pragmatic values of the religion were under question. One can readily see how these questions furnished the base for a life-long inquiry into the nature of religion in general, and of Hinduism in particular.

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[5] Ibid., p. 6.

Radhakrishnan has come to be recognized as one of the foremost philosophical exponents and interpreters of the Hindu religion. He describes his inner reactions as he struggled with the problem concerning the adequacy of Hinduism.

> I remember the cold sense of reality, the depressing feeling of defeat that crept over me, as a causal relationship between the anemic Hindu religion and our political failure forced itself on my mind during those years.[6]

Radhakrishnan possessed a sense of fairness in evaluating the work of the Christian missionaries, as well as their influence upon Indian life and thought. He mentions that the Christian faith should be proud of some of their great teachers in India. They were men convinced of the uniqueness of the message of Jesus Christ and India's need for it.[7] Still this did not make them indifferent to the spiritual aspirations and endeavors in the non-Christian faiths. Perhaps this might show some degree of objectivity and capacity for gratitude.

Radhakrishnan took his Master of Arts degree in philosophy in 1909. From 1909-1917 he was on the staff of Presidency College, Madras. He tells his own story of this period.

> I started my professional life as a teacher of philosophy in the Madras Presidency College in April

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[6]J. H. Muirhead, editor, Contemporary Indian Philosophy (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1936), p. 258.

[7]Schillp, op. cit., p. 806.

> 1909, where I worked for the next seven years. During that period I studied the classics of Hinduism, the Upanishads, the Bhagavdgita and the commentaries on the Brahma Sutra . . . as well as the scholastic words of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Among the Western thinkers the writings of Plato, Plotinus and Kant, and those of Bradley and Bergson influenced me a great deal. My relation with my great Indian contemporaries, Tygore, and Gandhi were most friendly for nearly thirty years, and I realize that they had a tremendous significance for me.[8]

His ability as an able exponent of the abtruse problems of philosophy was readily recognized, and he was transferred to the Arts College, Rajamundry, as lecturer in Philosophy. After a year's service, he was selected for the post of Professor of Philosophy in the University of Mysore. From 1918 to 1921 he remained at Mysore in that position and wrote two books, The Philosophy of Rabindrnath Tagore and The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy. The latter work brought him to the attention of Western thought, as it was considered to be an able criticism of Western philosophy.

Radhakrishnan's career as an educator and philosopher was well on its way. In 1921 he was offered the King George V Professorship of Philosophy in Calcutta University, which position he accepted and held for twenty years. Within this period his two-volume work appeared, Indian Philosophy, which undertook the ambitious task of surveying minutely not only the six major systems of Brahmanical

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[8]Ibid., pp. 9-10.

Philosophy, but included with them the Vaisnava, Saiva, and Sakta systems of theism.

It will be possible to list only some of his more important achievements. In 1926, he delivered the Upton Lectures at Manchester College, Oxford. By this time his fame and international stature as a scholar were well established. The lectures were subsequently published in what has become one of his most popular books, The Hindu View of Life. Thereafter he attended the International Conference of Philosophers in 1926 and delivered the Haskel Lectures at the University of Chicago.

In 1929 he visited Manchester College and delivered the lectures which were later published under the title, East and West in Religion. In that same year he delivered the Hibbert Lectures which were published later under the title of An Idealist View of Life. This work is considered by many to be the most significant of all his works to that time.

In 1931 he became the Vice Chancellor of the Andhra University in which position he continued until 1936 when he resigned and accepted the Spalding Professorship of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford. In 1939 he returned to his Professorship of Philosophy in Calcutta University, at the same time acting as honorary Vice Chancellor of Benares University. In this same year he was able to publish probably his most well accepted and most important

work, Eastern Religions and Western Thought, in which he seeks to trace the continuity of the relationship between certain aspects of Upanishadic and Western thought.

For some years after World War II he took an important part in the affairs of UNESCO, first as leader of his country's delegation and later as a member of the Executive Committee. In 1948 he resigned as Vice Chancellor of Benares University and was appointed Chairman of the Indian Universities Commission. His sustained literary production has amazed many, both east and west. Radhakrishnan has been described as the greatest Bridgebuilder between two thought worlds, between two civilizations, who has arisen in many decades. He seeks to build a bridge between the traditional wisdom of the East and the new knowledge and energy of the West.

In 1949 he served as Ambassador to Moscow. During this time he came into a sharp and severe consciousness of the political problem of religion as it plays its forces upon the nations of the world. He developed such a keen sensitivity to Communism that he was able to write one of the best critiques of Communism that has been written in terms of its emphasis or non-emphasis upon man. Since that time he has been acting as the Vice President of India under Jawarhal Nehru. Now he has the opportunity to be the Philosopher-Statesman Plato idealized.

The importance of Radhakrishnan is nearly parallel to the growing importance of India as a nation among nations. Many would say that it is due to the tremendous labors and influence of Radhakrishnan that India is beginning to shake herself from her "giant sleep." In many ways Radhakrishnan is representative of many more voices whose sound, as yet, has not caught the attention of the Western ear. As the technological civilization of America has effected its influence upon the world, it has brought the world closer together. This gives birth to and heightens problems that did not appear important due to their distance. Now their proximity forces the issue. A wider understanding and a better mutual relationship is needed on planes other than the technological. Radhakrishnan attempts to provide such planes of contact and conversation.

Radhakrishnan's goal is a world philosophy, or a world religion. It is in the light of this that one can readily sympathize with his Herculean efforts to bring about a historical understanding of the basic cultural relationship between the East and the West. He has returned to the origins of European and Indian thought to find the basis or bases to develop a world philosophy. He is quite realistic when he affirms his hopes for a world religion for a world community.

> The modes and customs of all men are now a part of the consciousness of all men. Man has become the spectator of man. A new humanism is on the horizon.

> But this time it embraces the whole of mankind. An intimate knowledge between peoples is inescapable in producing an enrichment of the world consciousness. We can no more escape being members of a world community than we can jump out of our own skin. . . . The supreme task of our generation is to give a soul to the growing world consciousness, to develop ideals and institutions necessary for the creative expression of the world soul, to transmit these loyalties and impulses to future generations and train them into world citizens.[9]

Those who in the name of religion, race, nation or ideology separate themselves from the rest of mankind are only retarding the free movement of human progress toward its ultimate goal of oneness. In the struggle to bring this view down to the level of all men, regardless of creed, country, or race, we find one of the most significant phases of Radhakrishnan's work. He is to be evaluated in India and in the world in the light of a momentous cultural transformation which seeks a deeper quality of world unity. As the philosopher with a new East-West synthesis, he represents a new line of philosophical activity.

He is quite aware that there must be the spiritual capacities to appropriate those freedoms. As a member of the international committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the Old League of Nations and in the UNESCO, he worked for international unity and cooperation. It has been his constant goal that India should take her place among the family

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[9]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 211.

of nations as a full fledged member. This generation is beginning to see the inauguration of this realization. Radhakrishnan believes that India has a significant offering to make toward a larger unity and accord among nations. It is his conviction that the great spiritual truths of Hinduism have a contribution to make in delivering the world from the slough into which the gross Western materialism has thrust it. Errors of rabid dogmatism in religion which have so often added to the world's already heavy burdens of woes may be avoided if the deeper underlying principles of Hinduism are fully comprehended.

CHAPTER III

RADHAKRISHNAN'S VIEW OF GOD

His Choice

"If religion is experience, the question arises, what is it that is experienced?"[1] Around this question Radhakrishnan frames the thesis of this chapter.

> All these problems have changed their meaning and are dependent upon the one and only problem, whether there is or is not behind the phenomena of nature, and the drama of history an unseen spiritual power, whether the universe is meaningless, whether it is God or is chance.[2]

The system of thought that Radhakrishnan has selected as his own is the idealistic point of view as it is represented in the Vedanta. Conceivably there were other trends in Indian thought which would have served his purpose in erecting a structured synthesis of Indian and Western thought. He might well have attempted to build upon the atomism of Nyaya or upon the emergence view of Samkhya or perhaps kindred views within Western philosophy.

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[1]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, The Hindu View of Life (London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1927), p. 23. Hereafter this work will be referred to as HVL.

[2]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, editors, Contemporary Indian Philosophy (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1936), p. 266.

In accounting for his choice of Idealism, the philosophic predicament that launched his career should be recalled. It was created by the opposing claims of religious absolutes, Hindu and Christian, which confronted him as a college student. His initial objective was to analyze and examine the validity of the two systems of thought as well as their respective claims upon men and the world in which they lived. It was in this process that he discovered Vedanta as the most acceptable foundation upon which to build his philosophic structure. As he sought a reapproachment with Western culture through the pathway of mysticism, Vedanta, with its emphasis upon the kinship of all selves and intuitive knowledge, fulfilled his particular need for a theoretical component.

The term Vedanta is a broad one that moves easily between the two poles of modified dualism and a rigid non-dualism. Often, and with some doubt as to its correctness, rigid non-dualism is termed monism. Vacillating freely between these two poles, Radhakrishnan achieves a status not only as a creator of a philosophic world view, but perhaps comes as near as any to the stature of the oriental theologian. Always to be remembered is that when the Eastern Mind speaks of his philosophy, it is, by necessity, a religious philosophy. By necessity is it so because the Eastern Mind considers it highly impractical, if not foolish, to deal with the ultimate concerns of man and his present

predicament, future hopes and aspirations, if the whole picture is not portrayed.

"Such as men themselves are, such will Himself seem to them to be."[3] This statement by the Cambridge Platonist, John Smith, is quite agreeable to Sri Radhakrishnan. The Hindu Seer in Upanishadic thought who describes God's nature by remaining silent, "The Absolute is silence,"[4] Buddha with his answer to the nature of God as being, neti, neti, the sense of moral values of the Hebrew prophets, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God"[5] are some of the descriptions that appear and that men have endeavored to give in answer to the problem of the nature of God. Radhakrishnan maintains that none of these are satisfactory.[6]

> Not one of them gives the whole truth, though each of them is partially true. God is more than the law that commands, the judge that condemns, the love that constrains, the father to whom we owe our being, or the mother with whom is bound up all that we can hope for or aspire to. "Him who is the real One, the sages name variously."[7]

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[3] HVL, p. 27.

[4] Ibid., p. 26.

[5] Micah 6:8.

[6] HVL, p. 28.

[7] Ibid., p. 29.

God and the Absolute

"Every attempt at solving the problem of the ultimate basis of existence from a religious point of view has come to admit an Absolute or God."[8] This is Radhakrishnan's conclusion. He qualifies this by saying:

> Rationalistic logic and mystic contemplation favor as a rule the former conception, while ethical theism is disposed to the latter. It has been so in Hindu thought from the age of the Upanishads till the present day.[9]

As to how Radhakrishnan reconciles these opposing demands of logic and devotion gives rise to his view of God and the Absolute.

The Absolute is the whole, the totality of perfections in his system. In it all differences and contradictions are reconciled.

> The dead mechanism of stones, the un-conscious life of plants, the conscious life of animals and the self-conscious life of men are all part of the Absolute and its expression at different stages.[10]

It contains time, events, and processes. Brahman, as reality, means that It transcends the phenomenal, the spatial, the temporal, and the sensible and empirical. It is

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[8] Ibid., p. 30.

[9] Loc. cit.

[10] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life (London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1947), p. 27. Hereafter this work will be referred to as IVL.

what is assumed as foundational to all of existence, but It is not substance in the material sense of the term. It can have no relations; therefore, It is never in a causal relationship, nor is It Cause. It cannot be described for fear that It might become another of the particulars among the multiplicity of things. It can be best described as what It is not. It is a blank, yet not a blank since It is in the nature of Ultimate Consciousness. It knows nothing in the usual cognitive sense, for that implies immediately the areas of change and modification. It is beyond the sequence which binds things to rebirth. The creation of the world can neither add nor take away, but the Absolute represents the totality of being, and there is nothing other than It.

The needs of philosophy are fulfilled by the Absolute, but the character of God as personal love serves the needs of religion. God, who is the finite expression of one of the possibilities of the Absolute, is bound to the world and is ever under the categories of time and space. The great problem of reconciliation that is present between the realm of philosophy and of religion is just this reconciliation: how does one reconcile the character of God manifested as a self-determining principle with a temporal development which includes both nature and man? The decided difference might best be pointed out by Luther's use of Deus Revelatus and Deus Absconditus. However, as a result

of the final relationship of God to the world, it is most logically understood in Radhakrishnan's view, in terms of a rigid non-dualism. And this view of God is ultimately less than the Absolute. As a consequence, if the point is carried to its logical end, religion and its God are sublated to the realm of philosophy. Practical religion presupposes a God "who looks into our hearts, knows our tribulations and helps us in our need,"[11] but the God of religion is for the purposes of a cosmological explanation ultimately subordinated to the Absolute.

Radhakrishnan feels that Hinduism, while emphasizing the personality aspect of the divine, has, at the same time by its doctrine of the Absolute, kept alive the supra-personal nature of Ultimate Reality. By the term, Absolute, he seems to refer to those aspects of the divine which are not within the grasp of man's comprehension. Yet this would present a slightly distorted picture of what he actually means. Ultimate Reality, the Absolute, is beyond comprehension, beyond existence; It is neti, neti, not yet, not yet. On the other hand, however, he means to stress that the ground of the world is ultimately spiritual. It is more than personal, but not less than personal. The personal is for the finite mind. For such a man as Radhakrishnan, the personification of the Absolute for the

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[11] IVL, p. 340.

finite mind is nothing more than a method, a means, whereby man can refer to that Reality in whom we live and move and have our being. "When we emphasize the nature of reality in itself we get the Absolute Brahman; when we emphasize its relation to us we get the personal Bhagavan."[12] For him the history of religion is the history of man's progressive development toward an ever enlarging and more adequate conception of God.

> It (Hinduism) accepts the obvious fact that mankind seeks its goal of God at various levels and in various directions and feels the sympathy with every stage of the search. The same God expresses itself at one stage as power, at another as personality, at a third as an all-comprehending spirit, just as the same forces which put forth the green leaves also cause the crimson flowers to grow. We do not say that the crimson flowers are all true and the green leaves are all false. Hinduism accepts all religious notions as facts and arranges them in order of their more or less intrinsic significance.[13]

He sees in the polytheism of popular Hinduism a multiple but diluted expression of the divine, while in the refined monotheism of the intelligentsia he finds a more pure expression of religion. The worshipers of the Absolute are in this scale of excellence awarded the highest pinnacle of achievement, while the devotees of the personal God come next. They are followed by the worshipers of ancestors, deities, and sages. The lowest of all are the

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[12] Ibid., p. 186.

[13] Ibid., p. 31.

animists and nature worshipers.[14]

Evidences for God

The world of becoming is not capable of explanation from within itself, and the major import of the classical arguments for God aim at this point. Concerning those proofs Radhakrishnan suggests that they will help us to understand the rationality not so much as proof but as the determination of an indeterminate object.

We can refer to God as the cause, but not as an event within the series of events; for the ultimate cause of the world in a very special sense lies outside of the world since it is prior to it. This creative energy of the universe is not plurality but leads back to a basic unity, and the natural order cannot be understood as the scene of conflicting forces. Thus Radhakrishnan points out that "The first principle of the universe possesses unity, consciousness, and priority of existence."[15] He utilizes the classical arguments of design and teleological purpose in combination. These in turn are supported by the argument of moral purpose running through the universe. His final appeal is to the coherence which underlies the kinship between man and his world.

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[14] Loc. cit.

[15] IVL, p. 331.

Radhakrishnan is favorable toward the ontological argument for God. But this is rightly used in conjunction again with that of harmony and coherence in the structure of the universe but not in isolation, all of which points to an Absolute consciousness. It requires the combined ideas derived from metaphysics, morals, and religion to arrive at the conception of God as the primordial mind, the loving redeemer, and the holy judge of the universe. The Hindu concept of God as Brahma, primordial nature; Vishnu, participant in the world process; and Siva, judge of the moral order, illustrate the characteristics that are thus required.

God and the World Process

The question of how Brahman brings about individuation within the phenomenal world is the insoluble and inexplicable question in the thought of Radhakrishnan. He seeks to answer the problem by positing maya. A definition of maya is by no means simple. If Brahman is the sole reality, it would logically follow that the nature of everything must be Brahman. To say this in another way would be to say that nothing else possesses its own distinct nature. The doctrine of naturelessness eliminates the matter of substance in which the elements subsist. This is one of the many subtle differences between Radhakrishnan and other Indian philosophers. It inevitably results in difference

between the true self and *maya*. The true nature of everything is *Brahman*. But everything is *Brahman*. Thus does he escape the logical *sequitur* of pantheism, at least temporarily. If the transcendence of the Absolute is to be retained, complete identification of *Brahman* and all else is impossible. This basic twist is important for a following chapter on his view of man. However, there does exist the necessity for a *modus operandi* for the purpose of intervention. This is called *maya*. If *prakriti* were posited, as other Indian philosophers posit it, as a material cause, then this would total two causes. Since the Absolute cannot have a second, Radhakrishnan obliterates the concept of *prakriti*, and accepts *maya* as the mysterious, negative, passive force of the universe that is opposed to *Brahman*, the active, positive force. This does not dispose of his difficulty of accounting for the world. As will be seen later, Radhakrishnan is forced to posit the *Saguna Brahman*, a finitized *Brahman*, a *Brahman* with qualities and relationships in order to account for the world process. Concerning the concepts of *purusa* and *prakriti*, he says,

> It will be well for us to understand at the outset that purusa and prakriti are not facts of experience, but abstraction set up beyond experience to account for it.[16]

Yet according to Radhakrishnan the projecting, obscuring

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[16]*Ibid.*, p. 318.

force of the universe is a mystery without explanation. In reality it would seem as though he has fallen into the same pit that he tried to avoid. He has two unaccountables, Brahman and maya. God and the world are super-imposed on Brahman by maya. Thus God, man, and the world are a series of events; rather since God and man are organic with the world, they exist as one of a series of events.

What is the relation between this one God and the world? The Brahman who creates, the Vishnu who redeems, and the Shiva who judges "represent the three stages of the plan, the process, the perfection."[17]

With reference to the world, God is organic to it. To sever God from the world would be inconceivable. He cites Ramanuja's parable of likening God to the world as the soul is to the body. He suggests that struggle and growth are realities in the life process of God. This might appear to some as a case for a finite God. But Radhakrishnan says no to this. With him it is a case of the Finite God and the Absolute. "Progress may be derogatory to the Absolute, but not God."[18] Since his God ultimately recedes with the world into the Absolute, it can be regarded only as a mental construct without any actual ontological reality.

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[17] Ibid., p. 332.

[18] Ibid., p. 338.

His view of the world process as an emergent process is dealt with all too briefly. Perhaps this is necessary in view of the fact that it possesses an inherent evil of not answering how it occurs. But this is not a process of mere unfolding. It is by the manner in which the process operates that he is saved from the problems of Hegelian levels of evolution and development. God does not become identical with the world--which would be the most rigorous type of pantheism--until the end of everything.

Radhakrishnan's view of the Absolute has been termed a logical or intellectualistic absolutism. The world and God belong to the realm of intellect, while the Absolute belongs to the realm of intuition. It is then a matter of perspective. From the conceptual aspect we have God, while from the intuitive we have the Absolute. "Intuitive knowledge is not non-rational; it is only non-conceptual. It is rational intuition in which both immediacy and mediacy are comprehended."[19] In a similar fashion the Absolute is not different from God, but rather it is his completion. This does not, however, solve the ontological problem. For the Absolute has been posited as pure consciousness as it alone is true. The selves in the world have only an epistemological meaning, not an ontological meaning. Likewise God has no ontological necessity since the Absolute

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[19] Loc. cit.

can have no relationships, causal or otherwise.

Maya, the Starting Point

One of the most common criticisms that is leveled against Hinduism is that it reduces this world to an unreal appearance and thus deprives all ethical endeavor of any significance or meaning. It is again based upon the Vedantic teaching that reality is one, and all that appears as plurality is an illusion. The world of time and space, the world of history, is the world of plurality and is characterized by change and decay. Consequently the spatio-temporal world came to be regarded as illusion. This obviously had the necessary consequence that the things of the world, including all ethical concerns and enterprises and all efforts of any serious purpose, cannot in the last analysis have any abiding meaning. The passivity of the Indian, his unconcern and lack of effort toward correction of social evils and economic injustices are based upon the status quo acceptance and inherent belief in this teaching. Not only have the critics understood Hinduism in this way, but the cultured and the unlettered lived it out this way.[20]

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[20]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, "Religion in Life," Autumn, 1956, p. 501.

Since Maya means the contradictoriness of the world, that which is other than the real, then it is all the more unusual that someone should take this as his point of departure for a philosophic system. Yet for Radhakrishnan, his point of departure is not only fundamental but necessary. He has reconstructed or reinterpreted the doctrine of maya. As a consequence this has had a great effect upon the interpretation that he puts forth in his presentation of Hindu ethics. Radhakrishnan, however, would undoubtedly protest that this is not a new interpretation or new conception of maya. He would rather say that it is merely a matter of a proper understanding. Before pointing out his reinterpretation of maya, we shall deal with the usual Hindu conception of this doctrine in order to form a backdrop against which his interpretation will stand out more sharply.

Maya is posited to account for the variety of things in the manifest world, when in reality, all is one. It has two functions. One to conceal the real, and the other is to project the unreal. It pervades the universe, but its presence is inferred only from its effect.[21] Professor Bernard sets forth as clearly as any the orthodox Hindu view of the relationship of maya, illusion, to matter and

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[21]Theos Bernard, Hindu Philosophy (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 126.

avidya, ignorance, or spiritual blindness.

> It is identified with prakriti, universal matter, for it exists as the material cause of the universe. When nature is in a state of equilibrium, universal matter is called prakriti; but the first disturbance, the first conceived motion away from that original triune condition of equipose, is called maya, because it is an illusion. As such it is the material substratum of creation; it brings forth the universe by undergoing mutations. The world is regarded as maya because it has no reality, but is only an appearance of fleeting forms. . . . When the universal force called maya operates in the mind of the individual, it is called avidya, ignorance, especially in the spiritual sense. It is an impersonal force in the consciousness of all individuals producing the phenomena of illusion.[22]

Maya is that peculiar projective power that shrouds the perceptual world. It is the answer to the problem of the identity of atman and Brahman, of the relationship of God, the finite, and Brahman, which are separated by the buffer of an unknown and an inexplicable. The world of variety and multiplicity screens the real from us. Because maya is deceptive in character, it is called false knowledge. It is not the mere absence of knowledge, as the word ignorance might infer. It is positive error. Consequently, when this activity is ascribed to the Absolute, the Absolute becomes God. Radhakrishnan maintains that it is the finite mind that brings about the distorted projection. Maya and its effect is merely a description of what has occurred to bring about illusion. When higher knowledge,

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[22] Loc. cit.

parvidya, is at work, maya is pierced and the Absolute is perceived.

Six Interpretations of Maya

To present the whole picture of maya in interpretation, the six basic conceptions of maya are presented. What is most significant again is that they present a sharp picture of what Radhakrishnan has done in his "proper understanding" of the doctrine. What seems almost ironic is that Radhakrishnan presents these in his work, Indian Philosophy.

> (1) That the world is not self-explanatory shows its phenomenal character, which is signified by the word maya. (2) The problem of the relation between the world and Brahman has meaning for us who admit the pure being of Brahman from the intuitive standpoint and demand an explanation of its relation to the world, which we see from the logical standpoint. We can never understand how the ultimate reality is related to the world of plurality, since the two are heterogeneous, and every attempt at explanation is bound to fail. This uncomprehensibility is brought out by the word maya. (3) If the Brahman is to be viewed as the cause of the world, it is only in the sense that the world rests on Brahman, while the latter is in no sense touched by it, and the world which rests on Brahman is also maya. (4) The principle assumed to account for the appearance of Brahman as the world is also maya. (5) If we confine our attention to the empirical world and employ the dialectic of logic, we get the conception of a perfect personality, Iswara, who has the power of perfect self-expression. This power or energy is called maya. (6) This energy of the Iswara becomes transformed into the uphadis, or limitations, the unmanifested matter (avakrita prakriti), from which all existence issues.

> It is the object through which the Supreme Subject Iswara develops the universe.[23]

The six basic views of maya as a doctrine, when analyzed, quickly point up that maya is used to grasp the Brahman by ascending from the phenomenal world, and also to explain the world by descending from the Brahman. In addition the other two aspects of maya that were stated previously as inexplicableness and incomprehensibility are shown as well.

Radhakrishnan's Interpretation of Maya

It is against this backdrop then that Radhakrishnan's view of maya is presented. Of importance here is to point out that Radhakrishnan sharply deviates from the other views of maya by positing a teaching which other scholars of philosophy have called a lower order of reality. According to his interpretation the spatio-temporal world is far from being the empty dream world of illusion or inexplicable unreality. It is a lower order of reality, which has being in the Absolute. He is saying that the world has no basis in itself. It cannot explain itself. It is phenomenal and dependent. Yet, empirically it is here and it is real. He points out that even the great Indian philosopher Samkara employed three levels of reality; the

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[23]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, in Library of Philosophy (Revised edition; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1931), II, 573-4.

illusory, the empirical, and the transcendental. It is the second of these that Radhakrishnan chooses as the basis for his construction of the view of maya. Its modification by Radhakrishnan does nothing essentially to change the basic fact that the universe is spiritual. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the world is illusion. It is empirical and has empirical being which is something quite different from illusory existence. Human experience is neither completely illusory nor on the other hand, ultimately real. Simply because the world of experience is not the perfect form or reality, it does not follow that it is illusion.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF RADHAKRISHNAN

The Origin of Man

In order to determine the anthropology of Radhakrishnan, it is necessary to establish the fundamental suppositions from which he builds his view of man. Consequently, in order to determine the origin of man, it is necessary to determine the origin of the universe.

Man is organic to nature. As nature is, so man is "an emergent aspect of the world process and not a substance different in kind from the process itself."[1] Nature and the Absolute are not equated.

> While God is distinct from the world, he is not separate from it. The world exists by the sustaining presence and activity of God. Without this presence and activity, it would collapse into nothingness. In this world one possibility of the divine is being accomplished in space and time. There is the operation of the divine in it. From this it does not follow that the world is organic to God. If anything, it is organic to this specific divine possibility which is in process of accomplishment. This possibility is regarded as the soul or the entelechy of the world; we may call it the World-Spirit. The soul of this particular world is a manifestation of the Absolute-God. When this possibility is realised, when the plan of the universe is fulfilled, there is an end to this

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[1]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1937), p. 266.

> world. Its disappearance is consistent with its created character.[2]

Radhakrishnan rejects the doctrine of creation,[3] and finds the theory of manifestation quite unacceptable to himself. The finite can hardly manifest the infinite. In order to satisfy the demands of reason and logic, he adopts the position of "wise agnosticism."[4] By this it is permissible for him, as he considers it, to accept the doctrine of differentiation, for it is the most rational and the most logical in view of the rational difficulties of a rational explanation.

> If we insist on an explanation, . . . the most satisfactory is to make It, the Absolute, a unity with a difference or a concrete dynamic spirit. We then reach the self and the not self, which interact and develop the whole universe.[5]

The differentiation of the Absolute into the self and the not self brought the beginning of the universe. As man is organic to nature, it is not difficult to see how man comes into being or existence. For the rest of the

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[2]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, "The Reign of the Spirit and the World's Need," The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, edited by Arthur Schillp (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1952), p. 44.

[3]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, The Hindu View of Life (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1937), p. 67. Hereafter this work will be referred to as HVL.

[4]Ibid., p. 69.

[5]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, in Library of Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1929), I, 185-186.

process in it is the struggle between the self and the not self for domination. The self is God. The not self is matter, or *maya*. The universe is the result of the conjunction and further differentiation between the two. Every aspect of this great cosmic process is the resultant product of the self-evolution of the Absolute.[6] Man as the great cosmic entity is one of the emergent aspects of this struggle between self and not self and their differentiation.

This cosmic evolutionary process is not a mechanical process, but a progressive ascent. In the doctrine of differentiation man was the last and highest result of the struggle. In addition he is the peak of the real existence in so far as the consciousness of the self, or Absolute, reaches its highest attainment in him. Man is the concrete dynamic spirit of the Absolute. And thus it is that as man is the concrete spirit of the Absolute in the highest and most conscious sense, so is he organic to nature and to God. For the Absolute is the organized whole of all of its constituent differentiated parts. The whole embraces all the particulars, but is yet greater than the sum of all the particulars.

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[6]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1920), p. 446. Hereafter this work will be referred to as *RRCP*.

Radhakrishnan is severely sensitive to the basic problem involved in the doctrine of differentiation with the special reference of determining the origin of man. He postulates that the One dissociates into self and not self. But how this occurs is left unanswered. He gives it up as the inexplicable problem of the ages.

The Self of Man

The central question raised in the Upanishads is "What is truth?" The acid test of the Upanishad thinkers in their quest for subjective truth is "What is the common factor in the states of waking, dreaming, sleeping, death, rebirth and final deliverance?"[7] The result of the test is essential being. This is variously called or termed as the real self, deeper self, or spirit or soul.

Radhakrishnan distinguishes between the real self and the empirical self. Although the empirical self possesses a level of reality, nevertheless the empirical self is denied a metaphysical reality. The soul is self existent and eternal. It is the soul of man. The soul or atman is the underlying reality of all experience.

Atman is unchangeable and eternal. Though present in all, it is distinct from all. Death can not touch it.

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[7]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, editor, The Principle Upanishads (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1953), p. 28. Hereafter this work will be referred to as TPU.

Want or desire are foreign to it. It is the basis of all knowledge.

While the empirical self is finite and individual, the real self, the soul, is infinite and universal. It is the common ground in all individuals. "It is hidden in all things and pervades all creation."[8] Identical experiences in different individuals are the proof that the same soul pervades all men. This is the very core of being, or existence. It is the thread upon which are strung all the particulars, all the differentiations of the world.[9]

The basis for vital religion is found in the real self. The fundamental truths of a spiritual religion are contained in this one kernel, that is, real self is the supreme being. "It is the soul's experience of the essential unity with the whole of being that is brought out in the words, 'Thou in me and I in Thee.'"[10] It is quite clear that Radhakrishnan conceives of the real self of man, his soul, as being identical with ultimate reality.

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[8] TPU, p. 54.

[9] IVL, p. 271.

[10] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought (Revised edition; London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 26. Hereafter this work will be referred to as ER&WT.

God and the Real Self

One basic concept in the philosophy of Radhakrishnan is the identity of the real self and God. Even though the real self actually transcends all human categories, it is the essential being, or God, in our selves.[11] Man can not comprehend this. It is deeper than intellect. It is at the very center of our being. It is "akin to the supreme."[12] He thus affirms that there is reality, real ground, in man's deepest being which is a condition for divine knowledge.

Man is a mirror of creation. The real self reaches up to the absolute. It extends down to the plant and the animal. Though covered about with a material organism, the real self has the capacity to transcend intellect and directly apprehend spiritual reality or God. The self becomes aware of its existence and its oneness with the omnipresent spirit.

In spite of the identity of the soul in man and God, the latter appears to be a long way off from the former. Having drunk of the waters of forgetfulness, man has forgotten his heavenly origin. He is an exile from heaven, clothed in what seems an alien garment of flesh.[13] Our

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[11] IVL, p. 103.

[12] Loc. cit.

[13] Ibid., p. 111.

knowledge is only partial. Identity of atman with Brahman does not eradicate the facts of the unknowable and the inexplicable for man.

Radhakrishnan would also hold that such a problem of knowledge would bring about the reason for man's view of God as a personal God. It is merely one of standpoint and not of essence. It is a difference between God as He is and God as He seems to us.[14] To compare the supreme with the highest that we know is nearer truth than to compare Him with anything lower.

A combination of good and evil, a dualism, a separation, is denounced by Radhakrishnan as unfair to man. Man is man because he is real self. He is this for no other reason. Man is one as God is one. Man is transcendent and immanent even as God is transcendent and immanent. This is not unity, but identity. But here lies the stricture ultimately. If man is an emergent aspect of differentiation, it is impossible for him to be the same as the Absolute, or God. Yet Radhakrishnan holds that it is upon this fundamental thesis that he envisages the function of religion. This function is to bridge man and God by restoring this lost sense of identity.

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[14]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, The Heart of Hindusthan (8th edition; Madras: G. A. Natesan & Co., 1945), p. 52. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as HH.

The Nature of Man

The nature of man reflects every level of reality from matter to God.[15] Man is the highest reality. With his reason and will, affection and conscience, he is the climax of the world process. He is the meeting point of every grade of existence. There is in him the divine element which is called the beatific consciousness, the ananda state, by which at rare moments it enters into immediate relationship with the Absolute.[16]

Man is an amphibious animal. He lives in two worlds. He is in the process of becoming and yet never achieving. It is a struggle between the self and the not self, between the higher nature and the lower nature. "Born of matter, entangled in it, oppressed by want and misery, he still has the divine spark which gives him a place in the spiritual realm of freedom."[17] The destiny of man is dependent upon the struggle between spirit and matter, between self and not self. The mastery of the spirit over the finite, or not self, is the end goal of man's life.

In the relationship between man and the universe, Radhakrishnan regards the "human self as an emergent

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[15] ERAWT, p. 25.

[16] IPU, p. 80.

[17] RRCP, p. 80.

aspect of the world process and not a substance different in kind from the process itself."[18] The distinctiveness of the real self lies in the specific organization of its contents. For it is an organization that is active as a whole. Being identical with the soul of the universe, it is of the whole and thus organized actively as a whole. The determining principle for this is man's life purpose. Everything, all of his activities, are subordinated to this one unifying, organizing principle. Radhakrishnan would call this the "teleological unity."[19] For the real self, as was stated before, is the only common factor in the concrete, busy, active, and dynamic self. Man's unfounded belief in his own individuality outside of his real self keeps him in war, in a state of unequal equilibrium. His conscience points him to a divided life, a life of confusion and uncertainty. This is not a problem of separateness, of conflicting tensions between the self and the not self, the higher nature and the lower nature.

The cure for the tension of separateness or fragmentariness is devotion to the whole, or the self realization of identity of his real self with the Absolute. This is the peculiar privilege of the real self. It can consciously join and work for the whole. It can embody in its

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[18] IVL, p. 266.

[19] Ibid., p. 268.

own life the purpose of the whole because it is of the whole.[20] This naturally will differ in degree from individual to individual. It is the source of difference between superior and inferior souls. It is in this process of living as a whole that the two elements of selfhood, uniqueness and universality, grow together until the most unique becomes the most universal.

Due to this conflict that rages in man between his self and not self, Radhakrishnan approaches a close relationship with a modern western view of man. For he sees man as a wanderer on a road, a perpetual tramp. His life is an endless battle, an endless process of change and incessant metamorphosis. He is the victim of ignorance which inadvertently produces selfish desire. As a victim of ignorance man absolutizes his will and his ego, pits them in opposition to society though under guise as a member of society, and thus completely misses his moral vocation. He is for all practical purposes the highest product, though still a product, of nature. He is subject to its necessities, compelled by its laws, driven by its impulses, and yet at the same time a non-nature product. He stands outside of nature, and outside of his own given nature. He has the capacity for transcendence, the ability as subject to make of himself an object. Thus, man, by reason of his

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[20] Ibid., pp. 273-274.

nature, has affinities with the real of all creation, and with that world that is above and beyond the world of nature.

Man's dignity consists in his participation with the realm above nature, in his capacity for self-transcendence. This capacity displays his true or real self, his identity with God. The reality of this self is again the divine spark of the infinite with the real self, also infinite. This divine spark is of the same nature as God.[21] It is God. It is the foundation for man's moral, religious and intellectual life.

Man and Karma

The doctrine of Karma is one of the commonly accepted beliefs of all the various religious systems in Hindu thought. No matter how radically they may differ in other respects, they are on common ground in accepting karma as a basic influence in their views of man. The law of karma was first introduced into Hinduism during the age of the Upanishads and has been developed since with various modifications. Most of the modifications have risen with the new interpreter, a class which includes Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Basically, when the Hindu thinks of karma, he views it as his rational and acceptable explanation for

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[21] IVL, p. 103.

the variance of men socially, as well as the reason for the presence of evil in the world which he lives.

Karma is a moral law. It corresponds to the physical law of causation. As such it is the most universal of all laws. No event can occur without having a definite cause behind it. Similarly, no event can occur without being a cause that will produce its own effect. There is then, in the realm of nature, a chain of causes and effects; each cause is the effect of a previous cause, and each effect is the cause of previous effect.

Karma is a law of action and reaction. It is employed to explain why character is either good or bad and places the responsibilities of a person's character upon what he was in the past.

Karma is a law of compensation. It is that which always brings about from a cause an effect of similar nature both in quantity and quality. The effect is never out of balance with its cause, and the cause will always bring about an effect of equal quality and quantity.

Karma is the law of retribution. This is similar to the law of compensation in that it deals with the effect of the wrong action upon the perpetrator. Actually this is saying that the virtuous reward themselves and the evil punish themselves by their own thoughts and deeds. The wicked act and its punishment grow on the same stem. The same can be said of the good act and its reward.

Self and Karma

In Radhakrishnan's exposition of karma two aspects of it are emphasized. Again, as it is fundamental to the understanding of Radhakrishnan's adaptation and modification of principles in his interpretation of Vedanta doctrine, attention is directed to it. For his two emphases are important for his view of man in society. The two aspects are the two pervasive features of all of nature; that is, connection with the past and the creation of the future. His view of man's connection with the past and his creation of the future is involved in the karma concept as it is found in the Hindu systems.[22]

According to Radhakrishnan, the karma principle is deterministic. It is deterministic in so far as it maintains that we are in the present by what we were in the past, or because of our connection with the past. All acts produce their effects. These are recorded in the individual organism and his environment. Their physical effects may be short-lived, but their moral effects are worked in the character of self. Every word, thought, and deed enters into the living chain of causes which makes man what he is in the present. Karma is deliberate and pains-taking in its attempt to point out to man that his life is not brought

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[22] HH, p. 92.

into being by mere whim or caprice. For as Radhakrishnan says,

> Our life is not at the mercy of blind chance or capricious fate. The conception is not peculiar to the oriental creeds. Even the Christian Scriptures refer to it . . . for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.[23]

Important to the first aspect of Radhakrishnan's view of karma is the realization that it is not so much a principle of retribution as it is a principle of continuity. Radhakrishnan sees everything in the world as a cause and as an effect. Continuity exists because it is native to the cause to pass into the effect. Good produces good, evil produces evil, love increases love, and hatred magnifies hatred. The one naturally flows into the other. The cause becomes the effect, which in turn becomes the cause for another effect.

The principle of continuity leads into the second aspect of his view of karma, the creation of the future. For Radhakrishnan holds that man is the creator, the architect of his own self, of his own future, which he is continually shaping due to the principle of continuity. It is at this point that man and his relationship with the absolute enters into the picture, for it is man's capacity to transcend himself that brings him to the position of being the architect of the future. As much as his connection with

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[23] IVL, p. 275.

the past is an integral part of man, a part that time does not blur nor death erase, so is his ability to make his future a part of his very being.

There is nothing that is uncertain or unpredictable about the moral world. Man reaps what he sows. The process of moral evolution is governed by immutable laws. The attempt to leap over them is futile. Man's piercing of avidya by jnana is the transcendental power that enables man to seize the opportunities that are his to create his future, but it is always in keeping with the law of karma as the law of natural consequences of the law of continuity.[24]

Karma is not a mechanical principle. Rather is it a "spiritual necessity."[25] It manifests the mind and will of God. God's judgment is not in some remote future. It is now. Every moment is man on trial, under judgment. Every deed must produce its natural effect in the world because the universe and all that is therein is lawful to its very core.[26] As much as God is in man, so is the law of karma organic to man's very nature.

In dealing with the second aspect of karma, or what may be termed the creative freedom of the self, it must be

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[24]TPU, p. 121.

[25]HVL, p. 73.

[26]Ibid., p. 72.

remembered that while it regards the past as determined, it views the present as the conditioning agent for the future. Man is neither a mere mechanism of instincts nor is he a product of environment. By virtue of his spirit, he is capable of transcending karma. Only the lower nature of man is subject to karma. It has nothing to do with the spirit in man.[27] His spiritual nature helps him to master the forces of avidya that try to enslave him. The very essence of spirit is freedom, not slavery. By its exercise man can check and control his natural impulses. It is for this reason that life is something more than a succession of mechanically determined states. His acts to be free must not be expressive of the mere force of habit or shock of circumstance, but rather of the freedom of the inner soul. The soul, or atman, is always the master. Nothing external, inclusive of karma, can compel it.[28]

Maya, Karma, Moksha, and Dharma

Maya has usually been construed as the power, emanating from prakriti, which has brought about the illusoriness of the world and all that is in it. Man suffers from this power by the two forces of spiritual blindness, avidya, which is his original sin, and kama, selfish desire, which

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[27] TPU, p. 122.

[28] Ibid., p. 123.

is the original sin in action. Both reveal the power of maya. Both place a reality, sensory and empirical, upon world and man. This keeps man from seeing reality, or the real self, the atman, which will lead him to a state of perfection. So man deals with that which is unreal. Radhakrishnan, however, maintains that there are three levels of reality; sensory, empirical, and the real, or transcendental. The world does not have reality of and by itself. It has reality only as it has its being in Brahman, the ultimate reality. Consequently, there is a sensory and empirical reality to the world and to men. It is obvious how important and perhaps even revolutionary Radhakrishnan's interpretation of maya is for Hindu ethics. For if the traditional view were to be maintained, the world and man would be illusory and thus destroy any rational reason for an ethic.

Karma is one of the most important doctrines for the metaphysical basis of dharma. Operating on the assumption that the Hindu believed that the world and men were real, he would still be left without a motivation toward service to his fellow men. Due to the plaguing, persistent principle that man was caught in the web of retribution, that his present station in life was due to his past life, that he was punished in this life because of the sins of the former life, that he was surrounded by evil because of the sins that he had brought forth in a previous rebirth by

samsara, the doctrine of re-incarnation, the Hindu was left with nothing but a resigned and fatalistic attitude toward all of life. He was caught in his own web. There was nothing that he could do or that could be done. He could be most happy by merely waiting out his days. He was responsible for himself and no other. Every man for himself was the principle by which he was forced to live. Radhakrishnan renovated the doctrine in saying that an individual could do something about his present situation as well as his future. By achievement of spiritual liberation, man could transcend karma with its actions, consequences, and retributions. How was man to attain spiritual freedom? By bhakti, karma, and jnana marga. His devotional life and life of good works were to lead him to jnana marga, or they could possibly lead him to moksha without jnana marga. The latter is important to state. Most men did not have the capacity for jnana marga, and consequently were doomed before they were to start. Thus, by the principle of spiritual freedom, Radhakrishnan put new life into the doctrine of karma and was able to give meaning and purpose to dharma which is one of the four ends, or stages toward attaining spiritual freedom. In fact, according to the new doctrine as elucidated by Radhakrishnan, man was thus forced to put dharma to work in order to achieve his liberation from the endless cycles of sumsara, or rebirth.

Moksha, the doctrine of spiritual liberation or the doctrine of identity attainment between atman and Brahman, the real self and God, is still the end goal of every Hindu life, or it should be. Toward this end, this final goal, every man's life was to be channeled. Moksha was his only and ultimate concern. If he should not be concerned about this, he would assign himself another rebirth and his cycles of samsara would be endless until he attained his goal of moksha. Again, this was his own concern; no one could help him attain moksha, any more than he could help someone else. As a result the Hindu found himself, theoretically anyway, in the situation of working out his own salvation with fear and trembling. His concern was with himself and none else. By nature this would force a non-ethical life upon the Hindu. If his concern were to be totally involved in the other-worldly, what would be his concern with anything that would be this-worldly? His own answer, as history seems to point out well enough, was "none." There was no need for an ethical life, a this-world life, if man's goal was other-worldly. Because of this Schweitzer could say that becoming one with the infinite is strictly an act of the spirit and has no relationship with dharma whatsoever.[29] Radhakrishnan, however,

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[29]Albert Schweitzer, Indian Thought and Its Development, translated by Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1952), p. 43.

maintains that to attain moksha, man must renounce himself. Thus, by doing this, the attainment of moksha is arrived at by an ethical practice. In addition he has adopted and adapted the Buddhist concept of the bodhisattva into his concept of moksha. For the one who has attained moksha spends the rest of his days, if possible, attempting to bring other men into the right state whereby they also may attain moksha. Finally, by quoting the words of Dr. Paul Deussen from a speech delivered to a gathering at Bombay, Radhakrishnan seeks to establish another metaphysical basis for dharma. Dr. Deussen said:

> The Gospels quite correctly establish as the highest law of morality, Love your neighbor as yourself. But why should I do so since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbor? The answer is not in the Bible . . . but it is in the Veda, the formula That art Thou which gives in three words the combined sum of metaphysics and morals. You shall love your neighbor as yourself because you are your neighbor.[30]

Since Brahman is atman and the atman dwells in every man, it is easily seen that every man is every other man, for every other man possesses the same atman. As Krishna says to Arjuna in the Bhagavadgita, "He who knows himself in everything and everything in himself will not injure himself by himself."[31]

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[30] ER&WT, pp. 100-101.

[31] Ibid., p. 101.

Having established a metaphysical basis for the concept of dharma, or ethical duty in life, by a reconstruction of basic concepts in Hindu metaphysics, Radhakrishnan is able to deal with the most important area of this reconstruction which is dharma or ethics. It is less sweeping in its scope than the other concepts of maya, karma, and moksha, but nevertheless is important. Ordinarily Hindu ethics have been construed as mainly subjective or personal with its purpose of elimination of such mental impurities as greed and egotism for the ultimate attainment of the highest good. But Radhakrishnan also speaks of an objective ethic which transcends both individual and society, both position and stage in life. Swami Nihilananda, in his book, Hinduism: Its meaning for the liberation of the spirit, calls this the universal ethic which applies to all men irrespective of their "position in life or stage in society."[32] By promulgating an objective or universal ethic, Radhakrishnan is seeking to bring man out of himself out into a world where there are other men, where there are social plagues and diseases which can be corrected only by the cooperative efforts, the ethical efforts and concerns of all men. Consequently the individual abides not only by an ethic that applies for himself, an ethic that is

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[32]Swami Nikhilananda, Hinduism: Its Meaning for the Liberation of the Spirit, in World Perspectives (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1958), XVII.

relative, but abides also by an absolute ethic that is pertinent and applicable for the well-being of all of society.

Having thus reviewed three reconstructed doctrines and quickly previewed a fourth, all of which are fundamental in understanding Radhakrishnan's anthropology, it is necessary that the fourth, the doctrine of dharma be dealt with in a more than cursory fashion.

Schweitzer's Critique of Dharma

It would be well to present a sharp picture which will contrast the classical view of Hindu ethics with ethics as it has been re-interpreted by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. For it is in ethics that Radhakrishnan is of the greatest importance to India as a prophet and interpreter. India's plight of starvation, disease, and suffering have usually been attributed to her belief in world as illusion, in the renunciation and negation of the world, in her fatalistic conception of the doctrine of karma, and in her concern with identity between atman and Brahman. Due to these basic beliefs, the Hindu has displayed little social concern for anyone besides himself. He may bemoan his own fate due to karma, he may deplore his station in life, but he would not jeopardize what may be called his faith, by concern over that which is unreal and illusory, the world. To do so would be to play the fool.

Albert Schweitzer, in his book, Indian Thought and its Development, sets forth eight criticisms of Hindu ethics. It is a criticism that is essentially based upon the "world and life negation" of the Hindu.[33] The emphasis upon the mystical identity between Brahman and atman naturally leads to world and life negation. Secondly, he claims that Hindu thought is essentially other-worldly, and thus humanist ethics and other-worldliness are incompatible with one another. Thirdly, the Hindu doctrine of maya, which says all the world is illusion, makes ethics inconsequential. Fourthly, the best that the Hindu has to say about the origin of the world is that it is a game of magic played by God. Fifthly, the way of salvation is jnana, or self-discovery, which is quite different from moral development and thus is non-ethical. In the sixth place, the goal of human endeavor is escape. It is the deliverance of the soul from the bonds of finitude. Religion seems to amount to a refuge from life and all its problems. Man has no hope of better things in any worldly sense. In the seventh place, the ideal man of Hinduism is raised above any ethical distinctions such as good or evil. Finally, the ethics of inner perfection insisted on by the Hindu mind conflict with an active ethic and wide-hearted love for one's neighbor.[34]

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[33] Schweitzer, op. cit., cf. p. 89.

[34] Ibid., and Schweitzer, passim.

Man and *Dharma*

In the Hindu system there exists a gradation of four ends of life: *moksha*, or spiritual liberation, which is the highest end of man; *kama*, the emotional life of man, his feelings and desires; *artha*, wealth or material prosperity; and *dharma*, the rule of right living, which is to be employed where each man finds himself, regardless of the level of caste. It is the *dharma*, the all controlling principle for man's life, his ethical life, that is here presented. It is in the area of ethics that the greatest criticism has been leveled at Hinduism. The charges usually deal with the illusoriness of the world and man, man's total unconcern for another man due to the fact that his own ultimate concern is for his own achievement of identity with the Absolute, and finally that the doctrine of *karma* leads men to despair of any concern for the society in which they live.

The Concept of *Dharma*

Dharma is a word of the greatest significance. It is derived from the root *dhr* which means to uphold, sustain, or nourish.[35] For all practical purposes it may well be

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[35]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Society* (2nd edition; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1949), p. 107. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as *R&S*.

called the norm or the universe. The Chandogya Upanishad speaks of the three branches of dharma relating to the duties of the householder, the hermit, and the student.[36] When the Tattiriya Upanishad urges the practice of dharma, it refers to the duties of the stage of life to which a man belongs.[37] Dharma is the whole duty of man in relation to the fourfold purpose of life, dharma, artha, kama, and moksha, by the members of the four groups, caturvarna, and the four stages, caturasrama.

> While the supreme social order aim is to train human beings for a state of spiritual perfection and sanctity, its essential aim is directed, by reason of its temporal ends, towards such a development of social conditions as will lead the mass of people to a level of moral, material, and intellectual life in accord with the good and the peace of all, as these conditions assist each person in the progressive realization of his life and liberty.[38]

The basic principle of dharma is the realization of the dignity of the human spirit which is the dwelling place of the Supreme. Radhakrishnan quotes two lines from the Upanishads to clarify the basis of such a statement. "The knowledge that the Supreme Spirit dwells in the heart of every creature is the abiding root principle of all dharma." The golden rule of the western world is brought to mind

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[36] Swami Nikhilananda, The Upanishads (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949), p. 23.

[37] Ibid., p. 11.

[38] R&S, p. 107.

when his second quote meets the reader's eye. "Know this to be the essence of dharma and then practice it; refrain from doing unto others what you will not have done unto yourself."[39] Any other type of behavior is due to the second cause of man's situation, his selfish desire.

Of particular interest is Radhakrishnan's herculean effort to point out that dharma is to mean nearly the exact opposite of all that Hinduism ordinarily would mean to imply by its use.

> Under the concept of dharma, the Hindu brings the forms and activities which shape and sustain life. We have diverse interests, various desires, conflicting needs, which grow and change in the growing. To round them off into a whole is the purpose of dharma. The principle of dharma rouses us to a recognition of spiritual realities not by abstention from the world but by bringing to its life, its business (artha) and its pleasures (kama), the controlling power of spiritual faith. Life is one, and in it there is not distinction between sacred and secular. Bhakti and Mukti are not opposed. Dharma, artha, and kama go together. The ordinary avocations of daily life are in a real sense service to the Supreme. The common tasks are as effective as monastic devotion. The Hindu does not elevate asceticism, or exalt the sterile renunciation of the joys of life. Physical well-being is an essential part of human well-being. Pleasure is part of the good of life. It is both sensuous and spiritual. To enjoy the sunshine, to listen to music, to read a play is both sensuous and spiritual. Pleasure as such is not to be condemned.[40]

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[39] Ibid., p. 108.

[40] Ibid., p. 106.

The Sources of Dharma

There are a number of sources for dharma. Some are held more highly than others. The Sruti or the Vedas, which are the holy scripture for the Hindu, head the source list. The Vedas are eternal. Their teachings are held as absolute authority. Though the Vedas are the eternal consolation and hope of all men, yet they do not contain an orderly and systematic account of dharma. They direct attention toward ideals and mention a few particular practices, but that is all. The rules and commands are found in the smrtis. Smrti is literally what is remembered by the sages. With the smrtis are the dharmasastras, which are virtually synonymous. Any rule of the smrti which can be validated by the Vedas automatically receives the authority of the Vedas. If a conflict should occur between them, then the Vedas are accepted. Another source is the sista, the disciplined, way of life. Even the practice of men from the Sudra class is acceptable for emulation. The last possible source of dharma may be the good conscience that is born out of moksha or born out of careful thought. It is the conscience of the disciplined man and not the caprice of the shallow fool.[41]

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[41] Ibid., pp. 109-110.

Exceptions to the rules of duties are permissible in times of distress. Any form of conduct that is essential for self-preservation is permitted under the principle of apaddharma, which reminds one of Kierkegaard's teleological suspension of the ethic. Necessity is unacquainted with law in such situations. Radhakrishnan tells the story of Visna-mitra who found that it was necessary to steal dog's flesh in order to stay alive. Visna-mitra justified it by saying that keeping alive is better than dying. "One must live before one can live according to dharma."[42]

This points to the relativity of the Hindu ethic. "Hinduism emphasizes the relative nature of dharma, and does not recognize absolute good or evil; evil may be described as what is less good."[43]

Principles of Change in Dharma

Time and circumstances are the determining factors, or principles of change in dharma. Social flexibility has been the chief characteristic of the Hindu ethic. Its method is that of experienced change. Radhakrishnan holds that a society, in order to live, must have not only the power of continuity but also the power of change. "Nothing

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[42] Ibid., p. 111.

[43] Nikhilananda, Hinduism: Its Meaning for the Liberation of the Spirit, p. 71.

is so subversive to society as a blind adherence to outworn forms and obsolete habits which survive by mere inertia."[44] The Hindu view thus makes room for the changes that come. A break with social heredity should never occur, yet the new stresses and conflicts must be faced with new insights and new ideas. The truths of spirit are assuredly eternal, but the rules must change from one age to another. Radhakrishnan urges that the changes are made today and not tomorrow. The content of the Hindu dharma must be made relevant to modern conditions. Radhakrishnan seems to make much use of the principles of change in his Kamala Lectures in order to justify his own position. He closes the lectures with,

> Some of the suggestions that I make may not appeal to the orthodox; the radical may think that I am too conservative. I am stating what seems to me to be the urgent demands of our society.[45]

As was mentioned in the introduction, Radhakrishnan himself quite aptly describes his own religious, intellectual, and philosophical position over against a modern India and her ancient Hinduism.

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[44] R&S, p. 113.

[45] Ibid., p. 111.

Varna and Asrama

Dharma is carried out in the four-fold order of society, varna, and in the four-fold succession of the stages of life, asrama. Varna involves the caste system of India, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the Sudras. The Brahmins represent the men of learning, a class that is much akin to the philosopher-statesman of Plato. He is the leader of society and as such, much is demanded of him. The Kshatriyas represent the warrior class, the guardians of the land during war and peace. The Vaisyas represent the skilled craftsmen, the men upon whom the creativity and productivity of the economy rest. The last class, the Sudras, are the workers who, in the words of Radhakrishnan, chiefly contribute "an instinctive obedience and a mechanical discharge of duty."[46]

The aim of dharma is to take the natural life of man and subject it to control without unduly interfering with its greatness, freedom, or variety of expression. Consequently on the one side of the picture, the varna dharma, the social ethic, deals with men by the duties assigned to them in their positions in society as determined by their character, guna, and their function, karma.

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[46] ER&WT, p. 364.

The other side of the coin, asrama dharma, the individual ethic, deals with the duties relevant to the stage of life. The Hindu scheme does not leave growth entirely to the individual's unaided initiative, but gives him a framework for guidance. Human life is represented as consisting of four stages of which the first three are in the area of class or caste jurisdiction. Consequently, during most of the individual's life, his ethical concern is both individual and social.

Student life, the first stage of asrama, is not to be thought of in terms of the picture in which knowledge is poured into a resisting brain, but rather it is the development of the individual to fit him for the role in life that he must play as a member of a particular caste and also grant him a general idea of the conditions of spiritual life. As the householder, the individual fills a definite social pattern of relationships through marriage. As Radhakrishnan says, "Celibacy is the rarest of sexual aberrations."[47] The individual must learn the patterns, the social and spiritual lessons of each stage before he is able to pass on to the next stage. If any would ask the question that is usually asked at this point as to what would happen to the individual that never passes the stage of student life, he would be referred to the doctrine of

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[47] Ibid., p. 379.

karma with its pertinent application. Nevertheless the way to the higher life is through the present life. By fulfilling his function in society, man begins to feel the greatness of the soul which is behind the veils of all nature and yearns to attain his true universality. His life at this stage has been sharply disciplined and prepared for the third stage. The forest-dweller life is the life of meditation and contemplation. Retiring to the quiet of a forest near-by, man seeks to discipline his mental operations in the hope of achieving the intuitive experience, the flash of identity with the Ultimate. It is here that the individual hopes to attain moksha, or, at the very least, a high degree of selflessness. After this he enters upon the fourth stage of this life, the life of a monk, the ideal Indian man. The Indian Ideal Man differs greatly from the magnanimous man of Greece or the valiant knight of Europe or the successful salesman of America. The Indian Ideal is the man free of self, filled with insight and spirit, a man who has freed himself from the prejudices of his time and place. For the end goal of every man is always moksha. Moksha is to pierce the wall of maya by jnana and to experience reality in all of its overwhelming splendor and beauty. It is the aim and end of every man.

CHAPTER V

RADHAKRISHNAN'S POLITICAL VIEWS

The Point of Departure

Radhakrishnan possesses no specialized viewpoint in approaching a political thought system. Rather is the opposite true. With the attitude of the synoptic, he is the synthesist par excellence. His view of politics is comprehensive. Thought and intellect and intuition are intricately involved. Each has its own assigned designated seat in the political council gatherings.

To speak of the political philosophy of Radhakrishnan is to do so only for the purpose of some attempt at a systematization of his views as they reveal his concern for the development of a social ethics. For he has not attempted to write anything that might appear as a systematic approach to the philosophy or science of politics. His views are scattered with abandon throughout his writings, as they have import in terms of logical sequence from another point. More often than not, this other point from which he starts is his view of man. For essentially, it is his passionate belief in the uniqueness of the individual, his repeated stress upon the import of individuality, and his sensitive consciousness to its validity and value that form the backdrop for his political views. Wherever the

significant uniqueness of man can be heightened and preserved, Radhakrishnan is quite likely to view this as pertinent and agreeable. Where this does not occur, he is as apt and able to criticize it with free abandon.

Democracy

It is from his recognition of the value and importance of the individual that Radhakrishnan derives his faith and confidence in democracy. For him, democracy is the "highest religion."[1] It is not just a political arrangement. Whenever he speaks of democracy, it is as if he were possessed with a religious fervor.

> There is no doubt that parliamentary democracy is the most civilized form of government. It enables us to bring about drastic and even revolutionary social and economic changes through peaceful processes. If we believe in democracy, it requires us to effect social justice within nations and extend democratic liberties to other nations. Liberal democracy is easy to profess, but difficult to practice. If democracies acquire honesty of purpose and fervour of faith, they will liberate oppressed nationalities, strive for racial harmony, and assist under-developed countries to achieve economic progress.[2]

Radhakrishnan interprets democracy as a spiritual accomplishment and maintains that by acting as an advocate for democracy he is not referring so much to parliamentary

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[1]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Education, Politics, and War (Paone Book Service), p. 8. Hereafter designated as EPW.

[2]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, East and West: Some Reflections (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 113. Hereafter this work will be designated as E&W.

institutions as he is to the dignity of man. To him, it is merely a recognition of the fundamental right of all men to develop the possibilities within themselves. He asserts that the common man is not common, but precious, and has within himself the power to assert his nature against the iron will of necessity. "To tear his texture, to trample him in blood and filth is an unspeakable crime."[3]

What is lacking and what is needed in democracy is a sacrificial faith.[4] The wretched attitudes of racial superiority, the condoning instead of the condemning of racial oppression wherever it exists, are matters that speak no good of democracy. As he says, "Racial discrimination is opposed to the teaching of world brotherhood. The world judges us not by our precept, but by our example."[5] With his mind's eye directed at America, he holds America to a program of activity which she has not fulfilled. He pinpoints this by stating that democracy must assist all countries, even its own, which are struggling to raise the standards of living; social, economic, and cultural.[6]

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[3] E&W, p. 39.

[4] Loc. cit.

[5] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith, in World Perspectives (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), IV, 26. Hereafter this work will be designated as RF.

[6] E&W, p. 114.

From this passionate insistence upon democracy as the high point in the religious life in so far as it proclaims the doctrine of individuality, there follows his fervent advocacy of freedom in the fullest sense. He is quite vehement in expressing himself against every form of regimentation and totalitarianism.[7] Democracy is the political expression of the basic ethical principle that the true end of man is a responsible freedom.[8] Democracy is entirely opposed to the wholesale suppressions of minorities and minority groups' opinion. Liberty is a condition, a state of well being, for man's moral growth. There is no state nor any system that can lay its claim to men's allegiance unless it is based upon their voluntary acceptance of it. "We cannot develop a democratic state on the basis of force . . . a tradition of violence."[9] To do so is to make of democracy a tyranny, which, then, no longer is in the interest of society as a whole, but rather in the interest of a particular class or community.[10]

Democracy and violence, the suppression of liberty, and non-recognition of the uniqueness of the individual are

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[7] EPW, p. 97.

[8] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Religion and Society (2nd edition; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1949), p. 90. Hereafter this work will be referred to as R&S.

[9] EPW, p. 38.

[10] R&S, p. 91.

matters that are utterly incompatible.[11] Radhakrishnan, however, is careful to draw a subtle distinction at this point. It is a distinction between ahimsa, non-violence; and danda, force. In the democratic situation, force, danda, is quite compatible and very often necessary.

> There is a difference between the use of force in a state and the use of force between states. The use of force is permissible when it is ordered in accordance with law by a neutral authority in the general interest. . . .[12]

This appears as a compromise by Radhakrishnan, but essentially to him it is not. The necessity of such a distinction has found itself to be useful in theory for the proffered defense of his own country, India, should it be attacked by an enemy.

All is not well with democracy in spite of those who claim to love it so dearly. As a political arrangement today, it does not possess the greatest popularity. It has broken down in Italy and Spain. Russia and China are hardly disposed toward it. The Middle East finds itself looking at the processes of democracy, as it is represented in America, with a hesitant and suspicious eye.

Democracy in its actual working rarely permits a country to be governed by its ablest men. In the name of

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[11] Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, editor, Introduction to Mahatma Gandhi (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1939), p. 27.

[12] Ibid., p. 357.

democracy, some mysterious caucus in the background is in reality ruling the state. It has shown itself to be favorable to the rights of the individual. In Europe and America where the matter of individualization is reported to have reached its highest level of any country in the world, individual life is least regarded.[13] He lays the blame for this situation to the failure of the individual voter with regard to honesty and intelligence.[14] Democracy has become confused with ignorance of the rankest type. It is equated with the lack of discipline and sub-level tastes. Unwittingly perhaps, democracy has trained people to read, but not to think. It has become easier to enter a college and yet more difficult to become educated. Accordingly, he feels that the results should be obvious enough. Uncriticized mass impulses, crowd emotions, and class resentments have taken the place of authority and tradition. All of this may be due to the tendency in all democracies to standardize thought and belief.

> Our minds work mechanically. The mechanizing of mind is deading to all creative enterprise. The highest creations are evolved not as the result of thinking according to a pattern, but as the outcome of insight, hard reflection, and solitary meditation of men who are lifted above the common groove. . . . Paradoxical

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[13]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Kalki--or the Future of Civilization (2nd edition; Bombay: Hind Kitabs, 1948), p. 19. Hereafter referred to as K--FC.

[14]Ibid., p. 58.

> as it may seem democracy is in its actual workings anti-democratic.[15]

The reason for this is that the individual is no longer an individual, but rather the product of the Madison Avenue advertising men. Apparently the individual is important only in terms of the economic, the one who will buy to keep the other alive, the other being the particular class or group. Social theorists in America have validated this somewhat and have decried it. Few seem to be listening. Radhakrishnan would attribute much of the problem to capitalism as it exists in the democratic system. This will be dealt with more fully in the following section.

In spite of this, Radhakrishnan sees democracy as the great political instrument usable to bring about a necessary social revolution without violence. This point he sees as being most apropos to his own land. But it must be a democracy that possesses a moral courage and an imaginative vision for a great social revolution to occur.[16] For as was stated previously, it is democracy, and in democracy alone, that there exists the possibility for the recognition of the value of the individual. It is only in democracy that all have equal opportunities of sharing in the common life. Since democracy is a system of equal

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[15] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[16] R&S, p. 98.

right for all, there can be no encroachment upon the right of any.[17] Democracy creates conditions for free and full development of the individual, but not the opportunity for individual license. One of his basic distinctions fundamental to democracy is the difference between liberty and license. He points out that,

> It is easy to acquire the forms of democracy, but not . . . the spirit. . . . Essentially a democrat is one who has that trait of humility, the power to put himself in second place, to believe that he may possibly be mistaken and his opponent probably right.[18]

Democracy possesses the recognition of the universal values which can secure the fate of civilization and humanity. This can occur only when there is a "rule of law before which the poor man and the rich, the weak nation and the strong, are equal, which believes that the world belongs to all."[19] This is the heart of democracy. Its import has taken on a new significance. Democracy is meaningless if applied to only a race of one pigmentation. To be real, democracy must apply to all the members of the human family. This has acquired a physical and practical implication due to the spread of rapid communication and transportation. The world has been converted into a single whole and now stands on the threshold of the first era of

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[17] E&W, p. 115.

[18] EPW, p. 16.

[19] Ibid., p. 83.

world civilization.

> For the first time in the history of mankind, the consciousness of the unity of the world has dawned upon us. Whether we like it or not, East and West have come together and can no more part.[20]

Capitalism and Democracy

Concerning capitalism, Sri Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan minces no words in expressing himself as one against it. Not one against it. No one would be left with the impression that he would acquiesce in any way to permit such a system to infringe upon the land that he loves so dearly. It is of interest to note that his views of capitalism are bound up with the democratic free enterprise system. In America, where he sees the inter-relationship of the economic system with the democratic politic, it appears as inconceivable that these two systems should appear to be compatible. Political liberty is of little value as long as there is a growing economic inequality.[21]

> If one group or nation attempts to make itself secure at the expense of another . . . it is adopting an undemocratic method and can defend its unjustice only by the force of arms. The dominant group fear of dispossession and the oppressed stores up a just resentment.[22]

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[20]Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought (Revised edition; London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 115. Hereafter this work will be referred to as ER&WT.

[21]R&S, p. 39.

[22]Radhakrishnan, Introduction to Mahatma Gandhi, p. 19.

In his view, capitalism is morally dangerous. It permits and encourages the growth of large disparities between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Those who are privileged tend to develop habits of waste and luxury, while those who do not have the bare essentials for human living become frustrated and embittered. The capitalist system does not foster healthy relations among human beings. When a few people own all the means of production, the others, though they may be nominally free in the sense that they are neither slaves nor serfs, have to sell their labor under the conditions that are imposed upon them.[23]

Economic individualism means social stratification.[24] The workers and the poor can not be satisfied with crumbs from the capitalist's table, or from capitalism's self-indulgent charity in the forms of old age pensions, health and unemployment insurance, and minimum wage laws. A prosperity that is built upon such a social injustice is like the house built upon the sand. For the laws define the rights of the strong and wealthy, but are indifferent to the weak and poor.[25]

So long as economic power is concentrated in a few hands, a few groups, or a few monopolies, there can be no

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[23] RF, p. 25.

[24] K--FC, p. 18.

[25] R&S, p. 95.

sense of security among the large masses of the people.

> The emphasis of capitalism upon the supreme importance of material wealth, the intensity of its appeal to the acquisitive instincts, its worship of economic power, often with little regard to the ends which power serves or the means it uses, its support of property in general, not merely particular rights of property, its subordination of human beings to the exigencies of an economic system, its exploitation of them to the limits of endurance, its maximum production, its acceptance of divisions in the human family based on differences, not on personal quality and social function, but of income and economic circumstance, all these are injurious to human dignity. So long as the capitalist society encourages these concepts and habits, it subsidizes social unrest.[26]

Failure to recognize this fact has been the blind spot of democracy, especially of Western democracy. Communism has won the allegiance of the dispossessed individuals and nations by highlighting it and promising an early remedy. While more than half the population of the world in Asia and Africa lives under normal subsistence levels, the other part is spending its time, wealth and energy in building armies, navies and air forces which will avert nothing, which will solve nothing.[27] Radhakrishnan warns that if democracy is to defeat Communism, it must become disciplined, purposeful, and sacrificial.

A non-capitalist democracy takes away the political power from prosperity as such and vests it in the individual. Outgrowing the profit motive of capitalism can not be immediate

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[26] RF, pp. 25-26.

[27] Address to UNESCO--5th Session, 24 May, 1950.

or complete, but there must be greater limitations and responsibility in the acquisition of wealth. Huge profits should be unlawful and excessive incomes should be curbed by high taxes. There should be a prosperity of properly distributed wealth; equal distribution is quite another matter.[28]

Socialism

Radhakrishnan clearly presents favorable inclinations toward socialism or social democracy. Social ownership of large resources and sources of wealth and power is less dangerous to ethical life and more helpful to social fellowship.[29] Regulated control of all potential sources of wealth is less tyrannical than the blind profit motive of free enterprise competition, which by itself would slowly emaciate its own society. It would appear that Radhakrishnan seeks desperately to find some mid-point between the capitalistic democracy and a social communistic totalitarianism. His success in achieving this hardly appears complete. Within the realm of his own land, the formulated policies shift from this to that and back again, seeking to find the pragmatic operation, the operation that works.

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[28] R&S, p. 93.

[29] EPW, p. 42.

Communism

Communism is of vital importance to Radhakrishnan. To him it is a vast historical phenomenon which requires study and understanding. In one generation it has overthrown old orders, revolutionized widely disparate societies, and effected the greatest redistribution of political, economic and military power that the world has ever known. It has successfully absorbed nearly half of the world's population and stands as an ominous challenge to the rest of the world. If the spy stories, the Philbrick episodes, the heresy persecutions, the recantation of former communists who endured the change from faith to disillusionment, the military interventions, the liquidations of large sections of the community are all that the free Western world has to urge against the threat of communism, he feels that it is hardly getting at the root of the matter.[30] To Radhakrishnan, communism appears as a secularized Christianity, which is possessed with the logic of the missionary cause and thus drives itself to an agressive propaganda.[31] Though many of its ideals and basic principles receive his sympathy, he considers it fundamentally and intellectually inferior, and declares it to be utterly

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[30] RF, pp. 58-59.

[31] E&W, p. 111.

inconceivable and incompatible with recognition of the uniqueness of the individual. It fails to appreciate the fundamental rights and values of individuality.[32]

Although he fully recognizes the importance and significance of the distributive justice that is advocated by the communists, he maintains that the instruments and methods that it proposes to use for achieving social and economic democracy create far more problems than they will hope to solve.[33]

Communism condemns religions. Communism as a dialectical materialism is suspicious of anything that appears as a transcendental idealism. For its heaven is outside of the historical process. The communist ideals are this-worldly. The rewards that it loftily promises are to be enjoyed here on earth. Yet in the eyes of Radhakrishnan, communism, in spite of its absolute repudiation of religion, is essentially religious in spirit.

> With a tremendous effort of religious imagination, Marx sees and feels that human society is a single, organic whole, and strives to oppose the supernatural, other-worldly religions.[34]

The great moral force that exists in the background of communism is seen by Radhakrishnan. He recognizes that its

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[32]Address to UNESCO, 24 May, 1950.

[33]RF, pp. 58-59.

[34]R&S, p. 69.

plea for social justice and racial equality must appeal to all peoples, groups, and individuals that suffer from any and all physical and spiritual disabilities.

> Communism is the most powerful of these ways to escape. Young men and women are rediscovering that there is a joy, an exhilaration in devotion to a cause beside which a life of ease, pleasure and self-indulgence looks stale and tawdry. By joining a group and marching in step to the singing of tunes, we escape from the torments of self and are relieved of personal responsibilities.[35]

But for all of his sympathy for the social and economic program of communism, he could not possibly accept it as a way of life for himself or his people of India. "Marx offers no proof for his metaphysical materialism."[36] Marx's belief in the inevitability of progress is equally uncritical for "history is full of examples of decay and retrogression and cannot be regarded as a continuous development through conflict."[37]

The view of the individual that is adopted by communism reduces him to a slave or automaton. Marx maintains that it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence. Man has no power to direct or control the events of his life or the life of anyone else. Rather the social existence of men is determinative of their

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[35] RF, p. 53.

[36] R&S, p. 26.

[37] Ibid., p. 33.

consciousness. In view of the strong environmentalist belief in communism, it runs diametrically opposite the view of man according to Professor Radhakrishnan.[38] For Communism encourages and teaches not love, but hatred of enemies, even the most ruthless and bloody action against them. For everything and everyone is an enemy that does not agree with the state. Radhakrishnan pertinently asks, "How can we ask the individual to behave as a revolutionary if he has no reality (as an individual) at all?"[39] The individual loses his individuality and becomes a mere moment in a universal historical process. Radhakrishnan feels that this is communism's basic tragedy and its inevitable doom.

The communist view of history is fundamental to understanding how communism has attempted to wipe out any trace of consciousness and individuality. Marx interprets history as a movement that progresses through a series of contradictions. Nevertheless, this is an over-simplification; for the evidences of history are that "developments proceed at varying degrees and in varying fashions, now in transition from one state to its opposite, now in an unbroken line."[40]

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[38] RF, p. 61.

[39] R&S, p. 65.

[40] Ibid., p. 32.

A collectivist society, such as communism is, becomes tyrannical and spells great dangers to human life and freedom. It is to be repudiated by every man conscious of his love for freedom and his own sense of his destiny.

Internationalism

Socially, religiously, and politically, Radhakrishnan is an internationalist. His internationalism stems from his personal insistence upon democracy as the politic for all men. Democracy is the compound of individuality and internationalism is the compound of democracy. As the individuality compound of democracy would be nationalism, so also would the collective compound of individuality be internationalism. Democracy demands not only a tolerance and good-will among all members of a community, but also among all members of all communities of all the world. Yet to him, modern civilizations exhibit all the features that are strangely familiar to the symptoms which accompany the fall of civilizations; the disappearance of tolerance and justice; the insensibility to suffering; the love of ease and comfort; selfishness of individuals and groups; the rise of the strange cults which exploit not so much the stupidity of man as his unwillingness to use his intellectual powers; the wanton segregation of men into groups based on blood and soil.

> A world bristling with armaments and gigantic intolerances, where men and women are so obsessed with the imminence of catastrophe that streets are provided with underground refuges, that private citizens are equipped with gas proof rooms . . . is conclusive evidence of the general degradation.[41]

No civilization, however brilliant and advanced it may be, can stand long against withering social resentments and class conflicts which seem to accompany a maladjustment of wealth, labor, and leisure.[42]

He feels that the malady of our international problem and disease is due to an interdependent world worked on a particular basis. Such a conception as a world order demands the subordination of national interests to the common good of the whole world. Nations must refine the spirit of patriotism to make it a pathway from man to mankind.[43]

Nationalism had its place in a world with physical barriers. And even now a national consciousness is essential.[44] Yet nationalism must be a step toward internationalism. It can never end as self-sufficient and complacent. At the same time it dare not slip and re-enter as national animosity. If a greedy individual is a nuisance,

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[41] ER&WT, p. 256.

[42] Ibid., p. 384.

[43] EPW, p. 36.

[44] R&S, p. 81.

a greedy nationalist state is a catastrophe. Nationalism coupled with capitalism and militarism seek and destroy the spirit of men and nations. It is impossible for all the nations of the world who are nationalist as well as those who are experiencing the pangs of nationalism's strong pull to sit on its own powder keg and smoke its illusory peace pipe.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Sri Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a unique representative of a large company of reformers and religious leaders, has rightly received the adulations of the world as one of the world's great men of the first half of the twentieth century. He has been active and gained renown in every field of endeavor which he has entered. In a little more than thirty years of work, Radhakrishnan has achieved a stature, and accomplished in many fields, that which few other men have hoped to achieve in a lifetime.

As a youth, he was trained in Christian schools in India. In due course he was confronted by the conflicting demands of the two ideologies of the two religions, Hinduism and Christianity. Two factors which appeared as the two important problems with which he was to devote his life-time to answering were that on the one hand Hinduism was intellectually incoherent, and of even greater importance on the other was that Hinduism lacked any sound basis for an ethic, which India demanded and which any society would demand. Was the decadent, disintegrated status of Indian culture due to a deficient and inadequate Hindu religion? Does the deficiency work itself out in the social order? Is there a relationship in the social order, so intimately

fabricated with Hinduism and with the stagnation of the land and its people?

To these questions did Radhakrishnan address himself. It was fundamentally necessary for him to spend his life in the quest of finding a solution to the conflict, as well as accomplishing an even greater task, that is, of formulating a metaphysical or religious base for a vibrant social ethic for India. Feeling that the world is seeing a new humanism on the horizon, Radhakrishnan sees his task as being one that develops a world religion that arises out of the historical depths of Hinduism. His aim is the achievement of a world religion for a world community of world citizens. Nevertheless, in order to achieve this third end, he must achieve the first two, namely, developing a metaphysics for an ethic, and then the ethic itself.

Operating from the premise that there can be no philosophy of life without the datum of the religious experience, Radhakrishnan seeks to initiate his task.

"If the philosophy of life is centered about the religious experience, what is it that is experienced?" By asking this question, Radhakrishnan is dealing with the problems of life and of man. Is the universe meaningful or meaningless? Is the universe God, or is it chance? What is man's goal? What is his present purpose? What is the relationship between man and the Absolute or God?

God and the Absolute

In constructing a vew of the Absolute, Radhakrishnan is within the stream of orthodox Hindu thinking as he seeks to posit the Absolute as it is experienced by man, and the Absolute as it really is. For Radhakrishnan, the Absolute is that which is beyond the realm of description, that which can be described only negatively at best. Yet at the same time, the Absolute as it is made finite from man's view and experience, can be called God, which is a symbol for that which is beyond all else and comprises all else in itself. The Absolute is that which logically satisfies the philosopher. God is that which satisfies religion. The Absolute is impersonal, without attributes, the all-encompassing It. God is personal, with attributes, the all-encompassing He. The Absolute cannot be worshiped for it is beyond man's experience. God can be worshiped for He is within man's experience. Yet God and the Absolute are ultimately the same. Unfortunately, as Radhakrishnan has structured his view, God is ultimately sublated to the Absolute. Religion is sublated to philosophy. Radhakrishnan is unable to solve this contradiction. Yet he also feels that Hinduism, while needing the emphasis of the personal aspect of the divine, has, by its doctrine of the Absolute maintained the suprapersonal nature of Reality.

The question which will lead into the four areas of interpretation which Radhakrishnan has posited as the Hindu metaphysics for an ethic, is "What prevents man from living in harmony with the Absolute, and with other men?"

The Doctrine of Illusion

The doctrine of illusion is fundamental to Hinduism. All the world is illusory and without reality of any kind. Man is unreal, though possessing the Real. Flesh, food, material desires and dreams are all illusory, for they possess no Reality. Illusion is the projective power that pervades the whole universe. Illusion causes man to see reality where there is none. The world of time and space, the world of history, is the world of plurality. That it is illusion is characterized by its change and decay. Reality has no form. It knows no change or decay. It is beyond all categories of time and space. Illusion reveals its power in man's life in a number of ways. First, the mere fact that the world is not self-explanatory shows its phenomenal, and thus illusory, character. Secondly, the fact that the Absolute is One cannot be related to a world made up of plurality reveals the illusory character of the universe. Thirdly, since no causal relationship can be formulated between that which is Ultimate and that which is transient signifies that the universe is illusory. Fourthly, the principle that the Absolute appears as God

is to be attributed to illusion.

Why should an ethical concern exist if there is no reality to the world or to man? The logical answer is that there is none.

Radhakrishnan's View of Illusion

It is against this problem of Illusion that presents itself in orthodox Hinduism that Radhakrishnan retaliates with a new interpretation. Pointing to the great eighth century Vedantist philosopher, Sankara, Radhakrishnan presents his three views of reality. The first is sensory, the second empirical, and the third is the transcendental. It is upon the second that Radhakrishnan seeks to begin his structure of a metaphysical basis for an ethical concern in Hinduism. The world is phenomenal, dependent, and has no reality in or of itself. Yet, empirically, it is here and it does have reality, for its reality consists in that which is Ultimate Reality, the Absolute.

This is the first major Hindu concept which Radhakrishnan re-interprets to structure an ethical concern for Hinduism. Since man is one possessing an empirical reality, it is intellectually and physically more compatible to his religious life to be concerned about that which also possesses a measure of reality, though it is not ultimately real. In addition it alleviates one step of the problem of the relationship between man and the Absolute.

The Doctrine of Karma

Generally, the teaching of the doctrine of karma is portrayed as a moral law, or the moral law, which pervades the universe, and as such, is the most universal of all laws. In orthodox Hinduism, it is one of the most common beliefs. No matter how radically the numerous sects may differ, nearly all of them accept this doctrine as a basic and important influence in their view of man and society. The law of karma is an extension beyond this present life of that which we see and sense as the invariable sequences of cause and effect. As a consequence, karma teaches that we bear the burdens of the past and the hopes of our futures in the present. We are now as a result of our past. We shall be as a result of our present actions.

It must be remembered that karma, when fitted into the philosophic construct of realization of oneness with the Absolute, has little to do with determining man's end. It is illusion which separates man from this realization. As such, karma is not considered as something either good or bad by the Hindu. It is that which must be recognized as a part of illusion.

Within the realm of the illusive creation, it is the determining factor in the individual's cycle of re-incarnation. Karma determines progress or regress toward spiritual salvation or another cycle of rebirth. Though karma

is of no help in attaining liberation, it does hold out the hope that even within its limits of illusive creation, man may improve, until after many rebirths, he may eventually arrive at a state of self-realization and thus attain salvation.

Karma is a doctrine developed by man. It is the result of his attempts to find the truth of the spiritual universe by looking at himself and the universe, without considering or accepting revelation. An acceptance of karma, however, in addition to prompting a trust by man in himself, may also lead to despair and fatalism. The mere fact that a man will believe that he is what he is as the result of a previous rebirth, of which he has no consciousness, would lead him to accept fatalistically the present conditions of himself, if only that he would feel as though he deserved them from past actions. As a consequence, the despair and complacency of Hinduism toward a social progression has been attributed to the teaching of karma. For it would appear as though belief in karma has brought a lack of concern for the welfare of fellow-men. Since karma is inexorable and is always considered to be just, the conditions of the individual, no matter how miserable the conditions may be, must be accepted as the individual's just retribution for evil that was enacted in the past. To attempt to change his present condition in any way or to interfere with the operation of karma in his life is unthinkable. It is impossible to the devout Hindu. With

this in mind, it is not difficult to ascertain that the lack of working toward a cessation of future rebirths appears to be burdened with the weight of present despair and fatalism. Even more does it produce the awkward situation of a land that feels no obligation toward the welfare of the land or other individuals.

Radhakrishnan and Karma

Without the inspiration and motivation that is needed for a renewal of life and a reconstructed concern for a social ethic, no social ethic can be administered as a teaching.

In order to rid the Hindu mind of the utter despair of escaping the consequences of karma, Radhakrishnan emphasizes the individual's ability to transcend karma. The important matter is Radhakrishnan's emphasis, not his teaching. Man is able to transcend the law of retribution. Man is capable of building a life now that escapes the penalty of another rebirth. Man, if he is true to his spiritual concern, and if he dwells not so much on his station and condition as on his duty and goal in that station and condition, shall be possessed with the innate abilities to overcome karma.

Hinduism has developed a personal and social immaturity by accepting the idea that the individual is the victim of karma. To this point, Radhakrishnan is adamant

in pointing out that karma is not inconsistent with freedom. It is a condition and not destiny. Karma is not ultimate or absolute. Contrary to most Hindu thinkers, Radhakrishnan states that karma is the expression of the purpose and will of God. God is not fate, nor impersonal, not an abstract determining power. Karma belongs to the created order. As such it has an important and indispensable function to achieve in the order of God's economy. Man possesses the free, creative power of the present time to recreate, renew, and revitalize himself and the world in which he lives. Man must exercise his freedom, must employ his every gift of knowledge, must exert every fiber of his being in order to relate to himself, to men, and finally to the world that man is ultimately a reality only in relation to the Absolute. Radhakrishnan, by thus interpreting man under karma, re-enforces his plea for an ethical concern among his people.

Ethical Teaching in Hinduism

The essence of morality is essentially a combination of ethics and morality. The goal is the double object of happiness on earth and ultimate liberation. Needless to say that happiness on earth is dependent upon liberation or salvation. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the dependence became so strong in thought and practice that ethical concern revealed between Hindus was nearly

obliterated. Since the ultimate concern of the Hindu is release from the bondage of illusion and its relative, karma, the Hindu was forced to see that even this transcended any ethical concern. To attain identity with the Absolute was the ultimate goal of every Hindu. The teaching of illusion, the fate of karmic law, the problem of ultimate identity with the Absolute since the Absolute is all, afforded the Hindu good cause to be less than slightly concerned about the world in which he lived.

The Significance of Radhakrishnan's View of Ethics

Again it must be remembered that Radhakrishnan's view of ethics does not disagree with the Hindu view of ethics. The only difference lies in his change of some of the details. Radhakrishnan views ethical concern, with Hinduism, as the principle of the whole man in relation to the fourfold purposes of life, by members of the four groups of society, in the four stages of life.

Radhakrishnan emphasized two changes in the ethical structure of Hinduism. The first is that of moral obligation. Moral obligation is to mean that man aspires to divinity and also conforms to the discipline of society. The principles of ethical concern in Hinduism are eternal and they are absolute. Though admitting that ethical concerns are transcended, Radhakrishnan maintains that in

order to transcend ethical concern, man must be ethically concerned. The ethical life is the indispensable condition or the essential pre-requisite for the attainment of identity with the Absolute.

The second aspect that Radhakrishnan emphasizes is the personal aspect of the ethical concern. Though admittedly the social aspect is universal, eternal, and absolute; the personal aspect must be carried out in order to attain the perfection of the social or absolute ethical concern. Hinduism has caused man to identify himself with the separate ego, and thus thrust man into the quandary of spiritual blindness with the karmic results. In order to overcome his spiritual blindness, man must see his relationship as one personality with other personalities. It is important to remember at this point that Radhakrishnan's argument and appeal is based upon his teaching of empirical reality. It is man's encounter with other men, in the action and reaction with other men, that man can begin to see the awesome aspect of his own personality in all of its power and freedom. Only when man practices his personal ethical concern shall he be able to practice the social concern. It is only upon man's transcending of his own separate ego that he shall be able to realize himself as identical with the Absolute, and this can occur only when he practices personal ethical concern.

Finally, Radhakrishnan views the man who has carried out his personal ethical concern with himself among men as the man who is capable of achieving salvation.

Radhakrishnan's View of Man

Man is organic to nature, is the highest product of nature, and is identifiable with the Absolute. Man is nature and yet transcends nature. He is possessor of the real and the illusory. He is subject to illusion and karma and yet transcends illusion and karma. He is a self-conscious being and is thus free. His end goal in life is to be one with the Absolute. Nevertheless, he must pass through definite stages of life in order to attain it. Karma seems to place man in the awkward situation of subjection to an endless cycle of rebirths due to its inherent, unbreakable principle of causal action, retribution and determinism. In spite of this, man is able to exercise his creative power of freedom and transcend karma. Man's present is the shaping tool of his future and the future of the world about him. Man possesses the abilities to mold and recreate his future on the basis of present action. Karma is his condition, but salvation is his destiny. Man has a definitive ethical concern, which is personal and which must be carried out. He has his own particular ethic and yet is ultimately governed by a transcendent and absolute social ethic that is achieved by his achievement of

his personal ethic. By this accomplishment, man is led to have a concern for all of society.

Radhakrishnan's man is a man who is violently seeking to be released from the principles that have subjected him to endless cycles of rebirth, endless lives, and endless suffering. He is a man who seeks the good and hopes with a great longing to achieve a salvation from the misery and pain that he knows so well. He is human and divine, real and unreal, a man who is capable of achieving great changes and effects in the present state of Indian society. Radhakrishnan's man is a contradictory man, a man of paradox, a man who is and is not. He is the paradox of life, who knows that life is real only as he is in identity with the Absolute.

Religion, Man, and Politics

As religion is not a mental abstract, but is to be lived and practiced, as man is not an automaton, but is that being who lives and practices religion, so the political realm offers the greatest individual opportunity for man to carry out his religious concerns in an ethical way.

As to the center of Radhakrishnan's political views, it rests upon his passionate insistence upon the personality and uniqueness of the individual. It is for this reason that Radhakrishnan speaks of the highest religion as democracy.

Democracy offers the individual the opportunity to work out his salvation. Democracy is the highest form of religion for it offers man such possibilities. It defends the dignity of man, develops his consciousness of social concerns, advocates that man is precious and not common, stimulates moral courage and imaginative vision for social revolutions without violence or bloodshed. Democracy possesses the universal values that are so necessary to humanity and civilization.

Arising from his concern for social concern and social ethics, Radhakrishnan appears as a social democrat. State-owned public utilities, social ownership of large resources are more helpful for social fellowship than they are dangerous to the development of the individual and personal ethical concern.

Communism and Capitalism

In spite of his sympathy toward communism's social and economic program, it is thoroughly unacceptable as a way of life for himself or for his country. All of his criticism is directed towards communism's view of man. Man is reduced to the automaton. He is a slave to the state, a product of the state and of environment. Man loses his individuality, his importance, and significance in the communist ideal of the state.

Capitalism is viewed as the height of economic inequality and an incompatible component of the democratic way of life. Capitalism is morally dangerous. It permits great disparities between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Any society that lends itself to inequalities of wealth must promote inequality in social status and political power. As long as the wealth is concentrated in a few hands, a sense of security cannot exist among the large mass of the people. It is the non-capitalist society which takes the political power away from the prosperous and vests it in the individual where it belongs. There should be a prosperity of properly distributed wealth, not a condition of equally distributed wealth.

The Internationalist

Radhakrishnan is an internationalist at heart. As his concern for the personal ethical concern is applied to politics, it is evident why this should be so. The personal ethical concern of a nation can never be practiced unless among the nations of the world. As the compound of personal ethics is social ethics, so the compound of democracy as the highest form of the personal ethic is to be found as political internationalism. It is only as nations apply a highly sensitive religious politic to their relationships with other nations that a salvation for the nations of the world can occur. Nations must attempt to

experiment in the art of life. From it shall arise a new humanity, a universal humanity, a unified world, a new civilization. Within it the nations of the world shall live as fellow-members of the human race, not as hostile, self-conscious communities.

Further Considerations

There are three areas of research which would be of value to the student of Hindu philosophy. The first is the impact of Western philosophy upon the philosophic structure of Hinduism; the second is the infiltration of Buddhism, with its well-known ethical concerns, upon the religious life of the Hindu, and the third is the influence of Christianity upon Hinduism. Of the three areas for further consideration, the latter two would be most fruitful. For the purposes of Christian missions and studies in the history of religions, it would be of great interest and import to delineate the cultural inter-play of the three religious philosophies upon one another. As a philosopher, Radhakrishnan has been concerned in refuting the philosophies being offered by the West. His main criticisms are that Western philosophy lacks the completeness that is required for a world philosophy as well as being deficient as philosophies that deal with man and his life in religious terms. Radhakrishnan is apt and quite able to quote verbatim from the resources and rich treasures that have been

gathered of Buddhist and Christian views of man and life; however, he employs them with considerable random in order to elucidate and give new meaning to old ideas and doctrines in Hinduism.

This is important to the mission of the Church. No longer can the church revel in differences. The problem has become much more difficult than an apologetic against an opposite way of life. Christianity must recognize that she has influenced the world greatly. She has effected great changes in societal structures and in the religious thinking of the peoples of the world. It is necessary that she realize that more often than not, she is speaking to a "Christianized Hinduism" or a"Christianized Buddhism" in many of their outward forms. When another religion begins to adopt the social measures that once were peculiar to the march of Christianity across the world, she must realize that other measures must take shape and form in her total proclamation. She must realize that she is looking into a distorted mirror of herself as she looks at the religions of the world in operation. When another religion is flexible enough to adopt the doctrinal language and doctrinal forms of Christianity, she must be alert to the inherent dangers of syncretism. Christianity must realize her new frontiers in the proclamation of the Gospel. Her life and her language must exemplify to the world that there is an open discrepancy between the genuine article

and the simulated product. She must be as the razor's edge more than ever before in her proclamation. She must maintain the uniqueness of her message to a non-Christian world by the uniqueness of her men who live the unique life of Jesus Christ. Finally, as members of the Lutheran branch of the Church of Christ, we must guard against the over-simplifications of a distinct Barthian approach to the religions of the world. As much as his thesis, "Religion is unbelief" may possess a great deal of truth, Lutheranism dare never fall into another pitfall of curtailing the activity of God by merely sweeping the non-Christians of the world into a "theological dung heap." On the other hand, as sensitive and alert as Christianity must be to the syncretistic activity of the non-Christian religions, she must be as alert to the syncretism exemplified by such men as Hocking and Toynbee. To take the summum bonum from all of the religions, or to alert the non-Christian religions that they should take the very best from their religion, and then form an unholy alliance with Christianity is as dangerous to the Church as her own complacency about such problems. Lutheranism is not Barthian nor is it to be molded in the hands of religious syncretists. Lutheranism does not confine the activity of God to a spheroid.

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