UNIT 3  AUROBINDO AND S. RADHAKRISHNAN

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3.0  OBJECTIVES

One of the important aims of this unit is to introduce some of the prominent philosophical thoughts of two prominent Indian philosophers, namely, Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan to the students. It will provide a general picture of their understanding on the Absolute or God, nature, human being etc. It also helps students have a glance at certain concepts which are peculiar and unique to each philosopher.

3.1  INTRODUCTION

Aurobindo is considered as the greatest mystic of the modern age. The robust intellectualism, the powerful expression of philosophical thoughts, and the mystic vision are uniquely blended in his writings. Radhakrishnan’s salient features comprise universal outlook, synthesis of the East and the West in religion and philosophy, the spiritualism and humanism, and openness to the
influences of science, art and values. The values, culture, tradition, religions and philosophies of different countries are in synthesis in Radhakrishnan’s philosophy. His philosophy does not aim at merely a constructive synthesis, but at a creative assimilation of mystic perception and experience.

3.2 LIFE AND THE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO

Aurobindo (ArvindGhose) (1872-1950), yogi, nationalist, poet, critic, thinker, spiritual leader of India, was born at Konanagar, West Bengal on the fifteenth of August 1872 as the third son of Krishna Dhan Ghose and Swaranalata Devi. Aurobindo Ghose was educated in England from the age of seven to the age of twenty-one. In 1906 Aurobindo joined the political movement of Indian resistance to British colonial rule and became a prominent voice of the nationalist party. In 1908 he was arrested. In 1910, Aurobindo shifted to French India (Pondicherry) where he developed his great religious and philosophical vision of reality. He spent the next forty years of his life in Pondicherry formulating his vision of spiritual evolution and integral yoga, and refusing to pursue direct involvement in political events. He died in Pondicherry in 1950. Some of his main works include; The Future Evolution of Man, The Hour of God, The Life Divine, The Lights on Yoga, Savitri, a Legend and a Symbol, Foundation of Indian Culture, More Lights on Yoga, The Riddle of the World. The ideal of Human Unity, Bases of yoga, The Supernatural Manifestation on Earth etc.

At an early age of his life itself he was exposed to the world of western philosophy. He was also well-acquainted with great philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. His study of ancient Indian philosophy, especially, the Advaita Vedanta and yoga, made a great impact on him. However, it is right to say that he relied mainly upon his own vision, contemplation and reason. He believed that religion is a Sanatana Dharma, eternal and universal. It cannot be confined to one religious tradition or one set of texts. Its only infallible scripture is to be found in the heart of man/woman. However, this eternal religion is remarkably well expressed in the spiritual tradition of India and so India has a God-given mission to be the guardian, exemplar and missionary of this religion. Aurobindo goes back to early Vedas and discovers there, expressed in symbolic ways, the basic spiritual teachings of Sanatana dharma. While surface level meaning speaks of myths and rituals, the symbolical way of understanding the spiritual experience reaches the deeper secret meaning. The purpose of Aurobindo’s philosophy was to bring out this meaning.

3.3 THE TRANSCENDENT REALITY IN AUROBINDO’S THOUGHT

Aurobindo conceives reality as supremely spiritual. The ultimate reality for Sri Aurobindo is the triune principle of Sacidananda. The ultimate Reality is Transcendent. This Transcendent Reality expresses itself in the cosmos. The ultimate Reality is linked up with the cosmos by the triple formula of Supermind that “Brahman is in all things; all things are in Brahman; and all things are Brahman”.
In the thoughts of Sri Aurobindo, the supreme reality is eternal, absolute and infinite. Since it is absolute and infinite, it is in its essence indeterminable. The pure Absolute is indefinable, infinite, timeless, and spaceless. It cannot be summed up in any quantity or quantities; it cannot be composed of any quality or combination of qualities. The Absolute is beyond stability and movement as it is beyond unity and multiplicity. The Absolute is independent of all relatives, but it is also the basis of all relatives. It governs, pervades, and constitutes all relatives. Though it is indescribable and unknowable, it is self-evident to itself.

_Sacidananda_

The highest positive expression of the Reality to our consciousness is _Sacidananda_. _Sacidananda_ is the one with a triple aspect. For us, the highest positive expression of Brahman is the _Sacidananda_ or Existence - consciousness - bliss, all in all. In other words, in the Supreme the three are not three but one; existence is consciousness, consciousness is bliss and they are not distinct at all. It manifests itself as indeterminate as well as determinate, as _nirguna_ as well as _saguna_, as one as well as many, as being as well as becoming and yet it transcends them all. The existence (_sat_) of Brahman is that which appears to us as _Atman_, _Ishwara_ and _Purusha_. The consciousness (_chit_) of Brahman which is always a force (_shakti_) manifests itself as _maya_, _shakti_ and _prakriti_. The Bliss (_anand_) of Brahman underlies all these manifestations and it is out of sheer bliss that Divine manifests himself as this world. These three aspects and these powers embrace all reality and when taken as a whole, reconcile all apparent contradictions.

_Supermind Principle_

In the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, the ultimate Reality becomes the world by the principle of Supermind. It is present there in everything of the world as consciousness and controller. Supermind is creative principal. It has been variously described by him. It is Real idea, it is truth consciousness, the seer will, the Creative Idea, the Creator, the God and so on. The mind is divided into three parts – Thinking mind, dynamic mind, externalizing mind, - the former is concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own ways, the second with putting out of mental forces for realization of the idea, and the third with the expression of there. For Aurobindo, the overmind is a link between the higher and lower Hemispheres. The overmind is a sort of delegation from the Supermind, which supports the present evolutionary universe in which we live here in matter.

By the Supermind what we mean is the full Truth - consciousness of the Divine Nature in which there can be no place for the principle of division and ignorance; it is always a full light and knowledge superior to all mental substance or mental movements. We call it the Supermind or the truth – consciousness, because it is a principle superior to mentality and exists, acts and proceeds in the fundamental truth and unity of things and not like the mind in their appearances and phenomenal divisions.

**Check Your Progress I**

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answer
1) How does Aurobindo explain the Absolute reality as Sachidananda?

2) Explain the Supermind Principle of Aurobindo?

3.4 NATURE OF CREATION: THE WORLD-PROCESS

Sri Aurobindo conceives creation as a double-process. It is a process of descent and ascent or involution and evolution. First of all, it is a descent of the spirit into the worldly forms and then it also implies an ascent of the worldly forms to its original higher status. Aurobindo describes creation as the plunge of the spirit into ignorance. Ignorance, according to Aurobindo, is not a separate power, but it is a part and parcel of Divine consciousness itself. In involution the spirit is descended into the matter.

The movement of ascent, that is evolution, follows the same pattern as the process of descent but in a reversed order, starting from matter and reaching the Supermind and thereby sharing in the life of the absolute. Evolution presupposes involution. In other words, evolution is possible only because involution has already taken place. Matter can evolve into life only because life itself has involved into it. The lower cannot evolve into the higher unless the higher is already in it. So therefore, he conceives evolution as a reverse process of involution. This process of ascent has a triple character: (Widening: simple forms of matter take an increasingly complex character so as to admit the concentration of a complex and subtle form of consciousness. (b) Ascent: from lower to higher grade of being. (c) Integration: as soon as the evolution reaches a higher grade, it takes up all the lower grades and transforms them according to its own principles and laws. It can be expressed in the following manner.

Absolute being Sat-Cit-Anand: to Supermind

INVOLUTION: Overmind ...Intuition...Illumined mind... Higher mind...mind... Life... Matter.

EVOLUTION: Matter...Life...Mind...Higher mind...Illumined mind...Intuition... Overmind.

3.5 MAN IN TERMS OF EVOLUTION

According to Aurobindo, so far evolution has passed from the state of complete inconscience to the grade of mental which is well represented in man/woman. So in man/woman lies the possibility of the next step of evolution- the transition to the supra-mental level. Aurobindo believes that the man/woman who is evident to our senses is not the real man/woman- at least he/she is not the complete man/woman. In the process of evolution the appearances of
man\woman does not correspond with the appearance of mind. With the animals the mind has already appeared. But with the coming of human intellect we have new dimension of the mind. Now, apart from the knowledge of appearance we have self-consciousness too. Following the general principle of evolution man\woman takes with him\her the inferior levels of matter and life to a higher level. There is no opposition between matter, life and mind but an integration of the three in a higher synthesis. Man\woman and all the lower levels of reality reach the divine manhood or ‘super manhood.’ This can be realized only through a long process of evolution. This process cannot be limited to one life span. This evolution is fully possible only if we accept the general principle of rebirth.

3.6 REALITY AND ITS ASPECTS

The soul is a spark of the Divine. It is the representative of the central being. It supports all individual existence in nature. The Psychic being is a conscious form of that soul growing in the evolution, in the persistent process that develops first life in matter, mind in life, until finally mind can develop into overmind and overmind into the supramental Truth. The soul supports the nature in its evolution through these grades, but is itself not any of these things. The psychic being is, according to Aurobindo, the original conscience of man\woman. It is the concealed witness, hidden guide, inner light, and inner voice of the mystic. Sri Aurobindo uses the word consciousness in the following senses: Conscious Being or spirit; Purusha or Chaitanya, Awareness of knowledge; Chit, Chetana or Jnana, Consciousness force or conscious energy; Chit- Shakti, Power of awareness of self and things; Chetana, The faculty of becoming aware of anything; Chitta, Manas Chetana. Consciousness is a fundamental thing, the fundamental thing is existence. Not only the microcosm but also the macrocosm is nothing but consciousness arranging itself.

Being and Becoming as Real

Sri Aurobindo definitely tries to solve the problem of Being and Becoming in the most original manner. He tells that both Being and Becoming are real. He takes both the facts of Being and Becoming with equal importance. The word ‘Being’ is not used by Sri Aurobindo always strictly in the sense of Atman or the original and fundamental reality except in a few places like the Divine Being, the Supreme Being etc. In other places he has used it in the sense of existence or that which exists or is conceived of existing, life, etc… as the word is generally used in the English language. The Absolute manifests itself in two terms, Being and Becoming. The Being is the fundamental reality; it is a dynamic power and result, an effectual reality, a creative energy and working out of the Being, a constantly persistent yet mutable form, process, and outcome of its immutable formless essence. What is original and eternal for ever in the Divine is the being; what is developed in consciousness, conditions, forces, forms etc… by the Divine power is Becoming. The eternal Divine is the Being; the universe in time and all that is apparent in it is Becoming.

3.7 SYNTHESIS OF YOGA
Attainment of supramental status is not the ultimate destiny of human being. The superman also has to work for the transformation of others. So, one has to lead a divine life - a perfected life on earth - a life not of limited consciousness but a life of inner completeness and perfection of being. Aurobindo believes that this divine life can be realized with the help of yoga. Describing the nature of yoga, he says, “yoga means union with the divine, a union either transcendental or cosmic or individual or as in our yoga, all three together.” Yoga helps all the aspects of evolution: widening, heightening and integration and therefore it is integral. The triple yoga of knowledge, devotion, and action leads to the transformation of man’s/woman’s mind, emotion and will. Aurobindo classified the various yoga according to the way they have inserted themselves in human life. Here we have a more complete list of yoga: ( at the lower level we have the ‘Hata yoga’, which is concerned with the bodily transformation. (b) A little higher we have ‘Raja yoga’ which is concerned with the transformation of the mental level. (c) Finally, we have the yoga of triple transformation with its three branches of jnana, bhakti and karma, which lead finally to the yoga of self-perfection.

3.8 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

We find in his early writings a radical approach to politics. We see that nationalism appears as a sort of religion for him in the early period of his life. According to him the individual is a value that cannot be subordinated to society. The individual has a key role to play since it is through him/her that the supramental is to manifest itself in the world. Although Aurobindo uses organic analogies to speak of society he always sees that the individual in society is more than a cell in the body. He does not oppose individual and society. Both are manifestation of the divine reality. There is a relationship of reciprocity between these two and both tend towards the same goal.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Aurobindo explain his theory of involution and evolution?

2) Where does Aurobindo situate man in the process of evolution?

3) Explain Aurobindo’s understanding of ‘yoga’.
4) Explain the social and political philosophy of Aurobindo.

3.9 RADHAKRISHNAN'S LIFE AND WORKS

He was born on 5th September, 1888 at Tiruttani, a small village, forty miles northeast of Madras. He was the second child to his parents. From 1900 to 1904, he studied in Voorhees College, Vellore. Later he moved to Madras and studied in Madras Christian College. He rendered his service as a teacher in philosophy in Madras Presidency College and in the University of Mysore. He was Vice President from 1952 to 1962 that is for two consecutive terms. Later he became the President of the Indian Union securing 97.98% vote for the term of five years. His main works include: East And West, Eastern Religion and Western Thought, East and West in Religion, The Reign of Religion In The Contemporaty Philosophy, Religion and Society, The Recovery of Faith, Indian Philosophy, An Idealist View of Life, The Hindu View of Life etc.

Radhakrishnan had deep study of the classical literature. He studied the Indian philosophy in depth, which had influenced him very much. The study of Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Commentaries on Brahman Sutra by Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Nimbaraka, and others, The Dialogue of Buddha and The Buddhist and Jain Scriptures broadened his thought. Western philosophers such as Plato, Pontinus, Kant, Bradley, Bergson and Whitehead also influenced him in his writings. Amongst the contemporary thinkers of India, Gandhi and Tagore were his friends and they had definite influence on him. Radhakrishnan is a mystic philosopher. His religious thought serves as the data to his philosophy. Though he had widely read the ancient, medieval and modern philosophies, still for the real source of his writing he relies on his personal spiritual experiences.

Nature of his philosophy

His basic philosophical position is of a kind of a synthesis of Advaita Vedanta and the philosophy of Absolute Idealism. Like Vedanta he believes that the reality is one, like Absolute Idealism, he shows that everything is a necessary aspect of the One. So, it can broadly be described as a philosophy of monistic idealism. Since Radhakrishnan conceives reality as spiritual, he is an idealist. He realized the need for a re-awakening of the soul and a recovery of the spiritual life. Thus his philosophical thinking seems to be an attempt to illustrate that the ultimate nature of the universe is spiritual. Because of his tremendous emphasis on spirituality, he appears to be a mystic too.
3.10 THE ABSOLUTE OR THE BRAHMAN

Radhakrishnan conceives the nature of the absolute as monistic. In other words, the absolute in itself is essentially one. He has come to realize that the world expresses a unity within its process. This is the reason why he emphasises the monistic character of the absolute. The absolute is conceived by Radhakrishnan as ‘Pure Consciousness’, ‘Pure Freedom’, and Infinite Possibility.’ According to Radhakrishnan, the Absolute has to be spiritual. It is conceived as a free spirit. It is free in such a way that there is nothing to limit it. Its freedom is uninterrupted. The absolute is also infinite. It is self-grounded and is the foundation of everything else. Since it is infinite it is changeless. It is also self-existent and complete-in-itself. It is also eternal in the sense of being timeless. Radhakrishnan calls the Absolute ‘the whole of perfection’. Because of these reasons he asserts that the Absolute is beyond all kinds of expression.

Absolute and God

Radhakrishnan distinguishes between the Absolute and God. He feels that in order to explain the universe it is necessary to think of a principle that would account for the order and purpose of the universe. He also feels that there has to be a principle, a God- a non-temporal and actual being- by which the indeterminateness of creativity can be transmitted into a determinate principle. So it implies that the Divine Intelligence- the creative power- has to be conceived as the intermediary between the Absolute Being and the cosmic process. It is here that the principle of God appears in the philosophy of Radhakrishnan: The supreme has been conceived as revealing itself in two ways; Absolute and Ishwara. God is the Absolute in action; it is God, the creator. The real in relation to itself is the Absolute and the real in relation to the creation is God. He believes that the Absolute is the object of metaphysical aspiration and God is of religious aspiration.

Reconciliation between Sankara and Ramanuja

Radhakrishnan reconciles the views of Sankara and Ramanuja by maintaining that the Brahman of Sankara is Absolute and that of Ramanuja is God. God is a person, but the Absolute is not. God is an object of the intellect, but the Absolute is known through intuition. The Absolute is pre-cosmic God and God is the projected power of the Absolute. Intuition is higher than intellect and it overcomes the dualism of subject and object. Our thought is limited, and when it tries to grasp the Supra rational Absolute, it imposes its own limitations on the former. Thus, God is the Absolute pressed into the moulds of thought, which can’t do away with the distinction between the self and the other; but this distinction is overcome by intuition, which is Supra-rational.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) What is the main philosophical stand point of Radhakrishnan?
2) What are the factors that shaped the philosophy of Radhakrishnan?

3) How does Radhakrishnan make a distinction between the Absolute and God?

3.11 THE NATURE OF THE WORLD AND CREATION

Since he considers God as the creative principle of the world, he presents a spiritualistic account of creation and the world. The universe is conceived as expressing an aspect of the Divine plan. The world is created by God. The world has a beginning and an end. God is not separate from it. God is said to be the past, the present and the future of the world; and yet he is quite different from the world. This distinction is between the creator and the created. Creation is the actualization of one of the inherent possibilities of the Absolute. Radhakrishnan explains that the Spirit enters into the spirit of the non-spirit to realize one of the infinite possibilities that exist potentially in the spirit. He also speaks of the accidental nature of the world where he affirms that the creation is a free act of God. In other words, creation is not a necessary act for the creator. He also says that though the universe is an accident, it is real so far as it is the Absolute’s accident.

3.12 HUMAN BEING AND THE NATURE OF SOUL

In explaining the nature of soul, Radhakrishnan seems to be a realistic. He accepts the ultimate spiritual nature of the soul and at the same time, he asserts the reality and value of the biological life also. He affirms that human being cannot be fully known through the science alone. There is still something in man/woman which is beyond intellect and senses. So, according to Radhakrishnan, there are two aspects of human being. They are known as finite and infinite aspects of man/woman. Radhakrishnan used the word ‘soul’ in a very wider sense; so much as even those bodily activities which have tendency towards self-transcendence are called as soul-activities. Human being, unlike other beings, has a peculiar ability to reflect and to plan. He/she can go beyond himself/herself. Radhakrishnan calls it as ‘self-transcendence.’ For him it is one of the important aspects of the soul. Radhakrishnan defines the finite aspects of man/woman as those aspects that are determined by the empirical or environmental conditions. He calls this aspect of man/woman differently- ‘the empirical man’, ‘the physical man’, ‘the natural man’, ‘the bodily man’ etc. He also speaks of the infinite nature of human being. Beyond his/her external conditioning, there lies a capacity of self-transcendence. It is different and higher than the empirical. Radhakrishnan calls it as ‘the spirit’ in man/woman. In other words, the infinite aspect of man/woman consists in his/her spirituality.
Karma

Everything in the universe is an effect of its past and is the cause of its future changes at the same time. It embodies the energy of the past as well as causes changes in the future. Karma is not so much a principle of reward and punishment but as one of continuity. Karma has two aspects, retrospective and prospective, continuity with the past as well as creative freedom of the self. The karmas bind us with the past by giving structure to our self and thereby determining it to that extent, yet man\woman is free in his\her actions and acquires fresh potencies. Radhakrishnan says that we are both determined and free. Our actions are determined by our past Karmas. In whatever we do we are determined by the character of our self. The dynamic organisation of the tendencies of self is evidently a matter of our past karmas. But still we are free in our actions and have wide scope for fresh activity. Radhakrishnan removes the prevailing misconceptions by asserting that the theory of Karma is not one based on reward and punishment and it is also wrong to think that moral and virtuous Karmas lead to success and evil to failure.

Freedom and Self Determination

Free will is action done by self-determination. When an individual performs an action of his\her own choice, the act done is a self-determined one. Radhakrishnan here explains the meaning of the word self–determination. A self is an organised whole, it represents a form of relatedness. Self-determination means action done by the whole of the self’s nature. Only that action is free or self-determined in which “the individual employs his\her whole nature, searches the different possibilities and selects one which commends itself to his\her whole self.”

Human Being as Relatively Free

There is no complete freedom in human being’s action; it is only God who is absolutely free. When the self becomes co-extensive with one’s whole being only then the self becomes absolutely free. Human being is only relatively free; it is a matter only of degrees. When an action is done by the whole self, we are most free. But our actions are least free when done by sheer habit or convention.

A human action is motivated with some ends or purposes. All his\her activities are regulated towards some purposes, and, therefore, our actions are determined by some external goals or ends in view. But our actions are also governed by our past. If men\women were free from their past deeds, there remains no moral responsibility on them. Therefore, no action is absolutely free either in the human or in the external world. There is the continuity of the past in the present and the present conditions the future.

Radhakrishnan is against the view of pre-destination, in which God is the sovereign who works without law or principle. For him life is a gracious gift of God, who expresses his sovereignty through law. He says, “Such a view of divine sovereignty is unethical. God’s love is manifested in and through law.”

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Radhakrishnan look at the concept of nature?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
2) What is the approach of Radhakrishnan to human person?

Importance of Rebirth
Dr. Radhakrishnan speaks of rebirth in a concrete sense. According to him rebirths are essential for the realisation of the distant goal – salvation. It cannot be realised in a single life. As the span of life is short and realisation of union with God is a far-off goal, pursuit in the series of rebirths is essential. Radhakrishnan conceives that rebirths are essential for the realisation of the different possibilities existing in us.

Salvation
Radhakrishnan believes in the simultaneous salvation of all and not individual salvation. As God is the creator of the world, so long as the world lasts, God must continue as God without becoming one with Absolute. But the individual (jīv who is a creature of God must remain with God till the latter enters the Absolute. The world cannot disappear if there is a single soul without salvation. So individual salvation can only be incomplete salvation.

The self is the most integrated and highest product. The more a human being pursues his/her ideals, the more integrated and organised he/she becomes. The highest degree of unity in an individual self is attained when life is identified with one supreme purpose. The supreme purpose of human being is to become God. The cosmos is working towards that end; it is rushing for the union with God. It is by meditation and ethical life that an individual breaks off his/her narrow individualism and unites with the spiritual universalism. When all selves obtain communion and oneness with God, when all become prophets and seers, the world realises its destiny. The final salvation of an individual is dependent on the cosmic salvation. At the ultimate end all the selves unite with the Absolute. There is achieved then the freedom from rebirth, cessation of worldly existence and eternal oneness with Saccidananda. The final salvation is attained when the selves lose their individuality and get united with the all-pervading Absolute. The selves merge in the Brahman and they lose their identity, existence, name and form.

3.13 HIS RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

Man/woman looks for meaning and direction in life. Reason alone cannot give meaning to him/her. Man/woman has a natural tendency to transcend/go beyond the phenomenal world.
There is an innate impulse for perfection. He also speaks of universal religion, where all religions come together and contribute towards each other’s growth. Authentic religion is “the wisdom of love that redeems suffering man”. Religion is not a set of dogmas, beliefs, rituals, rites, creeds etc., but it must lead to Inner Realization. It is not institutionalized.

He dreamed of a secular India/India as secular nation. Secularism can’t reject religion. Secularism is an attitude of respect for all religious faith or anything, which human beings hold as sacred. It is based on the sanctity of individuals. The essence of democracy is consideration for others, respecting each one as sacred and encouraging the rich variety and diversity. The aim of democracy is ‘just society’.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Radhakrishnan explain his concept of cosmic salvation?

2) What is the political philosophy of Radhakrishnan?

3.14 LET US SUM UP

Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy is the basic philosophy of the twentieth century, Indian philosophy. His philosophy is a mighty synthesis of the oriental and the occidental, the ancient and modern thoughts, which can break up into many channels of thought. He presents the ultimate reality as spiritual. Presentation of God as ‘Sachidananda’ is peculiar to Aurobindo. In his thought matter is spirit. The integral theory of evolution put forth by Sri. Aurobindo is one of the best theories of evolution. The higher, spiritual and divine principles of consciousness get unfolded in evolution process. Sri Aurobindo is the first seer who points out to us the nature of the spiritual principle of consciousness. He also propounds earthly immortality. But his individual salvation is inseparably related with the cosmic yoga. Sri Aurobindo envisages spiritual humanism too. So in this sense, his philosophy contributes much to the philosophical literature.

Radhakrishnan’s philosophy can be termed as monistic idealism. One of his main concerns was to give a spiritual outlook to everything. He also makes a distinction between the Absolute and God. The world is considered as the creative work of God. But at the same time both God and the world are different. The credit goes to Radhakrishnan for providing a holistic understanding
of human person. He affirms the spiritual nature of human soul but at the same time gives due respect to the value of the biological aspect of human person. He provides a very reasonable and practical explanation of the theory of karma by removing the traditional misconception regarding it. While speaking about the self-determination, he assumes that the human being is relatively free. His explanation on the cosmic salvation explains that cosmic salvation is possible when all identify themselves with the Absolute losing each one’s identity. Though many consider him as an interpreter, the greatness of Radhakrishnan lies on the fact that he presented his philosophical conviction systematically and with an academic precision.

3.15 KEY WORDS

**Mysticism:** The word mysticism has been derived from the Greek word *mystikos*. It is the pursuit of communion with, identity with, or conscious awareness of an ultimate reality, divinity, spiritual truth, or God through direct experience, intuition, instinct or insight.

**Karma:** The universal causal law by which good or bad actions determine the future modes of an individual’s existence. Karma represents the ethical dimension of the process of rebirth.

3.16 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES


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