CHAPTER - III

METAPHYSICS
RADHAKRISHNAN:

Radhakrishnan is greatly indebted to the Upanishadic philosophy and also the Advita Vedānta of Śaṅkara for his concept of Absolute Reality. His integral idealism assimilates Śaṅkara’s Absolute and Rāmānuja’s God in the dynamic conceptual. As a philosopher, Radhakrishnan is fully aware of the fact that it is not possible to give a naturalistic or a materialistic description of the Ultimate. The Ultimate must be such that it can fully account for everything -- the universe and even itself. The ultimate principle is not the scheme of the material and it is also different from the physical forces. It is essentially a spiritual principle. For him, the Absolute is pure and passionless being which transcends the restless turmoil of the cosmic life.¹

The word used in the Upanishads to indicate the supreme reality is Brahman. Brahman does not admit of any positive description. Its nature has to be indicated negatively as ‘not this’ ‘not this’ (neti neti). Thus when Brahman is said to be sat-cit-ānanda, sat means not non-being, cit not non-conscious, and ānanda not of the nature of sorrow. Brahman experience is given in intuition, which is supra-rational. This supreme Reality
is not out there but is one with our deepest self. Brahman is Ātman, the Universal Spirit.

In the view of Śaṅkara too Brahman can only be negatively described as the other of its own otherness. "It is sat (real), meaning that it is not asat (unreal). It is cit (consciousness), meaning that it is not acit (unconsciousness). It is ānanda (bliss), meaning that it is not of the nature of pain (duḥka-svarūpa)."

In the philosophy of Rāmānuja, on the other hand, it is found that "The qualities of being (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda) give to Brahman a character of personality."

Radhakrishnan says that though the Upanishads and Śaṅkara try to express the nature of the ultimate being in negative terms, there is a danger in these negative descriptions. For him, by denying all attributes and relations we expose ourselves to the charge of reducing the ultimate being to bare existence which is absolute vacuity. The negative account is intended to express the soul's sense of the transcendence of God, the 'wholly other' of whom nothing may be predicated save in negations, and not to deprive God of his positive being. It is the inexhaustible positivity of god that bursts through all conceptual forms. When we call it nothing we mean that it is nothing which created beings can conceive or name and not that it is nothing absolutely. The scriptures do not demonstrate or describe him but only bear witness to him.

Radhakrishnan holds that the Gītā does not give any argument in support of its metaphysical position. The reality of the supreme is not a problem to be solved by a dialectic which the vast majority of
the human race will be unable to understand. Dialectic in itself and without reference to personal experience cannot give us conviction. Only spiritual experience can provide us with proofs of the existence of Spirit. So he writes, "Strictly speaking we cannot give any description of Brahman. The austerity of silence is the only way in which we can bring out the inadequacy of our halting descriptions and imperfect standards."5

The Absolute, for Radhakrishnan, is the only reality, but it is not arrived at by carrying the process of abstraction to its maximum limit. Everything of this universe is an expression of the Absolute, but these expressions do not in any way effect the monistic character of the Absolute. According to Radhakrishnan, "the same Absolute reveals itself in all these but differently in each. The Ultimate Reality sleeps in the stone, breathes in plants, feels in the animals and awakes to self-consciousness in man."6 And yet the Ultimate Reality is one Brahman unaffected by all these manifestations.

Radhakrishnan felt the need of a dynamic monism capable of accounting for the growing universe with its time and change. And keeping this view in mind Radhakrishnan proceeded to construct a dynamic type of absolutism based on the Upanishads and Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara. J.G. Arapura writes that Radhakrishnan "tries to demonstrate that Reality is the whole, the Absolute, which is the highest concrete and is so rich that its wealth of content refuses to be put in to the intellect. But the intellect has access to it although it can never exhaust its fullness."7

Radhakrishnan's Absolute Reality contains in it the elements of both the Advaita Vedānta and the Hegelian tradition. For him, the
Absolute is "pure consciousness, pure freedom and infinite possibility." In this view the first two characteristics have been described more or less in the manner of Advaita Vedānta and the third character has been explained in the manner of Hegel's Absolute Idealism. The qualities of existence, order, development, purposefulness etc. which we notice in the world demand an ontological foundation and that can be provided by nothing less than the Absolute. The existence of the world implies the existence of the Absolute; from which the world is derived. It is the Pure Being and as such the foundation of all existences. The Absolute is eternal and perfect. It is beyond all descriptions. Radhakrishnan says, "Pure Being which is the Absolute can only be indicated. It can be alluded to but not described." 

According to Radhakrishnan, the Absolute is "reality, consciousness and freedom-sat, cit and ānanda." For him, there are four poises of Reality; the Absolute Brahman, the creative spirit Īśvara, the world-spirit Hiranyagarbha, and the world, the Virāt-svarūpa. This order is only a logical succession and not a temporal one. These are the four sides of one whole: the Transcendental Universal Being anterior to any concrete reality, the casual principle of all differentiation, the innermost essence of the world, and fourthly, the manifest world. They are co-existent and not alternating poises.

The Supreme Reality is apprehended in a two-fold way, as personal and impersonal. The personal aspect is known as God whereas the impersonal aspect is known as Absolute.
Radhakrishnan holds that God is not an ethical principle, nor an intellectual concept, nor a logical idea but a perceived reality present in each man. Man expresses his very intuition of Reality through concrete forms. Through such concrete forms he responds to the internal reality. Symbolism plays a great role in the life of the ordinary human being. The very nature of lay man forces him to use symbols and idols. His reflection as conation are closely connected with the concrete world in which he lives. Radhakrishnan thinks that to use concrete symbols for unseen reality is to impoverish the Absolute. For Absolute Reality is much larger than man's concept or picture of it. There is much in the Absolute than man knows. The Absolute Reality is determined by a number of intellectual co-ordinates. But the intellectual co-ordinates cannot fully focus the Absolute. It is only in the mystical experience that we can have the glimpse of the Absolute.

According to Radhakrishnan when we work from the cosmic end we are led to the hypothesis of a Supreme whose nature is Being, Consciousness, Freedom, Power and Goodness. The power of creativity is inherent in Being. When we stress the creative side, the supreme Godhead or the Absolute Brahman is called God. Brahman and Īśvara, Godhead and God are one. Brahman refers to infinite being and possibility and Īśvara to creative freedom. This world is presided over by the cosmic lord and a creation of God. The absolute creative God and the Cosmic Lord are not to be regarded as separate entities. There are different ways of viewing the One Transcendental Being. He says, "All
things in the world though unreal and fleeting contain the element of reality for being present in them all."\[11\]

The so-called 'proofs', according to Radhakrishnan, for the existence of God cannot actually demonstrate the existence of God. The casual argument fails to prove the ultimate reality of God. Teleological arguments which suggest that God is creative will or purpose, also fails to comprehend the reality as a whole. These proofs for the existence of God are merely descriptions of God and do not afford any evidence for his existence. The existence of God can be realised or is proved in the spiritual experience of man. To say that God exists means that spiritual experience is attainable. In his own words, "When the individual withdraws his soul from all outward events, gathers himself together inwardly, strives with concentration, there breaks upon him an experience sacred, strange, wondrous which quickens within him, lays hold on him, becomes his very being. The possibility of this experience constitutes the most conclusive proof of the reality of God."\[13\]

Radhakrishnan argues that we require the reality of something which does not need the support or help of anything else. Even if we regard the whole universe as merely imagined, there must be something which is the basis of all imagination.\[13\] That is the Absolute. At other places he seems to support something like design argument "The uniformity of nature, the orderliness of the cosmos and the steady reaching forward and upward of the course of evolution proclaim not the unconscious
throbbing of soulless engine, but the directing mind of an all-knowing spirit. 14

But Radhakrishnan supports an Ontological proof for the Absolute in Śāṅkara. He says, "We are obliged to posit an absolute reality; otherwise our whole structure of knowledge and experience tumbles to pieces...... For him (i.e. Śāṅkara) integral experience, or anubhava is the basal fact. It is the highest religious insight. It supplies the proof --- if proof be the name for it -- of man's awareness of a spiritual reality." 15

God is immanent in the world as well as transcendent to it. He is the guide and saviour of mankind. Man should respond to the divine call. He should endeavour to transcend his imperfections to become perfect. Like Gandhi Radhakrishnan says that God is truth. Like R.N. Tagore he maintains that God is love. But Radhakrishnan adds that God is not merely truth and love but also justice. God is the perfect as well as the highest moral being free from all evils. God performs his acts according to his own laws. He writes "God loves us, creates us and rules us. Creation, redemption and judgement are different names for the fact of God." 16

Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that the way in which he indicates the relation between the Absolute and God is not the same as that either of Śāṅkara or of Bradley though it has apparent similarities to their doctrines. This is evident when he writes, "Even as the world is a definite manifestation of one specific possibility of the Absolute, God with whom the worshipper stands in personal relation is the very Absolute in
the world context and is not a mere appearance of the Absolute." 17
For him, both the Absolute and the personal God are real; only
the former is the logical prius of the latter. 18

In "The Brahma Sūtra" Radhakrishnan writes, "Īśvara is Brahman with creative power." 19 Īśvara is God, is not a mere symbol adopted for Upāsanā or worship. He has two sides, transcendent when he is one with Brahman, immanent when he produces the world. He has a double form. As transcendent he is free from māyā, other than the world put forth by him and one with Brahman, triguṇatita. He is also the living creative God.

The world is totally different from the Absolute. "The world is a different kind of existence, a degraded form when compared to the Supreme Being --- The objective universe is not the subject but is yet derived from it." 20 The worldly things are 'ideal constructions' and not the reality. By its very meaning the Absolute is different from the relative. Both the world and the Absolute, multiplicity and unity cannot belong to the same order of existence. For Radhakrishnan, the problems of the relation between the Absolute and God or the Absolute and the world are of the same nature. The relation between the Absolute and God is a special application of the general problem of the relation between the Absolute and the world. 21

Radhakrishnan says, "unreal the world is, illusory it is not." 22 If the world of experience were illusory and unrelated to the Absolute, love, wisdom and ascetecism could not prepare us for the higher life. The conception of jīvan-mukti, the idea of karma mukti, the distinction of values, of truth and error, of
virtue and vice, the possibility of attaining moksa through the world of experience imply that there is Reality in appearances. "The doctrine of māyā declares that the world is dependent on and derived from the ultimate reality. It has the character of perpetual passing away, while the real is exempt from change. It has therefore a lower status than the Supreme itself. In no case is its existence to be confused with illusory being or non-existence." 23 The world is unreal, but it is not illusory in the sense of being totally subjective. This can be proved within minutes by closing and opening our eyes for a few times. In doing this we see the same world everytime. No theory has ever asserted that life is a dream and all experienced events are illusions. 24 "Even Śamkara who advocates the theory of māyā carefully distinguishes the phenomenal existence of the world from the being of Brahman and the non-being of dreams, illusions etc." 25 Radhakrishnan speaks of the world as unreal in the sense that it does not possess Absolute Reality. He writes, "The world is not the Absolute, though based on it. What is based on the real and is not the real itself can only be called the appearance or phenomenon of the real." 26 The world is not the essential truth of Brahman, it is its phenomenal truth. But this does not touch the question of the practical reality of the world. Radhakrishnan holds that the world may not be permanent or eternal, "but the whole programme, this epic process starting with matter, coming up to life, consciousness and then to intelligence and then dissolving itself in the Absolute is a historical phenomena." 27 According to him the Absolute is the abode of infinite
possibilities and in its creative aspect one of these possibilities is freely chosen for accomplishment. That is the world. The creation of the world makes no difference to the Absolute. It cannot add anything to or take away anything from the Absolute. The world of change does not disturb the perfection of the Absolute. The world does not follow from the nature of the Absolute even as the conclusion of the syllogism follows from the premises, as Spinoza would have us believe. The Absolute is the ground of the world only in the sense that a possibility of the Absolute is the logical prius of the world. In this way Radhakrishnan proves the reality of the world along with proving the ultimacy of the Absolute. In the introductory essay of "Basic Writings of S. Radhakrishnan" Robert A McDermott writes that Radhakrishnan wants to establish a more positive relation between Brahman and the world, and Brahman and the self, than "the general Advaita tradition" had previously postulated.

God and the world are organically related. Man's eternal spirit carried him beyond the limited temporal order to the Absolute; whereas God is linked essentially with the life in time. Absolute is not concerned with the temporal process. Radhakrishnan maintains that the evolutionary process of the world is directed by God. According to him, God must precede the world. Otherwise, the values that emerge from it cannot have the reality. Therefore the immanence of God in the world process does not mean that he is identical with the world.

Radhakrishnan had been interested in theories of evolution from his undergraduate days and later on he examined them from
own point of view. The advocates of life force (Bergson and others) hold that life will continue to produce higher types of existence. They have faith in the trustworthiness of life force and its responsiveness to our deepest aspirations. But according to Radhakrishnan if we are so certain that the life force will behave in a reasonable and purposive way, it is not fair to think of it as an unconscious agency. If it is the operating principle of the cosmic process and contains, as Bergson suggests, the essential characteristics developed in the different lines of evolution in a state of reciprocal implication, then it is unmeaning to call it vital impetus or life force. But Radhakrishnan seems to support Bergson when he says, "We cannot account for the origin of new organs, for the co-ordination of variations or even their rise when their utility is not perceived unless we assume with Lamark and Bergson that there is deeper law of inward striving after higher forms of life. The striving organism is the creative effort to which evolution is due." 11

Radhakrishnan holds that naturalistic evolution, which attempts to account for the development of new species by the theory of accidental variations preserved by selection and fixed by heredity, assumes a series of miracles. So, "we must grant an intention of nature to account for the co-ordination of complementary variations in a manner beneficial to the organism and its transmissibility to the descendants." 12

Radhakrishnan was against the mechanical view of the universe. It is clear when he writes, "the mechanical view, while adequate in the realm of matter, fails us when we come to
organic life. The delicate adjustments of the bodily organs to the functions they serve, the eye for seeing and the ear for hearing seem to require a different explanation."³³ For him "evolution was not blind and mechanical but the expression of a purposive force."³⁴ He assumes the reality of a single supreme spirit at work in the whole cosmos. Radhakrishnan believes that the divine was already present in the self and the goal of cosmic evolution was the release of the imprisoned splendour in all men and women.

With regard to the qualities of continuity and change, or conservation and advance in the physical world, we have in the world of life heredity and variation. Living organism inherit a plan of organisation and also vary it. Living creatures have arisen, apparently by gradual change, from simpler ancestors. For Radhakrishnan the detailed structural affinities between man and the higher apes and the astounding evidence of the blood test prove a close consanguinity between man and the anthropoids. That is why he writes, "It is fairly certain that we are descended from the apes or their cousins."³⁵

In the opinion of Radhakrishnan though there is great difference of opinion in regard to the casual factors operated in the evolution, yet what Darwin said in his "Origin of Species" ('The laws governing inheritance are for the most part unknown', 'our ignorance of the laws of variation is profound) is still true. For him "Evolution is not explanation. It does not say why the process should have ever occurred, why life should occur at all. Survival of the fittest does not carry us far. Life has little
survival value as compared with matter from which it is supposed to have sprung. A rock survives for hundreds of millions of years while even the oldest tree is only a few thousand years old. If survival was the aim of nature life would never have appeared."

There is order and progress in the universe. The two striking features of the physical world are continuity and change, connection with the past and creative advance into the future. Every event has not only a retrospective but a prospective reference. At the conscious level we have memory of the past as well as the anticipation of the future. At the physical level also we have a physical memory and blind anticipation. Throughout the process of nature we have creativity, or the coming into being of the new, which is not reducible to or deducible from the old. Radhakrishnan's concept of evolution seems to resemble western theory of Emergent Evolution when he says, "Something new is perpetually happening in the course of nature. Every event seems to actualize a fresh possibility not contained in the past." Moreover Radhakrishnan's support to emergent evolution is clear from the following statement - "If evolution means an unfolding of what is already in being, emergence can only be the emerging or coming into view of what is already contained in it, though hidden. But evolution now is interpreted as the coming into existence of something new, which is unpredictable before its occurrence."
Creativeness, according to Radhakrishnan, is not confined to the vital and psychological aspects, but matter is also creative in character. Its processes are also irreversible. The physical world itself prepare for an unfulfilled future. At a certain time there came to be on the surface of the earth abundant supplies of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, which provided suitable conditions for the rise of life. The process of the physical environment cannot be accounted for without a reference to the end of life, for which they were a preparation. What we find to be the characteristic features of the physical world are found true of living organisms in a higher degree. They represent a different order of fact than atomic systems, and seem to be nearer to reality than the latter. They maintain a constancy in the external and internal environment. There is no division between the organism and environment. They are expressions of a larger whole.

For Radhakrishnan the human self is an emergent aspect of the world process. It is not a substance different in kind from the process itself. Consciousness, according to him, is not a mere 'unessential complication occassionally found in the midst of organic nature at a late stage of evolutionary history', but is essential to all experiences. He writes, "--- while the conscious arises from or emerges out of the vital or the biological, it is as real as the biological, from which it emerges, and represents a kind of interaction with things different from the vital."

If the world is rational, then the final outcome of the age-long organic process must be something better than man such. It
we are to save the rationality of the universe, we must assume that the transition from self-consciousness to God consciousness is the aim of organic evolution. For him, "The process of evolution has been at work from the inorganic to the organic, from the organic to the sentient, from sentient to the rational. A new phase is ahead of us, a life as far above the purely rational as the rational is above the sentient. Through effort and discipline the rational man has to grow to the spiritual man, to the Godman." In order to evolve to this higher stage man has to struggle for himself. "That all men and women could at some time attain to such greatness was a hope which Radhakrishnan based on his understanding of the theory of evolution." Thus Radhakrishnan gives a spiritual interpretation to the modern theory of evolution. According to him man is the higher product of evolutionary process. Spiritual evolution takes place after the emergence of man. The spirit in man brings a promise of higher spiritual development.

The idea of spirit is the root concept of Radhakrishnan's philosophy. Spirit is life, not thing; energy, not immobility, something real in itself and by itself, and it cannot be compared to any substance subjective and objective. Regarding the nature of the self Radhakrishnan says that we know about self, but we fail to explain it. It is felt everywhere though seen no where. The self is not the gross physical body or the vital organism. It is neither the mind nor the will but something which cannot be reduced to this or that formula. It is the basis and background of our whole being.
The real, calm, ever luminous and ever joyous self within us in the ground of all manifestations. Radhakrishnan says, "we cannot attain to this greatness of soul unless we are reborn. Those who have reached the height are literally reborn, made new.\textsuperscript{45} The germ of this rebirth is present in all of us, but it reveals itself in the lives of greatmen of the world. We, insignificant normal human beings may not have cultivated this great quality but we always adore the achievement of the great people who have attained this summit.

We have to discover the spirit in us by stripping off all that is extraneous to it. The assertion of the self as something other than the true reality of God is the fall or the original sin (avidyā). The obstacles of self-discovery can be overcome only by replacement of the selfish will by an impersonal universalized will.\textsuperscript{46} Radhakrishnan considers meditation to be the way of self-discovery. By it we can turn our mind homeward and establish contact with the creative centre. To know the truth we have to deepen ourselves and not merely widen the surface. Silence and quite are necessary for the profound alteration of our being and they are not easy in our age. Discipline and restraint will help us to put our consciousness into relation with the supreme.\textsuperscript{47} Thus Radhakrishnan's emphasis on meditation as the way of self-discovery is similar to the views of almost all the systems of Indian philosophy which hold that repeated meditation on truth and a life led accordingly can root out ignorance of the soul.

According to Radhakrishnan no explanation of the cosmic process is possible without a transcendental reference.\textsuperscript{48} "The
Divine Intelligence is the intermediary between the Absolute Being and the cosmic process." The emergence of life in matter, mind in life and self-consciousness in the human mind is the process of cosmic evolution by which God attempts to manifest himself in the world and tries to attain values like truth, beauty and goodness which are potentially contained in the Absolute.

Thus according to Radhakrishnan, with his faith in an all including God, evolution is a moral and spiritual process. That is why, S. Gopal remarks-- "He is more with Lamark and Spencer than with Darwin and Huxley." Radhakrishnan holds that creation neither adds nor takes away anything from the Absolute. "Evolution may be a part of our cosmic process, but the Absolute is not subject to it." Evolution is appearance, the Absolute is the Reality.

To the question whether the existence of evil and imperfection in this world is compatible with a religious view, Radhakrishnan answers that imperfection is an aspect of the existent world. If things do not have it, there will be nothing to distinguish God from his creation. "If the purpose of this life is the emergence of moral and spiritual values, then it cannot be free from pain and difficulties."

Radhakrishnan holds that man is very intimately related with the universe. He is more than matter, life or mind or all these put together. Referring to the evolution of life in this planet he has said that man is a relatively recent arrival on earth. But it cannot be said that man is the last and supreme utterance of life. He says, "Man may be another unsuccessful experiment
which the Unknowable, not quite certain of its direction, is making."54 Human being is an essential part of nature. Like other living creatures human being is destined to pass through three different stages of growth, blossoming and decay. History of life shows that the human brain is a novel product. He has got the special power of adoption to environment. In view of the great developments in science and technology in the present century, Radhakrishnan declares that if man is to survive, he must change. If he is unable to adopt himself to the atmosphere of the new world, another creature capable of adoption may arise.

Man can realize the supreme through true wisdom or intuition. He should not reject his personal life in order to attain the final end. He should reform it, purify it with the inner light which he has apprehended. Such an illumined man is a man of God. Man wants to be eternal and transcendent. He can raise himself to the highest stage through deepest spiritual experience. Man has a peculiar tendency to know the truth of all things which is beyond time and multiplicity, which is the ground where all are found and yet where all are lost. This is the Absolute Reality. The Absolute comprehends all principles, God and the world. For Radhakrishnan the process of creation or evolution effects the cosmic process but not the Absolute. The Absolute is infinite possibility, pure consciousness and freedom while God is specific possibility. When one stresses the creative side, the Absolute Brahman is called God. Brahman and Īśvara, Godhead and God are one. "We call the supreme the Absolute, when we view it apart from the cosmos, God in relation to the cosmos. The Absolute is

72
the pre-cosmic nature of God, and God is the Absolute from the cosmic point of view."

Radhakrishnan says, "Salvation is different from survival, liberation (mokṣa) from rebirth (samsāra), life eternal from durational continuance." Survival indicates only the immediate future of the self. But there is an ultimate goal which is above all the conditions of progress and regress in time. To seek for liberation from the wheels of births and deaths is nothing more than to rise to the spiritual level from the merely ethical. For him, the spiritual is not the extension of the ethical. It is a new extension altogether dealing with things eternal. As life has emerged out of matter and mind out of life, similarly spirit is to be evolved out of man and that is man's destiny. Our logical and ethical consciousness helps us to a certain extent in the advancements towards the ultimate goal. The goal can be achieved only when the self with its persistent efforts unveils the truth and enjoys the divine delight of being. Considering the different possibilities of salvation, Radhakrishnan says that it cannot be accepted that some men are ever unredeemed. Even those who are redeemed cannot lead an ideal life in heaven. They have to work for the unredeemed souls. When all the souls are freed, the world as such is saved and the time process comes to an end. The end of time may mean the perfection of humanity where the earth will be full of the knowledge of the spirit. He writes, "The only useful work which the liberated souls do is to help struggling humanity. So long as there are individuals who are unredeemed and so stand in need of saving knowledge, the
liberated have some work to do. But if we allow that the world purpose is achieved, that all individuals have attained their perfection, there is nothing to be done.\(^5\)

The self of man is not an abstract quality or essence which remains the same for all time. It is a living experience of which duration is an intrinsic characteristic. If everything else in nature arises from something continuous with it, the self need not be an exception. For him "If the general plan of consecutiveness is not to be violated, the human selves must continue after death. They carry on past threads, weave out something in the present and prepare for the future."\(^5\)

Rebirth is not an eternal recurrence leading nowhere but a movement from man the animal to man the divine, a unique beginning to a unique end, from wildlife in the jungle to a future kingdom of God.\(^6\)

Radhakrishnan makes a difference between Jivan-Mukti and Sarva-Mukti. For him liberation can be attained in this life. "Liberation is not a state of existence to follow on physical death but an all satisfying present experience. It can be had even in life. It is the condition of Jivan-Mukti."\(^6\)

On the other hand, "The word Sarva-Mukti means the liberation of all. In a deeply spiritual sense there can be no other salvation. Brahmaloka or the kingdom of God implies corporate salvation. We are all wayfarers towards the Divine Kingdom and so cannot rest until the goal is reached."\(^6\)

God subdues the world for himself. In the end the grossness of the earth will be taken away and the purpose of God will
prevail. This is Brahma-loka. "Brahma-loka" according to Radhakrishnan, "is not another world than Samsāra. it is the world of samsāra redeemed." 

SRI AUROBINDO:

The central theme of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is that matter as well as spirit is to be looked upon as real. There has been a persistent negation of the spirit in the West through its dominant tendencies of materialism and rationalism and a persistent negation of matter and life in the East through its dominant tendencies of Asceticism and Spiritualism. Both Spiritualism and Materialism are one sided. So philosophy must avoid these two extremes. Sri Aurobindo declares, "The affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in the mortal existence can have no base unless we recognise not only eternal Spirit as the inhabitat of the bodily mansion, the wearer of this mutable robe, but accept Matter of which it is made as a fit and noble material out of which he weaves constantly his gerbs, builds recurrently the unending series of his mansions." We must pronounce with our ancient forefathers "Matter also is Brahman." Sri Aurobindo says that through the unification of Spirit and Matter, it will be possible to arrive at some strongest foundation for a reconciling practice in the inner life of the individual and his outer existence. Sri Aurobindo attempts a reconciliation of matter and spirit through his integral
system. This system relates to both the East and the West. His system may be said to be integralism because it holds that reality can be apprehended in some spiritual supra-rational insight.

According to Sri Aurobindo, the evolution of the world, and of man, through different stages, points to the divine destiny of man. A harmonious and integral culture of his physical, vital and mental potentialities alone enables man to rise to a supramental realization of Truth, transforming and divinizing his total being. Man can thus become a superman, thinking, feeling and acting in unison, with the divine.\textsuperscript{65}

Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics is mainly based on the vedānta. He interprets the Vedas and the Upanishads in a synthetic spirit which he imbibes from the Ishavāsya Upanishads and the Bhāgavad-gītā. He acknowledges the Vedas and the Upanishads as the sources of numerous profound philosophies and religions that flowed from them in India. For him, "The Vedas and the Upanishads are not only the sufficient fountain-head of Indian philosophy and religion, but of all Indian poetry and literature."\textsuperscript{66} We know that one of the main problems of philosophy has ever been how to account and reconcile unity with multiplicity. Different systems of Indian philosophy made effort in this matter. Śaṅkara holds the Upanishadic formula "One without a second". All the same, he seems to admit the plurality of phenomenal world when he says "All this is Brahman". Consequently Śaṅkara says that Brahman, through his inherent power Māyā, becomes the Lord Īśvara who, in his turn is the
creator, the preserver and the destroyer of the world which is his appearance. He, however declines to say explicitly the kind of relation existing between the One and the many. Again, we find that Rāmānuja admitted three realities, god, soul and matter. He stated that all the three forms one Absolute Reality because the souls and matter are mere modes of Brahman. The modes stand in relation Brahman, as the body of man stands to the soul of man. In this way, the relation of 'One' with 'Many' is without One becoming Many. Thus Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja were very careful not to pollute the pure and spotless nature of Brahman by admitting in it changes or mutations. But Sri Aurobindo asserts that "Many are in the very essence of Brahman. They are in Brahman as substantial entities. They are the essential co-principles of the Integral Absolute Brahman. Consequently, Brahman is a Being that is in its essentiality, both Eternal Being and Eternal Becoming. But "Sri Aurobindo does not identity Reality either with Being or Becoming, but looks upon both of these as poises of Reality."67

The metaphysical dualism of Spirit and Matter formulated by some earlier philosophical systems such as Śaṅkhya, could not be satisfactorily overcome by the vedāntins. Śaṅkara's well known solution of the problem is that Brahman alone is real and the world is an illusion produced by Māyā. As Māyā exists in Brahman as a superimposition and therefore it is not continuous with Brahman, the question of Māyā compelling Brahman into a support does not arise. But this solution is not tenable. If Māyā is not continuous with Brahman, there is no reason why it should
be superimposed on the later. If it is a fact that Māyā cannot exist by itself and can exist only in Brahman, then there must be something in the later which permits a certain continuity between itself and the former. So it can be said that Māyā is not discontinuous with Brahman. It is only if it is continuous with Brahman, then the presence of Māyā as an undirected substance should impose a limitation on Brahman. Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, says that by itself dualism cannot be a valid philosophical theory. According to Sri Aurobindo, there are two essential conditions for the elimination of dualism. First, if Brahman is independent, then it must be free from all external determinations by anything not itself. In other words, matter cannot be an independent principle existing alongside with Brahman. It can only exist in Brahman and supported by Brahman. Secondly, Brahman is not only free from external limitations but also from limitations other than itself, for the presence of this something brings back dualism in another form. Thus according to Sri Aurobindo, not only should matter be supported by Brahman but it should something not other than Brahman. The fulfilment of these two conditions alone leads to a total elimination of dualism.68

Sri Aurobindo's total elimination of dualism accords well with the teachings of the Upanishads. The Vedas and the Upanishads contain helpful clues to the solution of the problem of dualism as well as to the creation of the world. Integral system of Sri Aurobindo is based on them. According to Sri Aurobindo, Brahman, the Supreme Reality, is one, ineffable, pure
Existence, without quality, quantity and form. But this pure Existence without quality, quantity and form not in the sense that it cancels them but in the sense that it exceeds them so that they can pass into it to get transmuted and again come out of it in the cosmic movement. This supreme reality is beyond stability and movement. It is beyond unity and multiplicity. But it takes its eternal poise in the one and the stable to whirl round itself infinitely and inconceivably in the moving and the multitudinous.

For him, "World existence is the ecstatic dance of Shiva which multiplies the body of God numberlessly to the view: it leaves that white existence precisely where and what it was, ever is and ever will be; its sole absolute object is the joy of dancing."

"The Absolute is not limitable or definable by any determinations." Its indeterminability is the natural and the necessary condition both of its infinity of being and its infinity of power. It can be infinitely all things because it is no thing in particular and exceeds any definable totality. On the contrary, Sri Aurobindo says that this Absolute is the source of all determination." This dynamic essentiality manifests to us through the fundamental affirming positives in which the Absolute equally meets us; for it is the self that becomes all things, the Saguna Brahman.

According to Sri Aurobindo, all realities, all aspects and all semblances are Brahman. Brahman is the Absolute, the Transcendent and the incommunicable. It is the supercosmic Existence that sustains the cosmos. It is the cosmic Self that
upholds all beings. "It is all these, and yet much more than these. It is immanent as well as transcendent."\(^{72}\)

The Absolute is described by the Advaitins negatively by denying all determinations. But Sri Aurobindo holds that such negation limits the Absolute by denying it even the freedom of self-expression and self-determination.\(^{73}\) The fuller view should be able to comprehend in one integral concept the transcendent, indeterminate Reality and also its finite, changing self-expressions in the universe. The Upanishads not only describe Brahman negatively (neti neti), but also declare positively "All this is Brahman" (Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman). Sri Aurobindo says that two contradictory predicates cannot be attributed to the same thing so long as we take an exclusive view of the thing as presented to us through sense-perception. But in our more comprehensive experiences in cosmic perspectives by the higher ranges of the mind (Overmind) the exclusive, finite existences become not opposite, but harmonious and complementary aspects of an Infinite Existence; finite consciousnesses become harmonious elements of an Infinite experience of Delight. And in still higher supramental consciousness, there is the spiritual realization of the unity of all. "The logic of contradiction pertaining to our finite mental experience thus becomes meaningless in the context of such higher and fuller experiences of the Infinite."\(^{74}\)

The supreme being of the Divine is beyond manifestation. The true sempiternal image of him is not revealed in matter, nor is it seized by life, nor is it cognisable by mind. What we see is
only a self-created form, rūpa, not the eternal form of the divinity, svarūpa. All the creatures, existences, things are his becomings, he is their being. They exist in him, live and move in him and draw their truth from him. But "even to say of him that all exist in him is not the whole truth of the matter, not the entirely real relation: for it is to speak of him with the idea of space, and the Divine is spaceless and timeless. Space and time, immanence and pervasion and exceeding are all of them terms and images of his consciousness."75

Brahman manifests to us as Ātman, Puruṣa and Īśwara. Brahman, the Reality, is the self-existent Absolute, but "with regard to the universe Brahman appears as the self of all existence, Ātman, the cosmic self."76 The conscious Being, Puruṣa "is the Self as originator, witness, support and lord and enjoyer of the forms and works of Nature."77 Īśwara, on the other hand, "is Brahman, the Reality, self, Spirit, revealed as possessor, enjoyer of his own self-existence, creator of the universe and one with it, Pantheos, and yet superior to it, the Eternal, the Infinite, the Ineffable, the Divine transcendence."78 Reality is saguṇa in as much as it is capable of manifesting qualities. It is nirguṇa as it is nameless and formless "but by that very reason capable of manifesting all possible names and shapes of being."79

The Absolute, as conceived by Sri Aurobindo, is the triune principle of Sachchidānanda, that is, Existence-Consciousness-Force-Bliss (Sat-Cit-Ānanda). The Absolute, as a pure Existence is the fundamental reality. For him "the pure existent is an
Absolute and in itself unknowable by our thought although we can go back to it in a supreme identity that transcends the terms of knowledge."\(^{80}\)

Consciousness Force is inherent in Pure Existent. Force thus inherent in Pure Existent may be at rest or may be in motion. When it is at rest, it nonetheless exists; indeed, it is the nature of Conscious Force to have this alternative possibility of rest and motion. This Conscious Force which is inherent in the Pure Existent and which is the dynamic principle at the root of all world process, is called by Sri Aurobindo, The Mother. This "Divine Mother", according to Sri Aurobindo, "is the consciousness and Force of the Divine --- which is the Mother of all things."\(^{81}\)

The Supreme Reality, Sachidananda, is not only Existence, and Consciousness-Force but also Bliss. Its Absoluteness means also its illimitable bliss of conscious existence. As Sri Aurobindo writes:

"My mind is cloven by His radiant sword,
My heart by His beatific touch is torn,
My life is a meteor-dust of His flaming grace."\(^{82}\)

The bliss of Sachindānanda, however, is not confined to the still and motionless possession of its absolute self-being. Just as its Conscious Force projects itself into a world of innumerable forms, so also its self-delight reveals in an infinite multiplicity of universe. To enjoy this infinite movement and variation of its
self-delight is the object of its creative play of Conscious-Force. Sri Aurobindo writes, "Delight is existence, Delight is the secret of creation, Delight is the root of birth, Delight is the cause of remaining in existence, Delight is the end of birth and that into which creation ceases." 83

Now a question arises: All being Sachchidananda, why so much pain and misery, so much sorrow and suffering, distorting the face of the universe? This is the crux of the problem of will as it is dealt with in religious philosophy. Sri Aurobindo replies that as in the apparent inconscience of Matter, our soul discovers the infinite conscious force, so in the apparent non-sensation of Matter, it comes to discover and attune itself to an infinite conscious delight, this self is its own self in all. But to our ordinary view of self and things, it remains hidden, profound and subconscious. And as it is within all forms, so it is within all experiences, whether pleasant, painful or neutral. 84 Thus according to Sri Aurobindo, pain, pleasure and indifference in our sensational and emotional existence is a distorted reflection on a lower plane of the self-delight of the Real. They are relative to the divided consciousness of the ignorant mind and are capable of being transmuted into elements of a harmonised bliss.

Sri Aurobindo holds that the world is not unreal. Unlike Śaṅkara he asserts that the universe is real. The universe is not an illusion. Sri Aurobindo advances a valuable analysis of dream in "The Life Divine." Like Śaṅkara he refutes the analogy of dream applied to explain the unreality of the world. For him neither dream nor life is unreal. But he rejects Śaṅkara's notion
of the unreality of the world from paramārthika point of view. There is no absolute gulf between the pragmatic and the spiritual truth though the later is certainly higher than the former. Sr: Aurobindo shows that the different analogies used by Śāṁkara, such as pots, double moon, rope and snake etc., presuppose the existence of that which is superimposed or other and hence do not prove the unreality of the world. Minc constructs unreal mental images, only out of real experiences. The products of the real power of Real must themselves be real. Īśhwara as creator of Māyā, world as real phenomena, individual as seeking liberation cannot be unreal. He writes," Māyā in its original sense means a comprehending and containing consciousness capable of embracing, measuring and limiting and therefore formative; it is that which outlines, measures out, moulds form in the formless, psychologises and seems to make knowable the unknowable, geometrises and seems to make measurable the limitless. Later the world come from its origina sense of knowledge, skill, intelligence to acquire a pejorative sense of cunning, fraud or illusion, and it is in the figure of an enchantment or illusion that it is used by the philosophical systems.85

Sri Aurobindo termed Śāṁkara a qualified illusionist.86 His disagreement with Śāṁkara on the conception of Māyā is evident from the following: "World is Māyā. World is not unreal in the sense that it has no sort of existence; for even if it were only a dream of the Self, still it would exist in It as a dream, real to It in the present even while ultimately unreal. Nor ought we to say:
that the world is unreal in the sense that it has no kind of eternal existence; for although particular worlds and particular forms may or do dissolve physically and return mentally from the consciousness of manifestation into the non-manifestation, yet form in itself, World in itself are eternal." ⑧ 7

According to Sri Aurobindo, a theory of Māyā in the sense of illusion or the unreality of cosmic existence creates more difficulties than it solves. For him, whether Māyā be an unreality or a non-reality, the ultimate effects of the theory carry in them devastating simplicity or nullification. The universe fades away into nothingness or else keep for a time only a truth which is little better than a fiction." ⑧ 8

The concept of evolution is central to the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. But it must be distinguished from the nineteenth century Western concept. The Darwin-Spencerian theory of evolution was perfectly naturalistic. From the spiritual point of view it was perfectly neutral. The application of the theory in philosophy has led to the reduction of all reality in its root to matter. But the Hegelian standpoint of evolution is that all evolution is evolution of the Spirit. By Spirit Hegel understands nothing but Reason. For him evolution is nothing else than the logical process of development of the Idea or Reason. So the Hegelian conception of evolution is not completely spiritual. From Aurobindo's point of view Hegel is wrong in identifying Spirit with Reason. For him a truly spiritual view of evolution must transcend Reason. ⑧ 9
In the theory of creative evolution, Bergson maintains that evolution is neither mechanistic nor teleological but creative. All things according to him are various manifestations of life impulse, the 'elan vital'. The point which Sri Aurobindo has emphasized in his view of evolution and which is different from Bergson's conception of evolution is that evolution is a process every step of which is directed by the spirit.

S. Alexander's theory of evolution comes closest to Sri Aurobindo's. Like Sri Aurobindo he also talks of the emergence of higher and higher forms of consciousness. The name which he gives to a consciousness higher than what has emerged at a particular stage of evolution is Deity. But the Absolute of Sri Aurobindo's theory of evolution and Alexander's theory of evolution is basically different. Sri Aurobindo begins with Brahman as Sachchidananda whereas Alexander begins with Space-Time. Thus in Alexander the aspect of spirit is lacking.

In India, the theory of evolution has received an elaborate treatment in Sāmkhya system. But though the Sāmkhya attempts to give a cosmic character of evolution, it has failed, because it has not been able to get rid of the cyclical view of the universe, according to which evolution and dissolution always follow each other in a cyclical order. But Sri Aurobindo, we can say, has beautifully handled the problem of evolution. "He has accepted the cosmic view of evolution of the West but has rejected its mechanical character and replaced it by a spiritual evolution. Likewise he has rejected the cyclical view of the Universe so dear to our country and the individualistic outlook of our theory.
of evolution, and substituted for it the cosmic and overpersonal outlook of the West. The result is an altogether new theory of evolution, unlike anything found either in the east or in the west. It bases itself upon the idea that the source of evolution being Sachchidananda himself, it cannot stop until the whole world is completely Divinised."

Aurobindo's theory of evolution may be said to fall under the category of Brahma-parināma of Indian philosophy, because according to him Brahman is the source and summit of evolution. For him all creation or becoming is nothing but self-manifestation of the eternal. In order to succeed in his object he considered the Supreme Reality, Brahman, under two aspects: the static and the dynamic. Brahman, considered under His static aspect, is Sachchidananda while considering Him under His dynamic aspect, is 'Supermind'. This Supermind is the Infinite creative mind representing the inner Brahman and all His outward manifestations. Supermind is the link between Sachchidananda and the finite world. Sri Aurobindo prefers to call the supermind "Real-Idea" which according to him is a power of Conscious-Force expressive of real being and pertaking of its nature. "The supermind is also called a Truth-Cousciousness. It "has the knowledge of the One, but is able to draw out of the One its hidden multitudes; it manifests the Many, but does not lose itself in their differentiations." Mind, Life and Matter are an inferior expression of it which serves as a goal towards which these are trying to move. Thus it is nothing else than God as creator. It is the foundation of our present natural and evolutionary existence.
"from which nature in us is trying to arrive at self-knowledge and world knowledge and a right-cousciouness and the right use of our existence in the universe." 

The whole course of creation is a movement between two involutions. Spirit in which all is involved and out of which all evolves downward to the other pole of Matter, Matter in which also all is involved and out of which all evolves upwards to the other pole of Spirit. The whole of creation is a lila or a Divine play of self-concealment and self-revelation. The infinite has gradually descended step by step, covering itself veil upon veil till it disappears completely under the musk of inconscient matter. Then It traverses back step by step by removing veil after veil and proceeds towards self-revelation. Thus each step in the descent is necessarily a step in the ascent.

Sat, cit and Ananda, with Supermind constitute the divine quarternary. He describes the quarternary as the higher hemisphere of being. The lower hemisphere consisting of Mind, Life and Matter derives its being from the higher. Thus the seven factors, the four of the higher and three of the lower hemisphere, may be said to be the sevenfold chord of Being. Out of these seven factors, Mind, Life and Matter are only three subordinate powers of the divine quarternary. He says, "Mind is a subordinate power of Supermind which takes its stand in the standpoint of division, actually forgetful here of the oneness behind though able to return to it by reillumination from the supermental. Life is similarly a subordinate power of the energy aspect of Sachchidananda, it is Force working out form and the play of
conscious energy from the standpoint of division created by Mind: Matter is the form of substance of being which the existence of Sachchidananda assumes when it subjects itself to this phenomenal action of its own consciousness and force."

According to Sri Aurobindo, we have a double soul. We have a desire soul which works in our vital cravings and emotions, and our inner soul, our true psychic being or caitya puruṣa which is the central core of our being. Sri Aurobindo lays the greatest stress upon the awakening of this psychic being or our true soul. For him the malady of the world lies in the inability of the individual to find his real soul. Through this caitya puruṣa, the divine principle of Bliss acts in us, as the divine principle of Supermind operates through Mind and the divine principle of Pure Existence manifests through matter. Now, if we add this psychic entity to the seven already mentioned, we would have eight poises of Reality which can be arranged in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existence</th>
<th>Matter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consciousness-Force</td>
<td>Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bliss</td>
<td>Psycho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermind</td>
<td>Mind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the first column represents God's descent to the world, the second the individual's ascent towards God.

The Infinite, for Sri Aurobindo, has infinite possibilities. It is capable of manifestation in infinite variations. The
Conscious-Force of the Divine, concentrates upon and selects a particular truth or a fixed order of truths and creates a world in conformity with that truth. Brahman expresses himself in many forms of consciousness, instead of giving up the previous form, the form is taken up in the next step and transformed. Thus Life emerged from Matter and Mind and intelligence in the human beings from life.

Sri Aurobindo has given a beautiful account of the concept of mind. Mind is only a final action of the Supermind in the descent towards creation. "Mind" according to Sri Aurobindo, in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole and contains them as if it were a separate integer." But mind is only a subordinate and not really separate working of the Supermind.

Life is an action of Conscious-Force working in the conditions of the ignorance created by the descent of the mind. "Life is everywhere, secret or manifest, organised or elemental, involved or evolved, but universal, all pervading, imperishable only its forms and organisings differ." Life expresses itself in three stages, material, vital and mental expression. In Matter it expresses itself as a blind energy which is the basis of all movements. In the vital expression of life, consciousness has partly emerged and in the mental expression of life, mutual devouring gives place to preservation of life through love and self-giving. But like Mind, Life also is not a separate entity or movement, but has all Conscious-Force behind it in everyone of its workings.
Matter is only a form of spirit. Spirit is the soul of matter, matter is the body of spirit. "Matter" according to Sri Aurobindo, "is Sachchidananda represented to His own mental experience as a formal basis of objective knowledge, action and delight of existence."^101

Thus the process of evolution is made possible by the process of involution. It is because of the descent of the spirit into Matter, Life and Mind that these can ascend to the higher regions of the spirit. In fact evolution is nothing else than heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest being so that it may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest.

"In evolution, says Sri Aurobindo, three processes take place. These are widening, heightening and integration. In the process of widening, evolution increases organisation, expression and differentiation so that it is capable of evolving to a higher principle. The process of heightening is the ascent from grade to grade upwards. This is shown in the evolution of the principle of life out of matter. When a step in this evolution has taken place and the principle has reached a higher stage, the process of integration takes place. This process is a mode of complexification of the less complex which alters the lower principle so that it ascends the evolutionary ladder. As a result of this triple process of evolution, there is a rapid change of the basis of inconscience into a basis of complete consciousness.

Evolution first takes place in Matter. Mind and Life are evolved in Matter. They modify the substance of Matter, first into
the substance of life and then into conscious substance. But they do not succeed in transforming it altogether. When Life first evolves in matter, it is bound to death. Similarly when Mind first evolves it is matter-bound and life-bound. This shows that neither Mind nor Life is the original creative energy. Like matter they are intermediaries. They cannot effect a total transformation of material substance. It can be effected only by the full emergence of the Spirit. And this is the culminating stage of evolution.

Evolution is not only cosmic but also individual. Behind all the changes of our personality and upholding them, there is a person, a real spiritual Individual, a true purusha. The discovery of this purusha is an essential condition of the discovery of the cosmic Self and Supreme Reality. The Individual Purusha in working out his cosmic relations with the Supreme Spirit, has to assume a body. This assumption of the body is called birth. But this birth, whether in human form or in any other, must have a past which was preparatory to it and a future for its further fulfilment. Therefore birth of any individual soul in a body must be continued in other births and must have been preceded by other births.

According to Sri Aurobindo, if rebirth were not a fact, then the evolution of the soul would also cease to be a fact. "Rebirth is self-evidently a necessary part, the sole possible machinery of such an evolution. It is as necessary as birth itself: for without it birth would be an initial step without a sequel, the starting of a journey without its further step and arrival. It is
rebirth that gives to the birth of an incomplete being in a body its promise of completeness and its spiritual significance."

Evolution means a triple transformation. Sri Aurobindo says that the gulf between mind and Supermind can be bridged only by the triple transformation. He says that first of all there must be the psychic change, the conversion of our whole present nature into a soul instrumentation. Secondly, there must be a spiritual change i.e. the descent of a higher Light. Knowledge, Power, Force and Bliss into the whole being. Finally, there must be the supramental change, i.e. the ascent into the supermind and the transcending descent of the supramental consciousness into our entire being and nature must take place.

There are four ascending steps of consciousness, through Higher mind, Illumined mind, Intuitive mind and Overmind. Beyond Overmind consciousness undergoes certain changes to reach Supermind.

The final stage of evolution is the supramental change. The supramental change is a change in knowledge. The transition to Supermind is really a passage from nature to Supernature. Sri Aurobindo holds that the descent of the Supermind into our earthly nature is the only way in which the ascent of the evolutionary process to the Supermind can take place. "For a real transformation there must be a direct and unveiled intervention from above; there would be necessary too a total submission and surrender of the lower consciousness, a cessation of its existence, a will in it for its separable law of action to be
completely annulled by transformation and lose all rights over our being.\textsuperscript{104}

Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that along with the participation and consent of the purusha to the supramental change, the surrender of nature is also required. When the descent of the Supermind takes place, Nature becomes transformed to Supernature and human beings into Gnostic Beings. The supramental descent will affect the nature of the lower evolutionary stages also. Something of its light and its force will penetrate downwards and awaken the lower regions to a greater action of the hidden truth in them. In human life also there will emerge a freer play of intuition and greater play and sympathy and understanding.

The gnostic individual or superman would be the consummation of the spiritual man. All beings would be to him his own selves, all ways and powers of consciousness would be felt as the ways and powers of his own universality. He would be "in the world and of the world, but would also exceed it in his conciousness and live in his self of transcendence above it; he would be universal but free in the universe, individual but not limited by a separative individuality"\textsuperscript{105} unlike Śaṁkara Sri Aurobindo never says that man's destiny is to conquer the bare abstract unity by completely rejecting his individuality. "The destiny of man is his identity or oneness with the Absolute or Sachidānanda in both status and dynamis. He is to remove ignorance and to divinise the entire living beings of the world."\textsuperscript{106} Moreover, Sri Aurobindo holds that our destiny is not to be
confined eternally to our present life. It is to exceed the present life and evolve into the higher life, the Divine Life which is secretly working within us.

Sri Aurobindo's conception of Superman is different from Avatār and Jivanmukta. It is also different from Friedrich Nietzsche's Superman. Aurobindo views the Superman as man turned into a perfect image of the Divine, thoroughly transfigured in every member of his being. Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that until we have revealed and evolved the spirit in our self out of its mental, vital and physical wrappings, extracted it with patience from our body, no outer divine living can become possible. "A divine life must be first and foremost an inner life: for since the outward must be the expression of what is within, there can be no divinity in the outer existence if there is not the divinisation of the inner being." 107

The gnostic or divine being lives neither for a separate ego, nor for the purpose of any collective ego. He lives in and for the Divine in himself, in and for the Divine in collectivity, in and for the Divine in all beings. This universality in action, organised by the all seeing will in the sense of the realized oneness of all, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the law of his divine living. Thus the intention of the involution of the Absolute into gross matter is the divinisation of man, world and nature as a whole.
COMPARISON:

If we go through the metaphysical views of Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo, first of all we will have to admit that both of them are influenced by the Upanishads and also by the teachings of the Bhāgavadgītā. Both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo have written commentaries on the Gītā. They are steeped in the great tradition of Indian Spiritualism. Their concerns and their moorings are the same. Interpretation of ancient Indian philosophy in the light of Western has occupied the mind of both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo. They have to acquaint themselves with both Western and Indian schools of thought and have to keep both in mind in forming their own conclusions.

Our study reveals that the Absolutisms of Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo are not entirely the same. Radhakrishnan's philosophy may be regarded as an Absolute Idealism and that of Sri Aurobindo's an Integral Non-dualism or Supramental Idealism. Following the footsteps of the ancient Indian philosophers both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo hold that the Supreme Reality is One, without a second. Both of them admit that the Supreme Reality is Sat (existence), Cit (Consciousness-Force) and Ānanda (Bliss). For Radhakrishnan the Absolute is beyond all descriptions. It can only be indicated but not described. In the same manner, Sri Aurobindo holds that the Absolute is not limitable or definable by any determinations. Moreover, Radhakrishnan speaks of four poises of Reality: the Absolute Brahman, the creative Spirit Īśvara, the world-spirit Hiranyagarbha and the world, the Virāt-Svarūpa. Sri
Aurobindo too says that Brahman manifests to us as Ātman, Puruṣa andĪśvara. But, for Radhakrishnan everything in the universe is an expression of the Absolute and these expressions do not in any way effect the monistic character of the Absolute. Thus Radhakrishnan is careful not to pollute the pure monistic nature of the Absolute. But after the study of the metaphysical outlook of Sri Aurobindo, it becomes clear that for him all things in the universe are in the very essence of Brahman, the form, the substantiality of the integral Absolute Brahman. Thus according to Sri Aurobindo, Brahman is both Eternal Being and Eternal Becoming. This shows Radhakrishnan’s affinity with Śrīnākara and Rāmānuja and Aurobindo’s difference from these two Vedāntists.

In Sri Aurobindo’s metaphysics an assimilation of materialism and spiritualism is clearly found. But in Radhakrishnan’s metaphysics no such distinct assimilation is found. Radhakrishnan’s metaphysical outlook may be said to be spiritualistic.

With regard to the creative power or creative force much similarity is found between these two contemporary Indian philosophers. According to Radhakrishnan, the Supreme Reality is apprehended in a two-fold way, as personal and impersonal. The personal aspect is known as God whereas the impersonal aspect is known as the Absolute. When we stress the creative side, the Absolute Brahman is called God. This world is a creation of God. The Absolute is the pre-cosmic nature of God and God is the Absolute from the cosmic point of view. Sri Aurobindo too considers the Supreme Reality, Brahman, under two aspects, the static and dynamic. Considered under the static
aspect, Brahman is Sachchidananda and considered under the
dynamic aspect, He is Supermind. Supermind is the infinite
creative mind. It is the link between Sachchidanda and the finite
world. It is able to draw out of the One its hidden multitudes.
This Supermind is nothing else than God as creator.

If we examine the world-views of these two philosophers,
we find that both of them refuse to accept Śaṅkara's view that
the world is an illusion. They admit that the possibility of
attaining liberation or mokṣa through the world of appearance
implies that there is reality in the world. The only difference
between these two philosophers is while Radhakrishnan holds that
the world is not the essential truth of Brahman, but it is its
phenomenal truth and that is why the world can be termed as
unreal as it does not possess absolute reality; according to Sri
Aurobindo, we should not say that the world is unreal in the sense
that it has no kind of eternal existence. For him the world is real,
because the product of the Real power must be real.

If we examine the theories of evolution put forward by these
two contemporary Indian philosophers, we find that they were
against the mechanical view of universe introduced by the
Western philosophers. Sri Aurobindo has offered a comprehensive
theory of evolution by combining both the Eastern and the
Western theories of evolution. His theory of evolution has two
series --- ascending and descending. It is through evolution that
man can apprehend the Absolute and again, it is through
involution that the Absolute can come down to the earth
consciousness. But in Radhakrishnan's theory of evolution we do
He accepts the theory of evolution from the West and conceives it as a movement of the entire creation towards the ultimate goal of absorption in the Absolute. According to him the object of the world process is the achievement of such a state of perfection in which not only all individual souls are merged in God, but also God is merged in the Absolute.

In his theory of evolution, Radhakrishnan seems to support Darwin. He says that we are descended from the apes or their cousins. But in Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy no such support to Darwin is found.

According to Sri Aurobindo, every step of evolution is directed by the Spirit. The evolutionary process cannot stop until the whole world is completely divinised. But outer divine living is not possible until we have revealed and evolved the spirit in our self out of its mental, vital, and physical wrapping and extracted it from our own body. For him not only human personality but also entire nature will have to attain spiritual perfection. Radhakrishnan too gives a spiritual interpretation to the modern theory of evolution. He is mainly concerned with the development of spirituality in man. According to him, man is the higher product of evolutionary process. Spiritual evolution takes place after the emergence of man. The spirit in man brings a promise of highest future development. Thus it becomes clear that both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo intended to develop spirituality in man. Moreover they put stress on the effort and discipline of the rational man to grow to the spiritual man.
Radhakrishnan termed it as God-man and Sri Aurobindo termed it as Superman.

The views of these two contemporary Indian philosophers on the “destiny of man” seem to be different. According to Radhakrishnan, as life has emerged out of matter and mind out of life, similarly spirit is to be evolved out of man and that is man’s destiny. Man’s highest destiny, for Radhakrishnan, is to grow more humane, more spiritual and to be more sympathetic in understanding others. Sri Aurobindo, too, holds that the highest destiny of man is a fulfillment of life by conquering the evil forces, darkness and death. But for him this conquest is through the process of supramentalisation or divinisation of earthly life. A “divine perfection” of the human being is the very purpose of evolution. This shows Sri Aurobindo’s difference from Radhakrishnan who emphasized spiritual perfection as the final destiny of man.

The belief in the rebirth of the individual selves shows a similarity between the thoughts of Radhakrishnan and that of Sri Aurobindo. For Radhakrishnan, the self of man is a living experience of which duration is an intrinsic characteristic. It must continue after death. Rebirth is a movement from man, the animal to man, the divine. Similarly Aurobindo holds that without rebirth evolution of the soul becomes meaningless. It is an indispensable machinery for the working out of a spiritual evolution.

A significant contribution of Radhakrishnan towards philosophy is his concept of universal liberation or Sarvamukti.
He rejects the notion of personal salvation. For him a man cannot attain true perfection through mere individual realization of God. He must be integrated not merely with himself and with the Divine immanent in him, but also with his entire social environment comprising of other selves. If one single soul fails to reach the divine destiny, to that extent the universe is a failure. He writes, “So long as some individuals are unredeemed, the other free souls have work to do and so retain their individualities. But when the world as such is saved, when all are free and nothing remains to be done the time process comes to an end.”

The end of time may mean the perfection of humanity, when the earth will be full of the knowledge of spirit. For him the cosmic process is consummated so far as the condition of space and time allow. When the cosmic process turns to an end, when all living beings achieve their immortality in God, God in turn gets integrated with the Absolute and merges in its static perfection, i.e., nirvāṇa. Thus according to Radhakrishnan, nirvāṇa is “the final end, evolution the method, God the mediator and guide, so far as this world plot is concerned.” But when the cosmic process is consummated, the earth and the heaven would be no more and the timeless and the transcendent alone would remain.

If the cosmic salvation of Sri Aurobindo is examined, it becomes evident that his cosmic salvation includes not only the salvation of the whole of human race, but also the physical universe. He stresses the divine significance of cosmic evolution. He does not believe in nirvāṇa as the ultimate goal of life; nor
does he believe in any final cessation of the time process. This shows his difference from Radhakrishnan. For him time is an endless as well as a beginningless process with the timeless as its ultimate support and background. "Time is for the mind a mobile extension measured out by the succession of the past, present and future in which mind places itself as a certain standpoint whence it looks before and after".\textsuperscript{110} Sri Aurobindo's view on the goal of evolution is different from that of Radhakrishnan. For him the goal of evolution is not nirvana whether individual or universal. His scheme of evolution does not aim at the absorption of all living beings in the Absolute on the attainment of universal salvation. "The supreme aim of evolution is not simply the raising of man's higher faculties to God, but the raising of nature, body, life and all the strata of mind to God, through the rousing of the supermind dormant in man and the universe, and by the consequent descent of the divine on earth through the supramental man."\textsuperscript{111} Thus the evolutionary change of ignorance into knowledge is the beginning of an era of divine creation.

REFERENCES:

3. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, vol.11, p.587
9. S. Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith, p.87
15. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol.11, p.534.
20. Ibid, p.139.
26. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, p. 584.
32. S. Radhakrishnan and J.H. Muirhead, Eds., Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 495.
34. S. Gopal, Radhakrishnan — A Biography, p. 87.
37. Ibid, p. 190.
38. Loc. Cit.
41. S. Radhakrishnan, The Brama Sūtra, p. 103.
43. S. Radhakrishnan and J.H. Muirhead, Eds., Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 492.
44. S. Radhakrishnan, An Idealist view of Life, p. 162.
45. Ibid, p. 163.
46. Ibid, p. 87.
47. Ibid, p. 89.
50. D.M. Datta, Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy, pp.142-143.
53. S. Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith, p.84.
57. Ibid, p.246.
63. S. Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith, p.84.
68. N. Jaya Shanmukhan, Sri Aurobindo and Indian Tradition, p.129.
70. Ibid, p.287.
71. Loc. Cit.
75. Sri Aurobindo, Essays on The Gita p.298.
77. Ibid, p. 314.
78. Ibid, p.318.
79. Ibid, p.305.
80. Ibid, p.72.
83. Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine, p.95.
84. Ibid, p.94.
85. Ibid, p.95.
87. Ibid, p.95.
88. Ibid, p.418.
89. S.K. Maitra, The Meeting of the East and West in Sri Aurobindo’s Philosophy, p.34.
90. Ibid, pp.35-36.
91. Ibid, p.51.
93. Ibid, p.117.
94. Sri Aurobindo, The Supramental Manifestation, p.41.
95. Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine, p.120.
96. T.M.P. Mahadevan and G.V. Saroja, Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p.168.

106


100. Ibid, p.166.


103. Ibid, p.793.

104. Ibid, p.820.

105. Ibid, p. 863

106. Nilima Sarnia, Twentieth Century Indian Philosophy, p.200.


