CHAPTER - IV

ETHICS
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Ethics is generally understood as the normative science of the conduct of human beings living in society. It is a science which judges this conduct as right or wrong, to be good or bad, or in some similar way. Conduct includes all voluntary actions. Voluntary actions include all willed or volitional actions in which there is a conscious process of willing. Conduct may include inward activities like motives and desires as well as outward activities like speech and movements of the doer's limbs. The conduct studied in ethics is not only conduct done in a society, but conduct that affects some other member or members of that society.

Ethics is concerned with evaluation of conduct with reference to an ideal. It seeks to determine the supreme ideal involved in human conduct. It helps to pass correct moral judgements upon human conduct, and consider it as right or wrong with reference to the supreme ideal of human life. It is the science of the Highest Good of man. The ideal involved in human life includes Truth, Good and Beauty. Ethics is the science of the Moral Good of man.
In his ethical theory, Radhakrishnan advocates that human beings are by nature value-seekers. They strive for truth, beauty and goodness. Each of these values has its own specific characters. But these values are only a flash in the pan and disappear sooner or later. Modern science has pointed out that ethical principles are general rules for the guidance of human conduct. These principles owe their significance to the developing society in which they arise. The authority of conscience too is of purely social origin. There is not a single human act which has not been approved or disapproved by the society. Though standards of society change, life seems to be meaningless without them and so myth or morality is invented. "Morality is a working arrangement and its sanction is social necessity". As morality is a matter of convention, society has a right to alter or amend it. But Radhakrishnan says that ethical principles are objective only in the sense that they are independent of this or that individual and not in the sense that they are unconditional commands.

Modern science tries to prove that there is no moral being or God. Man's moral consciousness is not in need of a moral being or God. But, Radhakrishnan states that human life is transitory and futile. It is not satisfied fully by the fragments of happiness as offered by modern science. It is in need of a deep synthetic unity which alone can give man the proper meaning of
life. It can be achieved by the people who are deeply aware of the moral and spiritual values of life. These spiritually developed people can attain victory over the evils and sufferings of life. To an ethical being the path of duty is clear. In its perception, we come nearer to absolute certainty, we have in it an intuitive apprehension of the real.

Radhakrishnan does not seem to be an advocate of conventional morality. For him moral life is an essential condition for the pursuit of wisdom. He holds that almost all the religious classics of India insist on ethical conduct as an indispensable means of spiritual life. "Ethics is the basis of spiritual life and its substance." Ethical certainty requires a highest end from which all other ends are derived. It requires an end which flows from the very self and gives meaning and significance to the less general ethical ends. "The ultimate assumption of all is the spirit in us, the divine in man." Life is God and the proof of it is life itself. If somewhere in ourselves we did not know with absolute certainty that God is, we could not live. According to him, we are not ourselves alone, we are God-men.

The central point in Radhakrishnan's philosophy is the assertion of the presence of spirit in man as the basis of unity in diversity, similarity in difference and harmony in discord. He does not regard spirit as a substance, for such a notion would be both unscientific and unrealistic. He identifies spirit with life, which is 'something in itself, and cannot be compared to any substance, subjective or objective'. This spirit in man is the
central reality, the basis of his physical existence, biological growth, mental development and intellectual evolution. Radhakrishnan's notion of spirit does not contradict science. Moreover, it is logically consistent and intelligible. According to him, our negligence of the power of spirit in man, and our assumption that intellectual and moral qualities exhaust the nature of man, have led to the formulation of the mistaken notion that scientific or secular humanism can rebuild the world. He has raised his voice against the evil effects of secular humanism whether positivistic or communistic because he feels that the solution of human problems lies elsewhere. He sums up the distressing situation of modern society in the following way:

"We have a world of rationalist prophets, of selfish individualists, of a monstrous economic system compounded out of industrialism and capitalism of vast technical achievements and external conquest, of continual craving for creature comforts and love of luxury, of unbridled and endless covetousness in public life, of dictatorship of blood and brutality anxious to make the world a shambles dripping with human blood, of atheism and disdain for the soul, a world in which nothing is certain and man have lost assurance".

Radhakrishnan says that the highest ethical ideal is Mokṣa, or spiritual realization. In order to attain Mokṣa or liberation, the empirical world with all its pleasures of sense is not to be discarded but transcended. Liberation is not the isolated existence of the soul, but a displacement of a false outlook by a
true one, Avidyā by Vidya. This outlook does not make the individual selfish, but inspires him to be altruistic. Radhakrishnan says that the ideal of Mokṣa is not antagonistic to social well-being, but conductive to it and the very basis of it. The antagonism between spiritualism and secular well-being disappears the moment it is realized that the liberated soul is not indifferent to the welfare of the world. "Perfect freedom is impossible in an imperfect world, and so those who have secured a vision of spirit work in the world so long as there is wrong to be set right, error to be corrected and ugliness to be banished from life".7

Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that humanism is a protest against naturalism on the one side and religion on the other. The soul of man is neither a thing of nature or a soul of God. Devotion of values would be inexplicable if men were entirely products of nature. As against religion humanism contends that this world is our chief interest and our ideal is the perfection of humanity. The ultimate harmonious interrelation of all individuals with one another is the aim of humanism. "Humanism seems to be a religion secularized. The self-sufficiency of the natural man, the belief that the only values that matter are human values is the central faith of the humanists".8

Humanism deprived of all values would not be humanism at all. It is seen that pragmatic and communistic humanism cannot explain values satisfactorily since both regard biological man as "the measure of all things". They neglect the spiritual and the central aspect of human nature without the knowledge of
which integrated development is not possible either for man and
for society as a whole. Thus the spiritual development of man
and its intuitive realisation alone can inculcate universal love
and brotherhood in each and every human individual. It can thus
bring about a synthesis of man's material progress and spiritual
development.

One can call Radhakrishnan's humanism 'spiritual
humanism'. It aims to blend the oriental and occidental cultures
and thereby paves the way for a universal human culture. "This
humanism accommodates science as well as religion, reason as well
as faith individual freedom as well as social well-being,
discipline as well as desire, and self-sacrifice as well as self-
realization. It promotes a life of equipoise which brings about
health, happiness, holiness and harmony both of the individual and
society."

In conduct, respectability is not righteousness. Mere
correctitude of behaviour is not the last word of morality. It may
be conventional good form but it is not creative good life. In
this connection Radhakrishnan mentions that Socrates' refusal
to escape from prison and Jesus's behaviour before Pilate are
some of the examples which are markedly different from
prudential morality. In ethics the discoverer of the true moral
good is the "moral hero" and thus the two examples mentioned
above are the examples of moral heroism. The moral hero, by
the very nature of the being, knows the path of duty clearly. But
the certainty is not quite like the Categorical Imperative.
because every man does not naturally know what he ought to do. On the other hand, it takes a kind of moral superman, who possesses a rigourously educated and disciplined conscience and gains automatically the knowledge of his duty.\footnote{Radhakrishnan says that virtue is heaven, self sufficiency and health of the soul. Vice, on the other hand, is hell, suffering and disease of the soul. Goodness is its own reward and evil doing carries its own penalty with it. It is not a question of the expediency or profitableness of virtue. The objective of morality to Radhakrishnan is social redemption and not individual salvation. Thus virtue is a steady pursuit of something higher and higher, and vice, the self satisfaction.}{\footnotemark}

According to Radhakrishnan, the term 'dharma' is of complex significance. "It stands for all those ideals and purposes, influences and institutions that shape the character of man both as an individual and as a member of society."\footnote{According to Radhakrishnan, the term 'dharma' is of complex significance. "It stands for all those ideals and purposes, influences and institutions that shape the character of man both as an individual and as a member of society."}{\footnotemark} It is a combination of ethics and religion. It is the law of right living, the observance of which secures the double object of happiness on earth and salvation. He maintains that dharma is progressive and changeable. He also says that the principles of dharma are eternal. "Though dharma is absolute, it has no absolute and timeless content. The only thing eternal about morality is man's desire for the better."\footnote{Dharma gives coherence and direction to the different activities of life. It is not a religious creed or cult imposing an ethical or social rule. "It is the complete rule of life, the harmony of the whole man who finds a right and just law of living."}{\footnotemark}
Further, Radhakrishnan relates this theory of dharma to the theory of reality, especially to the theory of universal self: "Dharma tells us that while our life is in the first instance for our own satisfaction, it is more essentially for the community and most of all for that universal self which is in each of us and all beings". 16

According to Radhakrishnan, inward awareness or Satya and life of compassion or ahimśā are the two principal sides of spiritual life. Man can develop his moral nature by cultivating love for his fellow beings. A life of spirit expresses itself in love. Then only we will know one another and love one another in that which is eternal. We should cultivate love not only in words but also in thoughts and deeds. When we see the universal spirit of Truth in each individual; we will love the meanest of creation as oneself. 17 In the spiritual commonwealth every one has a definite place by reason of his specific mode of being. No man has any claim to precedence over others. We should love our enemies too. Radhakrishnan says, "Even our enemies are not objects of contempt and aversion as they are moral personalities". 18 Love is non-resistance. Conflicts are to be overcome not by force but by love. Instead of incessantly resisting the evil in the name of an ideal, we are to endure it lovingly on its behalf. To him love of neighbour means endurance to evil.

Radhakrishnan regards truth as the supreme virtue. Man can know truth by controlling his narrow selfish motive and by transcending his ego-centricity. "In order to know the truth we
must cease to identify ourselves with the separate ego shut up in the wall of body, life and mind. We must renounce the narrow horizon, the selfish interest, the unreal objective. This is an ethical process".19

The Divine is expressed in nature as an impersonal, non-ethical creative power and as ethical consciousness in human life. When we realize that the Divine is expressed in us and in others, we feel the obligation to help others. Thereby the individual spirit becomes enriched. "Ahimsā is reverence for all life, active devotion to and a sense of union with all that exists."20 If we believe in God, we will adopt the principle of Ahimsa. √

Radhakrishnan says that good and evil presuppose the basis of egoism. "Good acts are those which aim at the well-being of oneself or other and evil ones are those which interfere with the well-being of oneself or others".21 Good and evil belong not to the reality as such but to the human world. They are symbolic, not images or shadows. Now the problem for man is to pass from symbols to reality. When he succeeds in his attempt, he is beyond good and evil, truth and error, beauty and ugliness. In the life of spirit all symbolism is welcome. To Radhakrishnan, "Evil, error and ugliness are not ultimate. Evil has a reference to the distance which good has to traverse. Ugliness is halfway to beauty. Error is a stage on the road to truth. No view is so utterly erroneous and no man is so absolutely evil as to deserve complete custigation."22
According to Radhakrishnan, if we hold that the world consist of free spirits, then evil is possible and probable. If all tendencies to error, ugliness and evil are to be excluded, there can be no seeking of the true, the beautiful and the good. He says, "If there is to be an active willing of these ideals of truth, beauty and goodness, then their opposites of error, ugliness and evil are not merely abstract possibilities but positive tendencies which we have to resist."\(^{23}\)

As there are laws in the physical world, similarly there are laws in man's moral and mental world. One of these laws is the law of Karma. According to Radhakrishnan, our life is not at the mercy of blind chance or capricious fate.\(^{24}\) He says that the literal meaning of Karma is action. All acts produce their effects which are recorded both in the organism and the environment. Their physical effects may be short lived but their moral effects are worked into the character of the self. Every thought and action of man has certain definite consequences. Man is both a determined and a free being. He is free to perform his actions or karma accordingly as he prefers to do. He gains the fruits of his deeds as he accomplishes them. Man's past karma is responsible for the present condition of his life. Again, his present act or karma will mould his future life.

Radhakrishnan seems to support Niṣkāma Karma of Bhāgavadgītā when he says "Actions done devotedly and whole heartedly without attachment to the results makes for perfection."\(^{25}\) He says that we have to work in the world as it is, while doing our best to improve it. We should not be defiled by
disgust when we look at the worst of life. To him, in order to
avoid the world of wars we will have to work in the spirit of Gītā
with detachment and dedication.

Karma is a principle of continuity. Good produces good,
evil produces evil. Love increases our power of love, hatred
increases our power of hatred. It emphasizes the great
importance of right action. According to Radhakrishnan, self-
determination means not determination by a fragment of the
self’s nature but by the whole of it. Unless the individual employs
his whole nature, searches the different possibilities, and selects
one which commends itself to his whole self, the act is not really
free. Radhakrishnan declares that freedom is not caprice, nor is
karma necessity. Karma or connection with the past is not
inconsistent with creative freedom. His reconciliation of karma
and freedom is significant. He writes, "Our demand for
freedom must reckon with a universe that is marked by order and
regularity. Life is like a game of bridge. The cards in the game
are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to past
karma but we are free to make any call as we think fit and lead
any suit. Only we are limited by the rules of the game. We are
more free when we start the game that later on when the game
has developed and our choices become restricted. But till the very
end there is always a choice. A good player will see possibilities
which a bad one does not. The more skilled a player, the more
alternatives does he perceive. A good hand may be cut to pieces
by unskillful play and the bad play need not be attributed to the
frowns to fortune..... The great souls find profound peace in the
consciousness than the stately order of the world, now lovely and luminous, now dark and terrible, in which man finds his duty and destiny, cannot be subdued to known aims. It seems to have a purpose of its own of which we are ignorant. Misfortune is not fate but providence."

Human choice is not unmotivated and uncaused. If our acts were irrelevant to our past, then there would be no moral responsibility or scope of improvement. Free act cannot negate continuity. Freedom is not caprice since we carry our past with us. Though the self is not free from the bonds of determination it can subjugate the past to a certain extent and turn it into a new course. Radhakrishnan says, "The law of karma encourages the sinner that it is never too late to mend. It does not shut the gates of hope against despair and suffering, guilt and peril. It persuades us to adopt a charitable view towards the sinner, for men are more often weak than vicious." It is not true that the heart of man is desperately wicked. It is also not true that man prefers evil to good and the easy descent to hell to the steep ascent to heaven.

According to Radhakrishnan, the institution of castes illustrates the spirit of comprehensive synthesis of the Hindu mind. The system of caste is the outcome of tolerance and trust. The different functions of human life are clearly separated here. The functions of the different castes were regarded as equally important to the well being of the whole society. The serenity of the teacher, the heroism of warrior, the honesty of the
businessman, the patience and energy of the worker all contribute to the social growth. "The truth underlying the system is the conception of right action as a rightly ordered expression of the nature of the individual being."28 Nature assigns to each of us our line and scope in life according to inborn qualities and self expressive function. "No one can be at the same time a perfect saint, a perfect artist and a perfect philosopher. Every definite type is limited by boundaries which deprives it of other possibilities."29 Nowhere, is it suggested that one should follow one's hereditary occupation without regard to one's personal capacities.

But, unfortunately, Radhakrishnan says, this system has now degenerated into an instrument of exploitation and intolerance. "The caste system is a degeneration of the class idea."30 Though idealistic in its origin, beneficent in large tracts of its history, it has grown out of harmony with our present conditions, owing to arrested development and lack of elasticity. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that caste is a source of discord and mischief, and if it persists in its present form, it will effect with weakness and falsehood the people that cling to it.

According to Radhakrishnan, the world is passing through a period of uncertainty and worldlessness longing. It wants to get out of its present mood of spiritual chaos and moral aimlessness. He shows the way: "Only when the life of spirit transfigures and irradiates the life of man from within it will be possible for him to renew the face of the earth."11
to him, the need of the present world is for a religion of the spirit which will give meaning and purpose to life, which will reconcile the ideal and the real and which will satisfy the whole of our being, our critical intelligence and our active desire.

SRI AUROBINDO:

Man possibly seeks for God in all the higher powers of his life. He sets out to arrive at his highest and most perfect self and the moment he touches upon it, the self in him appears to be one with some great soul, that is God. According to Sri Aurobindo to grow into harmony with its eternal nature of light, love strength and purity is the aim of ethics. Ethics, Sri Aurobindo says, is one of the means by which we arrive at the knowledge of the the workings of God through nature and through life. "Ethics must eventually perceive that the law of good which it seeks is the law of God and depends on the being and nature of the Master of the law." Ethics deals only with the desire soul and the active, outward, dynamic part of our being. Its field is confined to character and action. It prohibits and exhibits certain actions, desires and impulses. It also inculcates certain qualities in the act, such as truthfulness, love, charity etc. When it has got this done and assured a base of virtue, its work is finished.

Different theories of ethics such as hedonistic theory, sociological theory etc. have suffered from the defect of
abstraction. These theories have been built upon the truths of some one aspect of man's being, on the truth of the individual in isolation from society and vice-versa. But Sri Aurobindo points out, "The ethical being escapes from all these formulas; it is a law to itself and finds its principle in its own eternal nature which is not in its essential character a growth of evolving mind, even though it may seem to be that in its earthly history, but a light from the ideal, a reflection in man of the Divine." 3 4

Sri Aurobindo says that our ethical impulses begin in the infrarational and take their rise from the subconscient. They arise as an instinct of obedience to an understood law. At first man obeys the law without any question. He believes that these are the laws created by higher powers than himself and his race which are to be endured and cannot be violated. Later on, reason labours to use the ethical impulses intelligently and turns the instincts to ethical ideas. It corrects the crude and erring misprisions of man's ethical instincts, shows the relations of his clashing moral ideas, tries to compromise between their conflicting claims and arranges a system of ethical action. And all this, says Sri Aurobindo, is a necessary stage of our advance.

The high fulfilment of ethics comes when the being of man attains the level of divine nature. At this level, it is not his actions that standardise his nature, but his nature that gives value to his actions. He is no longer labouriously virtuous or artificially moral, but naturally divine. That is why Sri Aurobindo says, "Rising from the infrarational beginnings through its
intermediate dependence on the reason to a suprarational consummation, the ethical is like the aesthetic and the religious being of man a seeking after the eternal."35 This view takes account of the whole man, as a progressing, developing being seeking the fulfilment of his tendencies.

Sri Aurobindo puts emphasis on the necessity of spiritual transformation. He says that the supreme thing in us is the spirit, "the wide ground upon which a divine life of the human being can be with security founded."36 This spirit is not the intellect or will. It is higher than reason. It is concealed behind the coatings of our nature. It is the secret seed of divinity. The spiritual change must be accomplished first in the individual and in a great number of individuals before it can lay any effective hold upon the community. Therefore, Sri Aurobindo says, two conditions are to be satisfied in order that the spiritual change may be effected. First, there must be the individual and the individuals who are able to see, to develop, to recreate themselves in the image of the Spirit and to communicate both their idea and power to the mass. Secondly, there must be at the same time a mass, a society which is capable of receiving and effectively assimilating, ready to follow and arrive at an image of the Spirit. According to Sri Aurobindo, a spiritual human society would try to realize three essential truths of existence, viz. God, Freedom and Unity. When man is able to see God and possess him, then he will know real freedom and arrive at real unity.
The aim of a spiritual age of mankind will be able to diminish as far as possible the element of external compulsion in human life by awakening the inner divine compulsion of the spirit. In a spiritualised society, the divine whom an individual sees in himself, he sees equally in all others and as the same Spirit in all. "Not only to see and find the Divine in oneself, but to see and find the Divine in all, not only to seek one's own individual liberation or perfection but to seek liberation or perfection of others is the complete law of the spiritual being." 37

Sri Aurobindo thinks that the different political organisations such as nations, states, empires etc. fail to fulfil the dream of liberty, equality and fraternity. So there is needed a true religion of humanity which is different from orthodox religions. The fundamental idea of this religion of humanity is that "mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress, of the human being and human life are the chief duty and chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the state, the family nor anything else ought to take this place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid, its self-manifestation." 38 To him, the aim of the religion of humanity must be love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness in thought, feeling and life. Till this is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. Thus, Sri Aurobindo is a humanist. He is a spiritual humanist since he holds that the spirit
or God in man is the basic truth and goal of evolution and human effort.

Unlike Kant, who preached "Duty for the sake of Duty", Sri Aurobindo accepts duty for the sake of God. He says, "To work impersonally, desirelessly and without attachment to the fruits of our work, for the sake of God and the world and the greater self and the fulfillment of the universal will, --this is the first step towards liberation and perfection." Thus, like the Gītā, Sri Aurobindo emphasises the value of karma in life. But he does not admit karma as an end in itself. "The ideal man of Sri Aurobindo's moral philosophy works neither for himself nor for society, nor even for duty itself but for God as an instrument in His hand." In Sri Aurobindo's moral philosophy "Duty for Duty" is the highest principle so long as the ethical being remains in mental level. But as he transcends mental level, his performance of works becomes an outgrowing from the soul.

The Superman of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy transcends customary morality according to the law of his nature. "Supermen are conscious selfless divine instruments who devote their lives to the service of humanity without any selfish motive -- even without the motive of attaining their liberation. They consciously work for the spiritual uplift of humanity." They are divine man who consciously feel the pulse of divine energy within them, and try to elevate corporate human consciousness to the cosmic divine plane. They are devoid of love and hatred and suffused with psychic good will for all. Sri Aurobindo says that in the
spiritual progress of man "There could begin a heightening of our force of conscious being so as to create a new principle of consciousness, a new range of activities, new values for all things, a widening consciousness and life, a taking up and transformation of the lower grades of our existence, if brief, the whole evolutionary process by which the spirit in nature creates a higher type of being." 42

According to Sri Aurobindo, there are four main standards of human conduct that make an ascending scale. "The first is personal need, preference and desire; the second is the law and good of the collectivity; the third is an ideal ethic; the last is the highest divine law of nature." 43 He says that the satisfaction of one's physical and vital desires and mental cravings must be the first natural rule of his conduct. Then the personal satisfaction has to be constantly subordinated by the satisfaction of the society as a whole. Thirdly, above the natural individual law and the law of collectivity there has to arise the notion of an ideal moral law which is not the satisfaction of need and desire. On the other hand, it controls them in the interest of an ideal order that is neither animal nor vital or physical but mental. It is a creation of the mind's seeking for light and knowledge. Finally, there is above society's external law and man's moral law a law divine towards which both these laws are progressive steps that try to escape from the natural law of the animal to a universal rule. This law discovers the perfect movement and harmony of a great spiritualised collective life.
Sri Aurobindo upholds an ethics of self-realization. He says, "To discover the spiritual being in himself is the main business of the spiritual man and to help others towards the same evolution is his real service to the race." The spiritual self, says Sri Aurobindo, is not only individual and social but above all transcendental. The self is more than truth, beauty and goodness since it is consciousness, existence and bliss. It is neither social nor individual, neither rational nor infrarational but integrated, transformed and spiritualised.

In the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, the problem of good and evil occupies an important place. According to him, "Good is all that helps the individual and the world towards their divine fullness, and evil is all that retards or breaks up that increasing perfection." He says that evil and falsehood are the results of ignorance. So they cannot have their being in Divine personality. When separative or limited knowledge discards its separation and limitation, or when ignorance gradually vanishes into knowledge, evil and falsehood lose their status. In that case integral consciousness replace the partial consciousness of which falsehood and evil are the fruits. Therefore, evil and falsehood cannot be absolute. "Falsehood and evil has no fundamentality, no power of infinity or eternal being, no self-existence even by latency in the Self-Existent, no authenticity of an original inherence."

Sri Aurobindo holds that human values of good and evil as of truth and error, are uncertain and relative. What is held as truth in one place or time is held as error in another place or
time. What is regarded as good in one place or time is regarded as evil in another place or time. Again, what we call good results in evil and what we call evil results in good. This relativity, says Sri Aurobindo, is a circumstance in human mentality and the workings of the Cosmic-Force in human life. It is not the fundamental truth of good and evil.

Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that, "The duality of good and evil is not native to the material principle, it is absent from the world of Matter." It arises with the emergence of conscious life and emerges fully along with the development of mind in human life.

All types of evil and error arise out of the disharmony of life. Nature accepts them because they are necessary steps of the evolutionary process. The evolutionary intention acts through the evil as through the good. It has to utilise all. Because confinement to a limited good would imprison and check the intended evolution. The evolutionary nature, the cosmic force instils human being with the sense of good and evil and points out its ethical significance. By getting out of these good and evil, human beings can emerge into Supreme being which is eternal.

Sri Aurobindo places stress on the observance of self-sacrifice for the development of man's moral nature. According to him self-sacrifice "is the flowering of mankind's ethical growth, the evidence of our gradual rise from the self-regarding animal to the selfless divinity." This evolution is a gradual process. First, the egoistic individual self widens to include the welfare of the family as one's own welfare. Secondly, it is
realized that the community has a larger claim on man than his family. This communal self is again enlarged to include the self in nature. Then the progressive ethical being realizes that even this self should be enlarged to include the whole humanity. Finally, Sri Aurobindo points out the need of a still wider and deeper enlargement of self, that is, the realization of the Divine self. All lesser selves should be sacrificed for this highest one.

Morality, according to Sri Aurobindo, does not depend on consequences. Nor does it depend on motive or intention. It depends on the growth of consciousness, on the extent of which man's conduct is a true instrument of self-expression. The highest reward of the ethical being is his inner evolution. It is for this alone and not for any other results that he acts. Sri Aurobindo says, "But the truly ethical being does not need a system of rewards and punishments to follow the path of good and shun the path of evil; virtue to him is its own reward, sin brings with it its own punishment in the suffering of a fall from his own law of nature, this is the true ethical standard." 50

God is not a moral postulate. Nor is rebirth a moral necessity. According to him, freedom of will is the foundation of ethics. Freedom of will is not indeterminism but self-determinism and ultimately God-determinism. Sri Aurobindo says, "There is a Will or Force in the world which determines the results of my action as part of the great whole, there is will that determines, concealed by my thought and personal choice, the part that I shall take in determining the whole. It is this
that my mind seizes on and call my will. But I and mine are masks. It is All-Existence that gives me my reality; it is the All-will and All-knowledge that while I calculate works in me for its own incalculable purpose. For this very reason, I am right in laying stress on my free will."\textsuperscript{51} Thus man is the instrument and his divine self is the real master of his work.

Sri Aurobindo states that though Dharma is generally spoken of as something eternal and unchanging, yet in its forms it is continually changing and evolving. In this growth dharma is all that helps us to grow into the divine purity, largeness, light and freedom. Dharma, is a word which has an ethical and practical, a natural and philosophical and a religious and spiritual significance. Sri Aurobindo says that it may be used in any of these senses exclusive of the others. "Ethically it means law of righteousness, the moral rule of conduct, or in a still more outward and practical significance, social and political justice, or even simply the observation of the social law."\textsuperscript{52} If the word dharma is used in this sense, Sri Aurobindo says, we shall have to understand that when unrighteousness, injustice and oppression prevail, the Avatāra descends to deliver the good and destroy the wicked. The Avatāra also breaks down injustice and oppression and restore the ethical balance of mankind.

Sri Aurobindo does not accept the popular theory of Karma. He says, "The ordinary current conception of the law of karma is dominantly ethical, but ethical in no very exalted kind."\textsuperscript{53} He believes that the man is the architect of his own fate. All the activities he has performed in the past life must create
his present being and experiences. Similarly, all the activities that he is performing at present, will be the creator of his future being and experiences. "What I have become, I have made myself by the soul's past idea and action, its inner and outer Karma, what I will to be, I can make myself by present and future idea and action." From this it becomes clear that man's past and present karma shapes his future birth and determines the circumstances of his future life.

But, Sri Aurobindo points out that the law of Karma can carry its function only to a certain extent. It is not the law of karma which determines the destiny of the soul but rather the soul which uses the law as one of its instruments. The principal truth of human existence is spiritual and not mechanical. Human soul is greater than its karma. The soul has its own spiritual freedom. It is the soul of man that determines his own evolution. The law of karma is only one of the processes used by the self for the purpose of evolution. As we ascend in the chain of evolution, the hold of mechanical law is gradually weakened and we arrive at more and more spiritual freedom. As Sri Aurobindo points out "Prakriti is the field of law and process, but the soul, the Purusha, is the giver of the sanction, anumanta, and even if ordinarily it chooses to remain a witness and concede an automatic sanction, it can be if it wills, the master of its nature, Ishwara."55

Sri Aurobindo discusses the trend of the caste system in India. According to him, the Vedic institution of the four-fold
order, caturvarṇa, is miscalled the system of the four castes. Because caste is a conventional, varṇa is a symbolic and typal institution. "This appears in the Purushasukta of the Veda where the four orders are described as having sprung from the body of the creative Deity, from his head, arms, thighs and feet." 56 In this symbolic age, religious and spiritual elements predominate, though ethical, economic and physical elements prevail. In the next typal stage psychological and ethical elements predominate. The principal active contribution of this typal stage is the idea of social honour. The social honour of a Brāhmin resides in purity, piety, pursuit of knowledge etc. of the Kṣatriya, in courage, nobility etc., of the Vaisya, sound production, order, philanthropy etc., and that of the Śūdra is obedience, faithful service etc. The typal stage passes into the conventional stage of human society, when the external supports or expressions are given more importance than are the ideal or spirit. Thus in the evolution of the caste system, the outward support of the ethical four fold order - birth, economic function, religious ritual, family custom - began to exaggerate enormously. Thus the son of a Brāhmin came always to be looked upon conventionally as a Brāhmin. The rigidity having being established, the system lost its importance. In the full economic period of caste, the priests are known as Brahmins, the aristocrats and the feudal chiefs are Kṣatriyas, traders are the Vaisyas, and the half-fed labourer and the economic serf are the Śudras. When the economic basis also breaks down, then the imperfect old system has begun. And that is the last and present caste system in India. Sri Aurobindo says
that this imperfect form of the old system should be dissolved
or it would affect the system of life that clings to it.

Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that the ultimate object of
all social, political and human organisations, as also of all human
endeavour, should be to help each one and evolve such a
supramental consciousness and have an immediate realization of
the divine which would turn each into a universal, spiritual
individual. Therefore, Sri Aurobindo says, "The coming of a
spiritual age must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing
number of individuals who are no longer satisfied with the
normal, intellectual, vital and physical existence of man, but
perceive that a greater evolution is the real goal of humanity and
attempt to effect it in themselves, to lead others to it and to make
it the recognised goal of the race." 57

COMPARISON:

A close examination of the ethical theories of
Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo reveals that both of them look
upon morality as purely subjective. Morality, to them, is not
unconditional command, both of them consider morality as
belonging to the world of human beings. Morality belongs neither
to the real nor to the world of matter. These two contemporary
Indian philosophers have raised their voices against any form of
secular humanism which neglect the power of spirit in man.
According to them, awakening of the inner divine compulsion of
the spirit is more important than the element of compulsion in human life.

Both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo are of the opinion that ethical conduct is a means for spiritual life. It is a means by which we arrive at the knowledge of God. The Supreme thing in us is the spirit, it is the central reality. Radhakrishnan states that an ethical being has an intuitive apprehension of the real. Similarly, Sri Aurobindo expresses that the ethical being is a seeking towards the absolute, the Divine. Both of them agree that the high fulfillment of ethics comes when the being of man attains the level of Divine nature. Moreover, they opine that not only the liberation or perfection of one's own individual self but also the liberation or perfection of all is the complete law of spiritual being.

Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo may be said to be spiritual humanists as they hold the spirit or God in man as the basic truth and goal of human effort. Both of them agree that humanism is different from orthodox religions. Radhakrishnan terms it to be a religion secularised and Sri Aurobindo, a religion of humanity. To them the only values that matter are human values. Sri Aurobindo says that the aim of religion of humanity must be love and recognition of human brotherhood. And Radhakrishnan says that spiritual development of man and its intuitive realisation alone can inculcate love and brotherhood.

The 'moral hero' in Radhakrishnan's philosophy may be said to be similar to 'the superman' in Sri Aurobindo's ethics.
According to Radhakrishnan, the 'moral hero' is a kind of moral superman who knows the path of duty automatically. Sri Aurobindo too says that 'the superman' transcends customary morality. The superman knows the path of duty clearly.

Radhakrishnan's conception of good and evil resembles to that of Sri Aurobindo's conception. According to them good and evil are not absolute. They belong not to the world of reality but to the human world. But Sri Aurobindo's view on good and evil seems to be wider than that of Radhakrishnan when he says that they are necessary steps in the process of evolution. By getting out of the duality of good and evil, human beings can emerge into the eternal. Of course, Radhakrishnan too holds that good and evil are symbolic and when man passes from symbols to reality, he is beyond good and evil.

In the ethical theories of Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo 'dharma' occupies an important place. They hold that dharma is progressive and changeable. It has an ethical and religious significance. But it is different from religious creed or cult. Both of them relate the theory of dharma to the theory of reality.

Radhakrishnan puts emphasis on truth (Satya), life of compassion (ahimśā) and love. To him truth is the supreme virtue. But Sri Aurobindo does not give such supreme status to any virtue. He, on the other hand, has given great importance on the observance of self-sacrifice for the development of man's moral nature. He shows the evolutionary process in which the egoistic individual self widens step by step for the realization of the Divine self.
When explaining the law of karma, these two philosophers say that man's past karma is responsible for the present condition of his life. Moreover, his present karma will determine his future. Both of them seem to agree to the view of Gītā when they hold that actions performed without attachment to results make for perfection. But, Sri Aurobindo's explanation of the law of karma seem to be different from that of Radhakrishnan because he does not accept the popular theory of the law of karma. He says that human soul is greater than its karma. The soul of man determine its own evolution. The law of karma is only one of the processes used by the self for the purpose of evolution. Radhakrishnan, on the other hand, seems to support the conventional law of karma when he maintains that if our acts were irrelevant to our past there would be no moral responsibility or scope of improvement.

That the present caste system in India is a degeneration of the ancient idea, is the opinion of both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo. In their writings, these two philosophers show that in ancient India a person's function was determined by the society according to his personal capacities. This was done for the well-being of the society only. But, both of them maintain that in India today heredity becomes the chief factor to determine a man's caste without the consideration of his capacity. They are of the opinion that if this degenerated form of caste prevails more, it will affect the system of life that clings to it. Thus, Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo hope for a better future by removing maladies from the society. This is possible in a fully
evolved society where the individuals know the truth of their life, that they are based on or are outcomes of the Spirit. Conformity with the truth of the world is good, and hence to be emulated; discord with that is bad, hence to be discarded. Essentially both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo advocate the same age old spiritual philosophy of India.

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