CHAPTER – II

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY ACCORDING TO RADHAKRISHNAN

2.1. RELIGION: ITS DEFINITION AND NATURE

It is difficult to define religion because it is a growing, dynamic thing, elemental personal and broad in scope. Religion is something that must be realised and experienced, not defined. Cicero\(^1\) maintained that the word religion comes from the Latin word ‘relegere’ which means to bind together. Religion is therefore described as the binding force of the society. It is a principle of unification and harmonisation. Any discipline which binds us all together in a wholesome way is religion. It is not a mere conviction but conduct; not mere faith but functioning; not mere belief but behaviour. The whole of a human being’s personality is involved in religion. It originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. Religion is a universal phenomenon. It is very important instinct of man. In religion three things are regarded to be very essential. They are – notion of the holy, notion of the sacred and the idea of the supernatural. Religion involves three elements of human life- (i) cognitive or intellectual, (ii) emotional or effective and (iii) volitional or practical aspect.

Religion is a very important phenomenon in society and therefore it is necessary to have a proper understanding of its nature. As religion is a product of deep expression of life, it cannot be divorced from life. The root meaning of religion is that which binds men together. At the same time religion also binds the loose ends of impulses, desires and various processes of each individual. Therefore religion is an integrative experience of man collectively and individually. There are various forms of religion, but there is one underlying factor in all of them. These various forms of religion are associated with the task of living
and adjustment to the various demands of life and society. Religion as an integral part of society is primarily concerned with people and society and plays an all-embracing role in human life and thought. It reflects the values, norms and cultural picture of a society. Religion in general attempts to reveal the relation between man and God. It opens the way for man to the divine. Religion is man’s attitude towards Reality and it is regarded as something trans-human, something more than man. There is hardly any race, any people which is devoid of the sense of religion.

In the history of the study of religion different thinkers have offered different definitions of religion. There has never been a universally accepted definition of religion. So it is very difficult to give a simple and direct answer to the question, ‘what is religion?’ However we discuss briefly the various definitions of religion put forward by eminent scholars from their different viewpoints----

According to Flint anything more than theism is not possible and anything less than theism is no religion at all. In the same way William James used the word religion to cover the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine. James said that religion cannot stand for any single principle or essence as it is a collective name. Galloway defined religion as that man’s faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gains stability of life and which he expresses in acts of worship and service. These definitions are applicable to theism as these regard the power beyond men, as the essential feature of religion. James Martineau defines religion as a belief in an ever living God, that is a divine mind and will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind. James said that religion cannot stand for any single principle or essence as it
is a collective name. According to him religion cannot be limited to rituals which seek to please the deity.

According to Hegel, “Religion is the knowledge possessed by the finite minds of its nature as absolute mind.” He said that religion is a kind of popular philosophy. In religion we find truth conceived in concrete, pictorial, metaphorical forms. In philosophy the same truth is interpreted and presented in terms of pure thought. E.B Tylor formulates the definition of religion as “the belief in spiritual beings.” For James Frazer religion is propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life. N. F. S Ferre states that religion is a search for power to overcome the evil side of life even more than its concern for understanding what life at its centre or depth means.

Schleiermacher, while presenting his view about the nature of religion emphasised the factor of feeling. According to him, “The essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God.” In his opinion pure religion is a matter of pure feeling. It has nothing to do with knowledge. Religion is a warm, intimate, immediate awareness of the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the temporal as in the sense of dependence on the whole. He rendered great service to religion by saving it from the barren intellectualism on the one hand and on the other hand he saved it from bare moralism. He revealed the mystic inwardness of religion as immediate awareness to God. But critics point out that the essence of religion cannot be mere feeling. Feeling requires an idea contact. Therefore we cannot talk about feeling dissociate from idea- contact. Religious feeling cannot be separated from its object or intellectual content or from the behaviour which is its outward expression.

The moralists emphasise the moral aspect of religion. Mathew Arnold defines, “Religion as morality touched with emotion.” Kant gave more emphasis on the moral aspect
of religion. Kant says that religion is the recognition of all our duties as divine commands.

The French sociologist Emile Durkheim defines religion as an expression of social cohesion and an expression of collective consciousness, which is the fusion of all our individual consciousness, which then creates a reality of its own. He held the view that no society was known to have existed without a religion and that there were always some group that was sacred to its members in every society. Durkheim felt that by giving an absolute and sacred authority to the groups existing rules and values, religion powerfully reinforced a given social structure, restrained deviance and limited change.

Rudolf Otto in his book *The Idea of the Holy* discusses the nature of the divine. According to Otto, religion is an outcome of the *a priori* numinous feeling. Otto distinguishes between the rational and the non-rational. He holds that religion has a non-rational core which is given the name ‘numinous.’ It is the essence of all religions. The developed form of the numinous is the idea of the holy and it is identical with anything religious. According to Otto, the experience of a numinous is the experience of a “mysterious tremendum et fascinans.” For Otto, the whole course of the history of religion is determined by an evolving apprehension of the fundamental elements of the numinous. Therefore the numinous is, according to Otto, the core of all religions. By this Otto has put religion on a secure pedestal. If religious experience is non-rational, then it cannot be rationally explained. In this sense the finite human understanding cannot apprehend it fully. According to Otto, the religious life is something absolutely specific and unique.

In India the word ‘Dharma’ is commonly used for the word religion, although it is not identical with it. Dharma refers to the social, ethical, spiritual, moral goal-oriented and humanistic aspects of religious behaviour. Etymologically the word ‘Dharma’ is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘dhr’ which means to sustain, to uphold, to support, to nourish etc. In Indian philosophy and in the Indian scriptures, the word Dharma has been used in many
different senses. The word Dharma is mentioned in the Rg Veda, in the sense of ‘upholder or supporter or sustainer’. In the Atharva Veda, it is used in the sense of ‘merit acquired by the performance of religious rites’. In the Chāndogya Upanishad it stands for the peculiar duties of ‘Āsramas’. Dharma is very comprehensive in character. In course of the long development of Hindu society though Dharma has come to acquire a deep and rich meaning which cannot be covered by any single term like religion, law, morality, goodness etc. It signifies all these things and many others. Again Dharma is dynamic and changing in character. It is not something fixed and static, one and the same thing for all things and persons and at all times, but is subject to variations. Lord Krishna says that it is far better for a person to perform his own dharma however destitute of merit it may appear to be than to go after the dharma of another person however superior it may seem to be.\textsuperscript{12} Every individual has a swadharma of his own.

Religion may not be entirely a universal phenomenon, but it has a strong presence in the world. Definitions of religions are different. Some definitions are broad and some are narrow. Though there is no commonly held way of looking at religion, most of the world’s population participates in a form in one way or another. Even though there is some disagreement among people what religion is, they show some agreement on what religion does and how it does. Generally religion can be described as a unified system of thoughts, feelings and actions which is shared by a group that gives its members an object or objects of devotion, something sacred to believe in, such as God or spiritual concept. Religion deals with what might be called the supernatural or the spiritual about forces and powers beyond the control of human mind. It also involves a code of behaviour or personal moral conduct by which individuals may judge the personal and social consequences of their actions and the actions of others. Usually religion does it work through some form of organization and worship, as well as through sacred rites and rituals, sacred books etc.
Religion has great significance for human life. It is one of the important social institutions of mankind. Religion has an important role in human society. Religion continues to be a vital force in society because it has value for people. This value comes in the experience of something beyond the boundaries of day-to-day life. For some believers of religion, religious experience is a valuable product of faith, linking them to a bigger universe and giving them hope of eternal life. For some others religion is an opportunity for intellectual analysis of doctrines and teachings, while for others the value of religion comes in its teachings about how to lead a moral and ethical life. Religion also plays an important role in regulating acceptable moral behaviour, and in implementing a sense of ethics, or proper behaviour and justice not only in the followers of that particular religion, but also in society as a whole.

Religion is the ultimate source of social cohesion. The primary requirement of society is the possession of social values by which individuals control the action of self and the action of others and through which society is perpetuated. Religion is the foundation upon which these values rest. Religion is the central element in the life of civilisation. Religion is important not only to guide people through life but necessary for people to reflect on the meaning of life and what they really want out of life.

2.2 RELIGION ACCORDING TO RADHAKRISHNAN

The salient features of Radhakrishnan’s philosophy comprise universal outlook, synthesis of the east and west in religion and philosophy, the spiritualism and humanism and openness to the influences of science, art and values. Naturally he combined the two traditions with perfect ease and is able to evolve a philosophy of synthesis. The philosophical thinking of Radhakrishnan is influenced by a number of factors of which Indian religious tradition, Advaita Vedānta philosophy, and Hegelian absolute idealism are the most
important. Radhakrishnan goes through the philosophical doctrines of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gitā, the basic texts of the orthodox and the heterodox schools and the commentaries of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. His philosophy contains a deep spiritual awareness.

Religious philosophy of Radhakrishnan is a landmark in the history of religion since he has given a panorama of central core of religion, apart from giving an authoritarian as well as institutional interpretation of religion. Radhakrishnan was deeply religious in his thinking. In his many lectures and writings he explained what he meant by religion. Radhakrishnan conceives the meaning of religion with a new orientation. According to Radhakrishnan, “Religion is not a creed or a code but an insight into reality.”

Religion implies a discipline, which transforms man’s nature and he develops an insight into his own true nature or his essence. Religion also implies firm faith in the existence of God, the soul of man and absolute spiritual values. Radhakrishnan stated that religion must contribute in the process of man’s evolution in his divine stature. Religion has to develop the spirit of love, tolerance and universal brotherhood. Thus a religion, which breeds narrowness, dogmatism, selfishness and communalism, must be abandoned.

Radhakrishnan stands for that religion which is ethically sound and quite relevant to human needs and social environment. Instead of isolation and resignation, true religion teaches courage and adventure. It also cultivates inner life, and the apprehension of the life beyond life. In his concept of religion, Radhakrishnan discussed all these things. According to Radhakrishnan, “Religion is spiritual change, an inward transformation. It is a transition from darkness to light, from unregenerate to a regenerate condition. It is an awakening; rebornness.......Religion is an experience which affects our entire being, ends our disquiet and anguish, the sense of aimlessness of our fragile and fugitive existence.”
Radhakrishnan’s concept of religion is dynamic. It is an authentic religion which makes an individual free from fear and fanaticism and brings about a change in society at the conscious level for the attainment of wholeness. Radhakrishnan’s religion of spirit serves as an inspiration in life. Religion is the awareness of our real nature in God. Religion is also defined by Radhakrishnan as strenuous endeavour to apprehend truth. Radhakrishnan admitted that a true religion is a perennial wisdom; it is eternal aspect behind all religions. It is ‘Sanātana Dharma’, or a timeless tradition of human race. According to Radhakrishnan religion is spiritual insight. Radhakrishnan holds that religion is, “in essence, experience or of living contact with ultimate reality.” It is an autonomous form of experience. Essentially, religion is concerned with the inner life of human being. True religion is an expression of the true nature of the self. Its root lies in the spirit of which is deeper than feeling, will or intellect. Our deepest soul experiences divine nature which is spontaneous, autonomous and unique. It is genius and exceptional. He says, “Religious experience is exceptional only in the sense that all genius is exceptional.”

Religion therefore touches the inner essence of human being. It aims at the attainment of salvation of life and makes man able to transcend his narrow egoism to spiritual pride. Religion makes spiritual change, inward transformation. Religion is a power of conservation of the whole world by awakening spirituality in man. It makes man free from the delusion of caste, creed, wealth and power. Religion aims at peace and truth.

Radhakrishnan says, “Religion is a search for truth and peace, not power and plenty.” The true meaning of religion is therefore found within and inside us. Man’s religion is his own. It is not imposed by any external principles or authority or code. Radhakrishnan says, “A man’s religion must be his own and not simply accepted or trust or imposed by authority. While trust and authority may put him on the way, it is his own independent search that will take him to the goal.” Of course trust or authority may guide
him to lead a right path. So, religious experience is quite personal where the self makes
communion with the divine being. It is so intensive and inward as its root lies in the very
depth of being. More we dive in to the experience more we get an intense feeling of
indubitable. It is “flight of the alone to the Alone.”

For Radhakrishnan, religion is more than revelation. It attempts to manifest what lies
deep in our being as also an effort to have a contact with that. The deepest layers of man’s
being are spiritual and religion being a spiritual attempt can trace out this layers. To have a
notion of God is not enough for religion. It attempts to transform our material experience in
to spiritual one in which we are acquainted with the deepest layers. The deepest layers refer
to ultimate reality.

Radhakrishnan was a worldwide acknowledged idealistic philosopher who specially
brought our certain influential development regarding the understanding and interpretation of
religion. According to him it is not easy to find out an exact definition of religion. Basically
he emphasises the universal aspect of religion. He speaks of the ultimate religion that is
religion as conceived in the most general way. According to Radhakrishnan, “Religion is an
independent functioning of the human mind, something unique, possessing an autonomous
character. It is something inward and personal, which unifies all values and organises all
experiences. It is the reaction of the whole of man to the whole of reality. It may be called
spiritual life, as distinct from a merely intellectual or moral or aesthetic activity or a
combination of them.” Religion is essentially a discipline of the soul. It effects
the transformation, integration and purification of the entire human personality. It is a
transforming experience. Religion is not the result of intellectual analysis. It is the art of self-
discovery. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that religion is not so much theological learning
or dialectical skill as spiritual insight. It is the conviction that man is not mere intellect or
senses or the mind but spirit, which while including all these far transcends them, and is
different from them. Radhakrishnan holds that religion has the aim of fellow feeling in the entire mankind and this can be accomplished by the spiritual insight or the awareness that man is spirit and not intellect. Radhakrishnan rejects the false conceptions of religion such as the ideal of the satisfaction of pleasures in heaven. Religion unites time and eternity in one eternal bond of friendship and harmony.

According to Radhakrishnan religion must be lived and experienced. In fact it is life experienced in its depth. Religion aims at spiritual fulfilment but it cannot be realised if man sticks to mere outer forms of religion without religious experience. Radhakrishnan repeatedly emphasised that we have to live in religion. Our religious temper and commitment must find expression in our day–to–day actions. If a person only professes religion but cannot practice it then that person deceives himself and others. Again if our faith in God is complete, if our actions conform to our ideals and if there is no difference between our belief and behaviour then religion can become the most powerful means of improvement of an individual and human society. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that, “There is nothing special in loving those who love us or who are themselves lovable. Jesus asks us to love our enemies in the hope of reawakening their humanness, their potential capacity for love. We are called upon to remove from the enemy’s heart the fear of our own hateful intentions. How far do we carry out these instructions to be good even to those who hate us?”

Radhakrishnan often uses the terms religion and spirituality as inter-changeable. When he distinguishes the two he relates religion to dogma and creed and spirituality to the experience of the true or Real Being. To him, “Genuine religion is indistinguishable from and coeval with spirituality.” Radhakrishnan asserts that Hinduism emphasises ‘spiritual experience’ rather than doctrine or creed, for which Hinduism is as ‘eternal religion’ (Sanātana Dharma) as it encompasses all the other religions with an open mind. Religious experience is spiritual experience which is integral in nature. Religion cannot be identified
with the phenomenal accounts of ‘pure experience’. While phenomenologists attempt to restore the pre-reflective experience of unity that accompanies all cognition, Radhakrishnan is concerned with reinstating the uniqueness and autonomy of religious experience. In his analysis, wholeness and self-sufficiency emerge as hallmarks of spiritual experience.  

In the course of history of thought religion has been identified with feeling, emotion, and sentiment or with instinct, cult and ritual or with perception, belief and faith. According to Radhakrishnan, religion contains all those elements in some form or the other. Religion is a synthesis of all these. The conflicts of different religions are due to the emphasis on one aspect of religion in utter disregard to other aspects. These conflicts do not touch the essence of religion. The essence of all religions is one and the same. Religion is an insight into the nature of Reality. It is a direct experience of Reality. This insight reveals that the ultimate reality is somehow immanent in man. Religion is a living creative power. It is the self-manifestation of the ultimate reality in man. Religion is not a way out of life but way unto life. Religion is the awareness of our real nature of the divine. It is also a way of response to the ultimate reality. Religion implies a faith in the ultimate spiritual values and a way of life to realise them. This faith involves an awareness of the beyond. It also involves a conviction that such awareness is possible. Radhakrishnan believes that the true meaning of religion lies in the development of the individuality of human being. It a way of living which disciplines body, mind and thought. True religion therefore summons man to change his individualist selfish nature and to let the divine nature in him. Religion is therefore, not a rigid ethical code but a universal guideline which teaches man to fight against the evil and to strive for the truths of the spirit.

According to Radhakrishnan, true religion is the most efficient instrument of social regeneration. In almost all his speeches and writings, he has put forth the ideal of the Religion of the Spirit. The function of religion is to foster humanist ideals and world unity. It
must harmonize the claims of the mind, heart and spirit. Religion is the response of the total nature of man. Religion is not a mere faith, it is conduct also. It helps us to transform our life and give us a new outlook. Radhakrishnan believes that at the core of all religions there is a wide field of agreement. This field of agreement he calls the Religion of Spirit. Radhakrishnan conceives the meaning of religion neither as ‘mere consciousness of value’ as Kant says nor as a ‘form of knowledge’ as Hegel says. Like the ancient Indian thinkers he says, “There is in it a mystical element, an apprehension of the real and an enjoyment of it for its own sake which is absent in the moral consciousness.”

For Radhakrishnan, religion is direct apprehension of the Supreme Reality. It is the attainment of a state of illumination. The Reality is omnipresent and therefore man is able to comprehend it directly within his own in most being. This truth is enunciated in the Upanishadic maxim, ‘tat tvam asi,’ (that thou art). Radhakrishnan says that, God is true according to all religions. Religion is a way of life which has for its end a profound spiritual transformation. Religion is not a theory or a sentiment, but a vital experience. Ethics cannot be divorced from religion as the essence of religion is the vision of the good. All religions are of a value in so far as they are exercises and discipline of the spirit. According to Radhakrishnan, any religion which asks us to hate other human beings cannot be regarded as true religion. Unless religion asks us to love one another, since God is love, it is not true religion. Religion is a means for fostering the integration of personality, social equality and also respect for all living faiths. A truly religious is devoid of any sense of egoism, any passions, hatred, ill will etc. Religion is direct encounter with the Supreme Reality and insight into the mastery of things, in to the meaning of existence. Religion reflects our common spiritual struggle and aspiration. Religion is not theology, but practice and discipline. The main purpose of religion is to restore the lost relationship between the individual and the eternal.
A particular religion, may, however be a defective one as it cannot generally get rid of prejudices and superstitions and dogmas. But an ideal religion is without defects and through Vedānta Radhakrishnan is seeking for such a religion. He is interested in a Universal Religion based on Vedāntic principles. His religion speaks of the city of God, a divine city where theological differences are absent. When man reaches this city through religion, he will find divine grace, and attain thereby salvation. He therefore, attempts at reconciliation of theological differences and claims of science and theology as well.

Religion is a matter of personal experience; it is not a matter of mere dogmas or faiths; it is a kind of personal experience. Man must be transformed, in that he has to become a different human being altogether as a result of his religious conversion. Without such spiritual conversion, man is not truly religious. ‘Religion’, Radhakrishnan says, “is not a thing which one can be bought or got from visiting temple or churches or other places of worship. It is a thing which one can practice only by waging incessant war on the baser instincts which have so much command over human nature.” For Radhakrishnan religion is not the mere search for individual salvation. It is not a mere belief, it is behaviour. It is a quest for values. Religion is the most potent instrument for individual salvation and social regeneration. It is a force and not a mere form. Through religion we can integrate ourselves with external nature, with fellow man and with one’s own life.

Radhakrishnan stands for a religion that is rational, scientific, humanistic and that which makes for world unity and fosters peace. For him religion is in essence a mystic experience- a firsthand encounter with God. It is a life transforming experience carrying a certitude all its own. Religion as a transforming experience makes man realise his true nature. Man does not understand his true dimension as long as he lives at the superficial level of the senses. The function of religion is the evaluation of man into his divine stature, develop awareness and intensity of understanding and bring about a better, deeper and more enduring
adjustment in life. Religion commands man to make the change in his own nature and let the
divine in him manifest itself. According to Radhakrishnan the purpose of life is not the
enjoyment of the world but the education of the soul.

Like many modern thinkers Radhakrishnan’s approach to religion has also a very
strong social aspect. According to him religion has a very vital role in moulding the society
and conserves the order of the society. Radhakrishnan maintains that religion is an integral
element of a society and it represents the whole aspect of human being. According to him
there is no sharp distinction between religion and social life. Religion has two sides, the
individual and the social. Both the sides are interdependent and complementary to each other
and without the one the other is ineffectual. Religion must lay emphasis on individual culture
and transformation of the inner world of man. Unless the individual is pure and perfect the
ideals of religion cannot be realised on earth. But religion is not merely individual perfection.
Religion is not solitary life. Radhakrishnan says, it is sarvamukti or the emancipation of the
entire mankind that the truly religious man tirelessly works. The religious man sees all
existence in his own self. True religion is universally valid and it encourages ‘fresh truth’ and
awakens ‘social passion’. Religion encourages man to become more and more integrated. It
aims at creating harmony among people of different religions and demonstrates how to live
together striving to attain perfection. According to Radhakrishnan the individual and social
aspects of religion are interlinked and inseparable. The personal and social dimensions of
religion derive from both the autonomous and heterogeneous nature of man. Religion has
been one of the most important preoccupations of mankind throughout the course of human
civilisation. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that most of the social inequalities and injustices
pervading all over can be easily affected by harmonious relations based on spiritual
consciousness and this sense of wholeness may be furnished by religious ideologies. Religion
is a great socialising and civilising agency which intends to call for a fresh and new turn of
mind and heart that guides us towards fellowship and co-operation. Radhakrishnan holds religion as a social factor, a binding force upon the social relations with moral awareness. He believes in the authenticity of experience and its insight penetrates into the things. Radhakrishnan like Gandhi also believes that religion should be treated as an inward integration which each one has freedom to achieve for oneself, without interference from others. It is as well as a call to establish an equitable social order...... Religion is in its essence, reintegration of human personality and redemption of human society. Radhakrishnan asserts that a religion which does not give importance to social reform and international justice has no appeal to the modern mind.

Radhakrishnan believes that religion should have great touch with human behaviours and his works. There should have profound consistency between inner and outer life which modern man lacks. Radhakrishnan writes, “The inadequacy of religion is evident from the disparity between outward allegiance and inward betrayal.” Among other things religion is by itself an abstraction. The true meaning of religion lies in man’s utmost and intense faith in the Supreme. True religion is the aspiration of the soul. Radhakrishnan prescribes to observe different modes of religious rites like worship, prayer to increase our faith in the Supreme. Religion is not a study of God. It is an endeavour to regain the lost unity between the individual and the Absolute. It is a binding force which enriches our fellow feelings.

It is generally observed that at the down of civilization religion, science, art, morality was found intermingled together. According to Radhakrishnan, it is untrue to believe that there is an opposition between science and religion. Talking about the relevance of religion in our own age of science, Radhakrishnan said, “The controversy between science and religion is out of date, for the science which challenged religion is as dead as the religions which it challenged. The problem today relates not to the incredible dogmas of
religion, but to the place of the spiritual in a universe which cannot be explained altogether by science. The kingdom of spirit is always within each of us. He holds that the creed of religion is as real as the theories of sciences. Philosophy is to lean on religion heavily with a view to possessing a spiritual flavour. While science enriches philosophy with material data, religion provides it with spiritual data. Philosophy has to work on both of them. For the progress of man both civilization and culture are necessary. Science contributes to the advancement of civilization while religion contributes to the advancement of culture. While culture is connected with man’s spiritual experience, civilization is connected with his material behaviour. Both are necessary for over all progress of man.

Religion, for Radhakrishnan, was the supreme value of human life, which must lend its own colour and complexion to everything that concerns human life. The distinctive feature of Indian religious thought is that there is no dividing line between religious and secular. Radhakrishnan exhibits an integral viewpoint in his systematic approach to religion. He has pointed out the contribution of each great religion to humanity and emphasised their fundamental unity. According to Radhakrishnan, religious truth depends upon the intuitive experience of the individual who reveals it to the world in human language as far as possible. Radhakrishnan also stated that the religion, which springs from the radical insufficiency of human nature, is an instinct with us which surely we cannot shake off. In fact there is nothing else but religion which transfigures the whole personality of man, his thought, feeling and action. Religion is the ultimate attitude of thought, feeling and will to God or the ultimate reality. It is by religion that man is able to create harmony in him and produce harmony in the universe and establish harmonious relationship with his fellowmen. Radhakrishnan assures that religion can give us the highest bliss; it can maintain our intimate contact with creativity. Religion has the capacity to meet challenges that comes in course of time in the
society. He emphasised very clearly that the growth of society is intimately related to the growth of religion. Religion gives security to value and meaning to life.

Symbolism plays an important role in religion. We adore the Supreme in the form of images or symbols. Symbolism is the vision of infinite, in the finite. According to Radhakrishnan, religion requires an observation of strict ethical discipline. It transforms our being and makes us capable to grasp the Reality by widening the narrow region of our being.

Radhakrishnan holds that the Hindu concept of Dharma is accepted as the rule of life. The Hindu ethical and social duties make our life disciplined. They are the ways to achieve the goal of life. Religion also requires an absolute purity of the mind. Inward purity is the complete mastery of the being over all other faculties. Purity of mind makes capable to realize divine being that within us. Meditation is the way of making contact with the Reality. It is the means of establishing direct relation with our inner being. It is the art of living in tune with the eternal. It increases our self-awareness. In true religion an inter subjective relation between divine being and individual self is established. It manifests one’s inward achievements. It is an aspiration of the self. In the words of Radhakrishnan, “True religion is not what we get from outside, from books and teachers. It is the aspiration of the human soul, that which unfolds within oneself, that which is built by one’s life blood.”

Radhakrishnan’s interpretation of religion is unique in the field of philosophy. He has prescribed a religion which is both scientific and humanistic. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that we cannot rest religion on dogmatic supernaturalism. He affirms that the idea of God is an interpretation of experience. It follow here that religious experience are for Radhakrishnan context relative. However religious experiences have value for Radhakrishnan, in so far as they offer the possibility of heightening one’s religious consciousness and bringing one to ever closer proximity to ‘religious intuition’. In his conception of religion Radhakrishnan affirms religion as a life or experience. It is an insight
into the nature of reality or experience of reality. The significance of Radhakrishnan’s philosophy is that he has attempted to restate certain aspects of Vedanta and recapture the eternal meaning of religion for modern man. He has related the imperishable truths of religion to modern enquiry. Radhakrishnan has discovered the ultimate truth of philosophy and of religion in the history of Indian Philosophy. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that religion can be equated with perennial philosophy under the circumstances that, religion must be purely spiritual, cleansed of all accidental accretions and it must be spiritual. Moreover Radhakrishnan seeks to show that religion has the qualifications to be treated as a fit subject for metaphysical investigation. He makes a sustained effort to vindicate religious experience as the plane where the realm of essence and existence meet. Radhakrishnan’s constructive endeavour is directed towards delineating metaphysics of religious experience. Radhakrishnan was a profoundly religious man. The most important contribution which Radhakrishnan has made is that of the religion of the spirit that must according to him be the future religion of the world. Radhakrishnan says that no religion is perfect, because religion is a movement or growth in which the new rested on the old. The different religions, Radhakrishnan felt, were like comrades in a joint enterprise for facing the common problems of peaceful co-existence, international welfare and justice, social equality and political independence. He used this as the basis for the development of human culture. He also asserted that religion which has not given importance to social reforms and international justice has no appeal to the modern mind.

2.3 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE:

While discussing the nature of religion Radhakrishnan put special emphasis upon religious experience. Radhakrishnan says, religious experience is, as old as our smiling and weeping, loving and forgiving, the sense of God is induced within us in several ways, through communion with nature, through worship of goodness even though natural events
like sunset and death. Referring to Schleiermacher, Radhakrishnan pointed out that in religious consciousness the element of feeling is predominant. Religious feeling of course is different from other kinds of feeling. Radhakrishnan would not agree with the view of Harold Hoffding that religion is a belief in the conservation of values. For Radhakrishnan religious experience is not just a matter of consciousness of values. Religious experience is not ultimately determined by the social dimension of the human psyche. Religious experience is the total reaction of whole man to the reality as a whole. It includes intellectual, ethical and aesthetic activities, but it transcends them. The individual self merges in it with the Universal Self. Inward peace, joy and power result in this experience. There is also a feeling of inner freedom in it. There is a feeling that religious experience is the most certain and the most ineffable possession of man’s life. This certitude and ineffability can neither be demonstrated nor proved. Radhakrishnan uses the expressions ‘self-established’, ‘self-evidencing’, ‘self-luminous’, to describe the nature of such an experience. Radhakrishnan is aware of the fact that it is not possible for our modes of expressions to comprehend fully the nature of religious experience. These expressions are only an attempt to explain the inexplicable. Religious experience is a type of experience in which the ordinary subject-object dichotomy is absent. Here we find an integral, undivided consciousness. In this consciousness not just a few aspects of the human nature are involved. It seems that the whole of the human being finds its expression in religious experience. In religious experience a sense of timelessness prevails.

In ordinary experiences a sense of time is present. There are references to past, present and future. But in religious experience these references are removed. In ordinary experience there is a separation between consciousness and being. But in religious experience consciousness and being are vitally united. Under ordinary circumstances consciousness is always consciousness of something. But this is not so in religious
experience. Here we find a total union of thought and being. Radhakrishnan called it the creative merger of the subject and the object. In the true spirit of the Philosophy of the Upanishads Radhakrishnan remarked that in religious experience the privacy of the individual self is broken. The individual self is invaded by the universal self. Radhakrishnan pointed out that while ordinary experience is incomplete religious experience is always complete. It does not appear to be something fragmentary and needs to be completed by some other experience. Describing the nature of religious experience, Radhakrishnan says, “It is a condition of consciousness in which feelings are fused, ideas melt into one another, boundaries broken and ordinary distinctions transcended. Consciousness and being are not there different from each other. All being is consciousness and all consciousness being. Thought and reality coalesce and a creative merging of subject and object results. Life grows conscious of its incredible depths. In this fullness of felt life and freedom, the distinction of the knower and the known disappears.”

Radhakrishnan admitted that, religious experience is not merely a form of knowledge as other ordinary experiences; it cannot be expressed just in a body of certain codes and rules of behaviour. It is above all these. Radhakrishnan admitted that religious experience is not mere ‘consciousness of value’, nor it is a ‘form of knowledge’. He maintained that there is a mystical element in religious experience.

Religious experience is not to be confused with the pursuit of truth, beauty or goodness. It is a life of adorning love, transcending these. Religious experience, when genuine is characterised by vividness, directness, freshness and joy. In it we feel the impact of Reality. It is spiritual discovery, not creation. Like philosophy religion is an attempt to account for our experience as a whole. According to Radhakrishnan, our concepts of nature, soul and God die, if they have no roots in experience. In the interpretation of experience, we employ the method of reason. It is the only way of attaining truth.
Radhakrishnan also discussed the epistemic status of religious experience. He pointed out that our experiences need to be validated by something or other that falls outside of them. But religious experience need not be validated by anything external to it. It is self validated, self luminous. It does not appeal to external standards which might be supplied by logic or metaphysics. Religious experience is beyond the bounds of proof or demonstration. It is characterised by completeness. When religious experience is realised, or when we have religious experience then a complete peace prevails. This experience is found to be profoundly satisfying. The continuance of this experience in which there is a complete realisation of peace may be called dwelling in heaven.

According to Radhakrishnan, the actuality of the religious experience is undeniable. We may have some observations and disputes regarding the implications of religious experience. This experience has an intuitive character. Such intuitions are not frequent. But even ordinary persons have experiences of them. So long as there is religious experience the individual remains in ecstatic state. According to Radhakrishnan he remains rapt in contemplation. In religious experience there is a feeling of certitude. This feeling of certitude appears to be beyond all cannons of logic. Again religious experience appears to be beyond all language. It is characterised by Radhakrishnan as ineffable. The content of religious experience is such that about which nothing more can be said. Conceptualisation is of no help here. Conceptual substitute for the religious experience are inadequate.

The aim of religious endeavour is “to enable man to realize the divine in him as the central fact of his being by growing into with it.” Religion is a way of life that enables man to “make a change in his own nature to let the Divine in him manifest himself.” Religion is an attempt at self-realisation which means to lift the empirical ego into the transcendental plane. According to Radhakrishnan, “Religion asks us to look within ourselves and to transform ourselves, to cleanse ourselves of all evil tendencies, the baser, the fallen side of
human nature and raise ourselves to a higher plane.”\(^3\) The means are indicated to fulfil the aim of religion. A strict ethical discipline is necessary at first. Again there is an insistence on the cultivation of the intellect.

2.4 CONCEPT OF THE ABSOLUTE:

In the writings of Radhakrishnan we may see the culmination of the idealist tradition of Indian philosophy. In conceiving the nature of the ultimate reality Radhakrishnan leans heavily on the Vedānta. Radhakrishnan is greatly indebted to the Upanishadic philosophy and also the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara for his concept of Absolute Reality. The Vedānta conceives the ultimate as the Brahman, which is the logical prior of the universe. Radhakrishnan also says that the ultimate reality is Brahman, the Absolute which is the logical ground of everything real and existent. As a philosopher Radhakrishnan is fully aware of the fact that it is not possible to give a materialistic or a naturalistic description of the Ultimate. The Ultimate much be such that it can fully account for everything- the universe and even itself.

According to Radhakrishnan Brahman is the ultimate reality. Brahman is Absolute and spiritual. Upanishads also denotes Absolute as Brahman. But Upanisadic concept of Supreme Reality is quite negative. Upanishads holds that the Absolute can be described only as `not this’, ‘not this’ (netti, netti).\(^3\) Though Radhakrishnan conceives the nature of ultimate reality in the light of Upanishads and Advaita Vedānta he describes it positively. For him, “Absolute is pure consciousness, pure freedom and infinite possibility”.\(^3\) Radhakrishnan believes that negative description of ultimate reality reduces its nature to bare existence. To deny attributes means to describe it as vacuum. Radhakrishnan says, “By denying all attributes and relations we expose ourselves to the charge of reducing the ultimate being to bare existence which is absolute vacuity”.\(^4\) Indeed Radhakrishnan is not so critical in using
the negative method to describe the Absolute. He says, “We can speak of the Absolute only in the negative way”. But it does not mean that he has blindly followed Śaṅkara’s view of the Absolute. He takes it in the positive sense. He says, “The negative account should not lead us to the suspicion that the Supreme itself is negative. It is the basis of all existent things.” Unlike Śaṅkara, Radhakrishnan’s Absolute is a whole where differences are reconciled and not obliterated. Radhakrishnan says, “That the Supreme in its non-relational aspect is the Absolute.”

Radhakrishnan feels that qualities of existence, order demand an ontological foundation and that can be provided by nothing less than the Absolute. Absolute is spiritual in nature. It is a free spirit. There is nothing beyond it. Its freedom is uninterrupted. The Absolute is described as infinite. It is incapable to increase. Absolute is complete in itself because it lacks nothing. It is changeless because it is infinite. The wholly perfect is the Absolute. Radhakrishnan asserts that the Absolute is beyond all its expressions. He says “Pure being which is the Absolute can only be indicated. It can be alluded to, but not described.”

In presenting his concept of Absolute, Radhakrishnan was influenced by Hegelian tradition also. According to Hegel, ultimate reality is the Absolute from the philosophical standpoint while it is God from the religious standpoint. Radhakrishnan also held this view. The Absolute, Hegel thinks, when grasped in religion, through representation becomes God. This means that God is an image of the Absolute. Like Hegel, Radhakrishnan also believes that the ultimate reality is a concrete synthetic being. Hegel calls the ultimate reality as the Absolute spirit. This Absolute spirit is a neither concrete universal which is neither difference less nor relation less. There is a relation of mutual dependence between the Absolute and the world. The Absolute for Hegel is both “itself and not itself”, its ‘itself’ is through the other self which is the ‘not self’. A ‘not self’ is a necessary moment of the self
expression of the Absolute. Radhakrishnan firmly asserts that the “Absolute is not an abstract
unity, but a concrete whole, binding together the differences which are subordinate to it. The
whole has existence through the parts, and the parts are intelligible only through the
whole.” The Absolute is “an organised whole with interrelated parts. On the line of Hegel’s
doctrine of unity-in-difference, Radhakrishnan remarks, “The same Absolute reveals itself in
all these but differently in each. The ultimate reality sleeps in the stone, breathes in the
plants, feels in the animals and awakes to self-consciousness in man.”

The Absolute for Radhakrishnan is a total spiritual reality, manifested and
unmanifested, actual and potential, realised and unrealised. It is the only reality underlying
the entire range of phenomena. The universe is growing with change, order, development and
purpose. The conditions of the universe demand an ontological foundation. Radhakrishnan
maintained that it can be provided by nothing else other than the Absolute. The Absolute is
pure being and is the foundation of all existence. To account the growing universe with its
time and change Radhakrishnan maintains a dynamic view of Absolutism. He writes, “What
we want is a dynamic monism capable of accounting for the growing universe with its time
and change.” The Absolute should be a real living whole including both the finite and the
infinite.

The Absolute is full of infinite possibilities and the world is the actualisation of one
of them. 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 consciousness of the syllogism follows from the premises. 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. The Absolute is a free spirit. Nothing can limit its freedom. The Absolute is
complete in itself. The Absolute is the source of all manifestations. Though the Absolute is
by nature nameless and formless, all names and forms are manifestations of its possibilities. The Absolute is therefore both abstract possibility and concrete reality. All these views show that the Absolute co-insides all the opposites. He says that it is all and nothing, self and not self, formless and form, the unknown knower in which all things are known. Radhakrishnan on the one hand says that the Absolute which is non-relational aspect of the Supreme transcends all temporal relations and on the other hand says that the Absolute embraces time, its events, processes. The finite universe is rooted in the Absolute. He seems to be presenting a contradictory picture of the Absolute as both non-relational and as the foundation of all relations. The Absolute as non-relational is an abstract entity. The Supreme in its non-relational aspect is the Absolute, in its active aspect it is God.

2.5. CONCEPT OF GOD:

In order to concretize the nature of the Absolute, Radhakrishnan posits God as a creative principle in a very consistent way. He conceives of God and the Absolute as the two distinct aspects of the same Supreme Reality. Radhakrishnan has not identified God with the Absolute like Hegel. God and Absolute are not to be regarded as “mutually exclusive”. “The Supreme in its non-relational aspect is the Absolute; in its active aspect it is God.” God is not a mere appearance of the Absolute. Unlike Śaṅkara Radhakrishnan does not give high status to the Absolute than God. In Śaṅkara’s philosophy a distinction is drawn between God and the Absolute. The Absolute is beyond all characterisations and descriptions. It is regarded to be wholly transcendent. It is considered to be beyond the creator-created dichotomy. According to Śaṅkara, it can be described only negatively. In the philosophy of Śaṅkara, God in relation to the Absolute is a lesser reality. Radhakrishnan has wholly rejected this view. He maintains an essential unity of the Supreme Reality with God.
According to Radhakrishnan, the Supreme Reality is apprehended in a twofold way-as personal and impersonal. The personal aspect is known as God whereas the impersonal aspect is known as Absolute. Radhakrishnan states that the Absolute has a transcendental existence but it is also capable of immanence. The Absolute has the infinite possibilities and God is one of the infinite powers of the Absolute. The Absolute comprehends all principles of God and the world. The Absolute is the basis of all actuality and possibility. It is infinite possibility, pure consciousness and freedom, while God is a specific possibility. Whereas the Absolute is eternal, God is one finite power. God has an infinite power but he is an expression of the Absolute. Though God has an expression of the Absolute, he cannot be conceived as mere appearance or mere expression of the Absolute. God is actual being, a supreme person. He is higher than his creation. He is not to be believed as a distorted reflection of the Absolute. God is the real symbol of the Absolute Reality. Therefore God has assumed double forms - the transcendent and immanent. In this creative aspect, he is immanent. But the Absolute is beyond it. According to Radhakrishnan, “The question of immanence and transcendence does not arise with reference to the Absolute.” Hence God and Absolute are two different aspects of the same Supreme Reality. Brahman and Īśvara are one. Both are infinite and divine. God is not a separate principle from the Absolute. For Radhakrishnan, “Īśvara is Brahman with creative power.”

Radhakrishnan holds, God is one of the infinite powers of the Absolute. Even though God is not within time, He is not an eternal reality. God creates space, time and cosmos. That is why He is beyond time. But God is not timeless, because His being is absorbed in the Absolute. Radhakrishnan says, “The temporal personality of God is possible only with reference to a world with its imperfections and capacity for progress. In other words, being of a personal God is dependent on the existence of a created order. God depends on creation even as creation depends on God.” God is the creator of the universe and in this sense God
is a personal being, whereas Absolute is impersonal. God can be conceived as a creator because of his attempting to actualize an unrealised possibility of the Absolute. Radhakrishnan states that God is attempting to transform the non-being into the being, the unrealised into realised. When the non-being is fully reduced to the being, the dualism between God and the given environment ceases; the distinction between the creator and created also then vanishes. In the language of Radhakrishnan in that case “God lapses into the Absolute”. The cosmos and God exist in the Absolute. The Absolute comprehends all principles, realities, God and the world. The Absolute is infinite reality, possibility and actuality. Radhakrishnan writes, “We may distinguish between God as distinct from the lesser spirits who derive their being from Him and the Absolute which comprehends all conceivable existence. God, spirits and matter are the Absolute and not God alone.”

God is the sustainer and the creator of the world. According to Radhakrishnan, “God is the creator, sustainer and judge of the world.” But Radhakrishnan has not conceived of God as the creator in the beginning. His God is not a Christian God. God is conceived as such who creates the universe continuously. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that, “the world is in the making and is being created constantly, and the reality of change means a plastic world not a block universe.” The relation of creation and creator maintains the meaning of God. God is real in so far as the creation is real. The distinction between the creation and creator remains so long as cosmic process continues. But at the end of cosmic process the dualism will be vanished and God will be realised as the Absolute. Therefore from the transcendental point of view God is the Supreme Reality. He is the universal consciousness. God lives beyond the world of creation. As a philosopher, Radhakrishnan is fully aware of the fact that such spiritual entity can never satisfactorily be explained from the materialistic, naturalistic, and deterministic point of view as these theories lack the spiritual note. Radhakrishnan believes that all proofs for the existence of God fail to demonstrate the
existence of God. They are merely descriptions of God because they conceive of God as an objective reality. The only evidence for the existence of God is the spiritual experience which is present in man. “To say that God exists means that spiritual experience is attainable. The possibility of the experience constitutes the most conclusive proof of the reality of God.”

As a creative principle God is with time. But the Absolute is timeless. Time is real for God. God is self-determining principle. He is the Supreme mind. He is the guide of mankind. God loves man and also rules us. He satisfies the religious sentiments of human mind. As God is personal, so He has an intense relation to human needs. Radhakrishnan describes God as love. Like Gandhi, he denotes God as truth. But more than these qualities he maintains that God is also justice. He is the most perfect being. He is free from all evils. God is the highest moral being. God performs his acts according to his own laws. God creates, rules and sustains the world. In the Hindu view of Trinity the same God is conceived as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva in the role of creator, sustainer and destroyer respectively.

God is Supreme Mind, Supreme Intelligence and Wisdom. God actualises the process of creation. God is love and goodness. Radhakrishnan very clearly says that the Ultimate Reality is one and that is Spirit. The problem of philosophy is to relate the conception of Ultimate Reality which is one and permanent, to the world of becoming which is ever changing. The world, according to Radhakrishnan has a dependent status as it is derived from the Absolute. Radhakrishnan does not deny the existence of the world, but he says, “The world is a different kind of existence, a degraded form when compared to the Supreme.” The logical relationship between the world and the Supreme is inexplicable. Radhakrishnan states that the relationship between the world and the Absolute is not one of equal interdependence, but of one sided dependence in which the world has its being only in relation to the Absolute. Radhakrishnan believes that God is organic with the world and it is not possible to detach God from the world. God constantly acts in the world to give it proper
direction. The world is temporal in character, but not separate from the eternal. The world is not apart from the Absolute. But though the world is temporal it does not mean that it is an illusion or non-existent. Radhakrishnan says that the world is real, because it is willed by God. The world and God are not really apart from each other. Radhakrishnan says, “The world is as indispensable to God as God to the world.”57 Radhakrishnan’s approach towards the world is positive. His contention is that the world is real. But it is not the ultimate reality, for this is reserved for the Absolute. Radhakrishnan employs the concept of Māyā as an explanation for his basic contention for the reality of the world. This Māyā is an abstract principle which is neither being, nor non being but it somehow explains the world which is neither illusory nor ultimately real.

For Radhakrishnan, God is regarded as the Absolute spirit, and unchanging from the cosmic or human standpoint. The world is the actualization of one of the infinite possibilities of the Absolute. According to Radhakrishnan, as the world is derived from the Absolute - God, it is regarded as real rather than illusory. The world is dependent upon God in the sense that without the sustain presence and activity of God, the world would collapse into nothingness. The durability of the world also depends upon the will of God. It exists “so long as God wills it to be.”58 But its mutability and eventual dissolution does not affect the Absolute reality of God in any way. God is independent of the world and above it. It indicates the one sided dependence of the world on God. Radhakrishnan makes the world the expression of God. According to him God is at the beginning of the world who orders it. God as the cause of the world is outside it. He is prior to the world. God brings perfection to the world. According to Radhakrishnan, though the world is derived and sustained by the immanent activity of God, it is however not identical with God. He states that God is richer, deeper and more spiritual than anything else.
Radhakrishnan being a monist speaks of Absolute and God as one. He refers to the primary reality as Absolute- God. But while speaking about the organic relationship, he seems to take an exclusive view of God and the Absolute. He writes, “While God is organically bond up with the universe the Absolute is not.” The Absolute for Radhakrishnan is the only reality but it is not arrived at by carrying the process of abstraction to maximum limit. Everything of this universe is an expression of the Absolute, but these expressions do not in any way effect the monistic character to the Absolute. Radhakrishan states that the same Absolute reveals itself in all these but differently in each. Philosophers may contend that God, the holy one that is worshipped, is different from the Absolute, the reality demonstrated by reason. God is a symbol in which religion cognizes the Absolute. God can be apprehended and thought of but His nature cannot be fully apprehended.

2.6: PHILOSOPHY: ITS DEFINITION AND NATURE:

The word 'Philosophy' is derived from two Greek words ‘Philos’ and ‘Sophia’. Philos stands for love and Sophia for wisdom. The literal meaning of philosophy is love of knowledge or wisdom or search for truth or pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. Philosophy may provisionally be defined as an attempt to explain and appreciate life and universe as a whole. It is an attempt to arrive at a rational conception of the reality as a whole. It is the search for a comprehensive view of nature – an attempt at a universal explanation of things. Philosophy enquires in the nature of the universe in which we live, the nature of human soul, and its destiny, and the nature of God or the Absolute, and their relation to one another. It also enquires into the nature of matter, space, time causality, evolution, life, and mind and their relation to one another. Philosophy is also concerned with the clarification of concepts. Philosophy is the critical analysis of the popular and scientific concepts and, the discovery of their relations to one another. Philosophy is a rational attempt which helps in integrating our knowledge and interprets and unifies our experiences. The
chief instrument of philosophy is logic. The method of philosophy is rational speculation, logical analysis and synthesis. Philosophy starts with the experience of facts, events or phenomena of matter, life and mind and seeks to reduce them to a system by rational reflection upon them. It is not divorced from the world of our common experience and so its method is also empirical. Philosophy employs rational reflection on the facts of experience in order to explain them adequately by making a rational hypothesis.

Philosophy is the most comprehensive study of the universe as a whole and as such must have the widest scope of all. It includes within its scope every branch of human enquiry but excludes none. A comprehensive view is formed out of the partial aspects of life and the universe. A philosopher therefore tries to comprehend the part with reference to the whole. That is why it is often said that a philosopher is a spectator of all times and existence. In this sense the whole universe is included in the scope of philosophy. Proper evaluation of life and universe is an indispensable part of philosophical activity. Philosophy is a conscious act. When man does not rest contend living his life like other animals and tries to understand the ultimate significance and value of life then such act may be regarded as philosophical. The question of value is intrinsically associated with the question of ultimate truth. The proper evaluation of things depend the right introspection of the real nature of things. Philosophy is the criticism of life. Philosophy investigates the origin, aim, nature and meaning of human life. It investigates the relation of values to reality. In this sense philosophy is the interpretation of life. It tries to understand the universe in relation to man. Philosophy is always concerned with giving a rational conception of the validity as a whole which satisfies man’s deepest intellectual, moral, aesthetic and religious aspirations.

Philosophy is the result of a long course of human thinking. There is a very close relationship between philosophy and life. If the essential nature of man is his thought and if to think is to have some kind of philosophy then philosophy must be the essential occupation
of human life. There are various other pursuits of man, but if man is to remain true to his own nature, these apparently diverging pursuits must coverage to an understanding of true human life. Philosophy is basically an intellectual pursuit concerned with some fundamental problems, namely, nature and analysis of language, of meaning, relation between language and meaning, nature of knowledge, its source and such other theoretical questions. One may, on the other hand take philosophy as a guide to the solution of the problem of meaning of life, nature of man and such other problems and rely upon philosophy as a source of solving problems which have a substantial practical bearing. Philosophy, in such an approach, is regarded as a coherent account of the universe we live in and our definite place in it where we can strive for our fulfilment.

2.7: PHILOSOPHY ACCORDING TO RADHAKRISHNAN

Radhakrishnan’s approach to philosophy is not that of a specialist in the narrow sense of the term. According to him, “Philosophy is not so much a conceptual reconstruction as an exhibition of insights.” From this remark we can have a glimpse of his expectations from philosophy. Radhakrishnan has issued a note of warning in almost all his works regarding philosophy as a perpetual discussion of isolated concepts. He holds that philosophy should be bound up with life. It must grow in to a “therapy of the soul.” For him thought may be different from life but should not be indifferent to it. Radhakrishnan has therefore advocated that philosophy which harmonises the soul with flesh. So philosophically he has propounded Absolute Idealism but in practice he has deeply recognised the significance and meaning of empirical aspect of life and world. Radhakrishnan emphasised that philosophy should aim to give vision of the meaning of life, purpose of life. Philosophy has also to serve practical ends of human society. Radhakrishnan felt that there was much scope for further development of Indian Philosophy in the light of changed conditions and therefore he did not accept everything of Indian Philosophy. Radhakrishnan was a great philosopher of religion. His
philosophical thinking and religious views cannot be separated. It is because the ultimate truths of philosophy and religion are the same.

According to Radhakrishnan, philosophy is a wide term that includes logic, ethics, aesthetics, social philosophy and metaphysics. Philosophy has two sides, one is an explanatory, a descriptive, a metaphysical and the other is empirical. Philosophy studies experience in a concrete form and reveals the order and being of experience itself. According to Radhakrishnan, philosophy is a sustained attempt to understand the universe as a whole; it coordinates and interprets all significant aspects of experience – the reports of scientists, the intuitions of the artists and the insights of saints. Any coherent philosophy should take into account observed data, rational reflection and intuitive insight, since human consciousness consists of the perceptual, the logical and intuitive awareness.

Radhakrishnan believes that philosophy is committed to a creative task. He agrees with Marx’s view of the purpose of philosophy that philosophy is concerned not only with interpreting life but also with changing it. In one sense he regards philosophy as a function of life. Radhakrishnan approached philosophy from the angle of religion as distinct from that of science or history. He did not confine philosophy to logic and epistemology. According to him, the function of philosophy is one of analysis, clarification. The method of philosophy is empirical, experimental and analytic. Its function is to define as clearly as possible the limits of human knowledge. Religion, Radhakrishnan stated, is a way of life which insists on behaviour more than our belief. Since belief and behaviour go together, we must live religion in truth and deed as much as we profess it in words.

Philosophy, for Radhakrishnan, is the structural foundation of a civilisation. According to Radhakrishnan religion is philosophy and philosophy is religion. The goal of both religion and philosophy is the complete and absolute explanation of the fact of human
destiny in terms of consciousness. Religion, for Radhakrishnan, is essentially a concern of the self securing a spiritual certainty. Religion also helps man in lifting his life above all meaningless existence, and dull despairs giving worth to values, meaning to life, confidence and adventure. Radhakrishnan says that the way to heaven is through earthly love full of woes and watered with tears. Radhakrishnan observes that the object of philosophy is a great instrument of liberal education. Its aim is one of elevating man above worldliness, of making him superior to circumstances. According to him, “Philosophy claims to implant in the minds of those who are of a nature to profit by its teachings and influence a taste for those things which the world cannot give and cannot take away. If properly pursued, arms us against failure, against sorrow and calamity, against boredom and discouragement. To form men is the object of philosophy.”

Science can tell neither about the past nor about the future. Here we must turn to philosophy. Radhakrishnan has deeply studies the various religions and systems of philosophy. Through his valuable writings written with insight, thought, endeavour, Radhakrishnan has presented to the world the religion behind the religions of the world and the common philosophy behind different systems of philosophy of the world. According to Radhakrishnan, “Philosophy visualises a universal consciousness at the back of nature and humanity.”

Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that philosophy and science cannot remain content with becoming good neighbours. They have to work as partners in a common endeavour. The importance of philosophy has not diminished by the influence of science on actual life. On the contrary it has made philosophical issues more relevant than ever before, because the new facts disclosed by science demand interpretation. ‘Philosophy’ the fruit of contemplation is the sign of freedom in a world of necessity. Philosophy has become not merely a right but a supreme need in our today’s life. According to Radhakrishnan, a sound philosophy must possess two other qualities. First, it must take its stand on the organic unity of the universe as
well as of human life. This requirement is fulfilled in Radhakrishnan’s philosophical writings, because he observes things in their entirety, comprehensively. In the words of a recent critic: “Radhakrishnan’s basic approach to philosophy is the recognition of and demand for the organic unity of the universe, of the different sides of human nature, of man and the universe, of the finite and the infinite, the human and the divine.” Radhakrishnan justifies this faith in unity by referring to the highest traditions of the cultural history of the world, and by the evidence of science itself. Secondly, philosophy must concern itself with value. There may be disagreements about specific aspects of reality; but to assert that reality is devoid of value would be to strike at the root of all philosophy. Radhakrishnan’s expectation from philosophy is that it should be dynamic and practical. It should accept the wholeness of reality and the unity of different aspects of the universe. Again it should help in the recognition, conservation and furtherance of value. Radhakrishnan accepts all systems and theories fulfilling the above mentioned criterion as partially true. He pleads for a sympathetic rather than a polemic approach in judging trends of thought which may fail to convince us. Radhakrishnan emphasised the purpose of philosophy as a discipline which is in its implications is practical. He expressed that philosophy is committed to a creative task. Although in one sense philosophy is a lonely pilgrimage of the spirit, in another sense it is a function of life.

2.8: MĀYĀ IN RADHAKRISHNAN’S PHILOSOPHY

Māyā is a philosophical concept employed by Hindu Idealism in its traditional literature as the basic and the common explanation of the relationship of Appearance and Reality. Man seeks an explanation of life and the world, its relation to the infinite. The notion of Māyā makes its appearance as an explanation to the mysteries of the world. Both classical and modern Hindu philosophers would however agree that without the notion of Māyā it
would be impossible to explain the mystery of life and world. The interpretation of the notion of Māyā is different at different periods of time.

The doctrine of Māyā is the keystone of Śaṅkara Vedānta. Śaṅkara boldly and logically announced the doctrine of Māyā as an explanation of the relation between the world appearance and Brahman. Through the theory of Māyā, which is an indescribable power of Brahman Śaṅkara proved that Brahman is the only reality and the world is an appearance. Śaṅkara is of the opinion that though the world is ultimately unreal, for all practical purposes it is real. In order to explain how the Real appears as the world Śaṅkara admits the principle of Māyā. Brahman with the Māyā Sakti becomes Īśvara who creates the world. Brahman appears to be the sole underlying reality from the transcendental point of view. It is only from the human end that Brahman appears as Īśvara.

The literal meaning of the word ‘Māyā’ is highly significant. It is a combination of two words, ‘ma’ means ‘not’ and ‘ya’ means ‘what’ and together it means ‘that which is not’. Therefore the meaning of the statement ‘the world is Māyā’ is that it is an appearance of Reality in a form which is not its essential and ultimate nature and has no being after the dawn of right knowledge. Śaṅkara has used the term ajñāna, avidyā, māyā, prakṛti, avyakta etc as synonymous in most of the cases. Māyā in Śaṅkara’s philosophy denotes the Divine Power or Sakti of Īśvara. It is the inherent force residing in the Supreme Brahman. Radhakrishnan writes, “‘Māyā’, according to Śaṅkara is the dividing force, the finitising principle, that which measures out the immeasurable and creates forms in the form less.”

Śaṅkara in his Advaita Vedānta neither identifies God with the Ultimate Reality nor says that it is different from it. Śaṅkara ascribes the term Māyā to associate the term Absolute with the term God. According to him God appears to be real as long as one is under the influence of Māyā; but God disappears when the lid of ignorance is uncovered.
Radhakrishnan is highly influenced by the Vedāntic Absolute Idealism, and he was fascinated by the deep philosophical insight of Śaṅkara. But he is not fully persuaded by the philosophical viewpoint of Śaṅkara. He does not hold strictly with Śaṅkara that the world is neither real nor unreal, and regards Māyā not as illusion, but as a concept of explanation. Radhakrishnan’s reinterpretation of the concept of Māyā is one of his greatest contributions to Indian Philosophy. Māyā as he interprets is a realistic concept. It is not the same as illusion. The world is real and not an illusion. It is as real as man himself. Radhakrishnan holds that Māyā only points to the phenomenal character of the world. According to him, what is not self-explanatory and yet cannot be denied as an unreality is Māyā. While admitting that the appearance of the world is without explanation, Radhakrishnan does not cover up our confusion by the use of the word Māyā. He does not consider that the world is devoid of value and importance. He holds that the things of the world ever struggle to recover their reality. So it follows that Radhakrishnan regards the world as a combination of Being and non-Being, sat and asat, rather than neither Being nor Non-Being as most of the Advaitins would hold.

Radhakrishnan introduces the principle of Māyā in his philosophy of the world and makes it serve a number of purposes. At times it is conceived as the principle of creation. At other times it is used to provide an answer to the question regarding the way of creation and at still other times it serves the purpose of illustrating the relation between God and the world. One important characteristic of Radhakrishnan’s approach to the problem of Māyā is that he rejects the traditional view of Māyā which holds the world is an illusion and he accepts that the term Māyā has six other meanings. Radhakrishnan insists on the right to differ from tradition. He wrote, “Many of my critics were puzzled by my discussion of the Upanishads, since I did not fly a banner and fix a label to my view. My criticism of the theory of ‘illusion’, generally associated with Śaṅkara’s metaphysics and supported by
Deussen, led some of my critics to imagine that I was opposed to Śaṅkara’s view. My indifference to personal theism made it equally clear to some others that I was not friendly to Rāmānuja’s interpretation. But if one is not follower of Śaṅkara or Rāmānuja or any other classical interpreter, it is assumed that one can only be a reveller in strange un-philosophical confusion. I submit that my interpretation of the Upanishads is not an unreasonable one, though it may seem to differ from this or that tradition in this or that point.”

In his approach to the problem of Māyā Radhakrishnan holds that there are four poises of Reality, (i) Brahman (the Absolute), (ii) Īśvara (the Personal deity), (iii) Hiranyagarbha (the world-spirit), and (iv) Virāt (the world). Radhakrishnan remarks that if we remember this four-fold character of the Absolute then it will be easier for us to avoid confusion in regard to the status of the world. And this confusion ultimately gives rise to the problem of Māyā. By conceiving reality in four poises this confusion can be avoided. Radhakrishnan argues that while the world may not be quite as real as Brahman, the world is nevertheless real. The world is not an illusion, because no poise of the Supreme Reality is an illusion.

Radhakrishnan approaches the problem of Māyā by criticising Śaṅkara. By referring to the concept of Māyā in Śaṅkara’s philosophy, Radhakrishnan says that he may perhaps develop Śaṅkara’s suggestive idea in his own way. In Śaṅkara’s Advaita Vedānta Māyā is mithyā or illusion; it has no independent existence other than Brahman. It is only because of our ajñānam or ignorance that we consider Īśvara’s māyāsakti or power of illusion as Satyam or real. In the Vedas the word Māyā has been used to mean the mysterious powers that God possess and it is because of their mysterious nature that it is impossible to comprehend the Divine nature and to penetrate into its depth, and secretes and mysteries of it. Therefore Māyā stands in between God and man, and God and the world because it stands in the way of man’s complete knowledge of God. According to this interpretation of the
meaning of the word Māyā, the world which is the expression of the creative powers of God becomes his revelation or expression rather than something that projects the world which does not exist at all, but only makes it appear to exist. The world which is the product of Māyā stands in between God and man. Māyā in this sense suggests the transcendence of God and not the delusive character of the world even though not standing on the same footing as God is real being an expression of the power of God. The world cannot be considered to be an addition to Brahman. From the point of view of God, the world cannot be regarded to be a matter of real addition to God, even though it arises from Brahman and being sustained in Brahman. Though definitely real in a sense, it is not real in full sense. All growth or evolution has to be within Brahman and consequently the world not being taken to be real addition to Brahman may either be looked upon as Brahman itself or may be declared as illusory. This point of view has been adopted in Śaṅkara’s doctrine of Māyā. The relationship between Brahman and the world must be understood in terms of world’s relation with the Brahman. The world is said to be the illusory expression or vivarta of Brahman.

In Advaita Vedānta there are some other interpretations of the doctrine of Māyā. Māyā cannot be different from Brahman which has no second. The process of the world is due to gradual deprivation of the reality. Māyā is used here as the name of the dividing force, the finitising principle, which measures out the measurable and creates forms in the formless. Māyā is the principle of time and change. It indicates the reality of time and change on the one hand and on the other hand it indicates the immutable nature of Brahman. Māyā, therefore points to both reality of the world and its false appearance. Śaṅkara gives Māyā an altogether different characterisation, its being described neither as real nor as unreal. It becomes indescribable or anirvacaniya. It indicates the fact that the world has reality of some sort and is altogether not false or fictitious. In Śaṅkara’s philosophy this doctrine of Māyā has been responsible for the doctrine of two Brahmans. One is the higher or pre-cosmic
Brahman and the other is the creator Brahman who brings about the existence of the world. It is because of Māyā, Brahman comes to possess duality of nature, one is pre cosmic nature and the other is cosmic nature. Śaṅkara’s whole object in his formulation of the doctrine of Māyā is to establish the identity or oneness of Brahman by declaring the illusory nature of the world which disappears at the dawn of spiritual wisdom.

Radhakrishnan does not consider this dualism to be justified. He thoroughly metamorphoses the doctrine of Māyā and gives it a realistic turn. Radhakrishnan’s treatment of the doctrine of Māyā is materially different from Śaṅkara’s treatment of it. Radhakrishnan says that though the emergence of the finite from the infinite is not intelligible at all, the finite can have its source in the infinite. The doctrine of Māyā contains this inexplicability of the process of the emergence of the finite from the infinite. Māyā points to the revelation and expression of Brahman in the world rather than its obscuration by it. Radhakrishnan has brought out certain implications of the doctrine of Māyā, as employed in Advaita Vedānta. Māyā reveals the truth that the world is not self-explanatory. It pre-supposes a higher reality which alone can explain its existence. Māyā also underlines the incomprehensibility of the relation of infinite Brahman with the finite world. Māyā suggests the impossibility of the conjunction of the intuitive and intellectual conceptions of the Ultimate Reality. Māyā also points to the non-existence of any temporal relationship between Brahman and the world. Again Māyā is the indicative of a technique that is adopted to emphasise the integrity of Brahman. It also indicates the intrinsic purity and perfection of Brahman and freedom from any kind of imperfection characteristic of the world. The appearance of Brahman as the world is also called Māyā. Māyā is also regarded as the energy or power of God, the perfect personality who has the power of self-expression and by virtue of which He reveals Himself through the world.
Radhakrishnan in his philosophy upholds the unity of God and Absolute, and so he interprets the doctrine of Māyā as to preserve the reality of the world. Radhakrishnan emphasises the primacy of Being as the ground of all existence. The existence of the world implies the existence of Being from which the world derives. Being which is the most universal and comprehensive concept is the foundation of all existence. Radhakrishnan following the Upanishads hold that Reality is one and not many. There is only one Being and that Being is Divine Spirit. Thus Radhakrishnan is an avowed monist who clearly identifies God and the Absolute. The question of the status of the world is bound up with the interpretation of the doctrine of Māyā. The world is the manifestation of the creative energy of God. In that case the world is dependent upon Brahman. Brahman alone is the Absolute, independent reality and all the rest is relative and dependent. Radhakrishnan maintains that the empirical world is between being and non-being that it is not an illusion, but it is not ultimate also. He argues that it is a distortion of Śaṅkara’s doctrine of Māyā to say that the world is an illusion, without meaning and significance. Other Indian thinkers hold that to Śaṅkara the world is an illusion. But Radhakrishnan strongly defends Śaṅkara on this view. Radhakrishnan states that in the history of Indian thought although many thinkers have misunderstood Śaṅkara’s doctrine of Māyā as illusionism, Śaṅkara himself never claimed that this world is unreal. Radhakrishnan wrote: “Śaṅkara, who is rightly credited with the systematic formulation of the doctrine of Māyā, tells us that the highest reality is unchangeable and therefore that changing existence such as human history has not ultimate reality (pāramārthika sattā). He warns us however against the temptation to regard what is not completely real as utterly illusory. The world has empirical being (vyavahārika sattā) which is quite different from illusory existence (pratibhāsika sattā). Human experience is neither ultimately real nor completely illusory.................The world is not a phantom, though it is not ultimately real.”67
The world in Indian thought is often said to be a perceptual procession of events where nothing permanently abides. Various expressions like the ‘cycle of birth and death’, ‘Samsāra’, ‘the wheel of time’ are used to designate the unstable character of the universe. The world according to Radhakrishnan has a dependent status as it is derived from the Absolute.” Radhakrishnan does not deny the existence of the world, but he says, “The world is a different kind of existence, a degraded form when compared to the Supreme.” The logical relationship between the world and the Supreme is inexplicable. The relationship between the world and the Absolute is not one of equal interdependence, but of one-sided dependence in which the world has its being only in relation to the Absolute. Though Radhakrishnan holds that the world is existent, it has limit to its existence. It is temporal in character, but not separate from the eternal, the Absolute. Radhakrishnan is emphatic in saying that by temporality he does not mean that the world is an illusion or non-existent. He writes, “To treat it as transitory is not to equate it with the non-existent or the illusory.” Radhakrishnan holds that the world is real, because it is willed by God. The reality of the world is not in itself but is in the thought and being of the creator God. It is what God thought and willed it to be before it was.

The world is dependent on the Absolute. But the Absolute is not dependent on the world. Yet the world is not for that reason unreal. The relation between the Absolute and the world is brought out by the term Māyā. The world is not essential being like the Absolute. It is also not mere non-being. It cannot be described as either being or non-being. Radhakrishnan examines the whole doctrine of Māyā and concludes that it does not make the world an illusion. It simply indicates that the world is ‘relatively real’. He has interpreted the doctrine of Māyā ‘so as to save the world and give it a real meaning.’ There are several interpretations of the doctrine of Māyā in Radhakrishnan’s philosophy and not all of them have implications for the status of the world.
Māyā indicates that the world is ‘derived being’. The world is an expression of the Absolute, not the Absolute itself. “To mark the distinction between Absolute Being and dependent being we call the later Māyā”.\(^73\) The world depends on the Brahman, but the Brahman does not depend on the world. “The world is not an essential being like the Brahman; nor it is mere non-being. It cannot be defined as either being or non-being.”\(^74\) Therefore, the world is described as Māyā, which means that its being is dependent or derived being. Māyā describes the temporal or transitory character of the world. The Brahman is eternal, whereas the world is temporal. There was a time when the world was not and there will be time when it will cease to be. History has a beginning and as end. But this does not mean that the interim period between the beginning and the end is an illusion.

Radhakrishnan accepts another interpretation of Māyā, according to which there are six other meanings of the term Māyā. In his introduction to the ‘Principal Upanishads’ Radhakrishnan writes, “Māyā is that which measures out, moulds forms in the formless.”\(^75\) This meaning of Māyā given by Radhakrishnan agrees with the literal meaning of Māyā which means, “that which measures, arranges, forms, builds, makes.”\(^76\) But besides this meaning his other interpretation of the term Māyā is quite different from the literal meaning of Māyā. These six different meanings of Māyā are as follows———

I. **Māyā as Inexplicable Mystery:**

Māyā means inexplicable mystery. It is an epistemological concept. It indicates that the relation between the Brahman and the world cannot be explained. There is no specific answer to the question of the relationship between Brahman and the world either in the Upanishads, Gitā or in the Vedānta philosophy. Radhakrishnan writes, “The inexplicability of the relation between the two is assumed by the Upanishads and the later Vedānta gives to it the name of Māyā.”\(^77\) It refers to inexplicability. Though Radhakrishnan did not
specifically state what he meant by the ‘relation between the two’, here however it seems to imply that the ‘two’ means Brahman and the world and not any other relation. And the relation between the Brahman and the world is inexplicable. He declares this view in his two summaries about Māyā, one is in Bhagavad Gitā and the other is in his summary in Advaita Vedānta philosophy.

In his summary of Māyā in the Bhagavad Gitā, Radhakrishnan uses the phrase ‘inexplicable mystery’. He wrote, “If the Supreme Reality is unaffected by the events of the world then the rise of these events becomes an inexplicable mystery.”78 Again Radhakrishnan in his summary of the meanings of Māyā employs the epistemological word ‘incomprehensibility’. He wrote, “We can never understand how the ultimate reality is related to the world of plurality, since the two are heterogeneous, and every attempt at explanation is bound to fail. This incomprehensibility is brought out by the term Māyā.”79 Here Radhakrishnan employs the word incomprehensibility to mean the relation between ‘the ultimate reality’ and ‘the world of plurality’ which is logically inexplicable. Similarly in opposition to the word ‘inexplicable’ he places another word ‘anirvacaniya’. Radhakrishnan explains his interpretation of the status of the world and the doctrine of Māyā in the following way-- “When the Absolute is taken as pure being, its relation to the world is inexplicable, anirvacaniya. We know that without the background of being there can be no world. The relation between the two cannot be logically explicated. This inexplicability of the logical relationship does not repudiate the existence of the world. It does not say that the world is not, though it appears to be.”80

When Radhakrishnan uses the different words ‘inexplicability’, ‘incomprehensibility’, ‘anirvacaniya’, it conveys the same idea. That is something which cannot be explained, understood and spoken or expressed. Radhakrishnan thinks that the inexplicability of the logical relation between the world and the Absolute does not repudiate
the existence of the world. He repeatedly emphasised that the world exists even though we
cannot say exactly how. Though there may be other relations indicated in Radhakrishnan’s
writings, primarily Māyā as inexplicable mystery refers to the relation between Brahman and
the world.

II. Māyā as Power of Self-Becoming:

Māyā also means the power of self-becoming, ātmavibhuti. Ātmavibhuti means the
arising, developing, manifesting, expanding or appearing to the self. The power of self-
becoming is inherent in God (Īśvara) in Radhakrishnan’s view. Māyā also means the power
of self-expression, the power of self-manifestation, the power of creation (ṛṣṭī), and creative
energy (sakti). Like the Vedas and Upanishads, Radhakrishnan admits Māyā as the ‘Divine
Creative Power’. By this creative power the Supreme Being creates the world. Radhakrishnan writes, “When the Supreme is viewed not merely as Absolute Being, but as
Eternal creativity the creative power is called Māyā.”

According to Radhakrishnan, the
power is contained in the Supreme as oil in the oil seeds.

In Radhakrishnan’s writings sometimes Māyā refers to the ‘power of self-expression’. Māyā is the principle of self expression by which the Absolute itself is able to manifest itself
in creation. Radhakrishnan wrote, “The power of self-expression possessed by the personal
Īśvara (God) is sometimes called Māyā.” He believes that an Absolute Self (Atman)
requires the power of self-expression in order to produce the world. He again states that in
Indian philosophy Māyā is regarded as the self-limiting power of the Absolute. Māyā as the
power of self-becoming is also described by Radhakrishnan as the power of self-expression,
the self-sundering of the Eternal, the self –limiting power of the Absolute, the self-distinction
residing in the very heart of reality, the dividing force and the finitising principle. This view
of Māyā as given by Radhakrishnan is closely associated with the etymological meaning of
Māyā which states that Māyā is used as the name of dividing force, the finitising principle, that which measures out the measurable and creates forms in the formless.”

Radhakrishnan writes, “Māyā is the objectifying or manifesting tendency. If the power of manifestation were excluded from the nature of the Absolute, it would not be the Absolute. The empirical variety of the world of existence has its roots in the Absolute.”

Radhakrishnan also says that the objectification or manifestation of the Absolute does not affect its unity or integrity. Radhakrishnan in another place clarifies that the manifesting power belongs to the Absolute in action and to the Absolute in itself. The active side of the Absolute or Brahman possesses Māyā as a manifesting power. Īśvara is Brahman with creative power. He is Brahman with the principle of self-manifestation. Radhakrishnan also describes Māyā as the power of creation (srṣṭī) and this power of creation is the power of Īśvara. He wrote, “The world is created by the power of Māyā of Īśvara.”

Again Radhakrishnan describes Māyā as creative energy. He wrote, “Māyā is the energy of Īśvara, his inherent force by which he transforms the potential into actual world.” He identifies creative energy of Īśvara as Sakti and states that Māyā denotes the Sakti, or the energy of Īśvara. So Māyā is the mysterious energy or Sakti of Īśvara by which He mysteriously creates the world out of Himself. By calling creation a mystery, Radhakrishnan means no more than that it is an expression of Īśvara’s freedom, the mysterious working of His will, which is called Māyā.

III. Māyā as Duality of Consciousness and Matter:

Māyā signifies the duality of consciousness (purusa) and matter (prakṛti). The concept of Māyā is a uniting concept. Radhakrishnan uses this concept of Māyā to unite Śāmkhya and Vedānta philosophy with his own point of view. He incorporates the Śāmkhya categories of purusa (consciousness) and prakṛti (matter) in to his own system. Radhakrishnan thinks that
duality of consciousness is only ultimately real. Radhakrishnan wrote, “Since the Lord is able to produce the universe by means of the two elements of His being, prakṛti and purusa, matter and consciousness they are said to be Māyā (higher and lower) of God.”

Māyā as duality of consciousness and matter intended to signify the two elements of His (Īśvara’s) being. Radhakrishnan expresses the view that two ness or duality of consciousness and matter, being and non-being, is inherent in all things. He thinks that even Īśvara’s nature is dual. Radhakrishnan suggests that the world process is dual: a mixture of self and not-self, spirit and nature, consciousness and matter. Radhakrishnan in this context of Māyā mentions the world (virāt) and the world-spirit (Hiranyagarbha) to express symbolically the inherent duality of consciousness and matter in all things. He wrote, “The world of duality is mere Māyā, the real being, the non-dual.”

IV. Māyā as Primal Matter:

Māyā means primal matter. Radhakrishnan equates it with lower prakṛti. Māyā is Prakṛti or primal matter from which the world is created or rather the world evolves. To create or construct a thing both form and matter are necessary. Māyā stands for the matter of the world while spirit stands for its form. Radhakrishnan in his introduction to Brahma sutra says, “Sometimes Māyā is said to be the primal matter or prakṛti.” Prakṛti is used by Īśvara for creating the world. He writes, “Māyā is also used for prakṛti, the objective principle which the personal God uses for creation.”

Radhakrishnan thinks that primal matter or Māyā is dependent on Brahman. He agrees with the Sāmkhya position that all existence arises from primal matter and that primal matter is not illusion. Primal matter is fully real in so far as it is seen to be part of the whole. He disagrees with the Sāmkhya position that purusa is an independent deity, a separate creative power. There is no doubt that Radhakrishnan conceives prakṛti in terms of matter.
He writes, “In the world process itself, we have the divine interacting with primal matter, what Indian thinkers call the unmanifest prakrti.” Radhakrishnan warns us against treating prakrti or primal matter as utter non-being, for it flows from divine being. Māyā in the sense of prakrti is non-different from Brahman. Māyā is both being and non-being. Prakrti is used as a means by which the Divine unfolds Himself and give rise to the world.

V. Māyā as Concealment:

The fifth meaning of Māyā provided by Radhakrishnan is that it is concealment. The manifested world conceals the real from the vision of the phenomena. Hence it is said to be delusive in character. Māyā is the source of the delusion. It is then interpreted as ignorance (avidyā). This concept of Māyā has five parts. First of all, Radhakrishnan thinks of as “the beginning less cosmic principle which hides reality from the vision of man.” He believes that liberation from endless rebirth (samsāra) requires a vision of the real. According to Radhakrishnan Māyā conceals the eternal Brahman under the aggregate of names and forms.

Māyā has two functions—one is the concealment of the real and the other is the projection of the unreal.

Secondly, Radhakrishnan interprets Māyā as the source of delusion. Delusion is a persistent and false belief about one’s self. In other words Radhakrishnan believes that Māyā is the source of a persistent and false belief about the human self. This persistent and false belief about the self is the belief that the true self (Ātman) is the same as the apparent self (Ātman). In the third place, Radhakrishnan interprets Māyā as a distortion of vision. Fourthly, Radhakrishnan’s interpretation of Māyā as a distortion of vision is axiological. For him, a distortion of vision is also a distortion of values. Finally Radhakrishnan regards Māyā as ignorance (avidyā). According to Radhakrishnan Māyā also refers to avidyā or ignorance by which the Real- the Unity behind the world of multiplicity is hidden from the vision of
man. Radhakrishnan wrote, “The concept of Māyā is intimately related with that of Avidyā.” He again asserts that, “Māyā in the sense of Avidyā is recognised, since the display of the world hides the one spirit in it all.”

Radhakrishnan believes that the phenomenal world is not ultimate. Māyā is the failure of man to recognise the principle of the universe. “Māyā is a term employed also to indicate the tendency to identify ourselves with our apparent selves and become exiled from our spiritual consciousness with its maximum of clarity and certainty.” Individuals are subject to Māyā or delusion being lost in outer appearances. To get rid of individuality one has to transcend Māyā and realise one’s true status. It is due to Māyā or Avidyā that man is not conscious of his true self.

Thus according to Radhakrishnan, the word Māyā refers to Avidyā or ignorance about the true nature of the Real and also about one’s true self. Radhakrishnan states that Māyā is to the cosmos as Avidyā is to the individual. He wrote, “While Māyā covers the whole cosmic manifestation, Avidyā relates to the ignorance of the individual.” While speaking about the significance of Māyā in the Advaita Vedānta Radhakrishnan writes, “The concept of Māyā is intimately related with that of Avidyā.” Again in another place Radhakrishnan says that Māyā and Avidyā are not two distinct concepts but one. He tells us that even as Brahman and Ātman are one, so are Māyā and Avidyā are one. Avidyā and Māyā represent the subjective and objective sides of the same fundamental fact of experience. Since it is dissolvable by knowledge, it is called Avidyā. But in its universal aspect it is called Māyā, as it is co-eternal with the Supreme Personality Īśvara. Radhakrishnan uses Māyā in the sense of Avidyā. But Māyā is more cosmic in significance; Avidyā is more subjective- “While the world is created by the power of Māyā of Īśvara, the individual soul is bound down by Māyā in the sense of Avidyā or ignorance.” Avidyā is ignorance is not a permanent factor in an individual. Māyā in the sense of Avidyā is
temporal. By temporality Radhakrishnan means having relative reality. Radhakrishnan wrote, “The Absolute alone has non-created divine reality, all else is dependent, created reality. This is the significance of the doctrine of Māyā.”

VI. Māyā as One-sided Dependence:

Radhakrishnan uses the word Māyā to signify the one-sided dependence of the world on Brahman. He wrote, “The world is a derived being.” Radhakrishnan thinks that the world is not an illusion. The doctrine of Māyā declares that the world is dependent on and derived from the Ultimate Reality. The multiplicity of the world points to a unity and is always dependent on that unity. The Absolute or Brahman stands for that unity on which the world depends. Radhakrishnan believes that the world is dependent on Brahman and that Brahman is not dependent on the world. According to Radhakrishnan, the dependence is one-sided. This one-sided dependence of the world on Brahman is sometimes illustrated by the analogy of the rope which gives rise to the analogy of the snake. Radhakrishnan wrote, “While the world is dependent on Brahman, the latter is not dependent on the world. This one-sided dependence and the logical inconceivability of the relation between the Ultimate Reality and the world are brought out by the word Māyā.” Radhakrishnan while emphasising the importance of the relation of the world and Brahman, fails to explain the relation and takes the cover of Māyā.

Māyā not only indicates the one-sided dependence of the world, but also describes the temporal and transitory character of the world. Radhakrishnan on the one hand speaks of the Eternity of Brahman, and on the other hand, speaks of the temporality of the world. According to Radhakrishnan the word Māyā indicates this essential temporality. The world, according to Radhakrishnan is temporal, but it is relatively real and not an illusion. The world which our intellect reveals to us is real, though its reality is limited and partial. The
finite world is not absolutely real, for it demands something else on which it depends. Radhakrishnan is very emphatic in saying that Māyā does not mean illusion. He wrote, “The phenomenal character of the empirical self and the world answering to it is denoted by the word Māyā, which signifies the fragility of the universe. Māyā does not mean that the empirical world with the selves in it is an illusion, for the whole effort of the cosmos is directed to and sustained by the one Supreme self, which though distinct from everything is implicated in everything.” So neither is the world an illusion, nor non-existent absolutely.

For what is non-existent cannot be born either really or through Māyā. For Radhakrishnan, the world is real though it has a lower form of reality than pure spirit. The world is not essential being like the Brahman; nor it is mere non-being. Therefore the world is described as Māyā, meaning that its being is dependent or derived being.

The concept of Māyā is very important in the system of Radhakrishnan. Writings of Radhakrishnan contain at least six meanings of the term Māyā. Radhakrishnan uses the concept of Māyā to save the reality of the world. Though Māyā is an abstract principle which is neither being nor non-being it is employed as an explanation for the reality of the world. Radhakrishnan writes, “In my writings I have interpreted the doctrine of Māyā to save the world and give it a real meaning.” But Radhakrishnan in trying to save the world has to face criticism. When pressed to decide whether the world is real in itself or not, he only discusses as it is related to Brahman and finally retreats into Māyā as indescribable mystery. Although Radhakrishnan attempts to give a rational explanation of the relation between the Absolute and the world and individual souls, he however fails. In his writings, we have found that the how and why of ‘Brahman’ and the ‘world’ is answered by Māyā-inexplicable mystery. Hence for Radhakrishnan Māyā as inexplicable mystery is the answer to such questions. Some of his interpretations of the doctrine of Māyā are in consonance with the Indian traditional scriptures like Rg Veda and the Upanishads. But sometimes his view
differs from the traditional view of Māyā. While presenting his own doctrine of Māyā he clarifies certain mistaken ideas regarding Śaṅkara’s concept of Māyā as illusion. He concludes that Māyā does not make the world an illusion, a mirage or a dream. On the contrary it simply indicates that the world is relatively real.

2.9 INTELLECT AND INTUITION:

INTELLECT:

Reason is an essential human phenomenon. Reason is the capacity to use universal concepts and in this respect man alone can claim reason. Radhakrishnan tries to use the word reason in a wider sense. According to him, reason is not mere abstract or formal in nature, but it is higher and synthetic. Intellect can be described as a faculty of knowing and reasoning. The intellect depends on the data of sense-experience. It associates and analyses sense–data and draws conceptual knowledge out of them. It is an instrument of consciousness that gives us empirical knowledge. Intellect fails to know the thing–in–itself. It abstracts the qualities of an object and discovers their relationships. Intellectual knowledge is one of abstractions. The intellect abstracts only those qualities or functions from the reality which serve individual’s practical purposes. It abstracts only those qualities which are practically useful. Intellect abstracts only a limited aspect of reality and human action is impossible without such abstraction. Intellect is only a part of our personality. Man experiences different grades of consciousness. Comparatively intellectual consciousness is a lower grade of consciousness. While sense is a lowest form of consciousness, intellect is higher to it and intuition is the highest consciousness that assimilates and transfigures sense and discursive knowledge. Intuition is the totality of consciousness of which intellect is only a part.
As intellect is the finite and limited principle of knowledge, it cannot perceive the reality in itself. Therefore it does not perceive the truth; it invents theories and awaits confirmation. Again intellect gives us partial knowledge of relations, symbols and characteristics of a thing, but it does not comprehend the truth. Its knowledge increases with experience. Intuition gives us profound consciousness of Reality. It is the total vision, infinite and supreme consciousness. The distinction between the subject and object always remains in intellectual knowledge. The contact between the subject and the object is always mediated by sense perception. It does not provide knowledge of reality. For the intellect, to know a thing is to know its relations. A thing is known in its definite relation to other object through reason. It postulates the existence of a reality, the validity of which is derived through connections. Intellectual knowledge is verified and developed through progressive enquiry. Intellect does not impart knowledge of reality. It is valid only so long the intuition does not manifest in us. Radhakrishnan states that logical knowledge is non-knowledge, avidyā and valid only till intuition arises. The more deeply we advance and penetrate, the more the intellect gives way to the universal and infinite consciousness, namely intuition. We get back to the source of intellect, the supreme consciousness. The intuitive consciousness is the totality of vision. Intellect is one and continues with intuition. The intellect advances and ultimately consummates itself in the intuition. Intuition is not irrational, but supra-rational. One becomes more and more rational when advances towards intuition.

But the anti-intellectualist philosophers have rejected intellect as an instrument of metaphysical enquiry levelling certain criticisms against it. Hegel in his dialectical method lays much stress on reason to make it organic to reality and completely denies the importance of ‘feeling’ and ‘willing’ – the two faculties of mind. But being the method of analysis only intellectual method cannot supply the materials of knowledge. Thus if intellect is taken as the
only method of philosophy it would lose all its richness, flexibility and concreteness. It becomes rigid, abstract and static.

In the Upanishads it is stated that the Ultimate Reality is beyond the reach of reasoning or discourse. Intellect or reason is limited in its approach to the realization of the ultimate values of life. Certain criticisms against intellect are levelled in Indian philosophy also. The condemnation of reasoning or ‘tarka’ is as old as the Upanishads which placed the Ultimate Reality entirely beyond the limit of reasoning and argumentation. Śaṅkara repeatedly asserts that discursive intellect cannot grasp reality. He maintains that reasoning as it depends on individuals has no solid foundation. Arguments held valid by some, may be proved fallacious by others.

Radhakrishnan also criticises intellect. But his criticism of intellect is not the total denial of it. He only tries to show the limits of its scope. Radhakrishnan never denies the significance of intellect. Reason or intellect is also included within his integral experience. Radhakrishnan maintains that being analytic in nature intellectual knowledge gives us a separate term and relation but fails to give unified knowledge. By the process of analysis, it may help to have an organized systematic expression of a thing, but it cannot replace intuition. Intellectual method however rich it might be is true only in the scientific analysis but as long as we stay at the level of intellect; profound philosophic synthesis cannot be obtained. Radhakrishnan has not totally rejected intellect; rather he has taken it as a supplementary factor in the process of his ultimate realization of intuition. Intellectual knowledge by the pragmatic outlook helps us to serve our practical interest to act on our environment to do things and to predict and control them; but fails to give us an access to reality. Thus what we establish intellectually or theoretically should be brought to practice.
INTUITION:

Intuition literally means the ability to know something by using feeling rather than considering the facts. Intuition is an idea or a strong feeling that something is true although one cannot explain why. Intuition is the supreme source of knowledge that occurs in mental activity. Intellect is the ability to think in a logical way and understand things specially at an advanced level. Intellect can be described as faculty of knowing and reasoning. The word intuition is a very difficult one to define, as it is well known for its extra-ordinary ambiguity. In the traditional Indian thought intuition is described by the term aparoksha jñāna or aparoksha anubhuti (immediate knowledge or immediate experience). In this sense, intuition is an immediate fusion of mind with reality, and as such it is a state of mind rather than a mere cognition of an object. For, there would be no distinction between knower and the known in such experience. The knower is enabled to grasp the reality as it is, because in essence they are one and the same. As far as the Indian thinkers are concerned all knowledge of the self is intuitive. They regard it as the only true and direct knowledge while all other kinds are mediate and inferential.

Radhakrishnan says that it would be correct to call his philosophy by the name integral experience. Radhakrishnan’s philosophy as integral experience implies self evident knowledge or Anubhava. In true knowledge, the knower and the known are identical. Integral experience involves the self, knowledge and reality. Radhakrishnan states that the word intuition in relation to knowledge devotes a variety of meanings such as process, product, faculty, capacity and source of knowledge. But in general, he distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge as perceptual and integral. Intuition in the context of first case can be sensuous, scientific, aesthetic or ethical. But in the integral intuition that we have both the completion of knowledge and the realization of the identity of being as such. In every case of intuition it can be seen as possessing certain characteristic features which distinguishes it
from other forms of knowledge. The chief among them is its immediacy or directness. Other distinguishing qualities of intuition include its certainty and vividness. Since intuitive knowledge arises from an intimate fusion of mind with reality, it is direct knowledge of being itself without the aid of symbols.

Radhakrishnan’s many of usages of the word ‘intuition’ seems to involve quality as when he says that in intuition “we see things as they are, as unique individuals”. In it there is a close communion between the knower and the known.” Radhakrishnan uses the word intuition in different senses. Sometimes it intimates as what cannot be known in other ways. Sometimes it means a fuller ‘realization’ of what may be already abstractly known in symbols. Again sometimes it is attached to the dawning, in the mind of the discoverer, of what will be, after confirmation, a powerful scientific generalization. It also denotes the knowledge of individual things in their concreteness. Radhakrishnan often stresses the point that the deepest things of life can be known only through intuition. Intuition is the most comprehensive among all forms of knowledge because it can move upward to mystical experience and downward to reason.

INTELLECT AND INTUITION:

The philosophy of Radhakrishnan is most important in the development of Indian and western comparative studies. Radhakrishnan has been working creatively for greater synthesis of Indian and western value. He builds a comprehensive metaphysical system integrating the fragments of our scientific, ethical and religious experience into the unitary vision of reality. His idealistic system can aptly be characterized as the metaphysics of integral experience. Radhakrishnan maintains that while all varieties of cognitive experience result in knowledge of the real, there are three ways of knowing reality which are sense experience, discursive reasoning and intuitive apprehension. Either an over emphasis upon or
a total disregard for any one of these sources of knowledge would result in the formulation of  
a distorted picture of reality. Acquaintance with the sensible qualities of objects is possible  
by sense-experience. It provides the foundation for natural sciences. Discursive reasoning is  
associated with the process of analysis and synthesis. The data that we obtain through sense-  
experience are analyzed and later associated with other knowledge. This way of knowing  
produces logical or conceptual knowledge. This logical or conceptual knowledge is indirect  
and symbolic in its character.

According to Radhakrishnan knowledge is a close communication between the  
knower and the known. It is a unity or oneness of thought and being which transcends the  
differentiation of the subject and the object. It reveals in the very nature of man’s existence.  
In logical knowledge there exists a dual relation between the knowledge of a thing and its  
being. Knowledge obtained from sense-experience and discursive reasoning is always  
limited. They can provide only empirical knowledge. Hence they are not able to apprehend  
the reality. However Radhakrishnan does not underestimate the importance of intellect or  
reason or discursive reasoning in human life since it is useful for action.

Radhakrishnan holds that Reality is higher than thought. So thought cannot apprehend  
reality wholly. In order to apprehend reality directly and wholly, one has to transcend reason,  
and attain a higher level of knowledge, or spiritual comprehension called intuition or  
aparoksanubhuti. Radhakrishnan develops intuition as the third source of knowledge.  
Intuition is the direct realization of its object. It is the source of the insight of reality.  
Intuition is absolutely immediate knowledge. Here the knower and the known are one. To  
know reality is here to be reality. According to Radhakrishnan spiritual apprehension or the  
kind of awareness of real values which are neither objects in space and time nor universals of  
thought is called intuition. Intuition is non sensuous, immediate knowledge. It is a knowledge  
by which we see things as they are, as unique individuals and not as members of a class or
There is no duality between the knower and the known in intuitive knowledge. So intuitive knowledge is beyond doubt and as such it is perfect. Radhakrishnan writes, ‘Intuitive truths as simple acts of mental vision are free from doubt.’ Intuition is not only a perfect knowledge but also a perfect living. It differs from the conceptual and sensual knowledge.

Reason functions within the limits of time, space and other mental categories. Like Kant and the Vedāntins, Radhakrishnan believes that reason cannot understand the depth of reality. Reason plays a vital role in man’s life and is necessary for knowledge of man and the world. But it is inadequate to realize the Absolute. Radhakrishnan takes reason in the sense of something fuller and richer than sense-experience. From his early days Radhakrishnan accepted the insufficiency of reason or intellect. But this realization is more clear to him as the time passes on. Radhakrishnan wrote, “The rationality of the world is transparent to the intellect. But its mysteriousness can be grasped only by intuition.” Thus he raises perennial question regarding the difference between intellectual knowledge of reality and immediate awareness of it.

Reason gives external knowledge of an object. It other words, it approaches an object from outside. To know a thing by way of its likeness to something else is to know it in relation to that other thing. Further, knowledge obtained by reason is abstract and partial. Reason analyses whole into parts. It cannot restore the living whole. Radhakrishnan observes that reason, “…….cuts out cross sections of this flow, sharpens their outlines and solidifies their contents.” Reality can be known without the intervention by reason. Reason cannot grasp reality as it is. It only asserts the reality, breaks it up, schematize it. Reason cannot grasp the essence of reality. Reason constructs only a symbolic image of the real. Radhakrishnan states, “Intelect gives no interpretations, formulas and symbols, and not the experiences or the objects symbolized. It is the function of a sign to signify, but for this it
need not resemble or reproduce the thing signified. Its function is only to symbolize and not to photograph.” Knowledge attained by reason is relative. Reason attempts to know the reality. The real is neither true nor false. But in our knowledge, we attribute this or that characteristic to it. All knowledge whether perceptual or conceptual, attempts to reveal reality in a limited, partial and symbolic way. Radhakrishnan thinks that the limitation of the reason is because of its dualistic nature and existential attitude. Reason distinguishes between subject and object. To solve this difficulty there must be a higher mode of consciousness. This higher mode of consciousness is known as intuition or Aparoksanubhuti. Intuition transcends the limitations of reason and views things in its integral whole. Radhakrishnan thinks that above reason there is intuition which springs from the spiritual level. Intuition resolves the conflict of reason.

Because of this inadequacy of intellectual knowledge Radhakrishnan argues in favour of the knowledge obtained by intuition which he calls integral experience. Intuition reveals the inner truth and holistic knowledge about the superficial knowledge of reality that intellect gives us. For Radhakrishnan intuition is a higher faculty than intellect. As a matter of fact, Reality comes through intuition. It is the foundation of all spiritual metaphysics and transcendental psychology. Intuition is direct and immediate in its action. It is all comprehensive. Intuition is the direct realization of its object. It is not knowledge by signs or symbols. It is a direct knowledge culminating in the highest kind of immediacy. In the intuitive apprehension the knower establishes an identity with the known. As a result the distinction between the knower and the known completely vanishes and their duality is completely destroyed. Therefore, intuition establishes a unity- almost and identity between the knower and the known. Radhakrishnan observes, “Intuition is not emotion, but the claim of certain knowledge. It gives us a sense of divine reality as a thing immediately certain and directly known.”

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Intuition is also called samyakjñāna. For Radhakrishnan intuition is the inner most realization of the soul. He asserts that intuition is the ultimate vision of the profoundest being. From this point it is clear that intuition is the ultimate criteria of truth. Radhakrishnan conceives the Absolute as indeterminate, pure consciousness, freedom and possibility. According to him the Absolute can be known only by intuitive knowledge not by discursive logical knowledge. Intuition is self-luminous and self evident. According to Radhakrishnan, “Intuition is self-established (Svataḥ-siddha), self-evidencing (Svasamvedya), and self-luminous (Svayamprakāsh). It does not argue or explain, but it knows and is. It is beyond the bounds of proof and touches completeness. It comes with a constraint that brooks no denial. It is pure comprehension, entire significance, and complete validity.” 

Intuition must be accepted not only as one of the ways of knowledge, but also as a form of thought. It is qualitatively different from logical thought, though not discontinues with it. Intuition is not independent but emphatically dependent upon thought and is immanent is the very nature of our being. Intuition is a genuine revelation of truth and reality. In fact intuional activity is the primary mode of our approach to the real. Therefore intuition will remain as the instrument of the philosopher as well as the activity of the mystic, in so far as it purports to be the study of the real. Again intuition is direct and gives immediate certitude. It is not a continuation of ratiocinative activity; it involves a jump to a new level of
apprehension. Radhakrishnan considers intuition as potentiality of being. Intuition is self
establishing, self evidencing, unitary, eternal and complete. It does not lose its validity in
individuality. It reveals the whole spirit of man. It is an integral whole. It is absolute and
direct knowledge. Western thinkers namely Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Bradley, Bergson and
others also recognize intuition as a direct and absolute knowledge. Descartes though a
rationalist, he admits intuitive principle as self- evident. Descartes defines intuition as “the
undoubting conception of an unclouded and attentive mind, and spring from light or reason
alone. It is more certain than deduction itself in that it is simpler.”113 He confirms the
certainty of the self by intuitive certainty. In Indian philosophy Śaṅkara also affirms intuitive
knowledge as direct and immediate.

Radhakrishnan says that the knowledge of the self as described by Hindu thinkers is
the great illustration of the intuitive knowledge. We become aware of our own self, as we
become aware of love or anger directly by a sort of identity with it. Radhakrishnan asserts
that self- knowledge is self evident and valid. Therefore to deny self- knowledge is to deny
the possibility of all other kinds of knowledge. At the same time he stated that intuitive
knowledge is not confined to self- knowledge. Intuitive knowledge is born of the
identification of our self with the reality to be known. The more the self is developed the
greater is the reality it can identify itself with. Radhakrishnan stated that the profoundest
things of life cannot be known through intellect. They can be known through intuition alone.
The truth of the deepest things of life can be recognized through intuition. But we cannot
argue about them. Radhakrishnan believes that every true religion is based on intuition. The
prophets, saints and seers cultivate the faculty of intuition which refers harmonious function
of emotion, intellect and will. Radhakrishnan holds that in the sphere of ethics also we have
to depend on intuition to ascertain the true meaning of moral values. For him religious
intuition is the highest kind of intuition in comparison with others as it reveals the totality of human spirit.

Radhakrishnan holds that intuition is a higher form of knowledge and one that is gained independently of reason. Intuitive truths, according to Radhakrishnan, as simple acts of mental vision are free from doubt. They do not carry conviction on the grounds of their logical validity. Radhakrishnan’s emphasis upon intuition, however, does not lead him to disregard the value of reason. On the other hand he considers it to be indispensable in the context of all knowledge. Reason, intuition and mystical experience have their respective roles in the context of ultimate truth but they do so only when they are properly directed and co-ordinated. Radhakrishnan argues that the various process of knowledge is not to be compartmentalized. There are different ways in which we acquire knowledge, namely sense experience, discursive thinking and intuitive apprehension. Though we get knowledge from all these sources it is intuition alone that can give us knowledge of the real. Therefore Radhakrishnan conceives the human capacities of sense, intuition and intellect in a hierarchy. He assigned the highest position to spiritual intuition or intuition of the Absolute, where the knower realizes himself as both the knowledge and the known. It is the vision of Reality.

Though Radhakrishnan recognizes intuition on both the levels of perceptual knowledge and integral experience, he is inclined to emphasize its role is the later sense. He clarifies his own position and states that, “personally I use intuition for integral experience.” Radhakrishnan uses intuition in a variety of senses. The root meaning of the word intuition will help us to understand the various possible senses in which it could be used and the primitive and universal meaning. The word intuition is derived from the Latin word “intueri” which means “to look into.” The extended uses of the word ‘intuition’ are ‘sight’. ‘Sight’ means directness and immediacy of knowledge. Like the word ‘Pratyaksa’ in Sanskrit, intuition implies the sense of sight. Therefore, it could be used to cover all cognitive
processes which have a directness or immediacy. It includes all knowledge by way of inference or hearsay.\textsuperscript{115} From the epistemological standpoint intuition stands for knowledge which is self-evident. Thus, according to Radhakrishnan whenever the quality of self-evidence or self-certification can be attributed to an experience, it should be regarded as intuitive in the generic sense of the term. Hence by definition, intuition is neither necessarily super natural, nor opposed to rational or sensitive knowledge. But in the special sense it refers to what Radhakrishnan conceives as the integral experience by which one comes to the realization of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. Radhakrishnan says, “Intuitive Knowledge is proved on our pulses. It is the only kind of absolute knowledge and also the ultimate vision of our profoundest being.”\textsuperscript{116}

Radhakrishnan’s main contention regarding intuition is that it should not be regarded as an alternative to reason. It must not be regarded as a way of knowledge adopted in mystical experience as against philosophical enquiry. Radhakrishnan had tried to remove a serious limitation of Advaita Vedānta system by establishing the relationship between intuition and reason on a more satisfactory basis. Following Śaṅkara the Vedāntins created a gulf between reason and intuition by confining reason to the domain of appearances and extending intuition to the realm of reality. But they did not clearly show that this direct experience is a form of knowledge involved in and presupposed by the discursive knowledge of the intellect. Intellect is not necessarily opposed to this higher experience but is absorbed in and completed by it.

The theory of the realization of Supreme Reality is merely a concept, but to realize Supreme Reality is a fact. To be spiritual man should not discard reason, but should go beyond it. Intellectual knowledge presupposes a duality between the knower and the known, the subject and the object. Thought or intellect cannot go beyond this duality. Radhakrishnan states, “In logical knowledge there is always the duality, the distinction between the
knowledge of a thing and its being.” Intellect helps man to know the conditions of the world. It also enables man to work successfully to proceed towards spiritualization. But as intellect is discursive in nature it is incapable to provide unique knowledge of the spirit, the whole of reality. Therefore there arises the need of intuition. To have an integral view of reality our discursive thinking is to be transcended by means of intuition. So intuition and intellect are not contrary, but complementary to each other. Though intuitive experience is higher than conceptual knowledge, Radhakrishnan observes, that it does not implies that the two are antagonistic to each other. Radhakrishnan holds that, neither the intellect is opposed to intuition nor is intuition irrational. Intuition must not be regarded as an alternative to reason, nor must it be regarded as a way of knowledge adopted in mystical experience as against philosophical endeavour.” Every great intellectual work may be philosophical, scientific or whatever it be is based on intuition.

Intuition is wholly dependent on thought. It is immanent in the very nature of thinking. It dynamically continues after thought. As intuition is the response of the whole man to Reality, it involves the activity of reason also. The truths of intuition are led up to by the work of understanding and can be translated into the language of understanding, though they are clearly intelligible only to those who already in some measure have immediate apprehension of them. Intuition comes to us after a long process of analytical reasoning. It is therefore higher and dependent on intellect. Radhakrishnan says that intuition is not independent but emphatically dependent on thought and is immanent in the very nature of our thinking. It is dynamically continues with thought and pierces through the conceptual context of knowledge to the living reality under it. It is the result of a long and arduous process of study and analysis and is therefore higher than the discursive process from which it issues and on which it supervenes. Radhakrishnan emphasizes the fact that intuition transcends reason, it does not reject it. He states that intellect which is discursive reason and
reason which is synthetic in nature must be linked and integrated in intuition. Therefore Radhakrishnan’s conception of intuition is rightly regarded by Dr. Arapura as integral experience.

Intuition needs intellect for the expression, elaboration and justification of its results. Intuition in itself is dumb. Their result, in order to be communicated to others has to be put in understandable and intelligible forms and for this intellect is needed. Intellect, on the other hand, presupposes intuition without which its deliberations cannot start. The function of intellect is ‘analysis’ but there must be something to be analysed and that something must be a ‘whole’. The whole as a whole can be grasped by intuition alone. That gives to intuition its primacy. Both intellectual and intuitive kinds of knowledge are justified and have their rights. Each is useful for its own specific purposes. Intuition stands to intellect in somewhat the same relation as intellect stands to sense. Though intuition is beyond intellect, it is not contrary to it. The intellect has a practical role. Intuition involves integral experience. It is called samyak jñāna or perfect knowledge. According to Radhakrishnan intellectual cognition prepares us for intuitive cognition. Therefore the intellect cannot be regarded as opposed to intuition. The latter does not cancel the former. On the other hand if an intuition cancels intellect than that intuition is completely useless. Unlike Śaṅkara Radhakrishnan believes that the intuitive knowledge of the self arises after the fullest development of discursive knowledge.

Radhakrishnan’s concept of intuition is based upon his strong belief in the reality of a spiritual or super consciousness over and above the animal level consciousness and the self consciousness of human beings. It is at this spiritual level that the individual becomes aware of the reality of the spirit. Such awareness is not an intellectual cognition of the object by the subject, but the subject itself becomes its own object. It is an awareness in which the timeless and the space less are aware of itself as the basis and reality of all experience. Thus when
he speaks of different types of intuition such as intuition of feeling and rational intuition, he points out also that these are partial. The Absolute or Mystical intuition stands to reason and feeling as whole to parts. So until the whole is reached all forms of intuitions are bound to remain partial. While trying to reconcile between the intuition of feeling and reason Radhakrishnan expresses his disagreement with the views of Hegel and Bergson. Hegel and Bergson are usually regarded as the representatives of the rational and the intuitive types of cognition respectively. As against Bergson who finds an opposition between reason and intuition, Radhakrishnan maintains that every genuine intuition must contain elements of rationality.

There is no break of continuity between intuition and intellect. When we move from intellect to intuition we are not moving in the direction of unreason, but we are getting into the deepest rationality of which human nature is capable. But this is not to say that intellect alone can function fruitfully without certain essential elements drawn from the order of the intuition. Hegel fails to recognize this fact and therefore he makes little use of intuition because according him intuition is an abstraction. Radhakrishnan states that, “Hegel is wrong, when he regards intuition as something unrelated to intellect and incapable of giving anything else than simple being.” Intuition should be seen as comprehending feeling and intellect. Because intuition is not logical but supra logical. Radhakrishnan says that intuition and intellect are parallel faculties that exist along side of each other, and also implies that intuition includes the intellect as the whole includes the part. Both intuition and intellect belong to the self. When the whole self reacts to reality intuition is experienced; but intellect is a faculty of self which comes in contact with the reality only partially. When the entire self comes in contact with the object there is a profound, deep, inner and full knowledge of the object. Radhakrishnan observes that both intellect and intuition belong to the self. Intuition is not mere reason; it is emotion, feeling, imagination, will and contemplation. Perception,
emotion and will fuse together in one unitary consciousness. Therefore Radhakrishnan want us that our search for truth should be on all comprehensive one in which all aspects of our being must find their respective roles in order to arrive at a final vision of reality as it is.

According to Radhakrishnan intuition is not opposed to intellect, but it goes beyond it. Intuition is related to intellect as whole is related to parts. “If we wish to know the inner nature of reality, we must resort to the whole personality of which intellect is only a part.”

Whole cannot exist apart from its parts and parts also cannot exist apart from the whole. This relation seems to be organic. But intuition is more comprehensive than intellect. Intuition is the very basis of the intellect. It gives the knowledge of the highest principle, the vision of the truth. But the intellect is strictly conceptual knowledge. While reality is dynamic, concepts are static. So, intellect fails to comprehend the reality. It also fails to synthesize the data of sense experience in a harmonious way. It is limited and finite. While intuition gives highest degree of knowledge, intellect is only a lower mode of consciousness. For Radhakrishnan intellect leads us to an idea of God. But ‘intuition’ tells us that the idea is not merely an idea but a fact. Therefore, there is no vast distinction between these two. Radhakrishnan observes, “Intuitive knowledge is not non-rational, it is only non-conceptual. It is rational intuition in which both immediacy and mediacy are comprehended.”

In our life both intellect and intuition at work. While the two are not exclusive, intellectual processes are more useful in the observation and description of things and their quantitative relations. Intuition gives us the object in itself while intellect details its relations. Intuition gives us an idea of the whole whereas intellect provides analysis of parts. Intuition is neither abstract nor formless. Radhakrishnan highlights its application in different fields of human activities - science, arts, literature and religion. Science has objective approach and it ignores subjective aspects.
Radhakrishnan conceives intuition more or less in Bergson’s way. Intuition unites instinctive knowledge. Instinctive knowledge outpours spontaneously from the natural impulses aptitude or faculty. Intuitive knowledge deals with objects not with symbols. Intuitions perform the functions of the sense, instinct and intellect. It is a form of inferred or immediate knowledge that enables to know reality. Value judgment is possible only through intuition. Intuition helps to distinguish what is good, what is desirable and important. “Intuitive knowledge is not convinced by reason, it is always immediate knowledge. Brahma experience is given in intuition which is not irrational or anti-rational, but supra rational.”

God is an intuitive fact, not an observed fact. If God is conceived as finite, eternal and necessary it is possible to look upon the world itself as finite, eternal and necessary. God is simple as well as his ways are simple too. Therefore God can be understood in a simple intuitive way. God of religion is a Supreme Being and in that sense He can be fortuitous.

Intuition is neither super natural nor opposed to reason. Radhakrishnan maintains that, “There are many who argue that they have no experience of intuitive knowledge. This is due to a misapprehension. Intuitive knowledge is not limited to the highest knowledge of God.” There are reason, intuition and mystical experience, but the greatest of them is mystical experience. It is unique and different from others. Intuition is the most comprehensive of all because it can move upward to mystical experience and downward to reason. Radhakrishnan does not held reason in disregard because he recognizes it to be the most solid being, of all the means of knowledge and hence thought is indispensable. The end of the three is the ultimate truth. They can reach the end only when they are directed towards one another. “When they are so directed and when they face one another and move towards one another they form an integrity which Radhakrishnan designates Integral Experience.”

It is quite unfortunate that insistence on intuition is often confused with anti-intellectualism. Intuition which ignores intellect is useless. The two are not only not
incompatible but vitally united. Intuition is beyond reason, though not against reason. According to Radhakrishnan intuition is not anti-rational, but supra rational. It is safe to say that it is non-rational and not anti-rational. Reason and intuition are not inconsistent and incompatible, but are two fundamental ways of knowing and apprehending. Reason and intuition must co-operate with each other. For him, “Intuition and intellect are not two opposed methods of grasping reality, for only a comradeship between the two can help us to the knowledge of reality as it is.”

Intuition makes man one with the spirit. It reveals the integral whole into which all the aspects of mind are properly cultivated, developed and merged. The religious life consists in the culture of intuition through the harmonious perfection of emotion, reason and will. According to Radhakrishnan, “Intuition is not crude perception. It is the exercise of consciousness as a whole, it is mind penetrated by the heart, knowledge suffused by feeling, intellect transfigured by emotion. Intuitive experiences are the moments of deepest wisdom which give us glimpses into the ultimate essence, or the whole which is the true and the real. Intuition is always viewed as the perfection of rational experience, since the demand of reason becomes a fulfillment in it.”

Intuition, being the faculty of human knowledge is sometimes criticized as something private, subjective, incommunicable. But its limitation does not undermine its bright aspect and successful operation in empirical as well ontological knowledge. It is generally said that intuition lacks public character. It is incommunicable experience. It does not give universal truth and therefore is incapable of verification. Intuitive knowledge is verified by its capacity to bring coherence and harmony into systems framed by the intellect. The immediacy of intuitive knowledge can be mediated through intellectual definition and analysis. Intuition also bears the stamp of individuality. Again it is also said that intuitive knowledge is unverifiable and incommunicable. Unverifiability and incommunicability simply mean that intuitive experience cannot be adequately explained in terms of sense-
experience or categories of thought. It has been described by the men of deepest insight as “self-establishing, self-evidencing, and self-luminous.” According to Radhakrishnan far from being of doubtful authenticity intuition can give pure comprehension, entire significance and complete validity. But it may be objected that what proof can we offer for the validity of intuition? Radhakrishnan replied that since intuitive knowledge is proved on our pulse, it is a matter of faith. Radhakrishnan observes, “Intuitive knowledge is proved on our pulses. It is the only kind of absolute knowledge. It is possible only when the individual is fully alive and balanced. We can see truly only when our inner being is harmonized. Intuition is the ultimate vision of our profoundest being.” Intuitive knowledge being self-knowledge is itself a legitimate proof of its authenticity. Intuition is open to all men, who possess the capacity of its acquisition and there are ways and methods by which we can prepare for its reception.

By discussing the relationship between intellect and intuition, Radhakrishnan wants to establish the point that intuition is not opposed to intellect. There is a continuity of knowledge from sense to intellect and intellect to intuition. Intellect is useful for action but not true, while intuition is true though not useful. The role of intellect cannot be nullified as intellect is constructive and creative. In fact, intellect and intuition are two necessary ways of apprehending reality. Intellect is the faculty of knowing as compared to will of feeling whereas intuition is a form of un inferred knowledge. Both the views can be held separately yet they unfailingly proceed together.

2.10 CONCEPT OF MAN :

Man is a rational animal. This special trait of rationality distinguishes man from other animals and makes him essentially a progressive being. The spiritualistic thinkers hold that man is a creation of God striving to realize his divinity. Any human endeavor is
anthropocentric and from that point of view man is definitely significant as an entity in the universe. The history of philosophy has explained the nature and status of man in different ways. It maintains that man is concrete both as an individual and as a member of a social group. Again man’s moral and ethical behaviour lies not in abstractness of a transcendental life, but a real earthly life itself. Among other beings of the world man has occupied a unique place in the world for his rationality. Man is the only beings to go in details of the worldly facts and phenomena. Man is not only the product of natural and material forces but also he has got deeper aspect of psychological and spiritual longing.

In the philosophy of Radhakrishnan we find a detailed discussion of the unique concept of man and his nature. His thought provoked interpretation reflects man as an ideal entity, who is the future of his own self. His unbound faith lies in his belief of spiritual reality as the Absolute Reality. The entire philosophical concept of man of Radhakrishnan has its basis on the glorious ancient tradition and noble spiritualism. He believes that absolute spiritualism is inherent in human character. According to him man is the spark of the human fire. The essence of man is spiritual.

Radhakrishnan observes in one of his monumental works, ‘The Bhagavad Gitā’, that man is a complex multi dimensional being, including within him different elements of matter, life, consciousness, intelligence and divine spark. Man is also a complex of emotion and reason. In Radhakrishnan’s scheme of values man occupies a unique position. Man is disposed to live in and through; society for both individual and social good and therefore freedom and justice are natural urges of man. Only free man is creative and his creativity is the symbol of his quest for truth that he instinctively seeks all around. He intends to realize that spirit under lying all the existence. For Radhakrishnan, freedom is the powerful means of realizing the spirit that is at work behind the universe. Having realized the spiritual freedom, man attains the detached state of mind. He leads a life of non-attachment and thereby making
his personality sublime. Here Radhakrishnan follows the Vedāntic philosophy that everything of the universe belongs to God. According to him man’s spirituality is a fundamental concept that is rooted in the Advaita Vedānta. Radhakrishnan says that the realm of spirit is not cut off from the realm of life. He wrote “Man is a being who is straining towards infinity, in quest of eternity; but the condition of his existence, finite and limited, temporal and moral cusses the suffering; when he attains ‘integrity’; there is harmony is his life and its expression of joy.”

Radhakrishnan regards man as essentially spiritual. Man has the spark of spirit, the principle of light and power. Man is subject to the forces around him so long as his consciousness is restricted to his surface being and he considers himself to be the unit of the social organism. When he is aware of his inner consciousness, he becomes superior to the external forces. The real destiny of man lies in his unity with the absolute of spirit. This unity is the unity of love, wisdom and action. Liberation is the freedom of the soul from the bondage of the body and the transfiguration of the whole man. While insisting on the spiritual nature of man, Radhakrishnan is careful not to ignore the fact that he is creature of this world as well. The totality of man lies in the carnal desires and spiritual aspirations as well. Man is an incomplete being so long as he is deprived of either side of his personality. Man is bound to evolve and to rise to the highest level of his personality. According to Radhakrishnan man’s ideal is to make himself “profoundly human”. Man’s perfection lies in self conscious aspiration that means ‘abhianubhuti’. The supreme ideal before man is the ‘spiritual ideal’ and the sole object of man is to become a ‘whole man’. The destiny of man is no other than the realization of the spirit through kinship with all that is ‘sarvātmabhava’. Radhakrishnan observes. “All men are the children of the Immortal, amṛtasya putrah. The spirit is in everyone as a part of one’s self, as a part of the very substratum of one’s being. It may be buried in some like a hidden treasure beneath a barren debris of brutality and
violence but it is there all the same, operative and alive, ready to come to the surface at the first suitable opportunity.\(^{131}\)

Radhakrishnan holds that the spirit in man is identical with the self. There is a common belief in different Upanisadic texts that the self is nothing but the spirit in man. The self is tending to give light and it illuminates man. Through the brightness of the self man subsists. The self lights up everything; but it is not splendid itself. Vedānta also advocates that jīve originates from the spirit. Remarking upon man’s substantive to the spirit, Radhakrishnan says that the spiritual hypothesis convinces us that man belongs to that which is ultimately real. This view of Radhakrishnan positively declares that reality in man is spirit. Spirit is self caused and not created by anybody. Spirit is real in its total sense. It is immortal that explains both the noumenal and phenomenal world. It is everlasting, unaffected and infinite spirit that is neither born nor ends. Radhakrishnan holds that the spirit in man is not produced by any process of unfolding emergence. Neither animated nor material scheme can unravel the spirit in man. Man is not capable of understanding reality in its fullest sense in his ordinary life. Being the reality spirit pervades all. It surrounds the entire horizon of the universe. It is the endless force having the quality of infinity. Man is regarded as a multidimensional phenomenon. Man’s multi dimensional qualities rest on his rational attribute. His rationality is an explicit undertaking of the spirit. Therefore the real man according to Radhakrishnan is spirit. From this standpoint man is basically a metaphysical being. Spirit is both unchanged and immortal. Man for his rationality is superior to other beings. A real man is free from the dominating attitude and he has the capacity to go to the zenith of realities and to keep his self free from all contradictions of life.

Man is more than a physical being. His nature is not constituted merely of instincts, mind or consciousness. He cannot be understood merely as an object of psychology, physiology or sociology. The real nature of man finds expression in the spiritual nature
where by all divisions and distinctions become irrelevant and life is experienced in its totality. Radhakrishnan believed in the concept of rebirth regulated by the law of karma. So long as man is a slave of his desires he is subject to the law of karma. Karmas or actions determine the pace of human progress towards the ultimate goal that is infinite self perfection. Radhakrishnan has outlined two conditions for the realization of his ideal. The first is inward perfection attained by intuition of self and secondly outer perfection which is possible by liberation of all. One should strive to get liberated for the good and liberation of all others. For this, man has to strive through religious discipline and gradual moral perfection.

Radhakrishnan holds that ethics has a great significance in the life of man. Ethics disciplines human nature and leads him towards perfection. It is a prerequisite for the attainment of spiritual destiny by man. Radhakrishnan says that the moral law which is within us is evidence of our citizenship in the world of spirit. Moral discipline makes for spiritual insight. According to Radhakrishnan human beings by nature are value-seeker. They strive for truth, beauty and goodness; each of these values has its own distinct nature. Radhakrishnan observes that human life is transitory and ephemeral. Man cannot be satisfied fully by the fragments of happiness which is inevitably end in sufferings. Radhakrishnan holds that man is in need of a deep ontological unity behind all these fragments, which alone can give him the proper meaning of life, the ever lasting peace of mind and spirit. Radhakrishnan lays emphasis on moral values which enrich man’s life and are necessary for the development of his personality. Man can also develop his moral nature by cultivating love for his fellow being. Morality teaches man to refrain from anger and covetousness to be pure and loving in thought, word and deed. Radhakrishnan regards truth as the supreme virtue.
Radhakrishnan some time regarded man as divine, because he feels that man is the reflection of God. He holds that man, the thinker and the seeker is an embodiment of the Divine. Again Radhakrishnan says that the self in man surpasses his material body. He refers to two different kinds of selves in man namely, empirical self and the transcendental self. From one side though the empirical self as well as the transcendental selves are of two kinds, but from the deepest point of view both are mingled in one point. They only serve at two different sides of reality. He further delineates man as an organized whole and this attribute terms him as the empirical ‘self’. The empirical self possesses different capacities to make man dynamic. The human organism gets united due to the emerging force of the empirical self. The empirical self improves human mind and makes all knowledge and action possible. There is a difference between empirical self and material body. But under erroneous conceptions man frequently thinks the empirical self to be the material body. Moreover for his wrong conception man thinks that the empirical self to be the material body. Moreover for his wrong conceptions man thinks that the empirical self is a substance. Even though the gross physical body has its metamorphosis yet the empirical self remains unchanged. From the transcendental point of view the self is “beyond spatio-temporal order, beyond all change and order.”\textsuperscript{132} Radhakrishnan is a philosopher of both life and spirit. His Absolute is total spiritual reality. It is not exhausted in the creation of the world. He is one with Rāmānuja in saying that God transforms the ‘non-being’ into ‘being’. Man is not a passive participant in the return of all things to God but he is an active agent in the process. He is not an object like other objects in nature. He is the expression of the ‘spirit.’ Life is not an accident but a series of opportunities to realize divinity in human being.
2.11 CONFLICT OF RELIGIONS:

Radhakrishnan regards religion as a phenomenon, as a revelation of the Supreme and as awareness of our real nature in God. It is defined in terms of individual and social effort and as an expression of the individual and society. Religion also includes nature and super nature. Again Radhakrishnan observes religion as a movement indicating progress or growth in which the new rest on the old. As such religion has to give the solution to any human problem and the religious man who is a lover of God must be a lover of his fellow men seeking their highest good by redemptive service and self sacrifice. Therefore Radhakrishnan’s religion is always changing, an evolution always ascending towards universality. But he does not accept everything of religion without rational examination. He developed remarkable clarity about the meaning and ideal of religion. According to him religion should be accepted as a discipline to achieve the goal of spiritual ascent. But unfortunately religion in their dogmatic forms obstructed free flow of ideas and instead of uniting mankind brought conflicts and divisions. There is a great need to understand the true meaning of religion and this can prevent complete annihilation of human race. Radhakrishnan maintains that the conflict of different religions is only an account of the fact that emphasis is laid only on one aspect of religion in utter disregard to other aspects which are also equally important. If we observe deeply into the nature of the religions then we shall find that there is a basic transcendent unity among all religions. In fact they are engaged in the attainment of the same objective. Radhakrishnan states that, “The different religions are like partners in a quest for the same objective.”\textsuperscript{133} But when a particular religion in course of time starts emphasizing one of its aspects as constituting the essence of religion then there arises conflict. In fact, these conflicts do not touch the essence of religion; they are the results of mutual incomprehension. Religions may be many on account of the divergence of the forms, but the essence of all of them is one and the same.
According to Radhakrishnan, when different systems of belief attempt to bring all people into their frames, religions discard and conflict are bound to take place. It is because of the fact that the world is only for a single absolute. Again Radhakrishnan mentions that the hostility among different religions is due to the idea of jealous God. By a fatal logic, the idea of jealous God is supposed to ordain the destruction of those who worship him under other names. In spite of his deeply religious outlook, Radhakrishnan does not hesitate to use strong terms in condemning the darker aspects of religion as revealed in history. His criticism is not confined to crude, primitive cults. He thinks the view that God has revealed himself exclusively to any one prophet or person and expects all others to depend on it and accept it or also to suffer spiritual destitution, is not simply a thing of the past. It works in the mind of some even now. Radhakrishnan maintains that sometimes he is taken aghast by the intolerance which the world’s major religions can display towards each other. He wrote, “Religious piety seems to destroy moral sanity and sensitive humanism ……… Nothing is so hostile to religion as other religions……… the world would be a much more religious place if all religions were removed from it.”

Radhakrishnan commented on the attitudes of Judaism and Christianity to other religions. He observes that for the first time Jews had invented the myth that only one religion could be true and that is their religion. They conceived themselves to be the ‘chosen people’ of God and they had a mission to convert the whole world to their faith. Christianity inherited to the Judaism a passion for ethical purity and a sense of superiority. Radhakrishnan holds that the desire for the world domination transformed the simple faith of Jesus, into an aggressively proselytizing creed. Radhakrishnan pointed out that when Christianity was accepted by the Europeans, they accepted the Semitic creed of the ‘Jealous God’ and the view of Christ as “the only begotten son of God”. It means that Europe accepted religious intolerance which is the natural outcome of the belief in the truth once for
all delivered to the saint. We can say that now not only Judaism and Islam, but all other religions are neighbours. The different religions have now come together and live together.

Religion can join hands with philosophy in realizing the ideal of world-integration. Radhakrishnan does not consider religion to be a spent force. But to remain dynamic, or even alive, it must free itself from dogmatism. Religion, as distinct from religions can be a powerful force of unity. Radhakrishnan observes that when we dispute over dogmas, we are divided. But when we take to the religious life contemplation we are brought together. Therefore, religion, as conceived by Radhakrishnan is not quiescent but combative. It is born in dissatisfaction and revolt against the present stage of humanity. It is an active preparation for a new life by transforming the feelings and passives of men, by a discipline of our whole being. Moreover, religion is not simply a personal affair. It may start with the individual but it must end in a fellowship. The essence of religion should be the vision of good. Ethics cannot be divorced from religion. All religions are of a value in so far as they are exercises and discipline of the spirit. According to Radhakrishnan any religion which asks us to hate other human beings cannot be regarded as true religion. It is not true religion, unless religion asks us to love one another, since God is love. We all belong to the same family of the Supreme Being. If we believe in the oneness of God our religion is a reality. Religion is a means for fostering the integration of personality, of social equality, and of respect for all living faiths. A truly religious man is one who is devoid of any sense of egoism, of any passions, any hatred, any ill will etc. Religion is direct encounter with the Supreme Reality and insight into the mastery of things. Religion must express itself in reasonable thought, fruitful action and right social institutions. According to Radhakrishnan religion is not dogmatic. Our conscience is vitiated by dogmas. But now a days religion has been identified with dogmas by men of sorrow religious thought and in our allegiance to dogmas, we overlook the claims of truth and the happiness of men. In spite of great contributions religions
have made for the promotion of art, culture and spiritual life, they have been vitiated by
dogmatism and fanaticism, by cruelty and intolerance and by intellectual dishonesty of their
adherents. Religion is a discipline through which man improves himself and attains wisdom.
We cannot preserve the dignity of man and the rights of human personality if we repudiate
religion, the perfection of the truly human.

2.12 POSSIBILITY OF MEETING OF RELIGIONS:

Radhakrishnan is for inter religious understanding and dialogue and suggests way to
achieving religious understanding and co-operation and harmony among religions. If we
want to achieve world unity, religion must have a universality of outlook. Religion,
according to Radhakrishnan is not a blind faith in the reality of an unseen world. Religion is a
self imposed code of conduct through which man attains a higher moral status. The purpose
of religion is to produce a tradition of humanity and social responsibility. Religion is a
binding force which, in its highest form, fosters world unity and universal brotherhood.
Radhakrishnan stated that the differences among religions seem prominent because we do not
seem to know the basic truth of our own religions. There is a common element in all religious
experience, a common foundation on which it rests its faith and worship. But the building
that is erected on this foundation differs with each individual God as architecture is not of a
standard pattern. The life’s of religious people bear ample testimony to it. Though there is a
single core in all religious experiences, yet the actual religious experiences are characterized
by diversity. So, it follows that one should not condemn the religious experiences of others.
But rather one is to exhibit tolerance to the view of others. Radhakrishnan maintains that the
unity of the different religions cannot be achieved at the external level. It has to be realized in
an inward and spiritual way without prejudice to any particular forms. First of all, religion
should abandon the missionary enterprise of conversation, which becomes possible when
ignorance of the other people’s faith is removed. For Radhakrishnan understanding of the
other religions does not mean substitution of one form of belief for another. It is to find out what others have been doing and help them to do it better. Radhakrishnan was against missionary motives which he regards as derived from the conviction of the absolute superiority of one’s own religion and contempt for other religions. Radhakrishnan strongly criticizes missionary activates which he argues will result in the spiritual impoverishment of the world.

Religions are now passing through a process of self understanding, self searching, self criticism and will be able to respond adequately to the great challenges that are coming against them. Radhakrishnan believes that there is no opposition between religion and science, between religion and highest social morality, between religion and cooperation among religions. Religion, as an inward transformation, as a spiritual change, as the overcoming of the discords within our own nature that has been the fundamental feature of it from the beginning of history. Religion is spiritual change, an inward transformation. It is a transition from darkness to light, from an unregenerate to a regenerate condition. It is an awakening, a rebornness.

Religion is a real life force and its very aim is to bind together the heart of all living beings to each other and to God. The ultimate goal of all religions is the same in essence. The ultimate goal of all men, the end of all religions is one i.e. reunion with God or with the divinity which is the real nature of all mankind. There are so much similarities in different religions which suggest the idea that the particulars of various religions have been copied from one another. Realization of self as God in all is the principal teaching of all religions. It is the belief in all religions that service to all living beings is the service to God and this is the way of attaining perfection in life. All religions believe in supernatural Being, transcendental but not indifferent to His creatures. Comparative study of all major religions of the world shows that except certain differences in regard to non-essentials or superficial elements all
religions teach the same fundamental truth. All religious practices are the expressions of the
inward desire for realizing the supreme. The founders of different religions agree in holding
that underlying differences there is an essential unity.

Radhakrishnan maintains that every religion is passing through self analysis and self
criticism and is developing into a form which is sympathetic to other religions. No religion
can retreat from modernity and science. With the spread of scientific knowledge religions are
becoming liberal, although a few religions are there which cling to dogma as their only
defence in this predicament. They are attempting to reach to what is of fundamental
importance, the common root in the spiritual world from which each individual may gain a
clear insight and a firm faith in his own religion. According to Radhakrishnan, religions
today may learn more from each other than they did in the past. Although no one of them
however modified by contact with others likely to provide a basis acceptable to all for the
spiritual unification of mankind. We can draw inspiration from the existing religions. We do
not want a new religion but we need a new and enlarged understanding of the old religions.
The future of religion is not bound up with the acceptance of one religion by all or a state of
conflict or anarchy among religions. But it depends on the acceptance of a fundamental unity
with a free differentiation. Our unity is of the heart and spirit. In the outward forms of our life
in God we are divided. But we believe that a deeper understanding of the different forms will
lead to united comprehension of the truth of spiritual life. The indifference, which many of us
have towards the religions of others, is due to ignorance and incomprehension. If we study
them deeply then we will realize that they share sympathy of outlook. By living not merely in
splendid isolation but in active hostility, they have lost a great opportunity. Radhakrishnan
quoted. “It is a reproach to us that with our unique opportunities of entering into sympathetic
relations with Indian thought, we have made few attempts to do so ..... I am not suggesting
that we should become Buddhists or Hindus, But I believe that we have almost as much to
learn from them as they from us.” Religions by working on each other should help them all to attain a great vision of human fellowship.

Radhakrishnan observes that all religions are friends and partners in the pursuit of spiritual life. All religions are bound together in a holy partnership to advance the cause of peace, justice and freedom. Each of the great religions though not originally at least by importation from other religions, has more or less the same religious ideas. All religions believe in one supreme spirit as the source from which the world proceeds, by which it is sustained and ends. This ultimate reality manifests itself and it can be conceived in various manners and it suggests various paths to perfection. As a matter of fact no fonder of religion does preach absolutely new truth. There is no difference in regard to the fundamental truth of almost all religions. The different prophets preach the same fundamental truth in varied languages at different times in almost all religions of the world. In the Bhagavad Gitā Lord Krishna puts to Arjuna- “The royal saints, the kings, the philosophers of ancient days from one to the other did pass this wisdom from age to age, that same eternal yoga, ancient vision. Here I declare to this day to strengthen the mind and heart of life’s perpetual strife.”

Buddha and Jaina speak respectively of the past Buddhas and Tirthāṅkaras and they admit that they have codified the same truths taught by them. In Christianity Christ says – “I am not to destroy the law of the prophets but to fulfill them.” Similarly in Islam Muhammad says, - “This that I am now telling unto you the Holy Quran it is to be found within the ancient seers too.”

Kung –Pen-Tu (Confucius) declared – “I only hand on: I cannot create new things.” The Sufis declared that - “Just as it is the luster of one Sun that shines in the different sea waves and bubbles, so it is One Truth that is expressed under the cover of different forms.”

Radhakrishnan asserts to that the unchanging thing in the religion is the spiritual evolution of man and his awareness of the living in him. So we should take into account this
basic truth above all religions. The traditions are only imperfect, halting expressions of truth. If we love truth as such and not an opinion of it or if we desire nothing except that is true and acceptable to God, the present religious snobbery and unfriendliness among religions will disappear. According to Radhakrishnan inter religious discord and conflict will cease if we recognize that different religions are diverse expressions or formulations of the same truth. It is frequently said by Radhakrishnan that the different religions of the world should exercise tolerance. Without this element of tolerance inter religious contacts among the great religions of the world will not be fruitful. Religious tolerance has two aspects – one is positive and the other is negative. Negatively it means refraining from persecuting the followers of the religions other than one’s own. Positively it is associated with the realization that every religion is relative. Because every religion is relative therefore the whole truth about reality cannot be possessed by just one religion. Therefore instead of claiming monopoly in matters of truth one is to exercise to tolerance. Religious tolerance involves the idea that no form of religion can have exclusive monopoly of truth. It is also relative. This realization is regarded to be an important realization in contemporary world in which we find encounters among different religions.

According to Radhakrishnan when we regard India as a secular state, it does not mean that we reject the reality of an Unseen Spirit or the relevance of religion to life. It does not mean that we exalt irreligion. We hold that no religion should be given preferential status, or unique distinction. Again no religion should be accorded special privileges in national life or international relations because that may lead to a violation of the basic principles of democracy and country to the best interests of religion and government. This view of religious impartiality and forbearance has a prophetic role to play within the national and international life. The religious impartiality of the Indian state is not to be confused with secularism or atheism. Here secularism is defined in accordance with the ancient religious
tradition of India. It tries to build up a fellowship of believes by bringing them into harmony with each other and not by subordinating individual qualities to the group mind. This dynamic fellowship is based on the principle of diversity in unity which alone has the quality of creativeness.

Radhakrishnan never deviates from his firm conviction that there is what is called a religion beyond religions. That is what he terms “the transcendent unity of all religions”. There are many religions on earth and all are different from one another. But in the midst of their diversity there is unity. However religions may be different in external manifestations and diffusions but they are all at one in their proclamation that the apparent world is not the real world. It is only an expression or manifestation of the super-natural world. Many celebrated teachers, seers and prophets of almost all the religions emphasized that religion must be deeply personal and not necessarily institutional. Radhakrishnan tells that the growing menace of materialism, mechanism, agnosticism, skepticism can be stifled not by the mutual antagonism between them but by their concerted attack on anti-religious forces which urge that there is nothing on which religions agree. Therefore, the aim of comparative religion should be to emphasize and bring to the forefront of philosophical thinking of the points of agreement between the religions, rather than the points in which they differ. Religions are the different languages in which we express our relations with God. By stripping religion of all its external manifestations no one can think of the growth and enrichment of spirituality. Dogmas and rituals are bound to continue to exist because it is through them alone that deep religious feeling can be expressed. Yet dogmas and rituals are not the core or essence of religion because they are only the outcome of the adjustment to circumstances and conditions in which men are placed. A study of different religions indicates that they have philosophical depth, spiritual intensity and human sympathy.
2.13 UNIVERSAL RELIGION:

Religion as one of the oldest cultural institutions of mankind has been present at every level of human society. But in some periods in the development of religion, the essential part of religion have become over crowded with dogmas and rituals that it has become difficult to distinguish the essential part from the inessential. The existence of God is common to all the religions of the world. But the philosophers, the sages and the priests have defined God in many contradictory ways. They have pronounced Him impersonal, beyond attributes and again personal, with form and also without form. Hence divergent religions have arisen. These divergences have acted as barriers between different religions and are main causes of all sorts of conflicts including bloody battle. The greatest need of our present day is the mobilization of the Universal Religion. Universal religion lays stress upon the essential unity of all the great religions of the world. Brotherhood of all men, irrespective of race or nationality is the ideal aim of Universal Religion. An ideal universal religion is that which will be equally acceptable to all minds, which will destroy the individuality of any man in religion, and at the same time shows him a path of union with all others. Universal Religion may be said to be the most general concept which reveals the very unity and unique nature of all religions of the world. The very heart underlying all religions in the world is the same. Universal Religion expresses the sameness of the fundamental principles as well as the teachings of each and every religion in the world. Universal Religion is neither the product of discursive understanding nor a synthesis of the vital elements of different religions. It is the realization that the different religions are expressions of one basic truth. In fact Universal Religion does not consist in following a creed, or in believing in dogmas, doctrines or scriptural writings, nor can it be found in the banner of some particular prophet, by joining a sect or denomination. Rather its objective is to upgrade the individual soul above the limitations of senses and bring it in close contact with the Infinite and to make it realize the
absolute freedom from the bondage of ignorance, delusion, egoism, pride, ambition etc. Explaining the concept of Universal Religion Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa said that the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic. They are various phases of the one Eternal Religion.

Swami Vivekananda was one of the earliest to talk about the possibility of universal religion. He took religion as a necessity of life and asserted that it was the most potent force guiding the destiny of human race. The great ideal of a Universal Religion was explained by Vivekananda as early as 1893 on the floor of the parliament of religions, Chicago. In several of his speeches and writings Vivekananda has spoken of Universal religion as the one Eternal Religion, representing the religious consciousness of humanity, which manifests itself in different places as different religions. He boldly put Advaita, the unity of all existence, as the possible basis of a Universal Religion. Universal Religion is the most general concept that asserts the oneness of religion for all men. Vivekananda’s concept of Universal Religion may be said to be rooted in his Master Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. Explaining the Universal character of Religion, Vivekananda said, “Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control, or philosophy- by one or more, or all of these – and be free.”144 This is according to Vivekananda the whole of religion. Universal Religion teaches a religion of humanity based entirely upon ethical laws. It is a religion of self-conquest and of the victory of righteousness over unrighteousness through one ways or style of thinking, willing and feeling irrespective of caste, creed and religion. A very remarkable element in Vivekananda’s philosophy of religion is his belief in the unity of existence and the essential unity of all religions. Each religion, according to Vivekananda, is as one pearl on a string of pearls. As they complement each other so in the heart of everything the same truth prevails. Universal Religion may be said to be the most general concept which reveals the very unity
and the unique nature of all religions of the world. The very heart underlying all religions of
the world is the same. Universal Religion expresses the sameness of the fundamental
principles as well as the teachings of each and every religion in the world. Vivekananda
believes that Universal Religion exists. Just as the universal brotherhood of man is there, so
also Universal Religion is there. Universal Religion is neither the product of discursive
understanding nor a synthesis of the vital elements of different religions. It is the realization
that the different religions are expressions of one basic truth.

Vivekananda reflected on the necessity of the concept of Universal Religion for the
society. He realized the nature of man, according to which mankind in the whole world has
been trying to look beyond in the quest of his ultimate destiny or search for God. Therefore
the whole of the world community is expecting a religion, which is acceptable to all.
Religions represent the spiritual aspirations and struggles of mankind. However it is
unpleasant that various world religions have been indulging in mutual criticisms,
persecutions. We have seen how some religions in the world, claiming universal empire in
the field of religion over all mankind, have engaged themselves in ruthless wars and
bloodshed to achieve this end. Vivekananda has observed these two mutually opposing
aspects of religion, which he explains in the following words: "There is nothing that has
brought to man more blessings than religion, yet at the same time, there is nothing that has
brought more horror than religion. Nothing has made more for peace and love than religion;
nothing has engendered fiercer hatred than religion. Nothing has made the brotherhood of
man more tangible than religion; nothing has bred more bitter enmity between man and man
than religion. Nothing has built more charitable institutions, more hospitals for men, and
even for animals, than religion; nothing has deluged the world with more blood than
religion."¹⁴⁵ Thus Vivekananda deeply felt the importance of religion as well as its crucial
role in the human life. He is of the opinion that to improve this situation and to establish
peace among religions, we must understand that all of those religions have proved their strength, their worth and their necessity for mankind. He questioned the thesis of religious plurality. If we say that one religion is true, automatically the rest of other religions become false. According to him, all religions are not really contradictory, but supplementary. He said that, “Each religion as it were, takes up one part of the great universal truth and spends its whole force in embodying and typifying that part of the great truth. It is therefore an addition and not exclusion.” That was his justification of equal status of all the religions.

Explaining the concept of Universal Religion, Vivekananda said that all religions in the world are looking at truth from different standpoints which may of course vary according to our birth, education, surroundings and so on. His idea was that all religions are different forces in the realm of God; each religion is working for the good of mankind. Universal Religion, for which philosophers are looking for, already exists in every country like universal brotherhood. Every religion has a great mission to fulfil. In Hinduism, we find one idea, i.e. spirituality. Hinduism tries to define the idea of the soul so that no earthly touch can destroy it. Renunciation and spirituality, the great ideals of India are still clinging to these ideas. Referring to Islam he said that Islam makes its followers all equal. It stands to preach to the world the practical brotherhood of all belonging to their faith. The central idea of Christianity is to preach – ‘watch and pray, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand’- it means that man should purify his heart and should be ready to that spirit that never dies. Vivekananda was ready to accept all religions of the past and hence he uttered- “I worship God with every one of them in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedans, I shall enter the Christian Church and kneel down before the crucifix, I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge to Buddha and His law. I shall go to the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu who is trying to see the light which
enlightens the heart of everyone." He was ready not only to accept all the religions but to keep heart open to accept any religion that may come into existence in future also.

Vivekananda questioned the diversity of religious views in explaining the identical phenomena and held that the diversity of the views is due to the fact that what each religion described was only the different phases of the same phenomenon. Each religion has particular ideals that are needed to the society. Thus Vivekananda gave equal importance to all religions in the world. Strengthened by this understanding of religion, Vivekananda identified the need for Universal Religion. Then he searched for the way to form that Universal Religion. He realised that the Universal Religion cannot be established with any one of the world religions, converting the followers of all other religions in to it. Universal Religion is possible only to the extent that there is a conception of universalism in which there is a place for all religions suited to different types of humanity. Therefore he gave due consideration to the phenomenon of diversity among the humanity in the world. There may be different types of people in the world with different mentality, with different habits, rituals and beliefs. Each and everyone have one’s own place in the society. All these various minds and various types of people are needed to the society. That was a fundamental assumption of his Universal Religion. With reference to his concept of Universal Religion Vivekananda says that religion consists neither in doctrines nor in dogmas. It is the direct realisation of the truths of the spiritual world that forms the real essence of religion. True religion is a direct transcendental experience of the ultimate reality. The idea of direct realization is common to all religions. The end of all religions is the realization of God in the Soul, and this is the one Universal Religion. If there is one universal truth in all religions, according to Vivekananda, it is realization of God. Ideals and methods may differ, but this is the main point to be noted.

Swami Vivekananda built his theory of the transcendental unity of all religions based on the direct experience of the Ultimate Reality. He spoke on the oneness of all religions
with regard to the transcendental aspect of each religion. Differences among religions would not be the cause of conflict for they are understood to be mutually complementary. All the religions of the world together constitute one whole. For Vivekananda, there existed only one Eternal Religion of which all other religions were only variations. Each religion has a special beat, a unique trait and its own articulation of what is good. By Universal Religion, Vivekananda says, ‘I do not mean any one universal philosophy, or any universal mythology, or any one universal ritual, held alike by all; for I know that this world must go on working wheel within wheel, this intricate mass of machinery, most complex, most wonderful.”

Vivekananda pointed out that the language of the soul is one; the languages of the nations are many, their customs and methods of lives are totally different. Religion is of the soul which gets expression through different nations, languages and customs. Hence the differences between the world religions are one of expression and not of substance and their points of similarity are intrinsic.

The diversity of human beings is as much a fact as the unity of the same. Universal Religion will have to tolerate and accept peculiarities internally existent in the individuals. Vivekananda says that the Vedanta understands that and therefore preaches one principle and admits a lot of methods. It merely preaches the principle and the method it leaves to us. Take any path you like to follow, any prophet you like, but have only that method which suits your own nature. Vivekananda called upon us to adore the living God around us- the man, neglected and dispossessed, i.e. the poor, the down – trodden, oppressed and needy people. According to Vivekananda, except service to man in the image of God, we get no other religion. A man inspired by God’s blessings gives moulding to all his passions and desires, love and ambition in one single mission of life i.e. offering service to the poor and neglected class of people and uplifting the very spirit of people bound up by slavery to a honourable position with fullness of life and manliness in the highest religion. A very beautiful reflection
about universality of religions of the world has been well represented in the following remark of Vivekananda: “A true religion which will give us faith in ourselves, a national self-respect and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around me..........if you want to find God, serve man.”149 To understand the exact nature of Universal Religion, it follows that we must learn the true nature of the Divine Life within. Vivekananda has said that we must have a pure mind and true realization of the Supreme Reality through right knowledge. So in essence all men are equal and in every man there is the reflection of the same Supreme Reality. Vivekananda emphasised the oneness of soul of all men. Thus it follows that Vivekananda’s concept of Universal Religion is rooted in his Vedāntism.

Vivekananda’s aim was to present the ideal of Universal Religion as the spirit of a universal society that is a new idea of religion for a new humanity. Vivekananda did not mean his Universal Religion to supersede or supplant the existing religions. The concept of a Universal Religion is just an awareness of the ‘economy of God’ where all religions of the world co-exist forming a grand symphony of man’s spiritual aspirations. He adds that Universal Religion is already exists in the minds of people who even while sticking to their own religion, their ancestral faith, look upon other religions with sympathy, who can without rejecting their own belief, show a genuine respect for the prophets of the different nations of the world. A believer in Universal Religion possesses a good understanding of and reverence for world religion without losing his sense of belonging to his own religion. According to him, unity in variety is the plan for the universe. Universal Religion as conceived by Vivekananda is, therefore not a new religion with a new scripture and a new liturgy, it can be regarded as a fresh attitude to religion, a fresh spiritual and moral outlook. It commands not merely tolerance; it insists on acceptance of other religions too as true and making religion thereby a principle of human unity. Universal Religion may, thus, be said to be a discovery of universality in all religions. Through his concept of Universal Religion Vivekananda
wanted to break down all barriers, chains of servitude along with the message that the manifestation of perfection is already in man so that man can live in a free environment. He showed that truly Universal Religion can even today bring the whole world closer and unite all men into a unit as its aim is to infuse the spirit of oneness. Vivekananda asserts that true religion has its roots in all the inner elements of mankind. That is why he uses the word ‘spiritual’ to mean the universal character of religion. The concept of religion put forward by Vivekananda is nothing but ‘humanism’ embracing all religions of the world. He preached this great principle emphasising the selflessness of the individual.

The religious universalism, which Vivekananda preached was later developed by Radhakrishnan in his own philosophical work as a foundation to an inter faith dialogue and east -west unity. According to Radhakrishnan, if we survey the historical view of different religions we will be able to obtain a more comprehensive vision and understanding of the spiritual truth. Radhakrishnan has laid the foundation for a Universal Religion that satisfies the demands of reason and the needs of humanity. Being an idealist he insisted upon the spiritual unity of mankind. He says, “We may measure true spiritual culture by the comprehension and veneration we are able to give all forms of thought and feeling which have influenced mankind. We must understand the experience of people whose thought eludes our categories. We must widen our religious perspective and obtain world wisdom worthy of our time and place.” According to Radhakrishnan it is our duty to get back this central core of religion; this fundamental perennial wisdom has been obscure and distorted in the course of history by dogmatic and sectarian development. Radhakrishnan’s conception of religion reflects the eternal meaning of religion. He had succeeded in formulating the conception of religion with reference to the etymological meaning of religion that is binding force. According to Radhakrishnan the doctrine of love is common to all the major religions of the world. It is universal. His motto is to respect other religions as one respects one’s own.
He is against disturbing the psychological comfort of people by unsetting their faiths. Radhakrishnan states that the basic principles of all the great world religions are essentially meant to promoting international understanding and universal brotherhood. According to Radhakrishnan faith is must for the individual and every one must have a religion. His philosophy appeals to the internal culture of man, which is the real measure of an individual’s attainment of a higher wisdom. Radhakrishnan states that true religion is catholic in character and universal in application. It does not function for a group, class or nation, but for humanity as a whole. It appeals to the higher instincts of man, reason, co-operation and love rather than fear, greed and hatred. Radhakrishnan wrote, “Religions proclaim a universal morality. Spiritual love is universal in its significance.”

Universality can be claimed by each and every religion of the world. In this context there may likely arises quarrel regarding which religion for being a universal religion can make justification in respect of its claim most. Radhakrishnan is convinced that Hinduism has a universal spirit and that such a spirit can became a vital element for bringing world peace. It is Radhakrishnan’s assertion that every attempt to gain universality on the part of the historical religions brings them to the Indian religious thought. The religious thought on which Radhakrishnan takes his philosophical character is completely universal in character. He finds all creative forms of religious life moving towards an ideal of unity. This movement towards universality transcends all historical boundaries and particularities of culture. Radhakrishnan with an implicit bias for Hinduism seems to attain the possibility of Universal Religion in the nature and form of Hinduism. He puts argument that Hinduism has always been very liberal and broad-minded by nature and character and the approaches towards other world religions has always been seen one of tolerance. Hinduism has always been keeping belief that all world religions indicate the very same reality or truth. They all should be regarded just like the various ways leading to the same goal. Hinduism is universal in
character, particularly because it stresses spiritual experience and inward realization which by its very nature cannot be confined to particular religions. If we go through the historical background we will easily detect certain elements with regard to the universalistic approach of Hinduism. At times, people of different religions came to India and settled here. The Hindus quite happily allowed these people to settle and observe their own religious. But in course of time, these religions could hardly maintain their identity in face of the liberal and universalistic outlook of Hinduism and they ultimately merged into it. Buddhism originated in India, spread and survived throughout the universe; but it could hardly maintain its separate identity in India. The liberality of Hinduism absorbed it. Those religions which did not merge into Hinduism were greatly influenced by it and they have hardly been able to maintain their original rigour. All these facts show that Hinduism contains within it qualities of being a universal religion.

Tolerance is the characteristic virtue of Hinduism and Radhakrishnan claims that because of this attitude of toleration Hinduism alone can provide the true basis for a doctrine of the spiritual harmony of all religions. The attitude of tolerance in Hinduism is not the result of ignorance or of scepticisms, but of conviction, sympathy and respect. Hinduism preserves the unity of different beliefs by interpreting them as the difficult modes or aspects of the Supreme. This is due to the attitude which has resulted from understanding other forms of worship. Faith for a Hindu does not mean dogmatism. The Hindu attitude is based on a philosophy of life which regards religion as a matter of personal realization. Creeds and dogmas, words and symbols are only expressions of that realization. But after the examination of the grounds depending upon which Radhakrishnan expects and keeps beliefs in Hinduism to have included within it the practical possibility of a universal religion cannot be treated to be more strong. The belief in different religions as to the God or gods and goddess are fundamentally one and the same and that these various religions are nothing but
the various pathways leading towards the some goal do not form Hindu religion: rather they construct Hindu philosophy of religion. For that reason the practical possibility of Universal Religion in Hinduism is not depending upon the fact that it treats all other religions with the eyes of sympathy and tolerance. In contrast it relies on the reply of the question- how far the beliefs, practices and religious stories of Hinduism possess documents within them through which the head and heart of all the world religious people can be satisfied in an efficient manner. One cannot with certainty put that Hinduism comprises elements which will be able to make the whole world satisfied. All the religions of the world would possess elements to satisfy their followers to the best in their own manner. The merger of certain religions at a certain time in some other religion or religions may be a sequel to many local factors of the time. There was a time when other religions merged into Hinduism and today there are several Hindus who are daily undergoing conversion in to Christianity. Further, if Hinduism has influenced other religions, the influence of other religions upon Hinduism also cannot be denied.

It has been maintained that Radhakrishnan is not only an interpreter of Hinduism, but also a defender of and apologist for the essential values of Vedānta as expounded by the great Śaṅkara. Radhakrishnan is loyal to the essential values of Vedānta. Instead of fruitless competition, he calls for genius co-operation among religions, strongly advocating a fellowship of faiths. Radhakrishnan rejects narrow mindedness and rivalaries in the realm of religion. When the world today is moving towards more co-operation and larger unity, religions should not insist on limited vision and narrow loyalties. Exclusive claims by particular religions have always been a source of pride, fanaticism and division. With greater study of the basic principles of world religions, mankind can steadily move towards informed understanding, larger sympathy and mutual respect, free from fanaticism and bitterness. According to Radhakrishnan the different religions are only aspects of the one eternal
religion. One should give his loyalty to religion and not to religions. The unchanging substance of religion is the evolution of man’s consciousness. The essence and the unity of religions is to be found in that which is divine or universal, not in what is temporary and local. All religions are part of the same pilgrimage of the human spirit to the Eternal, and the unity of religions is to be found in their spiritual aspiration. What is needed today, according to Radhakrishnan, is not fusion, but a fellowship of faiths, the only basis for which is the Sanātana dharma, the eternal religion. The main aim of Radhakrishnan’s religious universalism is not to start a new religion but to establish a comprehensive link between the old religions of mankind. He wrote, “We do not want a new religion, but we need a new enlarged understanding of the old religions.”

From the above discussion, it is found that the ideal of Universal Religion is to realize that the different religions of the world are like so many ways which lead to the same goal. Thus it follows that Universal Religion should not be treated as one more religion including the many existing from beforehand, rather it should be treated as the only religion pre-existent by nature all over the world which will be acceptable to and followed by all religious persons alike. This religion will become the religion of all religious men, and it will be not of one specific group or society. In this way Universal Religion will become the universally accepted religion. It has been a matter of feeling that once Universal Religion is realized from within, all bloodshed and enmity in the name of religion will be fully over and the real role of religion then will be played, i.e. the role of uniting all people of the world by one thread of universal brotherhood. Universal Religion may be a safeguard of decaying morality in the society of ill practices, malice and hatred to other faiths. The concept of Universal Religion which teaches to caste love against hatred and compassion against violence with calm and dignity is highly required in the present day context with a view to reshaping the ideals of man.
2.14 INTER RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE:

In order to bring harmony and unity amongst the different religions of the world inter-religious dialogue is an important means. Both Swami Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan supported inter-religious dialogue as a principle of bringing harmony among different religions. Inter-religious dialogue is a method of communication among the followers of different religions. It means not only discussion, but also includes all positive and constructive inter-religious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment. It is a meeting among people religiously strong in their own tradition, all trying to witness what is specific and personal in their religious convictions and experiences regarding man and his destiny, his place in the universe, his dependence on the Supreme Being and other questions of common interest. Inter-religious dialogue, also referred to as interfaith dialogue, is about people of different faiths coming to a mutual understanding and respect that allows them to live and cooperate with each other in spite of their differences. The term interfaith dialogue refers to cooperative and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions, at both the individual and institutional level. Interfaith dialogue is not just words or talk. It includes human interaction and relationship. For Radhakrishnan to be truly religious is to serve mankind. Therefore he saw the interfaith dialogue as a necessary outcome of the cultural border crossing.

The purpose of interreligious dialogue is not to settle the differences among religions by philosophical arguments, nor to find out the common factors by some kind of intellectual abstraction. Rather its aim is to show the kinds of considerations, the reasons which are relevant in religious discussions. Its aim is to show how the great religions can differ and agree upon principles. Religious systems do not meet, but religious people deeply rooted in their own heritage do and what brings them together is love, contribution as well as to a
reciprocal enrichment in their faith. The possibility of inter-religious dialogue presumes the existence of many religions. At the same time it holds that since the basic truth of all the religions is the same, there is a common platform on which religions can meet.

The aim of a dialogue is the establishment of a harmony of religions. It will enable us to understand the truth underlying other religions. Such a dialogue will not undermine one’s own religious faith, but will give the participants a deeper understanding of their respective religions. Thus an inter-religious dialogue is expected to remove fanaticism and intolerance and at the same time it will start a free flow of communication among religions. This communication among religions is an interpersonal communication. Only when the spirit of fanaticism disappears, the followers of different religions can realize that no religions can claim absolute finality. Each religion gives an aspect of truth and therefore each religion should learn something from each other. As Swami Nikhilānanda observes it, “Different religions can learn from one another. Thus Hinduism can teach the art of meditation, Christianity social service, Buddhism inner peace, through desire less ness, Judaism justice and righteousness and Islam equality and brotherhood.” In the same way for Radhakrishnan also, the sincere and relentless effort to understand the religions of people different from one’s own is the need of the hour. Radhakrishnan is very much concerned about the relationship between religions of India and Christianity. He distinguishes between the early forms and later developments of the both. He contrasts the pure and simple teachings of Jesus with the developments which Christianity has undergone in the west. Radhakrishnan traces the development of Christianity like this the Jews give to Christianity an ethical passion and a sense of superiority. But the development of Islam, according to Radhakrishnan, has taken the following course: “Islam the creation of a single mind and is expressed in a single sentence, “There is one God and Mohammad is his prophet.” Mohammad claims to be the final link of the great chain from Adam through Noah, Moses
and Jesus……. It borrowed its idea of Messiah from Judaism, its dogmatism and asceticism from Christianity, its philosophy from Greece, and its mysticism from India and Alexandria. The Indian form of Islam is moulded by Hindu beliefs and practices.”

Through Gnosticism, Radhakrishnan tries to prove Hindu influence on Christianity. The chief features of the Christianity are akin to those of the Upanishads. Radhakrishnan claims that Jesus is closes to Hinduism and Buddhism than the Judaism. Early Christianity is humanistic, tolerant and less authoritarian. But when it became the religion of the Roman Empire it became intolerant and authoritarian. Again Radhakrishnan says about Buddhism that Buddha did not announce a new religion. According to him, Buddha was born, grew up and died a Hindu. The Buddha adopted an absolutist view of Reality, but not a theistic one. He calls himself Brahmabhuta, he who has become Brahman. Thus from Radhakrishnan’s point of view, Buddhism did not start as a new and independent religion. It was an offshoot of the more ancient faith of the Hindus. Radhakrishnan thinks that Buddha’s main object was to bring about a reformation in the religious beliefs and practices of Hinduism by making it alive to its basic principles. Radhakrishnan believes that the people of different races, languages and cultures have met on the Indian soil and have settled down as members of a common civilization whose primary characteristics are faith in an unseen Reality of which all life is a manifestation, the primacy of spiritual experience, the relativity of rites and dogmas, a rigid adherence to intellectual norms, and an anxiety for harmonizing apparent opposites.”

Inter-religious dialogue aims at to understand and acknowledge the believers of various religious traditions in their otherness in order to bridge the gulfs of mutual ignorance and misunderstanding. The prerequisite needed in a dialogue of this type is that doctrinal foundation of each religious tradition may be studied critically but value judgments need not to require. Inter-religious dialogue requires a certain measure of understanding and
receptivity to the beliefs and practices characteristic of various religions. An important objective of inter-religious dialogue is to promote the true value of religious pluralism. Inter-religious efforts intended to promote the culture of communal harmony and nation building process. This is incompatible with any attempt either to suppress or displace or even to absorb one religion by another with a holy embrace. As Radhakrishnan maintains, “We must enter into a dialogue with the world in which we labour. This does not mean that we work for featureless unity of religions. We do not wish to lose the diversity which enshrines precious spiritual insight.”

The aim of interreligious dialogue is not the change of creed but to change of attitude towards believers of other religions. Believers of various religions while being faithful to their own religious affiliations should be able to discuss matters of religious concern and other public interest in the dialogue forum and be able to interact with each other in their social life on non sectarian terms. The kind of pluralism that is to be nurtured through inter-religious dialogue is one that accepts the legitimacy of all religious traditions and treats their followers as equal partners in religious and secular affairs of common human concern in the political society. Religious harmony is an essential requirement for national integration. Sustainable harmony and national solidarity among citizens can only be built on permanent ethical values which protect human persons in their dignity as moral subjects and social beings.

It is believed that participation is an inter-religious dialogue, would prevent the participants from making any attempt to aggrandize any particular religion in doing any harm to others. Its aim is to develop to toleration towards other religions and to create harmony among all of them. In the proper sense toleration does not mean any meek or cowardly submission in to the aggressiveness of the followers of other religions, but is as Radhakrishnan says, “the homage which the finite mind pays to the inexhaustibility of the
Infinite,” The true meaning of the harmony and unity in the religious field was brought out by Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of religions in Chicago. He says, “If any one hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and destruction of the others, to him I say, “Brother, Yours is an impossible hope. Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God Forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or the Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid...... The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.”

The study of other religions is essential for the understanding of one’s own religion and it is a valuable constituent of one’s general culture. It is true that no one can master all the scriptures of the world. We must work for a new spiritual reconciliation and outlook in the light of recent developments. We can conclude that religions can meet, and this meeting is possible through a friendly dialogue. The state of affairs’, which may be brought about by such a dialogue may be called ‘democracy of religions.’ Democracy of religions negatively means that the religions are not opposed to each other and positively it means that the religions are on same footing in so far as their goal and achievement are concerned. In this democracy each religion lives and grows in its own way and yet maintains a friendly relation with others in so far as they all are fellow travelers towards the same goal.

2.15 CONCLUSION:

Radhakrishnan is universally accepted as one of the greatest religious philosophers of the world. Religion for Radhakrishnan is a communion with the Eternal. It consists in fellowship and service for the welfare of all. Religion for Radhakrishnan consists in doing justice, in loving mercy and in making our fellow creatures happy. Religion is of immense value and it can teach a great deal to mankind. Radhakrishnan supports not this or that
particular religion but the spirit which lies behind all religions. Radhakrishnan holds that mere political and economic organization will do nothing good to society. If society is to function as a living reality, it needs moral values to be fostered and it is the religion that can furnish men with moral conscience. It guides men towards a social passion that holds them together.

Radhakrishnan’s conception of religion certainly aims at “liberation of all or Sarvamukti.” True religion is universally valid and it encourages fresh truth and awakens ‘social passion.’ Man’s instinct seeks harmony and strives for proper adjustment. It is religion that encourages man to become more and more integrated. Radhakrishnan firmly believes that a society can be rebuilt only by changing men’s hearts and minds and religion prepares men for this new change. It aims at creating harmony among people of different religions and demonstrates how to live together striving to attain perfection. Radhakrishnan holds religion as a social factor, a binding force upon the social relations with moral awareness. He believes in the authenticity of experience and its insight that penetrates into the things. In its essence religion is reintegration of human personality and redemption of human society. Radhakrishnan holds that religion insists on behaviour more than on belief. It aims at rediscovering lost faith for new social order since in the absence of faith social order will be paralyzed. Religion reintegrates social relations and evolves human personality.

Radhakrishnan’s method of approach towards religion is synthetic. His writings are a harmonizing force in the world of religions. With a profound grasp of the modern situation, especially the religious one, Radhakrishnan stresses the important value to comparative method and thinks that it is most relevant to the present contact of encounter between religions and cultures. Radhakrishnan rightly puts emphasis on empathy and open mindedness for understanding other faiths. His basic insight regarding religion is that it is intrinsic to human nature. For him the choice is not between religion and no religion. But
what kind of religion we want. However this is a controversial issue and only a serious of phenomenological understanding of religion and its relation to human existence can throw light on the tenability or otherwise of this insight. In its true sense religion means a search for truth and its realization by every individual. It does not consist simply of dogmas and rites. Radhakrishnan considers religion as a way of life and not merely a system of abstract ideas and doctrines. The main purpose of religion is to awaken man to the divine and make him realize it for himself.

The motive behind Radhakrishnan’s insistence on the necessity of religion is his insights into the nature of human civilization, its survival, and growth. The essence of civilization according to him does not consist in racial unity or political-economic organizations but in the fundamental value system. Religion is the embodiment of such values. So, through religion civilization can attain stability and perfection. Radhakrishnan believes in world-citizenship and advocates the vitality of religion that makes man universal. Religion is a living faith, a new light and a new reform. So, he attempts a conception of religious reality that satisfies both head and heart. Religion as a social factor helps people in shaping the world as a peaceful family with spiritual coherence and psychological unity. Only religion based on the authenticity of experience can foster harmony. Radhakrishnan believes that such a religion alone can foster harmony. The whole world is gradually growing to a single whole but it lacks a soul so it suffers from inward loneliness. Religion can provide it soul and help in achieving its goal that is one family on earth. The attempts that are made in order to bring about human unity through mechanical means and political adjustments have proved inadequate. It depends on the direction of its life force and energy and religion being a way into life can regulate it properly. Here religion in a non-dogmatic sense can be of great help to serve as the basis for a larger human fellowship. Radhakrishnan asserts that today we need a profound change in man’s way of life. Radhakrishnan believes that, religion,
besides a social factor, is strictly a binding force and helps people to restore justice and recover faith.

However Radhakrishnan does not support and justify all kinds of religion. He draws clear distinction between the Semitic religions which stress on adherence to dogmas, scriptures, ceremonies etc and the Indian religions which insist upon the primacy of spiritual enlightenment. In the modern times the sole justification of a religion is its abilities to guide man spiritually. From the point of view of this perspective the Indian religions have a greater role to play today. Radhakrishnan considers the Indian religions to be more valuable than the Semitic religions from the point of view of interreligious tolerance and dialogue. Radhakrishnan observes that the Semitic religions with the concept of the chosen people their exclusiveness of religion contain the seeds of inter religions antagonism. Therefore Radhakrishnan insists that the Semitic religions have to change themselves.

Radhakrishnan is essentially a philosopher with a deeply religious and spiritual bent of mind. All his social and political thinking is thoroughly imbued with spiritualistic outlook and in lying foundations of his political thought Radhakrishnan has emphasized spirit, intuition and religion. Religious life culminates in spiritual or mystic experience which is the foundation of all religions. This experience is higher than ritual worship of God and it also gives us an insight into the nature of reality. As a true philosopher of religion, Radhakrishnan argues with a good amount of evidence in favour of the universality of spiritual or mystic experience. Radhakrishnan considers religious experience as unbound or undetermined by cultural or historical forces. For the establishment of universal brotherhood such kind of perspective is obviously conducive.

Religion for Radhakrishnan is not a doctrinal conformity or ceremonial piety but it aims at transforming man’s personality, it kindles spiritual awakening in man. His religion is
both a religion of man and the religion of the spirit. He firmly believes that all great religions begin with individual and end with brotherhood and fellow feeling. Radhakrishnan believes that a true religion makes a man free from all human vices and brings about a change in society at the conscious level for the attainment of wholeness. Man’s ultimate ideal is to go beyond the boundaries of this transitory and perishable world and the religion helps man in realizing the perfection.

Radhakrishnan’s important contribution towards religion lies in his thesis that in the plane of mysticism alone mankind will discover its religious unity. Radhakrishnan talks of an invisible brotherhood among the mystics. Though they are separated from each other by space and time, their religious experience revealing the spiritual identity of all and this makes them members of a single fraternity. Therefore according to Radhakrishnan future belongs not to the organized religions but to mysticism, not to creedoal dogmatism, but to spiritual experience, not to any race or nation but to humanity.

But the most important contribution which Radhakrishnan has made is that of the religion of the spirit which according to him must be the future religion of the world. The task of comparative religion must be according to him to focus attention on those doctrines and tenets on which we are united rather than those on which we disagree. All religions are basically one. We should treat all religions as friendly partners in the supreme task of nourishing the spiritual life of mankind.
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