CHAPTER IV

MODERN INTERPRETATIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA AND REBIRTH

Modern thinkers generally believe in the reality of the world, dignity of humanness, integral nature of man and the reality of human freedom. The ideal of life can be reached only by transcending the finite world. Freedom for them is both the nature of man, and his ultimate destiny. Man is free but some obstacles that he has ignorantly put around himself appear to limit his freedom. Man’s ability lies in how he uses his freedom. He should make efforts to remove the obstacles, in order to realise the fully manifested freedom. M. K. Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghosh and Dr. S. Radhakrishna are relevant among modern thinkers whose contributions to Indian thought are more precious and valuable.

4.1 Gandhian Concept of Karma and Rebirth

Mahatma Gandhi is an example of a leader who is not guided but the passing moods and passions of the populace, but who turns and guides these in the direction of the vision of human excellence that he has experienced for himself. He practiced what he professed in his life and passionately worked to increase the moral status of the Indian people and to better their material conditions. He endeavored to impart to the nation the inspiration of a religion of
divine love and human service. His stress on truth and non-violence is the only beacon light in a world enveloped in the darkness of selfishness and exploitation, hatred and violence. He alone could look calmly and compassionately into the blood shot eyes of modern man.

Like any other modern thinkers, Gandhiji also stressed the dignity of man. He observes that in the history of philosophy, there have been many thinkers who have given different pictures about the nature and status of man. But these pictures of man appears to Gandhi as based on partial or superficial analysis of man’s external behaviour and conduct. He holds that man is essentially a spiritual being. At the same time he is also aware of the importance and value of the bodily aspect of man. The bodily man is the apparent man, his body is natural in so far as it is akin to other objects of nature. It grows, and decay according to the Law of nature. But man has many other characters which are not just physical. He has consciousness, conscience, reason, will emotion, and similar other qualities and the expressions of the real man - the spirit or soul present in him. Those who believe in the divinity of man, develop a respect for man. Gandhiji regarded the individual as one supreme consideration.

As a monist, he believes that whatever we come across is an expression of our supreme God. As such, man according to him, is an expression of that
one reality. In this sense, both bodily and spiritual aspects of man are expressions of God. Every individual is a mixture of bodily and spiritual aspects. It is a fact that there is an element of Divinity present in every man. For him, it is the aspect of the essential goodness present in every man. Outwardly man appears to be selfish, but inwardly and essentially he is good. About the dignity of man as a spiritual person, Gandhiji describes his own view by quoting Urdu couplet the gist of which is, “Adam is not God, but he is a spark of the divine”.

More or less in the manner of the traditional Indian thinkers, he also believed in the Doctrine of Karma and Rebirth. His belief is obviously a product of his extreme respect for Hindu beliefs and traditions. According to him “Whatever a man sows, that shall be reap. The Law of Karma is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the laws as it were retired”. The Law of Karma instituted by God, governs the world and even God does not interfere with its operation. Every action gives its result, good or bad and karma can never be undone. It is believed that our karmas create tendencies in accordance with which our subsequent bodies and capacities are built. As D.M. Dutta observes

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"What we call accidental is predetermined and even the time of death can never be altered. Here by karma, Gandhi means the merits and demerits of our past deeds. Karma also means body and as long as the body is connected with the soul, it acts. Thirdly, karma means violence. Complete freedom from karma, from the body is liberation".3

The Doctrine of Karma has both metaphysical and ethical aspects. Metaphysically, this law explains births and formation of bodies. As such this life and body are on account of our past deeds. Also the Law of Karma is conceived as moral maxim, 'as you sow, so you reap'. He has referred to both these aspects of karma. He describes the metaphysical status of man in terms of his Karmas. But for him the moral significance of the Law of Karma appears to be more important because it is consistent with his moral convictions and also with his kind of faith in rebirth. His views on rebirth differ to some extent with that of other Hindu thinkers. In Hinduism, rebirth is more or less a metaphysical doctrine, explains mystery of life prior to birth and after death. While Gandhi is not denying it, but he gives a moral interpretation to this doctrine by emphasising the ethical value of this belief. By believing in this doctrine, one is able to make adjustments with life and it enables man to be loving, moral, kind and benevolent even in the adverse condition of life. A belief in rebirth becomes

a condition for pious, moral and noble living. He says that his belief in the
rebirth is as much as he believes in the existence of his present body.

The realization that one's own karmas determine the future nature and
the status of an individual creates the further realisation that it is man himself
who is the maker of his own destiny. For him, such a realisation will create a
sense of responsibility in man. He thinks that it is almost obligatory on the part
of the individual to raise himself by himself. So that he can fully realize the
divinity in him. "We are the makers of our own destiny. We can mind or mar
the present and on that will depend the future".  

The acceptance of the Law of Karma did not mean to Gandhi that all our
lives and activities are completely determined. Freedom of the will is a
necessary postulate of morality. He observes that the Doctrine of Karma implies
freedom, for, it lays down the fact that man is the maker of his own destiny. The
law of karma which stands for the continuity with the past implies creative
freedom of the individual. It is true that our past Karmas sets a limit into the
exercise of our free will. But the little freedom we have is real in the sense that
we are free to choose how we use that freedom. He asserts that if we don't use
it, then we are practically dead. He knows well that the freedom we enjoy is
extremely limited. "The free will we enjoy, says Gandhi, "is less than that of a

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passenger on a crowded deck.”

Though our will is free, “we cannot command results, we can only strive.” Man can control his temperament but he cannot totally eradicate it. Human contact, like physical events, is a result of prior causes, but out of these causes, have emerged conscious will, which is free to exercise its choice. Thus within the limits of the framework imposed by the past karmas, the individual is free to choose his past actions. Further the individual has also freedom to liquidate the entire accumulation of past karmas.

Mere mechanical action performed under the influence of impulse or custom cannot be moral. When we say that behaviour is free, what we really mean is that the self acts as a whole, making the action of its own, taking full responsibility. Only voluntary actions are considered to be moral. In this regard he writes accordingly, “No action which is not voluntarily can be called moral. So long as we act like machines, there is no question of morality. If we want to call an action moral, it should have been done consciously and as a matter of duty.”

The doctrine of rebirth presupposes the existence of ‘I’. So long as ‘I’ exists, rebirth takes place. The man who realizes God alone exists, becomes one with God and is liberated. Birth and death are only transitions of the self from

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5 Harijan, 23rd March 1940, p.55.
6 Harijan, 6th May, 1937, p.112.
one body to another like its transition through the states of childhood, youth and old age in the same body. It is body that is subject to disintegration, but not the soul. Gandhiji stresses that the individual soul stands self-proved and self-known, and is the mixture of real and unreal. The soul, when identified with the body, become unreal, but the soul as such is pure and absolute.

According to Gandhiji, the doctrine of karma with its corollary rebirth is only an application of the theory of means and ends. For him both means and ends are equally important. He does not regard means as primary and end secondary. The end is the goal and the means is the way of the realisation of the goal. Means cannot be separated from the end just as the way cannot be separated from the goal. With regard to the relation between means and ends, Gandhi says, "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is same inviolable connection between the means and ends as there is between the seed and the tree". In his philosophy of means and ends, it has a direct relation with the doctrine of Truth and Ahimsa. If Truth is conceived by Gandhi as the end, and Ahimsa the means, how can the two be separated? The end, he believes, is in a stage of progressive realisation. As a natural course of development, the means itself turns out to be the end, through different stages. Thus there is a real unification between means and ends.

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For Gandhiji no, good work goes without good results and no bad work goes with unpunished. This is only a specific instance of the general doctrine that good means alone can bring about good ends. As the means so the end. The law of karma thus presupposes that the world is governed by moral law which ensures the conservation of lives.

The liberation of the soul, according to Gandhi, is the deliverance from having to assume the endless succession of various bodies and from the resultant suffering. It is the distraction of shackles of birth and death. There are two types of liberation according to Gandhi, "One is destruction of one’s body after which, however the necessity of being born again and again remains as ever. The other nirvana is Brahma-Nirvana, which is a state of void. But the void is in regard to the external world, within it is all bliss of illumination".

Thus, in short, we see that Gandhi has a firm belief in the Doctrine of Karma and Rebirth. For him, man’s sufferings are due to his wrong actions done in the past. Good and bad action performed in this life will bear fruit in future and this enables man to make himself free and liberated.

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4.2 Aurobindo’s Views on Karma and Rebirth

Sri. Aurobindo is widely accepted as the great mystic philosopher. The philosophy of ‘The Life Divine’ is known as realistic advaita, as contrasted with the illusionistic Advaita of Sankara. The real import of the term Realistic Advaita is that according to him, the creation is the manifested world and all that has become is as real as Brahman. Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy in tune with the Upanishadic thinking, believes in Sachidananda – Bliss – Existence – Consciousness – as the ultimate truth. Man’s task on earth is to achieve identity with absolute. Broadly speaking his philosophy be termed idealistic as it conceived reality as spiritual and lays down an ideal for mankind towards which all our efforts have to be directed.

Creation, according to Sri. Aurobindo, is a process of descent and ascent, of involution and evolution. It is firstly a descent of the spirit into the worldly forms and then it also implies an ascent of the worldly forms to its original higher status i.e., it is a process of involution and evolution. Evolution pre-supposes involution. In fact evolution is possible only because involution has already taken place. Evolution conceived by Sri. Aurobindo has a distinctive character of its own. Here we can find along with the descriptions of cosmic evolution, a description of the evolution of the individual also. According to him, evolution is as much individual as cosmic. He recognizes the
importance of individual and feels that individual is the medium through which spirit reveals and discloses its being. Therefore his theory of evolution attempts to describe the basic features of individual’s evolution.

For him, evolution has passed from the state of complete inconscience to the grade of the mental, in the process of passing through matter, life and psyche. In man mental grade is first represented, and therefore lies the possibility of the next step of evolution, i.e., supramental level. In the philosophy of Sri. Aurobindo, the three divisions on the concept of individual are:

1. The individual in his physical aspect.
2. The individual in his subliminal aspect.
3. The individual in his true aspect or transcendental aspect which he calls jivatma.

The birth, death and decay are only with regard to physical aspect. The second and third are akin to our spiritual nature. The second aspect is the spiritual; aspect of man in evolution which is going to change and get transformed. It is imperishable and as such endures through births and ever active in expediting the divine transformation. The third aspect is the potentiality of divinity that has to be finally expressed. He describes man in the following words, “The being of man composed of these elements- the physic
behind supporting all, the inner mental, vital and physical, and the outer quite external nature of mind, life and body which is their instrument of expression. But above all is the central being, jivatma, which uses them all for its manifestation, it is a portion of the Divine self.

Sri Aurobindo’s account of the Doctrine of Karma and rebirth contain strictly original ideas, which although in certain respects similar to the traditional Indian notions. He also emphasises certain elements that carry the mark of his original insight and freshness. He writes on the necessary relation between karma and rebirth thus. “The ancient idea of karma was inseparably connected with a belief in the soul’s continual rebirth in new bodies. And this close connection was not a mere accident, but a perfectly intelligible and indeed inevitable union of two related truths, which are needed for each other’s completeness and can with difficulty exist in separation. These two things are the soul side and the nature side of one and the same cosmic sequence. Rebirth is meaningless without karma, and karma has no fount of inevitable origin and no rational and no moral justification if it is not an instrumentality for the sequences of the soul’s continuous experience. If we believe that the soul is repeatedly reborn in the body, we must believe also that there is some link between the lives that proceeded and the lives that follows and that the past of

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the soul has an effect on its future; and that is the spiritual essence of the Law of Karma.\(^\text{11}\)

In his view, karma is not merely a doctrine of retribution of rewards and punishments. The ordinary current conception of Law of Karma is the mosaic law—eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Such a view reduces the supreme to the status of a strict and honourable accountant, he observes. The idea of petty rewards and punishments can’t appeal to the rational mind. But, in a general way, he admits the reasonableness to accept the Law of Karma both in the metaphysical and moral aspects. For him, man is a persistent being who pursues his evolution within the persistent being of the world and he is created by his own past karma which shapes his heredity, his environment, his affinity, his opportunities and obstacles, which is not arbitrarily predestined. It is on this basis that we build our further karma. This process is woven in with the universal evolution and all its lines are included in the web of being. In his own words, “It is mainly his action that construct his fate they are the chief or most forceful determinants of his being and his future. This is the whole of Law of Karma.\(^\text{12}\)


There are, according to Aurobindo, four presuppositions or steps of the Law of Karma. Firstly, he observes that, this world is not all chaos. Law and order pervades the universe. Just as there is no chance or probability in the physical world, there is no chance or chaos in the mental and moral world as well, but there is an ordered energy at work which assures its will by law and fixed relation. "To be assured that there is an all pervading mental law and an all pervading moral law, is a great gain, a supporting foundation." This lead as to the conclusion that what we sow, so we reap. It is the guarantee of divine Government, The second presupposition of the theory of karma is that "it is the idea which creates all relations. All is the expression and expansion of the Idea, Sarvani Vijnana – Vijnabrhitani. Then I can by the will, the energy of the idea in me, develop the form of what I am and arrive at the harmony of some greater idea than is expressed in my present mould and balance. I can aspire to a noble expansion." Thirdly, our souls are in the process of growth. What we have become is the result of our own past idea and actions. What we will be is determined by our present ideas and actions and finally, "both the idea and its karma may have their origin in the free spirit and by arriving at myself by experience and self-finding. I can exalt my state beyond all bondage of karma to spiritual freedom. These are the four pillars of complete theory of karma."
The originality of Sri Aurobindo’s views on karma lies in recognising the limitation of the law. He is not prepared to give to the Law of Karma that importance and elevated position that ancient Indian thinkers normally gives to it. He believes that this law can’t be the sole and the absolute determinant of the working of the cosmos, unless the entire process is conceived as absolutely mechanical. The fundamental truth of our being is spiritual, so it must be our soul that would determine its own evolution. Therefore, there is not only a law and process, not only a machinery in the Law of Karma, but there is a spirit, a mind behind it. Law of Karma is one of the processes which helps the soul’s evolution. It is in this sense, the soul evolves, that the soul is greater than the law. Thus the Law of Karma can only be one of the processes that it uses for the purpose.  

Regarding the phenomenon of rebirth, Sri Aurobindo maintains that it is not a mechanical repetition, but evolutionary. He rejects the old religious idea of Law of Karma as the determining factor of rebirth. His own solution to the problem is based on certain fundamental postulates, of which one is that, that which has no end must necessarily have had no beginning. The Law of transmigration depends on the immortality of the soul and such a soul can’t be the product of mortal matter though by its descent into the matter, it may

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transfer some of its spiritual qualities to it. Secondly, every stage in development presupposes a past and hence the personality of a soul presupposes a previous birth for its development. And thirdly, if personality is a result of the mental, vital or physical heredity, then the soul must be detached something. While the soul is real and immortal, it should also be eternal and then either it must be changeless self or a timeless purusa.\textsuperscript{17}

"Rebirth presupposes a state as well as dynamic soul since in the absence of either it is meaningless. Thus rebirth is a necessary corollary in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. It is an indispensable machinery for the working out of a spiritual evolution."\textsuperscript{18}

Aurobindo holds that rebirth is an aspect of the general process of evolution and involution. Individual is the medium through which creation discloses itself. Therefore individual has to be given time and opportunity to grow. In order to grow, he has to assume a body. It is in this embodied state that the individual can do whatever he can do for expediting the next step of evolution. So he must be born and reborn till the spiritual goal is attained.

When soul assumes a body, we call it as an act of birth. The evolution of the individual his relation with other individuals and universals are possible

\textsuperscript{17} Ran Nath Sharma, \textit{The Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo}, Kedar Nath Ram Nath Publishes, Meerut, 1977, p. 94.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p. 94.
because of birth. The soul’s entrance into material birth persistently awakens consciousness in matter and effects a dynamic union between spirit and matter. The stupendous Divine evolution can’t be complete in a single birth of the soul. The individual life is short and repeated rebirths are required for the completion of the evolutionary process. He states that rebirth is the only possible effective condition, the obvious dynamic process of such a manifestation in the material world. Therefore, rebirths are absolutely essential for complete ascent and complete divenisation of the individual and also for the absolute self-manifestation.

Thus in Aurobindo’s philosophy, rebirth is necessarily a manifestation of *purusa* on the physical plane and a necessary aspect of the growth of the individual towards spirituality. It is not an accident of a soul into body without any preparing past to it or a future for its fulfillment. Each birth is an advance, and a steady progressive and continuous ascent in the realms of the spirit. In this sense, rebirths are milestones of our spiritual development. Birth of an individual soul in a body must be continued in the next birth and must have been proceeded by other births.

Thus “Rebirth is necessary as birth itself, for without it, birth would be an initial step without a sequel, the starting of a journey without its further step
and arrival. It is rebirth that gives to the birth of an incomplete being in a body, its promise of completeness and its spiritual significance". ¹⁹

In short, not a single birth, but a succession of human births are necessary for evolution. The human soul travels from birth to birth towards the regions of higher spiritual and supramental consciousness till it realises its integral unity and oneness with the supermind. The supramental conversion is a rebirth of the soul into the Divine. The emergence of supramental consciousness is really the arrival of a new consciousness into human race and signifies his unity with Sachidananda. "Thus in the ultimate analysis, rebirth is not a machinery for the persistent renewal or prolongation of unchanging personality, but a means for the evolution of the spiritual being in Nature. The involution of the spirit in matter and its consequent evolution is the entire theme of Sri Aurobindo’s explanation of the world enigma". ²⁰

Like any other modern thinkers, Sri Aurobindo also speaks about the concept of freedom in the Doctrine of Karma and rebirth. For him, one may attain freedom by cessation of all actions, will etc. but it can’t be a complete freedom. Man must be get rid of his individuality and karma, only then he can

attain complete freedom. At the same time, he realises the fact that even in mind, and even in its phenomenon of a conscious will, karma is the first law, and there can't be for us a complete freedom. There is no such thing as a mental will which is absolutely free, for, mind is a part of the action, and also of the outward ignorance, does not possess its full light and power. In other words, to have a freedom of power, one must not only get back from mind, but must stand in his thought and will even, above the levels of morality. When the soul is one with the supreme and with the universal and enjoys an initiating and relating truth of spiritual will and knowledge, admitting the spirit's fullness, ascent to self and its creative liberty, and its strain of our eternal joy in self-existence and self manifestation, then karma becomes a rhythm of freedom and birth a strain of immortality.

4.3 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's views on Karma and Rebirth

Dr. Radhakrishnan has the rare qualification of being well-versed in the great traditions of both the east and the west. But his fundamental convictions deeply rooted in Indian traditions, particularly vedanta tradition. Perhaps he is the most important exponent of Upanisadic idealism in the world today, has also been purveying the wisdom of the west to his eastern readers and presented his ideas in the models of western thought. Like other modern thinkers, he also endeavoured to reformulate and reconstruct the philosophical theories and the
ideas of ancient philosophers in terms of the needs and requirements of the present days.

Dr. Radhakrishnan also is a humanist, like Gandhi, Vivekananda etc. In spite of the emphasis on spiritual ideas, man and his destiny constitute the major part of his philosophy. While explaining the nature of man, he recognises two aspects of self, i.e., self as an organised whole or the empirical self and self has subject or the real self.

The empirical self or self as an organised whole is primarily bodily self, which is determined by the environmental conditions. In other words it is constantly interacting with the environment. This organisation is not automatic or instinctive as in the subhuman level, but it is teleological. He writes “The self is a teleological unity, which is the only thing constant in the concrete, busy, active dynamic self. Each soul has its life's star, its main purpose”.  

He recognised that this empirical self has a reality as long as man remains confined to that stage, but that is not his final nature. Man’s awareness of his finiteness and temporality means his consciousness of eternity. Man has the capacity to reflect and to plan his moves. In other words, he has the capacity

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to look ahead. This capacity is 'self transcendence', according to Dr. Radhakrishnan and is the very significant aspect of soul's activity. This is the real self, which is always the subject and never the object of any knowledge. It is different from all objects, from the body, the senses, and from the empirical self itself, but it is the very basis of empirical self.

The real self of man, according to Radhakrishnan, consists in his spirituality. By calling man a spiritual being, Radhakrishnan means that he is a self conscious person, who is able to unite all his experiences and activities in his act of self consciousness. It is on account of this capacity of unification that he can foresee his future and make plans for it. This capacity enables him to organise his moves and to bring about a spiritual growth. This then is the true nature of life.

Thus according to him, man is a combination of empirical self and the real self. It is to be noted here that these two aspects of self are distinguishable, but not separable. In fact, what he emphasis is spirit in man, but he tries to preserve the individuality of human beings with the greatest zeal. He never agrees with the seers of the past who emphasized the illusory character of the bodily self, instead, he stresses that the physical constitutes one aspect of the spirit. Man is the manifestation of the real self through empirical self.
Like Gandhi and Aurobindo, Dr. Radhakrishnan also believes in the doctrine of Karma and rebirth. In his ‘man centred’ philosophy, this doctrine plays an important role. He holds that the soul has to pass through various embodied stages and that each stage is determined by the karma performed in the past. Karmas performed in the present will determine the future. It is true that karma connects with the past, it is also true that human life is an organic whole where each successive phase grows out of what has gone before. According to him, “the two pervasive features of all nature, connection with the past and creation of the future are present in the human level”\(^\text{23}\). We are what we are on account of our affinity with the past. He remarks thus, “The self enters their life with a certain nature, and inheritance. We commonly speak of talents that are inherited, an eye for beauty, a taste for music, which are not common qualities of the species, but individual variations; so the self must have had a past history here and elsewhere”\(^\text{24}\).

For him karma is not so much a principle of retribution as one of continuity. Life is a continuous growth through births and deaths. Every actions produce effects, which are, recorded both in the organism and in the environment. Their physical effects may be short-lived, but their moral effects worked into the character of the self. Every word, deed and thought enters into

\(^{24}\) Ibid., p.289.
the living chain of causes which make up what we are. Our life is not at the mercy of blind chance. We are making our character and shaping our destinies every moment and the growth of the character of an individual self depends on the Law of Karma.

Thus karma binds us with the past by giving structure to our life, yet man is free in his actions. In his view, freedom and karma are not incompatible to each other, because karmas are karmas performed by the soul. He recognizes freedom as constituting the essence of spirituality and also it implies a metaphysical status of man. The materials of the present life are given by karma, but human freedom lies in the choice of its utilization. Each individual will get the return according to his actions.

Man is free to choose his own courses of life and action, in that sense future of man depends to a very great extent on man himself. Free will is action done by self-determination. According to him, when an individual performs an action of his own choice, the act alone is a self-determined act. He holds that self-determination means determination not by any fragment of the self's nature, but the whole of it. If the individual employs his whole nature, searches different possibilities and selects one which commends itself to his whole self, then the act is free. We are most free when our whole self is most active and not a fragment of it. Thus he maintains that the Law of Karma has two aspects; a
retrospective aspect and a prospective aspect, i.e., the continuity with the past and creative freedom of the self. Man is determined by past karmas, but he is free to create prospective karmas. Dr. Radhakrishnan argues that if our acts were irrelevant to our past, then, there would be no moral responsibility. Free acts can not negate continuity.

Our actions form our character. Our character determines our next birth. We take birth in circumstances best suited to realise our character. Our character and circumstances condition our actions, but do not determine them, for, we have a free will, "Life", in the words of Radhakrishnan "is like a game of bridge". The cards in the game are given to us. We don’t select them, they are traced to past karma, but we are free to make any call as we think fit and lead any suit. The skill in the game decides who is the better player. Just as the distribution of the cards, by the others and the rules and regulations regarding the game do not trouble the freedom of the player to make whatever call he thinks fit. So also in life, though the past impressions determine our present life, one can utilize and subjugate them. One who chooses the right path, transforms the influence of karmas in such a way that they lead to the realization of one’s true being the inner spirituality.

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25 Ibid., p.279.
If the Law of Karma is a fact, rebirth is a necessity. If the self is not produced by the body, it need not end when the body is destroyed. The death of the physical body doesn’t mean dissipation of the self and also discontinuity. If everything else in nature arises from something continuous with it and passes into something also continuous with it, the self also is not an exception to the general scheme. These may be the reasons to believe that even after the death of the gross body, the soul continuous to have some form as subtle ethereal body as its vehicle.

Radhakrishnan is very well aware of the fact that it is difficult to understand fully the mechanism of rebirth. But an awareness of the unfulfilled urges and tendencies in the purposive set up of the universe compel us to think about some possible forms of life after death just only to provide yet another opportunity for the realization of the unrealized urges. Man can’t exhaust all the potentialities of life in a single life. It has been said that nothing is to be left. Man has to enjoy the fruits of his present deeds also. That is why he has to take birth after birth for the realization of the fruits of all his deeds performed.

He holds that rebirth is not a meaningless recurrence, but it has a purpose and meaning. The self aims at the fulfilment of the function or development of individuality. It evolves ceaselessly from birth to birth, and can grow indefinitely in depth, richness, and comprehensiveness. The self which is
imperfect today moves on perceptually for fulfilment and perfection. So long as the self remains imperfect, its evolution is a continuous process. The capacity of the self for endless improvement and the pervasive facts of continuous point to a future, where the self’s ‘with held’ completions obtain a chance for fulfilment.

He maintains that, man so long as is in the embodied state, he can not attain his ultimate destiny. The first aspect of man’s destiny, for him, would be freedom from the embodied existence. Even when an individual is liberated that will not put an end to creation. Therefore the final aspect of his destiny must be the realisation of his unity at the end of the cosmic process. In other words, the world process will reach its final goal when every individual will realise Divinity. In this sense, the ultimate human destiny is not individual salvation, but universal salvation. Then, according to him, the drama of cosmos will continue until every one is redeemed. His Doctrine of Karma and Rebirth fits in with this idea too.