Chapter IV

UNESCO FOR THE THIRD WORLD

The teeming millions in the Third World hungered and hankered for economic development - the immediate panacea for their ills and the golden key to their aspirations. Radhakrishnan's great contribution lies in the fact that he perceived this at once and fully and set all his energies into making Unesco, and its programmes, an effective tool for the development of the Third World.

Unesco and Development

The countries emerging from the colonial rule inherited un- or under-developed economies afflicted with problems and constraints accumulated over a period of decades, if not centuries.

To break through the stagnation and sloth of their situation required skills and stamina. Education is the obvious key to inform and motivate societies, particularly those choosing accelerated economic development through industrialisation. The immediate, and possibly the best, help that could be rendered to these peoples was evidently to create the requisite manpower skilled and trained to bring about industrialisation, modernisation. Unesco seemed quite
suited to this task, and Dr Radhakrishnan steadily nudged the organisation in this direction.

In the beginning, the focus of the organisation was on education, and on the use of mass media for furthering understanding and cooperation among nations and promoting human rights. This thrust of Unesco was but natural when it is remembered that the just concluded world war was all about these issues. As we shall have occasion to discuss in our next chapter, it is to the credit of Dr Radhakrishnan that he made the organisation aware of its responsibility in another direction, namely, in furthering economic development and social progress in countries that were coming out of the foreign rule to freedom and hope.

Most of these countries expected technical aid from Unesco to carry out their programmes of development, aimed at transforming their backward economies into modern industrialized ones. Since developing heavy industry requires many high-skilled specialists, Unesco started playing a dual role in carrying out the Technical Assistance Scheme, to meet the aspirations of these countries. Firstly, it developed those aspects of its own normal programme by which assistance of various kinds to the needy countries was provided through educational missions, study seminars, aid to libraries and schools, fundamental educational centres
etc. Secondly, in close cooperation with other specialised agencies, it undertook some additional programmes that provided for intimate participation of these countries in many aspects of the overall UN development schemes to achieve the defined common goals. Unesco, thus, for the first time announced on 1 October 1950, the first part of its technical assistance programme for 1951-52, and has carried on this work since then. With the increase in the number of newly independent countries this programme has expanded greatly and constitutes today one of its major activities. Radhakrishnan's imprint on the Unesco's work in this regard, therefore, is deep and indeed seminal.

Spokesman of the Third World

Radhakrishnan's attitude to the role of Unesco in the amelioration of conditions of third world countries was determined by his own interpretation of minds of men thesis, his own theory of causation of wars, a realistic appraisal of the international environment at that time and his status as the main spokesman of the third world countries, voicing their hopes, aspirations and fears.

Even the most universally inclined, globally-minded, synthesizing scholar perceives the world from a particular angle. Radhakrishnan tended to see the world
from the perspective of the third world. He justified the incorporation of Technical Assistance into the work of Unesco on the ground that it is imperative to buttress the spiritual foundations of peace with the appropriate or congenial economic and social conditions of prosperity and equality for all. This insistence on the Technical Aid for development was, accordingly, a logical corollary of his version of the 'minds of men' thesis. According to him, one of the causes of war was the wide disparity in the standards of living which bred frustration and anger. The evils of fear, suspicion and jealousy could be removed from the minds of men only by improving the minds by rectifying the conditions of abject economic deprivation and depression prevailing in the countries that had long suffered the colonial rule. Changing the minds of men implied for Radhakrishnan, therefore, quite simply improving their quality of life. And this evidently could be achieved in large measure through the Unesco's Technical Assistance Programme.

No wonder then that as the Chairman of the Executive Board in 1949, he made every effort to direct Unesco's activities towards the development schemes and operations. It was under his Chairmanship that plans and decisions were made, and activities undertaken to incorporate technical assistance in the program of Unesco.¹

To the General Conference he pointed out on behalf of the Executive Board that economic realities were more important than political ideologies. He assured the Conference that the Scheme for Technical Assistance, which was designed to raise the standards of living in the underdeveloped areas of the world, could not only rebuild the world's shattered economy but also contribute to a lasting peaceful reconciliation among peoples.²

Not unmindful of the danger of the underdeveloped countries becoming a pawn or putty in the hands of the economically powerful, Radhakrishnan asserted that the material and technical assistance to these countries be channeled as far as possible through international organisations such as Unesco.³ This is precisely what the non-aligned subsequently came to demand.

In fact, what Radhakrishnan was seeking was a major and meaningful role for Unesco in a worldwide social revolution.⁴ Exhorting the organisation to actually lead the revolution, he declared that only thus could Unesco appeal to, attract and hold the allegiance of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.⁵ Whenever a choice was to be made between reconstruction and education in war devastated areas and the aid for development, his performance

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2 GC Fourth Session, p. 44.
3 Ibid., Third Session, p. 58.
4 Radhakrishnan: "Unesco and World Revolution", p. 16.
5 GC Fifth Session, p. 96.
was always for the latter. He, accordingly, supported all measures for raising maximum possible funds to be devoted to the developmental work in cooperation with United Nations.6

Radhakrishnan's efforts bore fruit when during 1950 Dr Adiseshiah, the then Head of the Technical Assistance Service of Unesco, was deputed to go to various countries to conclude agreements regarding technical assistance.7 Since then the Technical Assistance for development runs like a golden thread in Unesco and its work. Without doubt, a fundamental change of such magnitude and enduring importance in the policy and direction of Unesco occurred substantially because of Radhakrishnan's initiative and tireless exertions. A person of smaller stature or lesser vision would not have been able to do this.

Besides the issue of Technical Assistance, Radhakrishnan actively engaged himself in regard to the structure of Unesco, education for development, science and technology for development, culture of the Third World, disarmament and development, the Development Decade, Human Rights, racialism and colonialism and a new International Information Order, among others.

6 GC Seventh Session, p. 172.
7 Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, UN-I, Branch, File No. 8 (135) -UNI/50, 1950, p. 19.
Structure of Unesco

During the very first General Conference, Radhakrishnan cautioned Unesco not to repeat the mistake of assuming that the world consists only of Western Europe and North America. Drawing attention to the over-representation in the organisation of the European and North-American culture and under-representation of the cultures of Latin America, Africa and Asia, he protested:

"I know that, because the headquarters of Unesco is in Paris, it is essential to recruit the lower-grade staff here. I know that in many of those other countries the most intelligent men are not in a position to be spared from the work in which they happen to be employed. I can know also that the efficiency of this institution cannot be allowed to suffer for the sake of geographical and cultural distribution.

"But I do ask, making allowance for all these things, whether a serious effort has been made to give due representation to the different geographical and cultural regions. Middle Eastern, Latin American, Chinese and Indian Culture stands for more than three-quarters of the world's population and is it fair that they should be represented here by 7-8 percent?

"If we are to show that our organization is global in character, that it is international, that it takes account of all peoples of the world, it must be the special effort of this organisation to recruit competent men of different regions and give a lie to the impression that it is merely an Anglo-American concern".

He wanted that the global character of Unesco should be reflected at all its levels and in all matters,

8 GC First Session, p. 28.
9 Ibid., Second Session, p. 60.
major and minor, engaging it. Proper representation should be given to the third world countries at all levels of the organization—in the composition of the Executive Board, in the distribution of posts in the secretariat, and in the award of grants and subventions to non-governmental international organizations. On being elected the President (1952), he expressed his happiness that for the first time the General Conference would have a President from the East.

In regard to the composition of the Executive Board he said at the time of the 10th Conference: “Executive Board consists of 24 members. I note from its composition that 8 of them come from Asia and Africa and 16 from Europe and two from Latin America. They cannot regard this composition of the Executive Board as either just or adequate.”

His unhappiness found expression at the Third Conference (1948): “in the United Nations and its specialized agencies, there is not a single head who comes from these areas. Even in our own organization, there is not one from these parts of the world in the highest positions. It is our duty to become conscious of this fundamental insufficiency and remedy it.”

10 Ibid., Tenth Session, p. 40.  
11 Ibid., Seventh Session, p. 49.  
12 Ibid., Tenth Session, p. 40.  
13 Ibid., Third Session, p. 58.
Radhakrishnan's reasons in this regard were simple. Efficient functioning of Unesco in the broader sense was not possible unless all national viewpoints were adequately represented in its Secretariat. He devoted much greater attention to the geographical distribution in the organisation than perhaps anyone else did. He took up cudgels on behalf of the Third World, against the view that the objective of geographical representation should be considered as secondary to that of securing the highest standards of competence. This in his view was a fallacy, and he fought it hard and long. And so it came to pass that, slowly but surely over the years more and more representation was accorded to the Third World countries at different levels of the organization.

Education for Developmental Change

Education is indeed the key to all change, and becomes the foundation to support and sustain further transformation. It changes attitudes, and promotes skills and instruments that are wideranging and vital for development. As education grows and expands, so does the process of development. Social structure, politics and quite a few other things condition education, but equally it can transcend and revolutionise them too. Its impact on all sectors and aspects of society, and at all levels, is all too
obvious to be laboured. Without elaboration, the simple truth can be stated that the very quality and course of life depends on education - its expanse and content. In economic development the role of education is still more crucial.\textsuperscript{14} A nation, however rich in natural and other resources, cannot prosper unless its human resources are properly developed.

Radhakrishnan placed the supreme emphasis on the individual as a basic unit of all the reconstructional programmes of Unesco. In stressing the value of the individual, he was projecting the idea that all under-developed countries have to come out of the old orthodoxy feeding the tendency to view education as the privilege of only a few. That an "educational explosion", and its spread, is absolutely necessary for the modernisation and development of new states is now accepted as unexceptionable. But it was not really so till the 1940s. Radhakrishnan seems to have been something of a pioneer when he projected and canvassed the idea that there subsists a close link between education and development. So unless education spreads to cover all individuals the society's development would remain confined and constricted; economic development would be warped or stay stunted.

\textsuperscript{14} Myrdal, Alva, "The Power of Education", in E.J. Hughes: WORLD PERSPECTIVE (New York) 1962, p. 137.
Radhakrishnan took to Unesco Gandhi's concept of functional literacy. Dr Alva Myrdal, who was herself active in Unesco, has suggested that Gandhi's ideas of basic education influenced the Unesco's fundamental education programme, which in the less-developed nations trains teachers, produces local training materials and imparts reading, writing and occupational skills. She feels that this comparison places the Gandhian 'Wardha scheme' into a proper perspective, international in scope and significance.  

Radhakrishnan advocated channeling the development aid of Unesco to the field of education. The leading part he played in this regard accelerated the activities of Unesco towards developmental aid especially for education. At the very first preparatory conference (1946), he drew the attention of Unesco to the countries which were "educationally backward on account of the accidents of history". These were the areas that evinced immense interest in the anti-illiteracy campaign of Unesco.

At the third General Conference (1948), he suggested that Unesco should explore the possibilities

15 Power, Paul F: GANDHI ON WORLD AFFAIRS (Bombay) 1961, p. 90.
16 Unesco's main development work is still in that area.
17 GC First Session, 1946, p. 28.
of a comprehensive economic and financial plan for raising the standards of education of all backward peoples, and persuade the richer nations to make sufficient funds available for the purpose. The idea of a special fund for education, it may be noted, was in several ways distinctly Radhakrishnan's contribution. In the 1950 conference he specifically mentioned the need for the creation of such a fund: such a fund would ensure that there was no sense of humiliation on the part of the receiving country and would impress the world with the genuineness of Unesco's claim that it was truly democratic and sincerely anxious to promote the welfare of the world as a whole rather than a part of it.

Thus with the beginning of the 1950s, the Unesco started concentrating increasingly on the concrete rather than abstract objectives like the moral and spiritual development of man. The abstract objective of inculcating moral and spiritual values was not completely ignored, of course. But it was the concrete objective of extending free and compulsory education among peoples that was given greater and immediate attention. The decision to give top priority to the concrete objectives was arrived at after a series of seminars and regional conferences.

18 Ibid., Third Session, 1948, p. 58.
19 Ibid., Fifth Session, 1950, p. 97.
One of the regional conferences was held in Bombay in 1952. This Conference was organised for the countries of South Asia and Pacific. An important problem stressed at the Bombay Conference, as indeed at other regional conferences, was how to finance more schools. It was at once recognised that the need for money for compulsory education far exceeded the international help already available from the UN and other specialised agencies. But if a large segment of the world's population is allowed to suffer from poverty and misery, the social and political discontent resulting from it might pose a serious threat to world peace. It was therefore agreed that all possible attention must be given to the expansion of the compulsory education and that a movement be launched for the establishment of an international education development fund.

This suggestion was presented to the Eighth Conference (1954) and included in the Unesco Draft Programme for 1955 and 1956. Radhakrishnan's advocacy in this regard was accepted by Unesco when the 9th General Conference held in New Delhi (1956) recommended that the Director-General should propose a plan for Unesco fund for construction and equipment of schools.


colleges and universities.  

Radhakrishnan, along with others, eloquently drew the attention of Unesco to the educational needs of the backward regions of the world. There was a proposal during the Third General Conference to hold a seminar on education. The subject originally considered was "Education of War Handicapped Children", but at the instance of the delegation led by Radhakrishnan the subject finally decided upon was 'Adult Education', which was the very basic problem facing all the Asian countries. Unesco accepted the invitation to hold the seminar at Mysore in India, and it became the first seminar to be held in Asia. Radhakrishnan's satisfaction lay in the fact that activities of Unesco, such as the Mysore seminar, brought the work of Unesco to the attention of intellectuals, among others including the policy-makers.

A contradiction noticeable in Radhakrishnan's views here relates to the compatibility of spirituality, political modernisation and economic development. It is not difficult to agree that education has a

22 Document 9C.
23 Report, 1st GC of INC, p. 12.
24 GC Fifth Session, p. 94.
26 Ibid.
significant role to play in realising all three. In fact, voluminous literature has been produced in recent times to show how education and development are interrelated and how education facilities the process of both political modernization and economic progress. What is difficult, however, is to establish a logical consistency of a policy or an attitude which seeks to pursue all the three values of spirituality, political modernization and economic development. The relationship between political modernization and economic development is of course understandable but it is difficult to correlate them either individually or jointly with the value of spirituality.

The problem with Radhakrishnan's thinking on the question of role of education during the initial period was that he did not present a balanced perspective on this question. This is not to suggest that education has no role to play in the pursuance of the value of spirituality - of course, it has - or that education is only an instrument of political modernization and economic development. What is being suggested here is that when political modernisation and economic development become values in themselves - as they did in case of all developing countries - and when education is treated as a means for the realisation of these two values, our plans for development inevitably aim increasingly at the
creation of a socio-economic system **fundamentally and totally** different from the one which may flow from, or which is intended to be founded on, the commitment to the value of spirituality.

If, however, Radhakrishnan laid stress on all the three values in relation to the role of education in spite of an apparent dichotomy between spirituality on the one hand and political modernisation and economic development on the other, there were certain reasons for it. On the basis of his own reading of Indian texts and tradition, as also having been influenced by Gandhi it was but natural for him to talk of spiritual values as the proper foundations for a new world civilization. It was not possible for him to forget or ignore that system of education which Gandhi had recommended and by which he wanted to provide scope for the individual's moral development.

But this moral development of the individuals in the Gandhian scheme of things, could be achieved on the basis of simplicity of life, decentralisation of authority and a permanent institution of small village and cottage industries. All these pillars of moral development run counter to the notion of modernisation and economic development based on the assumption of maximisation of wants, heavy industrialization and
central planning. In the Gandhian system of education, the evolution of decentralised socio-political structure is coterminous with the moral and spiritual development of man. Thus it is obvious that when we talk of education as a means of attainment of a particular objective, the nature of the means varies according to the nature of the objective sought. If we pursue the objectives of political modernisation and economic development, the role of education cannot be the same as it would be if we pursued the values of spirituality.

The basic reason for the ambivalence in Radhakrishnan's attitude to the role of education was that he wanted to reconcile the idea of Gandhian system of education with the aspirations of the common man for material welfare defined and manifest in what has come to be known as "consumerism". Radhakrishnan was a major exponent of the concept of 'quality of life'. The special bond between him and Unesco rests upon his creative role in defining and promoting a living concept of 'quality of life' for the peoples of the world. Years before the Unesco had even been thought of, he had said in 1930s:

27 FREEDOM AND CULTURE, op. cit., pp. 16, 17, 37.
"A spiritual civilization is not necessarily one of poverty and disease, man-drawn rickshaw and the hand-cart. It is one thing to say that wisdom is more precious and quite another to hold that poverty and ill health are necessarily for spiritual advance. While poverty is spiritual when it is voluntary, the crass poverty is a sign of sloth and failure.

"Our philosophy of life requires the production and increase of wealth among the legitimate aims of human endeavour. Pursuit of wealth does not in itself spell spiritual ruin. It is a means in itself ethically colourless, neither good nor evil, but a necessary means for the attainment of the higher life for the individuals and the mass of mankind.

"What counts is the purpose for which wealth is striven after, and so long as we realise that it is a means to a higher end, we can boldly venture out on the path of the conquest of nature's secrets and their utilization for man's service".28

Again: "it is idle to pretend that poverty is better than wealth, malnutrition to nutrition, foul air than fresh air. Simplicity is not the same as squalor".29

He pleaded the same views, eloquently and repeatedly in Unesco too.

In stressing the role of spirituality, Radhakrishnan appears to ignore a crucial and not entirely cynical fact that this value could be realised only if the outlook of the people happens to be predominantly religious, and that in the situation of conflict between religion and creature comforts the former prevails. It is all too obvious, however, that

28 Ibid., pp. 16-17.
29 Ibid., p. 37.
the peoples of the 'Third World' having suffered a miserable existence of deprivation, hunger, want and oppression for centuries are now least inclined to suffer any more —religion or no religion. Creature comforts have now acquired a mesmeric hold over their minds, and they won't brook any obstacle in acquiring these. The craze for consumerism in these countries proves the point graphically.

Radhakrishnan was not quite unaware of this reality, as is evident from his statement above. He knew the hunger and the aspirations of the masses for creature comforts. In fact, in the period Unesco came into being, the urge for such style of life, and more material wealth characterised the preponderant outlook of the people, not merely in the Third World, but of the whole world. As a result, such wealth, and its acquisition at all cost, itself came to be treated as a value, superior and irresistible to spirituality or moral development.

This was the wave that swept the post-war world: nations regarded material attainments and advance as a value supreme in itself. If Radhakrishnan wanted the fruits of such advance for the peoples of the Third World too —particularly when they had been bereft of them for endless years —there was nothing wrong with it.
He, accordingly, was quite prepared to adopt the means of political modernization and planned economic development "through regulation by the state and economic planning", needed for the advance. But then this created a problem in that in defining the role of Unesco, Radhakrishnan had to lay equal stress on both the value of spirituality and that of the material affluence even though basically they were not easily reconcilable.

It would, however, be wrong to think that Radhakrishnan alone betrayed this contradiction. Every thinking person suffered from this dilemma to a greater or lesser degree and in one way or the other. More pertinently, even Unesco suffered from it for a quite a few years, and during this period it was unable to decide clearly what its educational role was. Unesco was unable to resist in any significant way the philosophy of scientific humanism propounded by Julian Huxley, the organisation's first Director-General.

30 GC First Session, p. 27.

Huxley's ideas on the possible role of Unesco in the field of education provoked a good deal of controversy among the member states. It would, not, however, be proper to conclude therefrom that his ideas were totally rejected. The central thesis of Huxley's ideas were not very much different from what has earlier been called Radhakrishnan's thinking on the educational role of Unesco. It is interesting to note that both Radhakrishnan and Unesco stressed the role of education in promoting the value of spirituality while at the same time pressing for modernisation and economic development.

It must be repeated, however, that in emphasising the role of education as an instrument of modernisation and development, Radhakrishnan represented the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people of Asia, Africa and possibly Latin America. It must also be said to the credit of Radhakrishnan that his emphasis on the relationship between education and development was much greater than what Unesco was prepared to accept in the beginning. It was only after a decade that Radhakrishnan's thesis on the close relationship between the two was accepted unreservedly by the Unesco as one of the fundamental, guiding principles of its activities.

Thus, it has to be admitted that in spite of whatever might have been the degree of ambivalence in
Radhakrishnan's thinking in regard to the question of tradition and modernity, Radhakrishnan's view of Unesco's role and potentialities was forward-looking. He tried to lay the foundations of a role for Unesco of which the organisation was apparently not aware in the beginning, but which it had to play nonetheless, sooner or later.

**Science and Technology for Development**

Science, like education in general, is equally crucial for the development of the Third World. In any case, education without science is utterly incomplete. The stress on science specifically here, however, underlines the vast role science and technology actually play in unraveling and managing -if not mastering- the mysteries of nature, understanding and controlling the environment and making these serve the needs of man.

Unesco, accordingly, had to concern itself with the use of science and technology for achieving economic development. Scientists had started recognising the stark differences in the levels of science in the modernised, industrial nations of the world on the one hand, and in the economically underdeveloped on the other; the quantum of science served to be directly corelated to the level of economic development.

The Unesco slowly became aware of this and decided to involve itself with the conscious efforts on the part
of scientists to reduce the choking disparities in
the level of science and spread of its benefits among
nations.

Radhakrishnan had always stressed upon the role
and the use of science and technology for economic
development. He took the initiative in directing the
attention of Unesco towards international cooperation
in science and technology for this purpose when, at the
Preparatory Conference (1946) itself he proposed the
establishment of an International Institute of
Nutrition.\(^\text{32}\) The institute did not materialise. But
Radhakrishnan on his part had shown Unesco the direction
along which it, subsequently, was to move slowly but
surely.

At the same Preparatory Conference the Indian
delegation proposed the establishment of an Inter-
national Institute of Hylean Amazon. Although it was
abandoned shortly afterwards, the project nevertheless
became the foundation of Unesco's Humid Tropics and
Arid Zone programme.

It was the same delegation that proposed at the
1948 General Conference that this programme be
sanctioned.\(^\text{33}\) And it was.

\(^{32}\) GC First Session, p. 28.
\(^{33}\) UNESCO AND WORLD POLITICS, op. cit., p. 124.
In its final shape, the programme was one of coordinated research which, under the auspices of an advisory expert committee created in 1951, became at the New Delhi Conference in 1956 a major Unesco project, called the Arid Zone Project. The project, by 1957 had aggregated and consolidated the various schemes that had been in progress since 1948; each year a different set of research problems, all with a contemporary ring—for instance Hydrology and underground water, plant ecology, solar and wind energy, human and animal ecology, climatology and microclimatology—were taken up, and had been going on. By 1960, the programme had grown and had an annual budget of $45,000.34

Culture of the Third World

Unesco has been looked upon by Third World countries mainly as an agency for cultural cooperation and hence it is considered as a "peoples' organization". As a result, it is more popular and more widely known among the people of these countries than are the other specialized agencies of UN. No wonder then that sometimes these countries have given more importance to Unesco than to the other agencies, or UN even.35

35 See, for example, Report, 1st GC of INC, pp. 3-7.
It is understandable why the third world countries have looked up to Unesco for their needs in the cultural field. Wealthy countries can usually afford to care for their own monuments, but some of the most impressive and hitherto least known monuments are in countries which can scarcely afford even to educate their people, or build roads; they have neither the money nor the skilled battalions to do such jobs. It is here that the role of Unesco comes in.

Nubia is one of the projects (infra, pp. 172-73) which Unesco has undertaken to save the cultural heritage of mankind. Radhakrishnan, among others, 'patronised' the project.

In Unesco, Radhakrishnan urged the recognition of the civilization and culture of Asia and Africa. At the Preparatory Conference he dialated upon India and China as examples of great tradition. He refuted the dubious claim of superiority of the European and North American Culture, and cautioned against 'cultural fascism' implicit in such claims or sentiments. Unesco should endeavour to protect the moral personality and cultural distinctiveness of every

36 GC First Session, p. 28.
37 Ibid., Second Session, p. 60.
individual. Radhakrishnan did not want a cosmopolitanism where "we roll all nations into one". He was sure that the ancient cultures of Asia and Africa had much to teach to the developing world.

Agreeing with Toynbee that "if civilisation survives this present menace, the concepts of art, philosophy and religion of Asia will have a determining and formative role to play", Radhakrishnan argued that it was the duty of Unesco to present and project those concepts, coordinating them in an integrated purpose.

Radhakrishnan exerted to ensure that values and traditions of the East, and their contribution to the culture of the world were recognised. In his life, person, writing and speeches, both in Unesco and outside, we see him engaged in this purpose. He did not accept the view that East was mystically minded and the West empirical in its outlook. One is more religious, the other is more scientific. He said that these distinctions have arisen only in recent times, and reminded that in the last 300 years the Asian countries had lagged behind while the western nations had made spectacular advances in science and technology, with the

38 Radhakrishnan, S: TOWARDS A NEW WORLD ORDER (New Delhi) 1980, p. 132.
39 Ibid., p. 144.
41 GC Tenth Session, p. 39.
result that the contrast seems striking in the material backwardness of the eastern and the progressive character of the western nations. This, he said, is true of only a few centuries. 42

The countries of the east, naturally, took a better notice of a project launched by the Unesco to bring East and West closer to each other. (Infra, p. 175). The project was, to a large extent, inspired by the life, person and work of Dr. Radhakrishnan. He took a particular interest in the launching and success of this project. None was happier than he when the project was accorded the status of a Major Project at the New Delhi General Conference in 1956.

Another project which was to fulfil the purpose of highlighting the cultural contribution of third world countries was the publication, Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind. Radhakrishnan was one of the members of the commission which prepared this history. He specially welcomed the project since he thought that the project would be a means to correct the 'myopia' of Westerners, so many of whom had not been able to see beyond Greece and had withheld from the East - particularly India- the credit due on account of the nations of cultural superiority. 43

42 Ibid.
Disarmament and Development

From its very early years, the Unesco had an academic interest in the question of peace through Disarmament. As time passed, the organization began to interest itself in the question actively first in regard to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and then, inevitably, in the problems arising on the wider issues of Disarmament.

Although Unesco could not take any direct interest in disarmament as such, the consequences of disarmament for development formed a legitimate field of its concern. In logical terms this inevitably entailed study of disarmament itself in its technical, if not political, sense.

From the very beginning Radhakrishnan had been conscious of the link between disarmament and development. As a spokesman of the third world, he saw in armaments a diversion of the resources which could otherwise be utilized for development, and, at

44 The interest of Unesco in atomic energy might well be regarded as a factor in the subsequent creation of IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency).


47 Here we may recall his association with Disarmament efforts under the League period.
the General Conference (1948), declared in resounding terms:

"We as an organization, are interested in raising intellectual standards, in spreading science and preserving culture; yet education, science and culture are the subjects which are most neglected today. The nations of the world - small and great - are spending large part of their national incomes in building up war material.

"Rich countries can perhaps do so without neglecting essential needs of health, education and employment, but poorer nations cannot afford to spend large sums on unproductive military expenditure. Yet, held in the grip of fear, they are unable to apply their energies to moral and material development of the people and are obliged to waste their resources on security measures". 48

It was in the same spirit that he welcomed the Disarmament Proposals put forth by Khrushchev at the UN General Assembly on 18 September 1959. Disarmament, Radhakrishnan maintained, would set free large funds which could be used for underdeveloped nations, hankering and hungering for these funds.

In Unesco, he constantly warned against the abuse of nuclear technology and urged that its use be confined only for developmental peaceful purposes. 50

In doing this, he, obviously, had in mind the energy requirements of the third world surging on the path to rapid industrialization and economic development.

48 GC Third Session, p. 57.
49 OCCASIONAL SPEECHES AND WRITINGS, 3rd Series, op. cit., p. 7.
50 GC Second Session, p. 59; Third Session, p. 57; Fifth Session, p. 95.
These needs of the Third World have since become more acute, especially after the oil crisis of the early 1970s.

**Human Rights, Racialism and Colonialism**

Unesco constantly refused to have an official philosophy of its own. Still, it gradually came to put faith in the ideology of human rights - a system of ideas and values that provides an explanation of history and a guide to action. Unesco also became the natural forum for discussing the juridical, and psychological implications of human rights.

Radhakrishnan laid great stress on the role of Unesco in promoting human rights. He was inclined to be more mindful of human rights in the Third World. The reason for this, evidently, was that he was himself from an area which had suffered the colonial rule for centuries. The memories of that rule were still fresh in his mind.

At the time of establishment of Unesco the Western countries had, curiously, shown their reluctance to discuss these questions - curiously, because the just concluded war had been essentially about the rights of peoples. But with the emerging of the new states - and especially after the admission of USSR, which supported the efforts of
the third world in this regard- Unesco became a natural platform for discussing these issues, and to condemn them at a theoretical level. Various resolutions were passed from time to time, exhorting abolition of colonialism, apartheid and racialism. Over the years proclamations were articulated in this regard (for instance, in 1950, 1951, 1964 and 1967) by the meetings of the experts convened by Unesco, which ultimately culminated in the form of 'A Declaration On Race and Race Prejudice' adopted by the General Conference on 27 November 1978.

Radhakrishnan was convinced that a close and intimate connection subsisted between peaceful coexistence and cooperation of states, and the abolition of racialism and colonialism. He held forth on these ideas in Unesco. At the Preparatory Conference he highlighted that social dogmas were beaten on the battle-field, but they were still undefeated in our hearts.

51 This is one of the reasons why U.S.A. has, many times, threatened to quit Unesco.
52 For example see Resolution No. 9.12 of the Fifteenth Session and Resolution No. 8 of the Sixteenth Session of the General Conference.
54 GC First Session, p. 27.
With an obvious reference to the Western nations he pointed out at the following conference that they should search their souls too. It was not enough, according to him, to deny the doctrine of inequality of men and of races in theory; we must deny and denounce it in practice too. Human rights, he held, should become "functioning living realities".

With the Declaration on Race and Race Prejudice, Unesco came to recognize in full the views of Radhakrishnan, who had proclaimed during the World War II that social cleavages "are not based on anything in human nature. There is no biological validity or scientific sanction which will make such conflicts unavoidable". He indicated that science supports the view that the "fundamental structure in the human mind is uniform in all races". There was "only one race, the human race".

55 Ibid., Second Session, p. 60.
56 Ibid., Fifth Session, p. 96.
57 Ibid., Seventh Session, pp. 49-50.
58 See IS THIS PEACE, op. cit., 1946.
Today Radhakrishnan's ideas stand accepted not only in Unesco, but in the entire United Nations.

**New International Information Order**

Yet another question the Third World countries have increasingly taken notice of is that of the freedom of information. Unesco, one of whose functions is communication, has emerged as a platform for discussing this question. Although in the beginning not much attention was paid to this issue, in the latter years a movement was launched by the Third World countries for the creation of what is now called a "New International Information Order"; the idea was to liberate the media in these countries from the grip of world news monopoly. The Third World has charged that the Western powers are using the international media as an instrument to refasten their claims of neo-colonialism on the recently liberated colonies. The concept of freedom of information now has thus undergone a metamorphosis.

Unesco is committed to not only free but also a balanced flow of news and information among nations; to the right to communicate and to the right to privacy; and has been gradually moving towards the right of nations to protect and defend their identity against the cultural domination and invasion by powerful media-
At the Second General Conference (1947) Radhakrishnan protested against this cultural domination and drew the attention of the Conference to the importance of the role of media like the press, the radio and the film in this regard. He wanted Unesco to make an important contribution in the matter. But the doctrine of Freedom of Information got caught up in the maelstrom of the cold war and floundered for well nigh a decade. In 1961, Unesco submitted to ECOSOC its concrete programme on developing media in the underdeveloped countries. The very next year, a survey was undertaken of requirements for information media in these countries, and a programme of international cooperation in their development undertaken.

On 20 February 1962, Radhakrishnan inaugurated a Seminar on Freedom of Information in New Delhi. Emphasising the fundamental right to information he urged that "freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of communication - all these things should be safeguarded", and people should not be bullied and worked upon by iniquitous propaganda.

61 Mankekar, D R: ONE WAY FREE FLOW, Neo-Colonialism Via News Media (Delhi) 1978, p. 9.
62 GC Second Session, p. 60.
In the Unesco plans, programmes and schemes just discussed the imprint of Radhakrishnan—his thinking, pleadings, cajoling and cautioning, and above all his ceaseless efforts—is all too clear. One can well say that in defining and congealing Unesco's broad parameters Radhakrishnan's was a pivotal role. More than a path-finder, he often showed the way to the young, novel but a well-conceived international organisation that Unesco happened to be. But equally significant was his contribution when it came to specifics as we see in the next chapter.