Dr Radhakrishnan's association with the work of International Intellectual Cooperation had earned him the status of a 'senior' in the Unesco. His was indeed a unique position, in that on the one hand, he was a decision-maker of India's policy in Unesco, and on the other, he in fact led the Third World in Unesco. This double responsibility enabled him to exercise a good deal of influence in and upon Unesco. His personal attainments and stature as a world class intellectual, equipped and enabled him to bear the burden with ease and effect.

Radhakrishnan provided a statesman like leadership to Unesco and believed that it must get the peoples of the world to work together on as many projects as possible. We shall now examine here the impact of Radhakrishnan on some specific programmes in the fields of education, science, culture and mass communication. For, it is the specifics that make the details to fill in a picture. This should also enable us to study how he assisted Unesco clarify its aims and programmes at a time when they were still in the melting pot or hazy.

1 GC Third Session, p. 58.
EDUCATION

Education has been given the first priority in the programme of Unesco. From the very beginning, the organisation has been conscious of the significance of education in the achievement of its objectives. The founding fathers at the London Conference lay great emphasis on the need and the value of human welfare in general, and on the urgency of tackling the worldwide maladies of ignorance, prejudice, illiteracy and the problems of proper education.\(^2\)

On coming into existence, therefore, Unesco made special efforts to undertake activities in the various areas and aspects of education. It proceeded with the assumption that illiteracy was an obstacle not only to economic progress but also to the eradication of ignorance, poverty and disease. It also realized that without the removal of illiteracy, people cannot be expected to know one another nor be able to apply modern science to their socio-economic development.

Thus from the very beginning Unesco made efforts towards the removal of illiteracy. Immediately after the finalisation of the constitution of Unesco by the London Conference of 1945, Sir Alfred Zimmern of the Preparatory Commission emphasised Unesco's

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\(^2\) Sir Boyd-Orr pointed out that the primary task of Unesco was to combat spiritual hunger and mental poverty throughout the world. See Preparatory Commission of Unesco, Report of the Programme of United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (London) 1956, p. 78.
responsibility to help countries in the amelioration of the social and economic conditions of their people. One important method to solve these problems was to launch a "war on ignorance and illiteracy". After a good deal of discussion among some top specialists, a report was prepared on the major problems of education with which the Unesco should concern and engage itself.

The Educational Programme

Radhakrishnan's approach to educational programmes of Unesco, as should be clear by now, was based on his own interpretation of the "minds of men" thesis. He was of the view that if the minds of men have to be corrected, the value of education must be recognised. Men and women, according to him, could be made more cooperative and world citizens only with the help of a correct educational system.

Contrary to the view held by a few countries, like France, that Unesco as an organization should devote itself only to the promotion of intellectual cooperation, Radhakrishnan believed that Unesco must concern itself with all the people in the world and not merely with the intellectual elite of nations. He was also convinced

3 With the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN in 1948, proclaiming that every one has a right to education, the question of education became still more important.

that Unesco shall have to adopt a direct approach to reach people by means of mass media like the press, the radio and films.  

The United States and some Western countries shared his view. But at the back of their minds was really the anxiety that the educational facilities and opportunities destroyed by the War must first be restored. More particularly, these countries were anxious that the changes in the educational systems brought in by the Nazi rule, which had "perverted" the minds of the people, must at once be removed and rectified.

Radhakrishnan did not agree with the view that Unesco should play such a particularistic, limited role. Unesco's efforts were required not exclusively in the war devastated countries, but also—if not more so—in those places and among those peoples who had no, or little, educational facilities. He would be satisfied only when an educational mission was sent to Afghanistan, which was not a war devastated area but a country badly in need of educational advance. For launching Unesco's programme in this regard it was not necessary, according to Radhakrishnan, that all the Allied powers should first agree; Unesco should go to work wherever opportunity for doing so existed, or presented itself.

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5 GC Second Session, p. 60.
6 Ibid., Third Session, p. 58.
7 Ibid., Fourth Session, p. 195.
Many in the Unesco, did not accept this view of Radhakrishnan in the beginning. And much of the educational activities of Unesco in those years were carried on somewhat haphazardly, without clear and definite guidelines, and that too in chosen areas—not universally, impartially. Unesco's concern thus remained merely one of educational reconstruction in war-torn Europe, not even in the war-damaged areas of Asia.

In the beginning, Radhakrishnan spoke in general terms as far as the role of education was concerned, both in the General Conference and in the Executive Board. Thus he pleaded at the Second Session of the Board that Unesco's purpose should be "to effect ideological harmony and diminish the tension... a task which might be difficult and delicate but was urgent and could be undertaken by Unesco". Similarly, at the very first session of the General Conference he said, what was needed even more than the rehabilitation of schools and libraries was the recreation of man in order to "recreate a new world community". Slowly he came to talk about the role which Unesco could play in the task of levelling up the standards of the people who had been rendered culturally and materially backward. But this could not be possible in those

9 GC First Session, 1946, p. 27.
initial few years (of late 'forties and early 'fifties) because of the prevailing tense, cold war conditions in parts, if not the whole, of the world.

Radhakrishnan's stress on education, the development of mass media and the promotion of international understanding had its impact when the 5th Session of the General Conference delineated in clear terms the scope of Unesco's educational activities. The Conference decided upon a ten-point list of priorities which reflected a renewed stress on education, mass media and international understanding.

Thus it was the joint initiative of the Indian delegation led by Radhakrishnan and supported by the British delegation which resulted in Unesco concentrating its effort on education (in comparison to science and culture) by according it an overriding priority.

Unesco now recognised that one of the most important aspects of fundamental education was adult education and that adult education had to play an important role in the creation of necessary public opinion in favour of peace. At the Second General Conference, it was in accordance with the proposal of Radhakrishnan-led Indian delegation that the subject of a proposed seminar was changed from 'Education for the Handicapped Children' to 'Rural Adult Education'.

The seminar was held in Mysore from November 2 to December 4 (1949) under the joint auspices of India and Unesco, and is considered to be an important landmark. Besides a large number of Asian countries, some European countries also participated in it, and observers were sent by WHO, ILO, FAO and UN too.

What is worth noting about the general recommendations of the seminar as a whole is the acceptance of Radhakrishnan’s view that literacy was something more than the mere ability to read and write. The Seminar formulated certain common programmes for the eradication of mass illiteracy. It recommended that since the causes of illiteracy varied from country to country and from area to area, we have to be conscious of these differences while evolving a common programme of the eradication of illiteracy which can be applicable to all countries. The Mysore Seminar also accepted the view that our objective should be not merely literacy but also education in its wider sense.

Radhakrishnan took keen interest in the programme of Fundamental Education launched by Unesco. He encouraged idea of holding various conferences in this regard, and felt that these conferences could give great impetus to the spirit of education in backward

11 For details of the Mysore Seminar see, The Hindu (Madras) 3, 27, 30 Nov, and 6 Dec 1949.
areas. He wanted that Unesco should work for the spread of literacy and for raising the school-leaving age. In his view, as far as the funds for Fundamental Education projects were concerned, Unesco should depend on voluntary and other contributions.

His own contribution to the concept of Fundamental Education consisted of the idea that this should be based upon the twin principle of truth and love. It should create in the minds and hearts of people a reverence for every form of life. Education to be complete should be humane, it must include not only the training of the intellect but the refinement of the heart and the discipline of the spirit. He made it clear that education was not to be confused merely with the acquisition of information and skill, it should also impart the scientific habits of mind.

Radhakrishnan's ideas in regard to basic and social education exercised a considerable influence on the development of Unesco's programmes on Fundamental Education and Functional Literacy. He was an ardent exponent of functional literacy, and wanted education to be related to development.

12 GC Second Session, p. 58.
13 Ibid., Fifth Session, p. 94.
14 Ibid., Sixth Session, p. 172.
15 Ibid., Eighth Session, p. 37.
Radhakrishnan was of the view that the old concept of Adult Education needed a thorough re-examination. According to the old concept, adult education meant that the people should be taught the 3 Rs. Radhakrishnan, on the other hand, advocated that mere attainment of literacy did not amount to much, for it was only a means and not the end. It is true that literacy helps in establishing contact with the world, and in acquiring a better understanding of the situation as also of our environment and in increasing our knowledge. But that is not enough by itself. Because, this does not help in the total development of human personality.¹⁶

Radhakrishnan cautioned against a narrow interpretation of the meaning of adult education. He was of the view that besides acquiring literacy, the adults should be able to increase their efficiency in work and improve their levels of living. Apparently, he favoured replacing the concept of adult education by that of social education. The purpose of adult education, according to him, was to improve the quality of life as a whole.

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¹⁶ Ibid., Tenth Session, p. 40.
Both Radhakrishnan and Unesco evinced a keen interest in the philosophy of education. Radhakrishnan's concept of man was the product of a new vision of the universe. Demanding that the non-human nature of man—as he called it—be played down, Radhakrishnan urged that a new man be created by turning, changing, his soul. His melioristic life-view is thus a blend of man-making and soul-making ideals, which believes that the world can be changed by human effort.

Unesco in 1951 authorised its Director-General to organise a discussion between thinkers and philosophers of different countries on the cultural and philosophical relations between the East and the West. A round table discussion was thus held in New Delhi from 13 to 20 December (1951) on the theme, "The concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in East and West".

Radhakrishnan, along with 11 eminent specialists chosen in consultation with the National Commissions of different parts of the world, was invited to take part in the discussion. No one else was more interested

17 Unesco: UNESCO PROGRAMME FOR 1951, Resolution No. 4. 1211.
than he in bringing together the Eastern and Western civilisations; he was selected the Chairman of the Round Table.

This was perhaps the first time that thinkers who represented different cultures, nationalities and regions of the world met to discuss such a fundamental issue. Till then, such symposia, seminars or meetings had generally discussed specific philosophic, economic, political or social questions. The New Delhi Round Table, on the other hand, was concerned with a more basic problem. It set out to examine (a) the concept of man underlying the different civilizations of the world and (b) the philosophies of education which had helped to define such concepts, and shaped human attitudes and behaviour in different cultures.

The oceanic vastness of the subject carried with it the risk that the discussion might lose itself in vague generalities or dissipate the energies of participants in seeking solution to too many problems. That this did not happen was due to the consummate skill with which Radhakrishnan brought back the discussion to the central theme whenever it tended to become discursive.\(^\text{19}\) In spite of the temptation to range over a wide field, the discussion was in fact on one basic issue: the evolution of a new concept of man which would find room for the contribution of East

and West and utilise the discoveries of science for reconciling differences due to geography, history and various other factors. This necessarily involved discussion of related themes like the relation between Eastern and Western thought both in the past and present, and an examination of the ways in which educational methods and ideas have changed, are changing, as a result of the growth of science and democracy.

Radhakrishnan spoke on behalf of the East. He said that in spite of wars there was worldwide desire for unification and for creative, positive peace, a world in which citizens of any state could feel "at home everywhere". The most dangerous division was not between East and West, but between communism and anti-communism. Communism itself was a typical western product with its features of logical rigidity, intolerance and propaganda. The East was well qualified to correct this one-sided view of man's nature, and the West, which had in some ways gone further than the East in democracy, could learn from the East tolerance and spirituality.

The discussion of the experts seemed to justify the conclusion that there were not two conceptions of man corresponding to the two regions of the world and

20 For a complete text of Radhakrishnan's speech see Unesco: HUMANISM AND EDUCATION IN EAST AND WEST, op. cit., pp. 39-48.
embodied in their respective education systems. Like Radhakrishnan, everyone referred not only to historical interrelations and influences but also to basically similar cultural and religious ideals. Even in the narrower range of specifically philosophical positions, what they said did much to discredit the caricature which sets a "materialistic", "empirical", "scientific" Western philosophy in simple opposition to a "spiritualistic", "rationalistic", "mystic" Eastern philosophy. In line with Radhakrishnan's argument they concluded that there have been materialistic, logical, skeptical and pragmatic philosophies in India, China and Islam, and idealistic, mystic, dogmatic and transcendental philosophies in Europe and America.

Impressed with the conference, Paul Green, a North Carolina playwright sent home a recommendation that all Unesco activities should strive to achieve a like elevation.

The New Delhi Conference set off a chain of activities to bring East and West closer which eventually culminated in the East-West Major Project.

Book Coupon Scheme

The Book Coupon Scheme launched by Unesco in 1948 had Radhakrishnan's whole-hearted support. The scheme aimed at helping those teachers, scientists and professional people of war-devastated and backward
areas who wanted to obtain the needed text books, reference books, periodicals and other material from other countries but could not do so because of the non-availability of foreign exchange. Unesco enabled such people to purchase the required material on payment in local currency.

**Primary Education**

Radhakrishnan fully supported the Major Project on the extension of the primary education in Latin America. The Project was an effort to do what fundamental education centres could not. Even though the project had run only half its course, its success led to the proposal that a similar programme through a Major Project should be launched in Africa and Asia too.

Radhakrishnan was one of those at Unesco who demanded that a major project should be developed for the spread of literacy and education in Asia and Africa. Although such a project did not mature, the experience obtained from the Latin American Project was utilised for developing the schemes of education and literacy for the countries of Asia and Africa.

Free and Compulsory Education was another idea which Radhakrishnan encouraged. Unesco concerned

21 GC Tenth Session, p. 40.
22 Ibid., Eighth Session, p. 35.
itself with this in the beginning of the 'sixties, especially after the Karachi Plan which aimed at making primary education a reality in Asia within a period of 20 years.

Radhakrishnan had always stressed the need for access of women to education. The entire membership of Unesco appreciated this view at the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the eradication of illiteracy which was held in Tehran in September 1965. Subsequently, Unesco has taken more and more interest in the education of women especially after the celebration of 1975 as International Women's Year.

SCIENCE

Article 1,2(c) of Unesco's constitution, lays down that one of its objectives is to 'maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge... by encouraging cooperation among the nations in all branches of intellectual activity'. Science is one of the most universal of all these branches.

When Unesco was established in 1946, the international scientific community had been artificially partitioned as a result of the Second World War. Under the circumstances, Unesco had naturally to concentrate

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first and foremost on re-uniting the scientists throughout the world.

As a first step in that direction, it decided to reinforce the structure and intensify the work of International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), in existence since 1919. At the same time, it instituted the Council for International Organization of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) in 1949, and the Union of International Engineering Organizations (UIEO) in 1950. A coherent network was thus formed, establishing contacts between scientists and engineers of all countries through specialised non-governmental organizations, which in turn were grouped into three main federations, closely associated with Unesco.

At the same time, Unesco established cooperation offices in South Asia, the Far and Middle East, and Latin America. This was the first attempt even before the Technical Assistance, to stimulate and aid science through international cooperation in the areas farthest removed from the major centres of scientific activities.

At about the same time (1946-48), the ECOSOC, considering that the only rational way of carrying out certain types of research was on international basis, launched an extensive enquiry into the problem of setting up UN research laboratories. Unesco was called upon to study certain proposals for joint international
research which had been drawn up on the basis of the UN enquiry, and particularly in the fields of automatic computing, the functioning of the brain, astromony, chemistry of living matter, problems relating to Arid and Humid Tropical Zones, Oceanography, and the physics of high-energy particles.

Several choices were then open to Unesco, with regard not only to the research activities to which it was to accord priority but also to the methods of work to be adopted in each particular case. From 1950 onwards, various projects were accordingly submitted to Unesco's General Conference for approval.

According to the nature of the research to be undertaken, Unesco either set up an autonomous inter-governmental scientific organization, or arranged for co-ordinated research programme to be undertaken in member states acting separately or jointly. One of the inter-governmental scientific organizations thus set up is the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), which is located in Geneva.

As regards international research programme, Unesco's methods of action evolved steadily as, for example, in the case of life sciences, the marine sciences, and the earth and space sciences.

The desire to introduce new forms of international scientific cooperation was expressed by Radhakrishnan
at the very first conference of Unesco. (Supra, pp. 133-34) This culminated in the Humid Tropics and Arid Zone Programmes, which became a Major Project in 1956. This programme was important not only in itself but provided an example of cooperation between scientists and governments under the aegis of Unesco, covering vast stretches of arid territory.

The success of this example was bound to suggest other forms of scientific cooperation in regard to parts of the globe which are not under national sovereignty, viz., the oceans and outer space. Resolutions relating to the marine sciences appeared in Unesco's programme from 1954 onwards. The organization's activities in this sphere led in 1960 to the establishment of the inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission for which Unesco, through its office of oceanography, provides the secretariat. The purpose of this Commission was to promote scientific investigation through jointly prepared plans, with a view to learning more about the nature and resources of oceans. Thus appeared the idea of concerted action open to member states voluntarily taking part in it. Success has attested to the value of this new form of international scientific cooperation, and Unesco intends to apply it to the extensive programme of international research in these and possibly other areas.
Science Cooperation Offices

Radhakrishnan had always attached a great value to the cooperation in the field of science. When the First General Conference of Unesco decided to set up Science Cooperation Offices in the region "remote from the main centres of science and technology", Radhakrishnan extended his whole-hearted support to the idea.

It was resolved at the First General Conference that one of the four Field Science Cooperation offices would be set up in India. But when its establishment was delayed, Radhakrishnan regretted the delay and brought it to the attention of the 2nd session of the Executive Board. Subsequently, a South Asia Cooperation office was set up in Delhi in April 1948. Radhakrishnan welcomed it. At his instance, the proposal for setting up of a South East Asia Institute was adopted at the Third Session.

Science Education

Radhakrishnan was conscious of the value and the need of developing a scientific habit of mind, especially among those bound by orthodoxy or tradition. He impressed

26 GC Fifth Session, p. 94.
the same upon Unesco. It was largely due to his efforts among others that Unesco recognised an integral approach of science and education in bringing about the necessary change in the minds of men. Science education came to be viewed as a part of the general education, besides constituting a foundation for learning other skills.

Atoms for Peace

Application of such an integrated approach to the problem of nuclear energy was implicit, from the very beginning in the statements of Radhakrishnan. He promptly warned against the wrong use of atom while stressing its potential for peaceful uses.28

Ably assisted as he was by India's nuclear scientist, Homi J. Bhabha, his advocacy was bound to make its mark in giving shape to Unesco's attitude on the question of nuclear energy, and also in evolving the organisation's strategy for facing the problem which quite simply is a question of life and death for the entire human race.

Health and Sanitation

Radhakrishnan's interest, from the very beginning, in the role of Unesco in improving the health and

28 GC First Session, p. 27; Second Session, pp. 58-59.
sanitation in the world with the help of science, also constitutes a very valuable contribution, the more so in the context of present day frantic efforts to conserve the purity of environment against the mindless onslaught of widespread pollution of all kinds the world over. We know what a major problem in the realm of science, is the problem of environmental pollution, with which the world is increasingly confronted. Unesco took note of this problem during the 'sixties'. Consequently, a new research programme called "Man and the Biosphere" was launched by the 16th session of the General Conference in 1970. The programme focused on the structure and functioning of the biosphere, and its impact on the changes brought about in his environment by man.

Social Sciences

Among the most important tasks entrusted to Unesco was the enquiry into international tensions and international understanding, studied as psycho-sociological problems. Some fundamental questions clearly begged research. What factors lead to suspicion, contempt or hostility between one people and another? What factors foster understanding, peace and security?

29 Ibid., p. 58.
The Unesco was expected to promote research which might help indicate the direction for more effective measures in this regard.

Radhakrishnan took a keen interest in the Social Tensions Project. His delegation was the first to ask for Unesco's assistance for instituting a research project on social tensions. In response to this request Unesco appointed Professor Gardner Murphy to serve for six months as Technical Adviser to the Government of India. The study in India centred on Hindu-Muslim relations but involved also language, caste, economic and regional antagonisms. Both Unesco and India spent approximately the same amount on this research.

In Radhakrishnan's view the East-West tension was, in fact, the most fundamental of all tensions. A path was opened for institutionalised contact between the two great power blocs when the General Conference in December 1954 approved a resolution which, among other matters, authorised the Director-General to undertake an objective study of the means of promoting peaceful cooperation among nations, applying the resources of social science to study the factors which hinder and

30 Ibid., Fifth Session, p. 94.
31 Ibid., Fourth Session, p. 59-60.
which encourage international understanding. Since then, efforts have continued to bring about an understanding between East and West.

Teaching of Social Sciences

A perusal of Radhakrishnan's statements would show that he laid a particular stress on the need of teaching of social sciences.

On 15 February 1954, he inaugurated a Unesco Round Table Conference on the teaching of Social Sciences in South Asia. The two important topics for discussion were: what are the disciplines which belong to the group of social sciences, and what is the unity binding them. On the occasion, Radhakrishnan stated that social sciences include Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Social Psychology, and that there was enough justification for giving greater attention to social sciences than was being done at the moment. He remarked that social sciences in the hands of men whose values are chaotic is not much of a help, for, such persons could scarcely impart the right values so crucial to defining a correct perspective and promoting understanding.

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32 Unesco Documents 8C/Resolution, p. 31. The Resolution (IV.1.3.41) is entitled "Social Science and problems of International understanding and tensions". The General Conference at New Delhi, in 1956 authorized continuation of the study of "The means of promoting peaceful cooperation"; Unesco Document 9C/Resolutions, p. 20. (Res. 3.5). To Radhakrishnan "Co-existence" meant "Co-education, co-understanding". See, OCCASIONAL SPEECHES AND WRITINGS, First series, op. cit., p. 25.
He also argued that the balance between increase of power over nature and the lack of control over oneself can only be restored by the study of social sciences. In his opinion, social science should lead science and technology.\textsuperscript{33}

**Culture**

More than education or science cultural activities taken up by Unesco enjoyed a tradition of international cooperation long before the pre-war times. On its establishment, therefore, the organisation besides seeking and promoting cooperation in the fields of education and science, automatically laid stress on cultural cooperation among peoples.

Both Radhakrishnan and the Unesco recognised that international integration could be brought about by bringing individuals in one country into direct cultural social relations with individuals in another country.

Unesco's cultural activities encompass not only arts such as the theatre, music, painting, sculpture, literature, museums and architecture, but also philosophy and the area of creative thought as a whole. No wonder then that the philosopher Radhakrishnan made a noteworthy contribution in this field.

\textsuperscript{33} OCCASIONAL SPEECHES AND WRITINGS, Ist Series, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 93, 94, 96, 97.
Culture is thought to be the least technical of all Unesco's fields of competence and, for that reason, the most likely to interest a wide public. The delegates to the Preparatory Conference (1946) of Unesco were apprehensive that certain quarters might harbour fear about Unesco trying to standardise culture. These fears were duly assuaged by persuasive pleadings in the Conference and elsewhere which repeatedly asserted according of respect to all cultures; the idea was to accommodate diverse cultures while retaining their respective identities rather than assimilate or absorb them into each other.

Radhakrishnan believed in some cultural assimilation, but up to a point. He was for the maintenance of differences culturally basic to man's political and social life, and accordingly argued for a theory of cultural regionalism.34

Reflections on our Age

In the series 'Reflections on our Age', arranged by Unesco immediately after its inception, Radhakrishnan delivered a memorable exposition of Indian Culture. He said that unity can only be founded on a sense of world community, and this sense can develop only from interchange of the treasures of mind and imagination between the peoples, along with a true understanding of the value of their different cultural and artistic tradition. Bringing this about, he said, ought to be the chief function of Unesco. In his opinion, the fundamental ideas of Indian culture will have a formative influence on the world of the future. Culture, he believed, was the pursuit of mind and spirit, and it tries to effect an organic balance of the various elements of man's being and a harmony between man and his social environment. The greatness of a culture consists not in its permanence but in the qualities which it is able to impart to human growth.

36 Ibid., p. 115.
37 Ibid., p. 121.
38 Ibid., p. 132.
Cultural Heritage of Mankind

During the period Radhakrishnan was active in Unesco, an international campaign in 1960, was sponsored by the organisation to save the monuments of Nubia in Egypt endangered by the proposed Aswan High Dam which would submerge them unless they were shifted elsewhere. The campaign, as Radhakrishnan pointed out, recognised the world's interest in the works of art. He took a special personal interest in the launching and success of the campaign which was an unprecedented, colossal undertaking. Radhakrishnan was put on the "Committee of Patrons" under which the campaign was placed.

The campaign involved all the continents of the world. The word 'Nubia' has acquired a special significance in international relations. What is now called the 'spirit of Nubia' has evolved as a term indicating international cooperation that surmounts all obstacles however formidable that obstruct relations between the countries. The Nubia project also turned out to be one of the most daring feats of engineering.


41 Unesco, DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT-1960, p. 132.
Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind

A project that evoked Radhakrishnan's keen and constant interest was the scientific and cultural history of mankind designed to bring out the respective contributions of the different peoples and cultures to the growth of world civilization. The International Commission set up for the purpose, had thus to include him when constituted in 1950.

Similarly, he became the chairman of the editorial board set up for the purpose of preparing a History of Philosophy with special reference to Indian Philosophy. The work was undertaken as it was felt that most of the contemporary works of this kind contained European and Indian and Chinese Philosophy but did not provide a complete and integrated picture of the development of human thought as a whole.

International Cultural Cooperation

It should be clear by now as to how very dear and near to the heart of Radhakrishnan was the whole idea of international cooperation. The concept and the principle of international cooperation has had many aspects, of course. However, it was the cultural aspect in which Radhakrishnan was most keen. He was of the view that no political understanding can be enduring without an understanding at the cultural level.

42 UNESCO AND INDIA, op. cit., p. 46.
He welcomed enthusiastically the decision of Unesco to celebrate 1965 as the International Cooperation Year, and said on the occasion that the "twentieth century man who is already probing the mysteries of the universe cannot restrict his very existence to a narrow corner of the world in which he happens to dwell".  

Speaking at the East-West Cultural Conference in Calcutta on the 1st of September, 1961, he had already pointed out that there were three things which were to be kept in mind while working for cultural cooperation. These were: "first, the renunciation of violence on the part of individual nations and the instruments of coercion. Second, sources of disorder and disquiet, inequalities, colonialism, degradation and so on will have to be given up. Third, in the whole world a community of purposes, common ideals, and objectives will have to be established".  

The first is related to the principle of moral and spiritual values, the second to the principle of freedom and dignity of the individual and the third implies the principle of international understanding. Thus the main ingredients of the cultural cooperation, as Radhakrishnan wanted them to be adopted and promoted by Unesco, were freedom, dignity of the individual, spirituality of man.

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and the advancement of international peace and understanding. If we view cultural cooperation in this perspective, it would include education, science, cultural activities and the media of communication. A glance at Radhakrishnan's speeches and writings would immediately show that he had such an idea of cultural cooperation.

Thus the task of cultural cooperation as Radhakrishnan understood it, could be acquiring knowledge of one another, understanding of a people through one another's culture, and mutual appreciation of cultural values.

Radhakrishnan played a leading role in preparing the ground for the East-West Project on mutual appreciation of cultural values. At the Ninth General Conference at New Delhi in 1956, it was mainly due to his efforts that Unesco adopted the East-West major project which seemed to manifest the very philosophy of Unesco, and of Radhakrishnan's own.

MASS COMMUNICATION

International cultural cooperation is a kind of free trade in information and ideas. Unesco did not realise this in the beginning. Radhakrishnan saw that great effort would have to be made in the field of mass communication, which alone could enable Unesco to reach
the "last masses of men and women". According to him, he emphasized the educational role of the mass media, and warned against these being used for propaganda purposes or simply as a device to reinforcing or confirming ideas already held by the people of particular cultures. UNESCO should remove obstacles to inter-communication, and at the same time encourage retention of cultural identity and autonomy.

While inaugurating the UN Seminar on Freedom of Information at New Delhi on 20 February 1962, Radhakrishnan expounded the concept of freedom of information, and declared that "freedom of information -vital to the most complete and effective use of communications media- cannot fulfill its real function unless it is international in scope, endorsed and practiced by all the countries of the world".

Through his speeches Radhakrishnan canvassed and created an opinion in UNESCO to this end. And, UNESCO started concentrating more and more on the problem of freedom of information in subsequent years.

45 GC Second Session, pp. 58 and 61.
48 See for example GC Twentieth Session.
Till his death in 1974, Radhakrishnan remained the ultimate source of the activities carried out in India for the accomplishment and fulfilment of the aims and principles of Unesco. He contributed almost single-handedly towards the establishment of the Indian National Commission for Unesco, nurtured it by his wisdom and patronized its efforts for the promotion of education, science and culture which became a part of India's efforts in this regard at the international level. Once Radhakrishnan's idea of East-West major project had been accepted, the Indian National Commission became all the more active. Radhakrishnan was, in fact, perhaps the sole and a decisive force in formulating India's educational and cultural policy. Being a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, framing the constitution for the country, he was among those who laid down the very foundations and guidelines on the basis of which India's educational and cultural activities would be conducted. Speaking in the Assembly on 9 December 1948, he said that the Constitution should "make all the citizens realise that their basic privileges -educational and social- are afforded to them". He, at the same time,  

made an impassioned plea for the development of India's cultural life. 51

Soon after the establishment of an Interim Indian Commission for Cooperation with Unesco on 26 March 1949, Radhakrishnan was made the Chairman of its Education Sub-Commission. 52

He contributed more than anybody else to the evolving of the educational policies of India. Radhakrishnan Commission (1948) laid the very foundations for the entire development of higher education in the post-Independence India. 53

He lauded the opening of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, in collaboration with Unesco and said that such institutes could help remove the technical backwardness of the country. On his visit to the Institute on 24 January 1957, he suggested that more such institutes should be opened so that the material standards of the Indian people could be raised substantially and effectively. 54 Subsequently, such institutes were opened at Bombay, Madras, Delhi and Kanpur etc., though

52 See Unesco: HANDBOOK OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS (Paris) 1949, pp. 97 and 100.
not with the assistance of Unesco, but instead with that of countries like UK, USA, West Germany and so on. Radhakrishnan visited most of these institutes and inspired their activities. His speeches there clearly show the importance and emphasis he put on the role of these institutes in increasing the agricultural and industrial production in the country through training of personal, and research at these places.

Radhakrishnan participated in the work of the three Indian National Academies—the Academy of Letters (Sahitya academy), the Academy of Arts (Lalitkala academy) and the Academy of Music Drama and Dance (Sangeet Natak academy)—which were set up with a view to fostering the study and practice of various forms of Indian culture. Shrimati Rukmani Devi's Kala Kshetra in Adyar, Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh's Andhra Mahila Sabha in Mylapore, and the Poets, Editors and Novelists (PEN) India Centre founded by Shrimati Sophia Wadia, all benefited from his counsel. He himself kept a close liaison with the Indian writers and artists. In 1949 he became the President of the Indian PEN. He became the President of the Sahitya academy in 1964. In 1968 he was made the first Fellow of the academy, thus having been recognized as one with "unquestionable record of literacy".

55 See RADHAKRISHNAN NUMBER, op. cit.
Radhakrishnan gave abundant and constant encouragement to the joint efforts of the Sahitya Academy, and Indian National Commission for Unesco to translate Indian classics into European languages. He wrote introductions to the *Adi Granth* (the Sikh sacred book, being a collection of the writings of the Sikh Gurus), and *Contemporary Indian Literature*. Himself, he rendered into English some of the Indian classics—the *Bhagavadgita, Brahmansutra, Upanishads, Vedanta, Dhammapada*—and these renderings are known the world over.

Radhakrishnan was in the forefront of cultural activities of the Indian National Commission relating to the East-West Major Project (1956), Tagore Centenary Celebrations (1961), an International Round Table on Nehru (1966), and Gandhi Centenary Celebrations (1969).


57 National Theatre.
(Adhchini) on 30 August 1962, and that of Triveni Kala Sangam (New Delhi) on 3 March 1963 etc. indicate how for years he dominated and inspired the cultural scene of India.

All this was in addition to the opening of innumerable exhibitions on paintings, books and inauguration of countless programmes on dance, theatre, libraries and museums through the length and breadth of the country.

The account in this chapter attempts to show the extent to which a single personality can play an exhaustive, extensive role in giving shape to the philosophy and functional agenda of a large, truly international organisation. It also indicates the intimate involvement of the personality at virtually every level - structural, organisational, deliberative and implementational of the organisation. Intimacy makes for identification, expertise and influence the personality comes to wield. In case of Radhakrishnan, the impact and influence spilled over to make the Unesco a force and a factor in building bridges of understanding in the world as we shall see in the next chapter.