Chapter 4
Beliefs Held by Trio Philosophers
CHAPTER - IV

BELIEFS HELD BY TRIO-PHILOSOPHERS
(MAHARSHI AUROBINDO, RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN)

AS EDUCATIONISTS, PHILOSOPHERS, IDEALISTS, SPIRITUALISTS AND HUMANISTS.

TRIO-PHILOSOPHERS AS EDUCATIONISTS

4.1 MAHARSHI AUROBINDO AN EDUCATIONIST

Maharshi Aurobindo is one of the greatest educators that India has produced. His educational philosophy has swayed the masses of India as never before or since. His views on education reveal that he was one of the most eminent and distinguished educationists of our country. As an educationist he has expressed his personal view that the past, present and future of the individual have to be kept in mind while planning any education. He was of the firm opinion that our heredity and culture is our past, which should necessarily form the basis of education. In short the past, present and future should determine the nature of education. He propounded that the study of the mind should be the basis of education. To quote his own words, "Any system of education founded on theories of academic perfection which ignores the instrument of study is most likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind, for the educator has to deal not with dead material like the artist, or sculptor, but with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism. He cannot shape an educational masterpiece
out of wood or stone; he has to work with the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body". Dr. R. S. Mani has expressed his views as: "Maharshi Aurobindo Ghosh maintains that the kind of education we need in our country is an education proper to the Indian soul and need and temperament and culture". The history of his life reveals that Maharshi Aurobindo was transformed from a politician to a philosopher and in this capacity he preached to the world his philosophy of Dharma, Spiritual growth, Brahmacharya, Yoga and Educational ideology.

4.2 RABINDRANATH TAGORE AN EDUCATIONIST

Rabindranath Tagore was not only a great literate but also a great educationist. He had his definite views about education and wanted to put them into practice. He wanted that the balanced development of the body, mind and soul of the children should take place through the system of education. He wanted to educate the children in an atmosphere of freedom. He has thought of education just as he approached life as a poet with a totality of vision. He gave much importance to education. He says, in the absence of education the individual will be deprived of self-realisation. He was well aware of the educational ideas prevalent in the West. So he synthesized the ancient Vedantic traditions with the modern Western scientific attitude in formulating the goal of education. As he was intensely devoted to ancient Indian culture he tried to absorb the essentials of the ancient Ashram system in the education of his days. So he devoted some of the best years of his life to education. He evolved an educational system, which has implications of psychological, moral, spiritual and practical. In 1901 he founded Shantiniketan at Bolapur in impressive natural surroundings, which he raised
it to Viswabharati in 1921. In this way he made experiments in the field of education. It should be noted that he had fully made use of these educational institutions for one great mission of his life—educating the youngsters in the lap of the Mother Nature. He possessed his own ideas pertaining to the national system of education. According to him, the true basis of education is the study of the human mind. Any system of education founded on the theories of academic perfection, which ignores the instrument of study, is most likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind, for the educator has to deal not with dead material like the artist or sculptor, but with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism. He cannot shape an educational masterpiece out of wood and stone, he has to work with the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body. After studying the thoughts of Western philosophers and educationists as well, he tried to imbibe the best in them to develop his educational views.

As an educationist Rabindranath Tagore has summed up in a nutshell the main objectives of education. To quote his own words, "The best function of education is to enable us to realise that to live as a man is great requiring profound philosophy for its ideal, poetry for its expression and heroism for its conduct". ¹

Rabindranath Tagore explains the highest aim of education in the following words:

"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education
of sympathy is severely repressed. From our very childhood, habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is wearied away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest aim of education for which we come prepared, is neglected, we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach geography of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates. He was born in the human world, but is banished into the world of living gramophones to explain for the original sin of being born in ignorance.2

Not only the whole of India but the entire world will be indebted to Rabindranath Tagore for the services he has rendered to mankind through his literature, philosophy, arts and education. Thus these unique achievements of him have raised the status of India in the estimation of the world.

4.3 SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN AN EDUCATIONIST

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was a born educationist. In the early days of his career, he began as a teacher to become an educationist of eminence. Besides being a philosopher of international repute Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan holds a prominent place on the educational screen on young India. As he was a great educationist, he himself has been a successful teacher for more than four decades in his life-time. He defines education as the instrument for social, economic and cultural change. He opines that the importance of education is not only in knowledge and skill but it is to help us to live with others. He believed that education must look to the whole man. "As an
educationist he commanded an excellent vantage point from where he could see that the whole human business was moving towards a fatal destiny and only education of the right sort could save it from a tragic finale.\(^3\)

As an educationist he gave much importance to religious education and university education. According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, nowadays, it is very sad that many people identify the word religion with their particular belief. But religion is manifestly and really the realisation of what the good is, it is realization of one's duty and good character. It must not be identified with a creed to be believed, or an emotion to be felt or a ceremony to be performed. It is a changed life. We cannot judge a man's religion by his intellectual beliefs but by his character and sincerity of Karma. With regard to the university education he has expressed that, "Universities are not ivory towers but service-centres..... It is in the universities that we should strive to enter the stream of the world history by adopting a scientific out-look, in the treatment of our problems and developing a social passion for establishing equality, offering equal opportunities to all eliminating inequalities so far as it is humanly possible to do so.

His view of Education has been elegantly expressed in the following lines-

"Right through the ages, India has been seized with a spirit of synthesis, harmony, integration and holism in its view of life and universe. This is reflected in the values it has all along glorified such as humanism, tolerance, non-violence, compassion and love. It is a view where in one looks at the other person not as a neighbour, a friend or a brother but as oneself. Such realisation is the summit of a conical hierarchy of learning, understandings, exercises,
reflection, contemplation and flashes that are built up brick by brick from the earliest level of education through its final stages. Knowledge of sciences and the social sciences, humanities and the arts, philosophy and religion are all required in their balancing proportions to realise a wholesome and meaningful education. Thus Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan had declared that the purpose of education is to give an integral view of the universe in the opening pages of the Report of University Education Commission.

In fine Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan not only theorised the educational principles but also practiced those principles into his teachings.

TRIO-PHILOSOPHERS AS PHILOSOPHERS

4.4 MAHARSHI AUROBINDO A PHILOSOPHER

Maharshi Aurobindo was not only a great poet, a Yogi but also a philosopher. In a way he was a rare combination of a poet. He was a philosopher sage. His life began with psychic experiences. His experiences were connected with his political, poetic and philosophical life. In other words, his life was a sage of psychic experiences. He has followed the tradition of Indian philosophers but led a sagely life. He is also a representative of modern Indian thought. Prof. S. Chatterji has observed that: "Maharshi Aurobindo's life and philosophy constitute a golden link in the chain that connects the past with the present in India's cultural Life". According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, Maharshi Aurobindo is one of the two best representatives of modern Indian thought. In his philosophy we do find a combination of theism and absolutism blended in unity. He started his philosophical system with an experience of integrations. His idea
of cosmology and metaphysics proves that he had developed spirituality and
experienced philosophy. Maharshi Aurobindo's philosophy carries on it the
stamp of a number of influences. Formally he was a politician. As he was a
patriot he roused the intense feeling of nationalism among the people of
India. Finally he declared complete independence as the goal of struggle of
independence. British government imprisoned him in prison many times
because of his active involvement in the struggle of freedom. While he was
in Alipor jail, he realised the presence of God in a dream. From that day
onwards he quitted all political activities. When he was released from prison
he returned to the French territory Pondicherry, for penance and spiritual
advancement. In Pondicherry he built an Ashram wherein he spent rest of his
life doing Yoga Sadhana and Spiritual advancement, between 1914 to 1921.
He wrote his major philosophy and published in "Arya", a new journal in
English. Hence onwards he became a philosopher. He himself says, "I had
no urge to spirituality in me, I developed spirituality. I was incapable of
understanding metaphysics. I developed into a philosopher. I had two eyes for
pointing. I developed it by Yoga, I transformed by nature from what it was to
that it was not. I did it by a special manner not by a miracle and I did it to
show what could be done and how it could be done." In this way, he was
transformed from a politician to a philosopher. His philosophy contributes
much to the philosophical literature. His philosophy strikes us not as one
which is out of date but as one which takes into consideration the latest
thoughts and latest discoveries.

He refused to be called a philosopher. "Philosopher-------- I never was
a philosopher- although I have written philosophy, I know precious little about
philosophy: before I did the Yoga and came to Pondicherry— I was a poet and a politician, not a philosopher! He considered that, while philosophy is a quest for truth of things by the human intellect, the endeavour to realise the truth in the inner self and in outer life is "Dharma". There are some thinkers who hold that there is nothing new in his philosophy— that his philosophy was not the result of his seeking, but as a result of his finding and discovery. However when we see from the point of view of life, what he has given to the present intellectual world. We find that he has some items of originality in the philosophy which he has expounded to the world. His philosophy is a mighty synthesis of the oriental and occidental the ancient and modern thoughts which can break up into many channels of thought.

Philosophy for him was not merely an intellectual past time nor was it for the satisfaction of his curiosity that he wrote so much on the subject. According to Prof. S. P. Chaube and Dr. Akhilesh Chaube, "it is true that Maharshi Aurobindo was very well versed in Western philosophy, but he loved Indian philosophy intensely and acquired a through mastery in this area also. No doubt his philosophy is very comprehensive and inclusive of numerous ideas pertaining to religion and spiritualism."

4.5 RABINDRANATH TAGORE A PHILOSOPHER

Rabindranath Tagore was not only an educator, a dramatist, an actor, a poet, a novelist, a writer, a painter but also a great philosopher. He had a philosophy of his own. He was a poet philosopher. "A student of philosophy is invariably faced with a difficulty when he is trying to apprehend a thinker who is also a poet. The procedure that is followed in philosophy is that of
gathering evidences first and then of making deductions from those evidences. "A poet-philosopher is not interested in arguments and logic, he is a visionary, and therefore, communicates the truth that are revealed to him directly through his poetic images. But then, it is the business of the student of philosophy to go beyond the poetic images deep into the poet's realisation in order to pick up the truths and to gather the evidences". There is the danger of error, but, "If you shut your door to all errors, truth will be shut out, with care an insight has to be cultivated- an insight into the poet's mind, feelings and realisations". He has expressed his views that Rabindranath Tagore was a great philosopher of India. To quote his own words, "Rabindranath Tagore's literary piece entitled SADHANA is charged with the practical problem of life. In fact, his literary works are inspired by his philosophical experiences. He was a philosopher from the core of his heart and it is not necessary at all to present example for proving it". His philosophy is much influenced by the "Gita" and the "Upanishads". As he was not a metaphysician so he did not possess any specific philosophy. But essentially he had a vision which is another name of Darshan or Philosophy. As he was essentially an Indian in spirit, he was greatly inspired by Indian philosophy. He imbibed the Idealistic philosophy of life and adopted the highest ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. His philosophy of life was guided by the principle of harmony. That is why he has been considered as the supreme reconciler, harmonizer and peacemaker in the domain of modern thought. He desired to reconcile contractions.

Rabindranath Tagore's philosophical beliefs were based on his deep study of Indian philosophy. He says, "One has to be freed from the clutches of the ego." Only then one can attain union with the supreme.
4.6 SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN A PHILOSOPHER

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is considered as one of the greatest philosophers of India. He has occupied a prominent place in the realm of philosophy throughout the whole world. He is popularly known as one of the greatest thinkers on Hindu religion. We do find an ideal combination of philosopher's vision and educationist's zeal in Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. In his opinion, philosophy and education go hand in hand. It is worthy to be noted, "Philosophy does not offer him the seclusion of ivory tower but offers him the opportunity to comprehend life and to have the vision of the realities of living. His philosophy is not removed from the truth of existence. According to him the function of philosophy is to order life and guide action. It has the quality of ennobling life and broadening the outlook. Philosophy gives insight into the meaning of life. His philosophy is idealism".7

As he was a Prof. of Philosophy in the Presidency College Madras, he acquired great fame as a teacher of philosophy. He used to explain difficult problems very skilfully. While he was serving as a professor he wrote many books on philosophy, which brought him great name and fame in the field of philosophy.

His political philosophy reveals that he is a great patriot. His writings on political subjects include national songs, addresses, essays and speeches. They would fill a volume or two and all these abound with an incontestable proof of his burning love for the motherland. It thus goes without saying that the poet was a patriot to the core of his heart. His philosophy is a powerful attempt to restore faith in the dignity and potentiality of human individuals.
This is of special significance in the present context where the world is looked upon as a mechanical whole and the individual is treated as its insignificant unit, is used for the production of material goods at the expense of his mental and physical health. In this gloomy background, his idea of the life eternal comes as a glowing ray of hope and optimism. In this effort he is in tune with other Indian idealists like Vivekananda and Maharshi Aurobindo. His philosophy is not based on speculation and theology. He derives the datum of eternal truths from his own and other seers' experiences and develops them in a system of thought.

AS IDEALISTS

4.7 MAHARSHI AUROBINDO AN IDEALIST

Maharshi Aurobindo is the representative contemporary Indian thinker. He as a thinker is idealistic. He takes the cue of his thought from the higher reaches of self-consciousness. He has investigated into the different ranges of consciousness and its movements and expressions through the different grades of existence. In a broad sense, his philosophy can be called idealistic. It is idealistic firstly because it conceives reality as spiritual, it is idealistic also because it fixes up an ideal for mankind towards which all our efforts have to be directed.

Maharshi Aurobindo believes in the vitality of experience. The movement of life in evolution to him is not a cosmic illusion but a movement of Divine will in expression or lila. The Divine limits itself in the process of self-alienation. It is a process in ignorance and the downward movement of creation expresses itself through stages of evolution of mind, life and matter. In the downward
process it has restricted expression. He removes the old dualisms of spirit and matter and unites them by supplying intermediate links. He thinks that the philosophy should take into consideration both spirit and matter and must not define in a way which makes them irreconcilable in thought.

Maharshi Aurobindo’s idealism cannot properly be called ‘Monism’ of an abstract type or ‘Theism of a personalistic variety. According to him there is one Truth, one Reality, the Being and the many are his becoming. This Truth behind all dualities, all contradictions, all variations, seen in the various levels of consciousness, is Brahman, the omnipresent Reality. He opines that Brahman is the absolute, it has no needs, no desires, has no deficiency, but it has the potentiality for creating names and forms. It is absolutely free, not even ‘bound by his own freedom not to create. Brahman is Sachidananda, existence consciousness and bliss; it manifests itself in the infinite names and forms and endlessly enjoys the delight of this variation. It is Ananda or delight out of which the world was originated. Sachidananda is the higher trinity, the source of all cosmic manifestations whose creative activity is called the Super Mind.

In the views of Maharshi Aurobindo, "mind is a distorted reflection of the Super Mind which works through the fronted aspect of Mind. It is that faculty of the Super Mind which measures and limits, fixes a particular centre 'the Cosmic movements and its interaction. Matter is the substance of the conscient Being it is an aspect of Sachidananda and holds itself with consciousness in a state of complete self- absorption. Thus spirit is the soul of matter, and matter, the form and body of spirit. Matter is the "final form and
objective aspect of the Divine Existence with all of God ever present in it and behind it”. Karma is not the sole determinant of rebirth, it is only an instrument of the Divine will. The significance of rebirth is growth or progression, the Psychic Being changes its personality which is a new physical vital-mental-formation or frontal aspect. Every individual has the inherent capacity to attain the higher spiritual heights upto the supramental level.

4.8 RABINDRANATH TAGORE AN IDEALIST

Rabindranath Tagore was an idealist from the point of view of his philosophy. "Tagore's Idealism is a true child of India's own past and his philosophy is Indian both in origin and development", so said Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. He was not only a great poet, a social reformer, a nationalist, a philosopher, but also an idealist.

Rabindranath Tagore, like most of the Indian rishis, believes that a man should live for the ultimate Truth, which liberates us from the bondage of death and makes us one with the creator. He is one with the poet who says, "Dust, thou art, to dust returnest was not spoken of the soul: For him, the goal of all human activities is to have access to the life that goes beyond death. In Gitanjali life is given out as Lila and God is shown as a playfellow who creates flower of beauty for his children and death is a momentary interruption of this great Lila. He has also an implicit faith in the absolute values and in the realities that persist and beauties that never fades.

Rabindranath Tagore never put much stress on materialism. "His emphasis was upon self realisation through fulfilling the 'dharma' or the ideals". 
He had a firm faith in the fundamental values. He laid stress on self-realization. He says, "Let us find our God, let us live for the ultimate truth which emancipates us, from inner light, not of power but of love". His idealism can be seen, in this statement of him. He does not believe in materialism.

His educational thoughts are also equally idealistic. According to him Love and Universalism are the two outstanding aspects of idealistic philosophy. Education to him, thus is the eternal search after these ideals of Love and Universalism.

Rabindranath Tagore's naturalistic outlook was tempered with idealistic philosophy. He believed in self-realisation "through fulfilling the dharma or the ideals. His idealism is inherent in his Naturalistic philosophy. He believed in 'Self-Realisation', a firm believer in the declaration 'Aham Brahmasmi', he sought liberation through an understanding of that assertion. According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, "Rabindranath Tagore's idealism is a true child of India's own past and his philosophy is Indian both in origin and development.

4.9 SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN AN IDEALIST

Among the well organised schools of thought Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's philosophy is classified under Idealism. Though Idealism advocates ideals in life, the etymology of the phrase has nothing to do with ideals. He is an idealistic thinker. His idealism assimilates Sankara's Absolute and Ramanuja's God in one dynamic conception. According to Shankara the Absolute is transcendent, nameless, formless, indeterminate being, existence, infinite and eternal. Where as Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's Absolute is an elevated
conception Shankara's Absolute is an empty one, a pure vacuity devoid of content. He criticises the advaita conception thus: "By denying all attributes and relations we expose ourselves to the charge of reducing the ultimate being to bare existence which is absolute vacuity. The negative account is intended to express the soul's sense of the transcendence of God, the "Wholly Other," of whom naught, May be predicated save in negations".  

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan conceives that the Absolute is a transcendental existence but it is also capable of immanence. The Absolute is manifested in God. It is the totality of God and the world and is also infinitely beyond them. God is one of the infinite powers of the Absolute and the world is its one specific manifestation.

If the Absolute is real, selves and the world are reduced to nothing. If the selves are real, the absolute does not remain Absolute. Dr. Y. Manish remarks, "Now the question arises, is there any room for individuality in the reality of the Absolute Brahman? Jivas are frankly admitted to be illusory products and ultimately as individuals' they have to be transcendent and sublated. Hence the idealism of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan cannot safeguard the indefensible reality of the individual and so cannot serve the cause of democracy.

The Absolute and God are not exclusive of each other. The Absolute is the non-rational aspect of these Supreme Being and God is the Absolute in relation. There is no distinction between God and the Absolute. The possible and the actual are both contained in the one reality, Absolute- God. The
Absolute is pure being and God is boundless movement. The Being is the basis of power. The distinction is only logical. The reality is both formless and formed, indeterminate and determinate. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan observes, "The supreme in its non-relational aspect is the Absolute, in its active aspect it is God. The Supreme, limited to its relation to the possibility, which is actually accomplishing itself in the World, is the World-Spirit.  

As an idealist thinker Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan resolved to explore his own tradition in fuller detail and wrote his master's thesis, "The Ethics of Vedanta (1908), in part to refute the Western prejudice that the Vedanta simplistically affirmed the "illusory" (maya) nature of the world and lacked ethical content and power. At the same time, he found that he could not ignore the paralyzing superstitions, which dominated Hindu social institutions and the life of the masses as integral features of their deepest religious commitments. He was encouraged by some of his more sensitive Western teachers to continue his research into Hindu philosophy in order to probe its innovative and universal potentials. He found much in Western philosophy—particularly in the idealists and the work of Henri Bergson—which was tangent to the Hindu and specifically Vedantic validation of mystical intuition and the spirituality of the universe.

"The metaphysic of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's Absolute Idealism represents a real fusion of East and West in so far as it boldly confronts the problem which haunted Bradley—that of the relation between the Absolute and God of religious experience—an answer in the form of an eschatology at which Bradley may have hinted in his denial of ultimate reality to the finite
self, but which he never made fully explicit. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan suggests a solution of the problem which is essential, derived from Indian Idealism... ¹¹

The Vedantic idealism of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is capable of giving any lead to our secular democratic set-up. He is excessively spiritual and traditional. He hardly gives us a metaphysics of life, a practical philosophy which may serve as the light for men and nations to follow. He is a Jnanayogi and the world to-day, seeks path through action. For a Karmayogi, he gives no method for realisation. The need of the age is to foster a feeling of brotherhood, human virtues, equality and economic peace. The practical approach is lacking in Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

AS SPIRITUALISTS

4.10 MAHARSHI AUROBINDO A SPIRITUALIST

Maharshi Aurobindo a great Yogist and seer of India showed to mankind the way to the highest spiritual growth. He was a great spiritualist. He was a rare combination of a poet, a philosopher and a spiritualist. He was a sage of psychic experiences. His life itself is based on spiritual discipline and at the one end ardently sought after everything done is the attainment of the 'Life Divine' while living in the world. According to him spiritual element is very important element in the life of a man. In his book "The Human Cycle" Maharshi Aurobindo regrets the neglect of spiritual element, which is responsible for the decay of human societies. He says, "The radical defect of all civilizations has been the neglect of the spiritual element. According to him economic prosperity is not the terminal goal of life. It is man's integral unfolding which should be the goal of all organised effort. Only integral men make an integral society.
Maharshi Aurobindo had several occult and spiritual experiences. Once he was wondering, during his 'Sadhana', whether 'Siddhis (powers) like levitation were possible at all; he found himself raised up, with only one part of the body in some contact with the ground. On other occasion when he was practicing raising of his arms and slewing them in that suspended position without muscular effort, he went to sleep: the warden who saw the scene from out side; was alarmed and reported that he was dead.

At the Pondicherry Ashram, Maharshi Aurobindo's vision of life broadened as he gain insight into spiritual realms of life. The oriental and the occidental culture, the spiritual and the material values and science and Vedanta so got blended in his vision of life that he emerged as the prophet of Sadhana. Sadhana was supplemented by integral Yoga as Divine life. The daily practices at the Ashram were devoid of extensive rituals or any occult practices. He gave the Ashramites a way of life based on spiritual discipline and quest for higher values. Thus he spent the rest of his life in Pondicherry in search of spiritualism.

In his book 'Arya' he says that Philosophy is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things, religion is the attempt to make the truth dynamic in the soul of man. They are essential to each other; religion that is not the expression of philosophical truth degenerates into superstition and obscurantism and a philosophy, which does not dynamise itself with the religious spirit is a barren light, for it cannot get itself practiced. All philosophy is concerned with the relations between two things, the fundamental truth of
existence and the forms in which existence presents itself to our experience. The deepest experience shows that the fundamental truth is the truth of the spirit; the other is the truth of life truth of form and shaping force and living idea and action.

Spirit being the fundamental truth of existence, life can be only its manifestations; spirit must be not only the origin of life but its basis, its pervading reality and its highest and total result. But the forms of life as they appear to us are at once its disguises and its instruments of self-manifestation. Man has to grow in knowledge till they cease to be disguises and grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its perfect instruments. To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution. He opines that Divine Life is the spiritual fulfillment of man's urge to individual perfection, to pragmatic inter-personal relationship and for the creation of a perfected collective life of Gnostic beings. Thus the Life Divine is the life lived in the Divine, a life of spiritual and Superman hood. He said, "Spiritualism is the real key of the Indian mind which gives an indication of eternity". He further said, "The first period of greatness of India was that of spiritualism. The stamp of its spiritualism is still quiet clear and it appears to be a permanent feature." He firmly believed that Indian spiritualism was original and healthy.

Thus in the spiritual world, Maharshi Aurobindo occupies a special place of his own. He was essentially a great spiritualist.
4.11 RABINDRANATH TAGORE A SPIRITUALIST

Rabindranath Tagore is considered as a great spiritualist of our country. His spiritualism is the outcome of his deep study of Indian philosophy and ancient Indian literature. He pleaded that Man’s soul must seek deliverance from “the grip of the self” and attain “communion with the infinite soul.” He regarded Nature as a supreme entity. In nature he visualised the manifestation of the Creator. With regard to the spiritualism of Rabindranath Tagore K.K. Bhatia and C.L. Narang express their views as- "Rabindranath Tagore lived in the true spiritual tradition of India. He was inspired by his deep study of Indian philosophy and ancient literature. So he advocated spiritual harmony and salvation of soul. He pleaded that man's soul must seek deliverance from ‘the grip of self’ and attain “communion with the infinite soul”. This will result in spiritual truth and beauty of our attitude towards our surrounding our conscious relationship with the Infinite, and lasting power of the Eternal in the passing moment of our life. He believed that spiritual man is the measure of everything.

It is remarkable that Rabindranath Tagore's naturalism paves the way to spiritualism, because he is not less spiritual. He finds music as an aid to the development of spiritualism. He emphatically states that while starting the school in the natural surroundings of Bolapur his principal object was to give spiritual culture to the boys.

With regard to spirituality and unity Rabindranath Tagore propounds: "In the night we stumble over things and become actually conscious of their individual separateness, but the day reveals the great unity which embraces
them. And the man, whose inner vision is bathed in an illumination of his consciousness, at once realises the spiritual unity reigning supreme over all differences of race and his mind no longer awkwardly stumbles over individual facts of separateness in the human world, accepting them as find, he realises that space is in the inner harmony which dwells in truth and not in any outer adjustments, that beauty carries an eternal assurance of our spiritual relationship to reality; which awaits for its perfection in the response of our love.

Rabindranath Tagore propounds that "Brahman manifests himself through nature. This manifestation of God through nature is clearer than His manifestation through man.

4.12 SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN A SPIRITUALIST

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is also a great spiritualist of India. To his consideration spirituality can be gained even living in the world. It is not escape from the world. It is knowledge of truth and its values and thus is the root of unity. On the ground of this concept of spirituality, he holds that the East and West can meet and that they have met in the past, the spirit of man being the same every where. Hence, he wants to cultivate the idea of worldly brotherhood.

Like Hegelianism, the fundamental concept of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's philosophy also is spirit. But unlike many Hegelians and Indian idealists who conceive the spirit as substances, he takes it to be life. "Spirit is life not thing", he says, "energy not immobility, something real in itself and by itself,
and cannot be compared to any substance "Subjective or Objective", There is only one creative energy because nature is too closely knit to be viewed as a scene of conflict between two or more powers. This energy is the very essence of the spirit, which underlies all existence.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has expressed his own ideas and views with regard to God and the Absolute. The most striking feature of his metaphysics is that his Absolute is not only pure existence, pure consciousness, pure bliss, an indeterminate, formless and impersonal Being but also God, the murta, the personal Creator. The Absolute is full of infinite possibilities, and the world is the actualisation of one of them. "While the Absolute is the total reality, God is the Absolute from the cosmic end, the consciousness that it forms and sustains the world. The possibilities or the ideal forms are the mind of the Absolute or thoughts of the Absolute, one of the infinite or thoughts of the Absolute. One of the infinite possibilities is being translated into the world of space and time.

While expressing his thoughts about Universe and Absolute Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan says- "If God is nothing but the Absolute viewed from the cosmic end this Universe is not an illusion. He seems to be inclined to viewing it as both being and non-being. The being of God depends upon the being of the world. Hence the universe is being. Thus he points out that the being of which we have a conflict between being and non-being in and through their mutual hostility the world exists.

About the individual Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan says, "The self consciousness being is the human individual thus it is clear that the human
individual is not a separate unit. He is the manifestation of the spirit. From the evolutionary point of view he is the richest and fullest expression of ultimate reality. He reminds that, man is not simply the animal gone up any more than and animal is a man gone down. Between the two there is a gulf.

According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan the world itself is a harmony. He says "Besides the affirmation of a spiritual reality which is variously interpreted and its consubstantiality with the deepest self of man, we have also the conviction of the unity of the universe, we see the one spirit over arching us. The earth and the sky, the world and the animals all become suddenly strange and wonderful. For our eyes are opened and they all declare the presence of the one supreme. The universe seems to be alive with spirit, aglow with fire, burning with light. All that there is, comes out of life and vibrates in it. The Upanishad says, "When all this is turned into the self, who is to be known by whom? The supreme spirit is in escapable. It is "above, below, behind, before, to the right and to the left." God is everywhere, even in the troubled sea of human history, in the tragedy and injustice of the world, in its suffering and sorrow. When we experience the harmony, the discord with which we are familiar seems unreal."

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan opines that the human mind being, what it is, tries to reconstruct the universe from the intellectual point of view into an organic whole. For the intellect, the unity is only a postulate and act of faith. For the spirit, the harmony is the experienced reality. It belongs to the nature of things and we have had partial and momentary premonitions of it, and we can work up the harmony if we remember that the world of ordinary experience
is a feeble representation of the perfect world, a combination of light and darkness, a reflection of the pure idea in an incomplete material form.

In the views of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan those who possess the intuition of all the pervading unity of the self and the universe are the saintly souls whose lives are characterised by an unshakeable faith in the supremacy of spirit, invincible optimism, ethical universalism and religious toleration. The attainment of steady spiritual insight is the aim of religious endeavour and the means to it are an ethical life and the art of meditation.

AS HUMANISTS

4.13 MAHARSHI AUROBINDO A HUMANIST

Maharshi Aurobindo who was not only a great philosopher, educationist but also a great humanist. He showed to mankind the way to the highest spiritual growth. His life is based on spiritual discipline. Hence he was a lover of humanity.

Maharshi Aurobindo envisages spiritual humanism. The human life, body and mind are forms of the Super Mind. They become divinely transformed. The destiny of man is to become a Gnostic being or a divine being and live on earth with godly powers. What Maharshi Aurobindo points out to the philosophers of to-day is that the human life, body and mind are the involved forms of Super Mind. The superform can be explicit, open and manifest existence in them. The human life becomes the life divine. He conceives of the evolution of divine humanity and rejects the materiality, mechanistic and Marxist approach to humanism. The human being cannot remain emancipated.
till he remains imperfect. He contributes the view of spiritual or divine humanism untold and unthought of ancient Indian philosophy.

According to Maharshi Aurobindo human interest and human prospect should be the highest concern for man as one international body and the only transcendent objective for mankind as a whole. The past records of human literary heritage from the myths to the sciences and technologies have values, not as ultimate, but as progressive steps towards further prospects of mankind as a whole. He opines that the aim of the spiritual man is to establish the kingdom of god on earth. Therefore first of all he will try to create a community of perfected individuals for raising the life of humanity. He advises us to reform our minds before we try to reform the world. Man has to grow in knowledge till the forms of life cease to be disguises and to grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its prefect instruments. To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution.  

With regards the eternal human values and international dimensions Maharshi Aurobindo propounds that, "The world - state will give its inhabitants the great adventures of peace, economical well being, general security, the intellectual, cultural, social activity and progress. None of these are in themselves sufficient to create the thing needed. For that certain psychological elements would have to be present in great strength. First as religion of humanity much more powerful, explicit, self-conscious, universal in its approach than the nationalists religion of the country. Secondly the clear recognition by man in all his thought and life of a single soul of humanity of which each man
and each people is an incarnation and soul-form. Thirdly, an ascension of
men beyond the principle of ego and yet without destruction of individuality.
Fourthly, a principle and arrangement of the common life which would give
free play to individual variations by which the soul of man lives and grows
great."

4.14 RABINDRANATH TAGORE A HUMANIST

Rabindranath Tagore had confidence in man and can be called a high-
class humanist. To quote Dr. M.P. Verma, Tagore was a humanist. He was a
prophet of love, fellowship and co-operation. He gave to the organised man
the gospel of unity and harmony. His humanism was nurtured on spiritual
foundations. His humanistic attitude pervades all aspects of his thought, and
yet, he does not allow it to fall down to the status of narrow anthropomorphism.
He was influenced by the philosophy of humanism. He once said of Humanism-

"I have great faith in humanity. Like the sun it can be clouded, but
never extinguished."18 I admit that at this time when human races have met
together as never before the basic elements appear predominant. The powerful
are exulting at the number of their victims. They take the name of science to
cultivate in the school boy superstitions that they have certain physical signs
indicating their eternal right to rule, as the explosive force of the earth quake
once might have claimed with enough of evidence, its never ending sway
over the destiny of this earth. But they in their turn will be disappointed."

With regard to the humanism of Rabindranath Tagore R.N. Safaya and
B.D. Shaida Say, "Rabindranath Tagore believed that since god manifests
himself in human beings, it is through an understanding of humanity that we can attain the ultimate goal of life. Tagore also believed in a universal mind of humanity which transcends all individual mind and influences them. He was therefore convinced that humanism embraces different cultures, religious viewpoints and political systems. Thus he stood for universalism and brotherhood of man irrespective of nationalities. He was an internationalist but his internationalism was neither economic nor political. It was spiritual. He longed for spiritual bondage of the universe. He had implicit faith in the fundamental unity of mankind and human brotherhood.

We do find a human touch in the writings and poems of Rabindranath Tagore. For examples, "If a river is described, a ferry at once appears, if a scene or land scope is painted, a human form must remain there; When a flower is presented, it is presented as bringing a message for the human soul; When the beauty of the rainy night is being described, the rains have to fall on, "the spire of the temple rising above the undefined mass of blackness grouped around the village huts; and if the quietness of solitude is pictured, its peace has to be intensified with joy by the rising notes of a faint song."

Rabindranath Tagore pleaded for world brotherhood and internationalism. Hence we find him as a believer in internationalism or world fraternity as envisaged by Gita. He believed in the fact that all men have come out of one saviour. Brahma, and so all are brothers and sisters the distinction of caste, colour, creed or any other discrimination is false, unreal and man-made. Two extremes of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy are 'Individualism and internationalism or 'World Brotherhood' Here in the field of education, he has similarity with Froebel and others.
He believed that service to man is service to God. His humanism knows no bounds. He emphasised much on the affinity and kinship between man and nature. This does not mean that he underestimates the advance of spirit over nature. In fact he awards to human personality such a high place that god himself is defined in terms of humanity. Nature and spirit are both real. They have much in common. But they are not equals. He says, "The revilement of the infinite, is to be seen most fully not in the starry heavens but in the sole of man." 19

He opines that of all the manifestations of the Divine man is incomparable. The human self is unique, because in it God reveals himself in a special manner. God has many strings to his lute. Some are made of copper, others of iron. Man is the only golden string in God's lute. This brings us to that much-used but seldom clarified word, 'humanism'. The popular concept of humanism is that it elevates man above everything else, demonstrates man's supremacy over the rest of creation. He further says that man expresses himself in a variety of ways in accordance with his own urges. "The fish in the water is silent, the animal on the earth is noisy,, the bird in the air is singing. But man has in him the silence of the sea, the noise of the earth and the music in the air. Illustrative of this humanism, here is a poem rendered into English by Rabindranath Tagore himself.

To the birds you gave songs, the birds give you songs, in return. You gave me only voice, yet you asked for more; and I sing.
You made your winds light and they are fleet in their service. You burdened my hands that I myself may lighten them and at last gain unburned freedom in your service.

You created your earth filling its shadows with fragments of light. There you paused. You left me empty handed in the dust to create your heaven. To all things else you give, from me you ask. The harvest of my life ripens, sin, sun and shower until I reap more than you sowed, gladdening your heart, O master of the golden granary.

Rabindranath Tagore points out to pious men that there is no point in looking for God in temples and offering him flowers and burning incense there and that they should rather seek him among the common men. He also says, "Come out of thy meditation and leave aside the flowers and incense. What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and the sweat of thy brow."

According to Rabindranath Tagore humanism alone can save us from separation and sectarianism. Man is a concrete complex of diversities and the riches and superior wealth of his inner being cannot be fathomed so long as we remain confined to the realm of abstractions. He gave preference to villages in national construction and reform. He was a supporter of the life of small towns rather than that of big cities. He believed in the respect and freedom of the individual. He did not admit any difference on the basis of religion, language and sex. In his opinion man or human being is of the greatest worth. It is through men that values and virtues of life are realised.
He wanted every human being to be a creative genius. Pointing out the grievous faulting of modern civilization, he said, "Invention, construction and organisation are spreading fast along the high road of history. But the creative genius of man is everyday losing its dignity". Human improvement he said, comes from within and not from without.

We can conclude that, an account of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy would not be complete without making a mention of his humanistic beliefs.

4.15 SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN A HUMANIST

No doubt Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is a great humanist. Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru considered Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as a humanist of the modern days. He says, "It is India's peculiar privilege to have a great philosopher, a great educationist and a great humanist."

With regard to humanists he has opined that humanists are no mean skeptics. They have a positive programme of human service, equality, fraternity and freedom from want and poverty. Humanists are not mere naturalists they have ideals, human values and refined ethics to shape the life of mankind. For a humanist temples, rites, ceremonies, beliefs and dogmas are false or meaningless and man is the highest being on earth. The uplift of man depends on better secular life, economic well being and equality.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has own ideals, thoughts and views pertaining to humanism. According to him, humanism is a substitute of religion for the non-believers, the rationalists and the socialists to-day. A large part of humanity
to-day takes religious theories to be more speculations or as an opiate for the poor and the plebeian. We are not certain of truth. Life alone is certain and therefore, we must respect life. Humanism is not a more form of naturalism. Man lives on ideals and values and protests against the instinctive and animal cravings. Fraternity, equality and selfishness, courage, wisdom, sacrifice, veracity, discipline of senses and passion are the human values and ideals for which man lives. "The ultimate harmonious interrelation of all individuals with one another is the aim of humanism".

But humanism is not a form of religion. It has nothing to do with religion. "Humanism is a protest against naturalism on the one side and religion on the other. The soul of man is not a thing of nature; nor it is a child of God... As against religion, humanism contends that this world is our chief interest and perfection of humanity our one ideal." 20

Humanism stands for a balance of life. It is more a tendency than a system of philosophy. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan commends the revolt of humanism against the ecclesiastical religion on the one hand and the mechanism of society on the other. Humanism fails to bring out the spiritual transformation of man. It is religion alone, which spiritualises and uplifts man to divinity. Humanism fails to be a substitute of religion, in as much as the former has the lower goal of economic well being and material happiness of man. He points out the congenial defects in the humanistic principles, which prevents it from being a substitute to religion. He observes, "There is no conflict between religion and a reasonable humanism. The truly religious act in this world, the inner feeling of the relation between God and man is bound
to issue in the service of humanity." According to him the centre of humanism is man and that of religion God. Due to the revolt of humanism, religion is gradually becoming an instrument of social reform. One who worships God but does not feed the indigent mass is not truly religious. How can one who does not love his brethren, love God?

In the opinion of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan human soul is divine. With regard to the divinity of the soul he remarks, "spirituality, to be or not to be that is the question." The world over the unleashed tendencies that crush the human spirit and degrade and dehumanise the mind are on the rampage. Humanity has been forced to become a robot. "If this human mind surrenders its humanity, says Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, "makes itself into an object, lapses into rapidly and routine and does not understand the boundless possibilities which are located in the creative side of human nature, it is "then that we become victims of necessity, dialectical, mechanical, historical or even providential".

According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan the human individual is not a separate unit. He is not even a part of the reality, which admits of no division. He is the manifestation of the spirit. From the evolutionary point of view he is the richest and fullest expression of the ultimate reality. The human individual shares with other animals, a fragile body, limited life and an uncontrollable, unenlightened mind. He has grown out of the physical, vital and animal life into the power of manhood. But reminds Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, man is not simply the animal gone up any more than an animal is a man gone down. Between the two there is a gulf. In biology organic life is sought to be
explained in accordance with early perceptible natural laws. Man himself is no exception to the general laws, which govern organic process. "He is not a free being capable of choice, able to decide whether he shall write classics of wisdom or advertisements for cosmetic".

With regard to the humanity of the modern days Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan remarks, "The world is more compact to-day than it was before. The values, culture, tradition, religion and philosophies of different countries are in synthesis in Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's philosophy. The humanity to-day is broad bottomed, universal open and free. It is preparing to give birth to the world's unborn soul. The humanity as a whole has become one body and there in it the search for a soul. It is the task of the renaissance thinkers to search and reveal the unborn soul of the cosmos. He observes, "The world which has found itself as a single body is feeling for its soul".22

4.16 COMPARATIVE VIEWS OF TRIO-PHILOSOPHERS ON THE BELIEFS HELD BY THEM

4.16.1 Points of Common

These trio philosophers were one of the greatest educators of India. They were not only great educationists but also social reformers. They pleaded that the education to be imparted should be proper to the need and temperament and culture. They not only theorised the educational principles but also put them into practice. Hence they were treated as the practical educationists. They were considered as the greatest prophets of educational renaissance in modern India. Their
contributions to religions and educational thoughts are really great and stupendous. They were all staunch supporters of a national system of education.

They were all great philosophers of India. Their philosophy is Indian in origin and development. They had already occupied a prominent place in the realm of philosophy throughout the whole world. They are popularly known as one of the greatest thinkers on Hindu religion. They were greatly inspired by Indian philosophy. The philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is influenced by the stand points of Rabindranth Tagore and Maharshi Aurobindo.

They were idealists to the core. Their philosophy and educational thoughts are idealistic. Their idealism is inherent in their naturalist philosophy. Their aims of education were all based on idealism. Their naturalistic outlook was tempered with their idealistic philosophy.

As Rousseau is considered as a great naturalist of the Western countries so also these trio philosophers of India are considered as naturalists of India admired nature even from their childhood. They have provided high place to nature. They have found an intimate relationship between man and man. So they argued strongly that child's education must be organised in natural surroundings and that too in the lap of nature. They expressed their views that the present system of education should be based on the basic principles of nature, because it is divorced from nature and thus brought harm to young children.
These trio philosophers were great spiritualists of our country. They showed to mankind the way to the highest spiritual growth. No doubt their spiritualism is the out-come of their deep study of Indian philosophy and Indian literature. As they were in the true sense of the word they have tried their utmost to cultivate the idea of worldly brotherhood. Really these trio philosophers were saintly whose lives are characterised by an unshakeable faith in the supremacy of spirit. They have propounded that human relations are the main springs of spiritual life. They emphasised that the discovery of inwardness is the essentials of basis of spiritual life. In other words the ultimateness of spiritual values should be obtained by inward honesty and cultivation of inner life.

A striking and glaring similarity among these trio philosophers is that they were not only great philosophers, educationists but also great humanists. They had developed the philosophy of humanism in them. As their life was based on spiritual discipline they themselves transformed into lovers of humanity. That was why they were known as a high priests of humanism. It is an admitted fact that the humanism that these thinkers adopted is by far more comprehensive than scientific humanism. They were considered as the healers of the soul. They were all the exponents of the Universal Humanism. They believed in the maxim. "Service to man is the service to God."
As Maharshi Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore were theorists and practitioners they established educational institutions in order to put into practice their educational principles. Whereas even though Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan himself a teacher did not establish any institution but he put into practice his educational principles in the institutions where he served and in the University Commission of 1948.

Maharshi Aurobindo himself opines that he was not a philosopher but a poet and a politician. While Rabindranath Tagore was a poet philosopher. He is a kind of Hindu Tolstoy. Whereas Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was an adventurous philosopher.

Maharshi Aurobindo’s philosophy is described as a philosophy of Monistic Idealism. While Rabindranath Tagore’s philosophy is an Absolute Idealism. Whereas Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan’s Philosophy is based on Vedantic Idealism.

According to Maharshi Aurobindo, "Nature is rushing towards God". While Rabindranath Tagore saw the Almighty in Nature. Whereas Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan opines that Nature is the creation and representative of God.

According to Maharshi Aurobindo spiritualism is the real key of the Indian mind, which gives an indication of eternity. While Rabindranath Tagore advocated spiritual harmony and salvation of the soul. Whereas Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan takes spirit to be life. He says, "Spirit is life not thing".
Maharshi Aurobindo envisages spiritual humanism. He conceives of the evolution of divine humanity and rejects the materialistic, mechanistic and marxist approach to humanity. While Rabindranath Tagore’s humanism manifests the age-old philosophy of our country. His humanism is emerged as a new spirit in him. Whereas Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan says that the common humanity of all mankind is not only the motto of his philosophy but also it should be the motto of all the countries.

Summing Up

A careful analysis and perusal of these trio philosophers reveal that the beliefs held by them are lofty and stupendous. Their perennial philosophical thoughts are admirably reflected in these beliefs held by them. These beliefs testify that their philosophy is Indian both in origin and development.
References


2) Ibid.


21) Ibid. p-72.