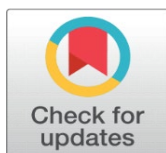


UNIVERSAL SPIRITUALITY AND ETHICAL IDEALISM: S. RADHAKRISHNAN'S RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY FOR THE MODERN AGE

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ABSTRACT

Religion is a dynamic process, a renewed endeavor of the creative feeling that seeks to elevate mankind to a new level through exceptional thinking and fostering harmony among people. There is no rational way to defend the absoluteness and perfection of one's religion. In this respect, S. Radhakrishnan expresses his opinions, arguing that religion gives people the opportunity to create a bridge of fraternity and unity as well as a chance for greater understanding between people. His proposal was centered on integrating religion into our everyday lives in a true manner in order to drive out our inner egoistic and greedy cravings and establish a new society of harmony, love, and a renewed spirit among all. Nevertheless, it is thought that genuine religion fosters a sense of spirituality or resemblance to divine. His understanding of religion is firmly grounded on ethical Idealism and global spirituality, and it stands in opposition to both materialistic skepticism and sectarian dogmatism. S. Radhakrishnan asserts that religion is an insight into reality, not a doctrine or rule. The core of Radhakrishnan's religious philosophy is the conviction that religion is essentially an inward, individual, and spiritual experience rather than following rituals or texts from other sources. Radhakrishnan was aware of both the problems with conventional religion and the threats it faces today. He admits the moral inefficiency of religion is the primary cause of the current instability and that conventional religious systems do not support and support the best way of living. If people pursue religion in a limited way, it creates barriers and conflict between them. In Radhakrishnan's view, religion was a spiritual experience that went beyond limits and sought self-realization and universal human unification, rather than just a collection of rituals or institutional activity.

Keywords: Self-Realization, Universal Spirituality, Comparative Religion, Humanism

1. INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the religion has a greater impact than anything else on those looking for the meaning of life. The modern world needs a new cultural foundation to remain cohesive, and the question is whether the spiritual or the more prevalent economic and pragmatic minds should lead the way. It is not the right purpose of human endeavor to create a mechanical world where people are welded into soulless machines. We need a spiritual perspective that embraces the deep demands of the soul as well as the huge and thriving world of politics and economy. In the past, religion rather than science, was of greater significance to the survival of mankind. In the field of Indian philosophy S. Radhakrishnan is regarded as one of the greatest thinkers. He had talked about variety of topics pertaining to human society and one of them is how individual see religion. The primary approach of this paper is to evaluate and apprise S. Radhakrishnan's concept of spiritual religion as a tool for social and national reconstruction. According to S. Radhakrishnan, spiritual religion is an essential component of life that can alleviate suffering of an individual, society, and nation as a whole. Conflicts over religion are causing the nation and society to be left behind. False conceptions of religion give rise to religious strife. Despite being a strong supporter of Indian spiritualism, S. Radhakrishna also experimented with other religions as well. He conceived it very well that every religion continued to include some truth. S. Radhakrishnan created

a form of religion that has been described as creative and integrative based on this understanding. This type of religion is creative, In the sense that it is the result of soul cultivation. His thoughts on religion transcends all creeds and dogmas to create a universal religion that would satisfy humanity's need for religion. According to Radhakrishnan, religion is a way of life that helps people to fulfill their spiritual ideas rather than just a belief in them. For him, religion is an understanding of reality rather than just a credo or a rule. In its realm, Religion has encompassed cognitive, effective, ritualistic and ethical components. The primary goal of comparative religion, which Radhakrishnan had studied, is to compare and contrast the various active religious beliefs of the globe. Learn about the faiths of other religions than our own is made possible by comparative religion, which is the critical examination of various religions. A deeper understanding of an individual's own religious believe may result from Studying the different religions.

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) The main objectives of the study are as follows-
- 2) To analysis Radhakrishnan's idea of spiritual idealism and how it underpins his broader religious philosophy.
- 3) To critically assess the influence of Western philosophy and Indian tradition in shaping Radhakrishnan's religious thought.
- 4) To evaluate the implications of Radhakrishnan's views for contemporary religious and ethical issues.
- 5) To highlight the significance of Radhakrishnan's concept of religion in the development of society and human welfare.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this paper descriptive and analytic method has been used. The interpretation is based upon the analysis of primary and secondary source related to Radhakrishnan's concept of religion and universal spirituality. The study is primarily theoretical and is best on a close reading of Radhakrishnan's key philosophical texts such as the Hindu View of Life, An Idealist View of Life, Eastern Religions and Western Thoughts, Religion and Culture etc. The secondary sources consist of materials collected from various articles, books and websites.

3. EXPLANATION

One of the most renowned and influential contemporary Indian philosophers, S. Radhakrishnan brought a distinctive perspective on religion that harmonized Indian spirituality and western thought. By demonstrating how the intellectual system of both traditions may be understood in terms of one another, S. Radhakrishnan is recognized for having helped to bridge the East and West. S. Radhakrishnan attempted to synthesize the essence of all religions out of sheer vision; he created a spiritual religion that is also combined. Western religion, is based on epistemological investigation. According to S. Radhakrishnan, genuine religion result from the combination of both intellect and intuition rather than being the product of either one alone. This is what super-science would produce if it were true religion. He was not just a philosopher but also an educationist, an administrator, teacher, statesman and a driving force behind Indian Renaissance. S. Radhakrishnan has made significant contributions to the growth of Indian philosophical ideas, such as philosophy of religion. According to him, religion is a way of life rather than simply a belief in the ultimate reality. According to his conception, the field of religion has both cognitive components and emotional components. Furthermore, religion also has a moral and ritualistic component, more S. Radhakrishnan prioritizes religious experience than any other experience of human life. According to him, an individual can find salvation by religious experience. salvation is a form of inner fulfillment that involves seeking out eternal truths. He also stresses the importance of the understanding of other' religion and religious perspectives. Throughout his Various works, S. Radhakrishnan has extensively explored the idea of Religion. He has explained and contrasted the various active religions around the world in addition to talking about the overall ideas of religion and religious experience. A belief in the supra-natural power as the creator, sustainer, destroyer and moral ruler of the world, along with the accompanying feelings of wonder and reverence and the voluntary acts of devotion, dedication, fellowship, and worship, is the general definition of religion. Religion according to some philosophers, is associated with sentiment, emotion, rituals, faith, etc. According to Radhakrishnan, their opinions are incorrect in what they deny but correct in what they affirm. Religious consciousness does not contain a feeling component, but religious feeling is distinct from other types of feeling. In S. Radhakrishnan's

opinion, religion could not be defined as a type of knowledge or as merely a moral consciousness of value. S. Radhakrishnan acknowledges Whitehead's theory of religion, which holds that it is an endeavor to find the best possible circumstances for human existence rather than merely a social phenomenon. "When Professor Whitehead defines religion as 'what the individual does with his own solitariness', he is urging that it is not a mere social phenomenon. It is not an apologetic for the existing social order; nor is it a mere instrument for social salvation. It is an attempt to discover the ideal possibilities of human life, a quest for emancipation from the immediate compulsions of vain and petty moods. It is not true religion unless it ceases to be a traditional view and becomes personal experience. It is an independent functioning of the human mind, something unique possessing an autonomous character. It is something inward and personal which unifies all values and organizes all experiences." Religion is a personal, and internal force that organizes all experience and integrates all values.

Love and solidarity are the foundations of a real religious life. Pilgrimages, bathing in holy rivers, chanting human mantras or suras, and idol or image worship are examples of external acts of devotion that do not exclusively identify an individual as fully religious. Religion that is acquired from outside sources such as sacred books, dharma guru or teachers, or other sources, is not regarded as true religion. One does not become a follower of true religion out of habit. Radhakrishnan highlights that different people have varied needs when it comes to prayer, worship styles, rituals, religious rites and ceremonies, and idol worship. However, for Radhakrishnan, silent meditation is the fundamental practice and 'yoga,' 'realization,' 'dhyana,' 'intuitive apprehension,' etc. are used by him to describe this meditation. Radhakrishnan indicated that the path to salvation is possible via religious experience. However, going through this experience is not simple; It entails a conflict within ourselves and a conflict with our passion. According to Radhakrishnan, there are two phases of work that can be necessary to overcome this obstacle. Religious doctrine, devotion and worship comprise the first stage, while meditation, contemplation, and love comprise the second. According to S. Radhakrishnan, the only reason why various religions conflict is arises solely because one part of religion is given too much attention than the other, which is potentially more significant. There is a commonality across all religions if we attempt to delve deeply into their nature and the core of religion is unaffected by the conflicts. The conflict arises from a lack of mutual understanding among the religions. Because of our individual circumstances, background, age, and upbringing, we depict the Absolute using our own symbol and methods. Therefore, although there may be many different types of religious beliefs due to their various forms, yet their fundamental characteristics are all the same.

4. COMPARATIVE RELIGION AS A PATH TO GLOBAL HARMONY

S. Radhakrishnan is most recognized for his attempt to reconcile eastern and western thought, particularly in the area of religion. He tried to bridge the gap between Indian spiritual thought and western rational inquiry. In order to show how Indian spiritual philosophy may enhance and complement Western religious and philosophical traditions, he focused on the premise that all religious traditions are fundamentally united. Having been educated in both traditions, he tried to present Indian philosophy as both intellectually sound and spiritually profound, contrasting Indian mystical insights with western philosophical ethics and frequently quoting Plato, Kant, and Hegel to demonstrate the universality of some religious and moral principles. Undoubtedly Comparative religion acknowledges both similarities and dissimilarities of various religions. However, recognizing the similarities does not imply that the differences are insignificant. The claims and contents of other religions must be understood and appreciated, even if we want to present the superior claims of one. According to comparative religion, every religion has a past and is neither absolute nor flawless. Religion is an evolution, and in any real development, the new is built upon the old. Every religion has certain remnants from its ancient traditions. Furthermore, we could look forward to a better religion even if we are dissatisfied with the current ones. "Comparative religion enables us to study faiths other than our own without condescension or contempt. It traces the history of our ideas of God from the simple conceptions of our remote ancestors who first formulated the experience of the great environing mystery down to the living faiths. Every mortal thing seems to have been deified. Power of nature, sun, stars, fire, water and earth, generative energies were all made into gods. Hero-worship and human apotheosis added to the number. Our mental pictures of God are as varied as we are." Comparative religion does not seek to prove that one religion is superior to another in terms of the expression of the religious spirit. It is hard to uphold the absoluteness of any religion when people of different religions are consistently seeing similar phenomena. In the East, Religion is more closely associated with spiritual life. It is the understanding that man is one with the universe's spirit of truth, love, and beauty. Such a perspective does not overstate the importance of intellectual ideas. It acknowledges them as feeble attempts to oversimplify reality.

5. RELIGION AS SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE:

The core of Radhakrishnan's religious philosophy is the conviction that religion is essentially an inward, individual, and spiritual experience rather than following rituals or texts from other sources. His emphasis on intuition above logical argument stemmed from the Upanishadic tradition, which holds that one must directly experience ultimate reality. By adopting this perspective, He was able to make argument for a universal spirituality that values diversity while pursuing unity, which allowed him to see all religions as distinct routes that ultimately lead to the same truth. "For it proves beyond doubt that while there are innumerable changes in religious forms, religion itself is found to be a universal phenomenon. Right round the world, distributed more or less uniformly, we find a mass of faith and ritual which, in spite of apparent variations and individual forms, seem to cohere with respect to certain essential features. Religion is native to the human mind, integral to human nature itself. Everything else may dissolve; but belief in God, which is the ultimate confession of all the faiths of the world, remains. Though religion may take many forms, it will continue as long as man remains what he is, a blend of power and weakness." . Religion, according to Radhakrishnan, is the discipline, heritage, course of conduct or way of life that allows man to transform his own nature and reveal the divinity that is concealed within him. It by religion that one must believe in the absoluteness of spiritual values and adopt a lifestyle that will help one to realize them. Because of this faith, one is convinced that it is possible to have a consciousness of the transcendental reality. Great religious figures have therefore frequently been prophetic. In spite of conventional dogmas and a materialistic worldview, we observe that S. Radhakrishnan attempts to frame religion in a way that can enlighten humanity. S. Radhakrishnan as a spiritualistic philosopher believed that spirit is ultimate reality and ideal of man. According to him, the first step towards realizing this ideal ultimate reality is faith, especially faith in religious experience. Because of its uniqueness and peculiarity, which cannot be reduce to any other type of experience, it is considered as religious experience. The goal of religious experience, in contrast to other experiences, is to discover the mystical, latent qualities and ideal potentialities of human being. Everyday experiences have a subject-object duality; however, the duality of subject and object does not occur in religious experience.

Religious dogmatism and sectarianism, in Radhakrishnan's opinion, created conflict and impeded true spiritual development. He argued that institutionalized religion frequently forgets the essence of faith and realization and minimizes the divine to dogmatic ideas. He was able to portray Hinduism as a paradigm for a more comprehensive religious worldview that could take in and value the teachings and truths of other religions, by viewing it as a dynamic, inclusive, adaptable changing and developing tradition. In Radhakrishnan's opinion, our goal should be to help religions like Buddhists, Christians rediscover and align with the core tenets of their respective religions rather than to converts Christians into Buddhists or Buddhists into Christians. It is necessary for a religious scholar to approach all religions with complete impartiality and detachment. In his opinion, all religions are equally wonderful, but most people do not share this cool indifference toward religious issues.

6. HUMANISM AND RELIGION IN S. RADHAKRISHNAN'S PHILOSOPHY

Radhakrishnan was conscious of both the shortcomings of traditional religion as well as the contemporary threats to it. He acknowledges that traditional religious systems do not support and advance the optimal way of living, and that the moral inefficiency of religion is the root cause of the current instability. Religion causes barriers and strife among individuals if it is practiced in a limited way. Because of the constant denial of life in the depths of religion, scientific advancements and a growing materialistic mindset of society pose a threat to religion. As a result, a variety of religious alternatives have emerged, including positivism, humanism, agnosticism, and atheism. He says "Those who are assailed by religious doubts are devising several ways to escape from the present confusion. In the absence of any definite direction from the leaders, they are taking to crude and amazing cults. They are finding substitutes for religions in Theosophy, Anthroposophy, Christian Science, New Thought and such other adventures of the human mind. But the more thoughtful are not satisfied with these sentimental substitutes and their constructive proposal range from dogmatic denial to dogmatic affirmation." However, Radhakrishnan argues that human requirements in the modern era cannot be satisfied by current religious alternatives, not even humanism. Humanism is merely one aspect of religion; religion and humanism are not incompatible with each other. "There is no conflict between religion and 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." Naturally, Radhakrishnan will conclude that the religion which unites all people is the real religion. He differs from several of the ancient Indian seers on this matter. He is more interested in how religion may be applied in

society to making it more relevant to the present times. The ideology of his religion is to promote involvement in society rather than to isolate its adherents. "For Radhakrishnan this has two different meanings. Internally, religion as a binding force can perform a psychological function, bringing integration, wholeness, and togetherness to a broken life. Spiritually it means to find unity within, to united with the God-head as suggested in Vedanta Humanism. Externally, it means that "religion" functions as a binding force socially bringing people together for the betterment of humankind."

7. ETHICAL IDEALISM AND HUMAN VALUES

S. Radhakrishnan did not differentiate between ethics and religion. True religion, Radhakrishnan underlined, must be based on ethical idealism, the conviction that moral principles are derived from spiritual reality rather than merely being human inventions. He maintains that ethics without spirituality becomes lifeless and mechanistic, while religion without ethics turns into superstition. "True humanism tells us that there is something more in man than is apparent in his ordinary consciousness, something which frames ideals and thoughts, a finer spiritual presence, which makes him dissatisfied with mere earthly pursuits. The one doctrine that has the longest intellectual ancestry is the belief that the ordinary condition of man is not his ultimate being, that he has in him a deeper self, call it breath or ghost, soul or spirit. In each being dwells a light which no power can extinguish, an immortal spirit, benign and tolerant, the silent witness in his heart." (S. Radhakrishnan p-25) According to him, the core of all true religious systems is moral. Religion is about cultivating virtues like compassion, honesty, and self-control, not just ceremony or doctrine. Radhakrishnan believes that the divine is good by nature and that ethical standards are realized when God is realized. He was adamant that moral behavior and ethical conduct are characteristic features of authentic faith. He held the view that compassion, altruism, and service to mankind must accompany spiritual awakening. In Accordance with S. Radhakrishnan, love, truth, and righteousness are fundamental principles of ethical idealism, which is the pragmatic manifestation of religious experience. This perspective aligns with the concept of Nishkama Karma founded in the Bhagavad Gita Radhakrishnan often emphasized in his philosophical writings. Love and human solidarity are the foundations of a real religious life. The quality of tolerance and respect for other religions are developed by learning about different religions. The virtue of tolerance is implied as a basic human right that is part of everyone's dignity. Radhakrishnan believed that faith is harmful if it is practiced without knowledge, tolerance, morality and respect for others religious believes.

8. CONCLUSION

Radhakrishnan's vision of religion as a universal spirituality based on ethical idealism is still pertinent in today's diverse and frequently polarized world. His appeal for ethical responsibility, spiritual self-realization, and interfaith cooperation present a compelling counter argument to both secular nihilism and religious extremism. It encourages people to interact with the inner humanity that unites all people and understand their outward distinctions. Religion is the inside of a civilization, the soul as it were of the body of its social organization. Scientific applications, economic alliances, political institutions may bring the world together outwardly; but for a strong and stable unity the invisible but deeper bonds of ideas and ideals require to be strengthened. In the work of rebuilding the human household, the role of religion is no less important than that of science. Radhakrishnan considers religion as an intricate synthesis of moral virtue, mystical experience, and universal love. His philosophical observations promote an ethically sound, inclusive, and transformative understanding of religion. His focus on universal spirituality and ethical idealism continues to inspire opportunities for individual development and social harmony in a time of religious conflicts and moral crises. Therefore, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that S. Radhakrishnan represent religion as spiritualistic and humanistic. In the current scientific and technologically developed era, superstitious ideas and dogmas are unacceptable. Religion is thought to be a unifying factor. However, religion will not satisfy modern society if it is the root source of societal disputes. People will undoubtedly benefit from S. Radhakrishnan's perspective on religion, particularly comparative religion, since it will clear their minds of misconceptions about other religious beliefs. people can be united by the qualities of love, fraternity, humanity and understandings of other faiths, which also contributes to elevate humanity to a higher plane. Thus, we can say that S. Radhakrishnan's perspective is still applicable today.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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