

This book is the result of a labour of love by a daughter to retrace the life and times of her father, Shri K.S. Radhakrishna, a Gandhian, who had made significant contribution not only to the Gandhian movement in the post Gandhian era but also in the attempt to reconstruct and restructure the socio-economic polity of the country on Gandhian lines through the tumultuous 70s -90s of the last century.

Shri Radhakrishna (1924 to 1994) was engaged in wide-ranging Gandhian constructive programmes for five decades in India based on Sarvodaya and Satyagraha. His pioneering interventions have been influential, in many ways, towards steering programmes for the regeneration of a decentralised social, political and economic resurgence for a nonviolent and peaceful Indian society as envisioned by Mahatma Gandhi.

The author of the book, his daughter, Dr Shobhana Radhakrishna felt that the work of her father, a proactive visionary with a sharp intellect, whose involvement through the network of the Gandhian organisations to implement and take forward the philosophy of Sarvodaya and Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi, has gone largely undocumented. The book is an effort to right that wrong. It takes us through the early life of Radhakrishna, and how he came to Gandhi's ashram at Sevagram, his work as an educationist working on Gandhi's ideas of education and later as Refugee Rehabilitator, in the aftermath of Partition. His involvement in the Sarvodaya and Bhoo-dan movements and later, in Jayprakash Narayan's Movement for Total Revolution and the unique role he played during the Emergency imposed by Mrs Indira Gandhi, as a result of that.

JP was arrested from Radhakrishnaji's home in the Gandhi Peace foundation. When all JP's associates, political and non-political, were put in jail, Radhakrishnaji evaded arrest and went underground for several weeks during which he sought to rally forces for resistance which he managed to do, even though he had to face many difficulties. Radhakrishnaji was eventually arrested, and locked in Tihar jail in Delhi. The organisations with which JP was associated, Gandhi Peace Foundation, Association of

Voluntary Agencies in Rural Development, Gandhian Institute of Studies, and many others, faced harassment, the families of Radhakrishnaji and other associates of JP faced interrogation.

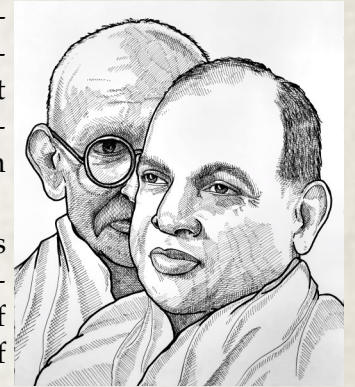
The book highlights the struggle for democratic rights and values, and freedom of speech, so viciously throttled during the Emergency and how Radhakrishnaji and other Gandhian workers emerged victoriously. After the Emergency was lifted and elections were declared, Mrs Indira Gandhi and her Congress party were defeated. The Janta Party was to form the new Government, and once again the Gandhi peace foundation, where JP was staying, became a meeting point for discussions and consultations on the formation of the new Government. Radhakrishnaji, whose advice was sought and respected by all, was often called the 'King Maker'.

Radhakrishnaji, however, stayed away from actively participating in power politics and continued with his constructive and rural development work and in building institutions and developing cadres of young people to participate in such activities.

The book, 25 years after his passing, celebrates the life and work of one of the many unsung heroes" who quietly worked to build an India of Gandhi's dreams. During the commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, it would be an essential contribution for the new generation to understand as to how the stalwarts fought for freedom or democracy, which we all take for granted, and was restored by the indomitable spirit & sacrifice of great leaders of the Sarvodaya & the Gandhian movement.

Dr Shobhana Radhakrishna is on a mission to reintroduce the messages of Mahatma Gandhi to the people of India and abroad. Imbibing Gandhiji's values as she grew up in his settlement in Sevagram India, Shobhana's focal point is following the Gandhian way of life and serving humanity for last four decades. She is founder of the 'Gandhian Forum for Ethical Corporate Governance' under the Standing Conference of Public Sector Enterprises in India for promoting ethical business practices and organisational integrity in public sector. She is Chief Functionary of DISHA, Radhakrishna Foundation, SWYAA-India and Centre for Gandhian Vision and Values.

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The life and work of Shri Radhakrishna dedicated to the lowly and lost, mind remind of the words of poet Tagore: “Centuries follow which each other perfecting a small wildflower”. Likewise, the decades of Shri Radhakrishna were to illumine the life of those who had treasured the millennial way of a simple living and of all-embracing happiness of inclusivity. As an ardent and assiduous disciple of Gandhiji, he saw in every person, ‘What shines in the Sun and shines in the Man are one and the same’ in the words of the Yajurveda 40.17. Post-Independent India became the overwhelming concern for individual self at the total neglect of societal interests. The so-called economic and technological development pushed aside the quest of meaningful life yet value conscious seekers like Shri Radhakrishna toiled for a just and equitable order.

-Prof. Lokesh Chandra

A stalwart figure for freedom of expression and dissent, and a backer of courageous individuals, Radhakrishna-ji died far too early. We miss him today when more than ever before fearless individuals are needed to combat zabadasti.

- Rajmohan Gandhi

History will remember Shri K.S.Radhakrishna for keeping Gandhian institutions going in very difficult times. The Gandhi Peace Foundation was and continues to be, a space open to debate, dialogue and expressing differences; keeping the spirit and values of Mahatma Gandhi alive.

- Aruna Roy

Decades ago Radhakrishna, fresh out of the university was sitting on a bench at the Madras Central station, deliberating whether to go home in Bangalore or somewhere else to live a meaningful life. He caught the train for Wardha instead to begin his life-long mission to spread Gandhi’s message to the people. This is a fond daughter account of how Radhakrishna went about creating a vast network of institutions at grass roots levels to improve the lot of the poorest living in the villages and sub urban areas of the country.

- HK Dua

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Mahatma Gandhi’s Vision Radhakrishna’s Action

Life, Thought and Work

Shobhana Radhakrishna

