

CHAPTER : IV

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

4.1 SOCIAL NATURE OF MAN

An essential fact about man is that he always belongs to some form of society. Man cannot exist without society. Man has not only a capacity for the social life, also an intrinsic need of it, is a self obvious fact.¹ Man's emotional development, his intellectual maturity, his material comfort for the full exercise of his liberty and progress in self perfection are unthinkable without society. No human being is known to have normally developed in isolation. As for example the case of Kasper Hauser (1828)² who from his childhood until his seventy years was brought up in the woods of Nuremberg, it was found that his mind was not developed. He could never make himself a normal man. Gisbert³ observed that society is nothing accidentally added to or superimposed on human nature. It is something which is consonant with it and fulfils a vital need in man's constitution. Indeed, as Aristotle said, man is social by nature.

C E M Joad is content to point out that " since it is impossible to explain the coming into existence of society, unless the capacity for living in it was already present in the human beings who were member of it, and since this capacity cannot have arisen, as it were, out of nothing, we are driven to postulate the presence of this capacity from the earliest moment at which human beings are first entitled to be called human; or rather, if the phrase be preferred, we are driven to postulate the

potentiality for this capacity, a potentiality which must from the first have expressed itself in some kind of social organisation, however rudimentary.”⁴ It reflects that man is not only a being who only attains his real nature in society; he is a being who has always lived in some form or other of society, even if his earliest society was only that of the family group.

Recently psychological study of social consciousness of child is also a confirmation of the natural sociality of the human beings. In the early stages a child hardly distinguishes between personal things and is confusedly aware of his own self. As he becomes conscious of himself, he also realises the existence of other things similar to himself whose nature he recognises through an inborn power of mutual recognition within the species or a common sympathy, or any other similar reaction among human beings which was expressed in the famous dictum ‘As man, nothing human is alien to me’, *Homo sum, human a me nihil alienum puto* (Terence)⁵

This process of individuality and sociality develop together. A baby who is just few weeks old, smiles when his mother smiles to him; cries when he is chidden. He plays later on with the other member of the society, deals with them as equal, and develops towards them the attitude of generosity and selfishness, joy and anger, sympathy and aversion. He is not moulded by society in utter passivity, nor is he the mere respectable of the social influence around him; the autonomy and initiative-desirable or undesirable which he displays in facing new situation testifies to his individuality and even to his creativeness⁶. His entrance for the first time in the larger world of a school, his experiences are the decisive landmark in the process

of individualisation as well as socialization, the net outcome of which is what in modern terminology is called, personality or character.

Sociality and individuality are the two aspect of the one reality which is personality. Personality is the final value, the only things in the world worth having in itself. MacIver observed “A society is best ordered when it best promotes the personality of its member. A community is great in the greatness of person who composes it. And in the attainment of this end not only individuality, but also sociality, is most fully developed”.⁷ Hence, the question of nature of sociality is closely connected with the question of the relationship of man and society as well as the question of its origin. As soon as we call a man a social animal, the question at once arises: In what sense is man a social animal? What is the nature of our dependence upon society?

Human life and society almost go together. Man cannot live without society. Man is biologically and psychologically equipped to live in group, in society. Society has become an essential condition for the human life and to arise and to continue. The relationship between individual and society is ultimately one of the profound of all the problems of social philosophy. It is more philosophical rather than sociological, because it involves the question of values. It is in the society that an individual is surrounded and encompassed by culture, a societal force. It is in the society again that he has to conform to the norms, occupy different stations and become member of a group. The question of relationship between society and individual is the starting point of many discussions. There are mainly two theories regarding the relationship between society and individual, they are individualistic and organismic.

4.2 Individualistic Theory :

Individualistic theory emphasises the importance of personal attribute of man. About 600 hundred BC in China we find Taoism holding that the individual's greatest satisfaction in life was not enjoyed by him as a member of society, but as a being isolated from everybody and being a law unto himself.⁸ laws and social institutions were mere devices to cramp his human development.

One or two centuries later the Greek sophist, especially Glaucon and Adeimantus, also taught that men by nature were selfish and unequal; that every one's hand was against his fellows; and so they decided to make a compact in order to get rid of the state of anarchy. The result of this compact was society.⁹ This ideas , which in reality had never died in the history of human thought, appeared in full force in the political and social thought of Europe in the seventeenth and in the two subsequent centuries. The rationalism and atomism which prevailed in the philosophies of those times were also applied to man. Man was conceived as an abstraction separated from any other reality. His rationality and individuality were taken into account, but society, the milieu in which and by which they naturally developed, was thought of as accessory.

Social contract theory views the society as a contrivance, deliberately set up by the man for certain end. Individual precedes society. The central assertion of social contract approaches is that the law and political order are the creations of man. Social contract is an intellectual device which intends to express the relationship between individuals and their government as well as society. it assert that individuals unite into political societies by a process of mutual consent, agreeing to

abide by the common rule and accept corresponding duties to protect themselves and one another from violence and other kinds of harms.

In Greek, famous philosopher Plato in his dialogue “Crito” expresses a Greek version of social contract theory. Epicureans were also seen to have strong sense of social contract, with justice and law being rooted in mutual agreement. The idea of social contract theory goes back, in a recognisably modern form, to Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Lock (1632-1704) and J.J Rousseau (1712-1778). Three of them taught in various ways that before the existence of civil society man live in a sort of pre-social state, called state of nature, and in virtue of contact among themselves, society come into existence.

The first modern philosopher to articulate a detailed contract theory was Thomas Hobbes. His book “*The Leviathan*”(1651) contained detailed about the social contract theory which maintained that society was conceived to protect man from his irresponsible, animal and egoistic tendencies. According to Hobbes the life of the individual in the state of nature were “solitary, nasty, brutish, and short,”¹⁰. Individuals in the state of nature were apolitical and asocial.

Hobbes does not admit the existence of any gregarious instinct in man in virtue of which he feels a natural urge to live in society. According to him man in the state of nature was in perpetual conflicts with his neighbour. He was selfish and did never look to the interest of others. Each man was a unit and there was no relation between one man to another. Such a state of nature made the life of man miserable. Hence man decided to make a contract with his fellowman to form a society and live in peace with everybody. Gisbert was of the opinion that moving in the midst of such unenviable condition; he decided to make a contract with his

fellowman in order to form a society and live in peace with all. Fear, therefore is the root origin of society.¹¹ As a result of this contract a sovereign and absolute government arose containing in it the will of the all persons. Social life developed out of this contract.

John Locke (1632) another social philosopher believed that state of nature was not a state of war; it was a state of peace, good will, mutual assistance and preservation. He asserted that man in the state of nature was enjoying an ideal liberty and there was no social restraint, nor were there any strife and conflict. According to Locke in nature all man are born free and equal. All man used to abide by the natural law and they lived very peacefully. But a time went on several disorders appeared in this natural state, people differed among themselves in explaining real meaning of natural law. Hence the people of the state of nature, in order to ensure the exercise of their liberty entered into a contract, by which the individual conferred power, not to the government as Hobbes thought, but to the community¹². This contract was not absolute, because the natural right of life, liberty and property, remains in the hands of the individual. In other words, not every right in society comes from the state.

Locke believed that individual in the state of nature would be bound morally, by the law of nature, not to harm each other in their lives, but without government to defend them against those seeking to injure or enslave them; people would have no security in their right and would live in fear. Locke argued that individual would agree to form a state that would provide a “natural judge, acting to protect the lives, liberty and property for those who live in it”¹³. Locke in his “second treatise

government” (1689) argued that government legitimacy comes from the citizens’ delegation to the government of their right of self defence.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) in his influential treatise “the social contract” (1762) outlined a different version of social contract theory, based on unlimited popular sovereignty. According to Rousseau man in the state of nature was a noble savage: peaceful and unsophisticated. This state of nature was a kingdom of heaven. Man lived here in peace. As time went on, difficulties sprang up even in this kingdom of heaven. Growth in number of men and the consequent quarrel arising among themselves with regard to the right over individual properties compelled man to make a contract with his fellowman in virtue of which every one while uniting himself to all, remain as free as before¹⁴. A general will emerge out of this contract. This general will is sovereign and includes by a tacit agreement the individual will of the all. Hence any individual will at variance with the general will shall be compelled to submit or shall be forced to be free. Thus by this peculiar device the possibility of conflict between the general and individual will is excluded, while everybody cannot help but remain free. This intrinsic contradiction in Rousseau’s theory has given rise to the most conflicting theories ranging from democratic liberalism to totalitarian idealism.

Though social contract theory tries to explain relationship between society and individual, it is subjected to severe criticism. In the light of above description of social contract theory as well as the man’s sociality, it seems hardly necessarily to insist any refutation of these theories. They only serve to stress a truth which some social scientist sometimes forget, - namely, that though society is natural to man, his whole life is not exhausted in terms of society. His personality and freedom remain

active in the turmoil of social life.¹⁵ Thus; social contract theory gave more emphasis on individualistic aspect of human keeping aside the other aspect of human life.

In addition to this we may also remark that in the state of nature, these theories imply that man was already living in society, outside of which he could not have developed mentally nor have acquired those ideas and feelings which led to the social contract. Social contract theory holds that in the state of nature man enjoyed several rights, but this is not acceptable because question of right is meaningless without reference to society. From the historical view point, on the other hand, the state of nature as described by social contract theory never existed nor could have ever possibly existed. There is no historical evidence of contract among man.

The social contract theory posits individuals with intelligent, power, judgement and the sense of unity before the origin of society. But this is only imagination. The history of man shows that the bodily and mental development has been possible only through the evolution of society. So we cannot say that society came about only by way of external relationship between some individual- human beings. If individuals themselves developed both physically and mentally through the development of society, the latter is obviously a structure which is objective and independent of any definite individuals. Individuals come and go but society remains and grows. Therefore atomistic or individualistic theory about the relation between individuals and society is unacceptable.

4.3 Organismic Theory :

There are some social philosophers who tried to express the relationship between individual and society with reference organic theory, which has more

emphasis on the importance of sociality of man, to the extent of neglecting the personal attribute of man. This theory provided the philosophical background and the pseudo justification for the totalitarian regimes and theories of modern times. These organismic theories grouped under two types- organismic theory strictly so called and idealistic or group mind theories.¹⁶

According to organic theory society is an organism whose structure and functioning resemble those of the human body and which also developed according to the same law. The organic theory is found in different form in Aristotle and some other ancient philosophers. Supporter of organic theory compare the social and political structure to living body endowed with organs, nerves, limbs etc. In this body individuals are nothing but cells subordinated to in their composition and function to the organism. This was the opinion held in the middle age of Nicholas of Cues; in more recent time by Buntschli, Spengler, Novicow, and Herbert Spencer. Spencer compares the social structure to an animal body whose system of nutrition has its counterpart in society, in the industrial and agricultural system; the circularly system with heart, arteries and vein, correspond to the communication and transport system o a nation; the nervous system, to the government and so on.¹⁷ Thus organic theory of society explains the relationship between society and individual with reference to cell and body as well as part to whole. It also holds that in reality the individual in society behaves as the cells of the body whose activity and life are meant for the sake of whole. If it is true, the individual would then exist for the sake of society, not society for the sake of the individual. Gisbert observed that about all these organismic theories “we may say that it is true that individuals in society are intimately connected with it, and that society itself is not an artificial device, as the

individualists maintain; still the dissimilarities between society and an organism are radical.”¹⁸ Herbert Spencer therefore accept the organic conception of society with a grain of salt, “ To speak of society as if it were a physical organism”, says Hobhouse, “ is a piece of mysticism, if indeed it is not quit meaningless”¹⁹

Though organic theory tried to explaining the relationship between society and individual, it is not free from criticism. The main defect of the theory lies in its reducing the relationship of individual and society to the relationship between cell and the body. In reality also, there is no resemblance in essence between the members of the society and cell of the living organism. Individual has his own brain and he himself thinks and contemplates. On the other hand cells of the body do not have any consciousness their own. Spencer himself said, society unlike an organism has no common sensorium, no central organ of perception and thought. It is not society that thinks and wills in society. Secondly the life cycle of individual organism is different from that of society. We can speak analogically of a individual being born, attaining maturity, reproducing and dying; but these vital functions are only true of the organism or of the individual, but not of society. In the third place, there are profound differences, both structural and functional, between the relation of the cells to the organism, and that of the individual to society. The life of the cells is exclusively for the sake of the organism. That is, if a group of cells displays a special activity out of harmony with the whole, the cancer or any other dangerous disease will follow. In society the opposite is true, the existence of a person’s character or men of genius who break away from old stereotyped ways and lend leadership to society, is a necessary condition for its healthy development and progress. In the organism be it a plant or animal, cell receives the impulse to

function and the coordination to work from the high organ of the body; in society it is the higher organ who receives their inspiration and direction from the individual. In other words, in society it is the individual who acts teleologically; in the organism, it is the organism who acts teleologically.

It is not the case that due to organic theory we use to object that the individual cannot exist without society; for neither can they exist without oxygen. Yet they are not a constituent part of the oxygen of the air. Furthermore, if a man can exist without society still less can society exist without man. We can imagine the cat without the grin, but we can't imagine the grin without the cat. As MacIver puts it "The only experience we know is the experience of individual, and it is only in the light of their struggles, their interest, their aspiration, their hopes and their fears that we can assign any function and any goal to society. What we speak of the 'group interest' we mean only the interest in the group which its member or any of them feel"²⁰

Individuals are in a double relation with society; they are organically related to an independent of society according to the stages of their development. A human infant reared outside of human society does not grow to be a human being. It becomes and can become a human individual if and only if it is nurtured in the social milieu. So individual are organically related to society up to a definite stage of development. They could not become what they are now without society. But when they have attained majority ,i.e. average development, they become somewhat independent in the sense that they now afford to live, if they want to, outside their own society. This however does not mean that they remain unaffected by society. Society still continues to influence them.

4.4 Group mind Theory:

According to group mind theory society is the name given to the mutual relationship of the individuals. The relationship between father and son, sister brother, husband wife, etc are not only physical , even when they live apart , these relationships continue to exist and are not marred because of distance. These relations are similar to the relation of co-operation and conflicts that exist between the different members of the society are internal. Hence some thinker conceives of society as a mind. In other words the mental relationship of the member of the group give rise to the existence of group mind.

Plato, Hegel, Green, Caird, etc are the supporter of the group mind as well as the idealistic theory of society. According to them social relation is neither mechanical nor artificial nor organic. It is spiritual. Society is an organisation of free self conscious spirit, Plato himself called civil society a mind 'writ large 'and divided it into three classes.²¹ According to Hegel (1770-1831) the father of modern idealism , the society , as manifested in the state of a natural organism is representing a phase of the historical world process or absolute. The state, not the individual is the real person; its will is the manifestation of perfect rationality, that is, the synthesis of universal and individual freedom. This state is the Divine Idea on earth. The individual has reality only in so far as he is a member of the state. The perfect life consists in living according to the will of the Absolute. It may be mentioned that according to the Hegel the ultimate reality is an absolute consciousness or Absolute mind from which have evolved the world, mind, and what the entire world contains.

This similar opinion were followed by the English idealists T.H.Green, F. H. Bradley, and B. Bosanquet in America by J. Royce and R.W. Emerson; in Germany by the so called armchair sociologist such as Wanger, Schmoller and Schaeffle²². According to Bosanquet the system of volitional disposition of every individual constitutes his 'standing will' or true character and implies a real will of the true self. This real will, as distinct from the actual character or inclinations of the individual, is an ideal will based on 'a fully articulated idea of the best life for man' essentially social and qualitatively identical in all individual. It is therefore, one will, real or general, and embodied in the state²³.

According to Otto Gierke (1841-1921), a German sociologist, our internal experience testifies not only to the existence of the ego, but also to the fact of our being a part of a higher whole, which whole, as such, we cannot distinguish within our consciousness. He writes "when the spirit of community reveals itself to us with an elemental power, in almost visible shape, filling and mastering our inward being to such an extent that we are hardly any longer conscious of our individual existence as such."²⁴

According to Durkheim (1858-1917) social mind also has an existence distinct (not apart) from the mind of the individual, and is superior to them. The mind or collective consciousness is the higher form of psychic life. It tends to absorb the individual mind from which it differs not only in the richness of content but also in kinds. Particular mind exist in the social mind as the atoms exist in the molecule absorbed by the higher synthesis of the whole.²⁵

The idea of group mind found a new exponent in writings of eminent psychologist W. McDougall (1871-1938), whose work "The Group Mind" published

in 1920, exerted a wide influence in the English speaking world, he forcibly disowns any brand of German idealism directly derived from Hegel, but he presents his own opinion in such a way that it is not easy to distinguish them from the theories that he repudiates. Thus he writes “The aggregate (of individual unit) which is a society, has certain individuality, is a true whole which in great measure determines the nature and the modes of activity of its part; it is an organic whole. The society has a mental life which is not the mere sum of the mental lives of its unit existing as independent units; and a complete knowledge of the units, if and in so far as they could be known as isolated units, would not enable us to deduce the nature of the life of the whole in the way that is implied in Spencer’s analogies.”²⁶

McDougall maintains that social aggregate has a collective mental life which is not merely the sum of the mental lives of its units. It may be contended that a society not only enjoys a collective mental life but also has a collective mind or collective soul. He also writes “The structure and organisation of the spirit of the community is in every respect as purely mental or psychical as the structure and organisation of the individual mind.”²⁷ In this way McDougall comes very close to Bosanquet. Both of them suggest that society is not merely a group of its members generally but it itself is a mind and a reality. Society is then an organism which exists because it has been thought and willed, it is an organism born of an idea. In this sense, society has never yet been perfectly realized but it is the ideal towards which social evolution tends.

The group mind theory has been subjected to severe criticism by critics like Professor Hobhouse, Laski and MacIver who maintain that, that society is something more than a mere aggregate of individual is conceded by critics, but that

it has a mind or will of its own distinct from the minds and will of the individuals who constitute it is not conceded by their critics. MacIver says “ If we speak of the ‘mind of a group’ we have no evidence and therefore, no right to conceive it as anything but the minds of its members liking or feeling in like ways, making like responses, and being moved by like or common interest.”²⁸ The concept of group mind can be used only in a metaphorical, never in a real sense. The only centres of feeling and of activity are the individual self. In society this self is bound together by interrelationships which they them self create. When we say that our minds are closely identified in the furtherance of a cause, we only use a metaphor indicating that we are jointly co-operating towards that cause.

Mc Dougall’s identification of mental system with a mind is not correct. Mind may communicate with mind, bur one never becomes the other. The coordination or even integration which belongs to the mental act of the various individuals is never the co-ordination which belongs to the acts of single individual. Therefore, to ascribe a mind to society and to place it by the side of individual mind fails to do justice to the individuality of the social being.

The theory presented above, as we have seen, fails to explain the relationship between society and individual adequately. The social contract theory puts undue emphasis upon the individual minimising thereby the value of society, which is said to be mere instrument devised for the satisfaction of certain human needs. The organic and group mind theories almost entirely discount the role of individual in social life. The relationship between individual and society is not one sided as these theories seems to indicate.

The problem relating to the relation between individual and society will be clear if it is possible to find out the answer of the question 'if there is such a thing as social unity or union?', and what does it consist in? 'Some of the modern sociologists are of the opinion that the individual and society are the two aspects of the same thing and so there is no conflict between them. But it is obvious that individual is not society, but only a tiny part of it. There is a type of unity between the part and whole, between man and society which we may consider. But this is not an artificial physical unity that is existing among the stones of a building which is already discarded in our rejection of individualism. Nor it is organic synthetic unity as that of the cells of the body or the atoms of a molecule which are merged in the whole. Nor is it even a mere functional unity in which every member is quantitatively effected by a change produced in any of the other functional part. It is true that there is a certain characteristic of union which we find in society, but it is neither the one and nor the other. It is *sui generis*; it is simply social, that without the company of his fellowmen, the individual is neither at all nor can develop his own personality.²⁹ But even when living and communicating with them he still has a life of his own which cannot be confused with the life of other men. Social values are in the last resort personal values. Even those qualities and powers which belong to society are realised only in its members, present or future, the life of society has no meaning except as an expression of the lives of the individual. Materially there are only individuals in a state of interaction, but this interaction creates a new unit, a social group. Hence society can be defined as a relation among individual; its members. This relation is of course necessary: being in society is an essential property of every individual. This concept is so far removed from the so called organismic theory of

society.....on the other hand by describing social group as concrete systems, the existence of society as such or the fact that it is something more than the sum of individuals, is by no means denied: society is the sum of interacting individual, and this interaction is what differentiates society from the mere aggregation of individual.³⁰

There are different types of philosophers as well as psychologists who tried to find out the ultimate motives which may prompt a person to be social. Lester F. Ward (1841-1913) divided what he called social force into *essential* and non *essential*. Essential forces are preservative and the reproductive, whereas the aesthetic, moral, intellectual are not essential.³¹ W.G. Sumner (1840-1910) and A.G. Keller (1874-1956) admitted hunger, love, or sex passion, vanity, and fear are the basic motives of society.³²

F.H. Giddings (1855-1931) reduced the springs of social behaviour to a fundamental principle called *consciousness of kind*. It means 'a state of consciousness in which all beings, whether high or low in the scale of life, recognises another consciousness being as of like kind with itself.'³³ Vilfredo Pareto(1848-1923) places the bases of human behaviour on the fundamental residues or 'manifestation of sentiment and instinct,' instinct for combinations group persistence, need of expressing sentiments by external acts, residues connected with sociality, integrity of the individual and his appurtenances and sex residue.³⁴ McDougall locates the ultimate motives of social behaviour in a special instinct of gregariousness or sociality³⁵.But the Mc Dougall rejects the theory of collective or group mind. His reason is this : it is true that people often act in a collective way ;

but it does not follow that they are fused into one mind. As he points out, there is no spatial contiguity between social individuals to be fused into one consciousness.³⁶

Though these sociologist and psychologist admitted different element with regard to the ultimate motives of sociality, yet without denying the truth which they contain, we think that most of them are incomplete or otherwise inconclusive. Neither the fear nor the wish for new experience may be held to be the ultimate spring of social behaviour, they are only secondary derivatives.³⁷ Man is all social, but he is something more than that. This is why the quasi- organic character of the ‘consciousness of kind’ propounded by Giddings and the ‘social forces’ of Lester Ward seems to be more acceptable than the other theories. Yet the excessive generality of Giddings and narrowness of the Ward which refuse to include the aesthetic, moral and intellectual tendencies of man among the essential forces of society weaken their validity.

An explanation, accounting for the most intimate motives of man’s social behaviour is the time honoured Aristotelian- scholastic solution, agreed by A.H. Maslow. Maslow’s “ Human needs” theory proposed in his book ‘Motivation and Personality’(1954) admitted three fundamental drives or inclinations which make man social. They are *self preservation* inclination, the *procreative* and the *intellectual*. The last is divided into the moral, religious, aesthetic and social inclination or propensities. These inclinations are not estranged from each other; there is between them a reciprocal and organic action whose extreme complexity constitutes one of the most difficult, if not soluble, problems of psychology. Self preservation tendency, which in some way or other is common to every being, is the inclination that man has to exist, not in general or in the abstract, but as a human

being. It includes some secondary inclinations which are either actualizations of it or tendencies arising under certain conditions to facilitate or improve the exercise of self-preservation, such as food hunger, excretion-hunger, rest hunger etc, of which Tolman and other psychologists speak.³⁸ The procreative tendency is not a mere biological inclination; it is more complex in the sense that it gathers round itself such concomitant tendencies as sex, parental love, wish for protection etc. All of them combined give rise to the institution of the family which is probably the most complicated social group. The third inclination is the intellectual. Its ultimate object is truth and reality in all its aspects. If this reality is norms according to which man's actions are finally good or evil, we have morality. If this reality is the Supreme Being or some supernatural being, we have religion. If this object is beauty, as perceived or expressed, we have art. And if its object is one's neighbours in so far as they are connected with one by one by social relationship, we have society,³⁹ but the problem is that neither can the self-preservation and procreative tendencies of man operate irrespective of thought and intelligence, nor can any one of them normally develop independent of society. The unity and type of interaction existing between them is such that we cannot separate them or give prominence to one to the exclusion of the rest. The problem therefore, does not seem to be well stated by merely inquiring into the ultimate motives or mainsprings of social behaviour. As Gisbert writes "The ultimate source of sociality is not one of a few particular needs or tendencies of man, but man himself with all his natural and fundamental inclinations, which require society as *sine qua non* for his life as human being. Man, as Aristotle so plainly proclaimed, is by nature social."⁴⁰

On the basis of above discussion, it may be concluded that individual and society are inter-dependent. The relationship between them is not one sided. Both are essential for the comprehension of either. Neither the individual belongs to society as cell belongs to the organism, nor the society is a mere contrivance to satisfy certain human needs. Neither the society is inimical to the development of individuality, nor it exists in its own right. All discussion about the question 'is the individual prior to society or the society is prior to individual', is equivalent to the futile debate over the priority of the hen or egg. The fact is that all human beings have been born into and inducted into some sort of society. It is evidenced in man's reflection on society ever since the beginnings of recorded thought, the reflection that it was not good for man to be alone. Man is dependent on society for protection, comfort, nurture, education, equipment, opportunity, and the multitude of definite services which society provides. Explaining the relationship between individual and society MacIver observed " society with all the traditions, the institutions the equipment it provides is a great changeful order of social life, arising from the physical as well as the psychical needs of the individual, an order wherein human beings are born and fulfil themselves. With whatever limitations and wherein they transmit to coming generations the requirement of living, we must reject any view of this pattern that sees the relationship between individual and society from merely the one or the other side⁴¹.

4.5 Radhakrishnan's View :

In Radhakrishnan's view all forms of social organisation including the various social institutions emerge out of human needs. The human needs define human interests, purposes and aspirations, and the actual planning or devising of the

different forms of social organisation takes place in terms of the adjustment of human behaviour, individual and social, with these purposes and aspirations society is organised to fulfil the desire of the individuals who realize freedom in society. They are saved from the external forces. The democratic ideal of society is organised from this doctrine. In society individuals gradually breaks his narrow and selfish ideal for the greater ideal for the welfare of the society. But social ideal is not final goal of man. Man is related with universe, he is a fragment of the divine. His reaction appears as a search for the mystery of the universe. The main purpose of social organisation is to nurture spiritual freedom of the individual and human creativeness. The economic, social or natural freedom may decline due to occasional causes but spiritual freedom is an ultimate which can be surrendered only at the cost of one's soul. For the sake of peace of the soul one may give up the entire world. " what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul⁴²."

In Radhakrishnan's view, spiritual peace cannot be obtained by the material goals. It is one of the illusions of modern life to engage in the task of material satisfaction. We need material comforts to make our life easy. But, Radhakrishnan aptly observes, " is there any material benefit more precious than life, any material catastrophe more awful than death?we are ruled by passions and ideals rather than by interests. There is more in life than economic values. We are men, not merely producers,or consumers, operatives or customers. Even if the world become an earthly paradise dripping with milk and honey, even if cheap automobiles and radios are made accessible to all, we will not have peace of mind or true happiness. Men and women who have every comfort and convenience which a material civilization

can give them are feeling frustrated, as if they have been cheated out of something. Human being lives not for present ease, but for the quest of impersonal ends, for the life of spirit”⁴³.

The realization of the freedom of the spirit is possible only when we overcome both physical and social restrictions. All progress is due to the contribution of the individual's new ideas. Intellectual freedom of the individual is behind the great revolutions of the world. Without individual effort socialism cannot put an end to human selfishness and stupidity. Hence Radhakrishnan remarks, “There is nothing final or eternal about states and nations, which wax and wane. But the humblest individuals has the spark of spirit in him which the mightiest empire cannot crush. Rooted in one life we are all fragment of the divine, sons of immortality, amrtasya putrah.”⁴⁴ Radhakrishnan's conception of human life and its conduct, social as well as individual, is organised in view of attaining the supreme Divine. The knowledge that the supreme spirit dwelling in the heart of every living creature is the abiding root principle of all dharma. Dharma is not an end in itself but a means for the realization of the spiritual freedom. This realization does not take place in vacuum but in this world. Therefore dharma does not devalue life on earth. This empirical existence is the path way to the real goal i.e. the spirit⁴⁵. For Radhakrishnan moksa or spiritual freedom is the goal of all beings in this world. As he says “man does not live by bread alone, nor by his work, capital ambition or power or relations to the external nature. He lives and must live by his life of spirit. Moksa is self emancipation, the fulfillment of the spirit in us in the heart of the eternal. That is what gives ultimate satisfaction, and all other activities are directed to the realization of this end⁴⁶.”

In a society the interaction with others lead to co-operation as well as conflict. No society can exist without change due to interactions among man. “social change’ according to Kuppuswamy,B, “ may be defined as the process in which is discernible significant alternation in the structure and functioning of a particular social system..... when we speak of social change we simply assert that there is some change in social behaviour, social structure and social and cultural values⁴⁷.” Norms and ideals systematize human lives and give order and harmony to social life. A society cannot exist without any norms because all individual are goal oriented. The change of the cultural life of the individual changes the society. Cultural and social changes are intermingling and overlapping. In a practical level they are almost overlapping and are inseparable. But there is an implicit difference between the two. According to Mac Iver and page, “culture and civilization embody themselves in products which persist and exercise an influence by their continued presence, while the society in which they arose, lives on only as a changing equilibrium of present relationship. Social change is there a distinct thing from cultural or civilizational change, entering in different way into the time process.”⁴⁸

The contemporary thinkers are of the view that changes in society do not lead to disruption and chaos in social cultural life. As Radhakrishnam says “ As knowledge grows, our theology develops, only those part of the tradition which are logically coherent are to be accepted as superior to the evidence of the senses and not the whole tradition⁴⁹.” Within this tradition every man is required to think steadily on life’s mystery until he reaches the highest revelation. Thus the concept of change for Radhakrishnan is not only the change of society but the whole universe in order to achieve universal salvation. Society mantains its beings through some

principles. Every form of life, every group of man has its dharma, which is the law of its being.

Changes takes places only in the temporal process but not in the eternal. But both of them are not isolated. It binds together the kingdom of earth and heaven. Social change has a purpose to fullfil in the end, to achieve the eternal truth. As Radhakrishnan says” All worldly relationship have their end, but they cannot be ignored. To behave as if they do not exist simply because they do not persist is to count disaster. The eternal is manifested in the temporal, and the latter is the pathway to the former. Truth in the finite aspect lead us to the infinite truth⁵⁰.”The core of religion is to hold together or process the people and the cosmos. This broad meaning of this term establishes a relation between the inner law and outer human nature. It is the highest science of self-culture which provides harmony with the environment. Religion is the heart of the society. Separation of religion from society is the primary cause of anarchism. Religion operates as a fulcrum of social norms and ideals. Our social life will change if there is any disruption in religions; because social organisation is the outer expression of the human will and desire. Social change occures only for the establishment of harmony among men. Society is an interrelationship of the indivisuals and all indivisuals are guided by the supreme law of the universe. Thus religious phenomena exist in society.

Society is an ongoing perpetual process in making of an ideal society. The evolution of the society is secured by the interaction of the absolute ideal and the existing social situation. As Radhakrishnan observes, “social growth is a continually evolving creative process, demanding both fidelity to the ideal of perfect love and sensivity to the concrete situation in which we have to work⁵¹”He further remarks, “

the spiritual progression to a far greater consciousness than the human mind is itself a manifestation of divine activity. Life in the world is not a distraction from, but a means to the attainment of the final end. Human life is not to be regarded as unworthy. Human desires are the means by which the ideal becomes actual⁵².”

The ideal society is one which is conducive to the spiritual liberation of mankind through the perfect cultivation of human desires. The ideal become actual through the means of the spiritual element in man. Because man is a fragment of the supreme spirit, the purpose of life is to realize the divine potency, the dignity of the human spirit. The ideal society is the outer expression of this spirit. This spirit is known as religion in society. Absence of religion is the root cause of anarchy in society. Social life is a movement in our destiny, not the terminus. There is a perpetual endeavour to raise as high as possible the general level of existence in relation to the given conditions. The progress of the society is due to the spiritual ideal which he cherish in our mind. This inward light in man enables him to understand the universe. This power is the ground of religion. “ Human progress lies in an increasing awarness of the universal working in man”⁵³.This universal can be realised through the effots of the selfless man. Radhakrishnan has a great faith in man’s power to build an ideal society. As he says “ man is not a detached spectator of a progrss immanent in human history, but an active agent remoulding the world nearer to his ideas. Every age is much what we choose to make it”⁵⁴. So religion is more a way of life than a form of thought. Racial conflict is troubling modern society. According to Radhakrishnan those conflict can be solved only by the consciousness of the earth as one great family. This wide vision comes from true religion.

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