By the same author

THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

PLANNING, POWER AND WELFARE

Considerations Towards

A THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

DAYA KRISHNA

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Dedicated
to
my friends

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With warm regards!

Varun

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1

PERSONAL COMMENT

—In Retrospect

THIS BOOK, let me confess, is more an exercise in wisdom than in knowledge. And who does not know that wisdom is at a deep discount in all that is modern in the academic and non-academic cultures of today? But, deeper than this is the question of the relationship between the two. How can wisdom—and I am talking of something articulate, something intellectual, something arguable—help us in the knowledge of generalizable relationships between specific phenomena? Or, for that matter, how could these generalized relationships and innumerable bits of itemized information ever contribute to that total perspective—and, again, I am talking of the intellectual perspective only—which alone seems the legitimate end and reward of the cognitive enterprise of man?

No one disputes the relevance of generalized considerations to the building up of theory in various fields. But how exactly is it relevant, few can ever specify. Perhaps, it is in the providing of a perspective, an atmosphere, a climate which suggests a different focus,

an asking of different questions, a seeking for different answers that the contribution really lies. At least, it is with this hope that the present work seeks to justify itself to the average practitioner of social sciences in the contemporary world. The hope, perhaps, is a delusion but isn't all creative endeavour sustained by such delusions? At least, that is what I think in the matter.

The work arose out of a persistent dissatisfaction with the one-eyed vision of most thinkers in the social sciences. The western thinkers seem to have educated themselves into a trained incapacity to appreciate or even understand a thought slightly different from their own. The intellectual scene in every field seems, thus, full of groups mutually incomprehensible to each other, an incomprehensibility which seems so unreal to any intelligent person outside the field.

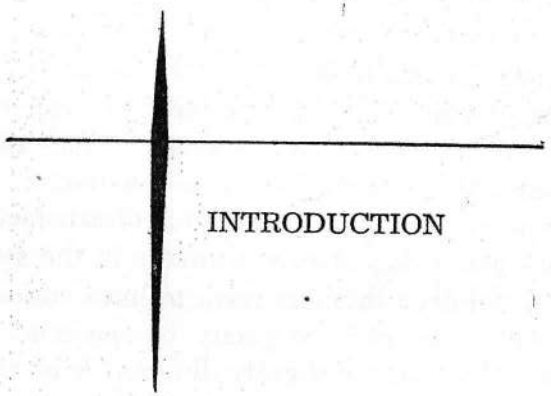
The dissatisfaction, however, would not have crystallized into the writing of this book had not the Rockefeller Foundation, through Mr. Chadbourne Gilpatric, granted me a visiting Research Fellowship to go to the United States and discuss my ideas with the leading thinkers in Philosophy and the Social Sciences. Later, as a Senior Scholar at the East West Centre, Hawaii, I was enabled to complete the work while participating in a different research project there. These two organizations, then, bear some responsibility for this work having been written at all. They, obviously, have no direct responsibility for anything written in the book.

This book is dedicated to friends for their fond love and intellectual companionship lasting over decades—friendship which, though in a sense less than love, is, in another, more than it also. To recount the names is

itself a pleasure—but if I start recounting, where shall I stop? Still, some names must be taken—Vivek, for more than two decades of something more than friendship; Sita, who is always a dear and who has fought and suffered for causes so courageously; Om, who has been the first of us to die and remind of the futility and fragility that surrounds all life; Fran, who has not only revealed new dimensions of Being and Value but also been closely and intimately associated with almost everything written in this book. The names of so many others cluster around fond memories, each dear in its own way. Let this be a remembrance of things past and no longer past, in however small a way.

DAYA KRISHNA

Jaipur
November 10, 1964



INTRODUCTION

SOCIAL CHANGE is such an obvious fact of the contemporary world that few can escape it. The anthropologists who used to study societies relatively isolated from the outside world now suddenly discover them under the impact of forces that impinge on them from all sides. The historians who used to gaze with fascination at the decline and fall of distant empires now find themselves in the midst of catastrophes that are shaking the very foundations of the world. The economists, long fascinated with the miracle of the Industrial Revolution, now find it imitated and imported all over the globe with consequences and problems that stagger the boldest imagination. The psychologists have found their attention shifted to the dynamics of personality development under cultural conditions of various kinds. Even the studies of perception have become clues to deeper things in the personality and culture.

However, with all this awareness of change, the theorization about the phenomenon has undergone a

deep transformation. Large-scale theorizing is under suspicion and out of fashion. The grand evolutional designs of the nineteenth century are mere matters of historical interest, and though the shadow of Marx still looms large, it is more because the communist half of the world prefers to swear by him. The Sorokins and the Toynbees still exist, but they are treated more as museum-pieces by the self-conscious sophisticates of the academic world.

There is a growing dissatisfaction with such a situation. The increasing number of inter-disciplinary seminars and joint works by authors with different specializations is an indication of this dissatisfaction. The search for middle-range theories is a pointer in the same direction. The mere collection of facts is at a discount, and it is increasingly realized that facts without the illumination of a theory are sterile.

But the theorists themselves do not seem very clear about what they want. If there are theories of change in the various social sciences, what could it possibly mean to have a theory *above* or *alongside* of them known by the high-sounding title *Theory of Social Change*? Or, if what is being sought is an integration of these theories, then integration in terms of what? Vaguely, everyone seems to feel there are some problems here, but exactly what they are is discussed but little and that, too, sporadically, and not in a concentrated manner. The dream of a coming Newton who will do for the social sciences what his predecessor did for the physical sciences moves the heart of every social scientist, even if his wisdom protests against the dream.

A theoretic reflection on the whole field of social change is, then, a desideratum. And though theoretical

reflections are primarily of interest to philosophers and theoretical thinkers in the field, they may be of wider relevance also. At least, that is what I propose to do and, as is usual with anybody who wants to do anything, I have persuaded myself that it will be useful, at least, to some others also.

The work may be characterized as a Prolegomenon towards any future theory of social change. It is concerned primarily with the theoretic problems arising in any reflection on social change and attempts to provide a framework of considerations for any thinking in this field in particular, and in social sciences in general. It seeks to provide, however tentatively, both a perspective and a focus for the theory of social change. In order to achieve this, it is divided into four parts: (*i*) Preliminary considerations, (*ii*) Conceptual clarifications, (*iii*) Problems clustering around the concept of change, and (*iv*) Towards a theory of social change. At each point, the generalized reflections on the social sciences intertwine with considerations for a theory of social change till, in the last chapter, they are seen as providing the clue to the perspective in which the theory has to be built, if ever at all.

ONE

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

THE TERM 'social' suffers from ambiguity. It has a larger and a narrower sense, though in both of its senses it has a necessary relation to other human beings. In the larger sense, any activity of man that is even remotely 'derived' from or has any 'relevance' to other human beings is regarded as 'social'. It is obvious that if 'derivation' is stretched very far, then there could hardly be any human activity which could not be considered social. Leaving aside pure unconditioned reflexes and physiological processes, there would seem little left which is not derived from a relationship with other human beings. Even the purely physiological and the unconditioned may become embedded in a cultural context which may make them participate in what we call 'social'. Sneezing may be a reflex activity, but not so the embarassment caused by it. And who knows if there may not be 'cultural styles' in sneezing and 'cultural patterns' in rhythms of physiological activities?

Similarly, the 'relevance' of man's action to other human beings can be conceived in such a sense that

hardly any human action can ever escape it. If, besides the actual present, we take the possible future into account, and if, besides the intended effect on others, we consider also the unintended consequences on them, and if we make our population infinite, then it seems fairly clear that no man can do anything which is not social. In this sense, even purely physiological acts may become social for who knows what their consequences for other human beings may be. My involuntary sneeze may carry a cold to another and my breath infect someone with a disease that I may not even know of.

This double direction of 'derivation from' and 'relevance to' creates what I call the socio-centric predicament of modern man in the West. The poor individual human being just does not know what there is in him which is not derived from the society or culture or historical civilization he happens to be born into, or what there is in mankind's future to which and for which he is not responsible in some sense here and now. The complete submergence into the social past and the complete responsibility for the social future is writ large on the mind and conscience of Western man. All the social sciences have conspired to create this image and this conscience, and all should bear some responsibility for what is, after all, nothing but a linguistic trick. The 'socio-centric predicament' is only as much a predicament as the 'ego-centric' or any other that thinkers have found for man.

There is, however, a paradox in this predicament which has not been much noticed, so far as I know. The 'derivation from' takes away all freedom from man and 'relevance to' saddles him with all responsibility. The completely unfree man is supposed to be completely

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responsible for everything. Dialectics does not seem confined to Catholics and Communists alone. Sociologists seem to share it as well. The dialectics of determinism and freedom in the Communists, or of effort and grace in the Catholics is at least the conscious assertion of a paradox. With sociologists, it is nothing of the kind. It is merely the statement of two contradictories without any awareness that they are such. The synthesis is achieved in the psyche of man who thinks that just because he owes everything to society, society can demand everything from him; that just because his existence is completely derived *from* society, his existence must therefore be completely *for* it. And if the 'must' is not an 'is', then it turns into an 'ought' and it is demanded that one *ought* to live completely for society just because one has derived everything from society, forgetting that one cannot derive 'ought' from an 'is'.

The universalization of the term 'social' by this stretching in the two directions renders the term meaningless. The only contrast it leaves open is with the world of non-human nature where, too, the principle of 'derivation' and 'relevance' may be said to obtain. For, after all, is not everything derived from something else, and does it not make difference to some other thing in the world? In fact, the principle is a peculiar, parochialized version of the law of causality. Its chief merit perhaps is the insistence that there is a socio-cultural world, besides the purely natural one, which surrounds the individual human being and transcends him, both in the past and in the future.

However, such an admission does not in any way legitimize the unnecessary extension of the term 'social', nor does it show it to be any more useful. Surely the

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case for a socio-cultural world with its relative autonomy could be argued without using the terms in such a way as to make it impossible for a man to do anything which is not social. The trouble with most terminological universalizations is that they mask the relevant differences far more than they reveal the relevant similarities. The extension of the term 'social' in its 'derivation' aspect, for example, masks the whole problem of individual innovation and creation. Similarly, its extension in terms of 'relevant to' hides the central questions 'relevant to what' and 'relevant to whom', just as it hides the distinction between actions that are concerned with other human beings and actions that are not so concerned.

If this latter distinction is sought to be made crucial then we get the narrower sense of the term 'social'. Here the term 'social' primarily means interpersonal. It is the relation of man to man which is central, whether it be of the direct face-to-face type or the indirect one mediated through other people or institutions. The relation, of course, may be person-to-person or person-to-group, or group-to-person or group-to-group, but whichever the case, the primary orientation is to persons and not to things or values.

It has been contended by a powerful school of sociologists headed recently by Parsons that any action which is to be designated as 'social' cannot be understood or even defined apart from some implicit or explicit reference to values. However true this may be, it does not mean that actions which are oriented primarily to values have to be oriented to persons also. An action oriented to other human beings may necessarily involve a reference to norms and values, but not *vice versa*. A person

meditating in the Himalayas, or even in the crowded city of New York, is certainly trying to realize a value but, equally certainly, his action is neither oriented to nor concerned with other human beings. If it be said, as most sociologists would be inclined to say, that meditating itself is a part of religious tradition involving the rightness of techniques and the appropriateness of subjects meditated upon, and that it has effects upon other human beings as exemplifying a worthwhile pursuit or, conversely, as a waste of human effort then we would have again slid back into the 'derivation-relevance' extension of the term 'social'.

However, even if we do confine the term 'social' to that which is primarily interpersonal, the question arises whether we are to confine it to that which is interactively interpersonal only. Should the act of a person, for example, be described as 'social' if the person or persons acted upon do not even vaguely know that they are the objects of the action? Is the successful shooting of a person by another from behind, when the other was not even remotely expecting any such possibility, to be described as 'social action'? If the essence of 'social action' is an *interactive*, interpersonal relationship then such an action obviously cannot be called 'social' at all. If, however, the mere orientation of action to another person is *sufficient* to make it 'social', then such an action is certainly social in character.

The trouble is not merely verbal as one might suppose. On the one hand, it seems obvious that unless the relationship is interactive, it is otiose to call it 'social'. On the other hand, if interaction is made necessary, then so many things will be excluded that are relevant and important for the understanding of societies *qua* socie-

ties themselves. So many of the actions of persons in constituted authority, for example, are meant for other human beings and yet so few of the human beings, whether as groups or as individuals, to whom their action is oriented are even aware of that. One of the difficult tasks of a democratic polity is the creation of this very interactive responsiveness between persons who are acting and persons for whom they are supposed to be acting.

The interaction itself may, however, be of different kinds. The paradigmatic case of two individuals interacting at a conscious plane in terms of shared norms is not the only kind of interaction important for understanding social phenomena. The case where the interaction is primarily between an individual and a group, or between a group and another group, or between a group and another individual, is equally important. Of course, in structured situations the individuals act as role-bearers for the group and, thus, the interaction between groups and groups, or between groups and individuals, is primarily between individuals who act as representatives of the group. A distinction, I think, must be drawn between roles which involve representation and those which do not. If such a distinction is drawn, it will be found that *representative* roles are more directly and primarily social in the sense that they are concerned with *classes* of individuals than individuals themselves.

The term 'role' is generally defined in terms of an expected pattern of behaviour which is averagely present also in the actual behaviour of the incumbents of that role. But as 'behaviour' is too universal a term for human activity, the term 'role' must be restricted to that

activity which is specifically and primarily oriented to and concerned with other human beings. On the one hand, then, role must be distinguished from activities which are concerned with things other than men and, on the other hand, from activities which are concerned with values other than the values arising from human relationships. The behaviour-situations with respect to other human beings, however, must be repetitive and arising more or less from the necessities of the social system. Otherwise, little need will be felt to structuralize the behaviour-expectancies into the system. Further, the more such a behaviour will be *for* the group and *on behalf of* the group, the more need will be felt to overtly structuralize it and the more explicitly 'social' it will be in its character. When such an action is on behalf of the total group of which one is a member and for the whole of that group as a group, then one has reached the acme of social action. The notion of a 'public office' exemplifies this explicitly and the exercise of the highest political function embodies it for all to see.

The concept of 'role', though extremely useful in certain respects, does violence to human behaviour by 'sociologizing' it so completely. It assimilates the social scene to a stage where actors 'assume' their roles and 'play' their parts till they physically die and are removed from the stage. The only difference is that the actor cannot get off the stage except by dying and that he cannot give up one role except by assuming another. Shakespeare wrote of this long ago, but he was a poet and not a social scientist. It may all be a metaphor, but metaphors can be dangerously misleading.

The role-concept is conceived so behaviouristically

that the degree of psychic involvement and the motives with which the behaviour is performed are regarded as mostly irrelevant to it. What is required is the expected performance and if that is fulfilled, no further questions need be raised about it. This, however, rests on the presupposition that the behavioural performance alone is sufficient to achieve the goal or goals which society in the person of those who administer rewards and punishments considers it worthwhile to achieve. Thus, the preeminence of a particular type of goals, i.e. those which can be achieved just by external behavioural performances alone, is implicitly assumed and smuggled in under the guise of the seemingly innocent concept of role in the social sciences. There certainly are goals to the achievement of which such formulation of role behaviour does adequate justice, but there equally are others which a society wants to achieve and which cannot be achieved by any fulfilment of external behavioural conditions alone. It will be strange indeed if motives and commitments were to be completely irrelevant to the pursuit of values and relationships which are regarded as intrinsic in character. A friendship that was not really friendly or a love that was not loving would be considered to be not merely not friendship and not love but as something worse, a hypocritical behaviour which deceives as to what one fundamentally feels. The situation, of course, could be remedied by making motives and commitment central to the very definition of certain types of roles. But this will give the concept an orientation which behaviouristically-inclined sociologists are generally not prone to accept.

There is another difficulty in the concept of role which has not been noticed. The expectancies of role-behaviour in the case of certain so-called roles may be more that of ideal norms which are not actually fulfilled by anybody or, even if fulfilled, are done so by a microscopic minority. In most cases, if a large number of people fail to fulfil their role-obligations continuously over a period of time, we think that either the role is falling into disuse or that its definition is changing. The criteria are a general weakening of the sanctions operative in the field or a non-recruitment in any significant number to the practitioners of the role. But there are cases where these criteria do not apply and where still a large number of incumbents do not fulfil their role-obligations. Take, for example, the order of religious mendicants in a country like India. It is quite possible that a large majority of them do not fulfil the expectancies of behaviour which are expected of a mendicant and yet the role-definition of what a mendicant should be does not change. Nor, for that matter, the praise or blame accorded to the person or persons who fulfil or do not fulfil the role-obligations.

However, there is a deeper point here. It may be that the ideal behaviour of a saint is conceived in such a way that no one can fulfil it at all. What will be expected then is the intensity and direction of seeking and not the fulfilment of any specific set of behaviour-patterns supposed to define the role. Every role, in fact, may be understood as seeking an ideal value which no one expects even to be approximately fulfilled and which many incumbents do not realize even in a minimum manner. The external behaviour expected is merely a conventionalized index to the true seeking of the person and if we do come to realize that the external behaviour is 'external' only, we call it not a 'role-fulfilment' but a

'role-frustration'. The expectancies of external behaviour may sometimes actually stand in the way of the deeper seeking of a value and the genuine seeker may avoid the external trappings of the role in order to avoid this danger.

The use of the term 'role' will obviously be extremely odd in such a case. This is just what I want to emphasize. Every human activity should not be construed as role-behaviour. The concept should be confined to behaviour which, first, is undertaken in a *representative* capacity whether on behalf of individuals or collectivities and, second, is oriented to persons or classes of persons in general. Third, the behaviour should be of such a sort that motivation and commitment are not central to its definition. Unless these three factors are present, the concept of role should be avoided if possible.

The term 'social' designates a wider class of actions than the term 'role', though many persons seem to write as if they have the same denotation. The stretching of the term 'role' to cover everything 'social' and of the term 'social' to cover everything 'human' is the recurring temptation of sociological thought. Everything that man consciously pursues and does is not 'social', nor is every behaviour of human beings 'role-behaviour'. The 'sociality' of behaviour, I think, will have to admit of degrees. A behaviour that is undertaken on behalf of or as a representative of a collectivity and which is concerned with the collectivity as a whole is pre-eminently an action which cannot but be described as 'social'. Such an action is equally paradigmatic of role-behaviour. Only, the trouble in such cases is that we usually tend to emphasize motivation and commitment to a great degree. But this is not necessary. If we only emphasize

motivation and commitment to the degree that it gets the job well done, the 'public office' will be the clearest example of social action and role-behaviour in the fullest sense of the word. However, any action concerned with other human beings will be social, gradually vanishing into the case where the other person is treated as a thing *and* he is not aware at all of the actor's behaviour towards him. The social character of an action may be taken completely to cease when the action is neither oriented to nor concerned with any other human being at all. Similarly, a behaviour ceases to be a role-behaviour if it is concerned with individuals and not classes of individuals *qua* classes *and* if the motivation and commitment is central to the behaviour concerned. Of course, no behaviour should be treated as role-behaviour if it is not concerned with other human beings, i.e. is not even minimally social.

It is obvious that to the external observer who is, by his very situation, most concerned with external behaviour, all behaviour tends to assume the character of role-behaviour. But, however natural it may be, it is unjustified as it masks essential differences in human behaviour. To an external observer, there is little difference between being a friend and behaving *as if* one is a friend. Yet, the distinction between the two is radical. The assimilation of all behaviour to that which is convenient to the viewpoint of the external observer is disastrous in cases where the external is not the essence of the matter. It may be that to the sociologist what *matters* is the external conformity to the behaviour-expectancies of a role-pattern. But if to the persons involved in the role-behaviour, such a conformity does not seem to be the essence of the matter then the

sociologist should be prepared to give it up also. Just as the physicist is justified in treating the falling of a man into the river when committing suicide in the same way as he treats the falling of a stone into the river, so the sociologist may also claim justification for his behaviour. But as the sociologist himself contends that the physicist, though justified, missed the most significant thing in the description in completely physical terms of the behaviour of a jumping suicide, so he should also be able to see that his own description of all human behaviour in role-terms or even in social terms may miss the centrally important aspect in that behaviour. There is no need for him to suffer from the same blindness which he sees so easily and so obviously in others.

The narrower sense of the term 'social', then, confines it to what is, at least as a minimum condition, concerned with other human beings. In its stronger sense, it requires an *interactive* relationship *in terms of* shared norms. The more the interpersonal relationship is in terms of pre-existent norms which are shared by the individuals, the more 'social' is the behaviour in that relationship. But the moment the pre-existent norms are treated merely as points of departure for an exploration of the interpersonal relationship on its own, that very moment it ceases to be 'social' in character. Thus, even in inter-individual relationships the 'social' element in the interaction can recede in the background. Where action is concerned with groups or is undertaken on behalf of a collectivity, its social character is obvious for all to see.

The observer's viewpoint may be considered crucial in sociology in another sense. It is the viewpoint of external sanctions, positive or negative, which cannot but

be applied only by others to the behaviour of a person or even the interactive behaviour of two or more persons. A person's behaviour may be considered social in so far as it is the object of sanctions by other persons. The sanctions are a sign that the behaviour is of interest to other persons, and that is precisely what is its social character. It is because people are interested in one's behaving in certain ways rather than others, that the question of sanctions arises, and it is this that introduces the specifically social dimension into action. An action to which others are indifferent would, by that very fact, be non-social in nature. And as actions which are regarded with indifference today can come to have interest tomorrow, every action is at least potentially social in this sense. However, as the converse is also true, the actual sociality of actions would be a function of other's interest in them.

The concept of 'sanction', as of 'interest', is too wide and can be stretched to cover almost any case. Any praise or blame, approval or disapproval, even sheer indifference in some cases can be construed as a sanction. Activities that are not primarily concerned with other human beings are the subject of other's interest and sanction in this sense. A person writing a poem may be regarded as wasting his time or doing some worthwhile activity, but this will not make his activity directly social. It may, of course, become a necessary part of a social ritual or even be composed as part of a game between friends. But the orientation, even in these extreme examples, is not towards persons but towards the writing of a poem which is a very different thing. It may, in this connection, be of interest to note

that the locus of explicit negative sanctions in a society, i.e. law, is primarily concerned with actions that are related to other human beings. At the other end, informal gossip-groups are concerned overwhelmingly with the same sort of relationships. Thus, if sanctions are to be taken as criteria for determining an action's 'sociality', the actions should first be limited to interpersonal actions only. Further, even legal sanctions take motives into account which the purely external viewpoint of the observer generally classes as irrelevant for his purpose. The sanctions-viewpoint, I suggest, is a good criterion for determining the *degree* of the sociality of an action, particularly on its negative side. Punishment is a surer sign of the sociality of an action than reward. People, of course, are honoured for their achievements in various arts and sciences and the honour may be formal and social as when the State makes awards to artists and scientists, but that does not in any sense make the content of their work social. The only Noble award, for example, that seems specifically in the social sphere is the award for Peace. The award for medicine may make such a claim also, but in so far as it is given not to persons actually practising medicine but to those who contribute to the knowledge of disease and cure through their discoveries in the biological and the pharmaceutical sciences, it is on the same plane as the awards in physics or chemistry.

In fact, the problem of medicine raises allied questions of an interesting kind. Is the student of man in his varied capacities as physiologist, psychologist, anthropologist and sociologist not concerned with man as an individual and as a group? Is not his action oriented towards him? And if his action is concerned with

and oriented towards other human beings, is not his action 'social'? The answer, I think, is that the scientist is concerned with knowledge and not with human beings even though it may be human beings concerning whom he is seeking knowledge. There certainly are social limitations imposed on the methods of seeking this knowledge by virtue of the fact that it concerns human beings. One is not allowed to experiment on human beings, except in a very limited sense. One does not have the same unlimited freedom as one has with physical or chemical substances or even with other species of animals. The Nazi attempt to experiment on human beings was looked upon with horror in most scientific and non-scientific circles alike. That there are even subtler problems raised by the study of human beings, besides the obvious ones of cruelty, has recently been shown by Shils in an article entitled 'Social Inquiry and the Autonomy of the Individual'. However, the social limitations on the study of human beings do not make the study itself social.

The narrower sense of the term 'social', then, seeks to confine itself to the realm of the interpersonal only, though there is a constant pressure to widen out the meaning and universalize it to be conterminous with all human activity in general. The 'social' aspect in this sense will always be present wherever persons are involved in any situation. It will be an analytical category abstracting out the interpersonal relationships in their interactive development over a period of time in the context of differing situations. The two poles of this ideal type continuum will be designated by concepts such as cohesion and anomie and the study of social change will centre round the factors which lead

from the one to the other. In the wider sense, as everything is 'social', the study of social change cannot centre around any specific focus. It can take up anything it is specifically interested in and trace its history over a period of time.

However, 'social' is not exactly identical with society and what any theory of social change seeks to understand is changes in society. Thus, unless we are fairly clear about what society is, we could not work towards a satisfactory theory of social or, what may perhaps better be called, 'societal' change. Every seeking of man is not social, but it does presuppose the existence and functioning of society in an important way. Men require others even for the achievement of their individual goals, for their expressive needs, for the pursuit of ideals and values which may have no intrinsic relation to others at all. Man cannot live and survive without the active co-operation of other men, nor can he pursue any other ideal or value without this survival. In both these cases, the need for others is instrumental. But there is an intrinsic need for others *as* others, as persons to whom and with whom one can communicate, share, articulate and explore what one thinks, feels and experiences. The traveller must tell his tale, the thinker express his thoughts, the lover his love. It is not only the business of living that requires others, but the joy of living also.

This need for others, both instrumental and intrinsic, is the foundation of society. Thinkers have sought its origins primarily in instrumental needs only. The theory that goes by the name of 'social contract' is the classic epitome of such a position. It is strange that 'the natural man' should be conceived either as barbaric, brutal and aggressive, or as peaceful, noble and loving. The Hobbesian version seems no more true than its opposite counterpart espoused by Rousseau. The modern sophisticate believes man to have always existed in society and the question of origin seems to him usually futile and unanswerable. In any case, he feels little bound by anything in the past, whether it be Adam's sin or the social contract. Still, the opposite views concerning man continue to hold the modern mind. 'Hell is other people' concluded Sartre and the Marxists believe in the intrinsic good nature of man perverted by social institutions all the world over except, of course, in their own countries. However, as everyone knows, heaven is other people also and no society including that of the communists has yet abolished the use of authorized sanctions against those who do what it does not want them to do.

The intrinsic and instrumental need of people for each other is, however, related in such a way that the first, though of supreme significance to life as lived by man, seems mostly irrelevant to the external observer. And as the scientist is the external observer *par excellence,* he is little interested in what matters to the inner, lived life of man. But society cannot be understood without understanding man, though there are specific problems that arise just because of the interaction itself. The problems arising from interaction can themselves be viewed instrumentally or intrinsically. In the context of goals which can be achieved only by concerted group activity, the satisfactory resolution of the problems arising from people's coming together is a necessary precondition for the achievement of the goal itself. On the other hand, where the relationship

between people is primarily expressive and not external-goal-oriented, the achievement of a positive relationship and the resolution of the problems arising from interaction is an intrinsic end-in-itself. In most goal-oriented collectivities, the interactional problems are important in a negative way. The relation between people should be of a minimally satisfactory character so as not to hinder the achievement of the goal which the collectivity is primarily supposed to seek. The external observer tends to see everything instrumentally and thus he gets interested only in those mechanisms which assure the minimum functioning of the system and insure against its positive breakdown. But in any intrinsic interpersonal relationship, it is not the minimum but the maximum that matters to the persons concerned.

Society, then, has to be understood simultaneously in a number of aspects. It should be viewed in causal-functional terms derived from the needs of men to live and survive and perpetuate themselves and in logico-meaningful or valuational terms derived from the basic human quest for ideals and values. It should also be understood in terms of the basic human need for one another both instrumentally and intrinsically. It should be basically seen as a facilitating structure for the individual's achievement of his non-social, social and trans-social goals. However, because there are societies rather than just a single society, there may be overriding goals of the society itself to survive in face of aggression and hostility from the other societies. The survival against other societies is, however, a secondary goal contingent on the existence of other societies which may be actually or potentially hostile to its existence.

As, historically, other societies have always existed, this secondary goal has played a not quite so secondary role in the functioning of most societies. But that the goal is secondary can easily be realized by thinking the contingent condition away. Survival, then, will still be a goal, but only against nature and here it will merge with the individual's need for survival itself.

This simultaneous holding together of the multi-faceted nature of society is itself the result of its interstitial nature between what may be called the bio-physical nature of man on the one side and his trans-social or transcendental nature on the other. The student of society is concerned with a midway realm and hence feels continuously tempted by the feeling that the whole thing is nothing but bio-physical or that it cannot be understood except in terms of values which are transcendental in nature. When he does escape these two temptations—and the modern sociologist often does so—he falls into the third one which he finds professionally difficult to escape. This is to regard society not as a midway phenomenon but as the ultimate term beyond which there is no other. Such a regard insists on treating everything from the sociological point of view even when the viewpoint is irrelevant to the understanding of the specificity of the phenomenon. Everything, in fact, can be approached from any point of view. But the deeper question always is, 'Does the viewpoint reveal the relevant aspect of the subject, event or thing it is supposed to illumine or make "intelligible"?' A line-drawing by a master-artist may be seen as a geometrical exemplification of a mathematical equation, but whether this would reveal the aesthetic qualities of the work of art, is a different question. Nobody,

when seriously questioned, maintains the *equal* relevance of *all* points of view with respect to *all* sorts of things. Yet, the specialist always pleads his specialism as an innocent excuse for viewing everything from the vantage-point of his own specialism. That his vantage-point may be a positive disadvantage in the understanding of a particular phenomenon scarcely enters the head of the specialist. The story of the intellectual imperialism of the various specializations has yet to be written. However, it is so conveniently forgotten by everybody that if specialism is a real specialism, its absolutization is a contradiction-in-terms.

The multi-faceted midway envisagement of society is, then, the context in which the problem of social change has to be set and explored and understood. However, this peculiar nature of the subject with respect to which the problem of change has to be understood raises questions of a puzzling conceptual character without whose preliminary clarification, no satisfactory progress seems feasible in the field.

PART II

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

TWO

THE PROBLEM OF CAUSAL AUTONOMY

SOCIETY as a functioning, persisting structure would not exist if men who sustain it by their repeated actions cease to exist. Yet the difference in specific types of societies that we encounter on this earth can hardly be understood in terms of the fact that human beings actually do exist on this planet of ours. This is merely one example of a large set of phenomena which, while requiring some other set for their existence, do not get their specific character intelligible in their terms.

The phenomena that we encounter for study are not all of one kind. Many of them are embedded in a larger framework and they may cease to be without the framework ceasing to exist thereby. The most pervasive framework that we seem to discern is the one studied by the science of physics and though it be an unsettled question if matter is being continuously created or not, all of us do seem to know other phenomena which are not as universal as this. Whether all matter pulsates with life and thought in a deeper sense is an important question almost impossible to answer. But that life and

thought as we know them are not exhibited by every bit of matter that we know of is such an obvious fact as hardly to be questioned by anybody. The question then is how to describe the relation between phenomena of a narrower realm to the phenomena of a wider realm in which they are embedded. This question is crucial not merely for the understanding of society which obviously is embedded in a larger context of phenomena which it presupposes, but also for the understanding of those which presuppose society itself for their functioning and development.

There are distinctly two ways in which this relationship can be conceived. One way is to hold that every event or occurrence in the narrower realm can be completely understood in terms of the events in the wider realm, and that ultimately everything should be understandable in terms of the most comprehensive realm that we know of. On this view, all the different sciences studying their various subject-matters are merely footnotes in some book on physics, footnotes that might not yet have been written, but which are bound to be added sooner or later. This is the deep, half-conscious assumption in the scientific thinking of today, and it is better for all concerned that it should be brought into the open and considered for what it is worth. Baldly stated, the assumption is that the most fundamental field is that which is studied by the science of physics and that ultimately every distinctive phenomenon in any other realm should be deducible from it and intelligible in terms of it.

Stated so bluntly, the assumption may appear fantastic. The fantastic character, however, is masked only by the fact that the assumption is seldom held very consistently and that the usual search for reductive intelligibility is only carried one step below the phenomena one is seeking to understand. No one generally tries, for example, to understand the socio-cultural processes in terms of the neuro-physiology of the brain, though there are many sociologists who try to seek the understanding of their subject in terms of psychology, and psychologists who seek in neuro-physiology the clue to understanding their own field of study. This looking only one step down for explanation makes it seem quite plausible, which it would not otherwise do, if seen all along the line at once. The plausibility increases even more when instead of seeking explanation one-step-down from one's own phenomena, one tries to understand almost everything else in its terms. It seems natural to start with understanding the processes in one's own field of study in terms of other processes of the same type, and gradually to extend this procedure and understand every alien-looking thing in terms of one's own subject-matter of study. Of course, one usually tries to do this only with respect to those realms which one somehow considers as presupposing the field one is primarily interested in. No one tries seriously to understand physics in terms of poetry or biology in terms of music.

A Lucretian approach to nature is, of course, possible and an artist may view everything from the standpoint of his own art. The aesthetic approach does reveal something and gives us an understanding which is so different from the usual scientific one. But there are points where what it reveals is so irrelevant that almost everyone feels it is 'just poetry'. One feels the same about the religious man who sees in everything the will of God. The absolutization of a viewpoint is interesting, but only

at the cost of increasing irrelevance and even positive distortion as the object viewed departs in its central specificity from that which the viewpoint is able alone to reveal. The irrelevance and the distortion, however, are generally visible only to those who are not in special love with the viewpoint concerned. Otherwise, as the proverb says, 'Love is blind'. In the present age of science, the irrelevance and distortion involved in the absolutization of, say, aesthetic and spiritual perspectives is visible to everybody. But that the same is involved in seeing everything from the standpoint of science is not equally obvious to everyone. Further, as the parochialism of a culture becomes hardly obvious to those who remain fixed in it, so, even within the field of science, the parochialism rampant in its various specializations is seen by none except those who are interested outsiders or who move from one subject to another for study.

It may be objected that the standpoint of science is the standpoint of knowledge and, thus, the absolutization of that viewpoint is not the same as the absolutization of other viewpoints. Unfortunately, the term 'knowledge' is extremely ambiguous. Does a Bradley give us some understanding of Shakespearean tragedy, or a Berenson of the Italian painters of the Renaissance, or a Zimmer of the art of Indian Asia? If they do, are they scientists? If they are, how could anybody seriously concerned with any subject be anything but a scientist? Why should there, then, be always in all studies concerning man, a cry that they are not 'scientific' enough and a school that crusades for it always prides itself on its purity and berates the others for still being in the pre-scientific epoch? If, on the other hand, we do not

want to call them scientists and yet admit that they give us understanding and knowledge about the subjects they deal with, then, obviously, the standpoint of understanding and knowledge is not exclusively that of science.

Even within the field of science proper, the question remains: 'the standpoint of which science'—for, as everyone knows or, at least, should know, there is no such thing as science but only sciences. The attempt to get away from the difficulty of the existent plurality of sciences by pointing to the monism of the method they employ is merely a seeming solution of the difficulty. The so-called hypothetic-deductive-verificational method which all the sciences are supposed to employ, masks its ambiguity by not analysing *experience* which is supposed to verify the hypothesis. The story of the verification-principle, by now, should be almost known to everybody. The great excitement has petered out into the innocuous tautologies which philosophers are trying their best not to recognize for what they are. Quine, for instance, writes: 'Our statements about the *external world* face the tribunal of *sense-experience* not individually but only as a corporate body?'[1] Good—but has he thought what it means? Are the terms 'external world', 'sense-experience', and 'corporate body' sufficiently thought out by the person who wrote them? Surely, the qualifications 'external' and 'sense' are supposed to be real contrasting characterizations in relation to something else which is not an external world and some experience which is not sense-experience. But what these non-sensory experiences and non-external

[1] W. V. O. Quine, *From A Logical Point of View* (Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 41. (Italics mine.)

worlds are and the relations between them is hardly a respectable question in contemporary thought. Yet, unless we take these disreputable questions seriously, there remains but little sense in talking of 'external world' and 'sense-experience'. Further, this profound end-result of modern empiricism would be seen to be what it is, if we ask ourselves the simple question, 'What is this external world, the statements about which have to be verified at the bar of sense-experience?' The answer is so obvious and yet so startling. The external world is that which is known to us by sense-experience. The profundity turns into a tautology and grins at us with a puckish smile. And pray, what is this corporate body of statements about the external world which is supposed to face the tribunal of sense-experience for its verification and validation? It certainly could not mean the mere sum of all individual atomistic statements about the external world, for Quine, the writer, explicitly means to contrast it with just that. There must, then, be implied some principle of organization, some criterion of coherence, some rule of hierarchical relationship which will turn the variedly infinite statements into some sort of a corporate body. But where is this principle or criterion or rule which will do the magic trick? What actually exists is not a corporate body of knowledge, but corporate bodies of knowledge. There is, of course, a fond, vague hope that some day it will all turn into one big, unified corporate body of knowledge and everything will be nice and everybody (I mean, every scientist) be happy ever after. But what this means, nobody seems to know, or, for that matter, cares to think about. The recurring dream is that ultimately everything will be, or at least

in principle should be, derivable from the fundamental laws discovered by the science of physics. And so we are back where we started.

Understanding and knowledge do not, then, seem to be the monopoly of what is regarded by many as strictly scientific. Nor is there anything like science as such in the sense of a unified, systematic, corporate body of all true statements that are actually formulated and possibly formulatable by the human mind. Nor, once again, is there any unity of method which pervades all disciplines usually regarded by most persons as 'sciences'. The mistaken illusion of a unified methodology arises due to the vague use of the term 'experience', which, when analysed, would seem to give but little warrant for that unification. It is almost as if one were to argue for a monism of content on the ground that everything is 'being'.

On the other hand, if someone were to explicitly reject the possibility that everything could be understood in its specificity in terms of the phenomena studied by the science of physics, then the only other alternative position for that person to hold would be that everything is understandable in terms of phenomena of its own type. This, though seemingly reasonable, raises the question, 'What are phenomena of its own type?' Logically, Ryle has suggested, things or events or occurrences can be considered to be of the same type if the same questions can meaningfully be asked of them. If, for example, it makes no sense to ask of a person, 'When did you start having pleasure?' and it does to ask him, 'When did you start having pain?', then pleasure and pain belong to two different logical types.[2] Empirically,

[2] Gilbert Ryle, *Dilemmas*. One may disagree with Ryle's example and

however, they both seem to belong to the same life of feeling, a characteristic of living beings in general as contrasted to things that are non-living in character. All distinctions, of course, as everybody knows, get blurred at a certain point, but that does not make the distinctions any more irrelevant to the differentiation of different types.

The problem of types is, in a sense, the problem of classification, and, theoretically, any characteristic can become the basis of grouping objects into different classes. The characteristic chosen may be trivial or profound and the triviality or profundity will depend on the purposes we want to achieve or the ends we have in view. A shift in our purposes, a change in our ends, so revolutionizes the scale of importances in which we live and think that it seems difficult to believe how we or anybody else could have seen or lived or thought otherwise.

The purpose here being to explore the alternative to the view that everything is intelligible and understandable ultimately in terms of the events studied by the science of physics, the notion of 'the same type of phenomena' may be defined as the set of all those phenomena without a reference to which the phenomenon cannot be understood in its essential specificity. When LaPlace told Napoleon that the hypothesis of God was not necessary for understanding the Book of Heavens, he meant something of this sort. God's creative willing does give some sense to the existence of the universe, even though

suggest that his difficulty derives from his failure to distinguish between organic and non-organic pleasures and pains. It certainly does make sense to ask, for example, 'When did you begin having pleasure from smoking?' The point, however, is not in the adequacy of the examples cited but in the principle they are supposed to illustrate.

it may raise problems of its own; but as far as the specificity of the motion of heavenly bodies is concerned, it is decidedly irrelevant. Something of the same sort was implied when Galileo banished final causes from the physical world. The recognition of a value-dimension as an essential component in the understanding of human action is something of the same sort, though very few people seem to welcome it in the same way. The reason for the difference lies in the phenomenal success of the physical sciences and the climate of opinion created thereby. The tendency towards monism is so great in the human mind that if once it was in the will of God that man tried to find explanation for everything, now it has to be the movement of particles of matter wherein is to be found the explanation and understanding of whatever happens to be encountered in the world. If, at one time, physics had to be understood in terms of theology, today theology has to be understood in terms of physics. Few, however, seem to realize that the latter is as unwarranted as the former.

It is not, however, easy to specify the criteria for the 'essential specificity' of a phenomenon. The more individual a thing is, the more it refuses to be understood in terms of anything else. 'Everything is what it is, and not another thing' is not an empty dictum, specially when applied to human beings, their experiences and their highly individualized creations in the realms of art, culture and spirit. There are points at which everyone feels that violence is being done, that what is being said is irrelevant or even distorting to the matter we wish to understand. The notion of 'essential specificity', then, is not a harking back to some Platonic essences. Rather, it is an assertion of the commonplace that there are diffe-

rences among phenomena and that these differences are often far more important than the common universal they may also happen to share in. It is only when the differences do not matter that they may be ignored, but then we are not concerned with the thing in question at all. Rather, anything which will satisfy the characteristics we are interested in will do for our purposes.

The situation becomes even more complicated in the case of things or events which are embedded in a larger series of phenomena. The concentric circles presupposed seem to become wider and wider and each of them in some sense helps us to understand something in the thing or the event in question. A thought, for example, in the mind of a thinker presupposes the specific tradition of the subject about which the thought has arisen, the larger context of the particular social tradition without which he would not have been able to use the essential prerequisites for thinking about anything including, for example, language. Not merely these, rather visible, traditions in which his thought is so obviously embedded but his own psychic biography and the fact of his being biologically alive are necessary sequences in which the thought is situated. The understanding of each of these does in some sense help us in understanding something about his thoughts, but it is equally obvious that as we move farther and farther the understanding increasingly *ceases* to be about the thought from which we started and begins to be concerned entirely with something else.

The story of such attempts is so large and so continuous that one has only to open any book concerning the social sciences to pick them up immediately. Take, for example, Arnold Hauser's *The Social History of Art*.

The author tries to explain the character of the German philosophy of the Enlightenment by the fact that 'the middle class intelligentsia . . . was excluded from the government of the country and was without influence.'[3] Now what sort of understanding or explanation is this? The philosopher is seldom the person who exercises in any sense the function of governing his country. He may, of course, dream of doing so, but so may anybody else. The type of problems he is concerned with does not depend for its answer on what class or classes are exercising the governmental functions in a polity. Supposing one has to understand the thought of, say, Immanuel Kant. Is the problem of knowledge as posed by the British empiricists and the continental rationalists more relevant to the understanding of his thought or the socio-political situation of Germany when he was writing the famous *Critique of Pure Reason*? There can be little doubt about the answer. The socio-political situation in Germany has radically changed and even in Kant's own time there were other countries with different systems. Yet the power and the fascination of his thought was confined as little by the socio-political situation then as now. Not merely this, it would be difficult even to say that the line of his thought was in any relevant sense related to the contemporary socio-political situation of his times. Anyone familiar with the history of philosophy could easily find similar turns of thought in thinkers living in societies far apart, even if they were not as fully explored and as completely developed as in Kant.

Hauser, it should be remembered, is not a stray bird in the social sciences. Rather, his type is the rule to

[3] Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. II, p. 606.

which there are but few exceptions. Leaving aside the innumerable legitimate and illegitimate progenies of Marx and Freud, there is hardly a social scientist who does not try his hand at explaining every creation of the human spirit in terms of some social need or other. Whether it be art or religion, poetry or love, superstition or science, the sociologist sees them in the same perspective as functioning in a social matrix for fulfilling social purposes. If one is not a Marxist or a Freudian, then surely one is a functionalist in sociology. The great approach so rampant in modern sociology always reminds me of a hefty, burly, bearded, venerable old gentleman who happened to be asked to say a few words after the great performance of a mighty maestro of Hindustani vocal music. He bravely stood up and commended the great master on the wonderful power of his lungs and advised the young people present there to take a lesson from the miraculous health of this master at his age and practise classical singing to develop their chests and strengthen their lungs. Each person in the audience felt so ashamed and, later, burst into embarrassed laughter. Not so, however, the audience before which the social scientist plays. It is never ashamed and never laughs. The most comic and the most obscene does not provoke laughter or shame when occurring in the context of a religious ritual. Science is the modern counterpart of religion and in its name every absurdity seems natural, however ludicrous it may be.

The venerable old gentleman with the flowing white beard was, of course, as much in the right as the venerable names in social science when they talk of the social functions of art or religion, or science, or sport, or, for that matter, anything else in which the so-called

social scientist may happen to be interested in at the moment. For, after all, classical singing does tend to help in developing the lungs and the chest, but who would, on that ground, make it central to the understanding of music? They can certainly be developed by means other than that of classical singing, and surely no one judged the quality of a performance by what it does to the lungs of the person who sings, or to the bodies of those who hear. This suggests that an activity in the human realm should be understood *primarily* in terms of the values it seeks to achieve and the criteria by which its achievement in that field are judged, and not by all the secondary ends which it may also realize, so to say, accidentally, by the way. The importance of an unconscious, latent function subserved by a human activity seems to have so completely crowded out the conscious, manifest values which it so obviously seeks that it seems to have become the hallmark of a scientist to assert the virtual primacy of the former as against the latter and imply that the latter is just an illusion, a self-deception, a rationalization which hides the 'real' behind the 'apparent' seeking.

This, obviously, is pure metaphysics even if it goes under the name of science. There surely are cases when something is an illusion or a self-deception or a rationalization, but to assert that almost all conscious seeking is that, is to deprive those words of any significant meaning whatsoever. Unless we are prepared to supply a distinctive criterion or even a set of criteria for distinguishing what is an 'illusion', a 'self-deception', a 'rationalization', there is no use in bandying these words about and hurling them at whatever one happens to dislike. In all these cases, they reveal more about the likings

and dislikings of the person who is using them than anything about the things he is talking about. The criterion, I think, could be found in the fact that the activity ceases to be pursued when it stops fulfilling the unconscious function it is supposed to fulfil or when something else performs it even better. A neurotic does not cling to his neurosis when it ceases to fulfil the unconscious functions it was supposed to subserve, nor does a fox cry sour grapes when it has already eaten and found them sweet. If a poet continues to write poetry and a painter paint and a philosopher philosophize and a yogi meditate even when the proposed or presumed secondary functions fail to be subserved, there seems no reason to think that it was really the so-called latent function for which the activities were undertaken or which it was supposed to realize. One may, of course, continue to perform an activity even when the original reason for its undertaking has disappeared. It may be just because the habit persists, or because the activity has come to be valued for its own sake, or because it is seen to lead to certain other desired types of results which were not foreseen before. But whatever the reason, the persistence shows that the so-called hidden reasons are reasons no more and that if the same activity can be pursued for so many reasons, then it is not so very essentially related to any of them.

Further, the criteria which define the success or failure of the performance of an activity remain normally the same, even when the reasons for its undertaking may undergo a great deal of change. One usually *judges* an activity in terms of the value it ostensibly seeks, the value which defines the activity to be what it is, the value whose seeking is the *raison d'être* of the activity

itself and which, thus, sets the standard for what is regarded as an illusion of the activity, a deviation or even a perversion. It is only when the secondary goals begin to be primary that a distortion seems to subtly suffuse the activity undertaken or even to invade it so openly that no one is any more deceived about it. Whatever the case, the criteria involved in the judging of an activity or a realm may provide another clue to the 'essential specificity' of that activity or realm.

Of course, the criteria themselves may change just as a genuine poet, painter, scientist, or philosopher may cease to write or paint, discover or think. There is a history of taste and judgement, just as there is a biography of the artist or the thinker. But we must distinguish, I think, between the change in the *importance* of criteria that are, so to say, internal to a realm and a change-over to criteria which just do not belong to the realm at all. The change, for example, from judgement in terms of realistic portrayal to judgement in terms of, say, the organization of space in painting is a change in factors that are obviously immanent to the realm of painting itself. Similarly, the novel tells a story and whether it is judged in terms of the success of the tale told or the characters developed or the action resolved, the terms of judgement stray not out of this field; for, so to say, they arise immanently from the field itself. But if one were to start judging literature or painting in terms of their effectivity in turning human hearts towards God, social revolution, or individual's political and civil liberties, then obviously the terms have strayed far afield.

Similarly, though a genuine artist or thinker or scientist may cease to pursue the activity he had been seek-

ing before, this, I think, should be distinguished from the case where the activity automatically ceases because it no longer fulfils the unconscious function it previously subserved or because something else now serves it better. The distinction could be found in the fact that a genuine activity is turned more towards the values immanent to the field and, thus, is governed more by the criteria pertaining therein. Further, where a genuine seeker ceases to seek the value he was seeking earlier, it is either because he is seeking a new value which he considers as being deeper than before or because he has just lost the capacity or the energy or the interest that was required for his earlier seeking. In the former case, it is evident to everybody that the cessation of the pursuit had nothing to do with its failing to fulfil the unconscious functions it was supposed to fulfil. In the latter case, the man himself thinks the time of the previous pursuit as the most valuable and worthwhile period of his life and if he cannot do so at the present time of his life, he consciously ascribes it to weakness of capacity or character or will. The point is, that he would want to return to his former pursuit if he could. This will obviously not be the case if the reason for the cessation of the activity had primarily been the non-fulfilment of the unconscious personal or social functions it was actually subserving, for since the activity had ceased to fulfil these functions, there seems no reason to desire a return to it any more.

The pursuit, of course, can be given up in another case, that is, where it begins to endanger the life-process itself. Normally, a person refrains temporarily from pursuing a value if it threatens his life and even gives it up altogether if no remedy seems feasible. Similarly,

if the activity is seen as threatening the social system of which one happens to be a member, measures begin to be taken against the person constraining him from pursuing that course of activity. However, no one takes this to mean that the end of all human pursuit is the maintenance of human life or the social system in which one happens to live. Firstly, there have always been martyrs who have died for a value and there have always been societies which have risked destruction to preserve their way of life. This normally has won the approbation and admiration of others even if some thought that discretion was the better part of valour. However good Falstaff's arguments against honour and everything else which men deem worth dying for may be, no one seems to have been convinced by them. The reason for such a persistent lack of conviction against such an obvious argument is that man has never conceived of himself as a mere biological being. He has never thought life to be justified in itself. Rather, the justification of living has been found in the pursuit of some value for which life provides merely the occasion and the opportunity. Even those—and this is the second point—who give up the pursuit of the value when it endangers the life-process itself, do so in the hope that life will permit them the pursuit of some other values. Similarly, when a society tries to ensure its survival it is in the hope that it will be able to follow the way of life it considers worthwhile.

The problem is dramatized in the contemporary situation where war threatens the annihilation of the human species altogether. Can there be anything for which a nation may go to war in such a situation? Whatever the answer, both those who draw the line somewhere and

those who do not, do so in the name of values. It is because the survival of the human species is seen as providing the possibility of realization of the values these people hold dear in however remote a future that they propagate and agitate for the position, 'no war under any circumstances'. Of course, survival is a value in itself. We do feel something wrong when species of animals are destroyed through human cruelty or stupidity. It is different with those species which are definitely dangerous or obnoxious or parasitical on man. The feeling is even more intense where human groups are concerned. There is a guilty feeling in the minds of men when they hear of the disappearance of primitive peoples in Australia or Africa or America. Even the cutting of trees arouses a feeling of life lost. Wherever there is life, its voluntary annihilation on the part of some other seems a sacrilege. It seems the intrinsic right of everything living to live until death comes in the natural process of living itself. Yet, in the case of man, as different from other species, living is never enough. It is only in the context of the opportunities provided for the realization of other values that living takes on meaning and importance. It may be an interesting question to ask what would be the choice of men between total annihilation and total damnation—i.e. living in a situation where there is not even the *possibility* of the realization of anything which the individual himself regards as valuable and worthwhile? Most men, at some point or another, contemplate the possibility of death. 'It is better to die rather than live like this', is uttered by everyone some time or other in his life. Even if the choice were to live in such a situation, men will know they have ceased to be men from the time they have

made such a choice. It would be the last all-too-human action on their part, for after this they will know they are living in evil and that the possibility of getting out of it has been taken away from them.

Whatever be the moral and metaphysical problems raised by concepts such as 'total evil' and 'total annihilation', it seems fairly clear that 'mere survival' is, at best, a marginal end of human endeavour which, though valued to some extent for its own sake alone, is primarily valued as it provides the opportunity for the realization of other things that we consider desirable. To put it in another way—a way that everybody will agree to—though everything is left for the sake of survival, the moment it is endangered, yet once it is ensured, what matters is the pursuit and realization of a value and not just survival itself. Even this relationship is questioned, as we saw earlier, in the case of the martyr who sacrificed survival for the sake of a value and a society which risks a war involving almost certain destruction for itself rather than lose its way of life. But even if these cases are ignored or interpreted to mean something different from what they so obviously mean, no one will seriously dispute the relationship previously posited. Obviously, no historian singles out a society just because it has survived, or a biographer writes on a person simply because he has lived. Yet surviving and living are the necessary preconditions for anything worthwhile being pursued by either a society or an individual.

Every activity of man, in fact, has consequences for both the personality and the social system and thus can always be viewed not in terms of what it so obviously and so specifically seeks and with reference to which it

is usually judged but in terms of what it does for these systems. Psychology and sociology thus tend to develop a claim to foundational primacy in the social sciences, seeking to understand everything else in their own terms. Both, of course, contest these claims against each other, also. The claims gain a certain plausibility from the fact that men have to live and their minds function with some degree of integration and societies function to a certain extent in order that any other thing may get done at all. Marx and Freud gain their persuasiveness from being concerned with things so closely related to survival. So do the present-day functionalists who try to see the meaning of everything in terms of what it does for the social system.

The limitations imposed by questions of survival are real limitations. But they only set the framework and are important only in a negative way. In no sense do they define the meaning of the activities which are carried on within the framework and are concerned with something else. The framework is presupposed in the carrying of the activity, but the activity is in no sense concerned with the framework, except as it begins to obviously undermine the framework itself. In this context, there is a distinct difference between the personality system and the social system. Both at the biological and the psychological level, though there are varied levels of integrated functioning, limited on the one side by death and on the other by insanity, there is no so-called privileged class of phenomena whose destruction is alone entailed by the destruction of the system. In the case of a social system, however, this is usually the case. It is usually a privileged class which generally equates its own survival with the survival of the system, though

the two things are very different. Of course, when a privileged class is destroyed or deprived of its privileged character, as in times of revolution, the social system also ceases to function or, rather, dysfunctions for the time being after which it quickly re-establishes itself, for without its functioning at a relatively efficient level nothing at all can be done by men. In a sense, man's very survival is bound up with the functioning of the social system in which he lives and it is this linkage which gives strength to the sociologist's claim that society is the primary thing in the understanding of everything that man does, that it is the root from which everything springs in the human world. But the root is neither the flower nor the fruit and what is primary is not ultimate, either. The truly trans-social pursuits of man are rooted in society only in the sense that without its functioning, they cannot be pursued at all. But the occurrences that are presupposed for the pursuit of any value operate not merely at the social level only. There are other levels which are equally presupposed, levels without whose existence, the activity will not exist at all.

The multiple levels presupposed by any human activity correspond, in a certain sense, to the types of phenomena in which it is embedded. A change anywhere in this supporting structure may make it impossible for the activity to be pursued at all. This is the weakness of the phenomena higher in the hierarchy. They are exposed to too many dangers in their supporting bases. A tubercle bacillus may kill Keats. The politico-jural institutions may condemn a Socrates or crucify a Jesus. A communist dictatorship may not allow one to speak or write or even think. The hydrogen-helium cycle may

destroy all life and, thus, all art, literature, science, philosophy and religion which man strives and has striven to create. But the forces that resist destruction do not create. They merely provide the possibility of creation.

The autonomy enjoyed by any realm which presupposes any other for its existence, then, is never absolute. It is relative as much as it is limited by factors which do not belong to its own realm. They do not affect what may be called the 'internal autonomy' of the realm. Hence, for understanding phenomena of any realm which are embedded in a wider realm, two sets of considerations are necessary. One, those concerning the factors which ensure the *existence* of the phenomena in question. Second, those that concern the realization of the value or values which are specifically sought or embodied in that realm and thus distinguish it from all others. The enmeshed intertwining of the seeking for existence and the seeking for value is so complex in all the areas of human activity studied by the social sciences that it becomes difficult to disentangle them. The temptation is, therefore, very great, particularly in the name of science, to regard every seeking in terms of existence only. It seems to be so *wertfrei*, at least as far as anything can be that, and isn't *wertfreiheit* the essence of being scientific? It is, of course, conveniently forgotten that the realm cannot even be defined without reference to the values sought or embodied therein.

The first set of considerations, i.e. those concerning the existence of the phenomena, are relevant but only minimally. They seldom concern the specificity of the phenomena and, usually, they draw attention to the surrounding events which support its existence. Also, they

focus attention and bring to light the distorting influences that considerations for existence bring to bear on the seeking for value. Only, the so-called scientist does not regard them as 'distorting' influences since 'existence', for him, is the essence of the matter and the talk of values only a verbalization which so meaninglessly persists in accompanying all human activity. The second set gives a deeper insight into the phenomena and always seems more *relevant* to the persons seeking within that realm. The first set, on the other hand, always seems more *crucial* to the person outside the realm, specially to those who are interested in something different and want to *use* it for their own purposes. Nothing is so useful as the knowledge of the existential conditions, particularly when the interest is in using it for values other than its own. A pressure on existence-conditions is the most powerful lever to force an activity to deviate from the genuine goals immanent to itself.

The relation between the phenomena of a narrower realm to the phenomena of the wider realm in which they are embedded is, then, the relation between existence and value. The realm of value is the realm of freedom, though the two are not identical. The wider realm sets the limits of freedom to the narrower realm. It spells out, so to say, the conditions of its existence. But existence is not the pursuit of a value, though without it they cannot be pursued at all. Thus, negatively, it is very important. But, positively, it just does not mean much. Existence, even if a value, is the lowest kind of value. And, normally, the existence-conditions ensure only a generic type. However, what matters within the realm is the specific and the specific can be understood

only in terms of the conditions and situations within the realm unless, of course, it be the problems of distortion that are sought to be explained and understood. Ultimately, the specific and the individual cannot be understood in terms of anything else, even when they belong to the same realm of which it is a member. The higher the level of individuality, the more this is true. That is why history in a sense is so frustrating, for it illumines only what is irrelevant.

Once the autonomy of realms is admitted, even if it be only in a relative manner, the autonomy of causality will have to be conceded. The factors operating within the realm will have to be distinguished from those of the realm or realms in which it is embedded. The latter will be seen only as defining the limits of constraint and of providing the opportunity for the realization of the specificities and values possible to the former. However, it will never be considered as *determining* their realization. The area of causal autonomy is also the area of freedom. This freedom is in respect of the realm from which it is free, not with regard to its existence, but rather in respect of the realization of the values peculiar to itself. The freedom is in direct relation to the realms presupposed while the danger to existence is almost in inverse relation to this. The more the realms presupposed, the greater is the freedom possible and also the more precarious is its existence.

The problem of causal autonomy is closely bound up with the problem of freedom, though few seem to have seen it that way. Levels of autonomy are correlated with levels of freedom and there perhaps is some relation between degree of freedom and the amount of autonomy enjoyed by a realm in relation to others. The

enmeshed intertwining of constraint and freedom, of the necessities of existence and the impulse towards value, so central to everything studied by the social sciences, is unintelligible except on some such way of viewing the relationship between phenomena of different realms, the one requiring the other for its existence but not *vice versa*.

The only other way is to hold a complete unilinear determination of all the multiple, varied types of things and events we know of by the movement of particles studied in physics or by the will of God unknown in its completeness to anyone but himself. In both the alternatives there is no autonomy or freedom or meaning or value in what human beings do and what the social sciences seek to understand and study.

Between God and Matter and the view we have been pleading for, there is none other. The specialist is always fond of arguing for the autonomy of his own specialism and denying it to others. This, I suggest, is impossible. It sounds too much like the political demand of self-determination for one's own group or country and its flat denial for others. It may be human; it may be clever; it may even pay dividends in politics. But in the field of knowledge it is just plain wrong, if not also fraudulent and dishonest. The choice has to be made. It is no use putting blinkers over one's eyes. There is nothing wrong in one's believing that there is only one book in the world—be it of the physicist or of the theologian—but at least one should say so. One may even try to write it, but if the announcement is made on the first page it will depend on the reader if he reads any further or not.

THREE

THE PROBLEM OF RELATIVE FREEDOM

THE SOCIOLOGISTS are in little danger of denying the autonomy of their field of study. Rather, they are prone to deny it to others. But they, like almost any other scientist, seem to be committed to the denial of freedom. 'What is seemingly free in man is not really so', seems the burden of every science and the sociologists being scientists and concerned with man in a pre-eminent manner tend to assert it pre-eminently also. Of course, they vigorously deny it to the biologist, or the climatologist, or to any other 'ist' if he asserts such a determination of the human phenomena. But they themselves are the first to show that the so-called freedom in the human world is illusory and that events and behaviour are determined by causes of which men know nothing or almost nothing.

The scientist, of course, functions always in a sort of situation that cannot but be described as paradoxical. On the one hand, he is committed to the belief that everything has a cause and is determined by causes to know which is to understand the nature of the thing

or the event in question. On the other hand, he seems equally committed to the belief that he, himself, is free in the discovering of this knowledge and that he enlarges the area of others' freedom by his finding the causes of events and things. Everything is determined, yet he is *free* to find this 'determination' and his knowledge helps himself and others to become free from 'determination' also.

The paradox is not confined to the scientist alone. The theologian, in a sense, shares it. Everything has to be completely determined by the will of God and yet man has to be free in order that spiritual effort may mean anything. Those who do not talk much about God, as in Buddhism and certain schools of Hinduism, have the same problem with the Law of Karma. How can men be free when they are what they are because of the actions they did in their past lives? In a still wider sense, the issue is posed for anyone who tries to *understand* other men. The dramatist or the novelist sees men as the victims of an overpowering fate, whether in the form of character, or situation, or the choices once made. Those who deal with others face the same problem also. They cannot but treat them as manipulable in certain ways, as being determinable in certain directions. The presupposition of action certainly is freedom, but it is freedom for oneself, the person who is acting and not for those who are being acted upon. As fortunately, however, everyone in the human world both acts and is acted upon, he has the privilege of feeling himself both determined and free. It is this alternating relationship that develops the simultaneous awareness of each other's freedom among human encounters. The recent existentialist literature which has been more concerned

with and aware of the problem of freedom has generally stopped at delineating and exploring the alternating relationship without seeing its development into the mutual awareness of each other's freedom.

The common man, however, develops no metaphysics. He is happy to be inconsistent and realizes continuously his own and others' freedom and the limitations of that freedom. And though he both understands others and acts upon them and in doing so he treats them as determined, yet he also has a feeling-relationship towards them and in this relationship he feels them to be free. Every object of feeling need not necessarily be felt to be completely free. One may intensely feel about nature, art-objects or animals and yet not feel them to be free. It is only when an answering relationship of feeling exists that the other is felt as free and even endowed with freedom if it does not exist. As the need for an answering relationship is almost inherent in the movement of feeling, one tends to endow with freedom everything one feels about. It is thus that the blue of the sky smiles tenderly back and the green branches of trees shower benediction on the eye that lovingly looks up and sees. One talks to animals and they answer with love and affection. The works of art become alive and seem to have a life of their own.

A scientist, however, is not supposed to feel. It is left to the poet, the lover, or the saint to feel this way about things. He tries only to know and feelings are supposed to interfere with knowledge. The problem is not acute when one is concerned with the study of non-living things. But the moment one turns to living beings, it begins to raise its head and when one deals with beings who are supposed to create and to try to know the truth,

and to pursue the good, it stares the blindest in the face. But, as scientists, we are supposed to ignore this. In the laboratory, or on the writing desk, one is expected to hold convictions which one belies the moment one leaves them. G. E. Moore once tried to prove the existence of material objects by showing his two hands, and Dr. Johnson, before him, had tried to do something of the same sort by kicking a stone with his foot. Recently, a number of thinkers have started wondering why the philosopher holds so tenaciously to the espousal of cognitive beliefs which he so obviously denies in practice. No one, as far as I know, has laid the same charge at the door of the scientist though he seems as guilty of this as anybody else. It is only the philosopher or the religious man who is supposed to be neurotic or hypocritical when his practice does not square with what he explicitly professes or with what is implicitly involved in what he professes. The scientist, for his part, is supposed to be concerned with giving us the knowledge of a particular field of phenomena only. And if he does this successfully, it does not matter what he does or how he behaves outside his laboratory or study. It is conveniently forgotten that there are certain principles, certain presuppositions, certain ways of looking at things which are behind or rather which permeate the whole activity through which he seeks this knowledge. If, then, there be different, even opposing, principles, presuppositions, ways of looking, permeating his activity when he is not being a scientist, then in what sense can only the first set be considered as correct or right? It will ordinarily seem more natural that both the sets are correct as they are required by different types of activities.

However, such a simple solution does not seem to

appeal to anyone. The scientist proclaims the universal validity of the principles which he discards the moment he steps out of his laboratory and he defends his universalization by pointing out their necessity for determining whatever is the case. If one cannot live or love or explore or create or meditate on the assumption that these principles are absolutely true, it does not matter, for if one wants to *know* about these or any other things one cannot do so except on the principles one uses in the study or the laboratory. If truth is the concern, then truth is whatever is the case and whatever is the case is determined by causes to be what it is. But if the concern for truth itself is our 'concern', if it is the seeking itself we wish to concentrate upon, then does not the situation change? How can the principles or the presuppositions that are involved in the seeking be less important than those involved in what is, so to say, found? Or, for that matter, why should the presuppositions involved in *knowing* be considered more important and more true than those involved in feeling or willing? One lives and for living neither is more primary than the other. Even with respect to their character as occurrence or fact, each is equally so, for one could not say that only knowing occurred and not feeling or willing. And knowing itself involves as much feeling and willing as they, in their turn, involve knowing. Also, if feeling or willing may be known or understood, so can knowing be felt or willed as the case may be.

A reflection on the presuppositions involved in different types of human seeking and activity is not much prevalent these days. In spite of much writing on the philosophy of science, there is not what may be called an articulation of and a critical reflection upon the presuppositions involved in what is regarded by all as the cognitive activity *par excellence* in our times. Kant's classic attempt is usually criticized on the ground of its being too much tied to Euclidean geometry and Newtonian physics, both of which have been shown to be limited these days. The critics, however, forget that the limitation has to be overcome, that an investigation similar to that of Kant has to be undertaken shorn, of course, of its limitations. Also, they can learn from him that one cannot be a mere philosopher of science. The presuppositions involved in feeling and willing have to be examined also. The *Critique of Pure Reason* has to be supplemented by a *Critique of Practical Reason* and a *Critique of Judgement*, if one is not to be terribly misled by an intense reflection on a limited field, however important it may be. In a profound sense, any reflection which is confined to a narrow and limited domain of human experience and activity is bound to give a distorted vision of the human situation and men are sure to be misled thereby.

Yet, even if such a widened and all-comprehensive critique is attempted, the question remains: 'What coherence, if any, can be found between the presuppositions and the principles involved in all these various activities that men undertake?' Kant himself never seemed to have raised this question and though he is far more comprehensive than many modern philosophers, he is not as much as he could have been. Even in the critique concerning knowledge, his reflection is confined too much to physics and mathematics, a limitation shared by contemporary philosophers of science also. Further, what he examines under knowledge is not so much the *seeking* for knowledge as the preconditions of what it

means to be known. Any inquiry into the presuppositions, I think, has not merely to get away from limiting itself to one specimen of the field one is studying treated paradigmatically, but also to go behind to the seeking itself and the value or ideal in terms of which alone the seeking becomes meaningful. One has to see that all knowledge is not patterned on one type, even if the type be that of mathematics or physics. Not merely this, all knowledge is not even 'scientific', if the adjective is confined to the type of knowing-process involved in what are usually known as the sciences. As I said earlier, we are supposed to understand and know a work of art even though this 'understanding' and 'knowing' is not of the type prevalent in the so-called sciences. Further, behind the knowledge there is a seeking which has to be understood in terms of what it seeks, the ideal or value without which the whole activity becomes meaningless, collapsing just like a balloon which someone has pricked. Besides the values or the ideals involved in the seeking, there are presuppositions implied by any seeking *qua* seeking. This is the common point between art, morality, science and religion, a point that Kant failed to notice. It is not the moral action *alone* that presupposes freedom in order to be meaningful, but any action that seeks to realize a value. The seeking of knowledge, the creation of Beauty, the search for the Absolute, all presuppose freedom to make them meaningful. And if freedom is the precondition for any seeking, including that of the scientist, then even if he is indifferent to the moral, spiritual and aesthetic seeking of man, he has to grant it, for his own activity which he considers as the *only* thing giving us knowledge involves it too.

In fact, viewed as an ideal seeking, science does not

involve existential[1] reference in any deeper sense than the other seekings of man. The truth that is sought is ultimately as ideal in character as Goodness or Beauty or the Absolute which men seek also. The point may perhaps be understood better if we ask ourselves the question, 'Would there be a time when science would have known all there is to know—not today or tomorrow, but in any length of time conceivable by man and granted to him by the existential-conditions of the universe?' Why does it seem so fantastic to think that one day all the research laboratories will be closed, all the research journals will stop publication, all the scientists will walk out of their studies, sad or happy, since it all is over? The simple answer is that truth is as much an ideal as anything else and that ideals make no sense when thought of as actualized, though without a reference to them the human seeking makes no sense either. Isn't it equally fantastic to think that one day all men will become naturally good, that there will be no problem of behaviour which practical reason will be called upon to solve, that beauty will be realized and artists have nothing to embody and create and discover, that the Absolute will be held in one's palm and not slip ever, that lovers will be united in ecstasy and parted never, never, never? Yet, however fantastic they may seem, these are the ideals for which men strive and which give direction and meaning and sense to their striving. Morality, art, religion and love have little left if these impossible ideals are taken away from them. And so is science with its impossible ideal of truth or knowledge, though it seldom seems aware of the impos-

[1] I am using the term in its ordinary meaning and not in the way it is used in the literature on existentialism.

sibility. No error, no falsity, no incompleteness—that is what it seeks. But aren't these orders impossible to fulfil? How shall we know that the very possibility of error or falsity has been removed? And how could we ever know that there was nothing more to be known? Even if it be granted that certain things are indubitable, it does not follow that all are or will be so. Even if it be admitted that about certain matters all that could be possibly known has been known, it does not follow that there are no *other* things about which we do not know anything at all.

The claim to complete achievement of the ideal in specific instances is made not only with respect to some particular items of knowledge but also with respect to specific acts of morality, creations of art, realization of the Absolute and the achievement of perfect, ecstatic love between two human beings. If it is maintained that the sensing of blue or the apprehension of the relation between premises and conclusion is as complete and certain a piece of knowledge as anything could be, then it is equally maintained that a promise fulfilled with the sense of duty realizes the moral ideal as completely in its domain as any act could ever do it. The parallel claim with respect to the creations of the greatest masters in any art or the founders of any religion is too well known to be pointed here. The case of the lovers may be left to themselves as there has hardly been any philosopher who has given to it the thought and critical reflection it so richly deserves.

There is, of course, a difference between religion and science in this respect. Most religions do claim that an individual can completely achieve the ideal they put before him. One can achieve liberation, union with the

Absolute, the vision of the Lord, stillness of the mind, desirelessness, blessedness, sainthood, nirvana—in short, anything that a particular religion regards as the perfect ideal for man. In contrast to this, science cannot even conceive of any human being ever knowing all that is to be known. It just seems to make no sense with respect to knowledge. Art, morality and love seem to stand somewhere midway between these two extremes. There seems nothing nonsensical about the idea that one has become completely moral in one's life or that one has realized the ideal of the perfect lover or that one has created and embodied perfect beauty in a work of art. Yet there seems something incongruous in claiming that one has achieved or realized these things. There is always a haunting sense of incompleteness in things realized by men. In any real conflict of values, the moral seeker never knows if he has chosen the right. The lover is never sure if he could not have achieved a more intimate and deeper togetherness with the person he or she loved.[2] The artist may be satisfied when he has completed a work that it is as it ought to have been, but the feeling seldom lasts for long and he finds his mind busy conceiving a new and more perfect embodiment of the ideal he vaguely apprehends in his soul.

However, though there seem relevant differences about the possibility of an individual's realizing his complete ideal in these different fields, there seems none about the possibility of all men realizing the perfect ideal in this world of time in which we all happen to live. It is not even pretended that they can and, except in the

[2] It is strange to reflect that the term 'lover' is only applied to the male and that there is just no word for the female counterpart who is perhaps supposed never to love, but only to be the beloved, i.e. the object of someone's love.

case of religion, there are no claims for realization in a world where time has been abolished. Men have to strive to realize an ideal which most of them know they can never realize in this life or in any other, if there be such, and yet this realization on their part is supposed not to affect their striving at all. The exception, of course, would be a religion like that of the Hindus which believes that one has to be born again and again till the ideal is realized. But what about an ideal that seems intrinsically unrealizable? No one, as far as I know, has argued for the meaninglessness of an ideal on the grounds of its intrinsic unrealizability. The realizability-criterion of meaning with respect to ideals has not been pushed by those who have pressed for the verifiability-criterion of meaning in respect of cognitive statements. Normally, it is not taken to be a defect in an ideal if it is shown that it cannot be realized as the function of the ideal is believed to lie in giving a direction to human seeking and endeavour which is, then, supposed to approach it asymptotically.

The notion of an asymptotic approach is supposed to give meaning to the notion of an infinite, unending quest which yet is progressively approaching something. This is supposed to save both the infinity of pursuit and reaching nearer the goal which at first seem so incompatible with each other. The analogy is taken from the infinite series in mathematics which, though infinite, yet converges to a finite sum. But, in all such cases, we can say the series is nearing the goal only because we already know what the goal is. For example, if we take such a series as, say, $1 + 1/2 + 1/3 + 1/4 + 1/5 \ldots$, we know at every stage that it is more or less near the goal simply because we already know that the series converges to 2

which is, so to say, its goal or final result. Now, such a situation is just absent from most of the ideal goals which we pursue, including that of knowledge or truth. We just do not know what complete truth means in order to be able to say we are nearer to it or farther from it. Not merely this, the approaching of the ideal involved in all these pursuits is radically different in a certain respect from the mathematical series that converges to a finite number. Unlike the latter where we know what is the next in the series because we ourselves have made the series in a certain way, there is just no knowing in the pursuit of an ideal what will appear next. Possibly, the next step may take us farther away from the ideal than towards it, as we fondly hoped. There is just no inevitability about this approximating the ideal as the mathematical analogy seems inevitably to suggest.

The paradoxical situation of man with respect to ideals in general applies, thus, equally or even with more force to his seeking for truth or knowledge. And if causality is a postulate for knowledge, so is freedom—for one cannot *seek* knowledge without implying that the seeker is free in some sense or other. Science, thus, does not merely involve determinism as is generally thought but also freedom—freedom to seek truth. Both freedom and determinism, it should be remembered, are postulates involved in most human behaviour. The one is no more a fact than the other, though many seem to believe that causality is there as a hard fact while freedom is a pious hope or a vain delusion which men in their vanity find it difficult to give up. In an empirical-factual sense, freedom is as much found as determination, since we all do distinguish between a stone and an animal and between

an animal and a man. Even among men we distinguish between those who are insane and those who are not. If someone were to deny these differences on any such ground as 'everything has a cause', I would merely say that this is not the description of a fact but something of a universal postulate which one is proclaiming one is not prepared to give up. There is nothing which will be accepted as possibly falsifying this statement. But postulates are not made *in vacuo*. They are supposed to be necessary for certain purposes. But any *purpose* for which this postulate is supposed to be necessary would, I suggest, find the postulate of freedom also essential to it. This is, so to say, involved in the very notion of purpose. Purposes have to be assumed, undertaken, sought, realized. Without the *simultaneous* postulation of causality and freedom, the concept cannot be thought at all. Thus, whether factually or postulationally, freedom is no interloper in the world, no false pretender whose rights are spurious and exposed long ago.

The claim to factuality is, of course, disputed by saying that it is because of our incomplete knowledge that it appears to be so. One wonders what these disputers will do when everything is known. I hope they still will feel they can do this rather than that and be anxious about what they really will choose. In any case, as the notion of completed knowledge does not make sense, it will always appear that there is freedom. As for postulation, the scientist is seldom interested in types of activity which directly postulate freedom. He seldom reflects on his own activity in terms of the presuppositions involved therein. At best, he is concerned with the methodological issues involved in his study. If the question of the postulation of freedom is ever raised, the

usual answer is that the increasing advance of science has dislodged it from field after field where it was supposed to be firmly entrenched. But—and this is the real question—what is this 'dislodging', and who dislodges what, and what does he do after dislodging? The discovery of every determination raises the problem of freedom anew. We use the knowledge of the determination to gain our freedom. We may use it to bind others but not ourselves. The scientist in his own pursuit seeks to get rid of irrelevant determinations and so does everybody else to the extent of his knowledge. What we discover always is a *particular* determination and the question this poses is always how we can get free from it and use it for our own purposes. Even in the sciences where we are dealing with man directly, the situation is the same. The discovery of each determination is a challenge to become free of it. And we do try to become free of it. Freedom, thus, is never disproved. Rather, it asserts itself each time in the face of its ostensive denial as something to be achieved and as that without which no achievement can be made. It is thus discovered to be simultaneously a goal and a presupposition of human action.

However, besides this large sense of freedom there is one involved in the very notion of an autonomous field of study. 'Autonomy', of course, is another name for freedom from an external determination. No one, I am suggesting, can plead for relative autonomy and stand for complete determination also. If one gives up the view that everything is completely determined in its specificity by either the will of God or the movements of the ultimate particles of matter, then one is committed to maintain the relative freedom of the realms against one

another. Basically, no one worries about the freedom of the wider realm against its determination by phenomena in the narrower realm. The stars are not determined by men, nor the movement of sub-atomic particles by vital processes like birth and death. The worry is rather the other way round. It is the phenomena embedded in the larger frameworks whose freedom has to be defended against the encroachment from the wider realms. Man has to be safeguarded against the stars, and life against matter. The battle for freedom has to be joined at every point, for those who want to do away with it are at large and do it in the name of science, which is the unquestioned god of modern times. Ultimately, what has to be defended is the lonely, individual human being against all the sciences that tell him how he is enmeshed and determined from all sides. And this is to be done, not by denying what the sciences discover, for this would be stupid, but by showing that what is supposed to follow does not follow.

The concentric circles of determination are the circles of freedom also. At the heart of these circles stands the human individual, presupposing them, enmeshed in them, yet free of them. In a sense, the freedom of man reverberates down the whole chain, and imagination and knowledge conspire to introduce a new dimension in the course of events. His freedom is precarious, as it presupposes so many things for its exercise and existence, but its influence is of another order as it brings values to bear on facts and insinuates ideal considerations into the utmost of triviality. The recognition of this freedom is the prime desideratum of any study that concerns man. At a larger remove, the story of all embedded realms is the story of freedom.

Freedom, of course, is always relative—relative to the existential conditions imposed by the wider field in which the phenomena are embedded. At the level of consciousness, freedom gets limited in another way. On one side, there are the existential conditions of sheer survival and, on the other, the realizability-limitations of the values apprehended and the more or less intrinsic limitations of one value by another. The very notion of multiple realms, each autonomous and yet dependent on the other wider ones for its existence, involves the notion of relative freedom. Without the generalized postulate of the individual's freedom, human seeking makes no sense. But, equally, without realizing the limitations in which and through which it has to function, the human reality would make no sense either. The problem is not so acute when we are concerned with autonomous fields below the human one. But the moment we try to understand man and the things he creates, 'relative freedom' becomes the key concept without which not much will become intelligible to the student.

The social scientists, in general, are concerned with man and what he creates. Freedom, an intrinsic characteristic of the subject with which the social scientist deals, cannot be understood in purely causal terms. In fact, it may be taken as almost axiomatic that a purely causal understanding would be extremely inadequate to the intelligibility of anything in the creation of which freedom and the apprehension of values has played a conspicuous part. The principle is clearly visible in the case of our understanding of works of art. The limitations of the purely causal approach are so obvious that every serious student of the subject is aware of them. One does not, for example, inquire into the causal con-

ditions that went into the creation of *Hamlet* to understand the creation itself. In fact, people even dispute who was the real author of the play. Not merely this, in the case of certain other works, say, the plays of Kalidas, even the historical times in which the author lived is not known with any approximation whatsoever. Rather, in many cases, the culture or civilization is known only through the creations of men which alone have survived to present times. If the understanding of a thing were to depend on knowing the causal factors alone, then in most such cases it will be impossible to achieve. In fact, if we were to ask ourselves what it would exactly mean to causally understand a work of art on the pattern of our understanding in the physical sciences, we will realize what is involved therein.

In the physical sciences, the object or event that is sought to be causally understood is generally treated as an instance of the universal. The instance could easily be replaced by another without affecting the understanding about the thing or event in any relevant sense of the term. The understanding, further, involves a prediction that, given the causes, the effect will reproduce itself in a more or less similar manner. This is not quite derived from the definition of cause, as many may think, since if someone were to suggest a cause which was in principle unrepeatable, no one will take it seriously. One could say of anything vacuously that if everything else were the same, the thing would have happened as it has happened. This is important, for in the case of concrete works of art it is useless to say that if one had the same heredity and the same environment, one could not but have produced what one has actually produced in the case. The art-object, though a member of a class,

is far more an individual in its own right. In a certain sense, physical objects and events have no unique individuality of their own, an individuality which cannot be known by a reference to their characteristics as members of a class. The only individuality they have is derived, so to say, from their positions in space-time which they happen to occupy at the moment of their existence, or occurrence. This is important for their availability for human projects and purposes, but that is almost all it is important for.

There is, of course, a causal understanding of works of art. The psychologist, the sociologist, the historian and the biographer do try to tell us something about it, but it is almost always as a member of a class rather than as the unique work that it is and, in any case, never about the qualitative achievement which is so intrinsic a part of it. Whatever they say could be said equally about a masterpiece and any ordinary work in the same genre. The very quality which is most important to the creator and the appreciator seems irrelevant to the causal understanding of such things. What Freud said about Leonardo could have been said about one who had not even one-hundredth of da Vinci's genius. The same is true of all the causal approaches that have been made to this or any other creation of the human spirit.

The problem of non-causal understanding seems so important and so closely linked up with the questions of freedom and value, that it would be better to explore it in an independent chapter and examine its relevance to the understanding of society which, though not quite a work of art, is still the creation of men who are free and seek values. The next chapter will, then, be devoted to this.

FOUR

CAUSAL AND NON-CAUSAL UNDERSTANDING

A WORK OF ART cannot be understood in merely causal terms. There is not much sense in knowing that given particular types of social or personality structures, particular types of art-forms may be expected to be produced. What is of interest and what is to be understood is that specific art-creation and generalized causes are as much an explanation of a bad work which no one cares for as of a masterpiece which arouses the ever-renewed admiration of the ages. Even in terms of the technical approach, there is no formula for the creation of a masterpiece, though many have proclaimed its discovery so many a time. There is, of course, the teaching of craft and skill, but somehow art seems to begin only when these are assumed and sometimes even left behind. The artist does use means for the achievement of his end, but it is so implicit in the work itself and so closely intertwined with the means used that it is not quite easy to distinguish where the one ends and the other begins. And even if someone does achieve the skill of using the same means for the achievement of the same end, we

are not much impressed and call him a faker or an imitator, as he does or does not hide his identity. The reason for this has puzzled many an art critic but basically it is no different from the one that usually debars us from giving high praise to anyone who repeats a performance which has already been performed by someone else. Even in athletics and sports this is true, though there the person who equals the record gets far more credit and praise than the one in the field of arts, science or philosophy. The reason for this is twofold: first, the individual's achievement in sports or athletics is not facilitated to the same extent by another's performance as in arts, science or philosophy; second, they are not ideal pursuits in the same sense as the latter are.

The first reason is easy to grasp. The extent of the independence in exercise of skill for the achievement is an important factor for giving credit or praise. No one would, for example, even think of praising anyone who has just copied someone else's poem, while the successful copying of a great piece of painting or sculpture does evoke some admiration on our part. Where the calligraphy of a writing is important as in classical Chinese, we might praise the skill of the imitating poet, but obviously not for the imitation of poetry but for the artistic quality of the writing imitated. In fact, there is a point at which we do not like even an individual artist to repeat himself. The musician who plays the same way or the painter who goes on doing the same thing begins to pall after a certain time. It is not just a matter of technique or style, but of seeking which is so different. When one repeats or imitates a past achievement, one is not seeking something new and that is what makes us feel the way we do about such attempts whether on the

part of the epigoni or of the master himself. This links up with the second reason which philosophically is the more important.

An individual creation is important not only for itself but also as evidencing the seeking for an ideal and, to some extent, the embodying thereof. If, therefore, one repeats or imitates one shows that the seeking for the ideal has been lost and that one has fallen in love with the creature rather than the creation of which it was but one instance, one symbol. The end of artistic activity, as that of any other ideal seeking, is not merely something specific—though it is that, too—but the realization of that which no one knows exactly what it is. However, though we never know very exactly the ideal we are seeking, it is extremely effective in making us reject the alternatives we feel to be inadequate and in letting us not remain content with what we have achieved.

This characteristic of ideals as being unknown yet effective led Plato to the conclusion that the soul must have been acquainted with them before being born in this world where passing time seems the essence of things. Köhler in his book *The Place of Value in a World of Facts,* is led to the analogous situation in a man's mind when he cannot tell you what the exact name of his friend is, but can reject with perfect confidence and knowledge the names you suggest as being definitely not his. This again is an appeal to memory, though Köhler does not draw the conclusion that Plato did. Instead of leading into the realm of the transcendent, it points to the personal unconscious which as a memory-trace of the past influences and controls the present consciousness. The linkage of the personal with the social, both at the conscious and the unconscious

levels, is easy to make and thus we get all the sociological theories of art. If a residuum is still felt to be left which seems unaccounted for, and unaccountable in terms of the personal conscious and unconscious as rooted in the society in which one happened to be born and wherein one lived and grew up, the recourse is had to the collective unconscious which is supposed to underlie both societies and persons in their ostensive manifestation in time. The hypothesis of the collective unconscious is supposed to explain how creative endeavour is controlled by factors of which the conscious mind knows nothing in the process of creation. Unfortunately, it is forgotten that the unconscious, whether personal or collective, can only causally determine an activity and that it is too determinate, finished and final to explain the creative pursuit of an ever-alluring ideal. The past, in whatever form, cannot but be treated as something that has happened once and for all. It is there in its determinacy, however difficult it may be to determine it. The future, on the other hand, is indeterminate in an essential sense and any attempt to understand it wholly in terms of the past is bound to lead to a denial of this indeterminacy. The past, of course, itself was a future at some time but then it was as indeterminate as that which happens to be future at the present time. In fact, it is because of this reason that no event in the past can be completely understood in terms of the other events that constituted its past. We always seem to say it could not have happened otherwise, forgetting that if something else had happened we would have said the same thing. People who try to understand a past event seem to feel its inevitability and when they do not do so, they ascribe it to the lack of information about the

preceding past. But they are far more informed about the present, yet with respect to the oncoming future they feel the same uncertain indeterminacy. This they again ascribe to lack of information, but they have just not asked themselves what it would mean to have complete information or knowledge.

In a sense, even if the complete causality of a work of art were known it would not mean its understanding in a very important and relevant sense of the term. There is an intrinsic reference to meaning, value, and significance without understanding which the work cannot be understood at all. What two critics dispute about a work of art is not its causality, but what it means or says or signifies, and how well it does this. The discussion is not in terms of the factors that produced the work, though historians of a certain sort are attempting to do so always, but rather in terms of what it seeks to convey and how profound is its revelation for human life and how successfully does it do this.

The distinction I am trying to point out is not the same as 'understanding in terms of causes' and 'understanding in terms of reasons' which has been discussed in some recent literature on ethics. It may be a perfectly good reason that the artist wanted money or fame or that he just wanted to while away his time or escape from boredom, but these and a hundred others like these in no way help us in understanding the work he creates. It is only in terms of the meaning and values inherent in the work that we can understand it. In fact, even such a common thing as the uttered or written statement cannot be understood in causal terms alone. One may know all the causal factors that have gone into the utterance and yet not know what was being said or

communicated. The 'reasons' and 'causes', then, do not exhaust the terms in which everything is understood.

This point is so important for the understanding of human society that it needs to be emphasized again and again. For, though society is not exactly a work of art, it is very much like one. Even at the risk of exaggeration, I would like to say it is more like a work of art than an object in nature. It is a human creation, and shares with others of his creations the characteristic that it is not understandable in causal terms alone. Obviously, it is not the creation of an isolated individual, nor is it a very conscious one. It is not that men get together and say, 'Now let us create a society', though there is never a time when men are not asking themselves whether the society they are living in is all right, what is wrong with it, where it can be improved and in which direction. If the ideal aspect of society as a collective creation of human individuals is not paid attention to, a very important truth about it will be missed. Understanding in terms of pure causality would do violence to any human creation, and society is no exception to this general rule.

Students of cultures and civilizations have not been entirely unaware of this fact. They have been struck, time and again, by the value-aspect of a society as embodied in and evidenced by its cultural creations. The anthropologists have gone so far as to see the dominant themes, the leit-motifs, the recurring patterns in all activities that men undertake and to find the distinguishing unity of a culture through these characteristics. The idea of culture-souls has been propounded and it has been contended that societies, like individuals, have a unity and seeking of their own. They are the realization of an

idea and they cease to be when the potentialities of the idea are realized and exhausted. The method, it has again and again been argued, is one of empathy, *einfühlung,* intuition, insight. The Germans epitomized the distinction in their classic division of sciences between *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften.* Any creation of the human spirit, anything in which man was essentially involved, it was contended, could be understood only in a manner and through a method that was basically at variance with the one used in the natural sciences.

The approach and the argument are not very fashionable today. But what is of importance to note is the fact that it is the persons primarily concerned with the cultural products seriously who tend to take this view also. There is something in the product of a human creation, especially of the sort that seems to seek an ideal value, which makes it appear obvious that it be understood in non-causal terms. Where meanings are concerned, the clue is not to be found in causality but somewhere else. No amount of physiological or psychological knowledge as to how a sentence comes to be spoken or uttered can give one an understanding of what the sentence means. Similarly, one may very well reproduce the written marks on paper infallibly and yet not know what they mean. The case of languages that remain undeciphered still is well known to everybody. What we do not know is certainly not how these marks can be produced in stone or on paper, but what these marks mean, which is a very different thing.

The question, then, is not whether there are objects with respect to which non-causal understanding alone is relevant or whether there is such a thing as non-causal

understanding. Rather, the question is whether society is such an object or not and whether for its understanding the causal approach is all-sufficient. Further, as the causal approach is too often identified with the sciences and the non-causal approach with the arts, the question will be whether the so-called scientific approach is sufficient for the understanding of society. The dispute between the two approaches is of long standing and if there is a prestige of science tremendously augmented today by the technological miracles it has brought into being, there is also a prestige of the arts traditionally known under the name of 'humanities' and brought to critical attention today by the danger to man which is spelled by the same technological miracles brought into being by the causal knowledge of the physical sciences. The answer to the question, then, is not to be given in terms of the prestige-value of an approach which may happen to be fashionable at a certain time among certain groups of people. Rather, the adequacy of the approach will itself be judged according to the nature of the subject matter it is used to deal with.

Society, it will be agreed by almost everybody, is not quite a natural phenomenon in the same sense in which a work of art is generally not regarded to be such. It is true that there are societies of ants and bees, but so are there nests and beehives and rainbows and sunsets and spiders' webs which, though sometimes very beautiful, no one regards as works of art. We need not enter into the complicated question whether there can be anything which we could with justice regard as not a natural phenomenon. But in case there are such objects—and most people agree that it is a misuse of the term 'natural object' to apply it to works of art—then society

is surely one of them. It would not exist apart from man's perpetual concern with it. Though adult man may exist apart from all society for years and sometimes even for his whole life, there could certainly be no society apart from man. Of course, it is true that we cannot conceive of man as having become human apart from any social context, but that only means the active concern of other human beings for his existence and growth. It does not, by any means, imply that society is a natural object. In fact, the very realization that man cannot become human without society of some sort makes it to some extent the central concern of all men. The politician, the lawyer and the moralist do this to a pre-eminent degree and this concern itself of man that without his thinking and active co-operation society itself would not be, differentiates it so clearly from objects of nature which can well get along without his help.

This is not quite true. There are things which everyone regards as natural and yet with respect to which it is true that they would not have been but for the activity of man. There are hundreds of chemical compounds and synthetic products which would not have been there but for man. Surely, no one thinks that orlon or dacron or nylon are not objects of nature, even though they would not have been there if man had not created them. Even elements, for that matter, may be created in a laboratory, which would not otherwise have existed in nature. It is not so inconceivable that some of the transuranic elements to be discovered or already discovered may just not be found anywhere else in the world apart from the activity of the scientist who brings them into being under very special conditions. Yet, these are the

very sort of things we are habituated to consider as natural objects.

This all, of course, is true. Still, there is a radical difference between these creations of man and those which are generally regarded as non-natural objects. The former do not embody any ideal meanings or values as the latter always invariably do and they never require any other concepts or categories for their understanding than the ones required for those that have not been created by man. There is, then, a sort of continuity between the natural objects created by man and those not created by him. There will be nothing otiose in imagining them to have existed in nature even apart from him. This, on the other hand, will seem certainly odd with respect to art objects. One may occasionally come across a rock which looks like a statue but one has only to move a little and look from another angle to discover how mistaken one was if one had thought it was a work created by man. More often, it is like seeing figures in floating clouds which remind one of certain things and dissolve after a certain time. One might try to suggest a similarity between the shifting patterns revealed by clouds in the sky and the art-piece in the Museum of Modern Art in New York which continuously revolves and shows new patterns. The comparison, however, will be wrong, for the clouds do not always show a pattern and the suggestion of a particular figure is not replaced by the suggestion of another figure but by nothing at all. This is important, for there is hardly a created work of art which is not meant to be looked at from all sides and be felt as significant. Further, the museum-piece itself is hardly a work of art. It is just a more sophisticated and more interesting kaleidoscope.

There may sometimes be an occasional mistaking of a natural object for a non-natural one, but it seldom lasts for long. A closer look always reveals the mistake. One does not find paintings in nature or statues, and if one comes across them in Altamira caves or on Easter Island one does not think them the work of the wind and the waves. An Aeolian harp may give a pleasing sound while swinging in the wind, but so may a brook running over pebbles and none will think of mistaking either of them for music. There is an aspect of man's ideal creations which is missing in these things; and it is missing equally in those which, though natural objects, may legitimately be said to be his creation also. The aspect is the one which is concerned with meaning and value.

Society, it will be agreed, is a human creation. The question, then, will pose itself: 'What sort of creation is this creation of man?' Is it like the natural objects he creates or like the works of art which he creates also? The answer obviously is that it is like neither of them, but rather is a third order of creation which has some of the characteristics of both, yet differs from them in essential respects. It is this fact, that basically society can neither be treated purely as a work of art nor as a natural object, which has vitiated both the intuitive-empathic and the scientific-causal approaches to its understanding. That it is not a natural object, whether man-created or otherwise, may be seen by the simple fact that an ideal concern with it has been a continuous preoccupation of man from the earliest times. Utopias have been conceived and written about and sought to be realized everywhere. There are no ideal natural objects; they are what they are. One discovers laws of nature;

one does not legislate them. One does not ask 'what nature ought to be', but 'what nature is'. People might think of an ideal Garden of Eden where nature was what they would like it to be, but it is never in the context of an ideal project to be worked for and realized. One just does not know what to do in order to change the laws of nature, except perhaps to pray to the Lord to effect it in some way or other. In fact, we could not even reasonably say what it would mean for one law in nature to be better than another.

That society is not quite like a work of art should be equally obvious. One of its primary concerns is to make men live, not in any metaphorical sense of the word, but in its strict, literal, biological sense. It is equally very much concerned with the smoothening of the interrelations between men. It also tries to make the everyday situation of recurrent intercourse between people predictable to a certain extent so that men may reasonably rely on what to expect from other people in certain situations. It tries to impose a causal nexus of its own on the one it finds prevailing in nature. Also, it is an activity that has to continue all the time, almost like nature, which never ceases.

These characteristics are not found in art objects. In a sense, society is never an object though we try to understand it as such. Human beings are too much and too continuously involved in it for it to have the status of an object. There seems nothing finished to contemplate; the curtain never seems to fall. We are witnesses of a play that goes on and on and does not even have a pre-existent text which is supposed to be interpreted and, to cap it all, there is none who is not in the cast and is not on the stage and in the play.

Obviously, the strict parallel with an art-object is extremely dubious to make. Society is too much enmeshed in nature and too much concerned with the values of survival to be much of a work of art. Of course, the artist too uses materials from nature and is supposed to respect their ingrained quality if his work is to achieve any great excellence. But the qualities which he has to take into account are only those which, so to say, belong to the *appearance* of the object. It is the colours, sounds, textures, that he is concerned with and though these have a being of their own which limits and restricts the artistic endeavour, it is not what may be called a 'willed resistance'. The nature of the material to which the respect is to be paid is itself, so to say, its *aesthetic* nature. It certainly is not what an engineer will have to take into account. That a bridge may not collapse requires considerations of an order different from those that go into the making of it as beautiful. The functionalists have tried to emphasize the indissoluble unity of the two. The beauty, however, in their view should be a dependent variable of achieved utility. For, if the object has been produced to perform its functions with the greatest efficiency, it must be beautiful also. Unfortunately, this does not happen to be the case. A Chinese jar, 'moving perpetually in its stillness', performs its function no better than any ordinary jar anywhere in the world. But even if it were so, it could not be denied that there are objects whose sole function lies in just being beautiful. In their case at least, there would be no utility apart from beauty and, thus, to talk of the indissoluble unity of the two would be wrong.

The two aspects are, then, different. The artist, in certain of his projects, may try to arrange a marriage of

the two. But that they are two and, therefore, distinct and different, he grants by this very attempt. The considerations that he has to bring into harmony belong to two different orders. And, then, there certainly are arts which are concerned with the creation of objects which have no utility apart from being themselves. The distinction between arts and crafts, the artisan and the artist, is usually drawn on this basis.

Is society, then, like a minor craft which tries to marry considerations of utility with considerations of beauty? The utilitarian considerations have to be paramount, for the functional exigencies of the system are primary. But they are tempered by other considerations, the considerations of rhythm, ritual and ceremony. There is a concern with *appearance*, in the literal sense of the word. It is not only women who ask a hundred times a day, 'How do I look?' Nor is it the man alone who fixes his tie, time and again, and smiles into the mirror before he goes out. There is not an aspect of social life which is not shot through with considerations for appearances, and, in certain contexts, the term 'high society' means nothing but this.

Still, however true this may be, society, unlike the minor crafts, is concerned with higher values also. There is no society which does not condemn mere appearances and there is always a seeking for sincerity in the pursuit of these ideal values. The heroes whom a society venerates and tries to perpetuate are seldom among those who lived merely for appearances' sake. They are usually the persons who have lived and died for ideals, dear to their hearts. The martyr and the saint, the scientist and the sage, the reformer and the revolutionary, the explorer and the creator—these have been the

heroes of every culture, and not the lady of fashion or the man of the cocktail parties.

Society, then, is both like a craft in that it is inalienably concerned with existential considerations which have a necessary primacy over everything else, and also like great works of art which are concerned with ideal meanings and values without which they almost cease to be anything at all. But it is unlike both in that it results in no finished product which can be viewed from all points in space or which can be grasped as a whole by anyone interested in it. Nor does it aim at the creation of any such product. The historian of cultures and civilizations may view them as such, especially when they appear as past and dead. But they themselves never sought anything of the kind. They were the seekers after eternal life; the denouement which the onlooker sees in their life was not wished for by them. An individual, in exceptional cases, may seek death or annihilation but a society, even in the most extreme circumstances, never does that. It seeks perpetuation and something more than perpetuation—ideals and values and a meaningful life worth living. The love of the past and the seeking for the future are inevitably intertwined in the present of every society. The one gives it specific being and the pride in being what it is. It gives it an identity without which it will not even know what it is. The other gives it hope, something to live for, something that makes life meaningful, that gives it the quality of ever seeking for ideals which seem always to be at the next turn till man reaches there.

Society, then, is neither a natural object of the type most physical sciences study nor does it belong even to those types of natural objects which may legitimately

be said to be created by man; nor is it like those creations of man which are studied by the cultural sciences, the sciences which may be said to study objects whose essence lies not in the causal nexus in which they are situated but rather in what they symbolize and embody in themselves; nor is it even like those creations in which considerations of utility are tempered by considerations of beauty. It is rather an object of its own kind and though it shares certain characteristics with all of these, yet it differs from all of them in essential respects. Embedded in the causal realm of nature, concerned with ensuring survival and perpetuation of its members, happy only in its dreams, proud only of what it stands for, it is the self-conscious creation of continuing generations who are in love with it and sick of it at the same time. Just as man hates the body in which he sometimes feels the soul to be imprisoned and loves it too as the embodiment of beauty and love, so does he feel about society also. It imprisons and frees him at the same time; it is his cross and his delight. He needs it almost for everything that he cares for; yet in his deepest self he wishes it were not so and he is convinced that ultimately it belongs to a secondary order.

If society is such a complex object uniting in itself characteristics of such different orders, it has to be understood in a complex way, too. Hardly any one method could suffice for its understanding. Each would have to be supplemented and limited by others and each will reveal some one aspect only. Prediction, being closely linked to the causal approach alone, will thus be discovered to have serious limitations in the understanding of societies. There will be crucial and significant aspects in the understanding of which the ap-

proach itself will be irrelevant. If the basic assumption concerning human freedom, inevitably presupposed by all significant seeking of man, is taken seriously, then the limitation in predictability will be seen as intrinsically built into the system. The usual statistical way out is in a very important sense blocked by the fact that it is the statistically random and the marginal which may be qualitatively the most significant for society. It is the exceptional which may be the more important and thus a heavy reliance on the repeatable and the average may itself be mistaken. Society undoubtedly is situated in a causal nexus and has functional exigencies to fulfil if it is to survive, but it also dreams of values and tries to embody them and thinks itself worthwhile only to the extent it is able to do so.

The causal, the functional, the aesthetic and the valuational are intertwined in the life of society and any attempt to understand it must unravel all these aspects and approach each in the appropriate manner. The aspects, though different, are, however, not apart. They are united and society is a unity both at the causal-functional and the logico-meaningful levels. The mistake has always been to view the unity from one side alone while it operates simultaneously from both the sides. This opens up the problem of unity which will be dealt with in the next section devoted to a consideration of the problems clustering around the concept of change.

PART III

PROBLEMS CLUSTERING AROUND THE CONCEPT OF CHANGE