CHAPTER - IV
ATTITUDE OF MARX AND NIMBĀRKA TO RELIGION

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Almost all social thinkers take much pains to settle the question whether religion has any impact on society or not. Religion appears to some thinkers as a hindrance to the free development of society, and to others as necessary condition for the development of it. The investigators of ideal society engage themselves to deal with the role of religion in a society and there is a storm of controversy among the reformers of society in east and west. Though Marx does not join his hand with spiritual socialist of the east, he feels it necessary to examine the role of religion in forming a better society.

It is a fact that in his treatment of alienation Marx frees himself from the traditional boundary of thought and necessarily criticises religion severely as abstract theory. But the religious concern of early Marx should not be ignored as youthful fancy. For a total understanding of Marx's criticism of the existing condition of the society his understanding of social man, the significance of the
writings of early Marx demands proper attention. (1)

That, Marx is dedicated for mankind has been first revealed in the few documents of young Marx dated from 1835. Marx concludes his third school essay "Reflection of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession" with the words "If we have chosen the position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but

(1) ....if the religious tone of the matriculation essays of 1835, and of the human concerns expressed in some of his early writings are ignored, we might miss not only the convicitional stance of Marx's logic through which he arrives at the understanding of man as "Gattungswesen" (species - being, social man) but also the cutting edge of his criticism of the existing condition of the world. Therefore, even though a religious stage may be found impervious to the critics of Marx in understanding him, and even though Marx did not strain any nerve to establish the primacy of a religious stage by presenting proofs, in so far as Marx's originary concerns of alienation proceed from an understanding of Gattungswesen with the conviction of a calling the significance of this stage cannot be ignored. - Marx on Alienation, p. 17, Minerva Associates (Publication), Calcutta - 1976.
perpetually at work, and over our ashes will be shed the hot tears of noble people". (2)

The school essays reveal early Marx's attitude to religion, and we find that Marx in this stage does not find any contradiction between religion and human development; on the contrary, religion appears here as a means of development. In his school essay on religion entitled "The Union of Believers with Christ according to John", Marx hold the opinion that as the whole of history shows, only in communion with Christ does man rise above his limitations to a genuinely virtuous life. Marx regards that religion cannot rest on the individual's sensual requirements or urges, as these lead him astray from virtue. The striving for knowledge of man is displaced by his sensual cravings for worldly pleasure, and his longing for truth is put out by the sweetly gratifying power of lies and therefore, man does not fulfil its purpose and is not worthy of God who created him. (3) But man has a natural inclination for good,


(3) ..... the striving for knowledge is supplanted by a base striving for worldly goods, the longing for truth is extinguished by the sweetly flattering power of lies; and so there stands man, the only being in nature which does not fulfil its purpose, the only member of the totality of creation which is not worthy of the God who created it. Ibid, p. 637.
for the truth and a strong desire for the Supreme Being and Marx observes "... union with Christ consists in the most intimate, most vital communion with Him, in having Him before our eyes and in our hearts and being so imbued with the highest love for Him, at the same time we turn our hearts to our brothers whom He has closely bound to us and for whom also He sacrificed Himself". (4) Religion here is a means of union with God and it is also a way for broadening the heart for fellow feeling. Religious behaviour appears to him a free and joyous activity. Religion removes the harsh notion of duty by uniting duty with love. (5)

Man has the capacity to choose his own aim, and so he differs from the animal. The possibility of the choice of a profession and the necessity of it is a great benefit of man over other creatures. But this choice is not free from danger. The unskilled choice may lead the man astray. Consequently, he must be fully conscious about the responsibility of choosing a profession for himself as well as for mankind.

(5) Therefore, union with Christ bestows a joy which the Epicurean strives vainly to derive from his frivolous philosophy. - Ibid, p. 639.
One must be free from every external influence, ambitions and vanities, and choose his profession in calm and concentrated manner. Marx thinks that Deity points a general aim and man is to respond it consciously. The Deity has given to man a general goal to improve mankind and to dignify himself but given up to him to seek the means by which he could attain this goal, left it up to him to choose the position in society which is most appropriate and from which he could best lift up both himself and society, and so it is necessary to be serious in our choosing of profession. "We must therefore seriously examine", Marx thinks, "whether we have really been inspired in our choice of a profession, whether an inner voice approves it, or whether this inspiration is a delusion, and what we took to be a call from the Deity was self-deception". Marx is convinced of a Deity's calling which is a sure guide for the improvement of mankind but there is always the fear that the deepest conviction and the innermost voice of the heart is easily

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(6) To man, too, the Deity gave a general aim, that of ennobling mankind and himself, but he left it to man to seek the means by which this aim can be achieved. Ibid, p. 3.

(7) Ibid, pp. 3-4.
immersed by self-deceit. The self-deceit is the consequence of a fury ambination by which man fails to respond the Deity's call and becomes a plaything of lusts, and he finds his wish unfulfilled and ideals unsatisfied, and thus he becomes the curse of humanity, (8) and in this position his reason fails to be his advocate. Experience as well as keen observation cannot also help him, because he is deceived by emotion and fantasy. (9) To early Marx, even the social relation reveals as a bondage and a curse. The contradiction between the determined social relations and the Deity's calling reveals to a man when he wants to over-come it. He fails to respond the Deity's calling also for his physical nature. His whole life becomes a ceaseless struggle between spiritual and corporal principle. (10) This thing is painful but unreducible. "Self-contempt", Marx thinks, "is a serpent, that ever gnaws at one's breast, sucking the life-blood from one's heart and mixing it with the poison of

(8) We shall soon see our wishes unfulfilled, our ideas unsatisfied, and we shall inveigh against the Deity and curse mankind. Ibid. p.4.

(9) Our own reason cannot be counsellor here; for it is supported neither by emotion nor by profound observation, being deceived by emotion and blinded by fantasy.-Ibid.

(10) ... our whole life is an unhappy struggle between the mental and the bodily principle. - Ibid, p. 7.
misanthropy and despair". (11) Here Marx hits the eternal problems which all religions of different ages wants to solve directly and from a definite angles. The problems of man is nothing but the consequence of the refusal of the 'inner voice' of the heart by the man who is bounded by social customs and relations ".... we cannot always" Marx clarifies, "attain the position to which we believe we are called; our relations in society have to some extent already begun to be established before we are in a position to determine them". (12) This is the emergence of the future Marx and the seed of his future hot-discussed theory - the relation of man in society - to which Marx engages himself tirelessly till he services.

The most important document of this period in Marx's intellectual development is the letter to his father on November 10, 1837. In the beginning of his letter, Marx writes that some moments in a man's life are like turning points. (13) He engages with one of these and points to a

(11) Ibid.
(13) There are moments in one's life which are like frontier posts marking the completion of a period but at the same time clearly indicating a new direction. - Ibid. p. 10.
new line of departure. He sums up a year of studies at the Berlin University in a spirit of utmost self-criticism. This remarkable document reveals the whole man of Marx in the youth giving every bit of his spiritual and corporeal strength for gaining truth. He reveals in his letter an insatiable thirst for knowledge, inexhaustible energy and merciless self-criticism. Marx begins by most sharply blamming his poetical essays. His verse is purely idealistic. Idealism is meaningless just because it has no touch with life. An abstract contrast between 'what ought to be' and 'what is', which was the distinctive feature of the idealism of Kant and Fichte, is meaningless. His letter reveals that his criticism of the subjective 'what ought to be' is directly connected with his study of the Philosophy of Hegel. The opposition between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' is appeared as a characteristic of idealism. His criticism of abstract contrast between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' leads to his criticism of subjectivism and ultimately leads him to the acceptance of practical world-view. "From the idealism which by the way", Marx says, "I had compared and nourished with the idealism of Kant and Fichte, I arrived at the point of seeking the idea in reality itself. If previously

(14) ...... the same opposition between what is and what ought to be, which is characteristic of idealism. - Ibid, p. 12.
the gods had dwelt above the earth, now they became its centre". (15) The "seeking the idea in reality" itself may appear to some as the acceptance of the standpoint of Hegel's objective idealism but the emergence of Marx's practical outlook begins to flourish from this time.

By his father's insistence, although Marx has to study law, his main interest at the University is Philosophy. After his father's death in May, 1838, he gives up the idea of specialising in law and devotes entirely to philosophy. From 1839, Marx begins to study the history of philosophy, above all Epicureanism, Stoicism and Scepticism. He first intends to confine himself in his study of these philosophical teachings initially in a narrow sphere, on the basis of which he prepares the dissertation, entitled "Difference Between the Democratic and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature" - for which he receives his doctoral degree in April, 1841 from the University of Jena. This dissertation reveals his views of ancient philosophy and manifests the development of his political and philosophical views and also reveals his attitude to the burning social issues in Germany of that

period. Marx shows in his dissertation that philosophy develops into practical activity. The keystone of the whole dissertation is that, philosophy, at the highest stage of its development, at any rate, is in principle anti-speculative and is the motive force behind social creativity. The first necessity for philosophical investigation is a bold, free mind. Philosophy appears as the negation of so-called religion. It begins where man rises above the stupidity and superstitious. (16) Marx observes that Epicurus, a distinguished representative of Greek Philosophy, initiates the beginning of true philosophy: a rational attitude to reality which rejects superstition.

Marx's dissertation reveals that a rational view opposes the fantastic view and it is the theoretical view of the negation of fantastic view and it is the theoretical basis for the negation of religion. Unreason appears as the true substance of religion and so each of the religions claims itself to be the only true one, and Marx criticises it severely "Come with your gods into a country where other gods are worshipped, and you will be shown to suffer from fantasies and abstractions and justly so". (18)

(16) Stupidity and superstition also are Titans - Ibid, p. 68.
(17) Epicurus is therefore the greatest representative of Greek Enlightenment - Ibid, p. 73.
Here Marx is inclined to see religion as almost the chief force that enslaves man. It is the task of philosophy to overcome the unreason and make the man rational. Actually speaking, Marx does not recognise all heavenly and earthly gods who do not acknowledge human self-consciousness,(19) and also criticises religion in which the god of one country is not approved by the other. Marx's love for freedom and rationality and hatred for oppression of man by man created by the ignorance and fear of man are clearly expressed in his doctoral dissertation.

Marx joins the Bonn University as teacher but finding it impossible to work at a German University while carrying on a struggle against the religious and political ideology prevalent in the country he engages himself into the political struggle and revolutionary - democratic journalism. In April, 1842, he becomes a contributor of the Rheinische Zeitung on politics, commerce and industry and in October of that year its editor in chief. This stage is important for Marx's ideological development. In his

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editorials Marx makes a contrast between Philosophy and distorted religion and votes for philosophy. In one of his editorials, he remarks "that philosophy, the wisdom of the world has a greater right to concern itself with the realm of this world, with the state, than has the wisdom of the other world, religion". (20) Philosophy does not hang in the air. It deals with the world just as the brain is not found outside the man. It represents the living soul of culture. It is spiritual quintessence of its time. Philosophy is necessary in changing the situation and making man conscious. "Philosophers" Marx conceives "do not spring up like mushrooms out of ground; they are products of their time, of their nation, whose most subtle, valuable and invisible juices flow in the ideas of philosophy. The same spirit that constructs railways with the hands of workers, constructs philosophical system in the brain of philosophers". (21) Blind faith and emotion are always hostile to philosophy and they are the son of religion. If Philosophy takes the place of religion then it must be beneficial for humankind. If religion is guided


by philosophy and merged with philosophy, then there cannot be any contrast. (22) In view of this Marx proclaims "It was not the downfall of the old religions that caused downfall of the ancient states, but the downfall of the ancient states that caused the downfall of the old religions". (23) From these observations of Marx it appears that Marx considers religion not as the cause but as the effect of social system.

Feuerbach's "Essence of Religion" makes a tremendous impression on Marx, as Engels affirms "We all at once became Feuerbachians" (24) Marx extends profound respects on Feuerbach because of his attack on the speculative theology and creation of imaginary fear of religion which make alienation possible. According to Feuerbach, it is not God who created man but it is man who created God. Religion is a fantasy. It compensates man for his sense of own inadequacy, — his sense that he is, in fact,

(22) The Epicurean, Stoic, Sceptic Philosophies were the religions of cultured Romans when Rome had reached the zenith of its development. Ibid, p. 189.

(23) Ibid.

greatly inferior to what he might be. In his notion of God man projects his idea of what he aspires to and cannot yet attain; he creates God in his own image or rather in the image of himself as he unconsciously desires to be.

Religion is a product of man's immaturity. The idea of God expresses man's sense of his own worth, - of the worth of his fully realised self. This impoverishes man, because it robs him of his own features and content in favour of a projection, a product of his mind which acquires the guise of a social belief, and thus, it makes its existence independent of its maker, it becomes an alien and often hostile force gradually coming to rule over man. Once created, and socially objectified religious beliefs become a force that is not only alien to man but also rules him and he is unable to shake off. This domination of man's product over man, Marx considers, to be the curse of religious alienation. He thinks as in religion, man is governed by the product of his own brain, so in capitalistic production he is governed by his own hand. He writes "As in religion the human imagination's own activity, the activity of man's head and his heart, reacts independently on the individual as an alien activity of Gods or devils, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity. It belongs to another and the loss of himself". (25) Hegel speaks of spirit.

Feuerbach speaks of man. Reality for Hegel, is spirit which is essentially active. It is an activity which culminates in complete self-knowledge and satisfaction. But before it has attained self-knowledge it feels itself a stranger in the world and it seeks compensation for the sense of self-estrangement in the idea of another world in which it is fully at home and satisfied. Thus, if one substitutes the notion of spirit by the notion of finite selves, man in the world, one moves from Hegel to Feuerbach. Man aspires for full self-realisation to the full exercise of his capacity which he thinks he has. He wants to enjoy his unrealised capacity into his imaginary creation of God, to whom he thinks to find full perfection. But whereas Feuerbach takes interest in the psychological state of the believer, Marx takes an interest in the social conditions of belief. Religion is a fantasy of men afflicted by the sense of his own inadequacy and will disappear when he is no longer afflicted. He is so because he lives in such a social environment which does not allow him to realise his potentialities. He is the victim of the forces which he has himself produced, though he does not know how he has done so. He engages in production to satisfy his wants, but the system of production is such that he is impelled into courses which do not satisfy him. Only when
man ceases to be the victim of the productive system and
the money economy brought into being by this effort to
satisfy his needs will he be able to live a fully satis-
fyng life.

Religion to Marx is not the cause but the effect
of social oppression. The article "On The Jewish Question"
is written by Marx in connection with two articles of Bauer,
in which Bauer asserts that social emancipation means the
abolition of religion. Marx shows in his essay that this
approach is idealistic, and that religion is not the cause
but the effect of social narrowness. "We no longer regard
religion" Marx opines, "as the cause, but only as the
manifestation of secular narrowness. Therefore, we explain
the religious limitations of the free citizens by their
secular limitations. We do not assert that they must over-
come their religious narrowness in order to get rid of
their secular restrictions, we assert that they will over-
come their religious narrowness once they get rid of their
secular restrictions". (26) Abolition of religion from the
political sphere, according to Marx, is not the answer.

(26) On the Jewish Question, Karl Marx Frederick Engels -
Collected Works, Vol. 3, p. 151, Progress Publishers,
Moscow, 1975.
The separation of church from state and freedom of conscience etc. do not amount to human emancipation, because social oppression is not rooted in religion but in their social condition and historical development, and is merely given a fantastic expression in religion. So, Marx thinks, "The struggle against religion is therefore, indirectly a fight against the world of which religion is the spiritual aroma". (27) The search for the root of human oppression leads Marx to necessarily criticise the state power. Religion appears to him not the basis of the oppression but only a phenomenon. So the theological questions turn to him as secular questions and the relationship between political emancipation to religion reveals as the relationship of political emancipation to human emancipation. Marx thinks that "the existence of religion is the existence of a defect, the source of this defect can only be sought in the nature of the state itself". (28) So he regards religion as the manifestation of social limitations and to overcome religious narrowness it is necessary to overcome social restrictions. Marx sees the man keeping him in the hard reality and thinks for human emancipation from practical

and revolutionary standpoint. It appears to him that the main task is to change the world situation. It leads him to criticise the existing social condition and the criticism of religion appears to him as the presupposition of all criticism. (29) The centre point of this criticism is that "Man makes religion, religion does not make man. ....Man is the world of man, the state, society. This state, this society, produce religion, an inverted world-consciousness, because they are inverted world". (30)

The point to which Marx’s criticism of religion is directed is the circumstances which make the religion flourish. So Marx’s criticism of religion inevitably transforms into a criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics. (31) Religion, which is the object of Marx’s criticism is "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the

(29) "... criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism". Contribution To The Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law, Ibid. p. 175.

(30) Ibid.

(31) Thus the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics. - Ibid. p. 176.
people"(32) The goal of this criticism is the deliverance of human individual as a true human being from the oppressed and alienated position. Marx's criticism of religion puts an end to the threshold of human emancipation.(33)

The revolutionary perspective and appealing situation created by religion compels Marx to change his outlook on Christianity which he previously held. In his article, "The Communism of the Rheinischer Beobachter", Marx exposes the reactionary attempts of Church and Christianity which help the oppression increase. Communism to him is the revolutionary burden and destruction of Capitalist system whereas Christianity certifies oppression and man's exploitation of man. Christianity was used in the past to justify

(32) Ibid., p. 175.
(33) The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest being for man, hence with the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is debased, enslaved, forsaken and despicable being ..... -

Ibid. p. 182.
ancient slavery and the serf system. Today it admits the proletariat's exploitation, even if it admits it with limitation. Christianity praises that the division of society into opposite classes is a sacred necessity and it appeals to the exploiter to do good deeds. It promises the oppressed people to repay in a coming life for the injustices they have to suffer in this life. In a word, Christianity appears as a great hindrance in furthering the communist revolution.

"This social principles of Christianity" as Marx views, "preach cowardice, self-contempt, absement, submissiveness and humbleness, in short, all the qualities of the rabble and the proletariat, which will not permit itself to be treated as rabble, needs its courage, its self-confidence, its pride and its sense of independence even more than its bread. The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypocritical and the proletariat is revolutionary." (34) It is a hot challenge of revolution against Christian social principles. As a true revolutionaryist Marx cannot reconcile with the principles which help social oppression continue.

Marx does not contend that the mere progress of science will destroy religion, rather he believes that the root cause of religion will cease to exist only in a classless society, a society without exploitation. And yet Marx does not overlook a close connection between the progress of science and the decay of religion. Theology purports to answer the questions which lose the importance as science progress. Man, imbued with the scientific spirit, becomes indifferent to theology. Questions about the world which science fails to answer are either empty or unreasonable. Scientific progress may bring the alienation to an end. But the mere spread of scientific research and technological development cannot destroy religion; it is rather the transformation of society, a transformation closely connected with the progress of science, makes religion unnecessary. Science and Philosophy both are needed for the abolition of oppression. "Philosophy", Marx holds, "cannot be made a reality without the abolition of the proletariat and the proletariat cannot be abolished without philosophy being made a reality?"
Thus it appears that though Marx extends profound faith in religion in his early life, in his later age he revises his view and sharply criticises religion. His criticism of religion is directed to the social conditions in human society that makes a man alienated from himself, from other men and from society as a whole. Marx's criticism of religion is to be judged in terms of its impact on society.
SECTION - II

NIMBĀRKA ON RELIGION
The advocate of Nimbarka school believes that the role of religion in the development of society and individual life cannot be measured. The school finds no opposition between religion and philosophy. Religion is the highest philosophy of perfection. Self-realisation is the ultimate aim of human life, and religion is an inevitable means that helps one to attain such goal.

Nimbarka school considers religion from social and spiritual points of view. Religion, Nimbarka thinks, is closely connected with human life. Life, spiritual as also social, is not free from religion. Superstition, blind faith and emotion are nothing to do with religion. Actually religion does not make a man blind, but it makes a man ever-conscious. It does never make a man to satisfy his personal self-interest, but on the contrary, it helps one to feel the interests of others. Religion does never alienate one from other rather it makes one conscious about his real essence that leads him to be free from alienation. Likewise other Indian Philosophers, the followers of Nimbarka school also have been much influenced by the appeal of universal outlook of religion. So Dr. Roma Bose
rightly observes: "From the point of view of religion also, the doctrine of Nimbarka scored no small triumph, .....
Although a man is at first overwhelmed by the grandeur and majesty of the Lord, yet he cannot remain at a distance from Him for long, but is irresistibly drawn nearer by a bond of mutual love and living companionship. Hence it is that the doctrine of Nimbarka has captured the hearts of thousands."(1)

The teaching of Nimbarka Vedanta leads one to final deliverance and this emancipation is accrued from self-realisation. It is the ultimate aim of human life. So religion does never advise to give up family life and society as a whole. The main emphasis in Nimbarka's religion is given on the spirit with which one should perform one's duty. It puts emphasis on the inner purity, detachment of worldly interest, the cultivation of mind and

the ethical good virtues of self-control. Unlike the champion of Śaṅkara’s extreme Advaitism, Nimbārka, the exponent of the doctrine of dualistic non-dualism does not denounce the world and consider it neither as a dream nor a figment of imagination. The Nimbārka school is nearer and dearer to human mind because it admits the reality of the world and advises to lead both household life and ascetism that can lead one to attain the ultimate aim. The conscious being and the unconscious matter are manifestations of one and same Reality. The Absolute Reality or Supreme Soul is the material and efficient cause of the entire universe, and as a matter of fact, the reality of the world cannot be denied. All the

(2) ... We find Nimbarka to be very broad-minded and rational. He insists not only on the external performance of sacrifices and ceremonies, but equally on the inner purity and cultivation of the mind, and the ethical virtues of self-control, charity and the rest. He does not insist that in order to attain salvation one must give up society and one’s stage of life or asrama. He lays the greatest emphasis on the spirit with which one performs one’s duties. A man who performs his duties in a disinterested and unselfish spirit is able to attain salvation, whether he be a householder or an ascetic. - Ibid, p. 279.
conscious being and unconscious matter are the parts of one 
composite whole - the Supreme Spirit and therefore, dis-
tinct and non-distinct for Him. (3)

The Nimbārka system acknowledges the distinct indi-
viduality of human being. As in wordly state the position 
of individual has been accepted with due honour, so in the 
state of liberation also the indiduality has been honoured 
with full splendour. Like the Advaita Vedānta the Nimbārka 
Vedānta does admit neither the total annihilation of indi-
viduality nor complete identity with Supreme Being at the 
time of emancipation. Religion, as a Nimbārkist points out, 
leads to realise one's own essential nature and his similarity 
with Supreme Being. Having attained the highest beatitude 
an individual becomes in a position to realise his indivi-
duality in full perfection. (4)

(3) brahmopādānākatvādābhmavadsatyām, brahmabhinnative'pi 
brahmabhinnam jagaditi siddham. - Brahmasūtra 2.1.19, 
Vedāntapārijātasaurabha, Vedāntakaustabha, P.164, 

(4) jīvo'rciradikena mārgena param sampadya svābhāvikena 
rūpenāvirbhavatīti "param jyotirūpasampada svena 
rūpenabhinispadaye" iti vākyena pratipadyate, 
svenetisabdat. - Brahmasūtra 4.4.1, Vedāntapārijāta-
saurabha, P. 422, ibid.
Both the householder and the ascetic are entitled to follow the path prescribed by Nimbarka. The religious
declarations, as a Nimbarkist maintains do not make a hindrance to daily life or social life. The religious
and ethical duties may be followed by all the members of society. The religious way of life, which the teachers
of Nimbarka school prescribe for the posteriety is that one who desires highest good should perform his daily work
without being attached to the result of his action, as a result of which all his actions would not bind him. One
should perform one's duty in a spirit of service that all the actions of his daily life are worship to the Supreme
Being - that embraces all the objects of his activity. This impression may help the mind of the performer to concentrate on the universal essence that rests on each and every object of the world and this leads the mind of the performer to centre round one similar thought that all our apparently dissimilar knowables are united by one Absolute Energy. If one engages himself to perform all his actions with this idea then his mind becomes concentrated and thereby purified as a result of which it receives a capacity to penetrate into the truth. Nimbarka school puts a special emphasis on the concentration of mind. In the thought of this school, it is through the process of centralisation of mind that an investigator
becomes capable to grasp the truth or the very essence of an object. Religion reveals the truth that all diverse individuals are equal in their nature, as they are the parts of same Supreme Reality.\(^{(5)}\) All individuals are not essentially different. The doctrine of dualistic nondualism advanced by Nimbārka may help the reader to understand the arena of religion. The School, with all emphasis at its command admits the theory of unity in diversity or diversity in unity.\(^{(6)}\) Unity is the foundation on which all the diverse objects rest for their existence. The school does not believe in complete identity. In fact, not even two objects are identical in the world. There are difference of colour, size, sects and the like. The teacher of Nimbārka system also does not refuse to accept all the diversity to establish equality, in as much as that equality would bring the death of humanity. As the different flowers make a garland in which a single thread runs through so all men of different temperament make the

\(^{(5)}\) paramātmano jīvo'ṃśh - Brahmasūtra, Ibid, p. 235.

\(^{(6)}\) aṁśāsībhavājīvaparamātmanorbhedābhedau darsāyati - Ibid.
universe a unitary whole of whom the common essence is Absolute Self. As the waves of ocean all individuals are parts of Brahman, they are essentially equal and the Supreme Being and the individual are district as well as non district to each other. (7)

Religion, according to Nimbārka, is the greatest of all civilising force as it goes to restrain the baser instinct of man and manifest the divinity within him. It is based on the data gleaned by the intuition of pure heart, the first hand experience of the seer. Such intuition rests on the purification or concentration of mind and this concentration again needs self-restrain which is the key-stone of Nimbarka concept of religion. (8)

Nimbārka lays a special emphasis on "aharasuddhi". Here

(7) brahmaṇo jagadupādānātve jīvarūpeṇa brahmaṇā eva su-
khaduḥkhabhokṛtvāpattervedaprasiddho bhoktṛniyan-
trvibhāgo na syāditi cet. avibhāge'pi samudrataraṁ-
gayorīva suryatatprabhayorīva tayorvibhāghaḥ syat. -
Brahma-sūtra 2.1.13, ibid, p. 158.

(8) brahmajijñāsurvidyāṅgabhūtasvārakarmmana vidyāni-
śattisambhavē'pi śamadamādyupetaḥ syāt, "tasmā-
devaṁvicchānto dānta uparastitikṣuḥ samāhito
bhutva'tmanyevatamanam pasyedi'ti vidyangataya
samādividhrestesāmavasyanuṣṭheyatvāt. - Brahma-sūtra
3.4.27, Ibid, p. 368.
'ahara' signifies enjoyment or collection of the objects by the senses. The sound which we hear, the object which we see, the smell which we smell, the works that we perform by our hands and legs, the object we think by our mind, and the food which we take - all these are the object of 'āhāra'. And 'aharasuddhi' means controlling the senses in the process of enjoying earthly objects. Here 'ahara-suddhi' or purification of food, that is, object of respective senses, actually signifies concentration of mind. If one performs all his actions with the impression that all the objects are manifestations of one Supreme Soul\(^9\) that embraces every object, then only through the performance of such action mind becomes concentrated. This Nimbārka position receives its support from the clarion call of the great Upanisad.\(^{10}\)

\(^9\) isa vasyam idam sarvam - Isopanisad, Verse No. 1.

The religion does never make a man to exploit others by creating a sense of fear rather it teaches that one who desires to get rid of the social oppression and sufferings should meditate on Supreme Self as his own self. (11) The relation between the worshiper and the worshipped is not a relation of awe but of profound love and devotion. This sweet and intimate relation between God and man makes the doctrine of Nimbárka so popular. (12)


(12) But this relation is not a relation of awe, but a most relation of love and spontaneous devotion. The soul does not serve the Lord out of fear but out of love... It is the sweet, intimate relation between God and man that has made the doctrine of Nimbárka - which makes such a relation possible - so popular, along with other vaisnava schools, as against the Advaita theory of the identity of man and God, which may satisfy intellect but not feeling - the head, but not the heart. - The doctrine of Nimbárka, and His Followers, Bibliotheca Indica, Work No. 259, Vol-III, PP. 63-64, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1943.
SECTION - III

A REVIEW
Marx views religion as a hindrance for the progress of society, but the object of his criticism is mainly directed to the enslaving conditions of society of which religion is the effect. Nimbārka holds the view that religion is enriched with time-spirit. It is meant for providing every one's progressive physical, social and spiritual welfare. It is not confined itself in the lunary item of the idle rich or a cold-stored vested interest of the profiter. Thus Marx and Nimbārka do not join their hands in dealing with the problem whether religion is necessary or a hindrance for the development of society, and whether science and religion are incompatible with one another. In this animated controversy the thesis may share the view of Swami Ranganathananda that if science and religion are combined harmoniously they can be meant for an all-round developed human society, (1) and this view is now welcome by many a modern

(1) They are two great disciplines, which, in the light of Indian wisdom, reveal that, when relied on separatedly, can be counter-productive in the long run, but, when combined harmoniously, can bring about an all-round expression of human genius and total fulfilment. - Science and Religion, p. 3, Advaita Asram, Calcutta, Second Reprint, 1982.
scientist. The scientists and religious persons of the present century veer round to the point of view that science and religion can heartily embrace each other, without detriment to the cause for which each stands, and work for the good of humanity. It is being realised more and more by both that there are elements in science that religion can adopt in order to fortify itself, and elements in religion that can deepen and strengthen science.

Truth of modern sciences are not questioned as they are based on practical experience. Similarly religions also receive human experience as its foundation. While analysing the diverse religions of the world one may find that the truth which the religions teach and preach are the outcomes of the experience of the person concerned. Every religion is built up on one universal and adamantive foundation of direct experience. The question may be raised that these experiences are not possible, since they are not scientifically proved. But this charge is not convincing at all. If there has been one single experience at a particular time it follows that the possibility of that experience always remains. As science has its own method of investigation, the science of religion also has its own, and it is the method of concentration of mind. Following
this method many persons of different countries experience the truth of religion. After a thorough and sincere practice of this method if one finds it meaningless only then one achieves the right in denying the truth of religion. But without doing so if one shouts that there is no such truth he must be rejected as a lunatic. (2)

Religion is not detrimental to the growth of society, rather it is helpful in building up a better society. It may be argued that religion results in communal dissensions, sectarian squabbles and riots, and can help the anti-social forces to jeopardise the solidarity of a nation. But actually it is not religion rather it is ignorance and perversion of religion that is the root of all these ends. As science can

(2) There are the truths of the sages of all countries, of all ages, of men pure and unselfish, who had no motive but to do good to the world. They all declare that they have found some truth higher than what the senses can bring to us, and they invite verification. They ask us to take up the method and practise honestly, and then, if you do not find this higher truth, we will have the right to say there is no truth in the claim, but before we have done that we are not rational in denying the truth of their assertions. - Raja Yoga, P. 6, Published by Advaita Ashrama, 17th Impression, 1978, Calcutta.
neither be condemned nor be rejected for the dangerous effects for its misuse, so also religion cannot be condemned or rejected for its misuse and perversion. Science is always a means for development, and religion as such, is always a means for realisation. As there are many ways for a distinction, there may be different forms of religion but there is no opposition among them. But when they are used for fulfilling personal or group interest, then it is the distortion but not religion as such. Dharma or religion has been propounded for the welfare of social beings, and so it leads to advancement and growth of the society as a whole.\(^{(3)}\)

What is harmful to oneself one should not do to other.

This is the quintessence of dharma. While the great Isopaniṣad gives emphasis on the benefit to the individual who develops sarvātmabhava,\(^{(4)}\) the great Vādarāyana in his magnum opus Mahābhārata emphasises the special aspect of religion and asserts how sarvatmabhava promotes the welfare and well being of all living beings in the Universe.

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\(^{(3)}\) prabhavārthāya bhūtānām dharmapravacanām kṛtam |
   yah syāt prabhavasāmyuktah sa dharma iti
   niścayāḥ ||
   - Mahābhārata, Santiparva, 109, 10.

\(^{(4)}\) yastu sarvanibhūtāni ātmanyevanupasyati |
   sarvabhutesu cātmānam tatonavijigupsate||
   - Isopaniṣad - Verse No. 6.
In all the different stages of growth and decay in our life religion helps the manifestation of the higher potentialities of the human spirit. It is beneficial for all people of all countries and for all time to come. Swami Budhananda rightly remarks "Certainly, Russia, too, has a spiritual impulse ....... If Russia has a goal in view, a goal which has no design against other countries, if it has a 'should be' which does not militate against the general welfare of humanity as a whole, we may say Russia is downright religious inspite of Marx, Lenin and Stalin, inspite of her anti-godism and other such dogmas". (5)

(5) The Saving Challenge of Religion, p. 35,