CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION
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It is recognized today that one of the most critical problems facing mankind is that of human relations. How can men live together in peace and in comfort? Although groups of people are composed of individuals, many new problems of behaviour enter the picture where groups are concerned. In the present world we are more problematic to ourselves. Therefore, Julian Huxley says, "The first thing that the human species has to do is to prepare itself for the cosmic office to which it finds itself appointed to explore human nature, to find out what are the possibilities open to it. But the exploration of human nature and its possibilities has seriously begun. A vast new world of uncharted possibilities awaits its Columbus." (1)

Now we want a sound philosophy of man and society that is based on ethical investigations of man's experience. "Who am I" is the question that lies at the root of problem of man and society. The concept of individual and society is therefore not a fruitless concept.

The problems of religion, ethics, literature etc. are connected with the problem of man and society. Man, in Benjamin Franklin's profound definition, whose significance Karl Marx stressed, is a tool-making animal. The definition can be shown to be incorrect, as it includes a
patent contradiction, animals do not make tools, which means that an animal that does is not an animal. The paradox, however, is that this contradiction is not so much one of the definition as of life itself. Man is, in fact, an animal, and at the same time is no longer an animal. Now this contradiction cannot be resolved by saying that he is an animal in one respect and not an animal in another. Such is the dialectic of identity and difference, which was first substantiated by Hegel. Identity includes difference, difference includes identity. It is already senseless to ask which is the greater in this unit of the human and the animal, identity or difference have a qualitative character here and not a quantitative one. Study of the social life of people is the subject matter of the social sciences. Biology, however studies the structure and life activity of the human organism which is of immense importance for the protection of health, improving living conditions and dealing with many social problems.\(^{(2)}\) Man occupies a definite place in the generally accepted classification of animals, divided into classes, order, species, etc. Marx called man a species being, having in mind not the biological determinacy, but the social essence of man. Man is not purely a natural being, he is a human natural being, that is to say, he is being for himself. Therefore he is a special-being. \(^{(3)}\)
Whatever distinguishes man has from the animal, however, he is, as Aristotle said, a social animal. That definition, too, is contradictory, since an animal is not essentially a social being. Every definition, Spinoza said, is a negation, a negation of its own, inevitable limitedness, abstractness, and one sidedness.

Man, unlike the animal, is the product of that interaction between human individuals which forms a society. The moulding of the human, as a process of individual development is possible only in society. Man's difference from the animal is not only the result of the anthropological forming of the human race, which took thousands of years, but also the consequence of each human individual's own development, of an individual that belongs from birth to the species called Homo Sapiens.

Man's differences from the animal are varied. As Marx and Engels wrote: "Man can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their material life." This definition stresses the diversity of man's differences from the animal, at the same time singling out the
fundamental difference that constitutes the main feature of anthropogenesis.

The British archaeologist Gordon Childe observed, "To the archaeologist man is the tool making animal. Man makes tools because he has to." Man is a working creature and so a knowing one. He is constantly striving in his life to know the truth. People were sentenced to death, done away with, burnt for the sake of truth. Socrates, Copernicus, Giordano Bruno and the thousands and even millions of honest people have preferred to die for their belief in truth than to betray the truth or to renounce it. Hegel touching on the subject matter of philosophy wrote, "Truth is a noble word, and the thing is nobler still. So long as man is sound at heart and in spirit, the search for truth must awake all the enthusiasm of his nature". It is important for philosophical understanding of man to make clear the motives of his life activity. Why man acts, why he acts as he does and not otherwise, what self interest, and concern with what, move and stimulate him at any stage of historical development, how they influence his social and moral image— all these questions call for a substantiated concrete answer, and that answer is an inseparable component of the concept of individual and society.
The social nature of human personality is partially innate and partially acquired. The social nature of a person becomes well-defined through his interaction with society. His personality is moulded to a very great extent by the social group of which he is a member. A human child is not born in a helpless state in a lone world. He is born in a society where he is looked after and nurtured by his parents, relatives, nurses and the like. His existence in a social group is inevitable to a very great extent by the society which environs him. The social nature of man is partly innate and partly acquired. Social philosopher, however, hold different views on this problem. Again a society is a dynamic organization of individuals. Individual don't precede a society. Individuals have always lived in some form of society. Changing and evolution of a society is due to the modification of the nature of purposiveness of the members of such a society.

However, broadly speaking, two kinds of attempts seem to have been made in the history of human thought to understand human nature. The one attempt has been to degrade it, to point it in black colours, while the others has been to exalt and idealize it. Religions of the world, however, almost all of them, have seen human nature in an exalted form. Hinduism has taken the soul within man, which is really his essence, as the divine spark within him. The Advaita doctrine
takes human Soul and 'Brahman' as identical. The Mahabharata says that there is nothing higher than man on earth. Jainism, Christianity, Islam all believed that in the light of religious beliefs we can formulate the concept of individual and its relation to society.

Since human beings are interdependent, the good society should discourage all forms of exploitation, domination, injustice and inequality, which necessarily coarsen human sensibilities and depend on falsehoods for their continued existence, and should find ways of institutionalizing and nurturing the spirit of love, truthfulness, social service, cooperation, and solidarity. The old and modern conceptions of individuality is related with Gandhi's Concept of Individual. Shankara and his followers did not believe in the ultimate reality of separate human souls. The life of Shankara spent in active social organisation, illustrates this teaching.

The Buddhist didn't believe in any substance, neither in God nor in the human soul. They believed in the fact of personality created by ignorance and its many effects. The long active live of Buddha for the redemption of suffering fellow being shows his compassion for all individuals. But the teaching of Buddha and Shankara were mis-understood and misapplied. Similar things happened also in Christianity.

But positive expects of the teachings of the old great philoso-
phies of India have again been revived, in consonance with the modern western emphasis. Vivekananda has greatly emphasised the positive aspect of Advaita Vedanta, namely that "All this is nothing but Brahman."

The speeches and writings of Vivekananda ushered in the religious, national and yet international movements of India which culminated in her political freedom.

Rabindranath Tagore taught, on the basis of the Upanisads, Buddhism and the Vaishnava poets of medieval times, the same ideal of constructive social efforts rather than a world-denying cult of defeatism and he also attracted attention to the presence of God in the poor and the suffering people.

Gandhi utilised the new positive ideas of modern India by assimilating them in thoughts, living them in his life, and giving them social and political shapes.

As Gandhi was a deeply religious person, so his concept of individual and society has also originated from the religious thought he conceived. The Gita, the Koran, the Bible and the Ramayana were the main centres of his philosophy about man and the society. Gandhi has sometimes been spoken of as the interpreter of India to the outside world, but, it is equally true and even more significant that he was the
interpreter of India to herself.

Gandhi enriched the age-old philosophy of ahimsa. His real contribution consists in his research in the possibilities of ahimsa in all walks of life and its application to large mass movements. Satyagraha, he was convinced, was the only way to solve the problems of mankind. Non-violence is a universal law acting under all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction.

Gandhi's social experiment consisted in creating a non-violent society based on cooperation rather than competition, a society free from evil and exploitation. He introduced a new method of education, to pave the way for the new social order.

Here it is important to say that Gandhi's fight for the emancipation of the Harijans will always be reckoned in history as the most glorious aspect of his fight for human rights and dignity. The only comparable instance in history is Lincoln's struggle for the emancipation of Negro slave in America.

We can observe the two main features of Gandhi's techniques. First, the moral values embodied in his technique are based on his religious predisposition and faith in God and secondly Gandhi believed in the essential unity of all mankind. Religion was an aid to him in his endeavour to mobilize the masses. It gave him a technique of life
and a method of struggle.

Man is not a mere physical being conditioned by stimuli. The real being in man, the central truth is the spirit. Gandhi's views regarding human nature are intrinsically connected with moral principle. He took into account not only man's physical behaviour but also his real nature, his true self, the spiritual element in him. So he firmly believed that human nature is in its essence is one and that every man has the capacity for the highest possible development. He does not believe that man is all good, an angel at the beginning of his life, though man is essentially a spark of the divine.

Science can't solve the problem of harmony. Science has not only failed to find the principle of harmony between human relations, it has sometimes made them even worse. To be useful, it should be subordinate to spiritual ideals. According to Prof Harold Titus, "Men have to make decisions and to act, and philosophy should help them workout a scale of values and a philosophy of life by which they may live." Science has played an important part in man's development but it also presents the most imminent danger to his survival.

In this connection we can observe that Gandhi's concept of individual and society are very relevant. His theory of human nature was closely bound up with his views on God and religion. Gandhi
observed that three fundamental facts characterized human beings. Human beings were an integral part of the cosmos. Second, they were necessarily interdependent, and developed and fell together, and third, they were four-dimensioned beings made up of the body, the manas, the atman, and the Swabhava, whose interplay explained their behaviour and formed the basis of morality.

It is clear that unlike almost all the major traditions of western thought, which nearly separate human beings from animals and assign the former a supremely privileged position on earth, Gandhi followed Indian traditions in taking a cosmocentric view of human beings. The cosmos was a well-co-ordinated whole whose various parts were all linked in a system of interdependence. It consisted of different orders of being ranging from the material to the human, each governed by its own laws and standing in a complex relationship with the rest. Human being were an integral part of the cosmos, and were tied to it by the deepest bonds. In Gandhi's favourite metaphor, the cosmos was not a pyramid of which the material world was the base and human beings the apex, but a series of ever-widening circles encompassing human-kind, the sentient world, the material world, and the all-including cosmos. Since the cosmic spirit pervaded or is infused in the universe and was not outside it, the so-called natural world was not natural or ma-
Gandhi observed that the mind included chetana or consciousness which began at birth and ended with death. So, mind includes buddhi which took many forms and operated at several levels, and gave rise to such capacities as discernment, analytical reason, insight and intuition. The manas was also the seat of passions, thoughts, memory and moods. Gandhi believed that mind was primarily an instrument of knowledge and action, and sought to understand, control and bind its way around in the world.

The atman was the third dimension of human beings. Although it is often translated as soul, and although Gandhi sometimes used that term, it is sometimes translated as spirit. He believed that the cosmic spirit permeated or was infused in all living beings. The atman referred to the cosmic spirit as manifested in them, and represented the divine. For him the atman was not a being or a thing but a force, a source of energy. Just as the body was the source of physical energy, the atman was the source of spiritual force or energy. All through his life Gandhi strove to generate such an spiritual power in himself, which was why his political life was integrally bound up with his pursuit of moral perfection.

Again Gandhi believed that human beings had a distinct Swabhava
or psychological and moral constitution, made up of various tendencies and dispositions. According to him it was an obvious fact of life that from their very birth onwards, human beings exhibited different temperaments and psychological and moral inclinations, were drawn to and repelled by different things, and developed according to their inner bent. This unique individual nature was ontologically as important, and as central to their identity, as the universal human nature that they all shared in common. It held the individual together and constituted the ground of his unique being or ontological truth.

His theory of human nature was the basis of his moral theory. As we saw, morality for him consisted in serving and becoming one with all living beings. In Gandhi's view, morality and spirituality or religion were inseparable. Since spirituality consisted in becoming one with the cosmic spirit and cultivating the love of all living beings, it necessarily entailed morality. Gandhi believed that the moral man was like an honest mercenary, whereas the spiritual man was like an ardent patriot. Gandhi observed that both did the right thing, but their actions varied greatly in their flavour, dependability, commitment and energy.

Mahatma Gandhi was not a system builder who isolated himself from the world in his hermitage or ivory tower. Gandhi was not the type of creative man who sets his own ideals and is still able to live
in the world without coming into conflict with it.

Hardly had any Indian leader ever touched the mass mind so deeply as Gandhi did during his own lifetime. To reflect with S. Radhakrishnan, Gandhi's voice had penetrated deep into the hovels of obscure villages in the country and reached the ears of the lowest of the low. When he travelled from place to place wearing only a loin-cloth, thousands of people ran to get a darshan of Gandhi and many prostrated themselves on his feet.

Motilal Nehru frankly conceded to Gandhi, "Our difficulty is that in politics you beat us at our own game. Later, Jawaharlal Nehru expressed to Gandhi, "But even in the wider sphere, am I not your child in politics"

There are a few leaders in human history who appealed to all sections of the diverse population as Gandhi did. He rose above all conflicts and envisaged perfect harmony in the midst of diversity.

He had a deep insight into the mass psyche. He was always with the masses as one of them. He served the Indian people whom internal discord and moral degradation had condemned them to political subjugation and poverty. Gandhi felt that in order to raise them morally, economically and spiritually, it was essential to infuse in them a spirit of self-respect and self-reliance in their struggle against the
exploiters.

He liberated four hundred millions of his countrymen from armed tyranny after an unprecedented and unparalleled struggle. In fact, Gandhi wanted to liberate man from other thrills, other shackles in social, economic, cultural and spiritual spheres too. It is this integrated and basic approach to man as a soul that distinguishes Gandhi from most other leaders of mankind. The other leaders are remembered only in the context of the freedom movement. On the other hand, Gandhi is a world figure who joins the rank of saints, political philosophers and revolutionaries of the highest order. Gandhi was an activist and a practical philosopher. He was a contemplative man of action and not an ivory tower theorist. Gandhi's mind was in essence not mystic but prophetic. Gandhi's idealism was not utopian. He was no intellectual angel beating his luminous wings in the void. He claimed to be a practical idealist. He showed how goodness could be made effective, how good ethics must be good politics and vice versa. And what was moral was also practical. He was a politician and social worker.

He stated, "I am essentially a man of compromise because I am never sure that I am right". Human life is a series of compromises and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one has found to be true in theory. A many sided personality- a saint, a politician.
an educationist, a journalist, a humanist, a social reformer, Gandhi became a legend in his own lifetime. His close circle of admirers and followers comprised shrewd capitalists and businessmen like G.D. Birla and Jamnalal Bajaj, sceptics like J.B. Kripalani and intellectuals like Jawaharlal Nehru, statesmen and politicians like Motilal Nehru and men of faith and renunciation like Vinoba Bhave, subtle minded lawyers like Rajaji, humanitarians like Rajendra Prasad, profound scholars and divines like Abu-Ul-Kalam Azad, brilliant medico geniuses like Dr. M.A. Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan, colourful personalities like the Nightingale of India Sarojini Naidu and Mira Behn, last but not least, the "Iron Man' and granite pillar of free India, Vallabh Bhai Patel.

We can say that to understand Gandhi is to understand a few basic things about him and these are :-

1) Ends and means are interchangeable.

2) The means should always be pure.

3) The basic unit of society is an individual

4) For the economic development of the country, the basic unit should be a village.

5) The only yardstick to measure the correctness of a system in the direction of any development activity is Non-violence and truth.
Now the chief aim of this work is to mark and assess the extent to which the various theories influenced Gandhi in the formation of his ideas regarding Individual and Society. His concept of Non-Violence and truth, Sarvodaya, Religion, etc. all are analysed here to show the extent of the influence. All his concepts are at bottom religiously oriented and have their basic root in the religious ideas, a major portion of which he got from Hinduism and the remainder from various other religions. But religion is intimately connected with Individual and Society. We shall try to present here his own ideas and interpretation regarding Individual. We have done this work in fourth and fifth chapters. In the rest of the chapters we shall try to analyse his various important concepts in order to mark out the impact of Individual and society in their formation. The final chapter presents a general assessment of Gandhi's beliefs and ideas in the context of some of our present problems and discussed Gandhi's philosophical thought as a whole.

There is an antithesis between the individuals and the society. With the progress of society and the state the necessity was keenly felt for regulating human behaviour. Laws seek to promote social welfare by regulating the conduct of human behaviour. Laws, thus, put a check on the freedom of individuals. Herein comes the antithesis. It is advocated the individuals can bring out the best in them if they are
unfettered in their dealings. Society, by restricting individuals freedom, hinders the growth of human calibre and thus stands in the way of individual well-being.

Modern writers do not believe this view. According to these writers there is no antithesis between individual and society. Individual can attain his best self only as a member of the society. The end of the society is to maximise human welfare, which is nothing but the sum-total of individual welfare. The rules or laws of the state or society restrict the conduct of the individuals, but these laws should not be regarded as positive evils. The purpose of these laws is to give maximum opportunity to individuals to develop their individual selves. The laws of the state thus curb the excesses of individuals when these excesses tend to disturb the rights of other individuals. Thus it is wrong to suppose any antithesis between individuals and society. In fact, society exists for individuals. It is rightly said, therefore, that in modern times society exists for the individuals as much as the individual for society.

The aim of this work is to show that all of Gandhi's statements were the result of some of his basic convictions which he so unshakingly cherised. Hinduism and various other religions influenced him, but having once cherished them he has all along been strictly guided by them.
Gandhi's concept of Individual and Society plays a very important role in the formation of his various ideas. Gandhi's non-violence is based on the higher aspects of human nature, which rebel against tyranny, injustice and authoritarianism. Gandhi believes in the tremendous urge in human nature for peace and freedom. The society which he aims at is already universally present in the hearts of men though it may lie submerged. We have to bring it to the surface by fighting the evil forces, political, social and psychological. For Gandhi, non-violence involves an inner war, which requires as to defeat fear, greed, anger and guilt. Whenever a great personality arises he challenges the spirit in us and reminds us that we are not just animals but human beings. Gandhi's purpose was to advance man's progress towards a rational world order. The above sentences clearly indicates Gandhi's aim.

Gandhi was a political engineer whose domain was action, first in South Africa and later in India. He was not a philosopher or thinker in the sense that he thought out a philosophy of life and chalked out a programme of action which he left to others to study and implement it. He worked and experimented, identifying himself always and completely with the people.
Gandhi's vision of a non-violent society is influenced by a powerful concern to place human beings at the centre of economic and political life, and contains many valuable insights. His emphasis on the moral and cultural implications of the economic system, a humane process of production, sustainable development, a more balanced relation to nature, the right to gainful employment and decentralized production are noteworthy.

Gandhi argued that human beings were necessarily interdependent, rose and fell together, and were born subject to non-repayable debts. Since society was necessarily a fellowship of unique and interdependent beings, the concept of equality had to be defined in non-comparative, non-competitive and non-atomistic terms. In Gandhi's view it basically consisted in each individual enjoying full access to his or her community's political, economic, moral and cultural resources in order to realize his or her unique potential and not as an abstract human potential.

The ideal of self-rule or Swaraj, as Gandhi termed it, meant the kingdom of God or Ramrajya. The aim of such government should be to recognise the equality in birth and consequently the right of equal opportunity. Moreover, a born democrat must be a disciplinarian.
Democracy does not mean freedom to everyone for doing everything. Mutual tolerance must be considered as a golden rule for a true democratic order. Ramarajya conceives of a society in which all its members get equal opportunity to express themselves and in which none suffers under forced opinion.

Gandhi is often criticised for opposing the modern means of production. He considered growing industrialism as a curse for mankind, because it meant exploitation of the weak by the strong. He did not consider modern devices of production as indispensable for the permanent welfare of the human race. By spreading the movement of khadi, Gandhi aimed to check exploitation, concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and unhealthy competition.

It would be a misrepresentation of Gandhi if it is said that, he was against mechanised industry. His antipathy to industrialisation was impelled by the same humanistic urge. He regarded machinery as anti-social for it was meant to replace human labour, and thus increase unemployment. His supreme consideration was man. The object in opposing the craze for machinery was to save the villages of India and thereby save India as a nation. Industrialisation on a mass scale, he thought, would lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers. Gandhi's whole life was directed towards the welfare of mankind. He considered society as meaningless if it could not become an integral part of the life of human beings.
It is regretful that India has paid only sympathy to the ideals of the Mahatma during the last so many years of independence. Indian society is badly divided in to castes and the ideal of social equality is yet to be realised in practice. The Gandhian method of non-violence and concept of Individual and Society has better appreciation outside India. It is a common feature nowadays for the public to destroy the national property for getting their demands fulfilled. The disintegrating elements are most powerful in these days. It is devoid of those values for which Gandhi lived and died. The country is in need of a leader like Gandhi to fight against those forces which have enslaved the society internally.

With a view to moralising the individual and society, Gandhi prescribed certain principles or work to which human conduct must conform.

In the present work an attempt has been made to study the Gandhian concept of individual and society. Because “Society is Gandhi’s temple, service is his sole form of worship humanity is his single passion. Truth is his one God and non-violence is his only means of attaining it.”[16] Men composing the sarvodaya society will, thus, be bound together in love and by love. every individual living for others and all others living for every individual. To him, society is just like a family and the relation between the individual and society is, therefore, one of close inter-dependence.
The individual comes first and foremost in the Gandhian outlook and in any scheme of social progress the first step always lies with the individual. But while attempting to analyse the relation between individual and Society due attention has been given to study the religious background, truth and non-violence etc. to a greater extent which formed the basis of the Individual and Society. Gandhi believed that Individual and Society must march ahead together. All faculties of the individual must be dedicated to the society which provides him with opportunities for free growth and development. Attempt has been simultaneously made to see into the nature of Individual and Society.
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