Chapter: 11

INDIVIDUAL SOCIETY, NOTION AND WORLD ORDER ACCORDING TO SRI NARAYANA GURU

Like any other animals man is also basically an animal. But He is rational and social animal. If cultivated he is spiritual animal too. Individual means undivided integrated human person. That means, in that individual human person, his all interests, thinking, feeling and willing are integrated holistically. In religious vocabulary the term 'Holy' plays an important role. An integrated personality is the one in which the mind, word, and action (kaya, vacha, manasa) or completely integrated and there will not be disintegration or difference what so ever.

Sri Narayana Guru aims at building such integrated individuals by giving them proper education both
secular and spiritual by the self sustained economic support by providing value oriented socio-ethical and by universalistic approach so as to build a most harmonious and practical society. It is because society is nothing but group of individuals. The term society is derived from the Latin word ‘Socius’ which means ‘companionship’ or friendship. Companionship means sociability, it was Aristotle who said long back that man is a social animal. He lives in social groups in communities and in society. Human life and society almost go together. Man cannot live as man without society. Solitary life is unbearable to him. Man is biologically and psychologically equipped to live in groups, society has become an essential condition for human life to arise and to continue. Society is more than our environment. It is within as well as around us. The existence of individual and society cannot remain
separate. In the words of Maciver and Page “no one can
really be an absolute individualist, any more than any
one can be an absolute socialist for the individual and
society interest on one another and depend one
another.”¹

During Sri Narayana Guru’s period Kerala society
in particular and Indian society at large was divided and
discrimination was made as the order of the day.² There
was the conception of Aryan society and Aryans were
touchable and non Aryans untouchables, there was a dual
code of conduct and hierachical laws. For the same sin
the higher caste man was paying one rupee and the
lower caste man was punishing to the death. The higher
caste individuals were priests and the lower caste
individuals were not allowed to walk nearer the
temples. The moment they make entry in the temples they
were hanged. Such was the social condition before the advent of Sri Narayana Guru in Kerala.

Being a visionary and a great social reformer has questioned this kind of discriminative social code of conduct propagated and perpetuated by the higher caste people and bull’dozer their doctrine created by the sanathan. They intend to exploit the ignorant and innocent people. In the beginning he has given knowledge tonic to the weaker sections of the society. Then he gave spiritual dimension to that society by building temples and making them as priests. Hence, he did not give much importance to the temple entry moment, instead a revolutionary moment of building temples, schools, institutions, industries, commerce, trade organisations was took place rapidly under the leadership of Sri Narayana Guru. This was a positive sign of a building of
a society and not a negative approach. Very silently Sri Narayana Guru has started uplifting the human individuals as the development of the individuals, who was the members of that society as a visionary. He knew that a development of entire world depends upon development of the welfare of the constituent nations of that world and the development of nations is depending upon development and welfare of the constituent states of that nation. The development of a state is depending upon the development and welfare of the society, development of the society is depending upon the development and welfare of human individuals. Since human individuals are the parts whereas society is a whole. Sri Narayana Guru has related to the individual to the whole world because his vision was viswamanavatva i.e., the citizenship of the entire world. That is why he has developed an integrated, value
oriented, Spiritio-secular education system. It was discussed in the 7th chapter in detail.

At the time of freedom movement many national leaders including Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore have visited to Sri Narayana Guru and got inspiration. Many satyagrahas were started in Shivagiri Ashram, most of the freedom fighters from Kerala were the disciples of Sri Narayana Guru. Sri narayana Guru was morning star of the freedom movement from Kerala quarter.

The nation is the supreme control of all social relationship, it makes laws and sees that they are enforced.

The social philosophy of Sri Narayana Guru presents a new value system which is not only relevant to the present day Indian society but also world order.
One of the burning questions of the country is: how to bring about world peace in a world torned with conflicts of caste, race and creed? There is no better lever to sway such a world to tranquility than the ethos emanating from the noble dictum enunciated by the Sri Narayana Guru in his own words “One caste, one religion, one god for men”. Guru has conceived the present day society as one reeling under the dead weight of caste distinction and religious hatred. The rulers must say “no one should speak of caste” and all of them must be united in the common brotherhood.

Race and religion problems are not only India but also common in the world at present juncture. This has become great hardle for the establishment of harmony and peace in the world order. According to Sri Narayana Guru the root cause of social conflict and absence of
cohesion is the root cause of strife, disintegration of humanity. He says:

"By fighting one to one, winning is impossible;
By fighting is no religion destroyed;
This the other religion sponsors realise not
fight futile and fail; such cognition should be.

Atma sukha is the goal of all human efforts both material and spiritually. It is the greatest wonder that in Guru both rationalism and mysticism were blended. It is an impossible factor as these two are opposed in the normal situation, but Guru being the great mystic who realised advaita truth has practiced a neo-advaita path, which lead social equanimity and religious amity. This is quite rational as human beings born free and equal by nature. Sri Narayana Guru has shown this by the help of both spiritual-realisation and rational interpretation. Hence he says Universal order or world order can be obtained by love and love alone. This is the platonic love which emerges out of the realisation of all pervading self. This, in fact i.e., the spiritual globalization a philosophic social theory which paves
for establishment of one world one government and thereby peace every where. Guru says:

"Every one here always efforts all Render for the sake of self happiness;
This in this world is the one creed.
Think so : control the mind, evil never befalling."

Evil is caste, evil is creed, evil is any kind of discrimination in human kind and therefore Guru advocated for one caste and God and one religion for the mankind which annihilates all evils quarrels, war etc.

The question of world-order is not merely abstention from war but we should get to remove all walls and barriers to the growth of our minds and hearts unless minds are developed larger and nobler generalities we cannot achieve anything. The purity of mind, the purity of thought and purity of action will lead one to self-realisation which will ultimately help to build a better world order (peaceful life).

In worldly life, whether in its individual social or national level, man needs an ethical norm based on fully convinced and realised truth. Sri Narayana Guru gave to
an ethical norms; intending the happiness of one and all. In his own words:

"The other man's interest that is even mine; what to one self is beneficial is so for the other man also; such in the course of Discrete conduct; all acts aiming at each man's self-happiness Must spell at once the happiness of the other fellow-man"
Foot Notes:


2. Even how such each a discrimination is still continuing in the so called civilised human society.


4. Ibid, 90

5. Ibid, 90

6. Ibid, 30