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different religious



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Indeed, society itself may be defined as a gregarious community. " By community", says Maclver, " I mean an area of common life, village or town, or district, or country, or even wider area." Common life and common consciousness are the two distinctive features of a community, whatever be the extent of area they refer to. The men who live together on a common land " develop in some kind or degree distinctive common characteristics, manners, traditions, mode of speech and so on." Once this distinctiveness from others is realized, they constitute a community. There are in community suggestions of common values and a homogeneous culture.

It is evident that the smaller a community is the more common and firm are its social values. Conversely, the larger the community, the less agreement there will be upon social values, whether they may be ideological, religious, political, cultural, etc. India is a huge country inhabited by different religious communities as the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians and many others. Then, the people of India speak different languages and constitute linguistic communities. Communities based on the conception of language, as Maharashtrians, Bengalis, Punjabis, Haryanvis, embrace all people living in their respective areas and professing different religions. There may also be a commercial community and a community of intellectuals. In both these cases neither the bonds of religion nor the bonds of language intervene. They constitute a community of interest.

Every country and every nation presents such crossing and recrossing currents of common life. " The conception of a community may thus be a conception of a machinery of wheels within wheels, or it may be a conception of a geometrical problem in which the lines bisect and trisect

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from several directions. A community may, thus, be a part of the wider community, and, in fact, “ all community is a question of degree.

” The whole world makes a community and it is the largest of all. Family is a community of blood and it is the smallest of all. Nation is also a community. A nation is a real feeling of unity which defies all other apparent diversities, like religion and language.

Small communities exist within the great communities and this process is the natural outcome of civilization. But the object of a small or great community is the same. It is a group of people tied by common affinities, and aiming at a common good life. It is a circle within a circle and we need the smaller as well as the larger circles of community. The great community brings us opportunity, stability; economy, the constant stimulus of a richer, more varied culture. But by living in the smaller community we find the nearer, more intimate satisfactions. The larger community provides peace and protection, patriotism and sometimes war, automobiles and radio. The smaller provides friends and friendship, gossip and face-to-face rivalry, local pride and abode.

Both are essential to the full life process.” Two points mark the difference between a community and an association. A community comprises all the people in a given area bound together by ties arising out of neighbourhood. It suggests strong ties of recognized interest, but no organization. An association must be organized. When a group provides itself with an organization for the achievement of its stated purpose, it becomes an association.

An association is not bound by limits of neighbourhood and ties arising there from. It may have world-wide roots combining together diverse people who engage themselves in the pursuit of a common purpose and its fulfillment.

Institutions: Society is a honeycomb of associations, but no association can function without an institution. An institution is the form, the structure or the framework of an association. It is a means by which the purpose of an association is realized; the instrument “ through which common interests are realized, the mechanism on which is based the success or failure of an association.” Or to put it in a simple way, institution is a group of people working towards a common aim. A university is an association and its common aim is realized through the agencies of its various teaching departments, colleges affiliated to it and the administrative office working under the control of the Registrar.

Similarly, government is the institution of a political association, the State. It is through the mechanism of government that the State fulfils its purpose. An institution is not always a mere framework. It is as living as an association and a smaller institution is by itself an institution of a large association.

Thus, a political party, a judicial tribunal, a legislative body, an administrative bureau, all is institutions as government itself is the institution of an association, the State. The people who comprise them may come and go as time passes, but the institutions once established, endure, though they may be moulded and shaped by the people who comprise them according to the changing needs of the time. Monarchy in Britain is an institution, but it is not the same today as it was during the times of the Tudors or Stuarts or even during the Victorian era. Similarly, British Parliament is an institution
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and it took more than eight centuries to transform it into its present position and stature.

The leaders of a political party will rise or fall over a period of years, but the party continues as an institution, unless it disintegrates. Moreover, the common aim that an institution pursues can be a very general one. The members of a legislative body, for example, will not always agree on bills which should be passed or in what form. Nor will the judges of a judicial tribunal always hand down unanimous decisions. But they do agree on when to meet, on how to handle their business, and on what it is they are supposed to be doing. Thus, all members of Parliament in India know that they assemble in New Delhi on appointed dates to pass laws; all Justices of the Supreme Court know that it is their job to decide cases.

The President of India knows his job and performs his functions in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. An institution, thus, consists of individuals, general goals, and rules for reaching those goals. There can be a one-man institution as the Presidency in India, America and France or Monarchy in England. It may consist of a score of them as the cabinet, or hundreds of them as Parliament or a Congress, or it may be a multimillion-member institution as a political party. Some institutions have limited goals whereas others have more comprehensive. In some the members of an institution are strong in their loyalty to its aim while in others they are apathetic or even obstructive.

Parliament in India and various Assemblies of her State legislatures stand as a clear testimony of obstruction. To sum up, “ politics cannot function

without institutions, and an understanding of politics requires an awareness of how they operate.”