

# Individual

Society & Social Problems

# and society

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Freedom is exclusive privilege of all individuals.

Liberty is cherished by all living things. Man is the epitome of liberty, which is ingrained in him. Still, amazingly enough, we find all man-made institutions shaped to work against the liberty of man, in the final analysis. A careful study of the history of progressive growth of traditions, customs and legislation is sufficient to prove this assertion. The evolution of the state when viewed from an unbiased and detached angle of perception will appear no more an institutionalized journey of man towards progressive slavery. To resolve this dilemma requires a deeper understanding of the factors which are responsible for this step by step transition from freedom to bondage.

Life offers two types of disciplines for us to study. One appears to be spontaneous, as though born out of nothingness in a sudden outburst of God's creative wonders. The scientists may however, refer to it as a host of mutative changes all taking place simultaneously in one single moment.

This hypothetical proposition is of course scientifically unentertainable. The second type of development of social orders in the animal kingdom is much more generalized and progressive in nature though the results are not dramatic as the first one. Even dogs, wolves and wild bees exhibit the trend of living together in societies in the interest of class survival. Whatever the reasons, we also find a similar trend in the flocking together of birds of the same feather. Likewise shoals of fish, turtles and sea urchins display similar tendencies. This bonding together therefore is common to life.

(With discipline, authority is born and leadership emerges. A vague precept of crime and punishment begins to creep into the society at every level. For man to have evolved as social animal, therefore, is not a solitary accident

some guaranteed protection and such assistance as would make his individual existence easier and more comfortable. It is interesting to note that in the beginning of the formation of society at all levels, individuals always emerged as beneficiaries.

This is what we find as a natural trend in the animal kingdom. This is also true of human societies at their rudimentary level. But human societies as they grow more organized tend to become lopsided in the distribution of power between them and the individual.

The larger the ratio between the membership of the society and the ruling few, the greater becomes the danger of misappropriation and exploitation of power by the ruling minority. The prime principle of individual liberty is gradually and progressively sacrificed at the altar of society. It often happens that the society as it grows, becomes more authoritative and less mindful of the ultimate interest of the individual.

One dividing line between animals and humans which distinctly separates is the powerful tendency in man to defraud, cheat, and break the laws of nature. In this game the humans outpace all other animals by a phenomenal margin. It is because the animals are strictly governed by the intuitive and instinctive laws and have little choice in the matters of right and wrong.

It is human alone who can willfully ignore his responsibilities and usurp the rights of other members of the society.

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but is in conformity with pre-designed plan of behaviour shared equally by most other animals, to a lesser or greater degree. The great difference however, is that the others are guided by their instincts. While the man having been endowed with sense, has been granted freedom of choice, to a certain extent.)

How the institutions are developed, is a lengthy discussion. Here only a few important features of social development among humans which are directly related to the subject under discussion can only be dealt with.

Individual liberty has always been intrinsically at odds with the restraints imposed by the society. A deeper understanding of the dilemma presented by this equation is most essential for a better comprehension of the

forces which finally determined the boundaries of individual liberty on one hand and the rising of the society on the other. Individual family relationship, individual clan relationship is all examples of how life can be studied in its institutionalized conduct. If man is by nature free and loves freedom, then why at all bow to any social authority is the question, which has to be addressed first

However, one thing essentially needs to be noted here, that man by nature will bow to the authority of society only when he is driven by selfish motives; otherwise he will have to be coerced into submission. Whenever a social, economic or political order evolves, it always evolves around an unwritten understanding of give and take between the society and the individuals, which collectively make the society. No individual will ever readily surrender his freedom but only on the understanding that in the bargain he gains more than what he has lost.

Primarily, it is individual security, which he bargains for, at the cost of personal freedom. On the one hand he surrenders some of his rights to whatever institution he becomes a member of and on the other he gains

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knowing it to be wrong. So the individual freedom in relation to the collective responsibility man owes to any institution is undermined and sabotaged by his propensity to break laws, commit frauds and corruption of all sorts, and act wrongfully, yet hoping to run away with whatever he can.

This has been the tragedy of human society throughout the ages. No institution is exempt from this. This inevitable built-in flaw in the individual social relationship promotes the tendency among systems towards ever increasing legislation. Apparently every new law is aimed at protecting the right of the individual on the one hand, and the right of the society on the other, from unjustified trespass into each other's exclusive domains of rights and prerogatives.

But unfortunately because of the corruption in man, the legislators fail to remain loyal to the principles of absolute justice. During the collective process of legislating many a time the individual will be deprived of his fundamental rights at the hands of the very institutions, which were created to defend him. Hence the dire need for practical legislation to ensure check and balances and to maintain enduring equilibrium in the society.