

## CHAPTER I

### SOCIAL MAPS

#### *The Universities and the Universe*

The earth is large, but it is at the same time small. Seen in relation to the totality of the physical cosmos it is as less than a speck in the sky. But seen as in the proportions of our common day it is the habitat of all mankind. Mankind taken as a whole is a cosmos, a social universe, in itself. And it is into membership of this universal society that every one of us is born.

Like any other living organism, man in growing up needs sufficiently to accommodate himself to his environment as given. To this there are the two aspects, the physical and the social. In so far as he sets out to improve his awareness of his environment he may be said to study cosmology; and, corresponding to the two aspects of it, he thus becomes physically, and socially, cosmology-conscious.

Awareness of the physical cosmos is in some measure fostered by almost any form of education. Who is not taught something about the atom at the one extreme and the nebula at the other? Of the social cosmos, by contrast, less systematic provision has in general been made for rendering the future citizen better aware. Indeed the very suggestion of seeing the social environment in its global dimension as the subject-matter for a kind of cosmology will be a novelty to not a few. Yet that, surely, is just what it is. And, if there is a case for acquainting the young man with the perhaps expanding physical universe on the one hand, there surely is at least a comparable case for helping him to find his bearings in the notoriously contracting social universe on the other. For there are aspects of the social universe which, though obvious when pointed out and important when perceived, may escape the notice even of the generally well-educated man. The acceptance of elementary social cosmology in universities, if not also

in schools, might go far toward correcting this traditional state of affairs.

### *Public World and Private Visions*

Viewed successively through red, blue and yellow lenses the same scene will appear respectively green, orange and purple; and within it different objects, and different features of the same objects, will in turn more readily catch the eye. This metaphor of the lenses is helpful in discussion of the social cosmos. For according to the light in which we observe it we may see it as made up of human individuals; of movements, groups, collectivities, organisations and so on; or, of sovereign states.

To say of the average adolescent that he knows less than with advantage he might do of the global milieu within which it is for him to live is not to say that he necessarily knows nothing of it at all. Nobody's mind can ever in this respect have been a *tabula rasa*. Some image of social reality, each his private image of it, every one of us may be assumed to have. One's conception of what, in its social dimension, the world is like and of the processes that take place within it, is a part of one's very personality, a product of one's upbringing and experience and a basis from which in future to move forward toward the enjoyment of a better view. One's picture of the social cosmos can never be re-begun *de novo*. It can only be taken as presently it is, with all its flaws, and modified, broadened, developed perhaps, in the light of new insights and discoveries; but never simply displaced.

And, as one's picture is an ever-changing one, so one's very capacity for appreciating what, stage by stage, one may further come to see is itself likewise subject to change. 'When I was a child, I thought as a child. But now . . .' Not only does each of us, in presence of today's events, reappraise, as if unconsciously, the situation as it stands throughout the planet, but his equipment for the making of his reappraisals may well be better now than formerly, and by tomorrow may well have become better still. To his mental stature it is simply not true to say that man cannot add by taking thought. This is why the study of the social cosmos should presumably be of benefit to almost anyone who is privileged to include it within the pattern

of his university programme. For this is one of those matters in which self-help can give quicker results if supplemented by the help of those others who know from their own greater experience something more of what is required.

### *Let Him that Thinketh he Knoweth . . . !*

It has been remarked by Sorel and others that men live on the whole by their illusions. Certain it is that we all of us do have to base our behaviour upon assumptions as to whose validity we can by no means always be sure. We have perforce to rely on our impressions 'as of now', even though in retrospect we can see that some of those on which we similarly relied in the past were mistaken. The best that we can do is to use as we go along whatever opportunities we may be given for rendering our ever-fallible impressions less unrealistic and less irrelevant to our need. When, disembarking with his car, an American in England for the first time proceeds at a good speed to Stratford-on-Avon, he does not rely on instinct only to guide him on his way. The roads are well sign-posted, and he has excellent maps. Almost one might say that he not merely believes, but positively knows, that he is on the right road. But the landscape of life across which man has, as best he can, to find his path is not merely physical. More importantly, of course, for the purpose of our present discussion, that landscape is social also. No equally reliable maps are available of our total social environment.

### *Give Us the Tool and . . .*

Whether we actually think in them or not, words must surely be a great help to all of us in our thinking. It is curious to consider how recently some of our most convenient terms first became available for our use, in getting a purchase, so to say, on our experience. The concept of 'mind' is an interesting example. Nothing seems easier than to credit oneself with a mind. Whether this is simply because we happen to have so handy a word for it one may wonder. It seems doubtful if in Homeric times the Greeks did have a word for it. Very awkward it must then have been, finding utterance for certain ideas, or perhaps even having those ideas at all. Much simpler at any rate now that we do have a word.



Basic to the discussion throughout this essay will be the concept of 'the social cosmos'. To some readers the expression may perhaps be new. The novelty of the term need be no discouragement to those who would like to see it coming into current use. The more we use it the more conscious may we expect to become of that reality to which it refers us. And if it be indeed the case that man's inherited parochialism is now becoming a threat to his very survival, it may be all to the good if he can be furnished with a mental tool wherewith to think more readily in terms of the larger social milieu. The notion of the social cosmos might serve him as such a tool.

*Your Own . . . in Fear and Trembling*

Looking upward at the night sky, Pascal felt a sense of fear. Equally might Columbus have felt one, when with a chart based so largely upon conjecture, he set forth across the sea. In the exploration of the social cosmos it is open to any one of us to set forth in a coracle of his own. For this he may have been able to equip himself only with a rudimentary map. On this map he will make his corrections as he goes. Whether we call it his 'map', or his 'image', what in his private explorations he has to rely on is something distinctively and personally his own. One man, one social map, one socio-cosmological image.

It is true that in the domain even of physical cosmology, where there commonly are accepted public answers to the questions we would wish to raise, those answers, sponsored not merely by individuals but by the fraternity of science, are never in principle better than tentative. The orthodoxy of today may tomorrow be superseded. In the sphere of social cosmology it is less generally easy to speak of an orthodoxy at all. One might for instance hesitate to say of a given conception of the human psyche that it was orthodox. Still more, of any picture of the cosmos as a whole. Yet even here there are points whose importance lies precisely in their status as orthodox answers, and which it behoves us to notice as such.

*The Whereabouts of the Thought-about*

There is however this more important further point of difference between the two domains. Though Columbus might have been led to make changes in the position of his

imaginary Japan upon his map, this will hardly have affected the position of the actual Japan upon the planet. If however all mankind were one morning to awaken every man with a changed conception of the social cosmos—or even were only one man to do so—the very nature of that cosmos would so have suffered change. Perhaps we ought to say that, along with man's notions of it, the very nature of the social cosmos is changing all the time. For that cosmos has its very being in the fact of being imaged, being conceived of, in the mind and imagination of men.

And now yet a further difference. Though two men's images of the total physical cosmos may differ, that of which they have their images is as objectively 'out there' as is say that particular item within it which we call the Nelson Column. Of the social cosmos, it is not in the same sense easy to speak of its existing, objectively, 'out there'. The social cosmos is indeed, as is its physical counterpart, a 'going concern'. But the going in this case proceeds only partly in the world of tangible reality. Partly also it proceeds in a different world, the world of diplomatic ideas. This latter, the world, shall we say, of 'diplomats', exists indeed, but only in the same sort of sense as does, in my mind, a 'castle in the air'. That it does so exist in my mind is a matter of fact. But the world of diplomacy is not itself a matter of fact. Like fairyland, it is a mental construct. And what takes place within it does so not in fact but in idea. And it is here, in this world of diplomats, that there occurs a great part of that going which makes of the social cosmos a going concern.

*Outward Acts and Inner Meanings*

It is of course useless to imagine that one can confine one's study of any branch of social behaviour solely to matters which can be visually observed. For in the processes of social coexistence there is so much that happens less in fact than in idea. In particular there is the idea of the role. As on the stage a man may be playing Hamlet, this fact being the key to an understanding of what he can be seen to do, so, off the stage, he may be playing probation officer, or referee, or inspector of taxes, or sergeant-at-arms. One man in his time plays many parts. But this he does not merely in successive ages of his



earthly existence. He combines many parts at once. My neighbour, besides being merely that, may be also my guide, my philosopher and my friend.

But there is a further point to be made. There are roles, and roles. When President de Gaulle faces an illustrious company in Westminster Hall, he speaks not merely as the spokesman, but as the symbol, almost indeed the living embodiment, of France. Not merely does he speak as in the name of France. France herself, he at least would seem to believe, is speaking through him. For in the realm of diplomacy it is not merely men, even in their roles as rolesmen, that behave. There is a sense in which there occurs also the behaving of countries, that is, of states. Such behaving is not, like that even of the rolesman, real behaviour. Rather is it behaviour by imputation, notional behaviour, and notionally the behaviour of states.

If, never previously having seen a Chinese play, a Westerner, arriving to watch one, comes in halfway through, he is likely to be at several sorts of disadvantage: he may not know the language, he may not know the plot, and he may not even know the conventions of the Chinese theatre. So, though he may be afforded a good view of what is happening in fact, he may have hardly an inkling of what is happening in idea. Even if the spectacle is not completely meaningless to him, his appreciation of the performance can scarcely be that of the connoisseur. And the like might well be similarly true of someone placed in a front-row stall in the theatre of world affairs.

Among people who engage professionally in the analysis of human affairs there are those to whom is nowadays given the designation of behavioural scientists. Of these it may be assumed that many would resist the imputing of behaviour to agents other than physically existent human beings. There is even a behavioural approach to the study of international affairs. That however is not what will be reflected in this book. For it will here be assumed that of significant things that happen some have their deepest importance in their happening not in fact but in idea: and it happens that in idea as distinct from fact states also do behave. Where de Gaulle is perceptibly behaving in fact, France may be behaving in idea.

### *Not a Case of Either/Or*

To think of the social universe as consisting only of men and women, and not of states, would be like thinking of a fleet at sea as simply a lot of sailors behaving—without reference to the performance of the ships. The naval historians will mention the ships by name, as if it were they that were behaving. One might tell them that they shouldn't, but they will!

Is the world then socially multiple or is it socially one? The catch in such a question resides in the disjunctive 'or'. It is the both-and rather than the either-or formulation that, in our answer, we require. For the social universe has its human dimension, wherein, in terms of political organisation, it is a plurality of systems, and it has its diplomatic dimension, wherein, in terms of diplomatic organisation, it is a single system, its units the sovereign states.

To specify all the sorts of relationships obtaining as between the people, the peoples, the interest groups and the other component elements in the social cosmos would be an interminable task. Even on a particular level the relationships may be of many kinds. But, for our present purpose, they would be found to vary in their importance. As, for International Law, it is the legal relationships between sovereign states that chiefly matter, so, from international relationships generally, it is reasonable to distinguish, as international relationships proper, those, of all kinds, obtaining between the sovereign states. Anyone within the cosmos can no doubt communicate, through the post office, with virtually anyone else at any level. But it is relationships between countries, manifested primarily in exchanges between governments, that, when speaking of international difficulties or misunderstandings, we chiefly have in mind. Could men effect a radical improvement in the relationships between states, many desirable things might be added unto them. But one does not affect the position of a shadow by doing things to the shadow. Neither does one affect the attitude of a state simply by addressing arguments to the state. As well might one address arguments to a statue! Only if one's arguments are overheard by human beings can they be expected to produce any effect. The bad relations may exist between the states, but it is between the governments



that the dealings occur and it is between the peoples, that is, the people who compose them, that the feelings may be running high. The feelings between the peoples may matter even where between the governments there are no dealings at all.

### *Peoples, but No Such Persons*

Groups as groups do not normally engage in dealings with each other unless so organised as to have their official spokesmen. While the Nicaraguans and the Nepalese could be imagined as intercommunicating at a moment's notice on almost anything whatever, between the peoples of Wales and Scotland there is less manifestly any channel for a getting quickly into touch. Their footballers may meet. Their feelings toward one another may become important. Their beliefs about one another may come to matter. But international relations proper are relations conceived as between persons; and persons, internationally, Wales and Scotland are not. Whereas Nepal and Nicaragua are. And herein lies incidentally the value, for the eventual consolidation into an effective one-ness of the universal human family, of the notion of the state as 'person'.

### *Two Cheers for the Poet*

Such then is the structure of world society. Omar Khayyam, when he sang of 'this sorry scheme of things', did not thereby imply that he would have been happier without one. What he wanted was to mould it nearer to his heart's desire. He did write as thinking in terms of a scheme. His emphasis was not it is true upon its diplomatic or international-political, aspects: but it is on these that we shall be putting ours. And we, too, like him, shall perceive that there already exists a scheme, a sorry one perhaps, but given, and a going concern. We might like to re-mould it, but its existence we can scarcely doubt. Yet, while perceiving it as given, we should not mistake its genesis. This scheme was not the work of Nature, or of any other such hypostatised and personified abstraction. It is artificial, man-developed—a 'socio-fact' in the jargon of some. What this generation can hope to affect is not so much the present inherited structure of the given scheme of things, man-created though it be: but, the manner in which the coming

generation comes to read, re-interpret, and, in re-interpreting, to re-mould, the scheme. The 'scheme' at any given stage derives its character from that composite prevailing image of it which lives in the collective psyche of the given generation. Were every infant so conditioned as to grow up with a persecution mania, the scheme of things might well be even sorer than already it is. And conversely, if men all saw their fellow-men only as fellow men, it might well be not so sorry. As the Jesuits would ask for control of the first few years of a person's life, as best enabling them to affect the rest of it, so may we of today think to avail ourselves propitiously today of the formative early years of what in its maturity will be the society of tomorrow.

### *The Second Best of Six Possible Worlds?*

A scheme then there is. Datum number-one is that the social cosmos is organised already to a certain extent: that it is thus in effect a society, of sovereign states, whose dealings are conditioned by received assumptions, received, that is, in the relevant, official milieu; though the layman may never have paused to make them his own. Those received assumptions are datum number-two. The layman's personal interpretation of them will be his private affair. While even of the physical cosmos it is true to say that men construe it differently and that the prevalent interpretation becomes modified with the passing of time, still truer is this of the social cosmos. That then is datum number-three, namely, that the cosmos is composed, *de facto*, of human beings each with his or her private version of the assumptions upon which, as a going concern, the scheme of things is based.

In theory no doubt the global scheme might well have been different. And indeed we may conclude this chapter by suggesting the six most obvious possible formulae for universal co-existence on the planet. First, sheer rudimentary co-presence, each man fending for himself in an abstract perfection of freedom (such being the freedom of the jungle). With the absolute freedom goes absolute mutual distrust and absolute fear. Second, ordered freedom, the order provided by a system of world-wide inter-personal relations (the phenomenon known as 'government' being as yet unknown). This is

the purely hypothetical condition of a utopia which never was and presumably never will be. Third, freedom relative, or non-existent, but never freedom absolute, in a multi-governmental system of warring states. This is the hypothetical condition of an utterly Hobbesian international anarchy. Fourth, freedom relative or non-existent but never absolute in a world under one world-wide government only. A hypothetical possibility this, which may some day materialise, though of men's liking it when they have it there can of course be no guarantee. Fifth, relative freedom, at best, in a world enjoying a modicum of order through an inherited and ever-developing system of inter-governmental arrangements (this being what now we have). Sixth, and finally, the same, in a world enjoying a greater degree of order through more effectively-functioning inter-governmental arrangements. This last we shall perhaps do well to recognise as what we have to hope, and to work, for, here and now. And, if it is this that we are set on doing, it were well that we should begin by taking more intimate stock of that possibility number-five, the 'here and now' from which we must effect a successful 'take-off' if our attempted flight is not to end up in a swamp.