

The concept/term "God," Hartshorne argues, "stands for that which makes all ordinary societies only subsocieties of the inclusive social reality, the universe as monarchical" ("The Individual Is a Society": 83).

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The idea suggested by a "social conception of the universe" is that "all societies, however democratic, may be portions of an all-inclusive monarchical society, the entire universe, with order imposed throughout by a single dominant all-ruling member," by virtue of which all members of the larger society are "compelled [*sc.* coerced!] to cooperate." "The 'monarch' sees to it that there is enough involuntary or unconscious cooperation to make voluntary forms of cooperation possible without intolerable risks. Men can freely decide to aid each other in this way or in that because it is decided for them that, whatever they do, the basic cooperations that maintain the cosmic society will go on" (*Reality as Social Process*: 38, 40).

Thus the social conception of God, which is the religious, although not the theological, idea, is that God is "that member of the [world] society which exerts the supreme conserving and coordinating influence."

"[R]eligion, as a concrete practical matter, as a way of life, has generally viewed God as having social relations with man, as sympathizing with him and gaining something through his achievements. . . . Technical theology, however, for long ages contradicted this practical working idea of God by defining him in strictly non-social terms. He was said to be absolutely perfect independently of man, incapable of receiving from man any good or evil. It was then inconsistent to speak of divine love. For to love a being [and] yet be absolutely independent of and unaffected by its welfare or suffering seems nonsense. Indeed, the very act of creation by such a God must be absurd and meaningless. A being which contains, in sheer independence of others, all possible perfection and value must