CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The importance of individual in every era is indisputable. Individual plays a pivotal role in every kind of society. Still, it is in recent times, that the word gathered much importance. This chapter aims at individualism as a concept, its relevance to other social sciences, and its application to recent times, and the prime importance of individual in any human society. The purpose of this research project is to relate this theme as central to the novels of Ayn Rand.

I

Elements of the foundational emphasis on the individual can be detected as far back as classical antiquity; it can be traced back in the Greek discovery of 'philosophy' as a distinctive form of free rational inquiry. Other elements appeared later, particularly in the intensely self-directed and self-oriented moral discipline of Hellenistic era, Epicureanism and Stoicism. And even more importantly, the traditions and institutions arising out of biblical monotheism placed heavy emphasis upon the infinite value, personal agency and moral accountability of the individual person.

The ‘confessions’ of Saint Augustine spoke about the importance of individual precisely through the gripping tale of individual conversion it rendered. The 15th-century Renaissance scholar Pico Della Mirandola offered an effusive “Oration on the dignity of man”\(^1\) as a ringing assertion of the individual human being’s profound moral freedom. He is represented
by his Oration, one of his shortest works, and the most famous. The speech is distinguished by literary elegance. It illustrates the dignity of man founded on man’s freedom and Pico’s syncretism based on his conception of universal truth. The dignity of man became a favourite theme of humanistic oratory and served as the starting point for the speculative idea of human dignity. The glorification of man was one of the favourite themes of early Renaissance literature. Individualistic doctrine as an elaborated and coherent theoretical discourse is associated with the philosophical and normative revolutions that occurred in the seventeenth century. The main core of the discourse remained individual. At this time, the notion of individual rights was developed as a systematic alternative to political obligations founded in scriptural prescriptions and the natural law of hierarchy and to social obligations deriving from an organic and collectivist Christian tradition. Charles Taylor describes the essence of this discourse: “The central doctrine of this tradition is an affirmation of what we would call the primacy of rights.” It ascribed rights to individuals and denies the centrality of the principle of belonging. Social and political obligations, rather the very existence of social and political communities, are secondary and derivative, because they are conditional on an individual’s consent or because they promote individual interest.

The process of finding the importance of individual takes a turn in the Medievalism. This period embodied the thesis of the corporation structure of the society, which regarded the individual as subordinate in hierarchical relationships of political and religious authority, and as inferior to and dependent upon an organic social community. Individuals were reduced simply to subjects, without the right or even the capability of independent action. The Christian confessional tradition did embody the idea of
individual conscience, but in their public behaviour people were subordinated to collective organization. Walter Ullman notes:

The synthesis of canon law and elements of Roman law, which produced this corporate vision of human organization in which all authority descended from above, was countered after the middle of the thirteenth century by feudal law or common law that embodied principles of consent, reciprocity and rights, the ascending image of society and authority.  

It comes, rather, as a surprise that the assertion of the rights of subjects occurred within a collectivist ethos. Nevertheless, embryonic common law did contain the seeds of a later individualistic interpretation of rights.

Puritan theology, resurrecting the primitive Christian tradition that believers of God stand in a direct and individual relation to God, which had been submerged in medieval Catholicism, emphasized the loneliness of the individual before God and the significance of individual conscience. While, this emphasis on the individual contributes to the emergence of individualism, Protestantism was not itself individualistic. Evidences of Individualism can be found in colonial times and in the Protestant worldview that informed the social expectations of the early settlers. Particularly among the puritans the catholic emphasis upon the Church as a vehicle of salvation was replaced by a belief that in matters of salvation must deal individually with God. In civil life too the focus on the primacy of the individual was evidenced. Men were beginning to think of themselves not as members of a traditionally defined group with an established social role but as individuals with the capacity to choose between social roles, or to create new ones. The individual had a responsibility for the well being of society, the connection was looser and the subordination of social structures to individual goals and aspirations went much further. At this time there came John Locke’s Two Treatises of
Government. They are better known for their contractual theory of government and their treatment of individual rights. John Locke’s vision of the pre-political and political condition of human beings, of the inherent powers by which individuals appropriate and master the gifts of nature through labour, and of the use of those powers to create governments for the protection of their persons and property stands at the fountainhead of the liberal political philosophy. Locke’s doctrine of rights is the very soul of individual rights.

It is important to notice here the paradoxical development, which, in the course of the modern era, freed men progressively from many previous restraints while at the same time developing a seemingly individualistic character-type enclosed within new psychological restraints. Men of the emerging middle classes, after the Renaissance, were turned loose in an economic order freed from the supervision of mercantilism, in a political order freed from the supervision of a hereditary aristocracy, in a religious order freed from the supervision of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Whether radical or reactionary, these men who were freed of external restraints under the slogans of laissez-faire economics, utilitarian philosophy, and so on, appeared fiercely and viciously individualistic and competitive. They are freed from scruples, rather false scruples. But if we look at these new men from the inside, we can see that it was precisely their internalization of a great deal of restraint that allowed them to become free of the group sanctions that might have been arrayed against their “individualism.” They could disregard the religious anti-money-making attitudes that had survived from the medieval and early Reformation period only because their Puritan religious ethics provided them with stern justification and with a shell of protection against the shocked attitudes of their contemporaries.
Although nearly all influential thinkers, before the dawn of modernity, have conceded the signal importance of the individual, none employed the term 'individualism' to express that belief. Instead, individualism began as a term of abuse. It first appeared in French, and in the discourse of one of the fiercest opponents of the French Revolution and modernity. The 19th Century French arch-conservative Joseph de Maistre devised the label of 'individualism' to describe much of what he found horrifying about the Revolution, its overturning of established social hierarchies and dissolution of traditional social bonds, in favour of an atomizing and leveling doctrine of individual natural rights which freed each individual to be his or her own moral arbiter. Maistre's individualism was not an affirmation of personal dignity, but a nightmare of egoism and moral anarchy run riot.

A few years later, The French writer Alexis De Tocqueville, in his classic study *Democracy of America* (1835-1840) employed the term in a subtler manner. Individualism, according to him, was a characteristic Pathology of 'democratic' societies, societies which lacked any legally recognized distinctions of rank and station among their members. Tocqueville found individualism to be one of American defining characteristics. He differentiated individualism from egotism. Egotism was an emotional disorder, a passionate and exaggerated, sort of self love. But individualism was something else. "It was a self-conscious social philosophy, a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellows and to draw apart with his family and friends, so that ---- he willingly leaves society at large to itself." By the mid-nineteenth century, this word, which reflected their attachment to the primacy of the individual, had become part of the vocabulary of most Americans. That word was Individualism.
In the second volume of Democracy in America, published in 1840, Alexis de Tocqueville defined Individualism as “a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends.”

Most Writers who have dealt with the history of the term in the English Language have credited Tocqueville with its introduction of the second part of his volume De la democratie en Amerique in 1840 as its birth date. Individualism began as a critical term then onwards.

Yet the Americans attributed to the concept a meaning different from that of Tocqueville and utilized other sources in their discussion of it. The contemporary literature reveals that the term was introduced by various other writers who preferred different connotations from that of Tocqueville. In October 1839 the author of “The Course of Civilization” had already used the concept, as the central force of human progress and the core of American Democracy. Michel Chevalier, in his letters sur l’ Amerique de Nord, written first as a series in the Journal des debats published in Paris in 1836, and in America as Society, Manners and Politics of the United States, also used word. Albert Brisbane’s Social Destiny of Man, a different meaning to the term. And Friedrich List’s Das Nationale System der Politischen Okonomie, which discussed economic individualism, although unavailable to the American reader until some years later, was relevant to the situation. All these writers utilized a term which had been coined in the school of Saint-Simon to sum up their criticism of the structure and character of contemporary society.

Tocqueville’s treatment was, without doubt, the most significant and most influential. Not only was the author already world famous, but the concept itself held central place in his historical and sociological analysis.
Moreover, he alone among the nineteenth-century historians had pondered on the significance of such general concepts and had, anticipating a true sociology of knowledge, considered them as the results of processes which shaped modern society.

The context in which Tocqueville introduced the word individualism was the modern mass society which destroyed all distinctions and all organic forms of communal life and loyalty, it created free, master-less individuals who desired absolute independence and absolute equality of status and rights. In the general instability and mobility, society recognized no traditions, no group opinions, and no authority, what remained was the self-sufficiency of the individual, his faith in his own reason, and his preoccupation with his own appetites and needs. In this atomized condition the only common bonds which survived were the state and the ever changing economic nexus. Individualism was the attitude toward such a society and toward political obligations in general. It arose out of the feeling of modern man, and in particular of the new bourgeoisie, that they

Owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands.

Equality of conditions made man forget his ancestors, hid from his descendants, and separated him from his contemporaries. Thrown back forever upon himself alone, in the end, he was confined entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

The profound significance of this attitude lay in its relation to political liberty and democratic equality. In itself, individualism expressed the objectively imposed isolation of each person reflected in his striving to achieve subjective independence. Yet in the framework of a mass society the individual became powerless. Being passionately jealous of his equal
status, which he could not influence except through the state, each man transferred to the government greater and greater power while he himself retreated more and more to himself.

Our contemporaries are constantly excited by two conflicting passions: they want to be led, and they wish to remain free... They combine the principle of centralization and that of popular sovereignty; this gives them a respite; they console themselves for being in tutelage by the reflection that they have chosen their own guardians.9

Political liberty which demands the personal participation in the affairs of the state by active citizens was destroyed by the desire for subjective liberty and a general equality of conditions.

The consequence was an ever-increasing consolidation of political power and authority and a steady weakening of society. At the end of this process all powers of decision would be transferred to the omnipotent state.

For Tocqueville the term individualism did not connote the elevation of the individual over and against society. It referred rather to the attitude which arose from the isolation of the individual and the atomization of society. A remark made many years later in L'Ancien régime et la révolution elucidated the real meaning of the term:

Our fathers lacked the term individualism which we have created for our own use, because in their time, there was not in effect, an individual who did not belong to a group and who could be considered absolutely alone.10

Tocqueville distinguished between individuality and individualism. The former inspired man to shape his own destiny, his capacities and faculties, as an active member of society with which he identified himself and thus jealously maintained his own liberty. The latter involved a withdrawal from society, and therefore a loss of strength and character; it
created apathy toward the public weal and left uprooted man only the enjoyment of the feeble pleasures of privacy. Individualism was the attitude of the masses who thought always in terms of generalization, of progress, society, the state, but never in the concrete terms of the true destiny of men.

There existed, then, a paradox in Tocqueville's formulation. Individualism in its indifference toward society destroyed the individual, who could retain his liberty only through unceasing public virtue. Two contradictory concepts thus confronted each other. Individuality, involving public virtue, aimed at strengthening the social body, limiting the state, and preserving liberty. Individualism, on the other hand, involving private liberty and equality of rights and status, aimed at strengthening the sovereign state, atomizing society, and destroying political liberty. Tocqueville's supreme concern was to safeguard liberty against the despotism created by the leveling of the democratic era.

Only American society had the answer, for, in the United States social and political democracy had evolved to their utmost limit, and civil and political liberty was securely established. The explanation was that Americans had found the means of successfully combating the corrosive influences of individualism. Individualism could be kept from becoming despotism even under democratic conditions through the establishment of free institutions which compelled each citizen to take part in public affairs. A commonwealth built on the principles of self-government and federation impeded the concentration of political power and authority and encouraged the active citizenship of all. Though Tocqueville noted that individualism was kept within bounds by the inveterate habit of Americans of solving most of their problems by voluntary association, he could only explain that phenomenon by the necessities of self-government and by the realization
that private interest could be served best by serving the public good. In short, the principle of enlightened self-interest, he thought, was generally accepted in America. The idea that enlightened self-interest was the sole basis for public virtue in a modern democratic society dawned upon Tocqueville almost as soon as he became acquainted with the United States. Representative government and the direct participation of all in the affairs of the country were the only means of arousing patriotism and interest of each in the welfare of all.

A "refined and intelligent egoism" had created the republican structure in America, which in turn compelled the inhabitants to serve the public in order to serve themselves.

The idea of selfishness and self-interest alone, were the sole motivating forces of modern society, was gratuitous or at best a projection of bourgeoisie upon society as a whole. As a matter of fact it was exactly the love of liberty and the dignity of man which had inspired the American theory of society. Enlightened self-interest was a means to an end which was not self-interest but a free society. Because he failed to understand this, Tocqueville’s use of the term individualism meant little to the American reader who shared neither his apprehensions nor his estimate on the true basis of self-government and who could hardly sympathize with the clearly expressed aristocratic leanings of the second part of Democracy in America.

The term individualism left its mark more on the dictionaries than on the minds of men. Webster’s American Dictionary defined individualism in 1847 as “an excessive or exclusive regard to one’s personal interest, self-interest; selfishness.” And other dictionaries also made the term synonymous with self-seeking egotism. A good word had been spoiled and given varied definitions.
In a review, E.L. Godkin, editor of The Nation submitted the relationship between democracy and individualism to a searching analysis. Godkin's essay on Aristocratic Opinions of democracy criticized Tocqueville's views, his methodology, and his deductive reasoning which attempted to reduce the explanation of complicated phenomena to a single force. An ardent student of John Stuart Mill's logic, Godkin emphasized the plurality of all historical causation and accused Tocqueville of having confused cause and effect. Godkin not only overturned Tocqueville's views but changed the character and historical significance of individualism in general. Unlike Tocqueville, he stressed its strength. It was not the vice and apathy of a society of long standing, but the primordial energy which conquered an empty and wild continent and built a new society, and it reflected the pioneer's lonely fight for survival and the character this mode of life developed.¹¹

II

Prior to Tocqueville, Michel Chevalier describes in his Society, manners and politics of the United States the concept of individualism.¹²

Chevalier introduced the concept of individualism, which he considered the general characteristic of modern society, closely bound up with the revolt of reason against authority in religion, politics and society. Individualism was a creative and debating force because of its power to dissolve tradition and authority and to liberate energies. For Chevalier, individualism was not wholly a negative force. It was an historic phenomenon which, created new forms of social life through individual self-determination. American republicanism was its product.
Society, which is heterogeneous in structure and origin, recent in its history and mobile and diverse in its character adopted this term so naturally. To Chevalier democracy was only a passing stage in the evolution of humanity toward its unification into one economic, religious and political society. He was skeptical and antagonistic toward the liberal system of values. The world needed an order of social justice and well-being, new elite with complete authority to be recruited from science, industry, and new organic aristocracies.

Americans had no experience of feudal, aristocratic, monarchical, and other pre modern political institutions. For them, individualism is a wholly natural positive thing. American history is nothing more than the story of an unfolding liberal tradition. A tale encapsulated in the classic expression of individual natural rights embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

Human beings require established institutions and prescribed rules of conduct to insure the viability of society. In democratic terms, the duties of each to all are much clearer but devoted service to any individual much rare. Thus the bonds of human affection are wider but more relaxed. Moreover, democracy loosens social ties, but it tightens natural ones. Devotion to Individualism thus causes people to focus on a personal world of family and friends as well as upon society in general. At the same time, Americans form all sorts of voluntary associations, because social interaction is based on freedom and voluntary commitment, people’s involvements are essentially the uncorked consequences of inner desires and personal goals rather than the result of bowing to the dictates of custom. Social unity stems from shared beliefs individually held rather than from institutions and traditions, which endure over time.
Richard D. Brown contends, "the modern personality, which 'exhibits a significant drive for individual autonomy and initiative', was operating widely, though not everywhere, in social, political, and economic life in the first third of the nineteenth century." The term was almost synonymous with selfishness, social anarchy and individual self-assertion. As Americans picked it up, its value content changed completely, for here it came to connote self-determination, moral freedom, the rule of liberty, and the dignity of man. It provided the nation with a rationalization of its characteristic attitudes, behavior patterns, and aspirations. Everything about the American experience went to intensify individualism, the love of enterprise, the pride in personal freedom.

Later times observed that the concept of the republican community gave way to the image of a loose association of individuals, each making his own way in the world. There was new emphasis upon competitiveness to go along with a conception of a dynamic, changing society in which individuals competed with one another for a limited number of prizes. In such a world most relationships with other people were impersonal ones. This was the glory of modern society. The independent, self-sufficient man asks no one to assume his responsibilities. He determines his own duties and obligations to society, but these are impersonal and relate only to carry his fair share. Individuality is a matter of independence and self-reliance, not of eccentricity or anti-social self-assertion.

A good many liberals as well as conservatives came to the conclusion that modern realities had put an end to Individualism. In practice many people assumed that the bureaucratization of business and government and the greater involvement of each with the other could not be based upon the rugged Individualism of the past. For liberals, the celebration of individualism is understood as the pursuit of economic self-
interest, in a context of minimal government interference must be replaced by positive governmental policies. It should be designed to promote social justice and development of a genuinely social ethic. To some social critics nineteenth century America stood as a reproach to the collectivism of an age in which the individual was approaching anonymity, squeezed between the closing frontier and the expanding powers of the political state and a machine society. Out of such a sense of profound disenchantment there emerged an emphasis upon Individualism as an assertion of the self against the endless array of forces in society aimed at controlling the individual.

The primacy of the individual has always meant that one ought to be free to do what one chooses to do. In that earlier period there were efforts to try to distinguish the positive elements of Individualism from the negative excesses associated with laissez-faire economics. The social thinkers always tried to distinguish between Individualism implying anarchy and social atomization and Individualism implying personal liberty and self-development.

In *Individualism Old and New*\(^1\text{4}\), John Dewey argued that while America’s material culture was becoming increasingly collective and corporate, its moral culture along with its ideology was saturated with the values of an Individualism derived from the prescientific, pretechnological age. Thus there is a perversion of the whole ideal of Individualism to conform to the practices of a pecuniary culture. Elimination of older economic and political individualism can make equal opportunity and free association and intercommunication become a reality. Then the balance of the individual and the social will be organic. Dewey’s conception of a new Individualism stressed the assumption that self and society can be harmonized when individuals voluntarily commit themselves to social ends. He felt that the freedom to be self determining had been lost in a
society which was unwilling both collectively and individually to assume responsibility for the complex structures of modern life.

In *The New Industrial State*\textsuperscript{15} John Kenneth Galbraith criticized economic Individualism as a pernicious myth because it obscures the economic dominance of large corporations and prevents effective regulation. While Galbraith found value in the sensitivity to others and interdependence, which modern business emphasizes, he placed his greatest faith in the members of the educational and scientific communities.

It might seem as though Americans in the twentieth century have been faced with a choice between a dominant collectivism fostered largely by big business and the liberal state and a minority protest in the name of the Individualism. A leading theme of twentieth century American politics has been expanding equality of opportunity through social and political reform.

An important aspect of individual freedom in America has long been the ideal of mobility. This is crucial not only to organizations but to society as a whole. The free movement of people within organizations promotes individual versatility and organizational fluidity, and both individual and the society profit by the free movement of the people from one organization to another, and from one segment of society to another.

Individualism is a term that ranges over a wide variety of attitudes, doctrines, and theories. Individuals are assumed to be the building blocks of modern society, which rests, in the words of John Stuart Mill, "the freedom of action of individual –the liberty of each to govern his conduct by his own feelings of duty, and by such laws and social restraints as his own conscience can subscribe to."\textsuperscript{16} This means that society is held together by the shared values, feelings, concerns and goals of its members.
It is not held by externally imposed customs and traditions or by formal social, economic and political institutions, which are merely embodiments of shared values. In contrast to traditional times social roles have a secondary importance because they are viewed as the consequences of the choices individuals make about their involvements with other people rather than as the essence of such involvements.

The American conception of Individualism does not assume that a person’s control over his own life can or should be total. There is a general agreement that, actions which limit others freedom are not appropriate exercises of one’s own individuality. Constant change has been considered a basic fact of American life. Hence each person must be free to exercise his ingenuity if he is to deal effectively with unpredictable situations. The practice of individualism seeks more to avoid being controlled by rather than to control the changing milieu around one. One’s real aim is the freedom to direct the course of one’s own life, not the power to control others or the world outside the self. From an American perspective Individualism represents the attempt to harmonize individual freedom and self-determination with larger social claims, not the rejection of those claims. Individualism in America has always been justified in social terms. Moreover, society itself is a multiplicity of individuals. Therefore it is a non-collectivist, non-organic, non-traditional way of viewing society and each person’s relationship to it. Most approaches to individualism throughout American history have assumed that voluntary agreement is the key to reconciling self and society. Two different, though intermingling traditions in American thought can be distinguished in terms of basic assumptions as to just how this is possible. Though in reality the individual is a part of society, from his perspective in some absolute sense he exists separately from it and only consents to live with others because he finds it in his interest to do so. Mutual self-interest enables men to interact without
having to sacrifice their individuality any more than is absolutely necessary, but the tension between self and the society cannot be entirely eliminated.

Men are equal in terms of rights but not in terms of abilities, has always seemed quite obvious to those who believed in traditional way. Equality is really a matter of equality of opportunity. A more idealistic and less dominant line of thinking in America minimizes the emphasis upon success as well as the inherent tension between self and society. For those within this tradition of self-determination is intimately linked with voluntary relationships and concern for other people. It is possible to trace this conception of social unity back to much earlier religious views.

As Garry wills has pointed out in *Snow flakes and snow drifts* Jefferson considered man as destined for society, in contrast to Locke's system of government based on the individual's autonomy. Men are already associated in families, and in the exchange of goods and ideas, before it becomes necessary for them to form civil government. Because social unity ought to rest on un coerced mutual agreement, Jefferson could without contradiction affirm both man's social nature and express a profound uneasiness about formal governmental and social structures. Though he did not as a practical matter reject them, he did try to insure that their hold over Americans' lives would be kept to a minimum.

Individualism represents a cluster of values and a way of living one's life in accordance with these values. It does not dictate the substance or content of a person's life so much as how he lives it. As Yehoshua Arieli points out:

> In societies in which the principle of unity is a nation or a given datum, a variety of ideologies may compete with each other, but in a nation in which social
and national cohesion is based on an ideological proposition, diversity can develop only within the framework of its ideological premises. Individualism almost by definition includes an acknowledgement of the fact that each person is in some absolute sense unique."

Individualism is essentially a doctrine of human nature. It consists of conceptions of a human liberty. Individuals should be as free from interference in their activities as it is possible to be. Such freedom is the natural state of mankind and is not achieved only due to pressures from repressive institutions. Naturally, it is recognized that there have to be some limitations on this freedom, and theories of individualism debate on where to draw the line. The essence of the position is that there should be a sphere of thought or action that is free from interference.

The individuals have the capacity for action in the transformation of their environment, natural and social. The impulse to activity is accentuated in the quality of restlessness and in the pursuit of novelty. Individualism advocates rationality. Free activity is not irrational but is planned and calculating and is the more effective for being so. If individuals act freely and rationally, they do so by virtue of some inner drive and they take responsibility for their actions. These individuals are self-actualizing. The energy of society, on this society or the state perpetually threatens to block the energy of men by controlling them. Motivational energy belongs to individuals, who can transform nature through work.

Individualism has long been recognized as laying the basis of political opposition to traditional monarchical government and the development of liberal conceptions of parliamentary Government.

C. B. McPherson has suggested that a politically oriented doctrine of individualism also embodied a coherent vision of economy and society.
According to his account, individualism was 'possessive' because people were seen as the sole proprietors of their own capacities.

The individual, it was thought, is free in as much as he is proprietor of his person and capacities. The human essence is freedom from dependence on the wills of others, and freedom is a function of possession. Society becomes a lot of free equal individuals related to each other as proprietors of their own capacities and of what they have acquired by their exercise. Society consists of relations of exchange between proprietors. Political society becomes a calculated device for the protection of this property and for the maintenance of an orderly relation of exchange.*

Moreover, possessive individualism embodies three sets of assumptions that are peculiarly appropriate in a capitalist society according to Macpherson. The social world is pictured as a market, and human society is essentially a series of market relations. As individuals are free agents and have property in their own labour, they can choose to contract their labour power in the market place. Absolute private property in oneself leads to absolute private property in things, since what one mixes one's labour with becomes one's own, which justifies the private ownership of capital. Thus possessive individualism is to be found not only in the individualistic political doctrines common to England and America, but also in their conceptions of property and social relations.

Modern individualism is an exceptional phenomenon. There is by no means agreement on its origins. The idea of the individual as a value is as idiosyncratic as it is fundamental. The sociologist would tend to give prominence to religion as against philosophy, because religion encompasses the whole of society and relates immediately to action. Within chronological limits, the pedigree of modern individualism is, so to speak, double. An origin or accession is of one sort, and a slow transformation into another. When we speak of man as an individual,
designate two concepts at once: an object out there, and a value. Comparison distinguishes analytically these two aspects - the empirical subject of speech, thought, and will, the individual sample of humankind as found in all societies and, the independent, autonomous, and thus essentially non social moral being that carry out paramount values and is found primarily in our primary ideology of man and society.

In an anthropological survey, Louis Dumont, in his book *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*, presents this idea with instance of Indian society. According to him, two complementary features have characterized Indian society. Society imposes upon every person a tight interdependence, which substitutes constraining relationships for the individual. But on the other hand there is the institution of world renunciation, which allows for the full independence of man who chooses it. The man who is after ultimate truth forgoes social life and its constraints to devote himself to his own progress and destiny. When he looks back at the social world he sees it from a distance, as something devoid of reality and the discovery of the self is for him coterminous, not with salvation in the Christian sense, but with liberation from the fetters of life as commonly experienced in this world. This kind of renouncer is self sufficient, concerned only with himself. His thought is similar to that of modern individual. Louis Dumont called this Indian renouncer ‘Individual-outside-the-world.’ Dumont clarifies the words ‘In-worldly individual’ and ‘Out-worldly individual.’ By In-worldly individual, he meant, the individual in sense of individual, if non social in principle, in thought, is social in fact: he lives in society, ‘in the world.’ In contrast, the Indian renouncer becomes independent, autonomous, i.e. an individual, by leaving the society properly called an Outworldly individual.
The renouncer may live in solitude as a hermit or may join a group of fellow renouncers as a master renouncer. If Individualism is to appear in a society of the traditional holistic type it will be in opposition to society. It is commonly admitted that the transition in philosophical thought from Plato and Aristotle to the new schools of the Hellenistic period shows a discontinuity, a great gap—the surge of individualism. Self-sufficiency, which Plato and Aristotle regarded as an attribute to the polis, becomes an attribute of the individual. Accommodation to the world is obtained through the relativization of values. For the modern man this tension between truth and reality has become most difficult to accept or to value positively. Hegel would have preferred Christ to declare war on the world as it is to “changing the world”. Sociologically speaking, the emancipation of the individual through a personal transcendence, and the union of outworldly individuals in a community that treads on earth but has its heart in heaven, may constitute a passable formula for Christianity. The views and attitudes of the early fathers and social questions—the state and the ruler, slavery, private property—are mostly considered by the moderns in isolation and from an inwardly viewpoint.

Terms like “Individualism” are often used to oppose modern society to societies of the traditional type. In particular, the contrast between caste society and its modern Western counterpart is a commonplace. Liberty and equality on the one hand, interdependence and hierarchy on the other, are in the foreground. The individual, insofar as he is the main bearer of value in modern society, is equivalent to order in traditional society. In tracing the genesis of man as an individual, of the dominant modern conception of man, it is important to note the interplay of several levels of thought and kinds of institutions: religion and philosophy, Church and State, political philosophy and law etc. It is convenient to start from the combination of Christian revelation and Aristotelian Philosophy.
The combination is intimate, but we can distinguish its two elements by saying that on the level of religion, faith and grace each man is a whole being, a private individual in direct relation to his creator and model, and on the level of earthly institutions he is a member of the commonwealth, a part of the social body. On the one hand, the self-sufficiency of the person is based on the ultimate values disclosed by revelation, and is rooted in his intimacy with God as opposed to his earthly relationships. On the other hand, the earthly commonwealth is legitimized, with the help of Aristotle, as a secondary value and a rational institution, in contradistinction to the early doctrine of the Church, which disparaged it as a remedy deriving its necessity from original sin. If the Revolution had been a triumph of individualism, its liquidation, which appeared retrospectively largely as a failure, brought not only a chronic disappointment but a primary emphasis on values and ideas contrary to those which the revolution had exalted.

In his Essay on Indifference, Lamennais searched for truth in society itself, by taking what he calls 'commonsense' that is, the traditions of all known societies, as the source and the sign of truth. Elsewhere, he wrote: "Solitary man is but a fragment of being; the real being is the collective being, mankind that does not die." 21

In most societies, and primarily in the higher civilizations, the relations between men are more important, more highly valued, than the relations between men and things. This primacy is reversed in the modern type of society, in which relations between men are subordinated to relations between men and things. In modern society a new conception of wealth is found. In the traditional type of society, immovable wealth is sharply distinguished from movable wealth by the fact that rights in land are enmeshed in the social organizations in such a manner that superior rights power over men. With the moderns, a revolution occurred in this
respect; the link between immovable wealth and power over men was broken, and movable wealth became fully autonomous in itself. There emerged an autonomous and relatively unified category of wealth.

Anthropologists are strongly motivated to identify an economic aspect in any society, but where does it begin and where does it end is not very clear. In recent years, two antithetic viewpoints have been expressed. The proponents of the formal one insist with good reason that economics is identical with its concept, and they propose as a consequence their conceptions of the alternate uses of scarce means, of methods to maximize gain. The modern era has witnessed the emergence of a new mode of consideration of human phenomena and the carving out of a separate domain, called economy. Modern culture has a powerful universalism slant which leads to rejecting the differences, from the cognitive domain. There is fundamental difference in the conception of man. Either the fundamental value is attached to individual or the fundamental value is attached to society or culture. The accession of Individualism to predominance distinguishes modern culture from all others.

In traditional holism, the society is exclusive, humankind coincides with the society formed by a-like people, and strangers are devalued as being, at best, imperfect men. Such an assertion is possible only because cultures are viewed as so many individuals, equal among themselves not withstanding their difference; cultures are understood as individuals of a collective nature.22

A concrete culture as a concrete entity in which individuals are merged, presents a holistic protest against the individualism of the Enlightenment, but this protest actually takes place at a subordinate level. The superior level is the global level of consideration, on which all cultures
are present as individuals with equal right. As against the ethnocentrism of naïve holism, this shows adherence to modern individualism transferred from the elementary to the collective level.

It is a general belief that absolute socio-centricism accompanies every holistic ideology. There is a need for reintroducing some measure of holism into individualistic societies, but it can be done only on clearly articulated subordinate levels, so that major clashes with predominant or primary value are prevented. More radically, one may contend that values cannot really be understood without adhering them to the proximity to the Marxist plea and to relativist values to kill them. In a discussion, A.K.Saran maintained:

Cultures could not communicate, which means cultural solipsism, a return to socio centrism. And yet, there is point in it in the sense that comparison implies a universal basis: it must appear in the end that cultures are not as independent from each other as they would claim to be and as their internal consistency seems to warrant. 23

Values, in these societies, are in general, intimately combined with other non-normative representations. A System of values is thus an abstraction from a wider system of ideas and values. This is true in modern societies that individual’s moral values are in their relation to scientific, objective knowledge. Morality is, together with science, paramount in our modern consciousness and does not hinder its cohabiting with other norms, or values of the common sort, namely traditional social ethics. Even if some transition, some substitution of the former for the latter is taking place without knowledge. Thus the modern value of equality has spread in the last decades in European countries to domains where traditional ethics were still in force.

Relations between men have to be subordinated for the individual subject to be autonomous and equal; the relation of man to nature acquires
Individualism is an ideology, which valorizes the individual and neglects or subordinates the social whole. Having found that individualism in this sense is a major feature in the configuration of features that constitutes modern ideology. The evocation of property rights in the parliamentary debates of the early and middle seventeenth century, however, should be seen partly as special pleading and not as strictly accurate accounts of the historic rights. Finally, economic individualism, the right of individuals to pursue their own material interests without political or legal hindrance or consideration of wider social obligations, and a new conception of the individual as the sole proprietor of his or her own person appears to have been a novel element developed in the seventeenth century itself. However, that it was not until the late eighteenth century that

Individualism has sometimes been contrasted to Nationalism. Probably nationalism evokes a group sentiment that is generally contrasted to individualistic sentiment. The basic sociological fact, however, is that nation, and nationalism, as distinct from mere patriotism, is historically conjoined with individualism as a value. The nation is precisely the type of global society, which corresponds to the paramount of the individual as a value. Not only does the one, historically, accompany the other, but also the interdependence between them is clear, so that the nation would acquire a global society form composed of people who think of themselves as individuals.

III

Individualism is an ideology, which valorizes the individual and neglects or subordinates the social whole. Having found that individualism in this sense is a major feature in the configuration of features that constitutes modern ideology. The evocation of property rights in the parliamentary debates of the early and middle seventeenth century, however, should be seen partly as special pleading and not as strictly accurate accounts of the historic rights. Finally, economic individualism, the right of individuals to pursue their own material interests without political or legal hindrance or consideration of wider social obligations, and a new conception of the individual as the sole proprietor of his or her own person appears to have been a novel element developed in the seventeenth century itself. However, that it was not until the late eighteenth century that
the classic liberal justification of economic individualism, as individuals promoting the collective good when they freely pursue their own economic interests, was propounded in Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, nearly a century after John Locke wrote his seminal work on political individualism.

The growth of the individualistic practices thought to be essential to the development of capitalist social and economic organization is conventionally charted by a comparison with traditional society conceived as a 'natural economy'. This is found in the writings of Marx and Weber and among modern historians. Characteristically, the natural economy is seen as a domestic mode of production, or a socioeconomic system based on the peasant household.

Individualistic practices are manifest in the rise of individual property rights in place of collective or feudal property. None of these rights had given the individual owner an absolute right to alienate or otherwise use land as he wished. Marx regarded that the growth of absolute private property between the fifteenth and eighteen centuries, as a mirror of the growth of the capitalist mode of production. It denoted the development of a new conception of land based on absolute individual ownership rights with a purely economic interest, divorced from 'all its former political and social embellishments'. This transformed land into a capital asset that could be bought and sold in the market.\textsuperscript{24}

The rise of modern individual property, associated with the development of the market, as one of the factors that helped destroy the peasant economy and promoted the decline of collectivist traditionalism. The transformation of rights in the land with the growth of possessive individualism as a doctrine and the emerging capitalist mode of production
as a new kind of absolute property right was required by the capitalist market society, that is, property as an exclusive, alienable right to all kinds of material things including land and capital.

Another individualistic practice associated with capitalism is the rise of free labour. The creation of the class of landless wage labourers has been seen widely as a defining characteristic of modern capitalism, capitalist development being thought impossible without the historical spread of property-less labour from the sixteenth century onwards. The expropriation of the peasant from the means of production meant that labour was no longer tied to the land and the peasant household, but was now ‘free’ to sell itself on the market, and thus came to assume the status of commodity. Free commoditized labour promoted individualism, by separating the labourer from the nexus of obligations and communal relationships of precapitalist society, and by elevating certain market principles of community. Free labour markets recognize the principle of possessive individualism, that labourers are the absolute owners of their own capacities and labour as a commodity is thus unique because it embodies an individuality that cannot be possessed by others: employers in effect rent rather than own labour power, and employees are free to choose which employment contracts they will enter. Individual private property in the capital market and individual ownership of labour power in the labour market are both essential to the rise of capitalism in these accounts, while the Marxist canon also stresses that their ideological legitimating, as in the possessive individualism that informed liberalism, is intrinsic to capitalism.

An important component of individualism, associated with Weber requires a new type of mentality and behaviour among businessman. Weber’s analysis of business behaviour immediately prior to the rise of modern capitalism takes for granted that merchants and other entrepreneurs
displayed an acquisitive attitude, the economic impulse, but that this was constrained in its practical applications by an ethos of traditionalism that stood in the way of the rational, economic resource maximizing behaviour.\textsuperscript{25}

After dealing with the economic individualism, the observation moves forward to the prevailing nineteenth century’s element of self-reliance and twentieth century’s emergence of a new kind of individualism, the individualism of non-conformity.\textsuperscript{26} To specify more fully, the individualism of the nineteenth century stressed the element of self-reliance while that of the twentieth century has stressed the element of non-conformity or dissent, but that in each case there was a strong emphasis upon the value of the quality in question for society as a whole and not simply for the individual apart from society.

Theoretically, perhaps, it might be supposed that these two emphases are not very different: that self-reliance and nonconformity would go together and would tend to converge. It is logical to argue that a man who does not depend on other people for his physical welfare will centrally not be very quick to borrow his ideas from them. He sets up his own ideas not only for himself but also for society. Individualism, in this case equals independence, and independence equals freedom, and freedom equals dissent causing the assumption that individualism equals dissent. Perhaps the plausibility of this kind of equation has led to the fallacy of using one term, “individualism,” to express the ideas of both self-reliance and nonconformity.

In fact, these two types of individualists seem to be almost natural antagonists. The laissez-faire economics is likely to be conservative and orthodox, while the nonconforming individualist is likely to treasure-
unconventional form of self-expression and to regard the orthodoxy of the laissez-faire individuals is as a threat to such self-expression and to novel ideas in general.

To the self-reliant individualist, the sin of the nonconforming individualist is that he denies the community the means of protecting its values and the morale of its members against injury by hostile or irresponsible persons or groups. His concept of the right of dissent is so absolute that he extends it not only to responsible critics who want to improve the society, but also to enemies who want to destroy it and to exploiters who are alert to every chance for arousing and playing upon the anxieties, the lusts, and the sadistic impulses which society, from the beginning of time, has struggled to control.

It is a notable fact about laissez-faire individualism that while it exalted the virtues of unregimented, uncontrolled, independent action by man acting alone, it never for a moment contended that the success of the unusual individual was more important than the welfare of the community. Instead, it constantly stressed the idea that the bold enterpriser served the community by daring to undertake projects which the community need but which the rank and file was too unimaginative to initiate. The argument was much like that of the modern non-conforming individualist who defends dissenters not on the ground that the dissenter matters and that the conventional thinkers from whom he dissents do not, but that the community needs ideas which the conventional or orthodox thinkers cannot supply.

The exponents of this new kind of individualism went forward rejoicing, for quite some time, that individualism was now purged of the taints of privatism and of conformity. For, the spokesmen of the individualism of nonconformity were very often men who could in no
sense being accused of indifference to the interests of the groups, of society.

This section of the chapter deals with traces of individualism in literature. Ralph Waldo Emerson stands as the explorer of individualism. Emerson wrote in his journal,

> Individualism has never been tried. All history, all poetry deal with it only, and because now it was in the minds of men to go alone, and now, before it was tried, now, when a few began to think of the celestial enterprise, sounds this tin trumpet of a phalanstery, and the new boys throw up their caps and cry, Egotism is exploded; now for communism."27

In these words, Emerson summed up his judgment of all reform schemes that aimed to improve mankind through a change of institutions and social environment. He declared that a society is a “conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members,” and that “nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.”28 Emerson tried to convince his fellow Americans that they could match old world standards of cultural excellence while developing a distinct voice and perspective appropriate to their coming of as a nation. “His philosophy may be viewed in three theses: first he believed in the unity of being in God and man; second, he believed that the material world was created by mind; and, third, he believed in the identity and universality of moral law in the material and spiritual universe. These are certainly consistent with Indian Philosophy.”29

For Emerson, to will social change through pragmatic action is to indulge the imperial overstepping of personal boundaries. In the essay, ‘politics’, he deals with the oppressive history of governments. Emerson’s
political mission for the self is the very antithesis of struggle, and particularly of class struggle in its Manichean, classical Marxist form. Emerson writes in 'Self-Reliance',

> when we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its of private character would supersede the "proxy" of political practice, would work their way from person to person and override all cities, nations, king without need of army, fort, or navy. To define the self in terms of its class solidarity was to enable not self reliance but instead that collective heresy of other reliance, which drains the reservoirs of self trust.\(^{30}\)

Emerson's political agency, at once transcendental and intensely private, could not and should not be legislated by collective alliances. This was not Emerson's greatest wager for social change; it was, in essence, his only wager.

Indeed, as several recent critics have noticed, the very structure of authentic Emersonian action contains an injunction against mistaking mere deeds for the truth, which can be neither produced nor contained by them. As Myra Jehlen puts it, Emerson’s 'necessary actor' is a "paradoxical being whose willful intervention either to hasten the future’s adventure, worse still, to redefine it, can only distort the perfect order that already exists implicitly and thus delay its explicit realization. Not only are deeds and revolutions not needed, they are forbidden."\(^{31}\)

The Emersonian self must instead concern itself with the conditions and principles, not the pragmatics of action. And when the individual understands what makes authentic actions and actors possible, he realizes that those forces, because they cannot be rested or altered, make particular actions and interventions spurious. It is by this logic that Emerson's "political" applications of his philosophical idealism make sense: Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution.
Emerson, having recourse to the ready made cultural rhetoric of religious or spiritual transcendence, could acknowledge that individual difference sometimes meant inequality but this unhappy fact was so, only because some selves had failed to achieve self-reliance, had failed to recognize in other words, precisely that oneness in Spirit or Universal Being in which all are equal. That machinery of transcendence in large part allowed what might have been an authoritarian egoism in Emerson to dissolve so often into exactly the opposite. Personal authority was indeed more than merely personal, but it could not be enforced or produced by concrete actions.

For the modernist, however, the appeal to spiritual transcendence and the equality it guarantees is largely foreclosed and it becomes much more difficult to argue that the kind of individual difference known as egotism, elitism, or inequality is only apparent because only material and historical. And if that is the case, then practice in and on the object world assumes an importance it never had in Emerson.

At the age of twenty-one, while working as a reluctant schoolmaster and facing daily the growing threat of proletarianization, Emerson gave voice in his journal to the social discrimination that cultural discrimination seemed to require. “Aristocracy is a good sign” he wrote.

Aristocracy has been the hue and cry in every community where there has been anything good, any society worth association with, since men met in cities. It must be everywhere. ‘It were the greatest calamity to have it abolished ... Robinson Crusoe’s island would be better than a city if men were obliged to mix together indiscriminately heads and points with all the worlds.’

For Emerson being American meant being unencumbered by the binding structures of class, church, and all the sheer weight of those European institutions that circumscribed the self’s social, economic,
familial, and cultural relations. But those institutional determinations were also an inheritance, a fact pointedly symbolized in Emerson’s own struggle to find a proper vocation for himself and symbolically, for the American intellectual.

The Emersonian self is fundamentally a space of experiential scarcity, which is the very sight of the American individual’s liberation from the sediment forms of the past. Instead of being a lack or deficiency to be overcome, that scarcity lying at the absent center of the American self is instead a ‘native birthright’ underwriting the American self’s radical freedom and autonomy. Paradoxically, that scarcity is the very property American individual must possess to assume their full, distinctive identities. As Emerson puts it toward the end of ‘Experience’ “We must hold hard to this poverty, however scandalous, and by more vigorous self-recoveries, after the sallies of action, possess our axis more firmly”.

Emerson’s poet confers upon property and possession of a new and unexpected authenticity. In Compensation for instance, his scorn for the debased marketplace does not keep him from finding economic categories applicable to the operation of the soul. In short, if Emerson participates quite often in the surgical exposure of capitalism’s evils and excesses, he also participates in the commercialization of all things. On the one hand, Emerson insists, as forcefully as any American writer ever has that the reliance on property including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self reliance. On the other hand, from the very beginning of his career, he also reminds us, as in nature, that property is a preceptor whose lessons cannot be foregone, that its logic is not accidental and capricious but rather is the surface action of internal machinery, like the index on the face of a clock, and that our relationship to it, for better or for worse reflects our experience in profounder laws.
Emerson’s sharp sense of the human toll of capitalism, the market, and nascent industrialism is a pang of recognition that is unmistakable not only early on in ‘The American Scholar’ and ‘Self reliance’ but also much later in texts such as ‘English Traits’ often led him to direct his critical ire not toward the ‘mob’ itself but at the powers that created and sustained it. Emerson’s awareness that the blame for the downtrodden condition of the masses lay not mainly with them but with the propertied and moneyed interests that produced them is recorded with particular forthrightness in his journals.

The whole of ‘The American Scholar’ is informed in part by precisely this struggle to drive home the realization that property and political mass movement are false alternatives. Emerson was not blind or insensitive to the plight of the masses; his empathy and even outrage are present throughout his work, early and late. It was his deep conviction that to give in to the masses and the history that created them was to give up the possibility of the only victory that mattered: the atomistic renovation of individual selves. To engage in charity for the masses was to confirm, all that made them not worth preserving.

‘Self-Reliance’ gave this harsh fact of individual affirmation and even harsher corollary: “Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did today, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they my poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong.” 34

Emerson imagined that personal properties and potentials once wholly owned by their proprietors, could be exchanged in a spiritual economy that would not violate them. This is a startling moment in Emerson, not because of its idealism but because of the supercharged
Lockean individualism thought which Emerson transmits it. What Emerson attempts here is a rescuer, conscious or unconscious, of the institution of private property from its alienations and contradiction, a rewriting not of the form and structure, but only of the ethical content, of capitalism's central intuition.

Emerson's answer to the rise of commerce, industry, and the teetering edifice of debt and credit that accompanied it was not to reject capitalism but to simplify and reinvigorate it by restoring a more direct relationship between individual industry and economic prosperity. A more rigorous economy of selfhood that might anchor the large dealings of commerce became one of the objects of Emerson's preacher tone and rousing parallelism. When he turned his attention towards the question of socialism, Emerson suggested, in his journals, that the relationship between self-reliance and self-interest was a good deal more direct than he would put forth.

After Emerson, William James attempted in the principles of Psychology to try to figure individual difference in a language that might reset modernity's systematic assaults on the self. But like Emerson's, James's unnameable self is an acquisitive one as well. In fact, this self is not composed of the transient external possessions of house and bank account but is rather itself a more permanent, inalienable, and extremely private kind of property. James finds truly in alienable private poverty located at the core of selfhood.

Pound's essentially humanist position in 'The Serious Artist' is transformed in 'The New Sculpture' into a 'Radical egoism.' Pound, the artist as the enemy of society, and he espouses a vehemently antidemocratic cultural politics. He appeals 'To the Individual' but has nothing to do with 'The People.' And throughout his career Pound would
insisted that his individualism was radically democratic, not for artists only. In ‘Murder by Capital,’ he looked back, a little embarrassed, to his early avant-garde elitism and provided his own riposte to set the record straight:

If there was a time when I thought this problem of art’s commodification could be solved without regard to the common man, humanity in general, the man in the street, the average citizen, etc., I retract, I sing palinode, I apologies.35

And in one of his last interviews he located the value of art in its affirmation of the heteroclite nature of individual difference and concrete context. In a statement that must rein us of his early critique of literary production, Pound characterized the good modernist fight as “the struggle to keep the value of a local and particular character, of a particular culture in this awful maelstrom, this awful avalanche toward uniformity.”36

At the same time, however it is clear that Pound wants to make virtue not merely a negative principle of individual difference in general but also a positive assertion of qualitative and hierarchical differences between individual. He writes:

The type of man, who built railways, cleared the forests planned irrigation is different from the type of man who can hold onto the profits of subsequent industry. Whereas the first man was a man of dreams, in a time when dreams paid a man of adventure, careless this latter is a close person, acquisitive, rapacious, and tenacious. The first man has personality.... The present type is primarily a mask, his ideal is the nickel-plated cash register, and toward the virtues thereof he doth continual strive and tend. The first man dealt with men, the latter deals with paper.37

This passage provides in miniature a kind of barometer for Pound’s later attitudes toward democracy and the individual’s place in it. Because Pound located the virtue of individualism in many past epochs and
cultures, it is difficult to see that his modernist project of creating and restoring a literature for change was, by his own reasoning, one for which the American character was particularly well equipped. Pound’s early social critique make it clear that America, in its loosening of social and cultural convention and in its openness to charge and innovation, was the land of virtuous individualism’s greatest promise. From Pound’s perspective, an American modernism was something that was just waiting to happen and sooner rather than later because America was the point of convergence between the very subversive vitality of literature and the type of self whose mode, too, was invention and risk.

More and more, Pound came to view the constructive individual and its predictions not only as the essence of modernism’s promise, but also as the very engine and value of history itself.

Thus, Emerson, James and Pound in figuring the individual within the logic of private property, also figures it, as the very enemy of all those other selves they deeply wanted to equally autonomous as well. In doing so they declare that in the same moment and against their strongest impulses, the permanence of that alienation and the structures generated it. By stressing in their critiques not capitalism as an implacable logic but rather modernity as a moment when that logic went away, Pound and James say in so many words that capitalist relation - by extension, the alienation they produce- are not historical and changeable but permanent and given. They are the fundamental facts of life because they are the fundamental facts of selfhood. Pound thought of freedom to do that which harms not another.
After probing into the literature, where individual reigns supreme, the researcher wants to find out the impact of individualism on some modern theories. As the observation moves further, Feminism is found as an offshoot of individualism.

Explicitly fashioned by and for men, the discourse of individualism has generally been taken for granted that the individual is male and has treated women, the other, as the problem; most modern feminist scholars, even those who emphasize fundamental differences between women and men, have rejected that fiction, insisting that women have the same claims as men on the role of individualism or at least that men cannot claim their own status as individuals to speak in the name of humanity at large. Determination to expose the implicit link between the individual in the abstract and man in the concrete has led to an important group of feminist scholars to insist forcefully that male and female can only be understood within the framework of gender, with gender understood as a social or symbolic category—not fact of nature—as the social or symbolic construction of sexuality of biology.

In practice, gender exists not as an abstraction but a system of relations, the specific relations between women and men. Male and female genders always exist in relation to each other, never in isolation.

A female child is born in a society that has its own view of the proper or normative relations between women and men. Those relations are grounded in the roles that the society offers to women and men respectively. All societies and cultures, through education in the broad sense, encourage women and men to identify with the roles available to them. When the process is successful, gender appears to both women and
men as the seamless wrapping of the self. To be an "I" at all means to be gendered to be male or female

Individualism did not emerge all at once as a full-blown ideology. It developed slowly and piecemeal. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the scientific Revolution, and the rapid expansion of commerce have all been related to the growth of individualism although in-significantly different ways.

From women's perspective the French Revolution codified the modern language of individual rights. In so doing, it drew heavily on French, British, and American precedent. The tension between liberty and equality acquired special resonance for women and remains today at the center of the most heated debates in feminist theory.

Individualism's discourse of rights as dramatized in the French Revolution opened the way for Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and thus for modern feminism. Wollstonecraft, who had incurred heavy debts to both male and female precursors, was not the first to write combatively of women's excellence and desserts in the language of individualism. She was, that is, the first to combine a defense of women's political rights as individuals with a discussion of women's entitlement in the new political language of individual rights; she poignantly explored women's social and psychological vulnerabilities. And, like her male contemporaries, who grouped all men under the rubric of 'man,' she generalized from her own situation in the name of 'woman.'

A sense of twoness has haunted women's relations to individualism. Cut off from direct participation in its political authority, as well as its most obvious social and economic benefit, women have also suffered a doubled vision of themselves through the prism of its culture.
Individualism, in this respect as in many others, flattened particularistic distinctions and constructed a newly stark opposition between woman and man, with far-reaching consequences for women’s identities and self representation. Significantly, it is to individualism that we owe the model of autonomy, which so many feminist theorists are beginning to criticize as inadequate image much less goal of human identity. But however much we are now beginning to recognize the limits of the model of individual autonomy, it has carried great prestige in the eyes of many women who have found themselves excluded from it especially since the culture of individualism successfully associated it with panoply of other virtues. Women’s sense of twoness in relation to the dominant culture of individualism thus derived in large measure from their sense of exclusion from its promises and prestige. Under these conditions, many women, as Carolyn Heilbrun and Nancy Miller have convincingly argued, found it difficult even to represent themselves as and authoritative subject within the language of individualism. For women autobiographers in particular, Miller suggests, “writing for publication represents entrance into the world of others, and by means of that passage a rebirth: the access through writing to the status of an autonomous subjectivity beyond the limits of feminine propriety.”

Individualism has in theory, if not in practice, eliminated all justification for hierarchy and inequality by emphasizing the importance of the self as an autonomous, accountable unit of consciousness. According to its premises, there is no reason that women, like men, should not be counted as individuals. Yet biological differences persist, as do their representations. The logic of postmodernist feminism points toward the denial of physical difference on the grounds that it, like other differences, exists solely in language.
Women, like men, construct self-representations through available discourses and in interaction with intended readers. Physical description explicitly identifies a woman as tall or short, fair or dark. Other descriptions, sometimes less explicitly, identify her as doing or not doing housework, as writing with a pen or with a computer, as making her clothing or buying it. Women represent themselves in relation to other members of specific families, communities, societies.

They also represent themselves as endowed with specific personalities and values, which are also shaped by their material and social circumstances. The abiding danger for women, especially in representing their character, remains that of being trapped into seeing themselves literally through men's eyes. The danger becomes, as Nancy Miller has suggested, especially acute when women attempt public self-representations such as autobiographies or self-portraits, for women can never free themselves entirely from the dominant discourses of their communities or cultures.

But the very act of self-representation implicitly modifies that abstraction with the contingencies of place and time and gender that make the self both recognizable and distinct. In this sense women construct self-representations within the conventions of specific discourses. The root of the problem lies in our inability to shake the legacy of individualism. Today, any viable notion of the individual must expand to encompass the asymmetry of male and female the central challenge to any idea of a unitary self that could serve as a proxy for all humanity. In this respect, gender does lie at the heart of our modern condition.

Feminism, in its many varieties, has derived from women's rejections of the poignant duality that rends the consciousness of female subjects, who live in a culture largely not of their own making. Like that
tradition, it has given rise to contending views about the nature of and best means to attain social justice and recognition for women. In this respect, feminism has followed the path of individualism in viewing “man” and “woman” as absolutes, in building the ideal of the individual or, in the case of woman, non individual directly from biology. Man and woman, respectively, embody nature. Feminism’s temptation to follow individualism in this abstraction flows naturally from individualism’s commitment to human beings on the whole.

Feminist individualism arises from enslavement and comes weighted with its legacy of fear. To be sure, male as well as female experience of enslavement of literal slavery, servitude, class exploitation, and simple denigration has informed the origins and triumph of bourgeois individualism as well as its radical and social democratic offshoots.

Following the principles of individualism, modern societies have determined that the persistence of slavery in any from violates the fundamental principal of a just society. But in grounding the justification in absolute individual right, they have unleashed the specter of a radical individualism that overrides the claims of society itself. To the extent that feminism, like antislavery, has espoused those individualistic principles, it has condemned itself to the dead ends toward which individualism is now plunging. Feminism, as an off spring of individualism, carries the potential of bringing individualism back to its social mooring by insisting that the right of individuals derive from society rather than from their innate nature. Feminism, understands that social opportunity must lie in access to the various roles that society offers. Above all, women, with the privileged knowledge of sexual asymmetry, which derives from their history of subordination, understand that justice must derive from a collectivity that
ground its deepest principles of individual right in the collectivity’s commitment to honor and protected difference.

V

The Moral basis of this thesis is the belief that respect for individual rights is the best way of honoring human dignity, by which it mean the equal dignity of every individual.

The theory of individual rights assumes that government as such, government in any form, has its own power, interest, which inclines it to deny that rights exit or to encroach on those it recognizes.

Rights-based individualism has a prima facie commitment to the greatest possible amount of such legally allowed “self-regarding” activity because this activity is a major part of free agency. When the Supreme Court speaks of a substantive due-process right to liberty and of a right to privacy, part of the reason is to conceptualize freedom of self-regarding activity. Mill defends this kind of freedom, this individual sovereignty, absolutely, even though he tends to make its value only instrumental. Mill would have remained absolute had he taken up certain cases that unawareness or decorum prevented him from discussing. A line has to be drawn, and not just to have a line. Where to draw it is, of course, open to dispute.

Rights-based individualism, in a way is intrinsically opposed to political quest for socioeconomic equality. We can distinguish this quest from two other aims: the relief material misery and, beyond that, the welfares attempt, undertaken by government, to improve the condition of the poor, the disadvantaged, the disabled. The quest for socioeconomic
equality is a different enterprise. Its aim to efface, to the fullest degree possible, differences between people and differences of wealth and power and, consequently, differences in possibilities and the experiences, in hopes and aspirations, in intensities of pleasure and pain.

No theorist of individual rights, until after Marx, held that socioeconomic equality is mandatory if individual personal and political rights are too secured and if rights-based individualism is to flourish. One exception is Rousseau. He does not really project an idea of a society in which rights against political agencies have any practical reality. Rights seem to have a more potent reality in conjectured prepolitical conditions than in the good society. To be sure, he makes much of civil liberty, which is equivalent to the protection of many rights. But these protections are not politically guaranteed. The culture that is supposed to grow out of the initial arrangements is not the culture worked out of rights-based individualism but a republicanism that does not favor any sort of individualism. As it is, Rousseau advocates a limited inequality, not a perfect socioeconomic equality. But he seems to move, in theory, as close to it as he can. He is much too perfectionist for a modern theory of rights.

The project of socioeconomic equality became a theoretically urgent matter. Rawls's effort to show that justice as fairness requires a limited inequality is powerful and influential. "The idea that any socioeconomic inequality must be justified by the contribution it makes to improve the lives of the least well situated has strengthened conscientious disquiet with gross inequality of every kind." 39

But most theorists of rights-based individualism expect socioeconomic inequality to exist and even to find it as an outcome that is
The historical record seems to show that socioeconomic equality or severely limited inequality is impossible except in the most rudimentary or desperate circumstances. Otherwise it exists only in such utopias as Morelly’s *Code de la Nature* or Rousseau’s *Social Contract* or Marx’s *Economic and philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Rousseau himself knows how contrary to human experience it is, and he conceived of its possibility only in a society in which the Lawgiver’s prescriptions had induced an almost complete transformation of the human character. The critique of the possibility of socioeconomic equality goes back at least to Aristotle’s analysis of the egalitarianism. Every thing in life militates against it. Economic misery can be abolished in modern societies if there is a will to do so; poverty can be diminished; some further measure of equality can be introduced. But in any society of complexity, whether free or despotic, people will be unequal socio economically. And the harder the state tries to create genuine equality, the more ruthlessly it must act the more continuously intrusive and regulative it must become the most intolerant of resistance. The project need not go the lengths of Stalin, Mao, all of them fanatics of equality and all of them practitioners of evil for that very reason—but it will nevertheless suffocate freedom and energy. It will erode or destroy rights; it will not honor human dignity.

Rights-based individualism is not a theory of class struggle. Class struggle, in fact, must be devoid of all rights, not only of the right of property. It is more like war, even when conducted peacefully, than peace. It is a refusal to grant legitimacy to constitutional representative democracy. The trouble with the alternative vision of democratic politics as group self-expression or group mastery is that it poses people a uniform
collectivity, or at least that it aspires to such a condition. That assumption is no better than that of class division into a uniform majority and a uniform minority. To want to believe that there is either a fixed majority interest or a homogeneous group identity is not compatible with the premises of rights-based individualism. And to act on either view is to weaken rights. One could conclude therefore that a modern democracy that rests on respect for individual rights is not properly seen as popular self-government in any active sense. Popular self-government is a negative concept: it is the absence of rule, to an appreciable extent.

The perspective of rights-based individualism is suspicious of the political realm. The manner in which constitutional democratic government is put together and does its business radiates powerful moral and existential lessons that help to engender a distinctive culture. Constitutional democracy is in itself a great moral and existential phenomenon: it is constructed out of respect for the rights of individuals. But it also contributes profoundly to another great moral and existential phenomenon, a new way of life. Indeed, if the policies of the government, or its effectiveness, were the force behind the creation or the psychological maintenance of a new way of life, the way of life is artificial and unlikely to last. The cardinal fact is that the form and routine political and legal workings of constitutional democracy give reality to personal and political rights. In doing so, the system impresses the meaning of rights on the psyche; behavior is changed because everyone's self-conception is changed.

Rights-based individualism defines the political meaning of constitutional democracy. It is an assertion against the actual government and policies, but, equally, it draws its life and nourishment from the form, the spirit, and the routine workings of that government. With time, latent
or extended or metaphorical meanings in rights are found, while the continuing public embodiment of rights in the political and legal system occasions further discoveries of meanings, and magnifies old and new meanings, and makes them vivid. The combined effects, over time, of living with rights against government and also experiencing its form and routine working are a potent force for revising human self-conception and all human relations. The meanings of rights are spread everywhere into society, in all the rest of life apart from government.

Every human being is the beneficiary of countless people, mostly nameless and unnamable, who delivered life, generation after generation, to the living generation and whose contribution to the powers and pleasures of life can never be told. These hidden millions and millions cannot be requited. They can be thanked only indirectly. That happens when the living acknowledge their infinite indebtedness to the past by giving from their surplus to the least fortunate in the present. Perversions of rights-based individualism encourage fortunate people to fantasize that they are literally self-made. But the doctrine, in its pure form turns against such hubris. It teaches modesty because it cultivates respect for human beings as human beings, known or unknown, near or far, dead or alive or to be born. All are equal. If, on the other hand, the theory of rights goes well enough with a sense of indebtedness to the mass of humanity as the source of one’s life and its powers and pleasures, it resists, most bitterly, a sense of indebtedness to the state and to one’s present and local society.

As everyday life is revised, it shows more and more evidences of democratic individuality, which is a cultural, indeed a spiritual outgrowth and elaboration of rights-based individualism in a constitutional democracy. The idea of democratic individuality also re-creates public citizenship by conscientiously re-individualizing it and encouraging
creative resistance on behalf of one-self or others. If made real, democratic individuality produces a culture or civilization that is the counterpart of the political system of constitutional democracy. The value of each are, with allowance made for some changes, the values that inspire the other. More is involved, therefore, than the claim that the political systems have some general good effects on people raising their self-esteem and hence their level of energy or calling forth such virtues as good judgment, impartiality, and fair play—which are not specific to democracy. And the culmination for the democratic individual can be theorized as a state of being which rises above immersion in its culture. That psychic culmination, too, has a counterpart in the anarchic qualities of the political system.

Democratic individuality can grow in a society that respects the rights of individuals. Rights-based individualism prepares the way for democratic individuality and guards the possibility of its occurrence. But, in turn, democratic individuality, when practiced, guards and fulfills rights-based individualism and signifies that the meanings of rights have been grasped and held.

In sum, the theoretical account of the individual in a constitutional democracy brings out an expansive concurrence of distant but intimately related elements. It embraces not only the basic requirements of modest human dignity but also the radical alteration of culture and, beyond that, the assertion of every individual’s infinitude – and, what may come with that, an openness to sublimity.

The idea of democratic individuality is complex. It makes the idea schematic. The division of the idea into three aspects of individuality, positive, negative, and impersonal, is not tactful or philosophically subtle. It may appear unnecessary eagerness to carry literature into political theory for the sake of political theory. That the legacy of Emersonian
individualism remains contested terrain can be seen in two recent and very different assessments. George Kateb’s study of democratic individuality places Emerson, along with Thoreau and Whitman, at the head of a tradition of rights-based individualism that is the ‘sine qua non’ of American democracy. The moral implications of democratic individuality are crucial, in that it is the lack of such a moral basis that the critics of individualism, liberals or conservatives decry most loudly. Kateb’s liberal individualism ensures a respect for others because one must be a democratic individual to individuate one’s sympathy and perception. One becomes an individual above one’s normal level by breaking up the world into individuals equally worthy of attention and response. Ultimately, democratic individuality differs from other types of individualism because it carries with it the conviction that one can make the sense of one’s infinitude a bridge to other human beings and perhaps to the rest of nature.

But it is observed that political theorists were not paying enough attention to the work of these writers and that some schematism could be provisionally helpful. By ignoring them for the most part, political theorists have ignored the best conception of individualism. If individualism means more, other political theorists are prepared to denounce it as an advocacy of solipsism or atomism or self-protective reclusiveness or aimless hedonism or amoral self-imposition. No doubt all these tendencies exist. But there is another tendency, another hope and another actuality. On the one hand, rights-based individualism is a claim for a shred human dignity, simply; on the other hand, the theory and the practice of democratic individuality are critical or hostile toward the other kinds of individualism. It would be foolish to deny that there are affinities and historical connections between these other kinds and both rights-based individualism and democratic individuality. The Emersonian tradition is an
attempt to sever democratic individuality from all the other individualism that resemble but reject or betray it, or that developed with it but then swerve and become narrowly extreme.

It helps to have read characterization in Plato’s *Republic* of the democratic psyche and society. Athenians did not have a theory of individual human rights of the modern absolute and universal sort. They are not usually thought even to have had a notion of the individual rights of Athenians. But they certainly had guarantees for citizens. They had a wider sense of inclusion in citizenship than was the usual. They loved dispute; they loved exposure to difference and contrast. They, more than anyone else, in their world, tolerated philosophy. They seem to have been free in a way that encouraged ordinary persons to take chances, to experiment, to be mobile, and to be receptive. They gave persons and things equal footing, an equal chance. They let roles be reversed, so that slaves acted as if they were free, the young as if they could instruct the old, the guilty as if they had never broken the law and, women as if they were as good as men. They would have preferred a word in which no one ruled or was ruled.

In modern times, the theory of rights against government is needed to get this culture started and keep it going, while the Athenians had some other inspiration, which was no more predictable and is no more exhaustively explainable than the birth of the theory of rights. But whatever the Athenian inspiration, one detects some version of the idea that ordinary persons have dignity and are worthy: they suffer, but should suffer less; they are capable of leading a life on their own, of living as they like, and not disgracefully; and they are capable of perceiving other as themselves.
After Plato, Tocqueville gave the United States for an illumination of democratic culture. The transformation of self and culture in a society governed in the manner of constitutional democracy is his great theme, concentrated especially in the second volume of *Democracy in America*. His emphasis is on the many ways in which democracy changes the world over: the spirit of equality, equal human dignity replaces the spirit of hierarchy in every sector of life. He writes about democratic manners: a more informal family life, a greater equality between the sexes, a greater mingling of people on equal terms in every circumstance of life, a greater mildness and leniency and openness, and a new sort of adventurousness.

Democratic individuality is not boundless subjectivist or self-seeking individualism. Though democratic surfaces change with extreme quickness, individual expression may take place, to a great extent, within a range of small differences. The most desirable democratic diversity is that shown by each person in relation to himself or herself in the instant or over time, a self-overcoming driven as much by self-displeased honesty as by a taste for adventure.

Democratic diversity is therefore not, in principle, infinitely permissive; nor is it in practice. The democratic culture is too fluid and uncertain to be a shapely stylization, but it is not incoherent. The point of special relevance is that if ever greater numbers of individuals stop thinking of themselves as individuals and, instead, detribalize in ethnic or other sorts of fixed-identity groups, the normal level of democratic individuality would grow weaker. The heart of rights-based individualism would also sicken. Fixed pluralism, rather than limited and temporary associations, is foreign to the culture of democracy. If, also, fixed-identity groups, new to a democratic society, pondered the spirit that gives them protection, they would perhaps come to dissolve or individualistically
reform themselves. They receive the tolerance they would never give. They are given the recognition they deny other: recognition of equal worth and dignity. They have been received as individuals but think and feel as an exclusive herd.

Negatively, extraordinary democratic individuality manifests itself in episodes of public citizenship in which some people whose rights are protected initiate resistance in behalf of other who are denied their rights, or join them in a common struggle. What makes this politics of resistance individualist is the presence of conscience, which means, in this context, the courage to stand for what all the advantaged profess but many do not follow. Thoreau, more than any other, has crystallized the sentiments of resistance for the sake of others. Certainly his conscientious refusals are a powerful example, but it is not the only one. Extraordinary individuality can also be displayed in acts of resistance that are not solitary or uncoordinated but rather associative and organized. The provision for extraordinariness is that each person enters the fight after political vices of partiality, self-deception, and insensitivity to the claims of the other side.

Democratic individuality becomes extraordinary in the impersonal sense when one labors to bestow sympathy abundantly, especially on what seems most to discourage or repel it. It is observed that the theory of democratic individuality, like some other individualism, cultivates a sense of individual infinitude. What helps to separate democratic individuality from other individualism, however, is the conviction that one can make the sense of one’s infinitude a bridge to other human beings and perhaps to the rest of nature. The world is aspects of oneself, of anyone, made actual. One has some affinity to every particular.
Another recent variation of individualism, in this regard is the Middle American based *Popular Individualism*.\(^{41}\) It means the ability to make choices in a variety of social settings. At its most basic, individualism is the pursuit of personal freedom and of personal control over the social and natural environment. It is also an ideology— a set of beliefs, values, and goals— and probably the most widely shared ideology in the United States.

Individualism being among other things a series of goals, what people want as individuals has been affected by changes in the country, the personal freedom and the ways of seeking it in the late-20\(^{\text{th}}\) century. The Middle American search for personal freedom means liberation from unwelcome cultural, social, political, and economic constraints, but also from lack of economic as well as emotional security. Middle Americans, like most other American, want to be able to avoid involuntary conformity, whether it is required by the family, neighbors, or the government. They also try to sidestep obligatory membership in institutions and organizations, sacred or secular.

Although the advocates of entrepreneurial and corporate, capitalist individualism may not like to hear it, popular individualism does not preach the virtues of risk-taking. Most Middle Americans hold jobs rather than pursue careers, and many people can lose these jobs quickly in an economic crisis.

In effect, the preoccupations of Middle American individualism remain modest. More important, individualism is not even an entirely fitting term for them. Further more, the goal of popular individualism is hardly separation from other people. Instead, it is to live mainly, and participate actively, in a small part of society, the array of family, friends,
and informal relations and groups which are referred to as micro society. Popular individualism is, therefore, very much a social phenomenon. To be sure, in one sense all individualism is social, for the components with which we construct our identities and with which we differentiate ourselves from, others are themselves social, or else we could not communicate with anyone. We can only survive as individuals because we are in and of society. Even the individualism of the highly educated, which appears to aim for distinctiveness, is social, for the many ways by which they seek 'self-actualization' are always conducted with, and for others. The radically individual method of orthodox or classical psychoanalysis, in which one person seeks his or her own identity in the company of a normally silent analyst, has just about disappeared in America.

Middle American individualism diverges considerably from the goals sought by others in the socioeconomic class hierarchy. Capitalist individualism is mainly economic, and varies not only between entrepreneurs and corporate executives but also to the extent to which the goal is profit maximization, market control, or escape from government regulation. As individual, the very rich and the merely affluent usually pursue kinds of self development that the average-income Middle American cannot yet afford.

For example, control and security are so central in popular individualism because of where Middle Americans stand economically, politically and otherwise in society.

Popular individualism is hardly beyond criticism however, its major fault is that, like all other individualism, it creates victims. Some people are hurt because they are unable to deal with the loosening of ties that is a part of individualism. Those who have lost ties, voluntarily or otherwise, but cannot develop new ones may suffer from levels and forms of social
isolation that can lead to despair. Loneliness is unfortunately usually invisible and has therefore received insufficient attention from critics of individualism. The suffering of some victims of loosened ties can become socially dangerous if they panic and surrender their egos to religious cult leaders with secular ambitions and totalitarian methods, or to political cults.

The traditional American values of individualism, self-reliance, self-discipline, and hard work had their roots, in part, in the fact that this country began as a frontier nation where nothing was given and everything had to be created. To be sure, most Americans exhibited a strong sense of community, and they certainly practiced mutual aid. But this was not seen as a substitute for self-responsibility. Independent people helped one another when they could, but everyone was expected to carry his or her own weight.

The Declaration of Independence proclaimed the revolutionary idea that a human being had a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This meant not that he or she was owned anything by others, but rather that other including the government were to respect the individual’s freedom and the inviolability of his or her person. It is only by the use of force or fraud that human rights can be infringed, and it was force and fraud that were, in principle, barred from human relationships.

This rejection of the initiation of force in human relationships was the translation into political and social reality of the eighteenth century precept of natural rights—that is, rights held by individuals not as a gift from the state but rather by virtue of being human. This idea was one of the great achievements of the Enlightenment.
America stood for Freedom, individualism, private poverty, the right to the pursuit of happiness, self-ownership. The individual is as an end in himself, not a means to the ends of others, and not the property of family or church or state or society.

In the arena of political economy, the name given to this system in its purest, most consistent form was laissez-faire capitalism, in nineteenth-century America, with the development of a free market society. People saw the sudden release of productive energy that previously had no outlet. They saw life made possible for countless millions who had little chance for survival in recapitalize economies. They saw mortality rates fall and population growth rates explode. They saw machines—the machines that many of them had cursed, opposed, and tried to destroy, cut their workday in half while multiplying the value and reward of their effort. They saw themselves lifted to a standard of living no feudal baron could have conceived. With the rapid development of science, technology, and industry, they saw for the first time in history the liberated mind taking cased control of material existence.

In the United States during the nineteenth century, productive activities were predominantly left free of government regulation, controls, and restrictions. True enough, there was always some government intervention into economic activities, and some business people sought government favors to provide them with advantages against competitors that would have been impossible in a totally free market. And there were other injustices reflecting inconsistency in protecting individual rights: the toleration of slavery and legal discrimination against women. But in the brief period of a century and a half, the United States created a level of freedom, of progress, particularly of achievement, of wealth, and of
physical comfort unmatched and unequaled by the total sum of mankind’s development up to that time.

Now, they are in a position to use the concept of individualism to put against the social evils like Racism. Edwin A. Locke, a professor of management at the University of Maryland at college park, writes in an article that “the only true antidote to the problem of racism: individualism.”

According to him people often make judgments of other people based on non-essential attributes such as skin colour, gender, religion, nationality, etc. This does happen. But the solution is not to abandon the ideal but to implement it consistently. Thus, organizational training should focus not on diversity-workshop but on how to objectively assess or measure ability, motivation and character in other people. The proper alternative to diversity, that is, to focusing on the collective, is to focus on the individual and to treat each individual according to his or her own merits. Thus, the focus of individualism is shifted from a confined area to vast vistas to embrace whole humanity and its betterment, placing the individual against individual working in harmony.

A magazine from UNESCO observes that, “Many peoples_ the Mbuti of the former Zaire, the Canadian Cree and Inuit the Batck of Malaysia and the Nayak of southern India, to name but a few_ are ignorant of the Western dichotomy between nature and nurture. In many cases, they see their relationship with the natural world from which they receive gifts as a genuine child-parent relationship. They therefore regard sharing nature giving to humans or humans giving to one another___as an part of their lives, expressing an outlook on the world that could be described, in Nurit Bird-David’s words, as a ‘cosmic economy of sharing.’

57
It serves as a proper conclusion to the debates of society and individual and their proper places respectively. Man, though, strives for his own self, in turn, serves society also. Society is, after all, made up of individuals. In, whatsoever way, it turns back to individual. The next chapter deals with the imbalance in a society where these relations are at stake. It gives the details of the totalitarian state where individual is diminished to lower importance.
REFERENCES

Chapter I


3. Ibid., P.89.


5. Ibid, P.394.


8. Ibid., P. 195.

9. Ibid., P. 196.

10. Ibid., P. 196.


16. Ibid., P.19.
17. Ibid., P.17.
18. Ibid., P.19.
22. Ibid., P.119.
23. Ibid., P.246.
25. Ibid., P.96.
28. Ibid., P.180.


32. Ibid., P.70.

33. Ibid., P.77.


36. Ibid., P.71.

37. Ibid., P.87.


40. Ibid., P. 28.

