

Individualism and society

Going back to the tribal age, we notice that each tribe had lived an independent life, forming a society of its own. Even after the state came into existence, the tribe did not recognize the state, or abide by state laws, or change its nomadic lifestyle. However, in the agricultural age, the tribe did not and could live an agricultural life without transforming itself, its culture and way of life. As a consequence the tribe was replaced by the extended family, which formed the unit of agricultural community and society; each farming community or village was made up of few extended families, and each extended family put its interests ahead of the interests of the village and state to which it belonged. In the industrial age that followed, neither tribe nor extended family did or could exist; the extended family was replaced by the nucleus family, which formed the basic unit of industrial community and society. Consequently, each family placed its interests and the welfare of its members ahead of the interests of the industrial community and society to which it belonged. The individual throughout these times had no particular role to play; he was a member of the major unit of society, and his will and wishes, as a result, were subordinated to the will and wishes of the societal unit to which he belonged.

As human societies began a difficult transitional period to the knowledge age, the nucleus family was replaced by the individual who came to represent the basic unit of the new society. As a result of this transformation, the will and wishes of society are being subordinated to the will and wishes of the individual. In pursuing their personal gain, individuals are moving in all directions trying to subordinate everything in life to money. In fact, money and wealth have become the focal point of all life activities and the major sources of satisfaction and social recognition. And in so doing, individuals and members of elites in control of economic, political, financial, and media affairs are slowly confiscating every material and non-material thing they are able to reach, causing great damage to the interests of society; individual gain in today's society translates into collective pain. But since no action could shield individuals from harming themselves, as harm engulfs society, elites will ultimately become victims of their own greed and selfishness. Of course, they can carry their wealth and run away and leave society in ruins, but they are unlikely to succeed because they are more likely to repeat their own mistakes and

meet the same fate as their victims. They are also likely to feel haunted by their own conscious, assuming that they will still have a conscious after ruining the lives of millions of people.

Since elites in all societies form today one global elite, they are partners in this game of greed and selfishness. Therefore, it is expected that the actions of this global elites will gradually transform all societies into victims, of course unless states intervene to place restrictions on the free actions of the rich and powerful. But since the state is run by members of the same elite, they are unlikely to act to protect the lives and interests of the poor and powerless. Ultimately, however, everyone will suffer, and no one will be saved the consequences. Nevertheless, no logical argument seems able to convince the greedy that their fate is tied to the fate of every one else. Individualism makes people with wealth and power feel that they are exempt from the laws of nature and therefore they can do what pleases them regardless its impact on the lives of others.

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