

“Be hard, and live dangerously!”, is the continual auto-suggestion of the Nietzschean individualist.

This was merely the crystallization into a formula of all those who have instinctively and temperamentally viewed life as an adventure, an adventure both in self-discipline and the unforeseen.

“Be soft, and live in security!”, is the slogan of the social, huddling animal. Like sheep, they are kept alive by the friction of friendly behind-rubbing.

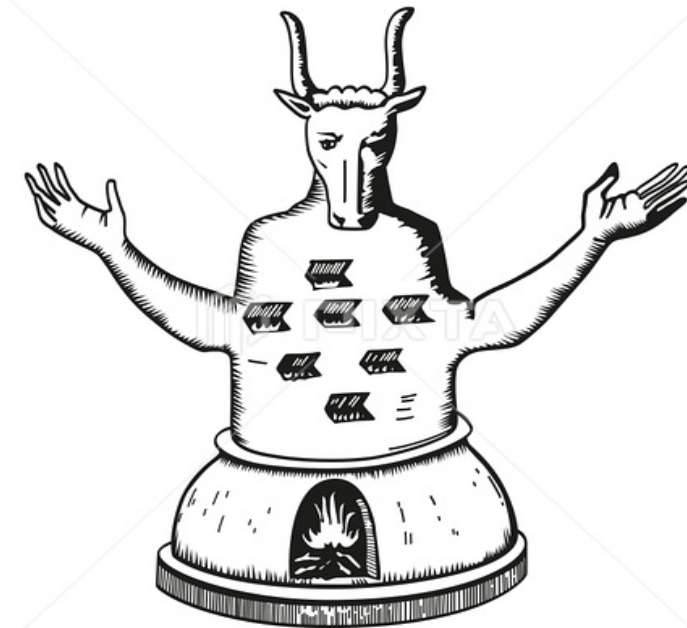
“I want to be kept!” is the unspoken but passionate aspiration of the masses from the formation of the first parasitic human group-state to the Communist, Socialist, Nazist and Fascist of today.

Feral Distro

feraldistro.noblogs.org

2022

The Individual Against Malach



Benjamin de Casseres

This is an excerpt from the book *The Individual Against Moloch*
by Benjamin De Casseres
Find the rest of the book for free at theanarchistlibrary.org

The Individualist

The Individual stands on the brink of annihilation. The State is the new divinity. The masses everywhere yearn to be kept. Economic pimping and gregarious parasitism are the dominant traits of the times. Mob-masters put the shackles on the people everywhere. And the people howl for bigger and better shackles.

The Bed of Procrustes stretches from the Rhine to Tokio—due east. To the west the shadow of the Bed of Horrors is thrown over France, England and America.

The Individual withers and the miracle-mongers are more and more. These miracle-mongers have various labels for their steady descent toward the life of the ant: Fascism, Communism, Socialism, Technology, Capitalistic-Ku-Klux-Klanism, Totalitarianism, Aryanism. However, in the crucible of the word-concept *Automatism* they all dissolve into one another.

For the human race, in all times, is divided psychologically into two classes only: the Collectivist-Automatic being and the Individualistic-Self Reliant being. There are degrees of each, fine shadings and interlappings and overlappings; but as a perfect living equilibrium is inconceivable, one or the other psychological characteristic will dominate every human being. It is a manifestation of the centripetal and centrifugal forces in psychic—and hence social and economic—life.

If the word *progress* has any meaning to me, it means this:
Whatever tends to individualism, differentiation, contrast, clash, independent life, variety is progressive.

Whatever tends to automatism, mass-movement, likeness, peace, parasitic life, unity, is retrogressive.

One is life; the other is death.

get in, also construct an ideology dripping with sweetness and light and promises as gaudy as the madame in an exclusive old Roman whorehouse for Senators and Pro-Consuls.

The “Redeemer” bawls Social Justice! Equitable Distribution of Wealth! Capitalistic Vampires! Dictatorship of the Proletariat! He has endless shibboleths for his own secret designs; he has a fine row of show-windows. But when you peer into the store—the deep-buried and ambuscaded Motive—you will find those fine old fellows, Envy, Greed, Will-to-Power, Vengeance, Exploitation and Ego, parading around as naked as a satyr at a strip-party on the Isle of Lesbos.

offense and perfectly logical and reasonable reasons for the most enormous crimes of governments and churches against dissenters are always on tap.

The sadistic, bloodthirsty, cruelty-loving, power-craving instincts in Torquemada, Robespierre, Cromwell, Lenin, Hitler and Mussolini, for instance, are veiled, hidden, clamped-down under the most grandiloquent and idealistic principles.

The natural monster that is man (all of us) took other forms in Jesus, Mahomet and Moses. There was forged—beyond their will—in the belly of their dreams of power and social vengeance the shield and helmet of Ethical Progress and Salvation for Mankind.

For the spiritual mob-masters as well as the physical and politico-economic mob-masters are Machiavellis (and, remember, Machiavelli was the sincerest man of his age). These spiritual Machiavellis (who have one set of rules for themselves and another for their exploited victims to-be) are profoundly sincere. In fact, they never know how sincere they are. They are the satyr-man in all his luminous glory. If they really knew their *real selves* they would commit suicide.

It was these continuous glimpses of the depths in himself that caused Tolstoy to veil himself with the mask of Primitive Christian Communist.

In a study of the soul of Tolstoy (such as we have in Stefan Zweig's fulgurant analysis of the fake Grand Moujik) we have a perfect example of the sublime comedy of the natural-satyr man parading the world with a crown of thorns on his head peddling a fifth gospel.

In my Lady Maya's wardrobe are many costumes, but they are all cut for one person—her eternal buffoon, Man.

Today, the natural-satyr-predatory man lies ambushed behind the ideologies of Communism, Socialism, Fascism. Ambush behind the ambush: Youth Movement.

Practical life also has its ideologies. There are just two classes in this realm: those who have fat jobs and those who haven't—the Ins and the Outs, as we say politically. The Ins all hold their seats because of some high-falutin' ideal principle. The Outs, wanting to

Unity, the automatic, mass-movement, likeness, peace, etc., cannot, of course, be abolished (one may as well try to abolish the centripetal forces), but they must be *subordinated* to the instinct for independent life.

Not since the Middle Ages, when the Catholic Church had dissolved all variety into unity, has there ever been such speedy motion toward universal Automatism as to-day. Mob-Moloch, with its Machiavellian masters, marches on relentlessly to swallow up the Individual.

Therefore, today, what we name "radicals" are reactionaries (including all Fascists and advocates of unregulated Capitalism). The "progressist," the real radical, is now, as always, the Individualist—he *who has no programme for any one else, who often has no programme even for himself—he who evolves spontaneously and expresses himself in the rhythm of his whole psyche.*

One may love his country, his race, his countrymen; but I defy you to show me any one who ever loved his government. Even those who are its beneficiaries hold it in secret or open contempt.

Now, the government is the state. It is, therefore, always the enemy of the individual. And yet this enemy must not, cannot, be abolished. For, like all enemies, it breeds, by the law of menace and opposition, a more definite, a more militant form of Individualism.

The great Greek, Roman, Italian and Russian individualists, for instance, flourished under various degrees of tyrannies. Under Communism and Fascism, as in Sparta, the individual is completely cowed into the mass. But in that oppressed mass—or masses—giant individuals are being created—just as the ultimate ego in a man is brought out in prison.

Georges Palante, Frenchman, who died about ten years ago, was the last of the few great thinkers who have been the defenders of Individualism against the continuous and murderous aggressions of Society, Church, State, universities and the Mob. He is one of the greatest analysts of man in society—a clarifier of Emerson, Stirner, DaVigny, Leconte de Lisle, Nietzsche and Spencer.

His three books, "*Combat pour l'Individu*," "*Les Antinomies entre*

l'Individu et la Societe” and “La Sensibilite Individualiste,” might have for inscription, “Dying, we salute thee, Lucifer!” For Lucifer is the protagonist of all Individualists. He revolted against the totalitarian State called Heaven, and as he fell he became immeasurably greater, and in the Domain of the Damned, whereto are sent by Church, State and Society all those who antagonize them, he reigns, the eternal enemy of the Collectivist, Unitarian theocracy of the sweet and brainless angels.

For all Collectivist societies are theocracies, even if they proclaim themselves atheistic, as in Russia. A Moloch—by various names—rules every such state. And there are blood-sacrifices to these ideological Molochs just as there were to Jehovah or the Aztec gods. The centuries and centuries of slaughter of millions in the name of the Lowly Nazarene will soon be taken up again under different masks: Communism, Socialism, Fascism—and even “Individualism,” that pseudo-“Individualism” which is nothing but predatory greed wearing the mask of a great personal ideal (a word—Individualism—debased, ladies and gentlemen of posterity, by a Herbert Hoover, a name which in all probability has no meaning to you; but he was once President of the United States).

Palante’s style is crystal-clear, sensitive, poignant, precise, logical, literary, simple: all the virtues of the French tradition—in fewer words, *exquisite strength*. From time to time I shall quote Palante and comment on what he has to say, for this essay is a collaboration, a conversation, between this great Individualist and myself. All italic quotations not otherwise credited are from the books of Georges Palante.

“Individualism is not an object of proselytism. It has value in its own eyes only as a personal sensation of life.”

The real Individualist is thus an Epicurean. He lives for experiences. He reacts to each experience differently. No Individualist seeks to make any one else an Individualist. He aims at the unique. He loves the unique in others. “He who calls himself a Whitmanite has not understood me,” said Walt Whitman.

The Individualist is a disciple of his own moods, his own sensations, his own emotions and instincts. His life is an adventure in

The alchemy of this process! The marvel of this transubstantiation! The cosmic-crashing humor of the hypnotic feat of transforming Caliban, Sancho Panza and Attila into a Don Quixote, a Jesus, a Karl Marx! It is a fantastic comedy played in crucible and retort—the heart and skull of Man.

The raw material for the manufacture of brain-blown ideologies are: man’s instinct for escape, self-preservation-at-any-price, greed, personal imperialism, profound narcissism love of lying, perpetual miracle-hunger, desire for the *Summum Bonum* without paying for it, primordial predatory instincts, egotism, love of psychological ambushes, prehensibility, lust for power, love of cruelty, indestructible boobism in regard to the phantasmal To-morrow, envy for that which I have not but which some other one has, and will-to-vengeance, to get-even, to settle scores.

This is the natural-satyr man. Love is included in this inventory of the original beast, for love is a compound of will-to-power, lust and narcissism. Love is the veiled satyr, one of the masterpieces of Maya.

But Maya is kind. Man, as I said, must not look down into this den of growling, gnawing, lawless animals, the composite name for which is Ego. So the Lie Ethical, the Lie-Ideal, the Lie Altruistic, the Lie Common Good are invented to hide man from himself.

The voice is the voice of Beneficence, but the hand is the hand of predatory and hairy Esau.

George Bernard Shaw (himself a comic victim of the ideological mask of Social Service, when all that he does is for the glory and the expansion of the innate prehensibility of Shaw) said somewhere, in effect, that when an Englishman is urged by a perfectly natural desire to appropriate to his own use the lands and labor of another people he first of all constructs an ethical reason to sanctify the theft—then he goes ahead and butchers and conquers with a lily-white conscience.

This trick is universal. Every criminal instinct constructs its moral mask. Self-excuse is the commonest of psychological manoeuvres. The Beast in the cellar is always ready with its alibi before the Social Magistrates. Ideologies for economic crimes and confiscations, ethical reasons for the commission of every private

has thrown a blinding light on the stage secrets of the human soul.

We now know how and why these pretty ideologies—economic and political—are fabricated by the fundamental, predatory, egotistic, greedy, anarchic instincts of man.

We see now the whole workshop—how the bombs of egotistic motive are carefully wrapped in all the fine silks of Utopian promises.

Soak the luminous blue-prints of the Saviors of Humanity in the acid of brutal analysis and see the pattern hidden in the scroll: the spider-web of greed, envy, exploitation and predatory power.

No normal man may look on his own naked soul. It is Medusa. The congealing stare of this famous lady—whose other name is Truth—is reserved for those daring souls who know how to marshal the shock-troops of Humor and Tragic Satanism against the death-dealing bolts from her eyes.

Buddha, LaRochefoucauld, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Jules de Gaultier, Flaubert, Thomas Hardy are a few among those who have not only looked the old lady square in the eye but tumbled her in the ditch.

The Veil of Isis—which veil is nothing but the ideological webs that are spun over the brains of Earthlings—has also not only been ripped off by these metaphysical and cosmic Realists, but they have ripped her drawers off of her as well. And behold!—the taproot of all lies is exposed—the cornucopia of all illusions, the pubic-sheathed dynamo which, in its unspeakable gnawing and craving, pumps up all the ideologies to the brain.

For only three things are needed to carry on this shockingly bitter farce beneath the stars: yone, lingam and ideological illusions of messianic, economic and social redemption.

Above the dynamo lies—in the instincts—the House of the Ego, the lair of the natural-satyr man, the humming subterranean factory of the Alberichs who spin with the mystical gold of Maya the redemptive economic and religious Cockaynes, which they pump up through the sluiceways of the blood into man's brain—even making him believe they are the products of his reason!

psychological vistas, in comic and dramatic situations of which he himself is always the hero.

To the Individualist life is a series of experiences, not a programme. The only discipline that he willingly assents to is self-imposed. He absorbs whatever he needs, and always stands at a distance from his environment and “the times.”

As the sidereal system is said to be travelling eternally toward the sun Vega in the Constellation of Lyra, so the Individualist is always travelling toward an unknown, an unprogrammed destiny, toward a mysterious and ultimate star in the firmament of his imagination.

The Individualist is the very opposite of a “selfish being.” The professional (and quite often the unprofessional) altruist, idealist, Collectivism the highly socialized busybody, attempts to impose his own private reactions on others by force or through the medium of laws; whereas the Individualist says, “Live and let live.” Society, the state and the moralist are always selfish. The Individualist is the enemy of selfishness. He opposes it with *selfism* for all.

The *Sacculina*, as Professor Maynard D. Metcalf tells us in his “Organic Evolution,” is a barnacle, “normally a free-swimming, shelled animal, with legs, swimming organs, nerves, stomach, etc. But it often attaches itself to a crab and draws its living from its host. Here it loses its legs, swimming organs and most of its sense organs until finally it is little more than a shapeless mass of protoplasm. Evolution is not increased efficiency or more perfect structure...It is adaptation to environment, and often if an animal degenerates it is better adapted to its environment than with a more ideal equipment.”

This is one of the best unintentional allegories of the Individualist versus the State and Society that I have ever read.

To-day, the masses seem to be degenerating to the *Sacculina*. The State tends more and more to become a tax-fat crab on which batten millions of *sacculinas*. In order to have the security of living on this filthy, corrupt, rich old crab, the *Sacculinidae* are quite content to give up all liberties and rights. As I write this, all Russians, Germans and Italians (in varying degrees) are of the *Sacculinidae*. The crab-state in America, England and France also

waxes fatter and her parasitic guests grow apace.

But there are still a few of us who prefer to remain free-swimming marauders, retaining our organs—and our inherent right to take our food when and where we see fit.

Wherever I turn today, ladies and gentlemen of posterity, I see great schools of Sacculinas headed for the Crab. In fact, mass-pimpery has become a great economic theory.

Individuality is *character*. Personality is artificial. Character is inherent, and, I believe with Schopenhauer, unalterable. Character is *difference*. The development of character is generally *away* from standardized and conventional patterns. Communism, Socialism and all authoritarian programmes aim at the destruction of character and the creation of a mass-personality.

Whatever exists tends *naturally* to individualize itself. The Ideal—which is always anti-biological—tends to destroy this natural law. It substitutes *You ought* for *I will!* Unless the *Ought* is self-evolved, I smash it, and reiterate in the face of all opposition, to the extent of my power and courage, *I will!*

Palante makes a distinction between economic individualism (the doctrine of laissez-faire, laissez-passer) and psychological individualism, although he admits one may have both characteristics, like Benjamin Constant, for instance. He instances Herbert Spencer as one who was doctrinaire individualist, but who did not possess "*la sensibilité individualiste*." For, says Palante, the individualist sensibility may express itself negatively. It is then will-to-isolation—almost misanthropic.

Spencer, being a thorough Englishman, was cosmically and socially an ethicist. He believed—in "Man Versus the State" and "Justice"—he had discovered the fine hair that divided the *eternal* rights of the state and the rights of the Individual.

There are no rights. There is only a war of might. "Right" is the utilitarian application of Might.

But Spencer's "The Coming Slavery" (meaning Socialism) is one of the clearest-eyed prophecies ever made. Those of you (whoever you are) who stand outside of the encroaching shadow of the

religious quietist who reposes serenely in the Essence, who lives with the Master of Tricks himself. Even they do not escape wholly, but they do live closer to the heart of the Secret Motive of Things than the hoodwinked billions who are doomed to eternal credulity, who tramp the Sahara of life down through the aeons looking for a Biskra, with its chanting nightingales, its featherbeds, its free champagne and caviar—that Biskra which is only a mirage, a pictured halation out of the ideological-fabricating skull of man.

Man must always be masked; he must always be the victim of ideological lies; he must always be compelled to conceive himself as he is not because of the unshatterable and immanent law of bovarysm that rules the universe.

This bovarysm, of which Jules de Gaultier is the formulator and expounder, is based on the fact that man is *two*. He is both object and subject. He is both actor and spectator. But if he knew the inutility and futility of the universe, or guessed that the motive for life was quite other than he complacently believes to be the true one—that is, his good—he would cease to be the actor. He would seek the Nirvana of Buddha.

But Nature, or God, has apparently other plans. It has its secret motive for carrying on the universe. And so it has given to man the Lie Preservative: the ideological lure and the ideological mask to keep him moving toward that mysterious bourne from which no news has leaked out and the secret of which is locked up in the heart of the Innominate.

The eternal conflict, then, between Motive and Ideal, or between the Purpose and the Mask, was never in the history of man more beautifully exemplified than it is today.

The drama rises to crescendo because there are more of us today who sleuth out *motives*. But there are as many—more!—ideological masks than there ever were. But there are more unmaskers, too. The human heart and its nest of secret motives now lies with fewer wrappings before the eye of the cynics and chemists of illusion than it ever had.

The great progress of psychology and psycho-analysis, stemming from the two master unmaskers, Machiavelli and LaRochefoucauld,

The Ideological Masquerade

That which is most completely hidden to the common eye are *motives*.

This concealment of Purpose and Intent is cosmic, personal and social. Nothing is more deftly hidden than the motive for Life. Man has never found out *why anything* should be.

Personally: our motives for doing and uttering are enclosed so deeply within us that we ourselves often do not know *why* we do a thing after the most galling self-inquisition. The motive-kernel is buried in the center of thousands of self-defensive wrappings.

Socially: the art of concealing motive, purpose, intent here reaches the highest perfection. It is hypocrisy, bluff, and auto-deception that keep the wheels of society revolving. Hence the cynic, the blurting, blunt truth-teller, is looked on as the common enemy. He is the menacing sleuth in a business suit at the Masked Ball of Appearances.

In human evolution, belief, not fact or experience, is the prime mover.

This belief—which is illusion with its fountain-core in the instincts and its mirages in the imagination—is the false motive. It is the eternal bale of hay hung before the hungry mouth of the Eternal Jackass.

The real motives for as far-sundered events as to why Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves, why you murdered your wife last week or why Romeo scaled the wall-ladder to Juliet's bedchamber are as different from the masked motives as are the form and substance of a joint resolution from a ringworm.

Nature, God—and therefore mankind—is Machiavellian. To rule is to lie. To sway, to move, to achieve corporeal power is to lie. Swindling—and above all self-swindling—as a fine art is the law of Maya and man.

The only persons—and they are infinitesimal in all ages—who can escape this perpetual bilk and mulct are the Apollonian artists—the spectacular aesthetes of life and its tragicomedies—and the

universal ant-village ideal of humanity should dig it up and read it.

Instances in America of a doctrinaire Individualist and a man with a highly organized individualist sensibility are Thomas Jefferson and Henry David Thoreau. Jefferson was, in my opinion, the most highly civilized being who ever appeared in our public life. Thoreau was, as a Frenchman has called him, a “civilized savage.”

Combine the socialized individualism of Jefferson with the militant anti-social attitude of Thoreau and we have Walt Whitman, barbaric-socialized-individualized Ego-Demos.

What the herd always fears, worships, follows, crucifies, hopes for, turns against, cringes before, revolts against, returns to, defies and anathematizes is the Individual.

“*Sociability and originality exclude one another.*”

Palante might have added to sociability *amiability*.

I am alone. Whether suffering or joyful, I am an individual. I am myself. Some one enters the room. I become masked immediately, automatically. I put on a borrowed air. Something of my innate self recedes to the dark depths. I become almost a stranger to myself. The same thing, no doubt, happens to the person who has come to see me. Two lies face one another. When I step out of a roomful of persons into the street, alone, I resume my self.

The *me* and *they* are always at war. The conquering *me* eats *they*; or if they are the conquerors, which is nearly always the case, *they* eat me.

Great poets are the supreme Individuals, for great poets are the most highly differentiated and evolved human beings on the planet. Poetic genius is the compendium and summit of the hidden inner self; and the inner self is always at war with the environment, and very often with its own heredities. The poet-genius is the unique opposed to the conventional and commonplace.

“*It is always an advantage for the Individual that the political and social powers should be divided and engaged in a fierce competitive rivalry in order to play one against the other.*”

Therefore, I hold, that democratic individualism such as we have at present in America, England and France is the best form of

government for the Individualist. In Chaos Lucifer is king. While the gangsters of the political parties wrangle over the spoils we go unscathed. It is only when they all agree that they turn their eyes on us. A unified society immediately begins to dust off the guillotine and pick out shooting-walls. Nearly all peoples east of the Rhine are *servant-minded*. The Americans, Englishmen and Frenchmen are *master-minded*.

“The pedagogic spirit is a new avatar of the priest-spirit.”

The universities, while they seem on the surface to be hotbeds of revolution, free thought and economic heresies, are in reality always reactionary, always anti-Individualistic. All their “revolutionary” demonstrations are gregarious. They hoot and howl and threaten in mobs. The yawp of the students for “freedom” always means the privilege of advocating some Collectivist doctrine, something fundamentally Christian, equalitarian, levelling.

The new priest is the professor. He is a priest whether he is tory or “red.” He teaches something. He is *ex-cathedra*. He is the salt of the earth. He is quoted today, ladies and gentlemen of posterity, as if he were the way, the truth and the life.

As a matter of fact, he is either a paid pimp of the *status quo* or a Saint Paul who has just discovered some new Collectivist Damascus-Utopia (and the value of publicity and syndicated tripe).

Did you ever know of an Anarchist who did not travel in gangs, groups, movements—just like capitalists, Socialists, Communists, Christian Scientists, Fascists and other herd-conditioned humans? The Individualist is to the Anarchist what the eagle is to the sea-gull.

Whatever is beautiful in this world is the product of an individual mind. There can be no such thing as mass-beauty, crowd-beauty. What the people like may be pretty, but never beautiful. The average man is not even moved emotionally before a sunset, the moon or dawn. He likes, above all things, Fourth of July fireworks.

Aesthetic apperception is purely an individual exfoliation. A professor of aesthetics (and there are such things in our seats of learning, ladies and gentlemen of posterity) is the comic pathos of Demos trying to rape the evanescent and always fleeing Helena.

Here is a piercing observation of Sainte-Beuve:

“After all, great external events and what we call ‘general interests’ are expressed in each man and enter in him through roads which are always very private and personal. Those who speak magnificently in the name of humanity as a whole consult their own secret passions and ambitions, which they dare not confess. They secretly wish to put themselves up as leaders and to crush their adversaries. Their motive is applause and power.”

Beware of those who profess a “love for humanity,” who want to “lift up mankind,” who have a hurry-call to “save the race.” They are all sentimental butchers. Deep in the perverse vats of the subconscious lie the masks of the eternal will-to-power. The meanest soapbox Fiat Luxer in Union Square dreams of a soft job under the Proletarian Regime and the loud, literate bawlers see themselves as Robespierres, Hitlers or Stalins.

“There is nothing new under the sun,” said the greatest seer of antiquity and modernity. But there is something new hidden from all suns, something that values or devalues (according to one’s temperament) all suns: the differentiated and unique soul of each human being. As Emerson said, everything conspires against this unquity. To affirm it to the utmost and then to be resumed in the viewless Absolute constitutes the only sublimity attainable by me—and you.