



# The Ego and His Own: The Case of the Individual Against Authority (Dover Books on Western Philosophy)

*Max Stirner*

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Credited with influencing the philosophies of Nietzsche and Ayn Rand and the development of libertarianism and existentialism, this prophetic 1844 work challenges the very notion of a common good as the driving force of civilization. By examining the role of the human ego, author Max Stirner chronicles the battle of the individual against the collective — showing how, throughout history, the latter invariably leads to oppression.

Stirner begins with a study of the individual ego and then traces its subjugation from ancient times to the nineteenth century. Nothing escapes his indictment: the ancient philosophers, Christianity, monarchism, the bourgeois state; all have fettered individuals with laws, morality, and obligations. Revolutions expunge one evil only to replace it with another, and Stirner predicted — years before the publication of Marx's *Manifesto* — that socialism would climax in the ultimate totalitarian state.

For students of political science and philosophy, this book is essential reading. For those concerned about the encroachment of authority upon individual liberty, Stirner articulates a philosophy that remains unsurpassed in its scope.

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