

SOCIETY

This broad term can gather around it many of the ideations that constitute what society is to the individual: a language home; a gender; a place to play (as in sports); a place in which to display—your handsomeness; a place to show them your best, to learn, and ultimately give; a place to be of a distinctive race, language, religious and ethical background; a crossroads of the science and technology which have set the historical tone of your moment; a place, though more nearly a second womb, an amniotic fluid surrounding and bathing you. To be asocial is to be nothing, society is there before the asocial can be thought.

Speaking of man as a social being, therefore, is speaking of him or her as of what cannot exist except as a vast network of others and of what they do and are. Individualism, to be sure, is part of the personal code of western man or woman—and the individual properly speaking, cannot be divided, but is just there, one and whole. Nonetheless the individual is already, prior to his staunch indivisibility, that web work bolus of social compositions, which society has made of him. The individual's strength is set in the fabric of the social unit.