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## **‘Objectivism’: a Philosophy for Living on Earth**

**Case Study: *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English Language and  
Literature in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree**

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## **Dedications**

To the memory of my father, to his soul, I gratefully dedicate this modest work

To my mother, the most generous and tender woman in the universe

To all the members of my family who wait the moment of reaping the fruit of this work, with a great yearning.

To all my best companions in life who did not stop listening to my complaints, self-doubts, and moments of stagnation and they helped me find my way out.

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## Abstract

This dissertation concerns itself with Ayn Rand's philosophy of Objectivism which has greatly affected the American individuals to the point that her novel *Atlas Shrugged* (1957) has been ranked as second only to the Bible as one of the most influential books in the lives of modern readers. This thesis begins with a brief biography of Rand's life, her cultural shift from Russia to the United States and her admiration for both Aristotelian and Nietzschean ideas that helped her a lot in bringing about a new philosophy, a philosophy for living on earth. It also sheds the light on the objectivist essentials and on the philosophical and literary integration in Rand's novel *Atlas Shrugged*. Therefore, the study aims, broadly, at showing to what extent is objectivism a philosophy for living on earth and how did Rand introduce a unified and integrated philosophical novel such as *Atlas Shrugged* in order to demonstrate how Objectivist ideas can be used in daily life. It is true that the word 'objectivism' is never mentioned in the entire novel; however its thoughts are present from the beginning. *Atlas Shrugged* is basically one gigantic manifesto which presents an integrated and all-embracing perspective of man and man's relationship to the world and manifests the essentials of an entire philosophical system (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and politics); As a result, Objectivism is not simply a body of theory for contemplation but a body of practical principles for living the great life.

**Key words:** Objectivism, Ayn Rand, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, a philosophy for living on earth, *Atlas Shrugged*.

## Table of Contents

<b>Dedications</b> .....	I
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	II
<b>Abstract</b> .....	III
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	IV
<b>General Introduction</b> .....	01
<b>Chapter One: Ayn Rand and the World She Made</b>	
1.1. Introduction.....	04
1.2. Ayn Rand’s Personal Life.....	04
1.2.1. Alisa before Becoming “Rand”.....	05
1.2.2. Ayn Rand’s Passion.....	07
1.3. Ayn Rand’s Cultural Shift from Russia to America.....	09
1.4. Aristotle as a Platform of Rand’s Philosophy.....	10
1.4.1. Aristotle: Ayn Rand’s Teacher.....	10
1.4.2. Ayn Rand’s Aristotelian Philosophy: a comparative study.....	13
1.5. Nietzsche as a Platform of Rand’s Philosophy.....	15
1.5.1. Nietzsche’s Influence on Rand.....	15
1.5.2. Ayn Rand’s Nietzschean Philosophy: a Comparative Study.....	16
1.5.3. An Illustrative Table about Rand's and Nietzsche's Position on the Major Issues in Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, and Politics.....	17
1.6. Conclusion.....	21

## **Chapter Two: Objectivism as the Best Choice for the Individual to Live on Earth**

2.1. Introduction.....	22
2.2. What is Objectivism? .....	22
2.3. The Objectivist’s Position on the Necessity of Philosophy.....	24
2.4. Tenets of Objectivism Philosophy.....	27
2.4.1. Reality: “Wishing Won’t Make it So”.....	27
2.4.1.1. Primacy of Existence vs. Primacy of Consciousness....	28
2.4.1.2. Determinism vs. Free Will.....	29
2.4.1.3. Natural vs. Supernatural.....	30
2.4.2. Reason: “You Cannot Eat Your Cake and Have It Too” .....	31
2.4.2.1. Knowledge and Reason.....	32
2.4.2.2. Logic and Reason.....	33
2.4.2.3. Emotions vs. Reason.....	34
2.4.3. Ethics: Rational Self Interest “Man is an End in Himself”.....	35
2.4.3.1.The Importance of Selfishness vs. the Peril of Altruism..	36
2.4.3.2. Rational Selfishness as a Pursuit of Happiness.....	38
2.4.4. Politics and Economics: “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death”.....	39
2.4.4.1. Individual Rights.....	40
2.4.4.2. Limited Government.....	41
2.4.4.3. Objective Law.....	42
2.4.4.4. Laissy-Faire Capitalism .....	43
2.5. Conclusion.....	44

## **Chapter Three: the Philosophical and the Literary Integration in Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged***

3.1. Introduction.....	45
3.2. About the Novel: <i>Atlas Shrugged</i> .....	46
3.2.1. Keys Facts.....	46
3.2.2. List of the Main Characters.....	48
3.2.3. Philosophical and literary Integration: a Plot Overview.....	49
3.3. Reason and Reality as an Absolute: “the Role of Reason in Man’s Existence”.....	50
3.3.1. The Role of the Irrational Mind in Human Life.....	50
3.3.2. The Role of the Rational Mind in Human Life.....	52
3.3.3. From a Rational to an Irrational Mind.....	53
3.3.4. Free will: “To Think or Not to Think”.....	55
3.4. Rational self-interest .....	56
3.4.1. Self-interest: Reason vs. Whim.....	56
3.4.2. The Producers’ Virtue of Selfishness vs. the Looters’ danger of Altruism and collectivism.....	57
3.4.3. Galt’s Rational Self-interest as a Pursuit of Happiness.....	59
3.5. Economic Power vs. Political Power.....	60
3.5.1. Capitalism as the Only Moral Economical System.....	60
3.5.2. Objective Laws as the Key for Economical Justice.....	61
3.6. Conclusion.....	63
<b>General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>64</b>

<b>Works cited</b> .....	67
<b>Appendices</b> .....	72
Appendix One: Ayn Rand’s Teacher, Aristotle.....	72
Appendix Two: The platform of Rand’s philosophy, Friedrich Nietzsche.....	72
Appendix Three: The founder of Objectivism Philosophy, Ayn Rand.....	73
Appendix Four: The statue of the Greek titan ‘Atlas’.....	73



# **General introduction**

## General Introduction

Among the varied influences that are continuously engaged in forming American ideas and molding American life, Objectivism has greatly taken a prominent place in American society. This philosophy, which is founded by Ayn Rand (1905-1982) the Russian-American novelist and philosopher, has changed thousands of lives, and has the power to change the course of history. Her views are spread across more than a dozen books and hundreds of articles and speeches. Ayn Rand's philosophy has greatly affected the American individuals to the point that the Objectivist principles are broadly covered topics by American daily press and millions of readers have been inspired by the vision of life in her novels.

Rand initially expressed Objectivism in her fiction, most strikingly *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), and later in nonfiction essays and books. However, what really motivates me to deal with this topic is the fact that her novel *Atlas Shrugged*, which is about 1168 pages, has been ranked as second only to the Bible as one of the most influential books in the lives of modern readers. Moreover, more than 30 million copies of her books have been sold, and nearly a million dollars in cash prizes have been awarded in essay contests encouraging high school and college students to read Rand's novels as if they believe that Rand's philosophy is the best philosophy to be experienced in real life. Therefore, a series of questions came to my mind, and one of them is what makes the modern American readers so interested in reading Ayn Rand's novels as well as non-fiction works?

So, it is necessary to unlock the mystery of Rand's philosophy, for that reason, the research question might be to what extent are Rand's objectivist ideas, the core of a philosophy for living on earth? And how did Ayn Rand introduce a unified and integrated philosophical novel of how individuals should live their lives? And if so, to what extent is *Atlas Shrugged* basically one gigantic objectivist manifesto?

The mystery of Rand's philosophy can be unlocked through one of these two hypotheses:

The first one is: the modern readers are eager to read Rand's fiction and non-fiction books because objectivism philosophy is a new morality of rational self-interest which results in freedom, justice, progress, and man's happiness on earth.

The second hypothesis might be as follows: the modern readers are eager to read Rand's fiction and non-fiction books because objectivism philosophy is a primordial morality of altruism which results in slavery, brute forces, stagnant terror, and sacrificial furnaces.

It is clear from the evidence that the first hypothesis is the one that it will be affirmed throughout this whole work which is divided into three chapters:

The first chapter, is entitled "Ayn Rand and the World She Made", is about Ayn Rand's personal life and her cultural shift from Russia to the United States \_ from her childhood in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution to her years as a screenwriter in Hollywood where she became one of the most significant and improbable figures of the twentieth century. The first chapter is also about her admiration for both Aristotelian and Nietzschean ideas that helped her a lot in bringing about a new philosophy. In this chapter, a comparative study is done between Rand's philosophy and both Aristotle's and Nietzsche's philosophies highlighting the position of each philosopher on the major issues in Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, and Politics.

On the other hand, the second chapter which is entitled "Objectivism as the Best Choice for the Individual to Live on Earth" is about defining objectivism philosophy and its tenets and also about the objectivist's position on the necessity of philosophy in man's life. It also discusses the four essentials of objectivism philosophy:

1. Metaphysics: "objective reality"
2. Epistemology: "Reason as an absolute"
3. Ethics: "Rational self-interest"
4. Politics and Economics: "laissez-faire Capitalism"

Rand translates those terms into a familiar language which I used them next to the title of each tenet:

1. "Wishing won't make it so" or "Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed"
2. "You can't eat your cake and have it, too."
3. "Man is an end in himself."

#### 4. "Give me liberty or give me death."

The goal of this chapter is to lay out the structure of objectivism philosophy and to examine the relationship between its central ideas from the axioms of metaphysics and epistemology to the principles of political philosophy, and the evidence that each idea requires for its validation.

The last chapter, “the Philosophical and the Literary Integration in Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*”, is divided into two sections. The first one, which is about *Atlas Shrugged* as a literary novel, attempts to explore some important key facts (such as the real reason that inspired Ayn Rand to name her novel *Atlas Shrugged*) and the list of the main characters in the novel. It also discusses the philosophical and the literary integration as a plot overview. The second section, however, sheds the light on the philosophical analysis of the objectivist’s tenets in *Atlas Shrugged* in which I try to choose the most convenient examples and themes that introduce a whole and coordinated perspective of how individuals ought to experience their lives.

Concerning the readers who are interested in learning more about “‘Objectivism’ a philosophy for living in earth” they are encouraged to see *Who Is Ayn Rand?* (1962) by Branden Nathaniel and Barbara Branden, *Essays on Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged* (2000) by Gotthelf Allan, *The Literary Art of Ayn Rand* (2007) by William Thomas, *On Atlas Shrugged and the Importance of Dramatizing Our Values* (2007) by Plauché Geoffrey Allan, *Atlas Shrugged as A Work of philosophy* (2007) by Salmieri Gregory, *Completing the American Revolution: The Significance of Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged at Its Fiftieth Anniversary*(2008) by Mayer David, and *A Philosophy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2007) by Kelley David.

# **Chapter One:**

## **Ayn Rand and the World She Made**

# Chapter One: Ayn Rand and the World She Made

## 1.1. Introduction

Ayn Rand is still considered to be a major intellectual of the twentieth century. She was born as Alissa Zinovievna Rosenbaum in Russia, on 2 February 1905 and educated there. Rand immigrated to the United States after graduating from the university where she majored in history, and she also studied politics, philosophy, and literature.

Rand had always found capitalism and the individualism of the United States a better system than the corrupt and negative socialism of Russia, and because she hates the soviet system, she left with no intention of returning. Rand believes in creating a kind of world that represents human perfection and in order to realize her life's purpose, she creates the objectivism philosophy.

The formal philosophical education of Ayn Rand included ancient philosophy especially Plato and Aristotle \_whom she considered the greatest of all philosophers\_ with an emphasis upon metaphysical naturalism, empirical reason in epistemology, and self-realization in ethics. Furthermore, she was evidently also exposed to Hegelian and Nietzschean ideas and read a great deal of Friedrich Nietzsche on her own. Though her admiration to Nietzsche, she differed sharply from him on many issues such as rationality, free will, individual rights, as well as her powerful affirmation of life and joy and the spirit of youth.

## 1.2. Ayn Rand's Personal Life

Ayn Rand was a polarizing and controversial person in life; she still provokes strong emotions and controversy because her personality and ideas are of such dynamism and force that even a quarter century after her death. The following paragraph is an autobiographical sketch in which Ayn Rand, in 1936, describes her personal life:

If a life can have a theme song, and I believe every worthwhile one has, mine is a religion, an obsession, or a mania or all of these expressed in one word: individualism. I was born with that obsession and have never seen and do not know now a cause more worthy, more misunderstood, more seemingly hopeless and more tragically needed. Call it fate or irony, but I was born, of all countries on earth, in the one least suitable for a fanatic of individualism, Russia—(Autobiographical, Sketch)

### 1.2.1. Alisa before Becoming “Rand”

According to Sciabarra, who provides a detailed biographical discussion of her early life and education in his book *Ayn Rand: the Russian Radical*, "Ayn Rand" is only a pen name that she adopted later in life. Chris Matthew Sciabarra transliterates it as “Alisa Zinovievna Rosenbaum”, a Russian name. Alisa was born on February, 2, 1905, in St. Petersburg, the capital city of the most anti-Semitic and politically divided nation on the European continent. She was the eldest of the three daughters of Zinovy Zakharovich Rosenbaum and his wife, Anna Borisovna (born Kaplan), largely non-observant Jews. Rand’s father, born Zelman Wolf Zakharovich Rosenbaum but known outside the family by the non-Jewish variant of his name, Zinovy, was a pharmaceutical chemist and the manager of the shop downstairs. Her mother, a homely but self-consciously stylish woman named Khana Berkovna Kaplan, known as Anna, had been trained as a dentist but had stopped practicing after her marriage and pregnancy.

Her birth came barely three weeks after the brief but bloody uprising known as the 1905 Revolution, where, on a bright January Sunday morning, twelve thousand of Czar Nicholas II’s cavalymen opened fire on thirty thousand factory workers, their wives and children, labor organizers, and students who had walked to the Winter Palace to petition for better working conditions and a role in the czar’s all-powerful government. The protest was led by a Russian Orthodox priest named Father Gapon, and many marchers were said to be praying as they died. The slaughter gave rise to days of rioting throughout the city and set the stage for the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, which would end not in the quick and brutal suppression of the rebellion’s leaders, as this one did, but in a revolutionary coup that would shake the world and mold Ayn Rand’s worldview (Heller Ch.1).

In these years, it was dangerous to be a Jew and this period brought the worst anti-Semitic violence since the middle Ages. In the fall of 1905 alone, when Rand was not quite a year old, there were 690 anti-Jewish pogroms and three thousand Jewish murders. Therefore, this may explain the reason why Jews often changed their names to avoid detection.

It was in this frightening atmosphere that Rand grew up. Besides, Alisa’s childhood was dominated by her volatile mother, whenever she asks her mother for something she refuses. Heller pinpoints one of these moments when he explains,

Anna was serving tea at the time, and—perhaps as an experiment—Rand asked for a cup of tea. Again her mother refused; children didn't drink tea. Rand refrained from arguing, although even then the budding logician might have won the argument on points. Instead, she asked herself, why won't they let me have what I want? And made a resolution: Someday I will have it (Heller Ch.1).

Alisa was a lonely, alienated child. In new situations she was quiet and still, staring out remotely through her large dark eyes. Anna grew increasingly frustrated with Alisa's withdrawn nature. Lisa remembered that she why didn't she like to play with others? Why didn't she have any girlfriends? At times Anna's criticisms erupted into full-blown rage. In a fit of temperament she would lash out at her children, on one occasion breaking the legs of Alisa's favorite doll and on another ripping up a prized photo of Alexander Kerensky. She declared openly that she had never wanted children, hated caring for them, and did so only because it was her duty.

This environment made Alisa serious and stern, uncomfortable with gossip, games, or the intrigues of popularity. She recalled that she would be bashful because she literally didn't know what to talk to people about. When Rand entered school, the same was true of her classmates. The intensely thoughtful child was not only solitary, but she was also awkward and offbeat. She remembered being aware that her extreme shyness and violent intensity put people off, but she was sure that such social awkwardness was merely a technical fault and that other people were wrong not to understand and appreciate her. She was self-consciously different from others, as if by choice. But she was painfully lonely. Most likely, her classmates simply found Alisa abrasive and argumentative. She had an admitted tendency to force conversations, a violent intensity to her beliefs, an unfortunate inability to stop herself from arguing.

Her classmates were a mystery to Alisa, who "*didn't give the right cues apparently.*" Her only recourse was her intelligence. Her high marks at school enabled her to gain the respect, if not the affection, of her peers. Alisa's perspective on her childhood was summarized in a composition she wrote as a young teen: "*childhood is the worst period of one's life*" (Burns ch.1).

But from her perspective, their jealousy had forced her into a lonely exile. Alisa was starting to understand herself as a heroine unfairly punished for what was best in her. Later she would come to see envy and resentment as fundamental social and political problems.



### 1.2.2. Ayn Rand's Passion

Just before writing her own first stories, at the age of eight or nine, she read two children's books that electrified her hopes and helped to set her course; one of them would reflect one of her most famous work. The first was a mini- biography belonging to her sister Natasha, recounted the lonely girlhood of Catherine the Great, the late-eighteenth-century czarina who, half a century after the reign of Peter, brought the ideas of the European Enlightenment to Russia. It presented Catherine as an unusually bright little girl who was overlooked and underestimated by her aristocratic family and friends because she was odd and homely. In the story, a fortune-teller at a party sees Catherine's future greatness in the shape of an invisible crown engraved on her brow, much to the envy and disbelief of the other girls and their mothers (Heller ch.1).

She survived these lonely years by recourse to fantasy, imagining herself parallel to Catherine the Great. Like Catherine, Alisa saw herself as "*a child of destiny.*" "*They don't know it,*" she thought, "*but it's up to me to demonstrate it*" (Burns ch.1).

In other words, Young Rand was sure that she, too, was meant for an incomparable fate, and wished that, like the fortune-teller in the story, someone would notice the special mark on her forehead. She was a child of destiny, she told herself. Nobody knew it yet, but everybody would realize its existence. This one would come true like many of Rand's forecasts about her future; and at twelve, was just entering adolescence. Short for her age and squarely built, she was highly animated when excited and became fidgety, standoffish, and sullen when her family's conversation turned from ideas and significant events to small talk. She already wore a look of luminous penetration in her large, dark, exquisite eyes. Stimulated by outward events and impatient to grow up, she assigned herself a new task: to examine her own ideas and beliefs just as rigorously as she examined those of others. This is what she think, she remembered saying to herself. Why does she think of it? If her answer didn't measure up—if it was based on what others believed or on a mistake in logic—out went the idea. The job of the adolescent, she explained, is to integrate the likes and dislikes of childhood into a coherent if subconscious "sense of life," which she defined as an implicit appraisal of the nature of the world. Is the world understandable or incoherent? Do people have the power of choice, or are they servants of destiny? Can a person achieve his goals, or is he helpless against the designs of an all-powerful God or a malevolent universe? Depending on how the child answers, he will become a self-assured

creator or a passive social parasite. That Rand answered her questions with such an insistent affirmative, and devoted so many years to proving that lack of credence in the power and efficacy of individual will equals moral cowardice, provides a clue as to just how great she felt were the obstacles to having what I want as a child.

With a passion for the liberal arts, Rand later said she found school unchallenging and she began writing screenplays at the age of eight and novels at the age of ten. She was twelve at the time of the February Revolution of 1917, during which she favored Alexander Kerensky over Tsar Nicholas II. The subsequent October Revolution and the rule of the Bolsheviks under Vladimir Lenin disrupted the life the family had previously enjoyed. Her father's business was confiscated and the family displaced. They fled to the Crimean Peninsula, which was initially under control of the White Army during the Russian Civil War. She later recalled that, while in high school at the age of thirteenth, she decided to be an atheist and that she valued reason above any other human virtue. Rand kept a diary during this period, where she wrote down her ideals and, on her thirteenth birthday, noted her decision to be an atheist. Later, she remembered her reasoning this way: Since no one had ever been able to prove that God exists, God was obviously an invention, and even if God did exist and was perfect, as reputed, then man would necessarily have to be imperfect. Therefore, she became an atheist due to the events taking place around her. Besides, the fact that there is a lack of justice leads her to think that there is no god (Heller ch.2).

Moreover, at the age of 16, after the Russian Revolution, universities were opened to women and Rand was in the first group of women to enroll at Petrograd State University, she began her studies in the department of social pedagogy, majoring in history. At Petrograd State University Alisa was immune to the passions of revolutionary politics, inured against any radicalism by the travails her family was enduring. When she matriculated at age sixteen the entire Soviet higher education system was in flux. The Bolsheviks had liberalized admission policies and made tuition free, creating a flood of new students, including women and Jews, whose entrance had previously been restricted. Alisa was among the first class of women admitted to the university. Alongside these freedoms the Bolsheviks dismissed counterrevolutionary professors, harassed those who remained, and instituted Marxist courses on political economy and historical materialism. Students and professors alike protested the new conformity. In her first year Alisa was particularly outspoken. Then the purges began. Anticomunist professors and students

disappeared, never to be heard from again. Alisa herself was briefly expelled when all students of bourgeois background were dismissed from the university; However, the policy was later reversed and she returned. Acutely aware of the dangers she faced, Alisa became quiet and careful with her words.

Her time at the University of Petrograd taught her that all ideas had an ultimate political valence. Communist authorities scrutinized every professor and course for counterrevolutionary ideas. The most innocuous statement could be traced back to its roots and identified as being either for or against the Soviet system. Even history, a subject Alisa chose because it was relatively free of Marxism, could be twisted and framed to reflect the glories of Bolshevism. The university also shaped Alisa's understanding of intellectual life, primarily by exposing her to formal philosophy. Russian philosophy was synoptic and systemic, an approach that may have stimulated her later interest in creating an integrated philosophical system.

### **1.3. Ayn Rand's Cultural Shift from Russia to America**

Even though Rand was born in Russia, her followers have often proclaimed that she was born an American in spirit and was merely trapped during her formative years in a dark and alien Slavic land. Her interest in America surged when the family received an unexpected letter from Chicago. Almost thirty years earlier Harry Portnoy, one of Anna's relatives, had immigrated to America, and her family had helped pay the passage. Now one of Harry's children, Sara Lipski, wrote inquiring about the Rosenbaums, for they had heard nothing during the wartime years. Alisa saw her chance. Using her connections to the Portnoys she could obtain a visa to visit the United States; once there she could find a way to stay forever. She begged her mother to ask their relatives for help. Her parents agreed to the idea, perhaps worried that their outspoken daughter would never survive in the shifting political climate (Burns 17).

Rand immigrated to America from Soviet Russia on January 17, 1926, without much English, to pursue a career in writing. Her early years in America were hard, but not as hard as she later claimed they were. "*No one helped me, nor did I think it was anyone's duty to help me*" (Heller 50). Going to America was like "*going to Mars,*" and she knew she might never see her family again. Yet she was extremely confident about her own prospects and she told her father that she will be famous by the time she returns and also shared her father's sense that the Communist government could not last.

When she arrived in New York City on February 19, 1926, she was so impressed with the skyline of Manhattan that she cried what she later called tears of splendor. Intent on staying in the United States to become a screenwriter, she lived for a few months with relatives in Chicago, one of whom owned a movie theater and allowed her to watch dozens of films for free. She then set out for Hollywood, California. “*I’ll never forget it,*” Rand said of her first experience of New York. “*It seemed so incredibly cheerful and frivolous, so non-Soviet!*” (Heller 99). Photographs from this period show her in a 1920s Louise Brooks haircut, a style she would keep until she died. Similarly, her enthusiasm for this free-wheeling, wildly optimistic, largely unregulated pro-capitalist time and place remained a lifelong touchstone of her expectations and her art.

Initially, Rand struggled in Hollywood and took odd jobs to pay her basic living expenses. A chance meeting with famed director Cecil B. DeMille led to a job as an extra in his film *The King of Kings* as well as subsequent work as a junior screenwriter. While working on *The King of Kings*, she met an aspiring young actor, Frank O'Connor; the two were married on April 15, 1929. She became a permanent US resident in July 1929, and became an American citizen on March 3, 1931 (Britting 71).

She made several attempts to bring her parents and sisters to the United States, but they were unable to acquire permission to emigrate. So no one supported her, she faced all barriers to achieve her goals and this cultural shift helped her lot in order to bring about her new philosophy of Objectivism.

## **1.4. Aristotle as a Platform of Rand’s Philosophy**

### **1.4.1. Aristotle: Ayn Rand’s Teacher**

Ayn Rand had the highest admiration for Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), and her philosophy is a form of Aristotelianism. Rand acknowledged Aristotle as a genius and as the only thinker throughout the ages to whom she owed a philosophical debt. According to Rand, Aristotle who is the teacher of those who know every achievement in civilized society including science, technology, progress, freedom, aesthetics (including romantic art) and the birth of America itself. She acknowledged him as the only philosopher to whom she was indebted, the father of logic who defined “*the basic principles of a rational view of existence and of man's consciousness.*” He is the most important thinker and most successful individual who has ever lived. She also described Aristotle as “*a philosophical*

*Atlas who carries the whole of Western civilization on his shoulders.*” She continued: “*Whatever intellectual progress men have achieved rests on his achievements.... Whenever his influence dominated the scene, it paved the way for one of history’s brilliant eras; whenever it fell, so did mankind*” (Rand 18).

In her classes she heard about Plato and Herbert Spencer and studied the works of Aristotle for the first time. In Lossky’s class she was dazzled by Aristotle, particularly his logical starting point of the axiomatic existence of objective reality and his belief in human reason as the only means to understand the world; for him, as for Rand, man was a rational animal. Interestingly, she agreed with Aristotle that man's life should be guided by reason and that the purpose of man's life is happiness. She agreed that happiness depended on objective, external conditions rather than on a subjective, internal disposition. She learned to detest Plato and his mysticism, which is how she regarded the Platonic belief that the observable world is a mere shadow of ideal forms that can’t be seen; she associated this, rightly, with mystical Christianity. And she learned from Lossky an intensely dialectical method of thinking—“thinking in principles,” she called it—which helped her to construct a worldview that was radically individualistic and seemingly Western but in some ways Russian to the core. When a teacher introduced the class to Aristotle and syllogisms it was “as if a light bulb went off.” Consistency was the principle that grabbed her attention, not surprising given her unpredictable and frightening life. Consistency as Alisa understood it was the road to truth, the means to prevail in the heated arguments she loved, the one method to determine the validity of her thoughts. Her reading of Aristotle and Plato, done for the forsaken nonfiction project, had sharpened her appreciation of rational philosophy in which she demonstrated the connection between reason and reality. As she began making this theme concrete, a series of questions arose: “*First of all, why is the mind important? In what particular way, what specifically does the mind do in relationship to human existence?*” (Burns 13-16). Pondering these questions, Rand realized her futures novels such as *the Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*.

In “Review of Randall’s Aristotle”, Rand described Aristotle as “*a philosophical Atlas who carries the whole of Western civilization on his shoulders.*” She continued: “*Whatever intellectual progress men have achieved rests on his achievements.... Whenever his influence dominated the scene, it paved the way for one of history’s brilliant eras; whenever it fell, so did mankind*” (Burns ch.2). Rand’s writing now reflected a new emphasis on rationality, drawn from her reading of Aristotle. As a first step she critiqued

her earlier notes and realized that they must be reorganized to give more thorough coverage to reason as the determining faculty of man. The idea that reason was the most important quality of humanity, indeed the very definition of human, had been a subtheme of her first drafts.

One way in which Rand distorts Aristotle's legacy is by overestimating his historical significance. Consider a few examples:

Everything that makes us civilized beings, every rational value we possess including the birth of science, the industrial revolution, the creation of the United States, even the structure of our language — is the result of Aristotle's influence, of the degree to which, explicitly or implicitly, men accepted his epistemological principles... \_For the new intellectual (Rand 22-23)

Aristotle's philosophy has underpinned the achievements of the Renaissance and of all scientific advances and technological progress to this very day. He is the most significant thinker and most successful individual who has ever lived.

At the root of every civilized achievement, such as science, technology, progress, freedom — at the root of every value we enjoy today, including the birth of this country — you will find the achievement of one man, who lived over two thousand years ago: Aristotle \_ Philosophy: who needs it (Rand 7)

Following Aristotle, she argued that reality is absolute: that “A is A” and facts are facts, independent of feelings, wishes, hopes, or fears. Furthermore, every entity's existence is also its identity (“everything is something”). To be is to be something in particular.

Concerning esthetics, Rand states that the most important principle of the esthetics of literature was formulated by Aristotle, who said: “*fiction is of greater philosophical importance than history, because history represents things as they are, while fiction represents them as they might be and ought to be*” (80). The exact quote, from *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man* book, is: “History, Aristotle says, represents things only as they are, while fiction represents them as they might be and ought to be; and therefore of the two, he adds, 'fiction is the more philosophical and the more highly serious.' ” (Nock 191).

### 1.4.2. Ayn Rand's Aristotelian Philosophy: a comparative study

Younkins argues that Aristotle and Ayn Rand are the philosophical champions of this world<sup>1</sup>. Both appeal to the objective nature of things. They agree that logic is indistinguishable from reality and learning. Insisting reality, reason, and life on earth, they agree that a man can manage reality, accomplish values, and live heroically rather than tragically. Men can get a handle on reality, build up objectives, take activities, and accomplish values. They see the human individual as honorable and potentially heroic being where highest moral purpose is to gain his own happiness on earth. Their shared conception of human life allows a man to keep up a practical good vision that can possibly move men to more prominent and more noteworthy statures. Rand takes after the Aristotelian thought of eudemonia<sup>2</sup> as the human entelechy<sup>3</sup>.

Like Aristotle, Rand attributes to just a couple of few basic axioms: existence exists, existence is identity, and consciousness is identification. Aristotle and Rand concur that all men actually craving to know, comprehend, and follow up on the knowledge acquired. For both, all learning is arrived at from sensory perception through the processes of abstraction and conceptualization. They consider rationality as man's distinctive capacity.

In *The Ominous Parallels*, for both Aristotle and Rand, the issue of how an individual should live his life goes before the issue of how a group ought to be sorted out. Though Aristotle sees a social life as an important condition for one's thoroughgoing eudemonia, Rand emphasizes the advantages gathering to the person from living in the public arena as being information and exchange. In spite of the fact that Rand does not explicitly talk about the human requirement for group in her non-fiction works, her portrayal of Galt's Gulch in *Atlas Shrugged* nearly approximates Aristotle's community of accord between great men. Aristotle and Objectivism concur on basics and, therefore, on this last point, also. Both hold that man can manage reality, can accomplish values and live happily. Each upholds man the thinker and therefore man the hero. Ayn Rand calls him Howard Roark, or John Galt and Aristotle calls him "the great-souled man" (311). In

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<sup>1</sup> For further information consult

[http://rebirthofreason.com/Articles/Younkins/Aristotle\\_Ayn\\_Rands\\_Acknowledged\\_Teacher.shtml](http://rebirthofreason.com/Articles/Younkins/Aristotle_Ayn_Rands_Acknowledged_Teacher.shtml)

<sup>2</sup> "eudaimonia," the Greek term that Aristotle uses to designate the highest human good, means happiness (Britannica encyclopedia.com)

<sup>3</sup> From Greek "entelecheia", in philosophy, means to realize or make actual what is otherwise merely potential. The concept is intimately connected with Aristotle's distinction between matter and form, or the potential and the actual. He analyzed each thing into the stuff or elements of which it is composed and the form which makes it what it is (Ibid).

addition, the association of Galt's Gulch is along the lines of anarcho-free enterprise as opposed minimal state political system of capitalism pushed by Rand or the somewhat paternalistic ideal of Aristotle's polity.

Seeing human life as far as individual thriving, both Aristotle and Rand show that we ought to grasp the greater part of our possibilities. Their similar visions of the ideal man hold that he would have a heroic attitude toward life. The ideal man would be both ethically and rationally brave. They both saw pride as the crown of the ethics.

Furthermore, in *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, the radical difference between Rand's view of concepts and the Aristotle's view, particularly in regard to the issue of essential characteristics. It is Aristotle who first created the principles of correct definition. It is Aristotle who identified the fact that only concretes exist. However, Aristotle held that definitions refer to metaphysical essences, which exist in concretes as a special element or formative power, and he held that the process of concept-formation depends on a kind of direct intuition by which man's mind grasps these essences and forms concepts accordingly. Aristotle regarded essence as metaphysical; Rand regards it as epistemological (*Rand 52*).

Therefore, in which points do Rand and Aristotle generally differ? Rand considers her philosophy to be epistemological and contextual rather than metaphysical that is to say that she disagrees with Aristotle who believes that the existence of essences is within concretes. She contradicts Aristotle's intuitionist vision that essences are essentially mentally seen. Rand, then, argues that universals or ideas are the epistemological results of a classification process that stands for specific sorts of entities.

Despite the fact that Rand's philosophy is different from Aristotle's, the objectivist philosophy is highly depicted within the Aristotelian naturalistic convention. Rand acquired huge components of the Aristotelian eudaimonic convention. Rand, similar to Aristotle, believes that her mission is helping people to know. Thanks to Rand, that the Aristotelian philosophy rebirth again, a philosophy of reason in which the individual is the mastermind of all actions ([rebirthofreason.com](http://rebirthofreason.com)).

To conclude, in "Review of J.H. Randall's Aristotle", Aristotle's philosophy (especially of his epistemology) has driven individual to a new experience, of man's freedom from the force of the state ... Aristotle (by means of John Locke) was the



philosophical father of the Constitution of the United States and subsequently of free enterprise\_ capitalism. Therefore, according to the objectivist point of view there is no flourishing future for the universe without the rebirth of the Aristotelian philosophy.

This concept would require an Aristotelian affirmation of the reality of existence, of the sovereignty of reason, of life on earth—and of the splendor of man. If there is a philosophical Atlas who carries the whole of Aristotelian philosophy on his shoulders, it is Rand. Ayn Rand believes that the deepest thing Objectivism has in common with Aristotle — and it has many things in common — is this: according to *The Art of Nonfiction*, Aristotle was the first to handle what the vast majority still don't, to be specific, that everything that exists is a particular, concrete entity, or a part of one, for example, an activity of an element, a quality of an element, a correlation it bears, and so on. A reflection is the structure in which we compose these elements in order to comprehend them. “*To be an Aristotelian all the way down, you must grasp that only concrete events, concrete relationships, concrete problems exist.*” (Rand 28-29).

## **1.5. Nietzsche as a Platform of Rand’s Philosophy**

### **1.5.1. Nietzsche’s Influence on Rand**

There was a Russian custom of seeking after philosophical request outside college settings, and that was the manner by which AR knew Friedrich Nietzsche, the rationalist who rapidly became her favorite philosopher. A cousin provoked her with a book by Nietzsche, “who beat you to every one of your thoughts.” After that, Rand used to read all his books outside of her classes, she, then, said: “Nietzsche beat me to all my ideas” (Burns16).

Rand absorbed a specific rationalistic strategy from her Russian teacher Lossky. Yet, there is a strong relationship between Rand's association with the Russian Silver Age and Nietzsche's influence on Rand. In other words, Bernice Rosenthal, who edited *Nietzsche and Russia*, highlights some magnificent essays on the Nietzschean theme of much Silver Age thought. Rosenthal exhibits the tremendous impact of Nietzsche on a wide range of scholarly customs, including the neo-Idealists, the Russian Marxists, and- in particular - the Russian Symbolist writers. Furthermore, Rand credited Blok, who is influenced by Nietzsche, as her most preferred poet - and this is one intriguing convergence that has yet to be investigated extensively. There are distinct parallels between Rand's definitive

perspective of Nietzsche and the Symbolist view: the key contrast is that Rand rejects in Nietzsche what the Symbolists celebrate (Sciabarra n.pag).<sup>4</sup>

Nietzsche's thoughts can be connected to Ayn Rand too. She endeavored to take from his works the parts which inspired her while dismissing the rest. For example when she was writing *The Fountainhead*, she hesitated about either quoting from Nietzsche or no, and finally she decided not to do so. Then, despite the fact that it is likely true that Ayn Rand and Nietzsche don't agree in details about the view of life, at a specific level of abstraction they do agree, and the agreement is quite important because it inspires Rand to bring about a new philosophy.

At the beginning of her career, Ayn Rand was extremely influenced by Nietzsche and this was so clear in her novels especially *The Fountainhead* which carried Nietzschean themes. Sometime after *The Fountainhead* however, she reevaluated some of those thoughts and composed against them and altered those lines out of her past compositions not a considerable measure just ten lines. By the time all hints of that part of Nietzsche were gone from her works particularly *Atlas Shrugged*. By different words *Nietzsche* inspired her in some ways and probably there were a few parts of his compositions (for instance, his thoughts regarding Greek versus Christian society stated in *The Birth of Tragedy*) that she still agrees about it, however, her philosophy of objectivism is undoubtedly anti- Nietzschean.

### **1.5.2. Ayn Rand's Nietzschean Philosophy: a Comparative Study**

In the final unit of the Cyber Seminar entitled "Nietzsche and Objectivism", Stephen Hicks, when responding to this question to what extent did Nietzsche influence Rand? Can we determine whether Rand was influenced on that issue by Nietzsche, or by some other thinker(s), or whether she arrived at that position independently? , drew a significant table. This table compares Nietzsche's and Rand's views on 68 philosophical issues. It also covers the major issues in metaphysics, epistemology, human nature, ethics, and politics. Hicks also include six other, philosophically related issues of comparison (Atlas Society org.).

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<sup>4</sup> This commentary is part of The Atlas Society's 2000 online "CyberSeminar" entitled " Nietzsche and Objectivism " in which Chris Matthew Sciabarra provides a valuable illustration about "RAND AND THE SILVER AGE" <http://atlassociety.org/commentary/commentary-blog/4427-response-by-chris-sciabarra>

After the table, Hicks has added some comments on the significance of the tabulated results. He has given references for Nietzsche's works by the following abbreviations: "A" Antichrist, "BGE" Beyond Good and Evil, "D" Dawn, "E" Ecce Homo, "GM" Genealogy of Morals, "GS" Gay Science, "HA" Human All-too-Human, "TI" Twilight of the Idols, "WP" Will to Power, "Z" Thus "Spake Zarathustra"

### 1.5.3. An Illustrative Table about Rand's and Nietzsche's Position on the Major Issues in Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, and Politics

Issue	Nietzsche's position	Rand's position
<b><i>METAPHYSICAL</i></b>		
Entity or process	Process ( <i>GM</i> I:13; <i>WP</i> 552, 1067; <i>BGE</i> 54)	Entities as objective; be wary of armchair physics
Monism, dualism, or pluralism	Monism ( <i>WP</i> 1067)	Naturalism: no armchair physics
Identity	No ( <i>WP</i> 507-517)	Yes
Identity and change compatible	No ( <i>WP</i> 520)	Yes
Causality	No ( <i>WP</i> 497, 545-552)	Yes
Teleology	No ( <i>WP</i> 552, 1067, Postcard to Overbeck)	Yes for organisms
Direction to evolution	Yes ( <i>GM</i> II.24)	No armchair physics or biology
Existence of God	No ( <i>GS</i> 125)	No
Consciousness as identification	No ( <i>WP</i> 507, 511, 513; <i>GM</i> II.16)	Yes
Consciousness as functional/useful	Yes ( <i>WP</i> 505)	Yes
Consciousness as causal	No ( <i>WP</i> 477-478, 524)	Yes
<b><i>EPISTEMOLOGICAL</i></b>		

Consciousness as identification	No ( <i>BGE</i> 211; <i>WP</i> 473, 479, 481, 516, 521)	Yes
Sensations as awareness of reality	No ( <i>WP</i> 479)	Yes
Sensations as value laden	Yes ( <i>WP</i> 505)	No
Concepts as awareness of reality	No ( <i>WP</i> 507, 513)	Yes
Logic as reality-based	No ( <i>WP</i> 477, 512)	Yes
Sensations, concepts, and theories as impositions upon reality	Always ( <i>WP</i> 515-516)	Sensations never; false conceptions only
Truth	As functional only ( <i>WP</i> 487), as a useful error ( <i>WP</i> 493)	Both as identification and as functional
Reason as efficacious	Weakly at best	Yes
Reason as primary cognitive tool	No ( <i>GS</i> 354)	Yes
Instinct as cognitively efficacious	Yes ( <i>GM</i> II.16)	No
Philosophy as systematic	Yes ( <i>GM</i> , Preface, 2)	Yes
Intrinsicism	False ( <i>GM</i> III.12; <i>BGE</i> 207)	False
Objectivism	False ( <i>GM</i> III.12)	True
Subjectivism	True ( <i>BGE</i> 211), but not in the dualistic sense ( <i>WP</i> 481)	False
Perspectivalism/ Relativism	True ( <i>GM</i> III.12; <i>WP</i> 540)	False
<b><i>ETHICS</i></b>		
Morality in the service of life	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> ; <i>GM</i> )	Yes
Psychological egoism	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> )	No
Conflict of interest the fundamental social fact	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> 259)	No
Values as intrinsic	No ( <i>GM</i> I.10)	No

Values as objective	No	Yes
Values as subjective	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> 260?)	No
Individuals as ends in themselves	No ( <i>WP</i> 287), yes ( <i>BGE</i> 287)	Yes
Individuals responsible for their characters	No ( <i>BGE</i> 264)	Yes
Individuals responsible for their actions	No and yes	Yes
Sacrificing self to others	Yes, if a weakling ( <i>TI</i> 33)	No
Sacrificing others to self	Yes, if strong ( <i>BGE</i> 265; <i>WP</i> 369, 982)	No
Individual life as the standard	No ( <i>BGE</i> 188)	Yes
The improvement of the species as the end	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> 126; <i>Z</i> Prologue 4)	No
Sacrificing some for the sake of the species	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> 62, 258; <i>WP</i> 246; <i>GM</i> II.12)	No
Power as the end	As means and end ( <i>WP</i> 1067)	As means only
Survival as standard	No ( <i>BGE</i> 13)	Yes
Happiness as the end	No	Yes
Egoism as good	Depends ( <i>TI</i> 33). "[T]he subject--the striving individual bent on furthering his egoistic purposes--can be thought of only as the enemy of art, never its source" ( <i>BT</i> )	Yes
Altruism as bad	Yes; depends ( <i>TI</i> 33)	Yes
Altruism as the egoism of the weak	Yes ( <i>GM</i> I.8, III.14)	No
Rationality as a virtue	No ( <i>EH</i> : "Birth of Tragedy" 1)	Primary virtue
War as good	Yes ( <i>GS</i> 283; <i>HA</i> 477)	No
Morality as relative to psychological type	Yes ( <i>BGE</i> 221)	No

<b><i>SOCIAL AND POLITICAL</i></b>		
Individual rights	No. "For the preservation of society, for making possible higher and highest types-- the <i>inequality</i> of rights is the condition"	Yes
On equality	False and destructive ( <i>WP 246</i> )	Before the law
On democracy	Bad ( <i>BGE 202</i> )	Secondary to rights
On socialism	Bad	Bad
On the welfare state	Bad	Bad
On aristocracy	Good ( <i>BGE 257, 258</i> )	Bad
On slavery	Sometimes good ( <i>BGE 188</i> )	Evil
On the role of government	Limited ( <i>D 179</i> )	Limited
On capitalism	Dehumanizing for most ( <i>D 2 6</i> )	Moral, productive
Civilization as ascending or declining	Declining ( <i>BGE 202; GM I.11,12</i> ); but Zarathustra will come ( <i>GMII.24</i> )	Currently declining; future could go either way

(AtlasSociety.org)

At the same unit of the CyberSeminar, on March 05, 2011, Stephen Hicks provides this comparative study in which he explains the previous table. So, beginning with metaphysics, Rand and Nietzsche agree on only one thing which is the death of god on the fact that awareness is practical. They differ on the need of procedure, about identity, causality and teleology<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Teleology, (from Greek telos, "end," and logos, "reason"), explanation by reference to some purpose, end, goal, or function. Traditionally, it was also described as final causality, in contrast with explanation solely in terms of efficient causes (the origin of a change or a state of rest in something). From Britannica Encyclopedia.com

In epistemology, they agree that philosophy is systematic and that intrinsicism<sup>6</sup> is false, but they differ on everything from whether awareness is identification, to the legitimacy of sensation, ideas, rationale, reason, and the comprehensiveness of truth.

In ethics, they agree on two noteworthy issues: that the morality of selfishness is life and that altruism and selflessness is death. There are additionally considerable differences between Rand's and Aristotle's vision in ethics issues: about whether conflicts of interest are essential, about whether life is worthy to be live happily or no, about whether force or satisfaction is the ultimate end for every action done by the individual.

In politic, they concur that contemporary human progress has exceptionally huge issues, and that communism and the welfare state are terrible; yet while Nietzsche has great things to say in regards to aristocracy, subjection (slavery), and war and awful things to say in regards to private enterprise (capitalism), Rand says the inverse. Last and not least, they believe in the same exalted, heroic struggle sense of life. In contrast to Rand, Nietzsche's writings contain a sense of bloodthirstiness that we don't discover in Rand; Rand regularly adds a strong dose of fury that we do not find in Nietzsche.

The differences amongst Nietzsche and Rand enormously exceed the similarities; they are both nonbelievers, they both are naturalistic in their way to deal with consciousness and qualities, and the two are against the morality of altruism and sacrificing oneself for the others. However they share almost no positive philosophy: they differ in every fundamental issue in metaphysics (mysticism), and epistemology; and they oppose about the proper positive standard, means, and end of ethics.

## **1.6. Conclusion**

Ayn Rand creates her unique world; she was a woman of truly remarkable achievement. She was one of the most significant and improbable figures of the twentieth century from her childhood in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution to her years as a screenwriter in Hollywood, She was a novelist-philosopher who outlined a comprehensive philosophy. Her cultural shift from Russia to the United States and her admiration for both Aristotelian and Nietzschean ideas helped her a lot in bringing about a new philosophy, a philosophy for living on earth, Objectivism.

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<sup>6</sup> Intrinsicism is the belief that value is a non-relational characteristic of an object. This means that an object can be valuable or not, good or bad, without reference to who it is good or bad for, and without reference to the reason it is good or bad. A present day example of it is the belief that guns are evil. People claim that guns are evil in themselves. From [http://importanceofphilosophy.com/Evil\\_Intrinsicism.html](http://importanceofphilosophy.com/Evil_Intrinsicism.html)

# **Chapter Two:**

**Objectivism as the Best Choice for  
the Individual to Live on Earth**



## **Chapter Two: Objectivism as the Best Choice for the Individual to Live on Earth**

### **2.1. Introduction**

Ayn Rand's philosophy has changed thousands of lives, and has the power to change the course of history. Her views are spread across more than a dozen books and hundreds of articles and speeches. Rand initially expressed Objectivism in her fiction, most strikingly *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), and later in nonfiction essays and books. Leonard Peikoff, an expert philosopher and Rand's assigned scholarly heir, later gave it a more formal structure. In "Fact and Value", Objectivism was portrayed as a "closed system" that is not subject to change (Peikoff 1).

Objectivism's central tenets are that reality exists independently of consciousness, that people have regulate contact with reality through feeling perception that one can achieve objective knowledge from observation through the procedure of idea development and inductive logic, that the correct good motivation behind one's life is the quest for one's own happiness (rational self-interest), and that the main social framework steady with this morality is one that displays case full regard for individual rights exemplified in free enterprise private enterprise laissez-faire capitalism.

Objectivism is a unique philosophy that has been a significant influence among libertarians and American conservatives. It is optimistic, holding that the universe is interested in human accomplishment and satisfaction and that every individual has inside him the capacity to carry on with a rich, satisfying, independent life. This idealistic message suffuses Rand's novels, which continue to sell by the hundreds of thousands every year to people attracted to their inspirational storylines and notable thoughts.

### **2.2. What is Objectivism?**

Objectivism is the philosophy of rational individualism founded by Ayn Rand (1905-1982). The term "Objectivism" reflects the conception that human knowledge and qualities are objective i.e., they are discovered by one's mind and determined by nothing except reality. Rand stated that she picked the name since her favored term for a rationality taking into account the primacy of existence—"existentialism"—had already been taken.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> the primacy of existence (of reality) is the axiom that existence exists, in which things are what they are and they possess a specific nature, an identity. Therefore, existence exists and existence is identity. Hence,

She named her philosophy “Objectivism” because it is a new notion of objectivity: the objectivity of knowledge in comparing to facts, the objectivity of ethics as a type of facts, the objectivity of a political code got from human instinct.

Rand provides a typical definition of her philosophy in her novel *Atlas Shrugged*:

My philosophy, in essence, is the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute. (Rand. App. to *Atlas Shrugged*)

Rand describes her philosophy Objectivism as a philosophy for living on earth; she was interested in founding such philosophy because of her desire which is centered in creating heroic fictional characters for her novels. She dramatized her perfect man; the producer who is independent and successful based on his rational mind and does not give or receive the undeserved, this ideal individual is depicted in her novels such as *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*.

Despite the fact that Ayn Rand expresses objectivism philosophy in her non-fiction books such as *The Virtue of Selfishness* and *Capitalism: the Unknown Ideal*, she never wrote a comprehensive presentation of it. Therefore, her student and objectivist heir, philosopher Leonard Peikoff, provides the first comprehensive book of her philosophy which is published in 1991. This book which is entitled *Objectivism: the Philosophy of Ayn Rand* stands for presenting Rand’s entire philosophy — metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics and esthetics — in organized statement.

In his book *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, Peikoff formulates Rand’s view: “To be objective in one’s conceptual activities is volitionally to adhere to reality by following certain rules of method, a method based on facts and appropriate to man’s form of cognition ” (81). In other words, Objectivity consists in a mind grasping the facts by the correct mental processes.

Another typical definition, which is provided by William R Thomas, Director of Programs and Senior Scholar at The Atlas Society, is:

Objectivism holds that there is no greater moral goal than achieving happiness. But one cannot achieve happiness by wish or whim. Fundamentally, it requires rational respect for the facts of reality, including the facts about our human nature and needs. Happiness

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the axiom of identity: a thing is what it is and this had already been taken in Shakespeare’s “to be or not to be” *Metaphysics: Objective reality* (Rand 106).

requires that one live by objective principles, including moral integrity and respect for the rights of others. Politically, Objectivists advocate laissez-faire capitalism. Under capitalism, a strictly limited government protects each person's rights to life, liberty, and property and forbids that anyone initiate force against anyone else. The heroes of Objectivism are achievers who build businesses, invent technologies, and create art and ideas, depending on their own talents and on trade with other independent people to reach their goals. Objectivism is optimistic, holding that the universe is open to human achievement and happiness and that each person has within him the ability to live a rich, fulfilling, independent life (atlassociety.org)

### **2.3. The Objectivist's Position on the Necessity of Philosophy**

Individuals regularly consider philosophy as a profoundly theoretical and specialized field, full of mysteries which are concern only to academics. However, all of us rely on philosophical conclusions.

In Rand's book *Philosophy: Who Needs it*, she responds to the question why does anyone need a philosophy? By the following statement:

You have no choice about the necessity to integrate your observations, your experiences, your knowledge into abstract ideas, i.e., into principles. Your only choice is whether these principles are true or false, whether they represent your conscious, rational convictions—or a grab bag of notions snatched at random, whose sources, validity, and consequences you do not know, notions which, more often than not, you would drop like a hot potato if you knew (5).

According to Rand, philosophy is a subject that deals with some of the most important issues in human life. She argues that the power of philosophy is inevitable and that it is something everyone should be interested in it. Rand, additionally, believes that we have the choice either to define philosophy by using a reasonable conscious and disciplined process of thoughts collected in a logical way or let our subconscious brings together a set of false generalizations, open-ended contradictions, unidentified wishes, uncertainties and fears, collected together by chance and whim.

On March 11, 2010, William R Thomas presents a significant answer for the following question 'Why Does Anyone Need a Philosophy?' He states that each of us needs to understand his own convictions consciously, to be able to put his sense of life into words. if not we don't really have a comprehensible plan of what we believe or what is motivating us to make our principal decisions—or whether it is correct or no. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of what we think philosophical questions, for the reason that our answers can affect to a great extent the course of our lives.

At this level of asking philosophical questions, it is necessary to include a series of crucial questions asked by Leonard Peikoff:

All philosophic questions are interrelated. . . . Suppose . . . , you read an article by Ayn Rand and glean from it only one general idea . . . man should be selfish. How, you must soon ask, is this generality to be applied to concrete situations? What is selfishness? Does it mean doing whatever you feel like doing? What if your feelings are irrational? But who is to say what's rational or irrational? And who is Ayn Rand to say what a man should do, anyway? Maybe what's true for her isn't true for you, or what's true in theory isn't true in practice. What is truth? Can it vary from one person or realm to another? And, come to think of it, aren't we all bound together? Can anyone ever really achieve private goals in this world? If not, there's no point in being selfish. What kind of world is it? And if people followed Ayn Rand, wouldn't that lead to monopolies or cutthroat competition, as the socialists say? And how does anyone know the answers to all these (and many similar) questions? What method of knowledge should a man use? And how does one know that? ("Reality" *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand*, ch.1)

These questions can be reformulated under one fundamental question 'who needs philosophy?', and William Thomas provides a noteworthy answer by relating these questions to the five essences of Objectivism philosophy:

First and for most, We need 'metaphysics' because we need to know whether the material world of daily life is the only one that exists—which makes a distinction between living for this life or some heavenly hereafter. It is necessary to know whether the world is legal or disordered—which makes a difference between attempting to develop things or review life as absurd and meaningless.

Thomas then gives a typical example: You take your vehicle to a mechanic in light of the fact that the motor misfires in a wet climate. Wouldn't it be weird if he somehow managed to shrug and say that cars simply do that occasionally? However, what's the issue with that? Why shouldn't you take that stance to your own problems at home or at work? Consequently, you need a philosophy to know the answer.

Secondly, an "epistemology" is a theory of knowledge i.e., the research study of how people can know anything about reality. To have an obvious grasp of one's own life and environment, one should have the capacity to deal with the mass of information, claims, and thoughts we get from others; that ability is based on epistemology. After all, we have to know whether what we accept is truly valid. How would you know when somebody has proven a point? Some people say that words are self-assertive and mean whatever we like. Does that mean it doesn't make a difference in the fact that somebody utilizes words he cannot characterize as a part of practical terms? Should we worry if we

don't feel like we have mystic intuitions, or would it be a good idea for us to worry if we do have it? How could you know what is right? You need a philosophy to know the answer.

What about “Ethics” which is the discipline we use to judge good from evil. William argues that we would prefer not to do evil, we might want to do good things on the off chance that we can. However, to do that, we have to be aware of being good, and what sorts of activities have a tendency to accomplish it. Individuals make requests on us: What do we owe to others and what do we merit for ourselves? To sort out our ethical perspectives and take the right course in life, we need to avoid being torn apart by contradictory objectives and standards.

For instance, William adds, you are working for a company and rising up to positions of greater responsibility. You attempt to work productively and you would like to profit, both in rewards for yourself and in benefits for the organization. However, you feel somewhat anxious, and you wonder: Are you doing great there, or you just going with the flow? After all this, you might think that your religion teaches you that the best individuals live simply and sacrifice the self for the other. Should you feel regretful about gaining money, or feel morally proud and glad for your prosperity? You need a philosophy to know the answer.

The answer that is given by ethics determines how man should treat other man, and this settles on the fourth branch of philosophy, “politics” which characterizes the standards of a legitimate social framework. All of us think about practical governmental issues, since we need to decide on whom we vote for, and in which causes to contribute our time and cash. Even though we argue about it, some citizens take the time to sort out their fundamental convictions about political issues. Is there a disagreement between the social good and what's useful for citizens? Is society in charge of either supporting poor people, for instilling values, or for managing the economy? To some extent, our thoughts will rely upon our ethical beliefs, yet we additionally require a reasonable thought of what government is for and what sorts of exercises it ought to be occupied with, if any. In election time, one party promises to guarantee that each individual has a good occupation by passing a law setting fair minimum wages. The other promises to ensure we are all free, and says we will all be better off in the end even if there are layoffs and wages are set in

the labor market. Which one is ideal? What is the exact definition of the political slogans: ‘freedom and fairness?’ You need a philosophy to know the answer.

## 2.4. Tenets of Objectivism Philosophy

Like any other philosophy, Objectivism has a crucial core: a set of fundamental doctrines that distinguishes it from other philosophies. In *The Objectivist Newsletter*, Ayn Rand described the essential tenets of her philosophy as follows:

In metaphysics, that reality exists as an objective absolute;

In epistemology, that reason is man's only means of perceiving reality and his only means of survival;

In ethics, that man is an end in himself, with the pursuit of his own life, happiness and self-interest as his highest end;

In politics, laissez-faire capitalism (35).

Is this the core of Objectivism? Undoubtedly these four principles are important. But they are not enough. These are extremely broad principles as stated. Every one of them has been explained by other objectivist philosophers, and in order to make Objectivism unique, it is necessary to identify the basic insights and connections that allowed Ayn Rand to give an original defense of the previous four principles.



### 2.4.1. Reality: “Wishing Won’t Make it So”

Ayn Rand’s philosophy, Objectivism, begins by believing in the fact that existence exists. So in the quest to live we must determine reality’s nature and figure out how to act effectively in it. It also holds that there is only one reality which is the one where we live. It is obvious that reality exists but we need to discover it. To exist is to be something, to acquire a definite identity. This is what is known as ‘A is A’ .i.e., the Law of Identity in which Facts are facts, and things are what they are independent of any consciousness. Wish, hope or faith will not change reality. In Rand's theory, the truth is not to be modified or got away, but rather, seriously and gladly, confronted and faced.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from <http://atlassociety.org/objectivism/atlas-university/what-is-objectivism/objectivism-101-blog/5485-what-is-the-objectivist-view-of-reality-metaphysics>

Objectivism remains against all types of metaphysical relativism or idealism. It holds it as an absolute that humans have free will to act and think, besides, it opposes metaphysical determinism or fatalism\_ the belief that people cannot change the way events will happen and that events, especially bad ones, cannot be avoided. More generally, it stands for the mind and body integration in which there is no basic disagreement between the free, unique character of mental life and the physical body in which it resides. Thus it denies the existence of any supernatural or spiritual powers. Therefore, existence is to reject all concepts of the supernatural and the mystical, including the death of God.

In other words, in Rand's philosophy, reality exists as an objective absolute, impervious to our wishes or desires. But our ability for thought gives us the capacity to comprehend reality and the choice to use this knowledge to create the new and the life-sustaining. "The power to rearrange the combinations of natural elements is the only creative power man possesses," Rand writes. "It is an enormous and glorious power — and it is the only meaning of the concept 'creative'" (27).

#### **2.4.1.1. Primacy of Existence vs. Primacy of Consciousness**

In "The Metaphysical Versus the Man-Made" (*Philosophy: Who Needs It*), Ayn Rand wrote that the primacy of existence (of reality) is the proof that existence exists, i.e., that the world exists independent of consciousness (of any consciousness), things are what they are, and that they have a precise nature, an identity. The epistemological outcome, then, is the axiom that consciousness is the power of perceiving that which exists — and that man gains knowledge of existence by looking outside \_ in reality.

The denial of these axioms signifies a reversal: the primacy of consciousness — the notion that the universe has no independent existence, that it is the result of a consciousness (either human or god or both). The epistemological conclusion is the idea that man picks up knowledge of reality by searching internally (either at his own consciousness or at the revelations it gets from another, predominant consciousness). The source of this reversal is the failure or unwillingness to grasp the distinction between one's inner state and the external world (24). This is clearly stated in Rand's following words:

Observe that the philosophical system based on the axiom of the primacy of existence (i.e., on recognizing the absolutism of reality) led to the recognition of man's identity and rights. But the philosophical systems based on the primacy of consciousness (i.e., on the seemingly megalomaniacal notion that nature is whatever man wants it to be) lead to

the view that man possesses no identity, that he is infinitely flexible, malleable, usable and disposable (“The Metaphysical Versus the Man-Made”, 28)

In other words, reality is independent of consciousness, things are what they are, no matter what the contents or the beliefs of human minds. For instance, when you are hungry and you have nothing to eat, you start imagining that ‘a pen’ is ‘a sandwich’; however in reality a human being cannot eat a pen. Therefore, there is no mental procedure that can modify the laws of nature or remove facts. The role of consciousness is not to produce reality, yet to apprehend it.

#### **2.4.1.2. Determinism vs. Free Will**

Many philosophers and scientists believe in metaphysical determinism. According to determinism, the space was set in motion somehow, perhaps by God, and everything that has happened since has had to happen; nothing else was possible, the outcome is determined. They believe that human beings are determined by genetic development, social and environmental factors.

In Objectivism we reject Determinism, Leonard Peikoff explains Determinism in his 1st. Lecture of The Philosophy of Objectivism lecture series, and he argues that Determinism is the theory that everything that happens in the universe\_ including each idea, feeling, and activity of man \_ is required by previous factors, so nothing would ever have happened differently from the way it did, and everything is unavoidable. Each part of man's life and character, on this perspective, is just a result of factors that are beyond his control. However, this theory is rejected by Objectivism.

The Objectivists believe, in contrast, that the individual has free will in which people have the ability of choice, not over every facet of existence, of course, but over a variety of actions within our control. Our freedom to decide to act or not is of the essence of what it means to be human. Man’s consciousness shares with animals the first two stages of its development: sensations and perceptions; but it is the third state “conceptions” that makes him different from the other creatures. His thoughts are integrated and transferred to actions so here the ability to choose either to act or no.

A man’s volition is outside the power of other men. What the unalterable basic constituents are to nature, the attribute of a volitional consciousness is to the entity “man.” Nothing can force a man to think. Others may offer him incentives or impediments, rewards or punishments, they may destroy his brain by drugs or by the blow of a club, but they



cannot order his mind to function: this is in his exclusive, sovereign power. Man is neither to be obeyed nor to be commanded (Ibid. 31)

However, when answering the following question what is the Objectivist view of reality?, William R Thomas - Director of Programs and Senior Scholar at The Atlas Society- claims that the idea of free will doesn't deny causality or science, it just points out that for at least some of the things you do, you are the cause. We may not yet comprehend scientifically how the chemicals in the brain and nervous system enhance this ability, but science can no more explain away the fact of free will than the germ theory of disease could explain away diphtheria.<sup>3</sup> Science doesn't get rid of actual features of reality, ones that we practice in every moment; it explains them.

Despite the influence of genetic and environmental factors, which limit the scope of free will, we do have extensive volitional control of our actions and character. According to the Objectivist view, free will resides in the choice to focus or not to focus, to think or not to think, to activate the conceptual level of consciousness or to suspend it. Certainly that is the fundamental way to explain free will.

#### **2.4.1.3. Natural vs. Supernatural**

Objectivism rejects any idea or belief in "supernatural" or indefinable dimension for spirits or souls which is beyond or above nature. The term "nature," in the broadest sense, refers to the world we perceive, the universe of objects that interact in harmony with causal law. So objectivists believe only in natural i.e., there is no miracles, no chance, no hope, no whim, and no use of praying.

What is nature? Nature is existence — the sum of that which is. It is usually called “nature” when we think of it as a system of interconnected, interacting entities governed by law. So “nature” really means the universe of entities acting and interacting in accordance with their identities. (Leonard Peikoff. The Philosophy of Objectivism lecture series, Lecture 2)

The supernatural is supposed to be beyond human understanding, to exist in no particular way, to affect our reality miraculously, beyond any and all physical laws. It is the belief that gods and super powers exist and control this world. The objectivist position on supernaturalism, in contrast, is that the super naturalists want to have their cake and eat it too. They claim that gods, angels, and devils exist, but are not anything in particular.

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<sup>3</sup> a serious infectious disease that causes fever and difficulty in breathing and swallowing

Objectivism rejects both subjectivism and supernaturalism and this gives birth to the idea of atheism.

What, then, is “super-nature”? Something [is] beyond the universe, beyond entities, beyond identity. It would have to be: a form of existence beyond existence — a kind of entity beyond anything man knows about entities — a something which contradicts everything man knows about the identity of that which is. In short [supernaturalism is] a contradiction of every metaphysical essential (Ibid. 2).

So as indicated by Objectivism, there is no life following death; it also holds that we live in a natural world full of free will which leads to man’s happiness on earth. As Ayn Rand recognized when she concluded her metaphysics with Francis Bacon's dictum Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed. i.e., Francis Bacon knew that in order to command and control nature, one must act according to its rules and identity. Furthermore, the fact that reality is absolute means it is not concerned with wishes, whims, prayers, or miracles. If you want to change the world, you must act according to reality. Otherwise, you will most likely not have your desired results; consequently, your failure will be metaphysical fairness.



#### **2.4.2. Reason: “You Cannot Eat Your Cake and Have It Too”**

The most important guidance of Rand’s philosophy is to embrace reason as an absolute i.e., face the real facts anytime and everywhere whether at work or at home, in business or in love — and no matter what conclusion logically ensues, whether pleasant or unpleasant. Objectivism states that all human knowledge is reached through reason, the individual’s mental process of comprehending the universe abstractly and logically by integrating man’s sensory perception.

Reason is the faculty which... identifies and integrates the material provided by man's senses. Reason integrates man's perceptions by means of forming abstractions or conceptions, thus raising man's knowledge from the perceptual level, which he shares with animals, to the conceptual level, which he alone can reach. The method which reason employs in this process is logic—and logic is the art of non-contradictory identification. (Rand. "Faith and Force: The Destroyers of the Modern World," in *Philosophy, Who Needs It?* 62).

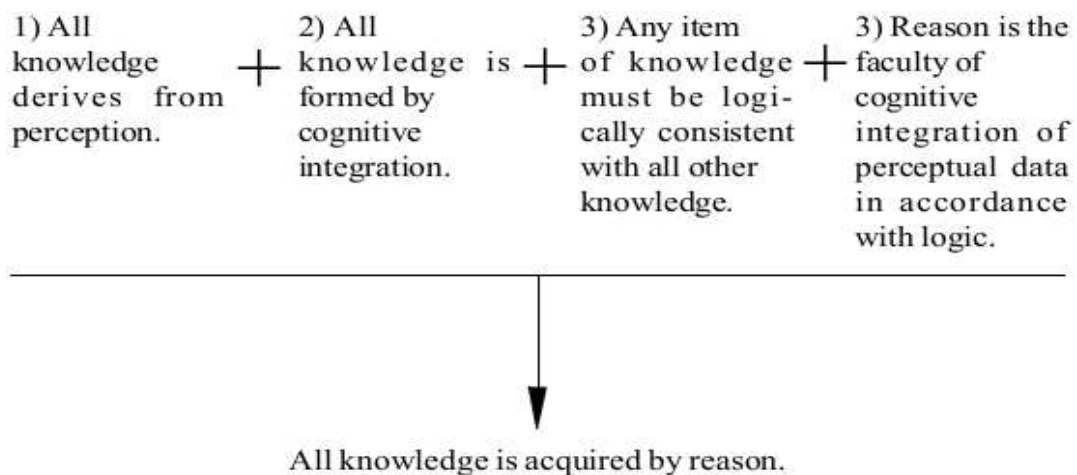
Reason doesn’t work without human intervention. We have to choose to activate our minds, to set them in action, to direct them to the task of understanding the facts, and to actively perform the steps that such understanding requires.

### 2.4.2.1. Knowledge and Reason

The basis of our knowledge is the awareness we have through our physical senses. We see reality, hear it, taste it, smell it, and feel it through touch. As babies, we discover the world through our senses. As our mental abilities develop, we become able to recall memories and we can form images in our minds.

Reason is man's only means of grasping reality and of acquiring knowledge — and, therefore, the rejection of reason means that men should act regardless of and/or in contradiction to the facts of reality (Rand. "The Left: Old and New" *Return of the Primitive: The Anti-Industrial Revolution* 162).

#### A diagram which Shows why knowledge is Acquired by Reason



(Thomas and Kelley 41)

This diagram illustrates the acquisition of knowledge by reason. The first, second and the third premises state previous conclusions that we have reached about the nature of knowledge. In effect, they specify conditions that a faculty must meet if it is to provide us with knowledge. Premise 4 shows why reason is the faculty that meets those conditions. If we consider conceptual knowledge as the product of a process, then reason is the faculty that performs that process. It is no accident that the same three basic ideas—a perceptual basis, cognitive integration, and logical consistency—are essential to our understanding both of knowledge and of reason. Nor is it the result of arbitrary stipulation on our part. As a result, the conclusion that all knowledge is acquired by reason simply states the harmony of process and product.

Knowledge is objective only to the extent that it integrates all the available evidence and those nonobjective factors are excluded from the integration.

#### **2.4.2.2. Logic and Reason**

The best way to ensure the objectivity of one's thinking is to utilize a deliberate logical strategy. Ayn Rand wrote that logic is the key for non-contradictory identification. Since there are no disagreements in all reality, two thoughts that contradict each other cannot both be true and valid; “A” cannot be “A” and “non-A” at the same time, and any idea that we can observe through our senses and it contradicts the true facts is surely false. Logic gives us standards we can use to easily judge whether an argument means something or no. The scientific method is an advanced form of logical reasoning.

Logic is man's method of reaching conclusions *objectively* by deriving them without contradiction from the facts of reality — ultimately, from the evidence provided by man's senses. If men reject logic, then the tie between their mental processes and reality is severed; all cognitive standards are repudiated, and anything goes; any contradiction, on any subject, may be endorsed (and simultaneously rejected) by anyone, as and when he feels like it. (Rand. “Nazism and Subjectivism”, *The Objectivist*, 12).

In his book *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, Leonard Peikoff states that individual's knowledge is not obtained by logic separated from experience or by experience separated from logic, yet by the application of logic to experience. All truths are the result of logical examination of experienced actions in order to figure out if it is a fact or no. To make an opposition between the “logical” and the “factual” leads to the separation between consciousness and existence, therefore this create a split between truths in relation to man's method of cognition and between truths in relation with reality's facts. Consequently, logic is divorced from reality and “*Logical truths are empty and conventional*”, besides, reality gets to be mysterious in which “*Factual truths are contingent and uncertain*” and this leads to the claim that man has no method of cognition and no way of acquiring knowledge (112-113).

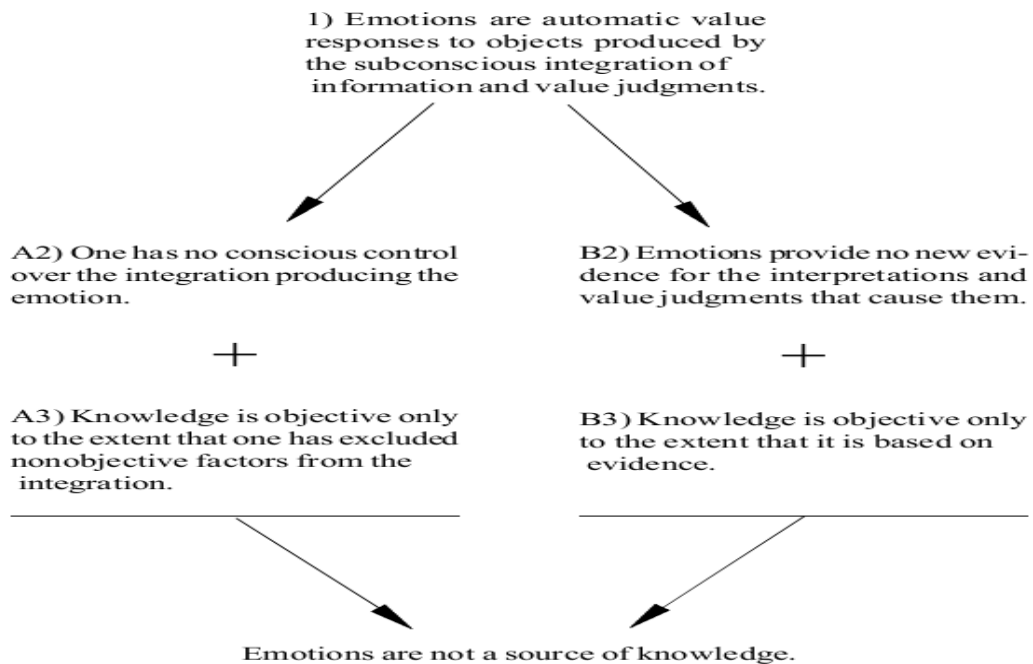
The Objectivists believes that it is possible to be sure about the validity of certain conclusions, but this requires a logical and objective process of thinking for the reason that it is only that kind of reasoning that allows us to form true ideas. Therefore, it is necessary to make an integrated relationship between the mind and reality (between consciousness and existence) by looking out when you are thinking and not looking in. So, in order to be reasonable when you are thinking you should relate your logical concepts to reality.

### 2.4.2.3. Emotions vs. Reason

Emotions are the automatic outcome of individual's value judgments expressed by his subconscious; they are produced by man's premises explicitly or implicitly. They certainly exist; they are pervasive and highly important features of conscious experience. Emotions provide important data about our inner truths, just as the objects present to our five senses provide important information about external facts. But this does not mean that the emotions themselves are forms of knowledge.

Emotions are not tools of cognition . . . one must differentiate between one's thoughts and one's emotions with full clarity and precision. One does not have to be omniscient in order to possess knowledge; one merely has to know that which one does know, and distinguish it from that which one feels. Nor does one need a full system of philosophical epistemology in order to distinguish one's own considered judgment from one's feelings, wishes, hopes or fears. (Rand. *For the New Intellectual*, 55).

#### A Diagram which Shows why Emotions are not a Source of Knowledge



(Thomas and Kelley 45)

In the previous diagram, there are two chains of inference that lead to the conclusion that emotions cannot be a method of conscious mental process 'cognition' as they are depicted in the diagram as (A) and (B). Both depend on the need for knowledge to be objective, though each appeals to a different aspect of that need. Chain (A) holds the fact

that one cannot control one's emotions in a direct way. Chain (B) states the fact that emotions do not, in themselves, provide original and objective data.

The objectivists believe that emotions tell you nothing about reality, and this confirms the main conclusion all knowledge is acquired by reason. So, in order to acquire knowledge, one must actively employ the methods of logic to ensure one's objectivity. This key principle of Objectivism is that reason is the only process that will in fact produce knowledge of reality.

### 2.4.3. Ethics: Rational Self Interest “Man is an end in himself”



Ethics is an objective and metaphysical essential of individual's survival. According to *the Objectivist Ethics* Rand defines ethics or morality as a code of values to guide man's choices and actions that determine the goal and the course of his/her life.

A moral code is a system of teleological measurement which grades the choices and actions open to man, according to the degree to which they achieve or frustrate the code's standard of value. The standard is the end, to which man's actions are the means.

A moral code is a set of abstract principles; to practice it, an individual must translate it into the appropriate concretes — he must choose the particular goals and values which he is to pursue. This requires that he define his particular hierarchy of values, in the order of their importance, and that he act accordingly. (Rand. “Concepts of Consciousness” *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, 33).

Rand, then, asks the first question that has to be answered, as a precondition of any attempt to define, to judge or to accept any specific system of ethics, which is: Why does man need a code of values? After that she stresses it by believing that the first question is not: What particular code of ethics should man accept? But does man need ethics at all — and why?

The typical answer is that we should figure out how to prevent our own interests and happiness from serving God or other individuals — and ethical morality will teach us. According to Rand the purpose of morality is to teach us what is in our self-interest and how can this selfishness produces man's happiness. She, then, argues that man has no automatic code of survival i.e., His sensory perceptions do not tell him automatically what is good for him or bad and what will benefit his life or jeopardize it, and what purposes he

should reach and the means to achieve them, last and not least, what kinds of values he depends on, and what course of action it requires in his life.

Rand summarizes by saying that individual must select his actions, values and objectives so as to achieve and enjoy that ultimate value in which his own life is an end in itself. According to Objectivism, man's own life and happiness is the ultimate value. To achieve happiness requires a morality of rational self-interest, one that does not give or receive the undeserved rewards from others.

### **2.4.3.1. The Importance of Selfishness vs. the Peril of Altruism**

Rand consciously saw herself as an ethical revolutionary and radical, who challenges both the traditional way of thinking that selfishness is evil and altruism is good which is the doctrine that man must live for others happiness's sake.

Rand argues that selfishness, properly understood, does not mean doing whatever you feel like doing or exploiting others, and she defines it in the introduction of her book *the Virtue of Selfishness*:

The meaning ascribed in popular usage to the word "selfishness" is not merely wrong: it represents a devastating intellectual "package-deal," which is responsible, more than any other single factor, for the arrested moral development of mankind.

In popular usage, the word "selfishness" is a synonym of evil; the image it conjures is of a murderous brute [that] tramples over piles of corpses to achieve his own ends, who cares for no living being and pursues nothing but the gratification of the mindless whims of any immediate moment.

Yet the exact meaning and dictionary definition of the word "selfishness" is: concern with one's own interests.

This concept does not include a moral evaluation; it does not tell us whether concern with one's own interests is good or evil; nor does it tell us what constitutes man's actual interests. It is the task of ethics to answer such questions (7).

Rand also offers a "new concept of egoism" based on reason as man's only method for survival and opposed to all forms of altruism. She, then, argues that sacrificing the self for others does not mean generosity or goodwill but the opposite.

There are two moral questions which altruism lumps together into one "package-deal": (1) what are values? (2) Who should be the beneficiary of values? Altruism substitutes the second for the first; it evades the task of defining a code of moral values, thus leaving man, in fact, without moral guidance.

Altruism declares that any action taken for the benefit of others is good, and any action taken for one's own benefit is evil. Thus the beneficiary of an action is the only criterion of moral value — and so long as that beneficiary is anybody other than oneself, anything goes (Ibid. 8).

The common usage of 'selfishness' carries a number of connotations. It suggests that the pursuance of one's self-interest must be at the expense of other people, that there is necessarily a conflict of interests among individuals. It suggests that other people's interests and happiness are more important than one's own and that self-sacrifice is a good quality. It suggests that there are values more important than individual life, for instance the good of 'the state', 'the country', 'society', or religion, and that self-sacrifice for these is good. The conventional definition of egoism, combined with the concept of altruism, presents us with a wrong sense — either sacrificing the self to others, or sacrificing others to the self; we are either meek victims or brutal parasites. It cripples any conception of an independent, self-supporting person — a person who supports his or her life and happiness by his or her own effort, neither sacrificing him or herself for others. Consequently, if the conventional view were true, there could be no benevolent interpersonal relationships.

A typical example is given in order to highlight the consequences if everyone managed to behave in an altruistic or unselfish way. Person A would deny his or her needs and desires, giving up his or her own joy for Person B's. However, person B, not having any desire to be selfish, could not accept A's gift (material or nonmaterial) and would need to pass it to C. Yet, C, not having any desire to be egoist ... Isn't the result clear? If everyone was benevolent and unselfish, they would all lose and none would gain. A moral ideal, which leads to that outcome, is plainly unsatisfactory and leads to misery and death. However, what if some individuals accept what is given to them. When individuals allow themselves to gain they enable the rest to be ethical. But why is it great to advance the happiness of others and not the satisfaction of oneself? If it is immoral for you to keep a value of any kind, why is it moral for another to keep it? Does being kind is when serving the other and neglecting the self? As a result, the doctrine of altruism, of self-sacrifice, is full of contradictions.

However, it is necessary to stress the fact that Objectivism is against altruism in the sense of an obligation to sacrifice to others. It isn't globally opposed to acts of kindness or charity.



### 2.4.3.2. Rational Selfishness as a Pursuit of Happiness

According to “The Objectivist Ethics”, Happiness is that state of consciousness which is the reaction of the achievement of one’s values. i.e., if an individual achieves a productive work, his happiness is the automatic reaction of his success. But if a man’s achievement is destruction, like self-torture and a sadist<sup>4</sup>, like a mystic<sup>5</sup> or like a jerk driver of a hotrod car his happiness is the measure of his success but in the service of self-destruction. It is necessary to add that the emotional state of all those irrationalists cannot be properly considered as happiness or even as pleasure but to be considered as a moment’s release from their chronic state of panic.

Neither life nor happiness can be reached by irrational whims. It is true that the individual is free to attempt to live by any arbitrary means such as a parasite<sup>6</sup>, a beggar or a looter, yet he/she is not free to succeed at it. In other words, he/she is free to achieve his happiness by any irrational corruption, any whim, any illusion, any senseless escape from reality, but not free neither to be successful at it nor to run away the negative consequences.

To hold one’s own life as one’s ultimate value, and one’s own happiness as one’s highest purpose are two aspects of the same achievement. Existentially, the activity of pursuing rational goals is the activity of maintaining one’s life; [...] And when one experiences the kind of pure happiness that is an end in itself — the kind that makes one think: “This is worth living for”

But the relationship of cause to effect cannot be reversed. It is only by accepting “man’s life” as one’s primary and by pursuing the rational values it requires that one can achieve happiness — not by taking “happiness” as some undefined, irreducible primary and then attempting to live by its guidance. If you achieve that which is the good by a rational standard of value, it will necessarily make you happy; but that which makes you happy, by some undefined emotional standard, is not necessarily the good. To take “whatever makes one happy” as a guide to action means: to be guided by nothing but one’s emotional whims (Rand 29).

A typical example is drug. It might create a short-term pleasure. But in fact the drug-addict, who lost his friends, his money, his self-esteem, and his freedom if he went to prison, is not happy at all. The drug acts as a mean of canceling the reality of his terrible life in order to avoid the feelings that would come from it.

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<sup>4</sup> a person who gets pleasure, sometimes sexual, by being cruel to or hurting another person

<sup>5</sup> someone who attempts to be united with God through prayer

<sup>6</sup> a person who is lazy and lives by other people working, giving them money

As a result the only successful way to seek for happiness is “the rational self-interest”. So, one can learn to pursue his/her own happiness by firstly, discovering the life-promoting values it requires i.e., think rationally and don’t bow to power. Join with other people when you have real values in common and just leave them when you don’t. Don’t try to be your brother’s keeper or to force him to be yours. Live independently. Secondly, follow reason, not whims or faith. Thirdly, Work hard to achieve a life of purpose and productiveness. Fourthly, Earn genuine self-esteem i.e., one’s certainty that one’s mind is competent to think and that one’s person is worthy is worthy of living a happy life.

The moral purpose of a man’s life is the achievement of his own happiness. This does not mean that he is indifferent to all men, that human life is of no value to him and that he has no reason to help others in an emergency. But it does mean that he does not subordinate his life to the welfare of others, that he does not sacrifice himself to their needs, that the relief of their suffering is not his primary concern, that any help he gives is an exception, not a rule, an act of generosity, not of moral duty, that it is marginal and incidental — as disasters are marginal and incidental in the course of human existence — and that values, not disasters, are the goal, the first concern and the motive power of his life (Ibid. 49).

Rational selfishness is the pursuit of one’s own happiness. Therefore, selfishness is a basic virtue and the Objectivist ethics is a form of moral egoism. Altruism, in contrast, which Rand characterized as sacrificing the self for others, as placing their interests above one’s own, is precisely fundamental moral fault. For that reason, the extent to which you live with a rational self-interest is the extent to live happily.



#### **2.4.4. Politics and Economics: “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death**

The Objectivist political theory has three primary components, all of which draw upon the classical liberal political tradition. To begin with, the establishment of the political framework ought to be the crucial right to live free from physical force. Second, the government has the entirely restricted capacity of protecting rights. Third, government force ought to be practiced according to objective laws. Free enterprise “capitalism” is the politico-economic framework suggested by these standards.

##### **2.4.4.1. Individual Rights**

The Objectivist morals hold that every individual can live and prosper through the independent exercise of his rational mind. Economically, people thrive through production

and trade, as is obvious from the way that the freest nations are either the wealthiest nations or are getting rich generally rapidly. Socially, exchange is the model for how individuals can best manage each other.

“Rights” are a moral concept — the concept that provides a logical transition from the principles guiding an individual’s actions to the principles guiding his relationship with others — the concept that preserves and protects individual morality in a social context — the link between the moral code of a man and the legal code of a society, between ethics and politics. Individual rights are the means of subordinating society to moral law (Rand. “Man’s Rights”, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, 92).

It is possible to live freely just in the event that one is permitted to do as such. One's decisions must be voluntary if they are to be freely made. On a very basic level, only the threat of deadly force can undermine one's capacity to reason and choose. Murder, theft, fraud: All these are cases of the utilization of power to deny somebody of flexibility, of products, or even of life. In her book *Capitalism: the Unknown Ideal*, Rand holds that since knowledge, thinking, and rational action are properties of the individual, since the choice to exercise his rational faculty or not depends on the individual, man’s survival requires that those who think be free of the interference of those who don’t. Since men are neither omniscient nor infallible, they must be free to agree or disagree, to cooperate or to pursue their own independent course, each according to his rational judgment. Freedom is the fundamental requirement of man’s mind (12).

Normally, the individual might employ one's intelligence to support one's well being. The danger of power makes one acknowledge another person's directs, as opposed to one's own particular judgment. This was the way the totalitarian frameworks, for example, Soviet Russia or Nazi Germany treated their subjects, and that is the reason the impact of those frameworks was a dim, uniform style of life, wavering generation, and occasional episodes of mass imprisonment and slaughter. However, the principle of non-initiation of force does not deny its utilization in self-preservation. The individual can use force in order to protect him/herself, his/her companions, merchandise if he/ she is threatened or attacked.

The individual rights to life, freedom, property, and the pursuit of happiness—specified in numerous American political reports—recognize distinctive measurements of opportunity and deny the comparing sorts of power. Ayn Rand argues that a 'right' is a moral principle defining a man's free will in a society. There is only one primary right a

man's right to his own life and all others are its consequences. To live, one must be able to take action, by one's own particular decision, in support of one's life; that is the privilege to freedom. We are material creatures, thus we require the freedom to keep the fruits of our labor; that is the privilege to property. What's more, we live as ourselves, for ourselves, so we have a privilege to seek after our own satisfaction.

#### **2.4.4.2. Limited Government**

The power of government is the force of the firearm. It has the ability to implement a set of rules in the territory it controls, a force that is often used against freedom. Objectivism therefore advocates a strictly limited form of government: a republican system that has just those forces and takes just those activities required to secure our rights to freedom from power. There must be a military force for defense against external enemies. There must be an arrangement of enactment and law courts to build up the law and to settle debate in which force might be used. What's more, there must be a system of enforcement of the law, for example, the police, to ensure the law is a social standard, not empty words.

If physical force is to be barred from social relationships, men need an institution charged with the task of protecting their rights under an objective code of rules.

This is the task of a government — of a proper government — its basic task, its only moral justification and the reason why men do need a government.

A government is the means of placing the retaliatory use of physical force under objective control — i.e., under objectively defined laws (Rand. “The Nature of Government”, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, 109).

No nation today conscientiously regards rights, and in fact numerous individuals don't comprehend what rights truly are. A limited rights-respecting government would have no welfare system and no constrained benefits paying framework like Social Security in the U.S. It would not have organizations with open-ended and vaguely characterized administrative forces. There would be no anti-trust law, nor zoning laws, nor anti-drug laws. This doesn't imply that a free society would not have unemployment insurance or that it would not have unmistakable neighborhoods or open crusades to decrease the utilization of perilous narcotics (drugs). But if individuals needed any of these things, they would need to compose and attempt them willfully, through individual contracts and free affiliations. And no one would have the right to enforce someone else to do something through violence. Rational persuasion and free debate would need to be the methods a social coordinator would utilize, and the outcome would be an arrangement of opportunity, in which every

individual would decide for himself the best course in life and would endure or appreciate the results of his decisions.

#### **2.4.4.3. Objective Law**

Civil law, is government's main positive service, provides objective and peaceful methods of resolving disputes among producers and traders. Therefore, it provides the environment needed for reliable long-term planning and contracting. In doing so, it makes available all the necessary conditions for the prodigies of global capitalist production and services of modern life.

[...]That which cannot be formulated into an objective law, cannot be made the subject of legislation — not in a free country, not if we are to have “a government of laws and not of men.” An indefinable law is not a law, but merely a license for some men to rule others (Rand, *The Objectivist Newsletter*, 28).

According to Rand, the non-objective law is the most effective weapon of human enslavement: its victims become its enforcers and enslave themselves (25). She, then, argues that all laws must be objective (and objectively justifiable): men must know clearly, and in advance of taking an action, what the law forbids them to do (and why), what constitutes a crime and what penalty they will incur if they commit it (110).

Therefore, the law courts must be structured so that objectivity and impartiality are the hallmarks of any legal decision. And the law must always be grounded in principles of rights.

#### **2.4.4.4. Laissy-Faire Capitalism**

Capitalism is not only a system of economic freedom, but a system of big businesses. Capitalism is a social system characterized by a complete separation of state and economy like the same way and the same reasons for the separation of state and church. It is a system that deals with people as individuals without caring about their ethnic, religious, or other collective principle included in the law.

Capitalism demands the best of every man — his rationality — and rewards him accordingly. It leaves every man free to choose the work he likes, to specialize in it, to trade his product for the products of others, and to go as far on the road of achievement as his ability and ambition will carry him. His success depends on the objective value of his work and on the rationality of those who recognize that value. When men are free to trade, with reason and reality as their only arbiter, when no man may use physical force to extort the consent of another, it is the best product and the best

judgment that win in every field of human endeavor, and raise the standard of living — and of thought — ever higher for all those who take part in mankind's productive activity (Rand. *For the New Intellectual*, 25)

Rand's support for laissez-faire capitalism is the outcome of her deeper philosophical analysis. An individual who eagerly embraces reality, who believes that his own rational mind is an absolute, and who makes his own life as his highest moral purpose automatically he will demand his freedom. S/he will demand the freedom to think and speak, to earn property and associate and trade, and to pursue his own happiness.

Capitalism is the unknown ideal, and Laissez-faire capitalism, Rand argues, is the system of individual rights in which one can fully live a life of reason, purpose and self-esteem. In such a system, therefore, the government has only one function which is to protect the rights of each individual by placing the retaliatory use of physical force under objective control.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

From numerous points of view, it's difficult to be finished while clarifying a philosophy like Objectivism. The implications are so wide-reaching. There are logical associations all through the different thoughts. There's a huge amount of empirical support for it. Furthermore, you could concentrate on defective philosophies to perceive how it stacks up against them.

Given the inability to be completed, and the time limitations on making this arrangement of addresses, so, it is important to present the philosophy in a systematic way. The emphasis on the structure of the philosophy, and the themes in each branch of the objectivism philosophy, were planned to coordinate the different thoughts into a strong bundle. To truly comprehend the philosophy, you must have the capacity to see the master plan and how the components fit together.

Objectivism is not simply a body of theory for contemplation but a body of practical principles for living the great life. So, objectivists most particularly aimed to see the fruit that people will bear as they apply it to their life, and advance it in the public arena at large.

# Chapter Three

**The Philosophical and the Literary  
Integration in Ayn Rand's *Atlas  
Shrugged***

## Chapter Three: the Philosophical and the Literary Integration in Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*

### 3.1. Introduction

Objectivism is the name of Ayn Rand's personal philosophy, and *Atlas Shrugged* is basically one gigantic Objectivist manifesto. Published in 1957, *Atlas Shrugged* was Ayn Rand's last and most ambitious novel. The novel, which is about 1168 pages, is all about demonstrating how Objectivist ideas can be used in daily life, and why those ideas are so important. In fact, for a long time the working title of the developing story was *The Strike*. However, the final title, *Atlas Shrugged*, concisely symbolizes the book's plot: the rebellion of the unrecognized and often persecuted creative heroes who bear the rest of the world on their shoulders. It might seem a bit odd to use a work of fiction to make a philosophical statement, but this actually reflects Rand's unique ideas and essentials.

Let's begin with the fundamentals. The word "Objectivism" is never mentioned in all of *Atlas Shrugged*; however its thoughts are present from the beginning. *Atlas Shrugged* presents an integrated and all-embracing perspective of man and man's relationship to the world and manifests the essentials of an entire philosophical system (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and politics). *Atlas Shrugged* embodies Objectivism in the actions of the story's heroes.

One complicated thing about Objectivism in *Atlas Shrugged* is that it is never referred to outright by any character. Characters who are down with Objectivism (John Galt, Dagny, Hank, and Francisco particularly) have something to say in regards to everything. Ayn Rand tied everything to *Atlas Shrugged's* unifying theme of "the role of the mind in human existence" (Rand 81). Constantly, say that Objectivism likes: life (living is super), money (particularly profiting, which is seen as an ethical demonstration), individuality, the pursuit of happiness (for the individual), private enterprise, diligent work, high self-esteem, free will (choices are good), reason, and rationality. More or less, Objectivism says that individuals ought to live just for themselves and ought to utilize the forces of Reason to work hard and make a happy life for themselves.



## 3.2. About the Novel: *Atlas Shrugged*

### 3.2.1. Keys Facts

**Full Title of the novel:** *Atlas Shrugged*

**Author:** Ayn Rand

**Genre:** Mystery; romance; epic; philosophy treatise

**Language:** English

**Setting:** 1946–1957; United States

**Date of first publication:** 1957

**Publisher:** Random House

**Narrator:** The story is told by an anonymous third-person narrator.

**Point of view** the narrator speaks in the third person, focusing mainly on Dagny and Rearden, but following all the characters. Characters and actions are portrayed subjectively; the narrator described the internal feelings and thoughts of the characters as well as their external activities.

**Tone:** at first glance, the story is described in a separated, objective tone, but Rand's fundamental attitude toward modern society is intensely ironic and satirical.

**Atlas:** the hero of Greek mythology, who carried the weight of the heavens on his shoulders, symbolizes the exploited industrialists, especially Rearden, whose diligent work and incredible power help the parasites who live off their fruitful abilities. Francisco d'Anconia asks Rearden what advice he would give "*if you saw Atlas, the giant who holds the world on his shoulders, if you saw that he stood, blood running down his chest, his knees buckling, his arms trembling but still trying to hold the world aloft with the last of this strength, and the greater his effort the heavier the world bore down on his shoulders — what would you tell him to do?*" (Ayn Rand org.) But Rearden was unable to answer; therefore, d'Anconia gives his own response: "*To shrug*". At the point when Francisco tells Rearden that he would encourage Atlas to shrug and let go of his weight, he means the

strike and he advises Rearden to lay down his burden and stop believing the fact that it is his obligation to bear such a great amount of weight for the undeserving. Because Rearden's only prize for his efforts is the abuse of a corrupt government and self-sacrifice for the other's happiness sake, Francisco knows it is unfair for Rearden, or anybody, to be thrown in this part. By enrolling him for the strike, he tries to show Rearden a way out.

**Protagonist:** Dagny Taggart

**Major conflict:** Dagny must try to keep her railroad from collapsing before she can find the destroyer who is systematically removing the creative thinkers from the world.

**Rising Action:** As the perilous collectivist policies of powerful looters plunge the nation into disorder and the destroyer guarantees more men, Dagny starts to doubt her commitment to the railroad.

**Climax:** Dagny follows the destroyer, John Galt, and discovers the vanished men who ask her to join their strike of the mind; she is torn between adoration for her railroad and the sanity of their position.

**Falling Action:** the looters arrest Galt, uncovering their actual evil nature, and Dagny realizes she must join the strike; she and the other strikers rescue Galt in a gunfight.

**Themes:** the importance of the mind in man's existence; the evils of collectivism and altruism; rational self-interest as a pursuit of self satisfaction.

**Foreshadowing:** Paul Larkin warns Rearden to watch his "Washington man," Wesley Mouch, who will rise to power after betraying Rearden and at last attempt to wreck Rearden Steel. Francisco describes his mismanagement of the San Sebastian Mines as the result of following politically popular ideas. Later, the large-scale destruction of the economy naturally follows from the looters' devotion to these ideas. Francisco depicts his blunder of the San Sebastian Mines as the consequence of following politically well known thoughts. Later, the extensive scale destruction of the economy actually takes after from the looters' commitment to these thoughts.

### 3.2.2. List of the Main Characters

All the characters in *Atlas Shrugged* are about 27 characters; however this list contains only the most important ones.

**John Galt** The most important character of the novel, John Galt is the man who dominates the action, though he doesn't appear until two-thirds of the way through the novel. John Galt is the character who conceives, initiates, and carries to a successful conclusion the strike of the great minds that forms the core of the novel's action. He is both the inventor of the motor and the "destroyer" that Dagny fears.

**Dagny Taggart** The novel's heroine, Dagny Taggart is Galt's most dangerous enemy but also the woman he loves. Dagny is a brilliant engineer/businesswoman who runs a transcontinental railroad expertly. Her strength of purpose and impassioned commitment to the railroad enables her to withstand the injustices of the looters' regime and, by her prodigious productivity, inadvertently sustain that regime. She is the primary foe that Galt must defeat.

**Hank Rearden** Hank Rearden is the industrialist who runs the country's finest steel mills. Through ten years of herculean effort, he has invented a new substance—Rearden Metal—that is vastly superior to steel. Hank is also Dagny's colleague and lover through much of the story. He is the other great industrialist inadvertently propping up the looters' regime and, consequently, also a danger to Galt's strike. Rearden has uncritically accepted part of the looters' code—the moral premise that an individual has the unchosen obligation to serve others. In order to experience the joy that he has earned, Rearden must liberate himself from the shackles of the self-sacrifice morality.

**Francisco d'Anconia** A friend and ally of John Galt, Francisco d'Anconia was the first to join Galt in going on strike and is an active recruiting officer for the strike. Francisco is the world's wealthiest man, a brilliant copper industrialist who takes the disguise of a hedonistic playboy as a means of hiding his true intent: the gradual destruction of d'Anconia Copper and of the millions of dollars invested in it by American businessmen. A childhood friend of Dagny's and her first lover, he pays the highest price for his role in the strike.

**Ragnar Danneskjöld** Like Francisco, Ragnar Danneskjöld is a friend of Galt's who joins the strike at its inception. A brilliant philosopher who chooses to fight the looters as a pirate, he robs their ships and restores the wealth to the people who produced it. Danneskjöld is the opposite of Robin Hood: He robs the poor and gives to the rich—he takes from the parasitical and restores wealth to the productive.

**James Taggart** Dagny's older brother and the President of Taggart Transcontinental, Jim is a "looter"—a businessman who seeks gain not by productive work but by political connections. The difference between Dagny and her brother is shown in their reactions to Dan Conway's Phoenix-Durango Railroad. They both want to put the competitor out of business. Dagny wishes to do so by building Taggart's Rio Norte Line into a more efficient road, whereas Jim seeks to destroy the Phoenix-Durango by political decree. Where Dagny stands for production, Jim stands for force. Jim is motivated by his hatred of good men and his desire to kill such individuals as Dagny, Rearden, Francisco, and Galt.

**Dr. Robert Stadler** The brilliant scientist turned looter-politician; Robert Stadler was once head of the Department of Physics at the Patrick Henry University. A genius in the field of theoretical physics, he was also the teacher of Galt, Francisco, and Ragnar. Stadler believes that most men are irrational and impervious to reason. Because men would never voluntarily choose science, they must be forced to support it. Stadler believes that the men of the mind are an endangered minority among the uneducated masses and should have the right to rule. For this reason, he thinks he can use governmental force to advance the cause of science.

**Dr. Floyd Ferris** The day-to-day head of the State Science Institute, Dr. Floyd Ferris is a murderous bureaucrat with an unquenchable lust for political power. Dr. Ferris would murder Galt without a second thought rather than give up the power he has gained. Ferris postures as a scientist but is actually hostile to the mind, because the thinkers, he recognizes, don't unquestioningly obey a dictator's commands. Therefore, he consistently attacks the mind, as in his book, *Why Do You Think You Think?*

### 3.2.3. Philosophical and Literary Integration: a Plot Overview

*Atlas Shrugged* is an accomplishment of complex basic synthesis and integration. The titles of its three noteworthy areas pay tribute to Aristotle, relate to his essential laws of

thought, and accomplish a thematic goal by implying something regarding the meaning of the events and actions in the respective sections of the novel (Younkins 127).

In part 1, called “Non-Contradiction,” there is a long series of strange and apparently contradictory events and paradoxes with no discernible logical solution. In part 2, “Either-or,” based on Aristotle’s Law of Excluded Middle, Dagny faces a fundamental choice with no middle road—to continue to battle to save her business or to give it up. Part 2 also focuses on the conflict between two classes of humanity—the looters and the creators. Part 3, “A is A,” is based on Aristotle’s Law of Identity. By part 3, both the characters and the readers are able to see the story as an interrelated network of events. There are multiple and integrated layers and levels of meaning and implications for each of *Atlas Shrugged*’s thirty chapters. Rand’s chapter titles are meaningful at the literal level in addition to being significant at deeper philosophical and symbolic levels (Seddon47-56).

The story is told generally from the perspective of Dagny, the wonderful, superlatively competent boss of operations for the country’s biggest railroad, Taggart Transcontinental. The primary story line is Dagny’s mission to comprehend the basic cause of the strange breakdown of her railroad and the industrial civilization; meanwhile her search of the two men: one, who invents the motor that could have changed the world; the other, a puzzling figure who, similar to some unreasonable sort of Pied Piper<sup>1</sup>, appears to be intentionally keen on attracting the most capable and skilled individuals. A concealed destroyer, who, she believes, is draining the brains of the world. At the end, she will discover that these two men are only one man, the man she loves the most, John Galt.

### **3.3. Reason and Reality as an Absolute: “the Role of Reason in Man’s Existence”**

#### **3.3.1. The Role of the Irrational Mind in Human Life**

The villains in *Atlas Shrugged* avoid rationality and production, seeking survival instead by looting the producers. The villains attempt to live by brute force, not by reason. However, man is not a tiger or a shark; he can’t survive the same way animals do.

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<sup>1</sup> a character in a children’s story who led all the children away from the town of Hamelin by playing beautiful music after the town officials refused to pay him for getting rid of all the rats

Wesley Mouch, James Taggart, Floyd Ferris, and the other villains in the story seek survival by means of force, which is an animal's method, not a man's. Consequently, the villains have no more chance to succeed than a bird that refuses to use its wings. The looters can—and, at times in real life, do—destroy the creators. But having abandoned their survival instrument, they lack all chance of achieving flourishing, joyous lives. Once they ruin the producers, they are left to starve. Only the men of the mind can attain prosperity (Bernstein 118).

A crucial example of the irrational mind is James Taggart (Jim) whose ambition in life is simply to destroy the good, making him a classic example of a nihilist. Because Jim's true nature is so terrible, he cannot bear to know it and spends a great deal of energy repressing it and convincing himself he is motivated by profit, public service, or love. He marries Cherryl Brooks in order to destroy her goodness but convinces himself he has done it for love. She is an easy target for him and a substitute for the great men like Rearden, whom he cannot manage to ruin. Eventually, Jim can no longer hide his nature from himself. Cherryl's suicide contributes to his awful realization. Finally, watching Galt's torture and screaming for him to die brings him face to face with his depravity. The realization causes him to go mad.

The looter's technique to destroy the producers is by using force. The first example is clearly illustrated when the economic dictator Wesley Mouch needs Rearden's cooperation for a new set of socialist laws, and Jim needs economic favors that will keep his ailing railroad running after the collapse of Colorado. Jim appeals to Rearden's wife Lillian who wants to destroy her husband. She tells him Rearden and Dagny are having an affair, and he uses this information in a trade. The new set of laws, Directive 10-289, is irrational and repressive. It includes a ruling that requires all patents to be signed over to the government. Rearden is blackmailed into signing over his metal to protect Dagny's reputation.

The second example can be shown through Dr. Ferris, Wesley Mouch, and Jim Taggart who tortured John Galt with a device called Project F in which the device runs electrical currents through his body. Dr. Ferris tells him that he will not be allowed to leave the room until he provides a complete outline of the measures he intends to take as economic dictator. However, Galt endures the torture without speaking. When the machine breaks down, he tells the man operating it how to fix it. The operator realizes in horror

what is happening and rushes out of the room. In his overwhelming desperation to see Galt destroyed, Jim finally realizes his true nature as a nihilist, and the knowledge is too much to bear. He screams and collapses.

As a result, the clash between the producers and the looters is the battle of mind versus muscle. The looters have only brute force as a tool, while Galt has his mind. Although the looters can use force to command him physically, they are powerless to coerce his mind.

### **3.3.2. The Role of the Rational Mind in Human Life**

The heroes of *Atlas Shrugged* are men and women of great intellect. Dagny, Rearden, Francisco, Ellis Wyatt, and, above all, Galt are superb thinkers—even geniuses. The story makes clear the multitude of ways in which the great minds are mankind’s benefactors. All the main positive characters in *Atlas Shrugged* are great minds.

Dagny Taggart is a brilliant businesswoman/engineer who runs a transcontinental railroad superbly. Hank Rearden is a productive genius of the steel industry and an extraordinary metallurgist who invents a new material that’s vastly superior to steel. So, this requires his command of physics. Francisco d’Anconia is a prodigy who masters every task as quickly as it’s presented to him; independently develops a crude version of differential equations at age 12, and invents a new kind of copper smelter. Ellis Wyatt is an innovator of the oil industry who creates an advanced method of extracting oil from shale rock. Ragnar Danneskjöld is a brilliant philosopher, and Hugh Akston, his teacher, is the last great advocate of reason. Above all John Galt, a philosopher, scientist, inventor, statesman, and man of superlative genius and accomplishment who, in real life, can be compared only to the greatest minds of human history. The heroes in *Atlas Shrugged* all dramatize the novel’s theme: The mind is mankind’s tool of survival (Bernstein 117).

Rand illustrates the previous theme in “Galt’s speech” saying:

To live, man must hold three things as the supreme and ruling values of his life: Reason — Purpose — Self-esteem. Reason, as his only tool of knowledge — Purpose, as his choice of the happiness which that tool must proceed to achieve — Self-esteem, as his inviolate certainty that his mind is competent to think and his person is worthy of happiness, which means: is worthy of living(128).

One tricky thing that readers first notice about Rand’s fictional heroes is their complete integrity. Dagny Taggart, John Galt, and Francisco d’Anconia show predictable fidelity to their standards on important issues, as well as in the littlest points of interest in their ordinary life. Holding an ethical code established in reason and reality permits the Randian hero to act ethically all the time. And this is so clear in the character of Galt in which Rand depicts him as a man who never think irrationally because he is aware about its damaging results. Since he doesn't consider reality to be his enemy, his most recognizable characteristic is his tendency for expressing the truths that others wanted to overlook. He rejects even to shield those whom he cherishes, for example, Dagny, from awful truths.

Rand portrays Galt as the man who rejects even to shield those whom he cherishes, for example, Dagny, from awful truths. Dagny desperately wants to stay in the valley with Galt—but the thought of giving up her railroad seems unbearable:

If only I could stay here and never know what they’re doing to the railroad, and never learn when it goes.

You’ll have to hear about it, said Galt; it was that ruthless tone, peculiarly his, which sounded implacable by being simple, devoid of any emotional value, save the quality of respect for facts. “You’ll hear the whole course of the last agony of Taggart Transcontinental. You’ll hear about every wreck. You’ll hear about every discontinued train. You’ll hear about every abandoned line. You’ll hear about the collapse of the Taggart Bridge. Nobody stays in this valley except by a full, conscious choice based on a full, conscious knowledge of every fact involved in his decision. Nobody stays here by faking reality in any manner whatever (Atlas Society org.)

As a result, the first distinctive feature of the Randian hero, then, is his total, consistent devotion to reason as an absolute.

### **3.3.3. From a Rational to an Irrational Mind**

In October 07, 2007, Robert James Bidinotto gave a typical course about the revolutionary philosophy of *Atlas Shrugged*<sup>2</sup>; in which he states that according to Rand, rationality was the essence of “the good” and irrationality the essence of “evil.” So, from the principal part to the last, the novel portrays the endless ways that human life, prosperity, and satisfaction rely on upon thinking. It demonstrates to us what happens at

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<sup>2</sup> For further information check this site <http://atlassociety.org/atlas-shrugged/atlas-shrugged-blog/3169-the-revolutionary-philosophy-of-atlas-shrugged>



whatever point somebody expect the necessity of using his mind—or whenever he fails to do so.

One of the most remarkable examples in *Atlas Shrugged* which tells us that conflicts between reason and whim can lead even great men and great nations to destruction is Dr. Robert Stadler\_ an incredible however skeptical physicist. Stadler trusts that reason is unproductive on the world, and he presumes that his work must be supported by power. So he establishes the State Science Institute, a government organization that propels citizens to bolster his investigative exploration through taxes.

Even when the Institute begins to support work he severely dislikes—for instance the book that assaults reason, composed by Dr. Floyd Ferris of the Institute's staff—Stadler refuses to repudiate it publicly, for fear of jeopardizing his tax-supported existence. Yet, these disagreements and evasions exact a heavy price on his self-esteem. Robert Stadler soon becomes totally dependent on his keepers—and totally corrupted. Rand argues in *For the Intellectual*, more precisely in “Galt’s speech”: “*To the extent to which a man is rational, life is the premise directing his actions. To the extent to which he is irrational, the premise directing his actions is death.*”(127).

She also believes that the fundamental explanation behind moral irregularities and treacheries is that men have been taught to seek after standards that are unreasonable, and in this manner illogical. Conventional virtues, for example, selflessness, confidence, and peacefulness, are as opposed to the prerequisites of human life and happiness. They force men into the horrible dilemma of having to choose between virtue and happiness—between morality and life itself.

One dramatic example in the novel is the industrialist Hank Rearden who is torn by such clashes. He is energetically enamored with life and happiness; yet he acknowledges uncritically the traditional view that his own longings, for example, his adoration for his work, are subjective, base, and without any honorability or moral significance. This belief leaves him morally defenseless against those who plot to destroy his steel mills. Likewise, he sees his love affair with his mistress, Dagny Taggart, as animalistic and degrading. This belief leaves him trapped in a loveless marriage to a horrible spouse\_ Lillian Rearden\_, held by a dark, unfilled feeling of blame and moral duty. He sees sex as a base and obscene impulse and believes both Dagny and he worthy of contempt. Dagny laughs in

disagreement. She is proud to make love to him and share her desire with someone she respects. She tells him she makes no claims on him except that he comes to her with his lowest physical desires (Spark Notes ch.10)

Then, she illustrates this later in her non-fictional work *For the Intellectual*, particularly in “Galt’s speech”:

Rationality is the recognition of the fact that existence exists, that nothing can alter the truth and nothing can take precedence over that act of perceiving it, which is thinking — that the mind is one’s only judge of values and one’s only guide of action — that reason is an absolute that permits no compromise — that a concession to the irrational invalidates one’s consciousness and turns it from the task of perceiving to the task of faking reality — that the alleged short-cut to knowledge, which is faith, is only a short-circuit destroying the mind — that the acceptance of a mystical invention is a wish for the annihilation of existence and, properly, annihilates one’s consciousness(128).

The cure for such clashes, as indicated by Rand, is an ethical code established in reason and the prerequisites of human life, rather than in faith, duty, and selflessness. Since rational ideal is both moral and practical, and it puts an end to for hypocrisy and contradictions.

### **3.3.4. Free will: “To Think or Not to Think”**

The central tenet is that reason, not faith or emotion, forms the basis of human prosperity. Men must choose the rational over the irrational and accept objective reality. Furthermore, men must live for their own self-interest, pursuing their own values, and not for others. To do so, they must be free of any interference from the government or other institutions that might seek to enslave the mind.

According to Galt: *“free will is your mind’s freedom to think or not, the only will you have, your only freedom, the choice that controls all the choices you make and determines your life and your character.”*(127). So, the mind which is the motive power of the world, must be free.

The individual is free to think or not, and this is what Rand expresses in her famous “Galt’s speech”:

To think is an act of choice. The key to what you so recklessly call “human nature,” the open secret you live with, yet dread to name, is the fact that man is a being of volitional consciousness. Reason does not work automatically; thinking is not a mechanical process; the connections of logic are not made by instinct. The function of your stomach, lungs or heart is automatic; the function of your mind is not. In any hour and issue of your life, you are free to think or to evade that effort. But you are not free to escape from your nature, from the fact that reason is your means of survival — so that for you, who are a human being, the question “to be or not to be” is the question “to think or not to think.” A being of volitional consciousness has no automatic course of behavior. He needs a code of values to guide his actions (120).

Most of the ideas presented in the speech have appeared before, in pieces of conversations, but here they are integrated into a single, comprehensive statement in which the individual is free to make the wrong choice, but not free to succeed with it. Man is free to choose not to be conscious, but not free to escape the consequence of unconsciousness: destruction.

### **3.4. Rational self-interest**

#### **3.4.1. Self-interest: Reason vs. Whim**

There are two different kinds of self-interest the first one is governed by reason which is Rand’s morality of rational self-interest and the second one is governed by a whim which is the looter’s morality.

Rand argues that indulging whims will not bring happiness, but only frustration, misery, and ruin. She, then, provides a typical example of James Taggart who spent the night with a cheap, brainless society girl, Betty Pope. So in the morning, when she was in the bathroom, he asks himself why he did those things?! Rand argues:

The nature of their relationship had. . . no passion in it, no desire, no actual pleasure, not even a sense of shame. To them, the act of sex was neither joy nor sin. It meant nothing. They had heard that men and women were supposed to sleep together, so they did (qtd. in Bidinotto 50)

Rand implied for us to comprehend that sexual relationship and sentimental joy — like whatever other human values— emerges from a full rational self-interest that is based on consciousness and reason and not on whim like James Taggart.

By contrast, In Hank Rearden, Rand offers an example of a successful industrialist moved to joy by the fruits of his own labor. He believes in what he can see and make, and is driven above all else by his love for his work. He is selfish in the sense that he is motivated to do things for himself, not for the benefit of others. For Ayn Rand, being motivated by his own values makes Rearden is not only successful but virtuous. And the following dialogue between Dagny and Rearden confirm his rational selfishness:

“The newspapers are against you. . . .”

“What do they write about me? . . .”

“That your only goal is to make steel and to make money.”

“But that is my only goal.”

“. . . .They think that your attitude is anti-social.”

“I don’t give a damn what they think.” (39)

Rearden’s independence and self-interest is also revealed at his trial. He disbelieves in the conventional moral slogan—the public good—that dominates the country and the entire world in the name of his right to trade freely with other men in his own self-interest. His bold statement: “The public good be damned” (481) expresses Rearden’s refusal to accept the morality of altruism. However, his family called him a selfish not in the positive sense of Rand’s morality but in the negative sense. He feels guilty and this makes the road easy to control him more and more. This dynamic is central to the looters’ way of life. By making the strong feel guilty for their strength and responsible for the weak, the looters are able to continue living off producers without producing anything themselves. This is why Francisco wants to help him and tells him that he is in the right way so the only thing he should do is to join the strike of the producers\_ the strike of the mind.

The strikers uphold a new morality of rational self-interest which condemns such enslavement\_ altruism and collectivism \_ as evil.

### **3.4.2. The Producers’ Virtue of Selfishness vs. the Looters’ danger of Altruism and collectivism**

Under the collectivist system Rand describes in the novel, the producers are made to feel morally obligated to provide for those who do not produce but live off the products

made by others. The system presents a morality of altruism in which all people are considered their brothers' keepers and the strong feel compelled to sacrifice themselves for the weak. To Rand, this system is fundamentally wrong. She, rather, celebrates the businessman who could not reach his goals unless he is selfish; however, the wealthy businessman in *Atlas Shrugged* is deemed evil and blamed for the current economic crisis facing the country:

The newspapers had snarled that the cause of the country's troubles . . . was the selfish greed of the rich industrialists; that it was men like Hank Rearden who were to blame for the shrinking diet, the falling temperature and the cracking roofs in the homes of the nation . . . that a man like Hank Rearden was prompted by nothing but the profit motive . . . as if the words "profit motive" were the self-evident brand of ultimate evil (Rand 476)

So, for a popular concept a businessman like Hank Rearden is denounced as a "predatory savage" (Rand 404) and business in general is dismissed as a trivial activity that any greedy brute can undertake to make a quick fortune.

However, when it comes to the looters such as Jim Taggart who pretend to have a social conscience all start praising them. One typical example is when a member of the "intellectual class" attempts to flatter Jim Taggart; he says "*the best compliment I can pay you is that you're not a real business-man.*" In response, Jim preaches the mantra of the looters: "*We are breaking up the vicious tyranny of economic power. We will set men free of the rule of the dollar. We will release our spiritual aims from dependence on the owners of material means. We will liberate our culture from the stranglehold of the profit-chasers*" (Ibid. 404).

In contrast, with her morality of rational self-interest, Rand rejected the conventional view of the businessman. Rather, she celebrated the businessman and his pursuit of material wealth as virtuous. She states this in Francisco's speech:

To the glory of mankind, there was, for the first and only time in history, a country of money—and I have no higher, more reverent tribute to pay to America, for this means: a country of reason, justice, freedom, production, achievement. For the first time, man's mind and money were set free, and there were no fortunes-by-conquest, but only fortunes-by-work, and instead of swordsmen and slaves, there appeared the real maker of wealth, the greatest worker, the highest type of human being—the self-made man—the American industrialist (Ibid. 414)

Rand holds that the businessman is the highest type of human being when applying a rational selfishness into the real world. She, then, sets out to demonstrate through the novel's action what happens when governments follow socialist ideas. She argues that when the individual is obliged to follow collectivism's forced moral code, he/she will take into consideration the needs of their neighbors above their own rational self-interest, therefore, the result is disorder and evil. The story of the Twentieth Century Motor Company exemplifies this clearly. After the plant adopted a method in which workers were paid according to perceived needs and ordered to work based on perceived ability, the workers became corrupted and immoral, each seeking to show himself or herself as most needy and least skilled. The plant failed, and the society was vanished by mistrust and self-indulgence. For Rand, any economic or political plan based on altruism and collectivism leads to disorder and destruction.

### **3.4.3. Galt's Rational Self-interest as a Pursuit of Happiness**

In her depiction of the valley, Rand displays her perfect world. The individuals with inventive and productive minds live in an independent community where creation is supported and property and money are valued. All the members of the group are selfish i.e.; they are centered around themselves and on looking for their own particular satisfaction and happiness which is based on the exercise of their own capacities. A world empties from the evils of altruism or collectivism. Everyone respects the other's rights, takes responsibility for themselves, their actions, their decisions, and there are no pretenses or false realities—everything is as it seems.

Rand illustrates the virtue of happiness through Galt's speech as follows:

Happiness is the successful state of life, pain is an agent of death. Happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one's values. A morality that dares to tell you to find happiness in the renunciation of your happiness — to value the failure of your values — is an insolent negation of morality. A doctrine that gives you, as an ideal, the role of a sacrificial animal seeking slaughter on the altars of others, is giving you death as your standard. By the grace of reality and the nature of life, man — every man — is an end in himself, he exists for his own sake, and the achievement of his own happiness is his highest moral purpose (123)

There is a typical example about Galt who knows about the past relationship between Francisco and Dagny and understands that Francisco continues to love her. However, Dagny realizes that John Galt is the man that she has looked for all her life. So, when

Francisco invites Dagny to stay at his house during the last week of her stay. Dagny puts the decision in Galt's hands. She fears that Galt may veil his own feelings in order to spare his dearest friend any pain, but Galt refuses to do so, because making such a sacrifice for Francisco would violate his code. The strikers' valley represents rational selfishness, the belief that an individual should pursue the life-enhancing values that promote happiness. To marry Dagny would make Galt happy. Galt's integrity is rock solid. He pursues the love on which his happiness depends, no matter what the circumstances are (Bernstein 87).

### **3.5. Economic Power vs. Political Power**

According to the Objectivist point of view the Economic power is the power to produce free market in which all prices, wages, and profits are achieved only by voluntary means: by the voluntary choice and agreement of all those who participate in the process of production and trade. However; political power when the government holds a legal monopoly by using the physical force on Private organizations. So, it is exercised by means of a negative, by the threat of punishment, injury, imprisonment, destruction (Rand 46-47).

John Galt clearly made the difference between the political power and the economical power saying:

You had said that you saw no difference between economic and political power, between the power of money and the power of guns — no difference between reward and punishment, no difference between purchase and plunder, no difference between pleasure and fear, no difference between life and death. You are learning the difference now (Ibid. 187)

Rand believes that the government should be separated from economics in which the economic power is reached by a free, general, "democratic" vote — by the sales and the purchases of every individual who take part in the economic life of the country and not by the arbitrary whim of the rich or of the poor, not by anyone's "greed" or by anyone's need — but by the law of supply and demand. Therefore this law is the objective law which establishes economic justice and brings about the only moral economic system, capitalism.

#### **3.5.1. Capitalism as the Only Moral Economical System**

Rand's great achievement was to offer a vision of capitalism as a moral ideal. Her characters represent the virtues of production and exchange of trade in a rational way. They also illustrate the struggle of producers against parasites and predators, and

demonstrate the results of that struggle over an entire society. All these events are shown through important speeches by different characters that lay out a new philosophy and moral code of individualism. In its characters, its plot and its philosophical themes, *Atlas* is about a new revolution, a capitalist revolution. It is truly *The Capitalist Manifesto*.

Its capitalist's characters such as Hank Rearden, Dagny Taggart, Ellis Wyatt, and John Galt are industrialists and entrepreneurs who reshape the world by being prime movers in the marketplace. In *Atlas Shrugged*, Hank Rearden is the prime example of a visionary, competent, independent, action-oriented, passionate, confident, and virtuous entrepreneur. By focusing on reality, he has the vision to see the potential future value of a new metal that will take him ten years to develop. Rearden learned a great deal by holding a variety of jobs in a number of companies in steel-related industries ever since he was fourteen years old. Through his intellect and tireless efforts, he ultimately owned and managed ore, coal, limestone, and steel companies (Younkins 126).

The most remarkable character who represents Rand's vision of capitalism is Dagny; she is strong, bold, and confident, she finds joy in productive, meaningful work. She makes decisions based on rational, objective facts. Her choice of Rearden Metal is based solely on her study of its merits and potential to yield profit.

Early in the novel, we hear Dagny reflecting:

Motive power—thought Dagny, looking up at the Taggart Building in the twilight—was its first need; motive power, to keep that building standing; movement, to keep it immovable. It did not rest on piles driven into granite; it rested on engines that rolled across a continent (Rand 67)

This passage demonstrates one of the things that Rand conveys about production which is the fact that the source of material achievements and wealth lies in the spirit of the producers. i.e., the human intelligence is the soul of the machine and this is what Dagny means by the motive power. Therefore, one of the important things that make capitalism the unknown ideal is the producer's spirit and mental power.

### **3.5.2. Objective Laws as the Key for Economical Justice**

In *Atlas Shrugged*, Justice is shown to be the expression of a man's rationality in his dealings with other men, involving seeking and granting the earned that he objectively deserves. The trader is a man of fairness who earns what he gets and does not give or take the unmerited. He based on the objective laws in which he exchanged his trade only for



something of economic value. He also does not give his affection, friendship, or esteem except in trade for the pleasure he receives from the virtues of individuals he respects. The trader's standard is an ethical guideline that includes the trading of worth for quality through voluntary exchange (Younkins 126).

A typical example about voluntary exchange and economic justice is when Rearden refuses to accept the order of the government directive who tells him to sell an equal amount of Rearden Metal to everyone who wants it. However, Rearden refuses and addresses the court as follows:

I work for nothing but my own profit—which I make by selling a product they need to men who are willing and able to buy it. I do not produce it for their benefit at the expense of mine, and they do not buy it for my benefit at the expense of theirs; I do not sacrifice my interests to them nor do they sacrifice theirs to me; we deal as equals by mutual consent to mutual advantage—and I am proud of every penny that I have earned in this manner. I am rich and I am proud of every penny I own. I made my money by my own effort, in free exchange and through the voluntary consent of every man I dealt with—the voluntary consent of those who employed me when I started, the voluntary consent of those who work for me now, the voluntary consent of those who buy my product (Rand 444).

Another character who promotes economic justice is Ragnar Danneskjöld, a philosopher turned a pirate who raids only public, government cargo ships in order to return to the productive what is rightly theirs. Robbing these ships prevents the government from redistributing wealth to failing foreign socialist countries. Danneskjöld converts the wealth that he has confiscated into gold and places it into accounts that he has set up for moral, productive, and competent businessmen in proportion to the income taxes that have been extracted from them (Younkins 127).

### **3.6. Conclusion**

*Atlas Shrugged* concretizes through various leveled, dynamic, and inductive illustration of Rand's well-organized philosophy of Objectivism. In her novel, Rand dramatizes varied subjects and introduces a whole and coordinated perspective of how individuals ought to experience their lives. She does this by giving a theoretical and comprehensive moral perspective on the people's way of life. Rand is able extend in real life what every reflection implies. Her incredible force originates from her capacity to bring together everything in the content to frame an integrated philosophy. The major theme of *Atlas Shrugged*, the role of reason in Human's existence, is embodied in every

event, character, and dialogue. The topic and plot are inseparably incorporated in which the literary style and subject are organically linked and fused to the content of her philosophy. She brings together the numerous parts of Atlas Shrugged according to principles of reality. Trusting that a novel ought to be an end in itself, she creates Atlas Shrugged which is extremely integrated and unified philosophical novel.

# **General Conclusion**

## General Conclusion

Ayn Rand's Objectivism philosophy is a unique philosophy that has been a significant influence among modern American readers. Rand describes her philosophy as a philosophy for living on earth because in one hand, it is a philosophy of rational individualism in which the term "Objectivism" reflects the conception that human knowledge and qualities are objective i.e., they are discovered by one's mind and determined by nothing except reality. In the other hand, every principle in objectivism philosophy is *derived* from the observable facts of reality and the demonstrable requirements of human life in which happiness is the ultimate goal of each individual. Rand's message, which suffuses all her novels, holds that the universe is interested in human accomplishment and satisfaction and that every individual has inside him the capacity to carry on with a rich, happy and independent life. This idealistic message makes people attracted to their inspirational storylines and notable thoughts.

The essentials of objectivism philosophy that has changed thousands of lives and has the power to change the course of history can be summarized as follows:

Metaphysics: it is about 'objective reality' in which the external world exists independent of the individual's consciousness and independent of any observer's knowledge, beliefs, feelings, desires or fears. This leads to the identity law which states that 'A is A' i.e., things are what they are and facts are facts. Therefore, the only task of man's consciousness is to perceive reality as it is not to create or invent it. As a result, Objectivism denies any belief in the supernatural powers and any claim that individuals or groups create their own reality.

Epistemology is based on 'reason as an absolute' in which a reasonable individual is fully competent to understand the facts of reality. In other words, the conceptual faculty 'reason' is the faculty that identifies and integrates the material provided by man's senses. Therefore, the only man's means of acquiring knowledge is reason which is his basic means of survival. Thus Objectivism rejects any acceptance of faith or feeling as a means of knowledge 'mysticism', and it also denies the claim that certainty or knowledge is impossible 'skepticism'. Additionally, it rejects any form of determinism, the belief that man is a victim of forces beyond his control and any form of determinism such as God, fate, or economic conditions.

Ethics is based on 'rational self-interest' in which the proper standard of ethics is required by man's nature for his survival as a rational human being and not by his momentary physical survival as a mindless brute. There are three fundamental values in order to create a rational individual: reason, purpose, self-esteem. In ethics, every man is an end in himself and not a means to the ends of others. In other words, he must live for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others nor sacrificing others to himself; therefore, his highest obligation is to work for his rational self-interest, with the achievement of his own happiness as the ultimate moral purpose of his life. Furthermore, Objectivism rejects the claim that morality consists in living for the sake of others or for society 'altruism'.

Politics and economics: 'give me liberty or give me death' in which the basic social principle is that no man has the right to use the physical force in order to seek for his own values. In other words, neither the individual nor the group has the right to initiate the use of physical power against others. However, according to the objectivist laws, men can use force only in self-defense and only against those who initiate its use and they must deal with one another like traders who give value for value by a free and a mutual consent to mutual benefit. For that reason, laissez-faire capitalism is the only social system that prevents such physical force among human relationships. Capitalism protects men from those who initiate the use of physical force because it is a system based on the recognition of individual rights such as property rights in which the only role of the government is to protect citizen rights. Thus Objectivism denies any form of collectivism, fascism or socialism. It also rejects the so called "mixed economy" the system that the government uses in order to regulate the economy and meanwhile redistribute wealth.

In *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), Ayn Rand presents her original and brilliant philosophy of Objectivism in a dramatized form. Her novel is basically one gigantic Objectivist manifesto. More than a great novel, *Atlas shrugged* is all about demonstrating how Objectivist ideas can be used in daily life, and why those ideas are so important. It presents an integrated and all-embracing perspective of man and man's relationship to the world and manifests the essentials of an entire philosophical system (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and politics). *Atlas Shrugged* embodies Objectivism in the actions of the story's heroes.

Readers are eager to read it because it is appealing on many level. It is a moral defense of capitalism, political allegory, social interpretation, science fiction and a mystery tale, romance story, and more. The deeper a person studies *Atlas Shrugged*, the more he

will be able to appreciate how these multiple approaches to plot augment one another. Rand is able to extend in real life what every reflection implies. Her incredible force originates from her capacity to bring together everything in the content to frame an integrated philosophy. She tied everything to *Atlas Shrugged's* unifying theme of the role of the mind in human existence which is embodied in every event, character, and dialogue. The topic and plot are inseparably incorporated in which the literary style and subject are organically linked and fused to the content of her philosophy. Trusting that a novel ought to be an end in itself, she creates *Atlas Shrugged* which is extremely integrated and unified philosophical novel.

Constantly, it is clear from the evidence that Objectivism likes: life (living is super), money 'the sign of the dollar' (particularly profiting, which is seen as an ethical demonstration), individuality, the pursuit of happiness (for the individual), private enterprise, diligent work, high self-esteem, free will, reason, and rationality. More or less, Objectivism says that individuals ought to live just for themselves and ought to use the forces of Reason to work hard and make a happy life for themselves. Objectivism is not simply a body of theory for contemplation but a body of practical principles for living the great life. So, objectivists most particularly aimed to see the fruit that people will bear as they apply it to their life, and advance it in the public arena at large.

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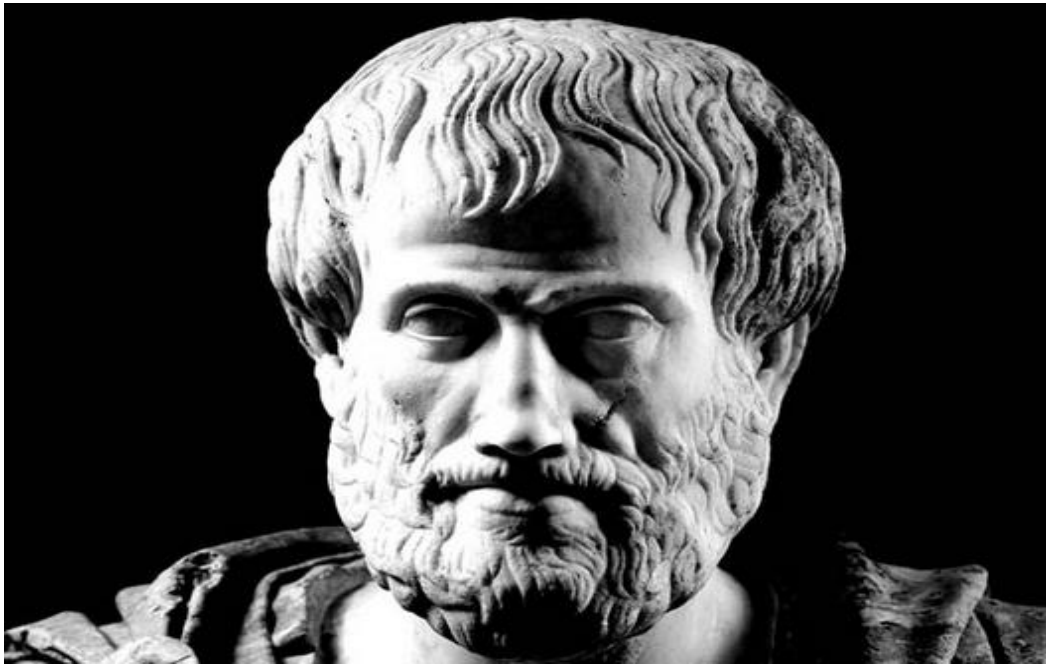
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## Appendices

### Appendix One



Ayn Rand's teacher, Aristotle (384- 322 BC)

### Appendix Two



The Platform of Rand's Philosophy, Friedrich Nietzsche (1884-1900)

### Appendix Three



The founder of Objectivism philosophy, Ayn Rand (1905-1982)

### Appendix Four



A statue of the **Greek titan Atlas**, the inspiration for the novel *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand, which was a catalyst for the Objectivist movement. The Bronze statue (1937), which is about 14 m (45 ft), is located in New York City, United States.



# AYN RAND ATLAS SHRUGGED

30TH ANNIVERSARY  
EDITION

