

Law, Property, and the Individual: A Critical Reassessment

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship between law, property rights, and the individual in modern society, with a focus on the tension between individual freedom and power, as well as the monetary and social normative mechanisms that shape these relationships. The goal of the study is to clarify how legal and property institutions both protect and limit individual freedom, and to show the corrupting consequences of individuals being made the means of these systems. The method used is qualitative, combining analysis and synthesis, comparison, and the method of reversing pairs of categories (subject-product, means-purpose, inevitability-freedom). This subject becomes a product, a means to an end, and, to that extent, ultimately free. The research demonstrates that a person can be explained not only as a subject, independent of property, but also as a product of power, norms, and money; and that the current law, which regulates property relations, does not yet address the root of social inequality. The significance of this research is to propose repositioning the theoretical foundations of the law, making them more closely linked to the truth of personal life and social responsibility, thereby opening up a new approach to legal science and interdisciplinary research on freedom, fairness, and human dignity.

Keywords: *Individual, property, law, power, and social responsibility*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, many problems stem from the interplay between law, property, and the self. Many argue that the law is primarily intended to ensure that each person can own their own property and be free from interference. However, in fact, the law is an even more complex thing. It is made up of a web of power, norms, and currency that



subtly forms and closes in on each person. This gives rise to a paradox: the individual is both recognized as a free subject and a product of external dominant mechanisms. Previous studies have primarily focused on the legality and legitimacy of property rights, but have rarely questioned whether the current law effectively addresses the root cause of human alienation in socio-economic life. This research gap serves as the starting point of the article: the current legal system has only stopped at regulating property relations at the formal level.

However, it has not directly addressed the root causes of inequality and personal alienation. From there, the article raises the urgent issue of the need to reposition the theoretical foundation of the law, one that is more closely linked to the truth of personal life and the requirements of social responsibility. Instead of the law turning individuals into products of their time, the legal science system needs to make people the subjects of history.

The issue of property, law, and the individual has become a significant theme in many disciplines of the social sciences and humanities. In the Western philosophical tradition, since ancient times, thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle have considered the relationship between the individual and property in the moral and political context.¹ It is from modern times, especially John Locke's philosophy, that individual property has been established as the cornerstone of freedom, political order, and the rule of law.² Locke argues that property rights are based on labor and are a key factor in making the state legitimate. Modern thinkers have extended the concept into the personal tradition of property ownership, where people are identified by their ability to hold and defend property.³

However, modern and postmodern views have given many strong objections to this classical thesis. Karl Marx was among the first to critique the concept of property as a form of alienation, where man is torn away from the product of his work and turned

¹ William Paley, 'The Principles Of Moral And Political Philosophy', in *The Reception of Locke's Politics Vol 6* (Routledge, 2000).

² Saad Rasool and Danish Chishti, 'Locke's Legacy: How His Ideas on Rights, Government, and Property Shape Today's Politics', *Social Science Review Archives* 3, no. 2 (2025): 1115–23, <https://doi.org/10.70670/sra.v3i2.702>.

³ John R. Owen et al., 'Energy Transition Minerals and Their Intersection with Land-Connected Peoples', *Nature Sustainability* 6, no. 2 (2023): 203–11, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00994-6>.

into a means of production.⁴ In his *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx argued that "property of others" is not only an economic phenomenon but also a mental state, in which people become entangled in material possessions and in the possessions of others. Michel Foucault further expands on this critical direction by examining how institutions such as the state, prisons, hospitals, and legal systems structure the individual as an entity that is produced, monitored, and regulated.⁵ According to Foucault, power is not just imposed by external rules and regulations, but also inherent within them. When people follow laws, they start to feel it is part of who they are. This means the person is not just free and independent, but someone formed by their links to others and the rules and knowledge they follow.

Pierre Bourdieu also made an important contribution to explaining the interaction between the individual and the social structure. Through the concepts of "field" and "capital", Bourdieu shows that individuals do not act in the void but are governed by social positions and forms of capital – economic, political, social, and symbolic – that they may possess.⁶

In the study of the rule of law, Hegel believes that property rights are the realization of freedom in the objective world, where a person declares themselves as an autonomous will through the act of possession.⁷ John Rawls' theory of justice as fairness argued that property is only valid if rules are used in a "primitive position".⁸ Both argue for the use of law as a means to legitimize property rights and solve social conflicts.⁹

However, scholars today view the concept of property as fraught with contradictions and inequality, especially when linked to the notions of "owning oneself" and "owning others." Judith Butler, in her work on gender and the body, argues that the human

⁴ Phoebe Godfrey and Ordoitz Galilea, 'Estranged Labor (From Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844)', in *Social Theories for the Anthropocene* (Routledge, 2025).

⁵ Gbenga Michael Adeyeye, 'A Critical Analysis of Mitchel Foucault's Perspective on Governmentality and Higher Education', *E-Journal of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences* 5, no. 11 (2024): 1945–54.

⁶ Garth Stahl and Guanglun Michael Mu, 'Pierre Bourdieu: Revisiting Reproduction, Cultural Capital, and Symbolic Violence in Education', in *The Palgrave Handbook of Educational Thinkers* (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25134-4_128.

⁷ Paul Rosenberg, 'Hegel's Political Philosophy', in *Hegel's Philosophy of Right After 200 Years* (Routledge, 2022).

⁸ Barnabas Obiora Idoko and Emmanuel Kenechukwu Okeke, 'Moral Defense of John Rawls Theory of Justice as Fairness', *Trinitarian: International Journal Of Arts And Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2025).

⁹ Jeremy Waldron, *Philosophical Foundations of Migration Law*, 37, no. 3 (2023): 173, <https://doi.org/10.5406/21520542.37.3.02>.

body is not entirely one's own, but is caught up in discourses, institutions, and symbolic violence.¹⁰

Another trend in modern research is the connection of law, property, and money as highly abstract forms of power. Giorgio Agamben argues that today's system of law is not only a tool used to determine which rules should govern people's actions, but also a type of symbolic system that both overrides and gives meaning to violence and dispossession.¹¹ Slavoj Žižek demonstrates how law and ideology can transform property into the source of all the symbolic violence and pain that justifies submission.¹² Both scholars argue that today's legal system is not merely a tool for regulating behavior, but rather a symbolic structure that works to legitimize different kinds of violence and dispossession. The law is therefore not a neutral institution but a means by which the power of the state and the capitalist system is sustained, where the person is defined by their ability to consume, productivity, and their submission to institutions. Meanwhile, global human rights theory continues to promote the view that the individual is an inviolable subject and that property rights are essential expressions of freedom. However, some critics, such as Nancy Fraser, argue that if the concept of individual rights is removed from its social context, it will result in an empty form of freedom, overlooking the specific physical and social grounds of justice.¹³ Axel Honneth, on the other hand, points out that rights and property will have no meaning if they are not linked to mutual recognition, so that the person is not reduced to an isolated being who has lost all social significance.¹⁴

In short, the current state of international research places an urgent need to redefine the relationship between individuals, property, and law in the context of globalization,

¹⁰ Kate Kenny and Mahaut Fanchini, 'Troubling Organizational Violence with Judith Butler: Surviving Whistleblower Reprisals', *Gender, Work & Organization* 31, no. 4 (2024): 1425–43, <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13083>.

¹¹ Md Azmeary Ferdoush, 'On the Example: The Need for a Complementary Contraposition to Giorgio Agamben's Theorization of the Exception', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 115, no. 6 (2025): 1248–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2025.2481136>.

¹² Zahi Zalloua, *Fanon, Žižek, and the Violence of Resistance* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2025).

¹³ Alice Le Goff, 'From a Theory of Justice to a Critique of Capitalism: How Nancy Fraser Revitalizes Social Theory', in *Thinking with Women Philosophers: Critical Essays in Practical Contemporary Philosophy*, ed. Eléonore Le Jallé and Audrey Benoit (Springer International Publishing, 2022), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12662-8_4.

¹⁴ Rafeeq Hasan, 'Kant's Theory of Property as a Theory of Mutual Recognition', in *Recognition: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives*, 1st edn (Routledge, 2025).

growing inequality, and the rise of invisible institutions of control. A cross-disciplinary view – blending philosophy, sociology, economics, and legal science – is bringing about new ideas for rethinking the concept of property: not as an absolute right, but as a social, moral, and political act closely tied to responsibility and humanness.¹⁵

At the heart of the article is the issue of individual alienation in the context of property relations and modern legal institutions. This problem can be expressed in specific research questions as follows: Does the current law honestly guarantee individual freedom, or merely legalize the mechanisms of ownership that are the source of unequal distribution? In the relationship between "owning oneself" and "owning others", is the law contributing to blurring the line between freedom and alienation of the individual? Do social norms and the monetary system, when recognized by law, inadvertently turn the individual into a vehicle instead of a creative subject? What are the limits of the law in dealing with the root causes of social injustice, and how can it reposition the theoretical foundations to restore the role of human creative subjects? From these questions, the article hypothesizes that modern law, although designed to protect property rights and freedoms, in fact often legitimizes the mechanisms of power and currency that lead to the alienation of the individual; Therefore, a new orientation is needed for legal science, closely linked to the truth of personal life and social responsibility.

METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a qualitative method with a philosophical and sociological orientation, but is implemented according to a rigorous process to ensure academic rigor. First of all, material resources was selected based on three criteria: (1) the influential canonist of philosophical and legal works as a theoretical basis; (2) the up-to-date of contemporary works in the fields of legal science, sociology, and political economy; (3) applicability from recent empirical research and legal policy to strike a

¹⁵ Mariano Croce and Frederik Swennen, 'Person, Property, Relationships: A Cont(r)Actual View', *Law and Critique* 36, no. 1 (2025): 167–82, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10978-024-09395-4>.

balance between philosophical and practical analysis. The selection is conducted through a system of academic databases, reputable publishers, and peer-reviewed scientific journals.¹⁶

Processing the analysis through the article by combining analytical and comparative operations to clarify the movement of basic categories, such as "subject-product", "means-purpose", "inevitability-freedom", and "value-price". In particular, the reverse-transformation method is used to show how legal concepts and relationships of Ownership are transformed under the influence of power, money, and social norms. Arguments are not only built based on philosophical reasoning but also verified by comparing them with case studies contained in legal and sociological literature, in order to avoid falling into pure speculation.¹⁷

The paper employs an interdisciplinary comparative approach: philosophical arguments are empirically tested against legal, sociological, and economic theories; in contrast, practical data are illuminated and explained through the framework of critical philosophy. The reference to this multi-dimensional source aims to minimize bias and increase objectivity. At the same time, interpretation has always been associated with the central goal of recreating the role of the individual in relation to law and possession, emphasizing consistency and logic in the argument. Thereby, the research not only retains its philosophical depth but also meets scientific standards in presenting methodology, scope, and reliability.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From Natural Necessity to Individual Freedom and Social Structure

Every entity in nature has a specific object: cows eat grass, lions eat meat. This natural relationship is a necessary possession. Cows are the product of grass; lions are the product of meat. Without food, animals cannot survive. Animals and food are

¹⁶ Jonaedi Efendi and Johnny Ibrahim, *Metode Penelitian Hukum: Normatif Dan Empiris* (Prenada Media, 2018).

¹⁷ Bernard Arief Sidharta, 'Penelitian Hukum Normatif: Analisis penelitian Filosofikal dan Dogmatikal', in *Metode Penelitian Hukum: Konstelasi dan Refleksi*, ed. Sulistyowati Irianto and Sidharta (Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2017).

inextricably linked to each other. The transformation between need and ability makes food the means, animals the purpose. The difference in means and purpose is the problem of use, possession, and disposition. Mutual use between subjects and products in social life often leads to injustice, and the law appears to enforce justice. Ultimately, justice is to protect ownership, which is the right to use, dispose of, and possess not only for oneself but also for others. Life is an interdependence in direct causal relationships. The tracing of the first cause and final result of nature, man, and society is the subject of metaphysics, theology, pure reason, and traditional philosophy. Therefore, there is a need for "transitioning from traditional methods to a comprehensive system".¹⁸

Meanwhile, modern science does not take the absolute starting point or goal as its premise; instead, it focuses on concrete, observable, and verifiable reality. The goal of science is to systematize direct, linear causal relations, in which cause comes first, effect follows, that is the manifestation of inevitability. Science, in this sense, is the study of the inevitable.¹⁹

The relationship between man and nature is a direct and inevitable causal relationship. This is the field of biology, medicine, engineering, "using the latest technologies"²⁰, where humans improve tools, hunt, cultivate, domesticate species, improve the environment, and educate fellow humans. However, the special point of human beings compared to other creatures lies in their ability to communicate: where individuals are both natural and human subjects, and products of each other. The relationship between husband and wife, as well as parents and children, is a typical example: they are each other's cause and effect. In the family, love and help need nothing in return, it is the highest expression of freedom. Moreover, it is that freedom that is the object of the science of man.

¹⁸ Bojana Pinter and Veronika Vogrin, 'Family Planning: Legal Regulations And Practice in Slovenia', *Medicine, Law & Society* 18, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.18690/mls.18.1.133-154.2025>.

¹⁹ Andrew Higgins and Inbar Levy, 'What the Fair-Minded Observer Really Thinks About Judicial Impartiality', *Modern Law Review* 84, no. 4 (2021): 811–41, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2230.12631>.

²⁰ Sandra Starke et al., 'Ability, Motivation and Opportunity to Participate in the Digital Change: A Focus Group Study on New Concepts for Sustained Learning in Healthcare Organisations', *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology* 9, no. 3 (2025): 61–74, <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i3.5114>.

Human life is governed not only by the inevitable laws of biology but also by the manifestations of freedom. The transition between inevitability and freedom is reflected in the balance between ability and need, two factors that are closely associated with personal and social life. Each lives and acts based on the abilities and needs of others. One person's monetary gain is the satisfaction of another's monetary needs. Those needs, in turn, require norms, and it is those social norms that are the foundation upon which other individuals make a profit. Meeting needs is instinctive. However, in human society, instinct is socialized through norms and social conventions.²¹

Unlike animals, humans can possess virtual (abstract) values, such as fame, power, and money, without getting bored. However, that is why people who love fame often lack knowledge, and those who love money never seem to have enough. Deprivation becomes a constant motivation and obsession. Individual life is thus inextricably linked to the normative and monetary system, and society forms as a system that operates relations between individuals who possess different norms and currencies.

Satisfaction in society is the ability of the individual to be promoted – that is, to be creative. Personal creativity is present through themes and products. Each product is the crystallization of the subject, but at the same time, a condition of existence for others. In the process, giving and receiving are no longer a reciprocal relationship, but a free meeting of possibilities and needs. Education, in this context, has a noble mission: to develop the abilities of each individual. Hence, life is not only the satisfaction of needs, but also the fulfillment of abilities, where people truly live "according to their abilities, according to their needs."

However, throughout history, the survival goal of species has rendered everything that serves to exist valuable. Value becomes a symbol of life. However, when the individual chooses the means of production that are not suitable for his abilities, impotence arises. Moreover, the helplessness of one person can become the misfortune of another when individuals begin to use each other as means. When different

²¹ Ismael Al-Amoudi and John Latsis, 'The Arbitrariness and Normativity of Social Conventions', *The British Journal of Sociology* 65, no. 2 (2014): 358–78, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12042>.

individuals emerge, the survival instinct tends to turn each other into assets, i.e., mutual possession.

If all of humanity had the same purpose in life, then each individual would be the means and mission to maintain the species. However, when there is a difference of purpose, one person becomes a vehicle for another, giving rise to the issue of morality, justice, and human rights, which are about "fundamental human and civil rights".²² From there, the confusion between the subject and the product, between the means and the purpose, leads to the formation of different ownership. The subject can use the product for its own purposes, and the communication process becomes the exchange of products. The purchase and sale of labor and social position are the concrete embodiments of this phenomenon.

Norms serve as the basis for assigning functions, valuing labor, and establishing social order, while also fostering creativity and innovation. "Innovation is essential to the expansion of the economy in the modern world".²³ When norms are bought with money and sold for jobs, political power and economic interests intersect and are legalized through legislation. It is the law that confirms the transfer of ownership, thereby turning the instinct to make money into a principle of life. The differentiation between the rich and the poor, and inequality in enjoyment, has become a social inevitability. In both such cases, instead of directly linking effort to wealth, wealth may be the byproduct of luck or institutional incentives.

Legal science, in its first phases of development, tries mainly to find out what the legal liability of a person who owns a product ²⁴, but that is where the real problem begins: the person is the product of norms and the monetary system. People use norms and money to get what they think are the values that matter. Norms and money are assets that can influence and control people. So far, there has been no legal system that makes

²² Nataliia Mykolaivna Onishchenko et al., 'Balance Between Public Interests and Human Rights in the Context of Applying Pro Rata Principle', *Science of Law* 2025, no. 1 (2025): 13–19, <https://doi.org/10.55284/sol.v2025i1.183>.

²³ Dana Kiselakova et al., 'Modelling the Impact of Innovation Performance on Digital Competitiveness: The Key Role of Innovation and Technologies', *Asian Economic and Financial Review* 14, no. 4 (2024): 295–311, <https://doi.org/10.55493/5002.v14i4.5020>.

²⁴ Antônio Honorato de Oliveira, 'Digital Platform for Shared Solutions and Open Innovations: Proposal of a Structured Theoretical Model', *International Journal of Innovation* 12, no. 4 (2024): e24221–e24221, <https://doi.org/10.5585/2024.24221>.

people responsible for how they treat norms or currencies. No court listens to "money" and no sentence condemns "norm". When money and norms are products, then humans are the responsible subjects. However, when individuals are products of money and norms, accusing individuals is paradoxical.

The law has yet to recognize that the individual is a product of social circumstances. It is society (with all its economic conditions, "between knowledge production and politics"²⁵ that makes people and guides how they act. When people commit crimes, it is not really the people but the social systems that make and allow those people to commit crimes. Crimes against humanity, if not recognized in relation to social circumstances, will continue to be attributed to the individual, as if they were the first cause, rather than the product of the system.

According to normative theory, the difference between ethics and law is that ethics is the "maximum law." In contrast, law is "minimum morality", which ensures "multilevel legal frameworks that honor customary authority while conforming to overarching sustainability goals".²⁶ Morality binds man from within; law prohibits it from without. Morality sets value by the line between convenience and sin, while law sets value by the measure of the damage through quantification.²⁷ An act of theft, in the moral sense, is as bad, but the law draws a line, in the figures, which sets the chicken thief and the buffalo thief in a different light. Again, the line between sexual possibility and need presents us with the enigma of the right to be free, in the home of our own will, and the social rule of the norm. One can live according to the sexual possibilities and needs, and find happiness and the truth of life. There are limits, however, from the norm, as, for instance, 'not lustful for another person's spouse' or 'no adultery'. It is the disparity between instinct and social norms that arises from deviations, misfortunes, and even sin.²⁸

²⁵ Tatiana Shchytsova and Valeria Korablyova, 'Decolonizing Knowledge Production in Belarus and Ukraine', *Topos*, nos 2024–2 (2024): 5–17, <https://doi.org/10.61095/815-0047-2024-2-5-17>.

²⁶ Arsyad Aldyan et al., 'Legal Pluralism in Environmental Management: Evidence from Bali, Indonesia', *Journal of Law, Environmental and Justice* 3, no. 2 (2025): 229–67, <https://doi.org/10.62264/jlej.v3i2.131>.

²⁷ Lorne M. Sulsky et al., 'Examining Ethicality Judgements of Theft Behavior: The Role of Moral Relativism', *Journal of Business and Psychology* 31, no. 3 (2016): 383–98, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-015-9418-5>.

²⁸ Zachary H. Garfield et al., 'Norm Violations and Punishments Across Human Societies', *Evolutionary Human Sciences* 5 (2023): e11, <https://doi.org/10.1017/ehs.2023.7>.

The Struggle Between Truth, Norms, and Possessions in Social Life

The fear and bad luck of the moral life have led to the law as a means of restoring morality to the truth of a person's life. When law becomes the ultimate aim, respect for the law becomes a necessity in social life. Law, then, is no longer only a way of running society. It becomes the way of telling right from wrong two sides of the same rule. In this structure, the rapist and the rape victim become two different moral-legal subjects: one has the ability and one has no need.

The injustice of the law in this light can be approached through two dimensions:

Firstly, when sexual abilities and needs are in a state of harmony, sexual behavior is freely given, and there is no need for it to be examined by anyone at all. The individual is himself, but only to himself; he is responsible for himself, but the law does not. However, in practice, the law not only punishes coercive conduct, but it also intrudes into the fundamental levels of existence. In this intrusion, it not only fails to preserve but also destroys the truth of being. The operation of the law is no longer an expression of justice but a job, a position, and an administrative function where truth and justice are regulated as a commodity.²⁹

Secondly, in cases where sexual abilities and needs are not uniform, the behavior becomes coercive, and the law intervenes and punishes. The rape victim is not punished but is still responsible for his or her body and spirit; The law deals with the rapist, but at the same time, is also a person who behaves according to his or her ability and instinctive needs. The law, therefore, falls into a paradox: the innocent can become irresponsible, while the conscious becomes a criminal. This raises the question of compatibility between personal responsibility and liability. People who are afraid of the law and refrain from coercive acts are responsible before the law, not to the individual.³⁰

²⁹ Heidi Jokinen, 'Solving Moral Conflicts. Case Restorative Justice in Domestic Violence Cases', *Contemporary Justice Review* 24, no. 2 (2021): 155–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580.2020.1819803>.

³⁰ Brian Smith, 'Assessing "Unnatural Lusts": John Locke on the Permissibility of Male-Male Intimacy', *History of European Ideas* 49, no. 1 (2023): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2022.2040046>.

In contrast, the protected individual is not responsible for that relationship. The consequence is the deviation between individuals, laws, and social life. The law punishes to maintain order, but it does not assume responsibility for the circumstances that make the wrongdoer blameless and the victim left without any recovery. The law then becomes an unequally used tool of force. When the subject and the product are no longer together, the product no longer reveals the true nature of the subject but becomes a tool for different purposes. The shift from ends to means and from means to ends breaks the ties that bind people to the world. Arguments over property rights between two people are not simply arguments over property. They are a sign of a loss of roots in the subjects.

The current law examines how to simplify the right to use and own property through transfer and sale. However, less is done about the actual start of the property. Therefore, legitimacy must be placed back on the person: the product must be examined in the real setting of its origin rather than simply through the legal form of the contract. The ambiguity in the concept of ownership especially regarding "property of others" makes it impossible to assign responsibility to institutions such as the family, religion, or the state. The law stipulates that individuals are the responsible subjects, but does not set proportionate obligations for social institutions. Meanwhile, human rights which cannot be coerced are transformed by society into moral obligations, where everyone is forced to defend the right to life of others, so the case of "the anthropocentric presupposition" should be considered.³¹ The law, therefore, operates as a coercive moral norm.

In the process of transformation between the individual and society, the role of means and purpose is reversed. The individual becomes the means of survival for society, and society becomes the ultimate goal. The right to own, use, and dispose of property is shaped by society through norms. These norms bind people together through species-like instincts: the family formed through traditional ownership, religion through theocratic ownership, the state through public ownership, and businesses

³¹ Marco Palombelli, 'Hegel on Human Ways of Considering Nature', *Ethics in Progress* 15, no. 2 (2024): 14–35, <https://doi.org/10.14746/eip.2024.2.2>.

and banks through contractual ownership. Although each form has a different division of functions and goals, they all use the individual as a vehicle, which is evident in the inequalities in status, living standards, and income – manifestations regulated by currency. "Money life becomes the purpose; human life becomes the means for different types of money".³²

Money has become a universal phenomenon, a force that coordinates life. Every individual needs money to survive, which makes human value converted into monetary value a commodity, even in cases of "altruistic surrogacy and commercial surrogacy".³³ There are two different forms, but they share the exact nature of exchange. There are two ways of communicating: in person and by law. In person, the sale happens between people. By law, conflicts are inevitable and must be settled. The law is crucial for protecting human rights, life, and humanity in our current world. However, to do that, we need to understand how people and their world interact with each other.

People must be seen as active and responsible individuals, not just as entities that are regulated. Society is, in fact, a place where each person can be and use himself and develop himself, and not the other way round. This places a requirement for legal science: not only based on purely rational jurisprudence, but also associated with human science and social philosophy, where the truth of individual life is restored and defended as an original value.

Each individual, when protecting their own life, is contributing to the existence of the species. Not taking responsibility for oneself is losing one's own bio-social role. Failing to protect fellow human life is a form of evil against fellow human beings and oneself. Communication between people especially between men and women, between parents and children is an inevitable and causal relationship in the whole life of fellow human beings. These relationships are patriarchal and are grounded in freedom,

³² Vu Toan and Nguyen Anh Quoc, 'Human Creativity and the Instinctive Circulation of Money in the Global Economy', *Edehweis Applied Science and Technology* 9, no. 4 (2025): 395–405, <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i4.5994>.

³³ Dodik Setiawan Nur Heriyanto and Ulvi Gasimzadeh, 'A Prophetic Law Approach to Reconciling Indonesia's Uneasy Relationship with Cross-Border Surrogacy', *Prophetic Law Review*, 30 June 2024, 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.20885/PLR.vol6.iss1.art1>.

responsibility, and a tradition of love. The family, therefore, becomes the traditional space of bonding, characterized by fidelity in marriage and filial piety in blood relations. Deceit undermines that foundation; therefore, marriage and birth registration have become legal forms to establish and legitimize ownership and responsibility within the family. However, legitimacy can also be a tool to hide cheating especially when it comes to sex and money.

Marriage and family law impose obligations on individuals to each other, while also establishing a bond that can lead to ownership of family property. Each ethnic group has its own economic, sexual and traditional conditions, which in turn leads to different legal forms of marriage and family to "encourage personal growth, and improve decision-making processes".³⁴ Debates about marriage, from polygamy to polygamy, are not only legal phenomena but also the product of specific coercive patterns, traditions, and histories. Therefore, many people are more afraid of the constraints of traditional norms than the coercion of the law.

The family is the subject of the mutual ownership relationship between its members. The family becomes the purpose, and the individual becomes the means. In such a structure, family life is no longer a space of satisfaction but a place of suffering and unhappiness. The individual is turned into a product of exchange, a commodity in the relations of power, means of production, and morality. The separation, rebirth, and fights in family life demonstrate how family life is a matter of life and death. Its powerlessness is where personal pain comes from. It is the pain in a person that we see. We do work with words when it is cut off from work with hands. That makes a set of ideas, which is a way of making.³⁵

It makes an engine of "holding on to new ideas".³⁶ The way of words is not just a means of understanding, but it is also a sign of how we can continue to exist as spirits. The

³⁴ Thorsten Eidenmüller et al., 'Professional Self-Reflection in the Digital Age: Technological Tools for Managerial Development', *Journal of Organizational Behavior Research* 10, nos 3–2025 (2025): 62–72, <https://doi.org/10.51847/8Nc9K5Uzeb>.

³⁵ H. C. Stoeklé et al., 'Society, Law, Morality and Bioethics: A Systemic Point of View', *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* 10 (July 2019): 22–26, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2019.06.005>.

³⁶ Sana Asif and Muhammad Saeed Shahbaz, 'Project Success Through Organizational Climate and Work Behavior: Systematic Literature Review', *Journal of Organizational Behavior Research* 10, nos 1–2025 (2025): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.51847/cUhkprt6DJ>.

crisis of the family, the law, and society is not only a moral or legal question, but also a matter of perception and ideology. It is a place where the individual needs to be re-established – not as a possessed entity, but as a free, capable, needy, and responsible entity.

The Complex Relationship Between Trust, Power, and Justice

The product of man, religion, is that man lives by religion. It exists in every conceivable form: metaphysical beliefs, social institutions, communities of worship, and individual prayer. Moreover, throughout the ages, the religious life has evolved into two distinct parts: the clergy and the laity. Clergy and believers are the subjects who practice and maintain religion, but at the same time, they are also the means by which religion serves its ultimate purpose. In that order, religion is elevated to the ultimate purpose, and clergy and believers become functional elements – interacting, possessing, and exploiting each other through a standardized system of doctrines, commandments, and regulations. The clergy are often seen as "in the religion" religion and the clergy are a unified body, holding knowledge, spiritual power, and norms.

Meanwhile, the believer is "outside" of the religion, and they have a different personality, so they approach and live according to the faith through the clergy. This differentiation creates an order of possession, in which the monk has made himself the possessor of the believer's life, through the ritual, the money, the almsgiving, and the institutions of worship. At first, this had been masked in tenderness. Later, it evolved into a form of coercive possession, based on the norms of the monks themselves, enabling them to pursue their economic diversification.³⁷

In that structure, the lover of religion simultaneously becomes the lover of the clergy devotion no longer directed to religion as a sacred concept but transforms into submission to the clergy as an embodiment. When faith in clergy is broken, so is faith in religion. This makes the clergy a center of power not only in religion, but also in

³⁷ Said Khalfa Brika et al., 'Study of the Impact of Climate Change on Economic Growth in North African and Sahel Countries', *International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies* 8, no. 3 (2025): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.53894/ijirss.v8i3.6421>.

social life, where religious life offers higher incomes and greater social status than other professions. From there, there has been the phenomenon of false description where religion becomes a means of earning a living, and the clergy are the ones who reproduce faith by "rhetoric" to maintain the system of possession. The falsehood of religion sets the clergy apart not only in their behavior, but also in their organizational structure. Differences in job positions, doctrinal monopolies, and the existence of false clergy brought an end to the "dharma" period the ideal period of truth and morality. Instead, it was the time of the Pharisees, scribes, and false prophets who used faith as a tool of manipulation.

This arises from the need for reform especially the need for consistency in monastic behavior, where deeds match words. When this no longer materialized, ecclesiastical law was enacted to control behavior. However, as doctrines, beliefs, and rules are made transparent, ecclesiastical law becomes a device to force individuals into religions and, as they are themselves a form of silence-ready obedience to the clergy, removes the distinctions between clergy and believers and makes all into "citizens" in a broad, legalized religious body. The two then tend to overlap in every way. There is a gradual merging of religion with law, and consequently, a gradual merging of law with religion. It was often a type of law in many cases. Now, suppose biology can find a fine line between what is in a species' instinct and what is in its making of new things. In that case, legal science must also distinguish human rights, which are the result of freedom and creativity, from religious rights, which are communal beliefs and norms. Currently, many legal systems still equate religious rights with human rights. This is a mistake. If the right to religion is a human right, then it can be seen as inevitable, but inevitably does not mean absolute. Only religion imagines an equal world where people become the same in heaven. Legal science, therefore, does not serve prejudice, nor does it side with the clergy or despise any profession, including prostitutes. Every profession has value, and at the same time, it also carries its share of suffering. Monks and prostitutes are both human beings, equally noble, but have different jobs and professions. The difference in profession becomes a difference in social status; thus, there is a moral opposition, although morally opposed, but there is a similarity in

terms of survival: they are bound by rules of relationship and responsibility regarding money and sex.

"Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) that entails their physical and mental breakdown".³⁸ Monks force themselves to follow the precepts and live in asceticism in the service of the faith; prostitutes are forced to follow the market and live by instinct to survive. Both carry with them irresponsibility to themselves, to others, and to community life. They follow "the code of conduct and rules of professionalism".³⁹ Still, if prostitutes can learn responsibility for "non-adultery", monks could also learn responsibility for themselves. Currently, rights are also "used to offer information about artificial intelligence and copyright".⁴⁰

Creativity is the product of freedom. Freedom is the subject that owns its product. Jesus' life is a testament to this: a life of freedom, responsibility before the law, and acceptance of consequences. The teachings of Jesus when they were common property belonged to no class. At that time, people lived according to their abilities and "distinct needs" there was no distinction between priests and laity. However, the possession of spiritual products, turning the teachings into exclusive ownership, is the beginning of injustice. Legal science does not trace the dead, but it is tasked with distributing their wealth fairly to the living including both physical and spiritual assets.

The law differs from the norm in that it is based on facts, rather than prejudice or deviant instincts. Bad people still have self-esteem transparency will deter wrongdoing. People who are afraid of death will do good, not because of morality, but because of fear of consequences. Religious people do good for the sake of the reward after death, and people outside religion do good for the value of life. When spiritual products become commodities especially spiritual counterfeit goods the law must regulate simultaneously. Religion like the state is a product of man. Man does

³⁸ A. Indah Camelia et al., 'Threat to Success Integration and Resettlement for Female Refugee: Exercising Poor Rights to Health', *Brawijaya Law Journal* 12, no. 1 (2025): 19–42, <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.blj.2025.012.01.02>.

³⁹ Muhammad Yasmin et al., 'The Effect of Brainstorming, Auditor Ethics, and Whistleblowers on Audit Opinions of Government Financial Reports: The Moderating Role of Management Support', *Asian Economic and Financial Review* 14, no. 4 (2024): 276–94, <https://doi.org/10.55493/5002.v14i4.5019>.

⁴⁰ Dwi Tatak Subagiyo and Hari Wibisono, 'The Urgency of Artificial Intelligence Regulation from a Joint Authorship Perspective on Copyright Infringement', *Indonesia Private Law Review* 5, no. 2 (2025): 135–56, <https://doi.org/10.25041/iplr.v5i2.3962>.

not live by the gods, but by his own products. The state in all its forms: coercion, management, or service exists to serve human life. The division of state functions is the division of social labor. When the life of a civil servant becomes the goal, the citizen becomes the means. The state and religion have, in many cases, become institutions that own people, rather than serve them. Moreover, that is precisely what modern legal science needs to criticize, to restore the inherent foundation of freedom and responsibility of everyone in human history.

Power, Possession, and Alienation of Personal Life

The lives of civil servants are intertwined with those of citizens through coercive mechanisms, particularly in tax policies. When the taxes of the people, especially those from the middle- and upper-income classes, become a tool to finance the public apparatus, it is no longer a means of fair distribution, but a method of serving the interests of the rich, who occupy the public service system. Meanwhile, people with low incomes who cannot afford to pay taxes cause the state to lose revenue, creating a spiral of unjust reproduction, so that "a just and equitable transition exists".⁴¹ Civil servants and the wealthy become two interdependent entities within the system of power, income, and social function. In this situation, civil servant life becomes a form of occupational possession, where position, income, and authority are all distributed according to a technocratic administrative order.

Meanwhile, the appearance of fake civil servants and the phenomenon of power abuse have become common and inevitable. The introduction of the *civil servant law* is not to restrict but to legalize the use of civil servants to take advantage of each other to do what the state wants. Accordingly, common ownership among civil servants is expressed in subordination to superiors – not based on competence or morality, but according to a power structure protected by law that establishes "guaranteeing

⁴¹ Andrew Frederick Smith, 'An Analysis of the Colonialist Roots of William Rees's Case for Human Population Decline', *Journal of World Philosophies* 9, no. 2 (2024), <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/iupjournals/index.php/jwp/article/view/7031>.

stability and trust".⁴² In that system, compliance with the law becomes an expression of freedom of form, but also a means of legitimizing irresponsibility, as real responsibility is abstracted into the concept of "law." The instinct of a civil servant is now legal, rather than moral or humanistic.

Man is the creator of the state, but once the state is formed, it becomes the dominant subject and owns the human being. As instruments of the state, civil servants become the means of production the resources for the state to operate, maintain, and reproduce its very survival. Responsible civil servants are tools of development; An irresponsible civil servant is a product of wear and tear. The state uses civil servants to serve its missions in all its forms whether in development or in war. In that order, both citizens and civil servants become vehicles.

The sacrifice of the individual, in the name of the fatherland, the people, or the ideals, becomes a means of protecting the existence of the state institution as a power structure. However, the existence of the state, when it becomes autonomous and separate from human beings, becomes a force that undermines the very life of the individual. Sacrifice for the collective ideal becomes a mistake if the ideal conceals a structural flaw. Lies both individually and socially are the source of all crime. Metaphysical theories defended these lies, transforming them into doctrines and dominant ideals. The elite born of metaphysical theories is no longer the moral subject, but the means of the times. When means and purposes are overturned, the quintessence is also corrupted, losing the ability to take responsibility as a historical subject.⁴³

However, the object of the thesis remains the subject of behavior that is, people who have not seen the products produced and created by humans that dominate their lives. The problem is that people management becomes product management. The times, methods, and rules of the law need a new perspective. Instead of managing people,

⁴² Meeran Hameed et al., 'The Appellate Body Crisis: Challenges and Reforms to the World Trade Organization Dispute Settlement Mechanism', *Prophetic Law Review*, 26 May 2025, 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.20885/PLR.vol7.iss1.art1>.

⁴³ Alex John London and Hoda Heidari, 'Beneficent Intelligence: A Capability Approach to Modeling Benefit, Assistance, and Associated Moral Failures Through AI Systems', *Minds and Machines* 34, no. 4 (2024): 41, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11023-024-09696-8>.

laws governing money, and norms, AI corrupts humans. However, if there is no way to make the law work, it is a worthless thing, revealing the limitations of strength. The strength of the law, if it is not based on truth, will be replaced by custom, money, or a theory that does not exist. The truth is, also, that if it is not respected, then the law itself is not a law. Truth is not just a reason for what is right and wrong, but it is a strength. The state when it is a thing that is made can be in any form: war, reason, working, or helping. In the modern world, the most common ways of acquiring power are through the law and financial means. These two things make all that we do in our own and social life: the "innovation ecosystem". If there is money, there is a law; If there is a law, there is money.

Money in that sense replaces law as the highest form of possessive power. When humanity is used as the unit of measurement for value, the entirety of life is reduced to numbers by the currency of money. Cause and effect, necessity, freedom, possibility, need, means, and purpose - all are seen as prices. Prices are how to value lifestyle, career positioning, and social dignity. Human value is changed by the ability to make money to be able to be "financially independent".⁴⁴ The money change rate became a way to measure the growth of a group of people and how quickly they work. However bad, committed, or paid they may be, all can be reduced to one amount of money. Money is the source of life; it is the standard of the profession; it is the axis system of social positioning. The law, therefore, becomes a means of protection for the ownership of money. Moreover, vice versa, money once used according to the individual's will becomes the subject of power, and the individual becomes its means. However, the paradox is that the law often assumes individuals use money, rather than the other way around. Individuals are legally responsible for spending money, while money, as the de facto subject, is not subject to adjudication. The law condemns people, but does not consider the reasons behind the possession or spending of money. Meanwhile, money by its very nature is the subject of action. The individual is only a form of expression. When money reigns, people's lives become the lives of

⁴⁴ Nairui Xu et al., 'News Laundering, Paywall, Quality Reporting, and the Copyright Law in the Digital China', *Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies* 6, no. 4 (2024): 478–99, <https://doi.org/10.46539/gmd.v6i4.476>.

money. Managing people is synonymous with money management, so there is a need for "positive money attitudes".⁴⁵ Production, issuance, speculation, and control of currency become the core functions of the state. Much money is no longer the result of labor, but rather the product of holding the right kind of money in the proper historical context. When a currency is discarded, the state that issued it also collapses. The survival of the state is tied to the ability to maintain monetary power. Money is the power of the state. Moreover, the state has the power of money. Money management becomes a functional aspect of state management in protecting justice and serving humanity.

This scientific research article clarifies the complex and overlapping relationships between law, property rights, and individuals in modern society. Through systematic and critical analysis, the study has demonstrated that individuals cannot be understood as independent entities, but rather as products of social institutions, ethical standards, and monetary systems. In many social relations, property rights are not limited to material objects but also extend to the control of others' bodies and spiritual lives, through mechanisms such as labor, family, religion, or law.

The difference between "owning oneself" and "owning others" is only a clear sign of the process of alienation and deviation from social standards. At the same time, the article demonstrates that the current law, although regulating property relations, leaves open the social responsibility of institutions that create inequality. On this basis, the study proposes a new approach to legal science, one that is not only based on formal legitimacy but also on the truth of personal life, social responsibility, and the restoration of the role of human creative subjects.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between law, property, and the individual clearly reflects the paradox of modern life: on the one hand, the individual is recognized as a free subject;

⁴⁵ Angelica Manalo, 'Money Attitude and Financial Wellness of Women Professionals', *International Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences* 14, no. 1 (2025): 203–7, <https://doi.org/10.14419/835ea432>.

On the other hand, they are often dominated and corrupted by power, money, and legal institutions. The critical analysis in the article demonstrates that the individual cannot be understood solely as an independent subject of property rights, but also as a product of a system of social norms and invisible power mechanisms. Existing law, while regulating property relations, has not addressed the root causes of inequality and alienation, and in many cases even inadvertently legitimized them.

On that basis, this study makes three main contributions. In terms of academics, the article suggests an interdisciplinary approach to legal science, combining philosophical and sociological analysis to clarify the movement between pairs of categories, such as "owning oneself-owning others" or "freedom-inevitability." In terms of legality, the article proposes repositioning the theoretical foundation of the law, not only in the form of ownership and contracts, but also directly associated with the truth of personal life and the requirement of social responsibility. In practical terms, the study's results lay the foundation for the development of legal policies to reduce inequality, restore the individual's role as a creative subject, and protect human dignity.

The limitation of the study is that it focuses heavily on philosophical arguments, while practical data and case-specific analysis are not extensive. Further research should be expanded to include a comparative survey of the legal systems of multiple countries, as well as a study examining how globalization, the digital economy, and artificial intelligence impact property relations and personal freedom. Only when both theory and practice are combined can the law become the just and humane foundation for a social order in which the individual is truly allowed to live freely, creatively, and responsibly.

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