The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Part I

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Dr. Robinson's books include *The Enlightened Machine: An Analytical Introduction to Neuropsychology* (Columbia, 1980), *Psychology and Law* (Oxford, 1980), *Philosophy of Psychology* (Columbia, 1985), *Aristotle's Psychology* (1989), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), and *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard, 1996). He has served as principal consultant to PBS for the award-winning series *The Brain* and the subsequent nine-part series *The Mind*. He is past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association: the Division of the History of Psychology and the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Dr. Robinson also serves on the Board of Scholars of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, is a member of the American Philosophical Association, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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Part I

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Scope:

This course of 60 lectures is intended to introduce the student to main currents and issues in philosophical thought from the founding of the subject in ancient Greece to more contemporary studies. The lectures are organized around three abiding problems: the problem of knowledge (epistemology and metaphysics), the problem of conduct (ethics and moral philosophy), and the problem of governance (political science and law). Each of these has by now evolved into a specialized subject treated rigorously in professional texts and journals. But even in these more technical projections, the problems remain largely as they were when the schools of Plato and Aristotle dealt with them and imposed on them the features they still retain.

More than a series of lectures on the great philosophers, this course is designed to acquaint the student with broader cultural and historical conditions that favored or opposed a given philosophical perspective. Attention is paid to the influence that scientific developments had on the very conception of philosophy and on the scientific rejection of "metaphysics" that took place when the "two cultures" began to take separate paths.

Needless to say, the vast terrain that philosophy seeks to cover extends far beyond what can be explored in 60 lectures—or in 200 lectures! Entire areas of active scholarship have been ignored. But still other areas have been more carefully examined than is customary in an introductory course: philosophy of law, philosophy and aesthetics, evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory. The hope and expectation is that, informed by these lectures, the interested student will press on, will fashion a fuller curriculum of study, and will return to these lectures for the more general framework within which the specialized knowledge ultimately must find a place.

Lecture One
From the Upanishads to Homer

Scope: In the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, Theseus, having killed the Minotaur, is able to escape from the labyrinth only because Ariadne had given him a golden cord by which he can retrace his steps. Myths are an endless source of metaphor, and the cord of Ariadne is an apt metaphor for history: We solve a problem or a puzzle by retracing the steps that got us where we are. In these 60 lectures on philosophy from remote antiquity to the 21st century, history will be our guide.

Central to the history of philosophy are three overarching problems. For the sake of economy, these may be dubbed the *problem of knowledge*, the *problem of conduct*, and the *problem of governance*. The first of these would be developed within the fields now called epistemology and metaphysics. The second is the domain of ethics and moral philosophy. The third is the province of political science and jurisprudence. But these developed realms of reflective inquiry were slow to reveal themselves to human intelligence.

Beginning in *mimesis*, in dance and ritual that encode and explain the world, the questions become more insistent, and as a whole, communities begin to ponder the nature of things. The dance is augmented by song and poetry, by epic tales so vivid that children never forget the main characters and their extraordinary experiences and exploits and that pose, in different terms, the fundamental questions: What is the world? What should I do? How are our lives to be ordered? Between 800 and 600 B.C., such accounts proliferated. Both the Hindu Upanishads and Homer's famous epics are rich in what may be called pre-philosophical reflections on the human condition and the point and purpose of life. Such works are the background "folk" wisdom of an age; philosophy is a refinement or a rejection of the claims of the dancer and the bard.

Outline

I. We are about to embark on an intellectual journey of 60 lectures devoted to great ideas in philosophy, covering a period of time from remote antiquity to the present century. Our guide will be the history of ideas.

A. We begin with myth, which seeks to answer perplexing questions but does so in such a way as to create and preserve a kind of civic coherence. The mythology of a people is the basis on which they recognize themselves as a people and have a coherent relationship, not only to each other but with their own past.

B. To some extent, philosophy is disruptive in this regard. The enterprise is not an essentially civic one. It does not begin with a settled position on political and moral matters, then seek ways to enshrine the settled view. Rather, the mission is a broadly epistemological one. The search, as we shall discover, is the search for truth.

C. Nonetheless, the questions that mythology must set out to answer are not unlike the questions that philosophy sets out to answer. We can identify three overarching issues that consume much of the subject matter of philosophy: the *problem of knowledge*, the *problem of conduct*, and the *problem of governance*.

1. The problem of knowledge is straightforward. How is it that we come to know anything? On what basis do we undertake to frame and seek answers to questions? Long before the appearance of philosophy, people facing the challenges of daily life were required to seek knowledge, if only practical knowledge. In philosophy, the problem reaches beyond the practical and the everyday to more general and abstract realms.

2. The problem of conduct is nothing less than the problem of deciding how one's life should be lived. How should I conduct myself in such a way that my life is a satisfying one? How will I be able to act in a way that maximizes pleasure and minimizes pain? What sort of person should I strive to be? What's the nature of the relationships I have to others?

3. Were there no basis on which to plan or conduct a course of life, there would be no real "problem" to be solved politically. The problem of governance arises in light of conflicts at the level of conduct. On what basis does a people come to understand itself as a people? What is the basis on which modes of leadership are chosen? What is the basis on which leaders are resisted, revolutions staged, radical upheaval fomented?

D. Long before the appearance of philosophy, issues of this sort were engaged, often heroically, by persons and by entire communities. Indeed, philosophy comes about at a late stage in the development of this daily encounter with the problems of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

II. The Upanishads are a brilliant example of the vast body of morality tales that appeared in many settled communities between 800 and 600 B.C.

A. The etymology of the word *Upanishad* carries the action of "sitting next to," as in "sitting next to the master." The Hindu Upanishads pose philosophical questions, but the answers are mythic.

B. The questions posed by the Upanishads are the abiding ones: Where do we come from? How do we explain the fact that some things live and other things don't? How did this great earth come about, and what are we to make of the objects in the sea and sky? What kind of life should I be living? Why is there so much evil in the world?

C. Central to the Upanishads is the notion that the universe itself, and everything in it, exists in virtue of some fundamental power or force or fire, a kind of cosmic soul, *Atman*, which because of its presence, gives reality to things and to us.

1. We share something fundamentally in common with the universe itself. We have the breath of fire within us. We have soul within us. It is an imperishable feature of our very nature. Everything that there is participates in the cosmic *Atman*.

2. There is a sense that there is something fundamentally identical between the life of the person and the life of the cosmos, that one is the microcosmic expression of the macrocosm.

D. These teachings come to equate *Atman* not only with fire and life and creativity but also with *Brahma*, a form of knowledge, knowledge as the manifestation of the spirit. The quest for knowledge then becomes quite a natural undertaking for those invested with *Atman*, and *Brahma* becomes the search that renders life meaningful.

E. All comes from the soul (*Atman*), even space itself. Creation is attributed to an imperishable and heavenly person, *Purusha*, who though breathless, gives breath. Again, what is *Brahma*? It is breath; it is thought; it is enlightenment. Thus, it is the macrocosm within the microcosm, which is oneself—both the self and the cosmos endowed with *Atman*.

F. Through the Upanishads, we have the beliefs of an ancient culture, a distinctly *Eastern* culture; however, nearly all civilized people adopt the Hindu teachings on ethical grounds. The Buddha's teachings include rules against killing and theft, against any form of moral degradation, against cruelty and deception. Nonetheless, the teachings do not stand as philosophy.

III. Moving from East to West, we can make certain comparisons between the Upanishads and the famous epics of the blind poet Homer, composed circa 750 B.C.

A. What moves the Homeric actors is not precepts coming from above but something arising inside themselves. Diomedes, for example, is said to be overcome by *lyssa*, the blind rage of the wolf.

B. The gods in Homer are enlarged versions of the hero, in fact, often have sired or mothered the hero. What divides humanity and divinity is mortality; otherwise, they have much in common, including little power over destiny itself.

C. There is something terribly immediate and awesomely human and real in the Homeric epics. We find ourselves on every page. There are no final answers to the questions of why things happen. Why, for example, does the Trojan War take place? Is it the anger of the gods? The pride of men?

D. *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are entirely open-textured at the levels we call epistemology, ethics, and political science.

1. The problem of knowledge is underscored in the epics in the form of delusional dreams, gods imitating mortals, hallucinatory experiences.

2. The origin of conduct is illustrated repeatedly by our vulnerability to our own passions, our loss of rational control.

3. The problem of governance in this war of princes and kings is written in blood and gore, where the Destinies are more powerful than the rule of law.

E. The Upanishads would merge us with the eternal cosmic soul, but *Iliad* and *Odyssey* assert that we are beings of this earth. Throughout the epics, the focus is on the problems of earth, on the beginning and middle and end of human life, the need for a conservative approach to life, the recognition that we are part rational and part passionate, and that there is an internal conflict taking place within us.

F. One character given to us in Homer, described as the most pathetic of all, the person in the worst imaginable situation, is the hearthless, lawless, stateless man.

1. What Homer is claiming here is quite different from the Upanishads, which promotes a kind of introspective and, indeed, isolating form of contemplative life.

2. Homer tells us that nothing is worse than to be outside the civic order of things, to be separated from the laws and customs and habitats of one's people.

3. The human condition calls for life within a settled community, a *polis* in which one participates and from which one draws lessons for life.

G. A final note about Homer is that everywhere in the epics, nature is the guide. In philosophy, at least in its earliest stages, we will also see nature as a guide. How apt, in this connection, that one of the great philosophers of the 20th century, Ludwig Wittgenstein, would say of his own mission as a philosopher that he attempted nothing more than "to show the fly the way out of the bottle."

Recommended Reading:

Hume, R. E., trans. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. Oxford, 1971.

Homer. *The Iliad*. R. Lattimore, trans. Chicago, 1951.

Robinson, D. N. *Aristotle's Psychology*. Columbia, 1989, chapter 1.

Questions to Consider:

1. Summarize the implications that follow when the soul of the cosmos is assumed to be within the person, in contrast to the sharp Homeric division between the human and the divine.

2. The Upanishads feature a search for wisdom; Homer's epics, for heroic achievement. Describe how both may be regarded as "perfectionist" in their aims but in quite different ways.

Lecture Two
Philosophy—Did the Greeks Invent It?

Scope: Philosophy is created when the mind turns from practical matters of avoiding danger and uncertainty to a form of critical inquiry in which its own resources are objectified and subjected to critical scrutiny. The ancient Greek world transformed inquiry from an essentially practical or ritualistic/religious enterprise into a form of abstract and theoretical thought. Was there something about the Greeks or their culture that brought about this transformation? The Greeks' relation to their gods, who had large but limited powers and business of their own to mind, was one influence. The fact that the religious establishment had little authority to pronounce on ultimate questions of reality was another. Further, the Greeks' commercial and military encounters with other cultures led them to questions of social organization. These things induced the Greeks to weigh themselves in relation to others, to examine the powerful influence of custom on thought, and to recognize no viable alternative to the use of their own limited intellectual resources.

Outline

I. Why is it that whether the subject is philosophy, or mathematics, or biology, or political science, even economics, our thoughts constantly recur to the ancient Greek world as we search for origins?

- **A.** There are theories that it had to do with sunshine, clean air, a slave economy, and abundant seafood, which provided leisure hours for the affluent.
- **B.** But other kingdoms had greater physical resources, yet never produced a semblance of philosophical thought and practice.
- **C.** The breadth and depth of ancient Greek accomplishment are too vast for single theories to embrace.

II. Before we can address the question of whether the Greeks invented philosophy, we must be clear as to just what the invention is. What is *philosophy*, and is it of such a nature that any people can be said to have *invented* it? Above all, why should our thoughts always go back to the Greeks to find the origins of our own modern thought?

- **A.** There is no known society so limited in its thought and practices as to be totally unphilosophical, for the very existence of a society requires the recognition and solution of problems that are philosophical in the nature of things.
  - **1.** Why not begin the history of philosophy with Buddha, Confucius? What about the scientific, medical, and engineering achievements of ancient Egypt and the mathematical discoveries of India?
  - **2.** So, too, with great literary works.
- **B.** But there is a difference between folk wisdom and philosophy.
- **C.** Philosophy tests the most fundamental beliefs, convictions, and values that we have.
  - **1.** Central to this process is *criticism*—of society, of received wisdom, of oneself.
  - **2.** Philosophy's purpose is not to solve practical problems or to solidify civic bonds.
  - **3.** Philosophy is the love of wisdom—not for its consolation or its finality but for the possibility of *getting it right*, even if that means bad news.
- **D.** Yet, in most settings—including the most developed and modern ones—the philosophy employed in addressing such matters is a most *practical* affair, arising out of the need for an intelligible world in the face of danger and uncertainty.
  - **1.** This took place from the first time *Homo sapiens* dropped from trees.
  - **2.** Children raise pre-philosophical questions.
  - **3.** Only rarely are there periods in which the very terms of debate are closely examined, periods in which even the most abidingly successful practical measures are held up to critical scrutiny.
- **E.** Philosophy does not begin with the need for an intelligible world. The need for an intelligible world begins with the fearfulness of pre-philosophical, pre-literate societies, facing an unpredictable world of change and trying to make sense of it.
- **F.** The ancient Greeks felt themselves to be outside the divine order, strangers in the world, self-determining.
  - **1.** They found themselves among peoples whose behavior they didn't understand.

2. Despite their oracles, priests, folk wisdom, and Olympian deities, there was no ultimate authority on matters of truth in their culture.
3. The way to understand was to ask questions.

III. The first age in which this rare form of inquiry became common enough to emerge as whole schools of critical inquiry was that of ancient Greece in the 6th century B.C. If it is fair to say that the Greeks "invented" philosophy, then it is important to consider the conditions that may have favored or at least encouraged this rarest of human achievements.

A. Was it the Greek "civilization"?
1. Earlier and perhaps greater civilizations failed to reach an academic level of inquiry.
2. It is a common mistake to think that civilization somehow matches up with philosophical and abstract modes of understanding.
3. Great civilizations come about by solving practical problems. Occasionally, wealth, power, and inspired patronage add a lasting and influential record of artistic and literary merit.

B. What explains, then, ancient Greek philosophy, and the fact that it would guide much of what would become Western civilization in its finest hours?

C. Was it the climate? The Greek climate was not milder or easier than others, nor was their land more fertile.

D. Was it the gift of a slave-based economy? This theory of a leisure class now free to exercise philosophical genius is implausible: Slavery was coextensive with civilization.

E. Did it arise from the unique nature of Olympianism?
1. The Olympian gods were largely unconcerned with human life and largely separate from the sphere of humans, who were left to solve their own problems.
2. The Greek religion, unusually for the period, was not a state religion, but neither was Greek society secular: The reverential and the political were highly integrated; there was a religious attitude but not a state religion.
3. Priests were the managers of ritual and oracles but had no authority to pronounce on ultimate questions.
4. A philosophical approach arises when religious authority is not regarded as all-powerful.
5. In one of Plato's dialogues, humans are described as puppets of the gods. But they have one string to pull back on—the golden cord of reason.

F. Is the reason for Greek philosophy more or less immanent in Greek culture and language itself?
1. It has been observed that the Greek language does lend itself to a kind of analyticity.
2. The speeches of Isocrates are masterpieces of rhetoric.
3. In his *Panegyricus*, Isocrates defines the term *Hellenes*, not as a race, but as all those who share an overall philosophical and aesthetic outlook—a commitment to self-perfection.
4. Isocrates credits philosophy with being the source of institutions that shaped Athens and, philosophy, in his words, "was given to the world by our city."

Recommended Reading:

Garland, R. *The Greek Way of Life*. Cornell, 1990.

Isocrates, *Panegyricus,* George Norlen, trans. Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 2000, Vol. 1, sections 45–51.

Robinson, D. N. *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 3rd ed., University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, chapter 2.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how the conception of the Olympian gods liberates Greek thought.
2. Describe factors usually offered to account for the Greek philosophical achievement that were *not* present in earlier and highly developed civilizations.
3. How does Isocrates intend *Hellene* to be understood, and does this sense of the term retain its meaning today?

Lecture Three
Pythagoras and the Divinity of Number

Scope: Pythagoras was born on the island of Samos in or about 570 B.C. and was perhaps the first to call himself a "philosopher." He traveled in Egypt and possibly in India, where he may have adopted his ascetic practices and the belief in transmigration of souls. In the course of his long and productive life he would find a sect that formed around his teaching, would assume the political leadership of the city of Crotona, and would lay claim to an astonishing number of original discoveries, including the theorem that bears his name as well as the musical scale.

For Pythagoras the ultimate reality was abstract and relational, depending on number: the four integers 1, 2, 3, 4 were quasi-divine generating entities. Pythagoras's teachings were to exert a strong influence for centuries, but markedly on Socrates, at least as Socrates is presented in the dialogues of Plato. This influence is seen in the Socratic theories that investigation of natural phenomena will always lead to the abstract, that abstractions such as number and form are capable of generating physical reality.

Outline

I. Though the Greeks of the 6th century are developing descriptions of the world that are naturalistic, one among them is not naturalistic but transcendent, and it is the view of Pythagoras. Who was Pythagoras?

- **A.** Pythagoras is a figure shrouded in mystery but one of the towering figures in the history of ideas. Before his birth, the oracle of Delphi predicted that he would "surpass all men in wisdom."
- **B.** Pythagoras spent many of his early years traveling, especially in Egypt; he was acquainted with the technical achievements of Egyptian civilization, including applied mathematics.
- **C.** Did he also travel in India? One account asserts that Pythagoras was sent to Babylon as a prisoner, where he studied with the magi. Other sources claim that Pythagoras became famous as a teacher in India. We do know that in the 6th century, the ascetic Hindu sect of the Jainists arose, with beliefs in the transmigration of souls and the sacredness of all life, beliefs the Pythagoreans also held.
- **D.** Pythagoras may have spent 40 years traveling in distant lands before returning to Greece, at which point, a cult had formed around him. He became the governor of Crotona for a short period of time, where the people were contemplative, committed to sustained inquiry into the ultimate nature of things.

II. We begin with the contrast between Pythagorean abstract, transcendent thought and naturalistic thought, which was so dominant in Aristotle and in ancient Greek medicine and science.

- **A.** This contrast is important because Pythagoras was a significant source for what would become Platonic thought.
- **B.** Pythagoreanism saw that reality was created out of something that is itself not material but is architectonic for all that can be material. That "something" is the abstract plan or idea on which reality is constructed. For Pythagoras, that abstract idea is number, through which material reality becomes accessible to the senses.
- **C.** The sacred integers, 1, 2, 3, 4—the *tetraktys*—were the grounding, respectively, of the *point*, the *line*, the *plane*, and the *solid*, and it was with these integers that the soul of the cosmos then generates the sensible world of material things.
- **D.** Pythagoras is known for the theorem $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ and for the discovery of the musical scale and musical harmonies. Indeed, the harmonies of music are but the sensible manifestation of relations between and among numbers; relationships that determine which combinations will be concordant and discordant.
  - **1.** For Pythagoras it was not coincidental that what is heard as "harmonious" is what obeys the divinity of number, for the soul itself can naturally perceive the same harmonic relationships that keep the planets in their orbits.
  - **2.** Creation is itself harmonic, expressive of a divinely rational plan: We resonate to the harmony of the universe, which is not material but *relational*.
  - **3.** Predictably, Pythagorean medicine included music as therapy. The body, which may manifest disorders, is the material manifestation of something that is, fundamentally, not material but relational.

4. Looking at geometry, we are told that a right-angle triangle has angles totaling 180° and that one of its angles is 90°. No material rectilinear triangle, however, is perfect, but the relationship $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ is perfect and eternal.
5. There is a wonderful correspondence between the realm of matter and that of abstraction. Often mathematical abstractions predate physical discoveries which, however, they describe exactly. Our wonder at this, and our sense that it is no coincidence, are Pythagorean.

E. If we take the creative force behind all existing things to be a divine force, then we can only conclude that number is a kind of divinity, that number, in its abstract, transcendental nature, is divine.

F. Consider, however, numbers that do not match up with anything material, such as π or $\sqrt{-1}$. Nonetheless, π is needed to calculate the circumference of a circle.
1. For the Pythagoreans, coincidence cannot explain this. Further, the odds are long that a mathematician would come up with a complex equation that, 200 or 300 years later, would perfectly explain some brute physical fact.
2. Such occurrences, then, must express some plan. The ultimate plan must be abstract but capable of generating the physical reality. The abstract plan must also be a plan of relationships.

III. What kind of governor was Pythagoras? The answer is: "not successful."

A. The people of Crotona ultimately staged riots in reaction to Pythagoras's "old-time religion."

B. How could Pythagoras be a man of affairs at all? Is politics the sort of activity in which a philosopher engages?
1. As Aristotle teaches, we seek precision only insofar as the subject allows it. There could be no Pythagorean theorem for political life.
2. A philosophically guided state is unlikely to survive the reality in which it finds itself.

C. What can we say about Pythagoras as "first philosopher," a title that he arrogated to himself?
1. The word *philosophy* means "love of wisdom."
2. The Greeks had several words for *intelligence* or *knowledge*, some denoting scientific knowledge and some, practical knowledge.
3. *Sophia*, however, was what the wise person possessed, the person who delves into core questions about the meaning of life.
4. Pythagoras appropriately called himself a philosopher because he devoted himself to an inquiry serving the purposes of knowledge. He sought to discover what it is that makes anything possible and real and, as in chemistry and particle physics today, found the answer in number.

Recommended Reading:

Fideler, D. ed. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*. Phanes Press, 1987.

Questions to Consider:

1. Summarize in what ways Pythagorean "numerology" is like and unlike modern mathematical models of reality.
2. Explain the striking agreement found between abstract mathematics and actually occurring natural items.

Lecture Four
What Is There?

Scope: How many different kinds of "stuff" make up the cosmos? Might everything be reducible to one kind of thing? Can we know what it is?

The subject of *metaphysics*, as it would be developed in the 4th century B.C. by Aristotle, had already been founded by Greek philosophers. *Metaphysics* refers to two distinguishable but interconnected sets of questions: first, the question of just what there is—what *really* exists, and second, the question of how we know such things and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible or hopelessly defective. The first of these questions is the subject of *ontology*; the second, *epistemology*. Both sets of questions preoccupied the philosophers known as the *pre-Socratics*.

The thought of the pre-Socratics was chiefly cosmological, an attempt to discern what really is. But the problem of how we can know the truth of such things (Is knowledge relative? Does it come from the gods? Why does it differ from people to people?) raises issues that the moral questioning of Socrates in the dialogues of Plato will have to address.

Outline

I. The word *metaphysics* derives from the writings of Aristotle and means, "after the physics," or "after the study of natural science." It asks, essentially, two questions: "What is there?" and "How do I know?"

- **A.** The first question is ontological, that is, concerned with questions regarding the constituents of reality. For example, do minds exist, or thoughts?
  - **1.** How do we go about answering such questions? Observation alone is insufficient. There is far more to reality than what is accessible to our senses.
  - **2.** Pythagoras had an abstract, rationalistic method for answering ontological questions that was largely intuitive and in which observation played no part.
- **B.** We have at least two methods with which to approach the problem of knowing what exists, but we are left with the task of choosing between them. The rationalistic method may offer an account of reality that is not supported at the level of perception. Which account is to be preferred and on what basis?
- **C.** Thus, we arrive at the second question, which springs from epistemology—the study of our claims to know. How do we know that reality is one thing or many things? To ask *what* there is is always to ask *how we know* what is.
  - **1.** Further, to declare that our senses deceive us or are incapable of reaching certain levels of reality is to make an epistemological claim.
  - **2.** If we know that our senses deceive us, we must have some non-deceptive—and non-perceptual—mode of discovery against which we can weigh the evidence of the senses.
  - **3.** What is this method of discovery for registering the truth of the world? Logic? Mathematics? Science? Religion?
  - **4.** These are questions of *epistemology*, meaning the study, criticism, and refinement of our very modes of knowing, the study of our knowledge as such.
  - **5.** Many of our most significant claims are actually *beliefs* rather than knowledge. We believe, for example, that the laws of science will still be operating tomorrow, but we cannot actually "know" what tomorrow will bring. Clearly, however, our belief in the laws of nature is different from a guess. How do we justify such a belief and distinguish it from guessing? This question pertains to what is referred to as *epistemic justification*.
- **D.** Obviously, the two branches of metaphysics—ontology and epistemology—are inextricably bound together. To answer the question "What is there?" is already to have adopted a method. To adopt a method is already to have taken a position on the sorts of things that method might uncover.
  - **1.** It is not solely in the philosophy seminar that these matters tax the intellectual resources. In daily life, we are continuously confronted by ontological and epistemological questions. Should I believe what I read in the newspapers? What medical advice is really sound? Do I die with my body or might there be a life after this one? Is there such a thing as goodness?

2. As we begin to supply answers to these questions, we have adopted a method and may discover that the answers we've reached were more or less guaranteed given the method.

II. What does have *real* existence? Democritus of Abdera gave the materialist answer.

A. Democritus argued for an essentially *atomic* theory of reality, according to which the ultimate constituents of the universe are invisibly small particles.

B. This answer seems counterintuitive. We all have dreams and desires and thoughts and sensations. Are *these* "atomic"? The ancient atomists took a firm position: what exists does so because of its atomic composition. In the end, nothing transcends the level of physical materiality. Everything is ultimately reducible to that level.

C. This reducibility is not at the expense of complexity, because the configurations of atoms may result in any number of things—buildings, turtles, people. But such collections are ephemeral. When the forces that hold things together become weakened through injury or disease, the atomic structure breaks down.

D. What, then, is the atomists' position on the soul? For them, the soul is a finer kind of atomic structure.

E. How many kinds of particulate, atomic "stuff" must be assumed to account for everything that exists? The materialist's answer is: "Only one kind—matter."

F. Returning to atomism, if what there is goes beyond the senses, how do we discover existence? Obviously, the atoms must come together in large enough ensembles to be accessible to the senses. Things take on defining properties in virtue of their atomic organization.

III. Does this search for what is real extend to the realm of morals? Are there such things as *beauty* and *ugliness*, *right* and *wrong*? To raise these questions is to trigger further questions about the means by which answers are found, that is, the method used to identify *right* and *wrong*.

A. Some have argued that the ultimate grounding of morality, law, and aesthetics is nothing more than conventional wisdom, one's social conditioning. We know, however, that different cultures or historical eras disagree widely on questions of right and wrong, good and evil.

B. The ancient Greek philosophers were not unaware of this dilemma. The pre-Socratics had grave doubts about our ability to answer fundamental questions without introducing our own prejudices into the equation.

C. Protagoras, who figures in the dialogues of Plato, insisted that "Man is the measure of all things." In this view, each person's experiences and perceptions constitute reality for that person—a reality that can claim as much ontological validity as any other.

1. What Protagoras claims is that judgments of any sort—right or wrong, beauty or ugliness—must have some grounding, and that grounding can only be the experiences of a lifetime.
2. We cannot occupy an epistemic position external to our own human ways of thought and feeling. If there is a standard independent of human nature, we could not even comprehend it.
3. In this light, epistemology is a fit subject for cultural anthropology or sociology, examining the extent to which social and cultural values shape our metaphysical speculations. Indeed, if the answer to the philosophical question "What is there?" is known only from the vantage point of the person making the judgments and if philosophical inquiry is a search for truth, it seems that asking the question is misguided. Truth turns out to be the perceptions and perspective of the individual, rather than some objective or transcendent and eternal state.

D. Protagoras's position on religious matters, reminiscent of Homeric epic, appears in the only surviving fragment of his treatise *On Gods*:

> About the gods, I cannot say either that they are or that they are not, nor how they are constituted in shape. There is so much that prevents knowledge of this kind: the unclarity of the subject and the shortness of human life.

1. The fact that our lives are measured in hours sets a limit on what we can know. Truth comes from no transcendental realm beyond the human ken; all we can know is that opinions vary and that what one man will die for, another will scoff at as absurd.
2. In this way, each man becomes the measure of all things, and the possibility of a coherent transpersonal body of knowledge is beyond reach.

E. The contribution of pre-Socratic philosophers takes the form of robust skeptical challenges to customary beliefs. Socrates, too, examines these beliefs but also the challenges. In the process, he shifts philosophical attention from the cosmos to the human condition itself. He will argue that each of us not only fails to be the measure of all things, but we are generally very poor in our understanding of our very selves.

Recommended Reading:

Barnes, J., ed. *Early Greek Philosophy.* Penguin Books, 1987.

Hussey, E. *The Presocratic Philosophers.* Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether there are similarities between the effects of skeptical philosophy on attitudes in ancient Greece and the effects of modern science on contemporary attitudes.
2. Given that nearly universal human customs (*nomoi*) are taken, therefore, to be "natural," explain how exceptions can be dealt with.
3. Give examples of nearly universal customs that are brought about by essentially local conditions.

Lecture Five
The Greek Tragedians on Man's Fate

Scope: In the drama of the ancient Greek world—in the works of Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles—the tension between fate and striving can never be relaxed. Medea is illustrative. Here is a woman whose magic is used to rescue Jason, only to have their subsequent marriage set aside by him as he pursues another woman. In blind vengeance, she kills their two sons. Was Medea's crime mitigated by Jason's treason against their love? Was she a murderer or the victim of uncontrollable impulses? *Nomos* or *physis*—better still, perhaps, *nomos* as *physis*.

Consider, on the other hand, Antigone, as presented by Sophocles. Against the express orders of King Creon, she buries her brother, then appears before the king to defend herself. But her defense is not that of Medea, not that she was overcome by grief or that passion got the better of her. No, Antigone's defense is that her allegiance to her brother is a veritable law of nature—something as causal as the laws of nature themselves. Indeed, if there would be kings at all, there must be a capacity for unrepentant faithfulness.

Is human nature within or beyond the natural realm? What is it in our nature that inclines us toward good and evil? Is everything but the result of whim and chance and fate, or is there something in the person that might rise above both custom and brute nature itself? It is in the major dramatic works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides that the problem of self-knowledge is underscored—a problem made ever more difficult by the variety of factors, both seen and unseen, that operate on us in the course of a lifetime. How can we limit the destructive force of those "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"? What form of life, what mode of conduct, might yield sanctuary?

Outline

I. Pre-literate societies had limited resources for recording what was of value to them, but one method used was dance, such as the dance of the cranes that Theseus performed to communicate the secret of the labyrinth to his people.

- **A.** Chorus and singing add vividness to dance, and narratives of consequence can be acted out before the whole people to remind them of who they are and what their responsibilities are.
- **B.** As individual speakers arise who are able to carry on colloquies and embody characters, the chorus addresses the audience, evaluating, commenting, and analyzing.
- **C.** Thus, out of gesture, dance, ritual, bardic story comes a world of stories and philosophical disquisitions cast in the form of dialogue: the world of the Greek dramatists that will issue eventually in the dialogues of Plato.

II. The psychological depth and philosophical complexity of Greek classical drama can be seen in the dilemmas of Euripides's Medea and Sophocles's Antigone. We first look at Medea.

- **A.** Was Medea guilty of murder? The killing of children by a parent is the most "unnatural" of acts, but her act might be seen as a natural revenge proportionate to the crime committed against her and, thus, fitting or "meet."
- **B.** Revenge of this sort harks back to an earlier, pre-juridical world—the world of the *law of revenge*, when the chthonic gods of the earth held sway and the Olympian gods of light were still in the future, a world in which the pleadings of the heart trump the demands of rationality.
  - **1.** This older religion was associated with birth and renewal, with crops and nurturing, and identified the female with all that was sustaining; the bond of mother and child was the fundamental social bond. At this most primitive level is where Medea's creative and destructive energies reside.
  - **2.** In the classical period, this pattern is reversed. The Olympian religion installed Zeus as chief among the gods, and the superiority of the male was uncontested. In Aeschylus's drama of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, Clytemnestra's crime (killing her husband) is judged to be worse than Orestes's crime (killing his mother) by the Olympian Athena, because Clytemnestra's crime is that she killed a man.
  - **3.** Medea harkens to an older perspective, so different from our own that she seems to us, and to Euripedes's audience, as simply mad. Indeed, Medea seems to be more driven than driving. Something

of the mystery of earth itself impels her movements, has her sacrifice her sons to return them to the earth, to revive the cycle and have it conclude more satisfactorily.

4. In a key moment, as she kisses and caresses the children she is about to murder, Medea describes her own dilemma without being able to alter it:

> Go, leave me; I cannot bear to see you any longer.
> Overcome by grief, now I understand what I am about to do;
> Passion—that cause of our most dire woes—
> Has vanquished my rational power.

5. Euripides develops characters more accessible than the Olympians: the mysterious and powerful but jilted woman, cheated by her opportunistic and aggressive husband, who finds "honor" chiefly in externals. Medea's impulses spring from beneath the earth; his, from what is above it.
6. Perhaps because this is a rather modern saga, many of Euripedes's contemporary critics thought it was uninstructive. It didn't accomplish what they regarded as the mission of theatre—not to depict the entities we are but to show us how good character leads to good ends. Euripides understood the tension between the earthly, chthonic life as it is lived and the ideal realm of moral imperatives.

C. We also find in Euripides, and in nearly all the Greek dramatists, the central canon that *character is destiny*.

1. The word *nomos* is pivotal here. As understood in the vocabulary of the ancient philosopher, *nomos* is not what is merely customary, but what is lawful, as in the very laws of nature. And in this same age, in the context of law and society, *nomos*, again, is not merely the customary practices but what is utterly binding as a legal precept.
2. How are we to understand the law? Is the law something naturally right? Is it something imposed? Does it arise from our very nature? Is it counter to our nature?
3. Medea's crime is "unnatural," but being driven by passion *is* natural. It is possible to recognize that you have passed beyond reason and be unable to stop yourself.

D. Medea is one of the commanding women of the ancient Greek world, a group that includes Aphrodite, Athena, Antigone, Andromache, the Theban women, Clytemnestra, Penelope, and others.

1. Despite their actual position of reclusive subservience in the ancient world, women are portrayed with greatness by the ancient Greek dramatists.
2. This prominence in literature seems to be a recognition of the power of Eros, the ancient understanding that what brings men and women together is not just a creative force, not just something that brings about life and repopulates the world, but also a powerfully destructive force. Because what we will do at the bidding of Eros is what Medea does.

III. *Nomos* as custom, *nomos* as law, and nature (*physis*) begin to merge and diverge as the classical world faces increasing complexity of thought and practice. The story of Antigone illustrates.

A. Where Medea surrenders to her passion, Antigone's passion reaches a universal principle.

1. Antigone violates Creon's order not to bury her dead brother out of her conviction that *nomos*—the law of the land—is more ancient than the orders of kings and that her duty to bury her brother is a *universal* one; a later age will call it *natural law*.
2. Beneath all our allegiances to king and custom is a deeper allegiance to nature that we must have in order for there to be kings and customs. To this allegiance, Antigone subscribes.

B. Medea's passion is a form of madness in which reason is surrendered: a form of ignorance. Antigone's passion is akin to knowledge. Antigone *knows herself*: She knows what she should do, the wishes of kings notwithstanding. She doesn't want to have to do it, hates the idea of dying for it, but she does it.

IV. Both Greek drama and Greek philosophy would propose "Know thyself." The resulting knowledge was scarcely reassuring. Even if we are careful, wise, and moderate and avoid *hubris*, dreadful things often befall us. Philosophy will have to address this tragic dilemma at the core of existence.

Recommended Reading:

Boardman, J., et al., eds. *The Oxford History of Greece and the Hellenistic World*. Oxford University Press, 1991, chapter 7, "Greek Drama."

Dane, N., and J. Ambrose, eds. *Greek Attitudes*. Scribners, 1974.

Vernant, Jean Pierre, ed. *The Greeks*. University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Questions to Consider:

1. In casting Jason and Medea as less than heroic figures, Euripides may be said to have humanized the psychological forces at work in tragedy. Euripides was criticized in his own time for presenting characters who defied the settled values of the *polis*. Summarize, in this context, what is the artist's responsibility in relation to morality.
2. Antigone is the quintessential exemplar of "civil disobedience." Conclude whether she was right to oppose the authority of the king or whether her sister was right in recommending the prudent course of compliance.

Lecture Six
Herodotus and the Lamp of History

Scope: Does history teach? Herodotus thought so, and this because of what he took to be certain universal human aspirations and deficiencies.

Herodotus, born in 484 B.C., is said to be the first historian in the accepted sense of the term. His treatise, *The Persian Wars*, is filled with details on character, armaments, battle strategies, and perhaps most significantly, attempted explanations of why events took the form they did.

As something of the "father" of historical scholarship, Herodotus would inevitably be found limited by succeeding generations of historians. There are patent impossibilities to be found in his major work; consider only the famous meeting between Solon and Croesus in chapters 30–32 of Book I. Given their respective chronologies, these two men could not have met; however, the point of their inclusion by Herodotus is not to relate a historical encounter but to tell something of a "moral tale." Such defects are not uncommon in Herodotus and have been subjected to deserved and predictable criticism by those who are now ranked as "professional" historians. Herodotus invented the subject, not the profession!

Outline

I. Herodotus is usually accepted as the first historian in the modern sense of the term. This is not because he was the first to chronicle major events or to establish dates for occurrences of interest to his contemporaries. The writing of history is not the occupation of the mere chronicler.

- **A.** Herodotus writes *The Persian Wars* to record the causes of the events and to ensure that brave deeds not be forgotten.
  - **1.** In this way, he recorded the ancient Greek sense of the past as prologue but, as we shall see, in a form less indebted to myth and religious notions of retribution.
  - **2.** But he is also wrestling with the *problem of knowledge*. What could be a more burning question, at least at the level of daily life, than to determine the causes of war?
- **B.** Men make war not out of hate and aggression but out of devotion to irreconcilable values, expressed in cultural symbols—themselves a form of discourse. Herodotus thus devotes many pages to customs, religious beliefs, the form of dress, weapons, and so on. He understands that an informing account of a world war calls for more by way of explanation than can be found in mythology.
  - **1.** Herodotus teaches that, to account for events of historic proportions, one must go well beyond the mere chronicling of the events. One must undertake a veritable "sociology" of those events and a "psychology" of the participants.
  - **2.** We see Homer's influence here, which suffuses nearly every aspect of the ancient Greek world and its achievements.
- **C.** Herodotus also recognized that history teaches and inclines people toward actions, but how does history teach?
  - **1.** The answer must be found at a level Herodotus takes to be more fundamental than ethnicity and culture: the level of our common humanity.
  - **2.** The lamp of history illuminates the very commonalities that constitute human nature itself. History teaches that wherever you find human beings, certain lessons are worth learning.
  - **3.** There is a root humanity that is reached by certain events and that allows us to predict how we are likely to behave under certain conditions and how those conditions, therefore, should either be promoted or shunned.
- **D.** Does the account teach us of the gods? In Herodotus, the religious and mythic elements are relegated to secondary importance. Rather, events are to be understood in terms of actual patterns of motivation, in terms of local conditions and contextual factors.
  - **1.** The Persian wars were caused by *us*. Religious *beliefs*, not divine will, were a factor. As he says in chapter 64 of Book II, when speaking of Egyptian religion, Herodotus will not attempt an explanation for, to do so, "I should be led to speak of religious matters, which I particularly shrink from mentioning."

2. This perspective *humanizes* human history. It helps us address the command "Know thyself." To know thyself is, among other things, to know what we've done. The problems of knowledge and of conduct and of governance may not be solved by historical study, but they can be thus illuminated.

II. If Herodotus's history of the Persian war succeeds as a descriptive psychology of human nature under conditions of stress and strain, it is less successful as an accurate historical account of events.

A. Herodotus has been accused by later ages of having written bad history, telling of encounters between people who could not have met. Yet throughout the work, Herodotus pauses to alert readers to interpretations that are based chiefly on the opinions of the author or to records of events that he did not witness.

B. His account includes parables, morality tales that communicate the lessons of history: What happens if we are cowardly? What do we stand to gain if we are brave and decent? In this way, Herodotus addresses the *problem of conduct*.

1. The dialogue of Croesus and Solon—the man famous for wealth and the man famous for knowledge—is not intended to be historical; it is a disquisition on the nature of happiness.
2. Croesus asks Solon who the happiest man in the world is, obviously expecting the reply to be that it is Croesus himself. Instead, Solon tells the story of Cleobis and Biton, asserting that they are the happiest men in the world because they died in a state of being that all would honor and aspire to emulate.
3. Happiness is not fame or riches or heroic virtue, but a state that will inspire posterity to think, in reflecting upon another's life, that it was the life one would wish to live. We can say of no man that he is *eudaimonios*, that his was a truly flourishing life, until his days are over.

III. These two elements that Herodotus addresses—the problem of knowledge and the problem of conduct—raise the issue of the problem of governance.

A. We know that the ancient Athenian democracy had to save itself from what would have been the tyrannical rule of the Persians. It turns out, however, that the Athenian democracy was not saved by the Athenians but the Spartans.

B. In illuminating this fact, Herodotus passes to Plato and Aristotle a historical perspective on a paradoxical question of governance: In the attempt to cultivate virtue, must one be battle-hardened?

C. Plato, like Herodotus, would recognize that in the spectacle of war, the truths of our mortality can be learned as in no other way, but this conclusion is worrisome. Are strife and conflict necessary if character is to be formed? Perhaps as an answer, Herodotus gives us the story of Cleobis and Biton, suggesting that there are alternatives to warfare in the cultivation of virtue.

Recommended Reading:

Collingwood, R. G. *The Idea of History*. Oxford University Press, 1994.

Herodotus. *The Persian Wars*. G. Rawlinson, trans. Random House, 1942.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the past is prologue.
2. Summarize whether the writing of history presupposes what is now widely doubted—namely, that events taking place at one time under unique conditions can help explain yet other events, widely separated in time and context.

Lecture Seven
Socrates on the Examined Life

Scope: Socrates (c. 469–399) is perhaps the most admired figure in the history of philosophy. Even when dismissing so many of the "pagan" thinkers, Saint Augustine would venerate Socrates, regarding him as a true philosopher because he was willing to die for what he believed.

What is known of his life comes by way of a good friend, Xenophon, and a loyal and loving student, Plato. The former provides a picture of Socrates as neighbor and fellow-citizen; the latter, a Socrates at sea on the endless voyages of mind and spirit.

Before Socrates, the major schools of philosophy emphasized cosmological and physical topics or, thanks chiefly to the Sophists, rhetorical techniques designed to highlight the ignorance of one's adversaries. In Socrates, however, at least as he is revealed in Plato's dialogues, there is a commitment to *objectify* the self and hold it up to scrutiny. As there is nature, so, too, there is a *human nature*, and it is a fit subject for discourse and dispute. But what vexations arise when the subject is the object is the subject! "The unexamined life is not worth living," but what form shall the examination take?

Outline

I. It was Socrates more than any predecessor, though there were ample pre-Socratic precedents, who worked to perfect the dialectical method of inquiry, the vaunted "Socratic" method that tests every assumption for its grounding and its implications.

- **A.** Socrates described himself as a gadfly—approaching those who were sure of what they knew and interrogating them until their certainty was shown to be groundless.
  - **1.** In ancient Greek mythology, a gadfly knocked a chap off his horse, who had been trying to fly up to heaven and engage hubristically in arrogating to himself the powers of the divine.
  - **2.** Socrates is a gadfly, then, in the sense of unseating the confident rider who believes he is on the flight path to truth.
  - **3.** Socrates was well trained in the art of rhetoric and the great Sophist teachings of his time, but he goes beyond Sophism. His objective was not just to expose the ignorance of an interlocutor but to find the truth and, ultimately, defeat skepticism itself.
- **B.** The first obligation of a philosopher, Augustine suggests, is the willingness to die for the principles of his philosophy. If this standard were generally applied, few philosophers would measure up—but Socrates did.
  - **1.** His friends urged him to flee after his trial rather than die—the trial had been a sham; no one would think less of him. Socrates preferred to die rather than abandon all that he had taught about the law as the corporate expression of rationality.
  - **2.** The charges against Socrates were that he had failed to respect the gods of Athens and had corrupted Athenian youth. The Socrates given to us by Xenophon, however, was a deeply religious and reverential man, not at all skeptical on the spiritual level, although perhaps less than obeisant to the customary devotional beliefs and practices of his contemporary Athenians.
  - **3.** That Socrates corrupted the youth of Athens also seems unlikely. In the *Symposium*, the one dialogue in which we might expect to find debauchery and corruption, Alcibiades complains that in attempting to be Socrates's lover, one gets nowhere. Socrates simply will not participate at that rich, lusty, corporeal level; indeed, given his wisdom and the depth of his thought, Socrates must have been among the loneliest people who ever lived.
  - **4.** Why did Socrates choose suicide? Because he recognized that the rule of law is the corporate or public expression of human rationality itself. Law is the means by which the rational power of corruptible man might minimize corruption. Having devoted his life to rationality, Socrates would not abandon everything he had stood for and taught merely because his own situation was compromised.

II. "The unexamined life is not worth living": Why? And if this is true, how are we to examine our lives?

- **A.** What is the matter with a life of perfect satisfaction and gratification that is based on an illusion—provided by drugs or machines?

1. Socrates did not live in our technical world of microsurgery and pharmacology; thus, in Plato's *Republic*, he considers prisoners in the depths of a cave who have objects and events projected on some parapet in front of them. They think they are experiencing reality, but this reality is no more than mere shadows and illusion.
2. What Socrates makes clear is that behind every experience, there is room for an interpretation of the meaning of that experience. It's in the interpretation, the examination of what life amounts to, that in fact, life becomes worth living. For Socrates, it's not the sequence of passive experiences but the integration of those experiences into some intelligible whole that constitutes a form of life, and one subject to refinement through self-critical reflection.

B. This returns us to the Delphic pronouncement: "Know thyself." But how we can do this?
1. We must know what it means to be a certain kind of being, in this case, what it means to be a human being. The answer must reach toward something other than mere biology, which may be a way to understand a particular species but certainly can't answer the question: "What kind of person am I essentially?"
2. Socrates's life as a teacher was devoted to the question: "What kinds of beings are we?" Only after reaching a defensible position on that question might we proceed to "How should we live our lives? What is the right form of government? What's the relationship between the individual and the *polis?*"

C. To know thyself presupposes the capacity to know anything. You may know many things and not "know thyself" in the Socratic sense. But to know thyself is, minimally*, to know*. Thus, Socrates begins with that core problem of knowledge: How do we know anything?
1. If the skeptics are right in that we can't know anything for certain, then we certainly cannot know ourselves in any settled and certain way, and that means that one's life is uselessly examined. What would the examined life be? Simply a constellation of prejudices and self-deceptions.
2. What must be defeated here is skepticism. We must come up with at least one kernel of truth that we can settle on as true and that will answer the root epistemological question: Is it possible to know anything? If we can settle on one thing that is true, then we can know that it is possible to know, and if we know the method by which we arrived at that truth, then perhaps we can use it to know other things.

D. We begin to see that the Socratic agenda is a fairly broad one. First, one must do philosophical battle with skepticism and cynicism. One must also contend with the problem of conduct. What kind of life is right for beings such as ourselves? Should we aim solely at happiness and pleasure? What of our values? Are they simply reflections of our own prejudices, giving us no right or reason to impose them on others or expect them to be shared?

E. Finally, what of the problem of governance and the vaunted "democracy" of the Athenian state?
1. The Athenians treasured the democratic character of the *polis*, and a philosopher could well expect trouble when challenging its core precepts. Socrates raised grave questions about such precepts, while others, including Aristotle, defended them.
2. Nonetheless, Socrates reserves to himself the right at least to raise the question: How should we be governed? This question cannot be answered in the abstract. We can't answer the question of how we should be governed unless we have already established the right kind of life to live. And we can't answer that question until we've settled the question of what kind of beings we are and how we can come to know as much.
3. Until we have successfully defeated a skeptical position on knowledge as such, we can't have a defensible position on ethics. And until we've handled the ethical dimensions of life, we can't pinpoint what the political organization of the *polis* should be.
4. It is a credit to the lasting genius of Socrates that he understands the interconnectedness of these questions, that the problem of knowledge, the problem of conduct, and the problem of governance are various phases of the same problem: how we come to know ourselves and realize our humanity in the course of a lifetime. This, of course, will be the central agenda of the program of philosophy for centuries to come.

Recommended Reading:

Robinson, D. N. *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 3rd ed. University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, chapter 2.

Xenophon. *Memorabilia*. Cornell University Press, 1994.

Questions to Consider:

1. Socrates assembles his friends in the years following the defeat of Athens at the hands of Sparta. Explain whether Socrates's philosophy is the thought of the "losing side."
2. If Socrates was undermining the values and received wisdom of his *polis*, conclude whether he was justly prosecuted.

Lecture Eight
Plato's Search for Truth

Scope: There is much revealed by Plato in his dialogue *Meno*, including a successful counter to the Sophist challenge about the search for truth—the challenge according to which such a search is either impossible (for one doesn't even know what one is searching for) or unnecessary (for if one knows what it is, then no search is needed). If one knows what one is looking for, why is a search necessary? If one doesn't know, how is a search possible? In *Meno*, we get a particularly clear version of that famous Platonic solution to the problem of knowledge, knowledge as a form of reminiscence. The reminiscence theory of knowledge is opposed to the empirical, the latter grounding knowledge in perception.

Outline

I. The search for truth can only be undertaken once one has defeated, or at least neutralized, the most cogent of the Sophist and skeptical claims against the very possibility of truth. In any number of the dialogues composed by Plato, we see the skeptical position being taken head on and an attempt made to refute it.

A. There is no final defeat of skepticism in every form, but there are fairly good counters to the more worrisome skeptical claims. Some of these are cogently developed in the dialogue Plato titled *Meno*, named after the young Athenian aristocrat who confronts Socrates.

1. Meno has been traveling, perhaps to Thessaly, which has a great school of Sophist teaching. He begins a conversation with Socrates by asking whether virtue is acquired by teaching or practice, or perhaps, it resides within us by nature.

2. What Meno is testing is the sense in which anything can be said to be known. Virtue is spoken of often and with confidence, but what is its source, and how is it to be understood? If we don't know it by direct experience, we have no route to discovery.

3. When Socrates declares himself to be ignorant of an answer, Meno asks, "How will you inquire, Socrates, into that which you do not know? What will you put forth as the subject of inquiry? And if you find what you want, how will you ever know that this is the thing which you did not know?" This is the stock Sophist challenge to one who claims to search for truth.

4. In response, Socrates shows that Meno's young and uneducated servant, through probing questions and gentle guidance, "knows" that the area of a square is uniquely determined by the length of the diagonal drawn through it. The boy "knows," then, the Pythagorean theorem, though he never studied such subjects, nor did Socrates give him the answer.

5. How did he know it? The answer Socrates gives is that he always knew it and, under the proper guidance, remembered it. This is the original statement of the most famous solution to the problem of knowledge: knowledge as *reminiscence*.

B. There are two distinct kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the facts of daily life and truth, that which has always been and always will be true.

1. Observation of daily life can yield facts, but it cannot yield the second kind of truth; this kind of truth cannot be learned by experience, because experience is merely the encounter of matter with matter and is subject to constant flux.

2. How, then, is truth learned? The soul knows it. How is it that the soul can make contact with such truths? They exist in our souls as prior knowledge, a part of the gift of rationality itself.

3. One of Plato's debts to Pythagorean teaching is a belief in the proposition that there is some animating principle within us that is immaterial and abiding, that pre-dates birth and persists after death. Through its repeated incarnations, it comes to possess a knowledge no single person could command.

4. With the death of the body, the soul is liberated and presented with the opportunity to gather its proper inheritance—pure knowledge.

5. Absent philosophical guidance, one remains a prisoner of the senses and the world of matter in motion—the world of fluxes and changes. Absent philosophical guidance, one cannot gain access to the truths possessed by the soul (mind) as a feature of its own rational endowment.

II. A philosopher is engaged in the search for truth—that which can be known certainly. That there is such truth is verified by the universal truths of mathematics.

A. The answer to the question "What is a right-angle triangle?" is: "Whatever figure satisfies the statement $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$." It is the latter that is the *true form*, whereas the drawn figure is but a transitory, defective, often misleading depiction. The true form suffers no change—ever.

B. Nothing drawn in the sand by Socrates is the Pythagorean theorem. The visible right triangle is, after all, soon to be swept away by the wind and the traffic of the road.

C. The difference between the *drawn* figure and the *true* right triangle is that the latter is, finally, not an object of sense but a formal relationship.

D. What is it about the soul, about rationality, that can make contact with a truth of that kind? We can't come up with mathematical truths experientially. Surely, Pythagoras did not arrive at that theorem by laying his measuring rod along various right-angle triangles, luckily finding the first one to be a 3–4–5 triangle.

E. Obviously, such ideas must exist, in a sense, in an *a priori* way, which doesn't necessarily mean temporally prior to experience, but logically prior to experience, because there is nothing in experience that will convey such truths. Given that rational beings are clearly in possession of these ideas, they must be in possession of them independently of experience.

F. This is an intuitionist's theory of knowledge, a theory of knowledge based on the proposition that what is firmly known, and known to be true, and could not possibly be known as a result of experience must be part of the very gift of rationality itself. It must be something co-extensive with the life and thought of a rational being.

G. We might note that Aristotle, commenting on Platonic teaching, insists that it was not Socrates but his disciples who conferred ontological standing on the "true forms." Our concern is with the larger issue: whether or not true forms in the Platonic sense can legitimately be regarded as having some kind of ontological standing, some immaterial but nonetheless real standing in the domain of actual things.

III. If the skeptic says, "How can you possibly stand behind the proposition that there is such a thing as unchanging truth?" one reply will present the truths of mathematics.

A. Plato was satisfied that the truths of mathematics were sufficient to put skepticism on notice. Mathematics has established that some things can be known with certainty. The problem of knowledge then becomes a search for the kind of truths that will match up with mathematical certainties.

B. But if such "true forms" cannot be reached through experience, what is left? The answer is: a rational enterprise that takes the form of a dialectical or argumentative approach, an *elenchis* in the Greek.

1. This approach is not simply a rhetorical device; it's an investigative device. Through the philosophical mode of investigation, we come to consult whatever is contained in the rational resources of the soul itself.

2. The truths we are looking for can't be held up and shown to anybody. We must discover them in the way Pythagoras must have discovered the Pythagorean theorem: by engaging in an internal contemplative discourse within the soul itself, a kind of introspective, spiritually guided form of inquiry into what Aristotle will call "first things."

3. Only through the dialectical method and the guidance of the philosopher is one able to get past the ephemera of sense to truths possessed by the soul from the outset.

C. This approach gives us, if not a solution to the problem of knowledge, a recognition of just what it is that makes knowledge problematical. Knowledge is problematical owing to a slavish reliance on experience.

1. As we have said, experience can't get at certain truths. Animals have experiences; wicked and foolish people have experiences. Further, if one person's experiences are insufficient, little is gained by adding those of another. Self-deception is not eliminated by increasing the number of those thus deceived!

2. We begin to see that in the solution to the problem of knowledge, there is already skepticism about democratic approaches to questions of conduct and governance.

Recommended Reading:

Plato. *Meno*, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, 2 vols., B. Jowett, trans. Random House, 1937.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the "Socratic method" is able to do any more than disclose confusions—whether it has a *creative* as well as a critical contribution to make.
2. Summarize how the notion of "pure forms" and skepticism regarding perception stand up against modern scientific conceptions of knowledge.

Lecture Nine
Can Virtue Be Taught?

Scope: In the dialogue *Protagoras*, Socrates must learn from Protagoras how his young friend Hippocrates should be educated and where he should be schooled if were he to become a fine sculptor or an expert physician. Receiving predictable replies from Protagoras, Socrates then asks what it is that young Hippocrates should aspire to be for it to make sense for him to study with Protagoras! The answer given by Protagoras is "virtue," but then Socrates must ask whether this is the sort of thing that can be taught.

Outline

I. The skeptics ask: Why is the conduct of life problematical? Why is it that we cannot simply live in such a way as to maximize our own satisfactions and take others into account only insofar as they stand in our way and must be avoided or defeated?

- **A.** There may be truths in mathematics but not in the conduct of life, which is a matter of personal taste and desire. Nobody can tell others how to live.
- **B.** To counter the skeptics' position, Socrates must make a case that there is a problem of conduct and that it can be solved with the same argumentative and analytical resources that proved successful in the search for knowledge itself.

II. In the dialogue *Protagoras*, Socrates deferentially asks the famed Sophist Protagoras how his young friend Hippocrates should be educated: Where should he be schooled? What is it he might learn from Protagoras?

- **A.** Protagoras goes along with the inquiry: were Hippocrates to be a fine sculptor, he ought to study with Phidias; to be an expert physician, with the Aesculapian school. Socrates then asks what it is that young Hippocrates might become expert in studying with Protagoras.
- **B.** The answer given by Protagoras is "virtue," moral excellence, *arête*. Socrates must then ask what is virtue and whether it is the sort of thing that can be taught. The dialogue explores these questions.

III. To teach anything one must know what it is. What *is* virtue? Is it one thing or many?

- **A.** Are justice, holiness, and temperance separate virtues or parts of virtue as a whole? It makes a difference, because if they are separate, it should be possible for a person to be, for example, just but intemperate or holy but unjust. Protagoras's answer, that these qualities are parts of virtue, introduces confusion. If justice is separate from and not in any way like temperance, then temperance must match up with what is not just, that is, with injustice!
- **B.** Socrates then pursues the question of whether virtue can be taught. Why would he raise this question? Socrates appreciates that there's something about moral excellence that defies merely academic exercises or pedagogical undertakings. There seems to be something in the human being that reflects, generates, expresses virtue. How can something of this nature be "taught"?
- **C.** We do not say of persons that they are virtuous in the morning but not so in the afternoon. We tend to think that a person is virtuous when there is a quality about the person that expresses itself in almost every context. For that to be the case, it must be because the actions of the person are guided by a principle or precept that is at once unified and universally applicable.
- **D.** Obedience to this principle is not blind, however. Expressions of virtue presuppose knowledge; courage, for example, arises not from ignorance of what is involved in one's actions but with full knowledge of the risks.
- **E.** Thus, virtue seems to be a quality regulative of conduct, but if it is a *universal*, then it cannot be accessed by the senses. The senses can pick up only particulars, not universals. If behind persons of virtue, there stands a universal principle, an impelling principle, applicable in all contexts and known in some non-sensory way, then virtue is like the Pythagorean theorem—a matter of relationships.
- **F.** If virtue cannot be learned by experience—that is, by some sort of perceptual activity—then how can it be taught at all?
  - **1.** In most contents, we teach by pointing to instances of what we are teaching, but we cannot point to virtue, which is a universal. A universal precept cannot be the subject of ostensible definition.

2. For Socrates, if virtue cannot be taught, then there is no point in teaching at all. Teaching is reduced to a kind of training, as in training to be a welder.

G. We might argue that we cannot point to virtue, but we can point to instances of virtue, just as we can point to right triangles, which though not perfect, are instances of the relation $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$.

1. This approach presents another problem: A one-year-old child shown the heroism of the Spartans at Thermopylae can learn nothing from it. The soul must be prepared and of the right disposition; there must be guidance, as Meno's servant required guidance to discover that he knew the Pythagorean theorem.
2. Thus, Socrates argues that virtue cannot be taught as such. However, if knowledge attained by philosophical reflection is the necessary ingredient in virtue, this can be taught.
3. Again, not all are ready to be "taught" virtue in this sense. The students for this instruction must have the background and propensity to resonate when a virtuous act presents itself. We cannot teach virtue by presenting instances of virtuous actions to a person whose soul has been so corrupted as not to be able to enter into a kind of sympathetic relationship with the exemplum.
4. We have here the foundations for a kind of elitist position on who shall be virtuous, which we will confront again in Plato's *Republic*. The life of virtue is not available to anybody and everybody—it requires a certain kind of person.
5. We also see the foundations for an essentially developmental theory. If one is ever to be in a position where the lessons of virtue make some impact, it must be because from the earliest time in childhood, one's soul was conditioned in such a way as to be receptive to lessons of this kind.

IV. In a later dialogue, the *Theaetetus*, the authority of Protagoras is again challenged, this time as a result of the famous claim in his long-lost book, "Man is the measure of all things."

A. Socrates notes that if Protagoras claims that each man one at a time and for himself is the measure of truth, then why should we believe this or any other pronouncement?

> I am charmed with his doctrine...but I wonder that he does not begin his book with a declaration that a pig or dog-faced baboon or some yet stranger monster which has sensation is the measure of all things; then might he have shown a magnificent contempt for our opinion of him by informing us at the outset that while we were revering him like a god for his wisdom, he was no better than a tadpole.

B. In so many words, Socrates insists that we can't have it both ways. Protagoras can't stand as a paragon of philosophical wisdom and still contend that everybody, one at a time, is the measure of all things.

C. At the end of the day, the problem of conduct is a problem of principle. If the principle is right, it is universally right. It is not tarnished or reduced by the mere showing that large numbers of people don't embrace.

D. Each man is not the measure of all things. There is a measure of things, and it is the task of the individual to find a way to understand that measure and apply it properly.

Recommended Reading:

Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New*. Cornell University Press, 1999

T. H. Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 1995

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the Socratic notion of *virtue* is taught in contemporary educational institutions.
2. Describe how Socrates would likely have been received by the politicians of this age.

Lecture Ten

Plato's *Republic*—Man Writ Large

Scope: This most famous of the dialogues begins with the metaphor—or the reality—of the *polis* as the enlarged version of the person. The fate of each is inextricably bound up with the fate of the other.

Plato's *Republic* is taken to be the foundational work in what we call "political science," but it is useful to recall that the dialogue begins with a quite different question—namely, what is it by which a man can be said to be "good"? In light of the complexity of the question, Socrates suggests that the subject of the inquiry be enlarged, made big enough so as to be seen more clearly. Thus, the question is transformed.

Outline

I. Plato's *Republic* is one of the most discussed philosophical tracts in history and the subject of both praise and condemnation. It is famous in political science—is, indeed, the origin of political science—but it also concerns itself with matters that are psychological: What makes a man good? What are the weaknesses of human nature?

II. Book I begins with a group assembling in the house of Cephalus, a wealthy and now old man whose son, Polemarchus, is among the group associating with Socrates. Cephalus and Socrates have an interesting conversation about reaching old age and the advantages of wealth.

- **A.** Cephalus asserts that as the end of life approaches, one begins to think increasingly about a time after death when one might be punished for moral failings. A rich man, having no need to cheat or defraud others, tends to have a clearer conscience and, thus, is less fearful of death.
- **B.** Socrates then mentions something he has learned—that what it means to be just is to pay one's debts. We are then plunged into an examination of justice. Before the end of Book I, the dialogue has raised the question of whether an unjust person can reach a state of happy and flourishing life.
- **C.** Note that at least this far into Plato's *Republic*, there is no attention to political science or statecraft. The focus, instead, is on justice, and in seeking to establish what it is that qualifies a person as just, the dialogue begins to explore the motives and desires of people. Thus, it stands as a treatise on psychology.

III. In Book II, Glaucon forces Socrates to categorize justice into one of three distinct classes of "good things."

- **A.** There are things that are good in and of themselves, independent of their usefulness, such as harmless pleasures. There are goods such as knowledge and health that are not only good in themselves but also for the consequences that arise from them. Finally, there are such goods as exemplified by money-making, which are, in and of themselves, disagreeable but are pursued for the sake of their results.
- **B.** Socrates places justice in the highest category, where things are desired for their intrinsic value, not their consequences. This allows the debate to continue: What is it that makes a man good? Who exemplifies the ideal in a world that lusts after power and wealth?
- **C.** Socrates is reminded that many seem just but are not and that the real determinants of conduct are not virtues, as such, but the fear of punishment and the expectation of reward. To make this abundantly clear, Glaucon refers to the mythical story of the ring of Gyges.
- **D.** Glaucon asserts that if a just and an unjust man both wore rings that offered the power of invisibility, in time, their conduct would be alike; each would pursue his own desires fearlessly.
  1. Socrates takes on this assertion by tracing out the lives of the two, the just and the unjust. He desires, however, to make this question as large as possible so that it can be seen clearly.
  2. Thus, the question is transformed into one regarding the good state, because in important respects, the person and the *polis* are reflections of each other.

IV. As the dialogue proceeds, Socrates places the origin of the state in small communities assembled to satisfy the most basic needs. Success enlarges the community. Specific needs are met by persons trained to perform specific functions. Greater success brings growth and prosperity and the need for defense, that is, guardians.

- **A.** The excellent soldier must be trained, yet training will be useless unless the natural abilities of the potential soldier are substantial. To train guardians, the state must begin with youths of good background and

establish a highly disciplined regime of early instruction. Further, to eliminate greed and resentment, there must be no money payments or property ownership in the community, and both wives and children must be possessed in common by the community itself.

B. Glaucon asks how the state will arrange to have a pool of suitable offspring to become guardians, and the scheme Socrates puts forth is pure eugenics, selective breeding for the purpose of acquiring those with the right natural endowments for the vital role of guardian.

C. Glaucon points out to Socrates that even good breeding may produce worthless offspring, and sometimes, mediocre parents have heroic children. Socrates says that undesirable infants are to be exposed. The state has no need for what it cannot use.

V. We now turn to the problem of knowledge as dealt with in Plato's *Republic*, where it figures centrally because Socrates must justify positions that seem to go against what most Athenians would take for granted.

A. The problem of knowledge is illustrated in *Republic* famously in the "allegory of the cave." In the cave, men are shackled and can see only a wall on which shadows are projected; they take the shadows for reality.

1. Being shackled is equivalent to being a material object, being tied to a body.

2. The shadows are taken for real, just as men take their own passions and points of view for the only truth, as Protagoras argues.

3. When one of the prisoners in the cave breaks his chains and climbs to the light, he sees what never before had been seen and begins to recognize that everything he had taken as true was just some shadowy illusion.

4. When this prisoner returns to the cave to inform his cohorts of his experience, they believe that he has been blinded by the light. In the allegory, the "light" is the guidance of the philosopher to universal truths.

B. We begin to recognize that the problem of knowledge is going to return always to a search for what is universally true, for a search for relationships, because it is the relationship that constitutes the true form.

1. The question "What is it that makes a government good?" must be answered in terms of certain relationships that obtain between the governing body and those governed, between the laws and those who are fit for the rule of law, and so on.

2. Justice, too, is understood as the harmonious relationship among the rational, the passionate, and the emotional dispositions of the soul.

C. The *Republic* offers a rigorously behavioristic theory of moral and civic development. Children must be protected, for example, against the corrupting influence of dithyrambic music. Children must also be trained in the disciplines of the good soldier.

D. To return to the story of Gyges, the point of the dialogue is not to examine what people will do if they were able to make themselves invisible. The point of philosophy is to determine how people ought to behave, not how they do behave.

1. Socrates recognizes that people are corporeal entities, inclined by pleasure and pain. He says that we might regard ourselves as charioteers, pulled by both a good horse and a bad horse.

2. The metaphor of the chariot and the good and bad steed is also found in the Katha Upanishads: "Know now the soul [*atman*] as riding in a chariot. He who lacks understanding, whose mind is not constantly held firm, his sense is uncontrolled, like the vicious horses of a chariot driver."

3. We see from India to Athens this useful metaphor of the impulses of the body being like an untamed steed, pulling us in one direction. Socrates recognizes that we must have a will capable of resolving itself to follow the right course of action.

4. The will itself cannot determine the right course of action, and desire knows only one course of action—that by virtue of which it fulfills itself. How, then, do we discover the right course of action? The answer is through the supremacy of reason, which in turn, is a reflection of our recognition that mathematical proportion, harmony, and balance must be the guides and the goals of life.

Recommended Reading:

Plato. *The Republic* and *Protagoras*, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, 2 vols. B. Jowett, trans. Random House, 1937.

Annas, J. “Classical Greek Philosophy,” in *The Oxford History of Greece and the Hellenistic World*. J. Boardman et al., eds. Oxford, 1991.

Questions to Consider:

1. Bertrand Russell, in his *History of Western Philosophy*, regarded the Plato of the *Republic* as a garden-variety fascist. Explain whether this is a sound reading of the dialogue.
2. Conclude whether there has ever been a “philosopher king.” Marcus Aurelius comes to mind, and the record he compiled was rather mixed. Explain whether the special talents required for each of these distinctive vocations is the same or even compatible.
3. Conclude whether virtue can be taught.

Lecture Eleven
Hippocrates and the Science of Life

Scope: One of the signal achievements of the classical world of the Greeks was the *naturalization* of what had long been absorbed into mysticism, superstition, and magic. The perspective of the natural scientist is nowhere more evident, however, than in the commonsense approach of the Greek medical writers and practitioners whose teachings come down to us in the form of "Hippocratic" treatises. In other societies of the ancient world, medicine was regarded as a part of religion; even among the mass of Greeks, most consulted oracles and believed that disease was visited on the body by the gods in punishment for wrong done (the Christian era would take up this view again). But the Hippocratic *empirikoi*, or empirical practitioners, believed no disease was more divine than another; observation and clinical practice were of the essence; and health was a matter of balance, diet, and the right kind of life.

Outline

I. Hippocrates (469–399 B.C.) falls between Plato and Aristotle and should be dealt with between them, in part, because he and his school promoted a perspective on life that points to Aristotle: the perspective of naturalistic science.

- **A.** Unlike the civilizations of Persia and Egypt, Hellenism conferred on the priesthood no special insight into matters of a scientific, medical, or philosophical nature.
- **B.** In all other early societies, medicine was inseparable from magic and religion; in Hellenic society, which never had a religious establishment, it was not.
  - **1.** The ancient Greek medical perspective is nothing short of amazing. The idea that the conditions of health and disease must be understood in a naturalistic, systematic, and scientific way is a great leap forward in the history of ideas.
  - **2.** Even in Homeric epics, one finds a matter-of-fact biology as a means by which to understand complex psychological processes: what drives us are conditions in our bodies.
  - **3.** The school of Pythagoras, who was, of all the early Greeks, most focused on the abstract and the divine, applied Pythagorean scientific precepts to medicine, treating the soul through the body by diet and a therapeutic regimen.

II. Hellenic society was singular in the ancient world for its tendency to objectify itself—its beliefs, its practices, its thoughts—for the purpose of scrutiny.

- **A.** In doing so, it stands in vivid contrast to an understanding based on revelation or the canons of a religious faith. For the Hippocratic physician, there is no scriptural authority or divine voice to settle naturalistic questions.
- **B.** Note that Hippocratic medicine comes to us in the form of "Hippocratic writing," treatises that were developed over a period of time and not necessarily written by Hippocrates himself.
- **C.** According to these writings, the power of the gods can exert itself in any and all medical conditions; thus, there is no reason to regard any disorder as any more or less "divine" than any other. No disease (e.g., epilepsy) is any more "sacred" than any other.
- **D.** This perspective is available only to those who have not accepted priestcraft as having *epistemological* authority. Whatever problems are to be addressed by oracles and priests, the problem of knowledge is not one of them, at least as this problem arises from the facts of the natural world.
  - **1.** If the chief knowledge claims of a society are religious in nature, progress is difficult.
  - **2.** Interpretations of reality are in the hands of the priests, and scholarship is confined to the analysis of divinely inspired texts.
- **E.** The Greeks did not lack religious impulses even in their science and philosophy (*vide* Pythagoras), but inquiry was seen as an essential feature of rationality.
  - **1.** The Hippocratic doctors were not skeptical about the gods but about their power in the body.
  - **2.** This is part of the process of the secularization of knowledge that the Greeks would bequeath to philosophy and science.

III. The dominant school of Greek medicine as early as the 6th century B.C. is that practiced by the *empirikoi*, those who base their diagnoses and treatments on *observation* rather than theory and theology.

A. When the Hippocratics call themselves *empirikoi*, it is to distinguish themselves from those who consult oracles to discover the causes of disease and who think that disease—particularly mental and psychological disease—has been visited upon them for things they have done.

B. This attitude, rare in the following centuries, would be noticeable in Eastern Christianity, which was still in touch with Greek thought when Western Christianity considered epilepsy and madness punishment for sins.

IV. If one is to promote the health and well-being of the body, then one must raise the question of what it is that controls the affairs of the body. It is interesting to note how late in the game it was that naturalistic philosophy actually spoke of organs and systems in the body.

A. Even as recently as Aristotle—and Aristotle is one of the pioneering figures in the history of biology and natural science—we don't get the sense of the body as a collection of integrated systems.

B. The Hippocratics were quite correct, however, in identifying the brain as the part of the body in which sensory and rational processes are grounded. In contrast, Aristotle regarded the central mission of the brain to be the regulation of the temperature of the blood.

V. The naturalization of medicine was not singular in Greek culture; in politics and philosophy as well, naturalistic and scientific attitudes were cultivated by leading thinkers.

A. These were not, however, the attitudes of most Greeks. The Greek man or woman in the street was a believer in magic and witchcraft, oracles and superstitions.

B. Many Greeks were suspicious of philosophers. Aristophanes mocked them; the Athenians executed Socrates and forced Aristotle into exile.

C. But there was also tolerance. Major figures gained and kept respect; for generations, the wealthy sent their children to be taught by men whom they saw not as wise so much as learned, men who knew useful arts of life.

D. A perfectionist ideal spread widely through the population, resulting in support of all forms of excellence. Perfection was something to be prized, even when one didn't quite understand it or when one might find it dangerous.

E. The statues of Phidias represent not the ordinary Greeks who looked up at them, but that ideal of humanity perfect in mind and body that the Greeks acknowledged. This legacy of perfectionism has come down to us today in such achievements as the space program, in which the integration of intelligence and courage, science and virtue, has resulted in humans reaching the moon.

Recommended Reading:

Hippocrates. "On the Wounds of the Head," in *Hippocrates*, W. Jones, trans. Putnam, 1923.

Lloyd, G., ed. *Hippocratic Writings*. Penguin, 1978.

Questions to Consider:

1. The Hippocratic physicians were successful, though they distinguished their efforts from those of magicians, sorcerers, and even philosophers. Summarize what their success says about the general attitudes prevailing in Athens circa 430–330 B.C.
2. Explain what the place of philosophy and religion should be in a therapeutic setting that is intended to be "holistic."

Lecture Twelve
Aristotle on the Knowable

Scope: One of the greatest minds the world would host, Aristotle laid the foundations for most of the subjects to which science and scholarship have been devoted ever since. He was the greatest biologist, logician, political theorist, and ethicist of his age, and no one in any age could lay claim to so wide a range of original contributions.

Thus, he records his confidence in *empirical* approaches to the problem of knowledge. The son of a physician and himself keenly interested in the facts of the natural world, Aristotle was a tireless observer and classifier, his research covering all the sciences and especially the biological. A student in Plato's Academy for nearly 20 years, Aristotle was always deeply respectful of Platonic thought, but his own approach would depart in significant ways. Aristotle was the first to develop systematic definitions and methodologies applicable to the study of nature, of ethics and politics, and of psychology. Knowledge begins with the desire to know and with the exercise of our powers of observation, but developed knowledge goes beyond observation and arrives at universal laws.

Outline

I. Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) begins the *Metaphysics* with the observation: "All men by nature desire to know. An example is the delight we take in our senses. For even quite apart from their usefulness, they are loved for their own sake, and none more than the sense of sight."

- **A.** There is an essentially instinctive desire for knowledge common to all creatures, which is necessary if they are to survive. Aristotle is too much the natural scientist to dismiss the information gleaned by the senses.
- **B.** Nature does nothing by chance, and we have obviously been fitted out with senses in order to be guided by them.
- **C.** As an opening statement, the first sentences of the *Metaphysics* are a vindication of knowledge gleaned by perception. That this is incomplete there is to be no doubt, but if we are to engage the problem of knowledge, perception—a sensory awareness of the world around us—must be our starting point.
  - **1.** In his naturalistic works on animals, Aristotle assigns to perception many powers and functions we are inclined to subsume under such headings as "intelligence" or "cognition."
  - **2.** In doing so, he grants to the animal kingdom rich perceptual powers that go well beyond elementary sensory functions, but he will then deny the animal kingdom that culminating and defining rational power reserved to the human psyche.
- **D.** This leads us to Aristotle's understanding of the various powers that the animal kingdom comes equipped with and a scheme of classification that will distinguish between and among animal types in terms of these powers or faculties.
  - **1.** Aristotle begins with the kind of question a scientist would ask when seeking a reasonable basis on which to divide the living from the inanimate realms. What is the fundamental power (*dynamis*) in virtue of which a living thing has life? What is it that the soul (*psyche*) of an entity must posses by way of animation such that life itself becomes possible?
  - **2.** The basic powers are nutritive, reproductive, and locomotor (even some plants have the latter).
  - **3.** Animals are differentiated by having the power of sensation: the power of perception, of acting consciously in response to events in the external world.
  - **4.** These basic functions of nutrition, reproduction, locomotion, and sensation are all powers of the soul (*psyche*). As used by Aristotle, this word is a generic term for those processes that are life-giving and life-sustaining.
  - **5.** With more complex animal forms, to these powers of the soul is added some kind of intellectual or intelligent power: the power of problem solving. Aristotle grants this to much of the animal kingdom; they have that in common with us.
- **E.** Aristotle reserves to human beings, however, a psychic power or faculty of a special kind. It is usually rendered in English as "reason," but the word he uses in his treatise *On the Soul* is *epistemonikon*, meaning the cognitive ability by which we comprehend universal propositions.

1. *Epistemonikon* is a special feature of rationality, fitting us uniquely for, among other things, the rule of law itself. After all, what is the rule of law except the ability to apply some universal precept to an indefinitely large number of individual instances, each qualifying as, for example, "theft"?
2. It is in virtue of this rationality that we become fit for a mode of political, social, and civic life that is unavailable to other "types" within the kingdom of life.

II. Given that we have these faculties and powers, how will Aristotle understand and approach the problem of knowledge? For Aristotle, to know something is essentially to know the cause of it; that is, to have a systematic, scientific understanding of things (*episteme*) is to know the causes by which things are brought about.

A. In effect, Aristotle says that a claim that someone knows that a right-angle triangle has 180 degrees can be understood in one of two ways.
1. A person may know that a triangle has 180 degrees because she has measured the angles and sees that their sum is 180 degrees, or she may know that *by definition* a triangle has 180 degrees and, thus, knows this of all triangles without measuring any of them.
2. What is the difference between the knowledge of one sort and the other? In one case, what is known is known by experience and does not rise to the level of *episteme*. In contrast, developed knowledge, such as could be gained by studying geometry, is a knowledge of the regulative principles and laws that govern the affairs of things, not simply factual knowledge of this or that.

B. Of course, to say that knowledge requires an understanding of the causes of things is to raise a question about just what a cause is. "Causation" can be understood in several senses.
1. Every identifiable thing that exists is made of some particular material and could not exist except as a result of that material. The marble of which a statue is made is, thus, the *material* cause.
2. Every such thing is recognizable as a given type or form of thing. This "form," then, must be present for the thing to be what it is. In this respect, the shape of the statue and its resemblance to an original is its *formal* cause.
3. But form is imparted to matter by strokes and blows and other forms of mechanical influence. The shape of the statue is carved out of the stone by chisel and hammer; these are the *efficient* cause of the statue.
4. The ultimate understanding of the object stems from the intelligent design that the object itself realizes. Aristotle refers to this as the *final* cause—that is, the final thing realized in time, although it is first in conception.

C. Truly developed knowledge embraces not only the material, efficient, and formal causes, but the *that for the sake of which* these causes were recruited. To understand *x* is to know *what x is for*, what its purpose or end, its *telos*, is. Thus does Aristotle seek *teleological* explanations as ultimate.

D. Questions of what things are *for* are also central to Aristotle's ethical and political thought. We have purposes and ends as the kinds of beings we are; how are those to be reached? How does the *polis* aid or hinder those ends?
1. Our knowledge of ourselves must be grounded in a respect for just what our defining abilities achieve because these very abilities reveal the *that for the sake of which*….
2. The developed knowledge that we have leads us to an understanding that the things of the universe, including living things, instantiate a plan; they fit in. Nature does not do things without a purpose. The ultimate question for understanding, then, is: "How does this fit into things? What is it for? What purpose does it serve?"
3. We know at the outset that nothing with pattern and design comes about accidentally. As Aristotle says, "If the art of shipbuilding were in the wood, we would have ships by nature." Wood, however, is the material cause of the ship, and the workers who build the ship are its efficient cause.
4. The art of shipbuilding is finally in the ship's designer. It is the designer who knows what ships are for and how that purpose is served by the right materials, rightly assembled. To "know" in this sense is to comprehend far more than anything conveyed by the mere material composition of an object.

III. As a final point, we must note one other aspect of Aristotle's philosophy of explanation that is often misunderstood.

A. Aristotle argues that a thoroughly scientific explanation is one that includes a universal principle of which the thing to be explained is an instance, something that is always the case. We do not fully understand any event unless we can show it to be an example of some universal principle of which it is an instance.

B. When Aristotle writes on biological subjects, as well as psychological and social matters, he inserts a qualifier: *hos epi to polu*, which is best rendered as "for the most part," "by and large," or "in general."

C. In other words, Aristotle teaches us to expect precision only to the extent that the subject at hand admits of it and to seek no more precision that what the subject at hand will admit of. When we examine complex social, political, and moral phenomena, we look for general precepts that are right by and large, in general, and for the most part.

Recommended Reading:

Barnes, J. ed. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, 2 vols. Princeton, 1984, especially the treatises "Physics," "On the Soul," and Book I of *Metaphysics*.

Robinson, D. N. *Aristotle's Psychology*. Columbia, 1989.

Robinson, D. N. *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 3rd ed. Wisconsin University Press, 1995, chapter 3.

Questions to Consider:

1. Evolutionary theory offers explanations that are "teleological." Explain how these differ from Aristotle's explanations.
2. Conclude whether the fitness of animals for the environments they confront establishes an intelligent or rational plan for the animal kingdom.
3. Modern science tends to limit explanations to those based on *efficient* causation. Conclude whether this really *explains* phenomena.

Timeline

800–600 B.C.E.	Morality tales, such as the Hindu Upanishads, appear in many settled communities.
~750 B.C.E.	Homer composes *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
700 B.C.E.	Colonization of Sicily, the east coast of Italy, and islands off the coast of Asia Minor begins, primarily to grow produce that can be sent back to mainland Greece.
6th century B.C.E.	Schools of critical inquiry emerge in ancient Greece. Parmenides and other pre-Socratic philosophers emerge. *Empirkoi*, or empirical practitioners who followed Hippocrates's philosophy, make up the dominant school of Greek medicine.
570 B.C.E.	Birth of Pythagoras.
551 B.C.E.	Birth of Confucius.
4th century B.C.E.	Isocrates composes the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.
479 B.C.E.	Death of Confucius.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Hippocrates.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Socrates.
446 B.C.E.	Birth of Isocrates.
427 B.C.E.	Birth of Plato.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Hippocrates.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Socrates.
384 B.C.E.	Birth of Aristotle.
360 B.C.E.	Plato writes his dialogue *The Republic*, generally considered to be the foundational work in political science. It addresses the question of how a man's virtue may be measured.
347 B.C.E.	Death of Plato.
338 B.C.E.	Death of Isocrates.
322 B.C.E.	Death of Aristotle.
300 B.C.E.	Stoic philosophy develops.
106 B.C.E.	Birth of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
43 B.C.E.	Death of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
1st century C.E.	"Hellenized" Jews build Christianity.
354 C.E.	Birth of St. Augustine.
397 C.E.	St. Augustine publishes *The Confessions*, a personal, introspective work of psychology.
430 C.E.	Death of St. Augustine.
476 C.E.	Fall of Rome.
632 C.E.	According to the teachings of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message that would be faithfully recorded in the Koran.

650–850 C.E. ..... The Dark Ages.

1150–1300. ..... Medieval period.

13th century ..... Advent of a "renaissance" of scholarly thought, with Roger Bacon and others recovering the spirit of experimental modes of inquiry.

1214 ..... Birth of Roger Bacon.

1225 ..... Birth of Thomas Aquinas.

1274 ..... Death of Thomas Aquinas.

1294 ..... Death of Roger Bacon.

1304 ..... Birth of Francesco Petrarch.

1374 ..... Death of Francesco Petrarch.

15th century ..... The Italian Renaissance.

1452 ..... Birth of Leonardo da Vinci.

1483 ..... Birth of Martin Luther.

1497 ..... Savonarola burns the vanities.

1517 ..... Martin Luther protests aspects of the Catholic Church.

1519 ..... Death of Leonardo da Vinci.

1546 ..... Death of Martin Luther.

1546–1648 ..... The Protestant Reformation, launched by Martin Luther's 1517 protest against aspects of the Catholic Church.

1561 ..... Birth of Francis Bacon.

1588 ..... Birth of Thomas Hobbes.

1596 ..... Birth of René Descartes.

1626 ..... Death of Francis Bacon.

1632 ..... Birth of John Locke.

1633 ..... Galileo is called before the Inquisition.

1642 ..... Birth of Isaac Newton

1646 ..... Birth of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1650 ..... Death of René Descartes.

1660 ..... The Royal Society becomes the center of a growing culture of science.

1660 ..... Thomas Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*.

1679 ..... Death of Thomas Hobbes.

1685 ..... Birth of George Berkeley.

1694 ..... Birth of François Marie Arouet, who wrote under the name Voltaire.

1699 ..... Lord Shaftesbury publishes *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, offering an explanation of moral conduct based on the notion of natural dispositions and affections.

1704 ..... Death of John Locke.

1705 ..... Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz offers a significant critique of the Lockean view in *New Essays on Human Understanding*.

1709 ..... Birth of Julien Offray de La Mettrie.

1710 ..... George Berkeley publishes his critique of the Lockean view, *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*.

1710 ..... Birth of Thomas Reid.

1711 ..... Birth of David Hume.

1712 ..... Birth of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1715 ..... Birth of the French philosopher Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1715 ..... Birth of Etienne Condillac, John Locke's translator in France.

1716 ..... Death of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1724 ..... Birth of Immanuel Kant.

1729 ..... Birth of Edmund Burke.

1734 ..... Voltaire writes his *Letters on the English*.

1739 ..... David Hume publishes *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which aimed to defeat Skepticism by putting philosophy on a firmer footing, grounding morality, science, and politics in the realm of experience.

1743 ..... Birth of Condorcet.

1748 ..... La Mettrie publishes the banned book *Man—A Machine*, which extends the materialistic drift of Descartes's psychology.

Mid-18th century ..... The "Scottish Enlightenment."

1751 ..... Death of La Mettrie.

1757 ..... Birth of Pierre Cabanis.

1758 ..... Birth of Franz Joseph Gall.

1764 ..... Thomas Reid publishes *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*.

1770 ..... Birth of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1771 ..... Death of Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1772 ..... Helvetius's *A Treatise on Man*, which maintains that human essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world, published posthumously.

1773 ..... John Locke's *Two Treatises* is published in colonial America.

1776 ..... Death of David Hume.

1778 ..... Death of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1778 ..... Death of François Marie Arouet (Voltaire).

1780 ..... Death of Etienne Condillac.

1781 ..... Immanuel Kant publishes his *Critique of Pure Reason*, which credits David Hume with awakening Kant from his "dogmatic slumber."

1783 ..... Death of George Berkeley.

1787 ..... The U.S. Constitution is forged in Philadelphia. During the subsequent ratification period, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay write essays in the New York newspapers addressing and countering the various

	arguments that had been advanced against the Constitution and the federal model of governance. These essays became known as *The Federalist Papers*.
1794	Death of Condorcet.
1794	Death of Pierre Flourens.
1795	Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* published posthumously.
1796	Death of Thomas Reid.
1797	Death of Edmund Burke.
1804	Death of Immanuel Kant.
1806	Birth of John Stuart Mill.
1808	Death of Pierre Cabanis.
1809	Birth of Charles Darwin.
1818	Birth of Karl Marx.
1822	Birth of Francis Galton.
1828	Death of Franz Joseph Gall.
1830	Auguste Comte publishes his *Course of Positive Philosophy,* which reflected on the achievements of the Enlightenment and concluded that human thought passes through distinct stages.
1830s	The British Reform Act ends British participation in the slave trade and extends political rights to those long denied the franchise, including those not members of the Church of England.
1831	Death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.
1833	Charles Lyell publishes his *Principles of Geology*, which provided a time frame compatible with the requirements of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.
1842	Birth of William James.
1844	Birth of Friedrich Nietzsche.
Mid–late 19th century	The Aesthetic movement.
1856	Birth of Sigmund Freud.
1859	John Stuart Mill publishes *On Liberty*.
1862	In November of this year, Hermann von Helmholtz gives a lecture on conservation of energy at Heidelberg, where he addresses, among other issues, the relatively new division between leading scientists and philosophers.
1867	Death of Pierre Flourens.
1869	Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin, publishes his studies of hereditary genius, which conclude that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.
1871	Charles Darwin publishes *Descent of Man*, which puts forth his theory of natural selection.
1872	Friedrich Nietzsche publishes his first notable work, *The Birth of Tragedy and the Spirit of Music*.

1873 ..... Death of John Stuart Mill.

1875 ..... Birth of Carl Gustav Jung.

1882 ..... Death of Charles Darwin.

1883 ..... Death of Karl Marx.

1889 ..... Birth of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1890 ..... William James publishes *The Principles of Psychology*.

1896 ..... Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Studies of Hysteria*, in which the theory is advanced that hysterical symptoms are the outcome of repression.

1900 ..... Death of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1910 ..... Death of William James.

1911 ..... Death of Francis Galton.

1912 ..... Birth of Alan Turing.

1938 ..... Death of Sigmund Freud.

1950 ..... Alan Turing publishes his *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*.

1951 ..... Death of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1954 ..... Death of Alan Turing.

1961 ..... Death of Carl Gustav Jung.

Glossary

Apatheia: Freedom from pathos and suffering.

Atman: The soul, or core reality of the human individual. Hindu.

Brahma: The "creator" within the Hindu divine triad—Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.

Categorical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made on principles whose moral authority takes precedence over any merely hypothetical imperative. Categorical imperatives derive from the intelligible realm governed by "the laws of freedom," rather than the natural realm of physical determination. Unlike hypothetical imperatives, they must be universally applicable. That is, they do not depend on a calculation of utility or on any calculation of possible consequences in particular circumstances.

Chthonic religion: Earth-centered religion, in which women or female deities are central figures because of their procreative power. Common in matriarchal societies.

Common sense: Scottish school of thought from the 18th and early 19th centuries, holding that in the perception of the average, unsophisticated person, sensations are not mere ideas or subjective impressions but carry with them the belief in corresponding qualities as belonging to external objects.

Contiguity: Similarity in time or place.

Ecstasis: Greek; "ecstasy." Stepping outside oneself or being removed from oneself.

Ego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The ego is purported to stand between the id and the superego to balance our primitive needs and our moral/ethical beliefs.

Eidola: "Phantoms," or atomic emanations from material objects that have some access to the organs of sense. Concept proposed by ancient atomists to explain hallucinations, dreams, religious visions, and so on.

Empiricism: The philosophical view that all human knowledge is derived from experience and that which cannot be confirmed via experience is not naturally known.

Enlightenment: Eighteenth-century European intellectual movement that rejected the presumptive authority of the past in favor of a reliance on experience and reason/science.

Enthousiasmos: Greek; "enthusiasm." Presenting oneself in such a way that the gods can enter the self.

Ephistemonikon: Abstract and universal statements.

Episteme: Scientific knowledge.

Epistemology: The study of how we know what we know and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible, one of the central questions in the study of metaphysics. Examines the question of knowledge and attempts to characterize the nature of truth and science.

Eudaimonia: The doing of something for its own sake, as the gods do. "Happiness."

Experimenta fructifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these consequential experiments are designed to allow the observer to choose between competing accounts of facts on hand.

Experimenta lucifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these "light-shedding" experiments alert the observer to factors operative in the causal matrix that brings things about. Such studies are essentially exercises in fact gathering.

Fallibilism: View that there is always *more* to the account than any current version *can* include, because other experiences, beliefs, and needs are always in existence.

Fatalism: The belief that every event is bound to happen as it does no matter what we do about it. Fatalism is the most extreme form of causal determinism, because it denies that human actions have any causal efficacy.

Functionalism: The view that consciousness is not a material entity attached to the brain, but a process, a stream of experiences knitted together as they flow by a supernumerary intelligence.

Hedonism: Doctrine holding that pleasure is the highest good.

Hypothetical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made to attain a specific end. Hypothetical imperatives are contingent; they are tied to a particular context and to the needs and desires of natural creatures under the press of the needs to survive, to avoid pain, and to gain pleasure. Decisions thus grounded are non-moral, because they arise from our natures as merely human beings, not as rational beings; that is, they are essentially reactions.

Id: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The id is purported to represent primary process thinking—our most primitive need-gratification thoughts.

Intuition: An instinctive knowing, or impression that something might be the case, without the use of rational processes.

Ius civile: Expression of local values and interests, which differs from place to place and people to people.

Ius gentium: Universally adopted precepts of those who live under any rule of law, such as the idea that harm done to another without cause is wrong, as is the taking of what clearly belongs to another.

Jainism: Ethical school based on the Pythagorean teachings, which emphasizes the celebration of all that lives.

Labor theory of value: The concept that property is worth only as much as the labor invested in it; the surplus is profit, which accumulates as capital.

Logos: The aims and goals generated by the rational intelligence behind the order of the cosmos.

Lyssa: "Wolf's rage"; extreme anger in the heat of battle.

Malleus maleficarum: A coherent theory of witchcraft, a set of tests to determine witchcraft, and a list of appropriate punishments used during the witch hunts from 1400 to 1700 and beyond.

Marxism: A form of communism based on the writings of Karl Marx, who theorized that actions and human institutions are economically determined, that the class struggle is the basic agency of historical change, and that capitalism will ultimately be superseded by communism.

Metaphysics: Concept referring to two distinguishable but interconnected sets of questions: first, the question of what really exists and, second, the question of how we know such things and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible or defective. The term is derived from the writings of Aristotle.

Mimesis: The imitative representation of nature or human behavior.

Mythos: The complex of beliefs, values, and attitudes characteristic of a specific group or society.

Naturalism: The meta-ethical thesis that moral properties are reducible to natural ones or that ethical judgments may be derived from non-ethical ones. Also, a scientific account of the world in terms of causes and natural forces that rejects all spiritual, supernatural, or teleological explanations.

Natural law: An ethical belief or system of beliefs supposed to be inherent in human nature and discoverable by reason rather than revelation. Also, the philosophical doctrine that the authority of the legal system or of certain laws derives from their justifiability by reason and, indeed, that a legal system that cannot be so justified has no authority.

Natural rights: Rights inherent in a being because of its nature as a being of a certain sort.

Nomological: The mode of causation employed by God, according to the Stoics; immutable laws control the affairs of the cosmos.

Nomos: Prevailing social expectations and requirements, or "the law of the land."

Noumena/Phenomena: According to Immanuel Kant, knowledge arises from experience; therefore, it must be knowledge of *phenomena*, that is, of things and events as these are delivered by the senses. From the evidence at the phenomenal level, we can reason to the fact that there is a *noumenal* realm of being. Thus, we can know *that* it is

but cannot know *what* it is. Ultimately, our knowledge claims must be utterly bounded by the pure intuitions of time and space and the pure categories of the understanding.

Ontology: The study of what really exists, one of the key questions central to the concept of metaphysics.

Philosophy: The rational pursuit of truths deemed to be answers to perennial questions, as well as a historical study of intractable problems; literally, the love of wisdom.

Phrenology: A Victorian-era science of character divination, faculty psychology, and brain theory derived from the Viennese physician Franz Joseph Gall's system, which held that the surface of the skull could be read as an accurate index of an individual's psychological aptitudes and tendencies.

Phronesis: Greek term for practical wisdom or prudence; the application of good judgment to human conduct, in contrast with the more theoretical inquiry leading to *sophia*, or wisdom generally.

Phusis: Greek, "nature."

Physiognomy: The study of the shape and configuration of a person's face to determine his or her character and intelligence.

Pluralism: The philosophical doctrine that reality consists of several basic substances or elements.

Polis: Life within a settled community, in which one participates and from which one draws lessons for life.

Positivism: A form of empiricism that bases all knowledge on perceptual experience, rather than on intuition or revelation.

Pragmatism: The doctrine that practical consequences are the criteria of knowledge, meaning, and value.

Providential: The mode of causation employed by God, according to Hellenistic philosophy. The cosmos is created and ordered by a perfect rational entity, whose knowledge is also perfect. The creative entity takes an interest in its creation.

Pyrrhonism: An early Greek form of Skepticism.

Pythagorean theorem: One of the earliest theorems known to ancient civilizations; named for the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras. The Pythagorean theorem states: "The area of the square built upon the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the areas of the squares upon the remaining sides."

Res cogitans*/*res extensa: The metaphysical dualism on which the Cartesian philosophical system rests. *Res cogitans* is God and the human soul; *res extensa* is the corporeal world.

Revelation: An enlightening or astonishing disclosure. Also, communication of knowledge to man by a divine or supernatural agency.

Romanticism: A movement in literature, art, and intellectual thought during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that celebrated nature rather than civilization and valued imagination and emotion over rationality.

Sophia: Greek, "wisdom."

Sophists: Greek philosophers who showed complete indifference to the problems of the world of matter and centered their efforts on man. But man can be an object of study in his sense knowledge, as well as in the more profound world of reason. The Sophists stopped at the data of experience—at empirical, not rational, knowledge—and from this point of view, they wished to judge the world of reality.

Stoics: Greek philosophers whose worldview was one of a rationally governed universe of material entities, each answering to its controlling principle and, thus, participating in the overall cosmic *logos*. In its most developed form, Stoicism takes the lawfulness of the cosmos as the model on which human life is to proceed. The rule of law is the defining mark of our humanity, according to this philosophy.

Sturm und Drang: German; "storm and stress." Romanticism perceived this evolutionary struggle that produces new and better things not predictable in a mechanistic view.

Superego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The superego is purported to represent our conscience and counteract the id with moral and ethical thoughts.

Tabula rasa: A blank slate. In the Lockean view, the condition of the human mind at birth.

Teleia philia: Perfected or completed friendship, the aims of which do not go outside the friendship itself.

Teleology: The philosophical study of purpose; a doctrine that assumes the phenomena of organic life, particularly those of evolution, are explicable only by purposive causes and that they in no way admit of a mechanical explanation or one based entirely on biological science.

Tetraktys: In Pythagorean philosophy, the sacred integers: 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Thomistic theory of law: Philosophical approach predicated on what is taken to be good for man, given the character of human nature. As "an ordinance of reason," law gives and honors good reasons for certain actions and good reasons for forbearing to act in certain ways. An action is good when it is in accord with the basic goods. A desire is bad when its fulfillment is in defiance of good reasons for action.

Turing machine: An algorithm—not a machine as such—that translates any input signal into a determinate output.

Ubermensch: Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "superman," an exemplar of self-creation who is free from the influence of the general populace.

Unconscious motivation: Concept central to Sigmund Freud's theories of human behavior; the idea that the subconscious portion of the mind plays a larger role in determining behavior than does the conscious portion.

Upanishads: Pre-philosophical Hindu morality tales that address questions of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

Biographical Notes

Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.): Earliest of the three greatest Greek tragedians, the others being Sophocles and Euripides; known for his masterpiece, *The Oresteia* trilogy. Aeschylus's greatest contribution to the theater was the addition of a second actor to his scenes. Previously, the action took place between a single actor and the Greek chorus.

Anaximenes (585–525 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who held that the air, with its variety of contents, its universal presence, and its vague associations in popular fancy with the phenomena of life and growth, is the source of all that exists.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274): Dominican priest and scholastic philosopher whose "natural law" theory defined law as an ordinance of reason, promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community. His treatises on law would form the foundation of critical inquiry in jurisprudence for centuries, integrating classical and Christian thought.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.): Greek philosopher who, along with Plato, is often considered to be one of the two most influential philosophers in Western thought. Aristotle most valued knowledge gained from the senses and would correspondingly be classed among modern empiricists. Thus, Aristotle set the stage for what would eventually develop into the scientific method centuries later.

St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.): Roman Catholic bishop and Christian Neo-Platonist who was a leader in the widespread merging of the Greek philosophical tradition and Judeo-Christian religious and scriptural traditions.

Avicenna (980–1037): Inspired by Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, articulated a mode of philosophical reasoning that would virtually define medieval thought and scholasticism. Put Arab scholarship and Islamic thought at the center of naturalistic and scientific thinking.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626): Generally considered the "prophet" of Newton and the father once removed of the authority of experimental science. Known for his groundbreaking *Novum Organum* ("*New Method*"), which established the authority of observation in discovering the nature of the external world and the authority of the experimental method as the way to select the correct from competing theories of causation.

Roger Bacon (1214–1294): Thirteenth-century English scholar who stated the basic program of experimental science. Known for his *Opus Maius*, considered one of the foundational works in the modern scientific movement.

George Berkeley (1685–1783): Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland and a scientist. Offered a critique of the Lockean view in his *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, which attempts to defeat materialism and the skepticism it spawns by establishing the essentially mental preconditions for a material world to exist at all.

Josef Breuer (1842–1925): Viennese neurologist who worked with Sigmund Freud on the theory of repression.

Ernst Brucke (1819–1892): One of Sigmund Freud's teachers, along with Hermann von Helmholtz, Karl Ludwig, and DuBois-Reymond.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797): British political writer and statesman. Burke's essay on the sublime, written in the period of the Enlightenment, prefigures the Hegelian worldview, defining the *sublime* as that which strikes awe and terror in the heart.

Pierre Cabanis (1757–1808): One of the leaders of thought in the French materialist tradition, known for his series of essays on the relationship between the psychological and physical dimensions of human life.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.): Roman orator, lawyer, politician, and philosopher who considered philosophical study most valuable as the means to more effective political action.

Auguste Comte (1798–1857): French writer whose works—a series of essays published collectively under the title *A Course of Positive Philosophy*—influenced John Stuart Mill. One of the fathers of a version of positivism.

Etienne Condillac (1715–1780): Locke's translator in France, who offers the model of the "sentient statue" whose character, knowledge, and conduct are carved into it by a ceaselessly impinging environment.

Condorcet (1743–1794): French philosopher whose *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, written while he was hiding from France's new "liberators" during the Reign of Terror, delivers the idea of

progress in one of its most summoning forms. The mind has progressed from murky superstition and timidity toward the light of reason in stages, each stage requiring the abandonment of ancestral ignorance. The advent of the scientific worldview now abets this progress.

Confucius (551–479 B.C.): Chinese philosopher who maintained that adherence to traditional values of virtue is necessary to achieve a state of orderliness and peace.

Charles Darwin (1809–1882): British naturalist who developed the theory of evolutionary selection, which holds that variation within species occurs randomly and that the survival or extinction of each organism is determined by that organism's ability to adapt to its environment.

Democritus (460–370 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who taught an atomic theory of reality, that all things are made of atoms and void.

René Descartes (1596–1650): Discovered analytical geometry, was an important contributor to the physical sciences, and was, perhaps, the most important figure in that branch of philosophy called *philosophy of mind*. Known for his proof of existence: "I think, therefore I am."

Denis Diderot (1713–1784): Most prominent of the French Encyclopedists. In the circle of the leaders of the Enlightenment, Diderot's name became known especially by his *Lettre sur les aveugles* (London, 1749), which supported Locke's theory of knowledge.

Diogenes (4th century B.C.): Leading philosopher of the pre-Socratic school of Cynicism. Diogenes practiced self-control and a rigid abstinence, exposing himself to extremes of heat and cold and living on the simplest diet.

Erasmus (1469–1536): Fifteenth-century humanist. His best known work is *Praise of Folly*, a pamphlet mainly directed against the behavior of ruling classes and church dignitaries while exposing the irony of mankind's vanities.

Euripides (480–406 B.C.): Greek playwright best known for the tragedy *Medea*.

Pierre Flourens (1794–1867): French physiologist who—along with François Magendie and Xavier Bichat—surgically destroyed selective regions of animals' brains and observed the behavior of the survivors. Through this technique, Flourens discovered that the areas of the brain that Franz Joseph Gall had identified with certain specific functions were not connected with those specific functions.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1938): The father of psychoanalysis. Freud, in collaboration with Joseph Breuer, articulated and refined the concepts of the unconscious, infantile sexuality, and repression and proposed a tripartite account of the mind's structure, all as part of a then–radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions.

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828): Leading neuroanatomist of his time; propounded the "science" of phrenology, a theory that brain structures are related to brain functions, which became dominant in the scientific thinking of the 19th century and thereafter.

Francis Galton (1822–1911): Cousin of Charles Darwin. Published his studies of hereditary genius in 1869, stating that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832): Eighteenth-century writer best known for *Faust*.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831): German philosopher who merged and synthesized many of the strongest tendencies in Romantic thought. First is the idea of progressive and evolving reality—not the staid mechanical repetitiousness of mere causality, but an active principle at work in the natural world. Second, there is the criticism of science as not being up to the task of comprehending this world, tied as it is to reductive schemes.

Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894): Nineteenth-century physicist and physiologist; one of Sigmund Freud's teachers. In a November 1862 lecture at Heidelberg, Helmholtz tried to clarify why leading scientists visibly shunned philosophers, when previously, the natural philosopher was the natural scientist.

Claude Adrien Helvetius (1715–1771): French philosopher who, in his *A Treatise on Man*, puts forth a radical environmentalism, which holds that our essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world; rather, it is a record of those experiences.

Herodotus (5th century B.C.): Greek scholar said to be the first historian in the modern accepted sense of the term; the "father of historical scholarship." Known for his treatise *The Persian Wars*.

Hippocrates (469–399 B.C.): Greek physician considered to be the father of modern medicine.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679): British philosopher who rejected Cartesian dualism and believed in the mortality of the soul; rejected free will in favor of a determinism that treats freedom as being able to do what one desires; and rejected Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy in favor of the "new" philosophy of Galileo and Gassendi, which largely treats the world as matter in motion. Hobbes is perhaps most famous for his political philosophy, which maintained that men in a state of nature, without civil government, are in a war of all against all in which life is hardly worth living. The way out of this desperate state is to make a social contract and establish the state to keep peace and order.

Homer (~ 750/800 B.C.): Blind Greek poet who wrote about the Trojan War, considered a defining moment in Greek history and presumed to have concluded a half-millennium earlier. Best known for his two epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

David Hume (1711–1776): One of the most influential philosophers to have written in the English language, Hume offered an experiential theory of knowledge, morality, and religion. He made more credible the notion that a bona fide *science of the mind* was within reach.

T. H. Huxley (1825–1895): British physician and surgeon who was one of the first adherents to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection; Huxley did more than anyone else to advance the theory's acceptance among scientists and the public alike.

Isocrates (446–338 B.C.): Greek philosopher who lived and wrote in the same cultural situation as Plato. Isocrates held that reality is immediate human experience and metaphysical speculation is a waste of time and energy. He also said that all knowledge is tentative and values are relative. Composed the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.

William James (1842–1910): American psychologist and philosopher who maintained that every idea belongs to someone, that mental life is not an empty container filled with experiences agglomerating with one another. Thus, the external world is chosen for the content that will be experienced and associated.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961): A younger colleague of Sigmund Freud, Jung divided the psyche into three parts: the ego, or conscious mind; the personal unconscious, which includes anything that is not currently conscious but can be; and finally, the collective unconscious, or reservoir of our experiences as a species, a kind of knowledge with which we are all born but are never directly conscious of. The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*, unlearned tendencies to experience things in a certain way. The archetype has no form of its own, but it acts as an "organizing principle" on the things we see or do.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): Kant's most original contribution to philosophy is his Copernican Revolution that the representation makes the object possible, rather than the object making the representation possible. This introduced the human mind as an active originator of experience, rather than a passive recipient of perception.

Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751): French philosopher whose naturalism tends toward materialism. His *Man—A Machine* extends to its logical conclusion the materialistic drift of Descartes's own psychology.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716): Offered a significant critique of the Lockean view in his *New Essays on Human Understanding*, which concluded that an organizing and rationally functioning mind must be present for there to be coherent experience and that nothing in the operation of the biological senses can constitute a thought or an idea.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519): Italian painter, architect, engineer, mathematician, and philosopher who is widely considered to represent the Renaissance ideal.

John Locke (1632–1704): Physician and one of the "fathers" of British empiricism. Locke set out in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to defend a naturalistic account of mental life and a reductionistic strategy for studying and explaining that life. Accordingly, both knowledge and self-knowledge are derived from experiences and the memory of them. One's very personal identity is but that collection of entities in consciousness entering by way of experience.

Martin Luther (1483–1546): Began the Protestant Reformation with his protests against aspects of the Catholic Church.

Ernst Mach (1838–1916): German physicist who formulated a positivist creed in science that John Stuart Mill would develop. Mach said that we recognize our work as science to the extent that it is *not* metaphysics and that physical laws are only systematic descriptions of sense data that need no metaphysical description or underpinning.

Karl Marx (1818–1883): Philosopher, social scientist, historian, and revolutionary who developed a socialist system that came to be used as the basis for many regimes around the world.

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873): Known for his *System of Logic*, published in 1843, which analyzed inductive proof. Mill provided the empirical sciences with a set of formulas and criteria to serve the same purpose for them as the timeworn formula of the syllogism had served for arguments that proceeded from general principles. Mill's work is not merely a logic in the limited sense of that term, but also a theory of knowledge such as Locke and Hume provide.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900): German philosopher who sharply criticized traditional philosophy and religion as both erroneous and harmful for human life, arguing that they enervate and degrade our native capacity for achievement. Best known for developing the concept of the *Ubermensch*, or "superman," a rare, superior individual that can rise above all moral distinctions to achieve a heroic life of truly human worth.

Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374): Father of humanism. An Italian scholar and poet who is credited with having given the Renaissance its name.

Plato (427–347 B.C.): Greek philosopher and student of Socrates whose writings convey the spirit of his master's teachings on the theory of forms, the problem of knowledge, cosmological speculations, and the treatment of government.

Protagoras (490–420 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher. A leading figure in Sophist thought, he proposed that "Man is the measure of all things."

Pyrrhon of Elis (360–272 B.C.): Greek philosopher known as one of the great fathers of Skeptical thought.

Pythagoras (c. 580-500 B.C.): Greek philosopher who maintained that the ultimate reality was abstract and relational, depending on numbers. His harmonic view of the universe provided one of the foundations for Platonic philosophy. The first person to demonstrate the theorem that with any right triangle, the sum of the squares of each of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.

Thomas Reid (1710–1796): Father of the Scottish Common Sense School. Scottish philosopher who laid the foundations for a "common sense" psychology based on the natural endowments by which we (and the animals) understand the world and act in it. His influence was broad and deep, reaching the leaders of thought at the American founding. Reid was the leading figure in a group of scholars and scientists at Aberdeen committed to the larger Newtonian perspective. He also was David Hume's most successful critic.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778): Swiss-French philosopher, author, and political theorist whose work largely decried the harmful effects of modern civilization.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498): Italian religious reformer best known for his attempt to reform Renaissance Florence society and the Catholic Church from the vices of modern life as he knew them.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805): German historian, philosopher, and dramatist; his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* maintained that it is freedom that creates, determinism that limits and kills. Friend of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Socrates (c. 469–399 B.C.): Greek philosopher committed to objectifying the self and holding it up to scrutiny in order to examine human nature. Developed the Socratic method, which tests every assumption for its grounding and implications.

Sophocles (496–406 B.C.): One of the great playwrights of the Greek golden age; known for his tragedy *Antigone*.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903): British philosopher and sociologist who supplied the phrase "survival of the fittest" and gave Darwinism its most portentous set of social implications.

Alan Turing (1912–1954): Mathematician and cryptographer who developed the concept of the computable algorithm.

Voltaire (1694 –1778): French Enlightenment writer and philosopher who maintained that our experience is the key to understanding human nature and the nature of the world around us. His real name was François Marie Arouet.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913): Worked with Charles Darwin to develop the theory of evolution by natural selection. Wallace concluded that he could not see natural selection at work in three domains: (1) abstract thought, which seems to serve no evolutionary purpose; (2) art, in which resources are willingly squandered in the service of the merely beautiful; and (3) moral thought and ethics, where we sacrifice our own most cherished interests in the service of others.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951): Austrian philosopher whose *The Tractatus* stated that the world consists entirely of independent, simple facts out of which complex ones are constructed. Language has as its purpose the stating of facts by picturing these facts.

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Part II

Professor Daniel N. Robinson

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Daniel Robinson is Distinguished Professor, Emeritus, Georgetown University, where he taught from 1971 to 2001. He is a member of the philosophy faculty of Oxford University and former Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. Although his doctorate was earned in neuropsychology (1965, City University of New York), his scholarly books and articles have established him as an authority in the history and philosophy of psychology, history of ideas, philosophy of mind, and kindred subjects.

Dr. Robinson's books include *The Enlightened Machine: An Analytical Introduction to Neuropsychology* (Columbia, 1980), *Psychology and Law* (Oxford, 1980), *Philosophy of Psychology* (Columbia, 1985), *Aristotle's Psychology* (1989), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), and *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard, 1996). He has served as principal consultant to PBS for the award-winning series *The Brain* and the subsequent nine-part series *The Mind*. He is past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association: the Division of the History of Psychology and the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Dr. Robinson also serves on the Board of Scholars of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, is a member of the American Philosophical Association, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition
Part II

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Scope:

This course of 60 lectures is intended to introduce the student to main currents and issues in philosophical thought from the founding of the subject in ancient Greece to more contemporary studies. The lectures are organized around three abiding problems: the problem of knowledge (epistemology and metaphysics), the problem of conduct (ethics and moral philosophy), and the problem of governance (political science and law). Each of these has by now evolved into a specialized subject treated rigorously in professional texts and journals. But even in these more technical projections, the problems remain largely as they were when the schools of Plato and Aristotle dealt with them and imposed on them the features they still retain.

More than a series of lectures on the great philosophers, this course is designed to acquaint the student with broader cultural and historical conditions that favored or opposed a given philosophical perspective. Attention is paid to the influence that scientific developments had on the very conception of philosophy and on the scientific rejection of "metaphysics" that took place when the "two cultures" began to take separate paths.

Needless to say, the vast terrain that philosophy seeks to cover extends far beyond what can be explored in 60 lectures—or in 200 lectures! Entire areas of active scholarship have been ignored. But still other areas have been more carefully examined than is customary in an introductory course: philosophy of law, philosophy and aesthetics, evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory. The hope and expectation is that, informed by these lectures, the interested student will press on, will fashion a fuller curriculum of study, and will return to these lectures for the more general framework within which the specialized knowledge ultimately must find a place.

Lecture Thirteen
Aristotle on Friendship

Scope: "Man is, by nature, a social animal," says Aristotle, but then he adds that this is also true of swans and bees. In his treatise on *Politics*, however, he makes the seemingly odd claim that the *polis* precedes the family and the individual. And in his ethical treatises, he is at pains to clarify the nature of human relationships as distinct from the herding instincts found throughout the animal kingdom.

Friendship is central to the existence of human relationships. The forms of friendship reflect the character of those entering into them. One common form is friendship for the sake of pleasure; another is friendship for the sake of usefulness. The rarest form is the friendship obtaining between the virtuous, who seek what is best for the other and this for the sake of the other.

The form of social life that is right for man is life in a political community, which is to say a community rationally governed by laws and customs that incline us toward virtuous conduct and away from vice. What arises in such contexts is the possibility of truly developed or "perfected" friendships, these being available to those who are relevantly equal as regards virtue itself. The good state is akin to the good friend, but the good state must be brought about and maintained by the few, for the benefit of the many. What the worthy *polis* affords is a rule of law conducive to virtue and, therefore, conducive to enduring bonds of friendship.

Outline

I. "Man is, by nature, a social animal whose inclination it is to live in the company of others." "Man is, by nature, a political animal." These are two famous views of Aristotle: that we are by nature social and that we are by nature political; there seems to be something in us that compels us to live in society with others.

- **A.** In light of Aristotle's approach to knowledge and understanding, we are not surprised that the question arising from this fact is: What are such groupings for?
- **B.** Not only do we have a tendency to group ourselves together, but it also seems that we don't stop at the level of tribal enclaves or small familial ensembles. Whenever there are favoring circumstances, there seems to be a movement in the direction of forming a *polis*. This fact also raises an interesting question: Why should this tendency to live in the company of others ever move beyond the stage of families? What purpose is served by more complex modes of social and, ultimately, political life?
- **C.** To this question we might answer, "There's safety in numbers," but we don't need a political community for defense. As Aristotle points out, pirates defend themselves, and indeed, pirates engage in trade; lawless communities can conduct both endeavors.
- **D.** What, then, are the grounds of social affiliation, if not just self-defense, commerce, or utility? We begin our search for an answer in Aristotle's two major ethical writings, the *Nichomachean Ethics* and the *Eudemian Ethics.*
  1. The majority of scholars would probably regard the *Nichomachean Ethics* as Aristotle's developed position on matters ethical, although some controversy exists on this point.
  2. In both works, Aristotle examines the nature of that most basic form of social affiliation, friendship. Aristotle's thoughts on friendship will prove to be a useful introduction to his understanding of social cohesion and political affiliation.

II. Friendship, says Aristotle, comes in different forms and serves different purposes.

- **A.** Some friendships are grounded solely in considerations of sensual pleasure. Such pleasure is ephemeral, however, and the friendship lasts only as long as the pleasure is reciprocated and forthcoming.
- **B.** Some friendships are based on utility. Two people befriend each other because they are useful to each other. Again, such friendships are not enduring. Other people may prove to be more useful to one of the friends, or the usefulness may no longer be reciprocated.
- **C.** The third class of friendship is identified by Aristotle as *teleia philia*, usually translated as "completed" or "perfected" friendship.

1. This expression is intended to convey a species of friendship that expresses the end or purpose served by human associations; therefore, the grounding of this form of friendship is virtue itself.
2. In such friendships, the friends share a set of values and principles of an essentially and irreducibly moral nature.
3. In this kind of friendship, what one person wants for his friend is what is good for the friend for the friend's sake.
4. What we find in a friendship of this kind is a constructive relationship in which each friend, in virtue of his own qualities, helps to realize ever more fully what is not only potentially in the other but also realized in the other. These are friendships of a lifetime. They exist in virtue of the fact that they conduce to goodness, understood as moral excellence, or *arête*.

D. Aristotle argues that this kind of friendship is available not to the many but only to *kaloi kagathoi*, "gentlemen," what we might think of as chivalric knights. Further, virtuous or perfected friendship is possible only between those who are equal, though the measure of equality is not quantitative but proportional.

1. Sufficient equality exists between an audience and a performer because each grants to the other what is due.
2. The only degree of equality that would entirely negate the possibility of friendship would be that which divides humanity from the gods!

III. When we say that the possibility of a completed or perfected friendship is brought about as a result of the virtue that flourishes in the participants, the question naturally arises as to what we mean by *virtue*.

A. Virtue includes the intellectual abilities that are central to our human life—greatness in art, learning, leadership. These virtues are partly innate but largely learned from masters.

B. Moral virtue is also learned. Rather than being intuitive or residing in the soul of superior individuals, it is acquired by lifelong practice—the *habit of virtue*. It is the result of a lifetime of learning and practice and discipline toward the goal of doing right.

C. Moral virtue is a mean between excesses, a balance point. The goal of virtue is perfection, conceived of as just the proper relation of elements—the golden mean, the middle way.

1. Anger is natural; all men are endowed with it by nature, and nature does nothing by chance. What must be practiced in order to be virtuous is anger at the right objects: anger at injustice is proper.
2. Rage is not virtuous because it is excessive and uncontrolled. Courage is the virtue at the balance point between heedlessness and cowardice, which are both excessive forms of the same thing.

IV. We return to the question of why we enter into political forms of social affiliation. We are, by nature, social animals whose inclination is to live in the company of others, but why the *polis*?

A. Aristotle makes a quite interesting claim in the *Politics*, that in the order of things, the *polis* precedes the family and the individual.

1. The *polis* does not precede the family in the sense of family as a breeding pool; it does not precede in the order of time. If all one means by family is a kind of hereditary relatedness, then of course, we can have that without any kind of political community.
2. What we mean by family, however, is a pattern of obligation and duties: the obligations that parents have to their children and children to their parents, the power to accumulate estates and pass on property through wills, to engage in familial modes of activity.
3. All this presupposes an essentially political form of life. Obligations and duties are brought about within the *polis*. Thus, to have a family in that developed sense of family, at least some minimal form of political life is necessary.

B. Again, to say that the polis precedes the individual cannot refer to events in the order of time. But what do we mean by the *individual*?

1. If all we mean is the body, then obviously, one needs neither a *polis* nor a family for that.
2. We identify individuals with certain designations, however, which come about within an essentially political community. We define ourselves through certain tasks and responsibilities, obligations, duties, and contractual terms, such as terms of marriage.
3. These identifications of the individual, these things that give the individual a personal identity, are inextricably bound up with familial and political life.

C. Aristotle is recovering the Homeric idea that a flourishing life presupposes a political form of affiliation, a rich and familial form of life entered into by those who are prepared to live together at the level of principle and in friendly relationships, which themselves presuppose a commitment to virtue.

D. In the end, virtuous actions are those performed consciously by virtuous persons, but people of virtue form a minority. Those fit for virtuous or perfected friendship are also fit for rule.

1. Mob rule is the rule of passion and can tyrannize over the virtuous, because the tastes of the mob are generally grounded in considerations of pleasure and utility.

2. We find in Aristotle, although not to the same extent that we found in Plato, a certain suspicion about radical forms of democratic rule, a recognition that the *kaloi kagathoi* must be the leaders.

3. Perhaps the best mode of political life is a constitutional monarchy, where the rule of law is determinative, but where those who are in charge of administering that law function as friends.

Recommended Reading:

Aristotle. *Nichomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics* in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, 2 vols., J. Barnes, ed. Princeton, 1984.

Rorty, A., ed. *Essays in Aristotle's Ethics*. California,1980.

Questions to Consider:

1. In Aristotle's scheme of classification, describe how you would characterize your own friendships.

2. Conclude whether the law functions now with that character of "friendliness" such that it secures the fidelity of those living under it.

3. Explain the form and degree of equality that you take to be essential to lasting friendship.

Lecture Fourteen
Aristotle on the Perfect Life

Scope: What sort of life is right for us? What is about us that would make this the right sort of life? Aristotle actually reaches rather different answers to this central problem of conduct. He begins his examination by acknowledging that our actions are impelled by the quest for a form of happiness (*eudaimonia*), but this only moves the issue back a notch to the question of just what counts as *eudaimonia*.

If we take the word to refer to that which is sought for its own sake and not in order to obtain some more basic form of happiness, then we might conclude that the right form of life is one that is removed, contemplative, and devoted to inquiries into the sublime and eternal. If, however, we take the word to refer to the creative conditions capable of sustaining and promoting *eudaimonia* itself, then the best form of life is that lived by the good lawgiver, active within the *polis*.

Outline

I. We continue our examination of Aristotle's two ethical treatises, *Nichomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics*. In particular, we look at his understanding of the problem of conduct and conflicting solutions to it.

- **A.** Virtue or excellence is of two distinguishable forms, the *intellectual* and the *moral*. The end of the intellectual virtues is knowledge of one sort or another, whereas the end of the moral virtues is the formation of *character*, or *self-perfection*. The intellectual virtues are the result of teaching and learning. The moral virtues arise from *habit*.
- **B.** Chief among the intellectual virtues is scientific knowledge (*episteme*) by which one knows the causes of things and the laws that govern them. Art (*techne*), too, is an intellectual virtue by which various things are created.
- **C.** Practical reason (*phronesis*) is yet another intellectual virtue, by which one comes to distinguish what is good and bad, the prudent course of action, the right strategy for securing safety and prosperity, and so on.
- **D.** The right kind of life also finds us committing ourselves, committing our rational powers, to what is worth thinking about. Given a choice between contemplating issues of philosophical consequence and contemplating changes in the stock market, a more flourishing life is lived by those who contemplate the former rather than the latter.

II. Moral excellence is developed through habitual striving and a devotion to self-perfection, but why aspire to moral excellence at all? Why should one be courageous as opposed to being a coward? Why should one be temperate as opposed to being extreme?

- **A.** To answer these questions, we must return to Aristotle's theory of causation.
- **B.** Aristotle transforms the question "Why should I live a virtuous life?" to the more general question "Why do I do anything? Why do I do things that involve a deliberated choice between two alternatives?"
- **C.** For Aristotle, the ultimate answer, after the question has been reduced further and further, is that we perform actions for the sake of *eudaimonia*. This central term is a challenge to translate.
  1. In many translations, *eudaimonia* is "happiness." Everything that we do, we do for the sake of happiness, but this is not merely sensuous pleasure and the avoidance of pain.
  2. The best understanding of *eudaimonia* is not that it's some point reached; it's not some transient state, but a veritable form or mode of life. It's life of a certain character and stripe, properly described as a flourishing life—*eudaimonia* is flourishing.
  3. The goal of our deliberated courses of action is a flourishing life.

III. The problem of conduct is then translated into the question of how to achieve that flourishing life that is the ultimate end of our choices and actions. If the goal of all our actions, ultimately, is *eudaimonia*, then what is *eudaimonia* for us? Aristotle gives two rather incompatible answers.

A. The essence of our nature is to reason; therefore, as birds must fly and fish must swim, it follows that the most complete life for humans is the life of contemplation of things of first importance and greatest excellence.

B. Actions performed for their own sake rather than as instrumentally tied to other goods are "godlike," because the Olympians do not act out of necessity. Only the contemplative life is "godlike" in this sense and answers to this description. The contemplation of the sublime is not a practical matter; it is not done in order to achieve some other good, such as wealth or fame or the like.

C. But is the contemplative life enough? Does not *eudaimonia* refer to a form of life that includes others? As a social animal, man cannot flourish in isolation.

1. Indeed, Aristotle says that the completed human being is found within the *polis*, at the hearth, and obedient to the law, not in Homer's hearthless, stateless, lawless man.

2. It is in the nature of the completed being to seek out the company of equals and enter into enduring friendships, which by their nature, are founded in principles of pleasure, utility, and virtue.

3. The principles of virtue at the individual level are like the principles of law that govern the political community itself. The good state will require all of us to do what the rational man does by choice and, by enforcement, will make virtue habitual.

4. In guiding us toward virtuous conduct, the state renders us fitter, not merely for life in the *polis*, but for the most rewarding of friendships and the flourishing life that becomes possible thereby.

D. What would be the best form of life one could live, understood in these terms? The *eudaimonic* life would be the active life of the lawgiver. It would be the life of one immersed in the political needs and realities of his time and contributing to the *polis* through his own virtuous conduct, contributing in such a way that the state, like the person, perfects itself.

1. The purpose of the law is to secure a reasonable, prudent, balanced, harmonious form of life.

2. The rule of law attracts us, and we attach our fidelity to it, because it has a friendly quality—*philikon*. It inclines us to behave in ways that are best for us for our own sake.

E. How do we broker the seemingly competing claims of a life of political activity and the contemplative life?

1. The answer is that it may not be possible to reconcile these competing claims; even Aristotle offers us no compromise here.

2. There is a fundamental tension between a life of activity and a life of contemplation. Once a scholar decides to devote himself or herself to a life of study, which includes the recognition that by nature we are fallible beings, it becomes impossible to take decisive action at the daily political level.

3. In contrast, the political leader changes the world, with military force, enacted legislation, trade agreements, and so on.

F. In this view, who do we see on the horizon? Alexander the Great, who attempted to Hellenize the world. In the process, he also transformed himself, illustrating the dilemma faced by those who seek to balance the contemplative life with the life of political affairs.

Recommended Reading:

Aristotle. *Complete Works*. J. Barnes, ed. Princeton, 1984 (especially the *Nichomachean Ethics*, *Eudemian Ethics*, and *Politics*).

Robinson, D. N. *Aristotle's Psychology*. Columbia, 1989.

Questions to Consider:

1. Given that the *eudaimonic* life is only for the few, explain what sort of life is right for the many.

2. Aristotle granted that non-human animals could experience pleasure and pain but not *eudaimonia*, because the latter requires developed rationality. Explain why "happiness" should require developed rationality and infer whether childhood can truly be *eudaimonic*?

Lecture Fifteen
Rome, the Stoics, and the Rule of Law

Scope: Stoic philosophy was first developed in the Hellenistic world after 300 B.C. The Stoic worldview is one of a rationally governed universe of material entities, each answering to its controlling principle (*logos*) and, thus, participating in the overall cosmic *logos*. In its most developed form, Stoicism takes the lawfulness of the cosmos as the model on which human life is to proceed. The rule of law is the defining mark of our humanity, installing locally what the *logos* furnishes universally.

The overarching philosophy of Rome was that of the Stoics, whose commitment to rationality and the rule of law provided a durable intellectual foundation for Rome's imperial administration of much of the known world.

Outline

I. In this lecture, we look at the emergence of two new schools of philosophy around 300 B.C. One was Stoicism, the father of which is generally taken to be Zeno of Citium, and the other was Epicureanism, the founder of that being Epicurus himself.

- **A.** Stoicism was so called because the teaching was done in the *stoa poikilE,* a painted colonnade in the Athenian agora at the foot of the Acropolis. The school has debts to Plato and to Aristotle, as well as to the Sophists and the Cynics.
- **B.** Stoic ontology is physicalistic but in an interesting and subtle way. If we accept Plato's standard of existence—for something to exist it must be capable of acting or of being acted upon—then the conclusion that follows is that only physical objects meet this standard. For most of the major writers in the Stoic tradition, this was the accepted ontology.
- **C.** *Logos* is the "designing fire" from which the physical world springs. It consists of two active elements—fire and air—and two passive elements—earth and water. The combination of the former creates *pneuma*, or "breath," by which entities become individuated in what is otherwise a totally continuous, uninterrupted fabric of physicality.
  - **1.** In its different influences, *pneuma* is life-giving and mind-giving. It is the *psyche* of the animal kingdom and of human rational power, which according to Stoic teaching, is the dominant faculty in healthy human life. The dominance is revealed by the Greek word adopted by the Stoics: *hegemonikon*!
  - **2.** Stoics also understood that non-physical entities must be included in any valid account of reality. Space and time, for example, are not "physical" entities but must be part of any valid conception of physical reality itself.
- **D.** Stoicism retained at its core the notion that reality is governed by law, that all of the physical world is governed by law, and that human affairs must approximate and be obedient to those same principles of lawfulness. The *hegemonikon* of reason must regulate life.

II. This ontological position generates the Stoic solution to the problem of conduct.

- **A.** Granting that the goal of our actions is happiness, or *eudaimonia*, it is obvious that any number of conditions may lead to happiness or to misery, depending on the particular circumstances. However, the source of genuine happiness must be that which is unfailing in its effects, and this can be nothing but wisdom itself.
- **B.** If what has real existence for the Stoic is a body of some kind, there is no room for disembodied "true forms." Nonetheless, "body" can manifest itself in extremely rarified fashions, in the form of fire or spirit or some animating principle.
  - **1.** How, then, can we integrate the world of bodies with ethics? Justice, moral precepts, and ethical teaching all have powerful influences on our conduct—they have some sort of reality.
  - **2.** Stoic teaching must explain this objectivity. Morals are not simply customary practices; they have real being and force in the world. For them to have such force, they must be able to make appeals to entities capable of responding to this kind of influence.

C. The Stoic account relies on the notion of *oikeion*, natural affinities, an appropriateness that expresses the order of nature itself. Nature as an expression of the *logos* is an ordered realm, governed by laws that collectively establish what is "right" for the entities that compose it.

1. The essential nature of law or morals is rational, proportionate, unprejudiced. It is also presented and comprehended by way of language, and this fact leads the Stoics to a rather interesting conclusion.

2. Only one creature has language, and therefore, only one creature can deal with the sorts of abstractions that are central to the rule of law and to an ethical life: a human creature.

3. Mankind is, thus, distinguished from the rest of the order of nature. It is only the linguistic community that is able to participate in moral, civic, and political life.

4. The Stoics contended that there is something about the rational power of humanity that confers special powers generative of rights. It is in virtue of the powers of abstraction and comprehension that we have liberties at all. Liberty, after all, is not anarchy; it is conforming one's behavior to a principle.

D. It can be argued that the Stoics, not the French of the 1780s or the authors of the Constitution, first formulated the concept of *natural rights*. They understood that the rule of law is a rational order accessible to rational beings so fashioned as to have a natural affinity to such a rule of conduct.

E. We see here the development of the concept of the *individual person* as the object of the law's regard. In virtue of the *logos*, we as rational beings come to comprehend the cosmic order of things and become capable of legislating for ourselves to secure, not what is pleasurable but what is fitting.

III. Emotion and passion are what most contradict reason. Only a man is able to control his animality and, ultimately, to surface as a fully rational being, now sharing in the universal *logos*.

A. The right disposition to have is that of *apatheia*, not "apathy" in the sense of indifference but *resignation* before the fact that the cosmic order is determinative.

B. We bring about our own suffering and unhappiness by violating the dictates of reason—for example, by wanting what is either unattainable or what is not in our interest.

C. The essence of the Stoic worldview can be found in the words of Epictetus: "Never say of anything that I've lost it, only that I've given it back."

D. There is an order and a rational plan to things. Nothing happens without a cause; everything is an expression of the overarching *logos*. The individual must understand his or her place, first within the family, then within the civic community.

E. The ultimate moral community is the community of language-using, reasoning, justifying beings who possess the natural dispositions and powers that qualify them for life under the rule of law.

F. On the question of good and evil, the Stoics again are defenders of a form of rationalism that resists supernatural or mystical explanations. What we really mean by "evil" is a departure from virtue and from the natural order of things. This argument will later be taken up by Christians theorizing about sin.

IV. The Epicureans depart from the Stoics on a number of points.

A. The Epicureans are resolutely naturalistic, but their creed was not "Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die"—far from it. The actual teachings of Epicurus and his followers are extremely conservative at the level of individual behavior and social life.

B. One of the principle differences between the Epicurean and Stoic system is that the Stoic requires us to enter the political world and participate fully in the affairs of the *polis.* The Epicurean scheme is one that has us remove ourselves from the hurly-burly of daily life.

C. The point of Epicureanism is to reduce the likelihood of pain and suffering, to defer death as long as one can, and to act in such a way that the likelihood of loss is diminished. Pleasure is understood almost in negative terms—as the absence of pain.

D. Where the Stoics valued friendship as central to rational community, the Epicureans used friends to achieve their central goals. Friendship is a species of self-defense, a protection against the vagaries of the future.

E. The Epicurean would be the last one to argue that we should eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we will to die, because to perform these acts and to be so fearful of tomorrow's death is already to be overcome by

emotional states that cause unhappiness and distress. The Epicureans would advise the contrary: Do nothing to excess.

F. The Epicurean scheme, of course, is explicitly atomistic, taking the ultimate nature of things to be indivisible elements. It is owing to the materialistic psychology that the arguments for hedonism gain force: To be subject to pain and death owing to one's very material composition sets as the ultimate goal the best means by which to defer the inevitable.

G. The personal code of the Stoic and Epicurean resembled each other closely. The only way to distinguish the two would be in their degree of involvement in the public world.

1. The Epicurean would be found on his country estate, living moderately away from the dangerous excitements of the city.

2. The Stoic would be found in the city, the senate, and the court, arguing cases and making law—the frank, upright figure we see in Roman portrait busts.

V. The Epicureans are unblushing materialists. Everything about life and the mind is finally to be understood in terms of basic material processes.

A. Stoicism differs in that the Stoics see as the engine of life that spirituous fire mentioned earlier, the *pneuma* in the ancient sense of "breath." There is something capable of ordering and organizing the physical world, and that something must have enough in common with what it organizes to have influences of that kind.

B. An even more fundamental conflict between the two philosophies arises in connection with the problem of moral freedom.

1. Stoicism, with its acceptance of the rigid, rational governance of the cosmos, would seem to render all actions and events totally determined by cosmic reason. But to avoid this morally unacceptable conclusion, the Stoics provided for what they called a "relaxation," leaving room for the individual to align his own rational purposes with those of cosmic reason itself.

2. Rejecting the reality of such transcendental forces or agencies, the Epicurean has less difficulty with the problem of free will and determinism. Yes, the ultimate composition of everything is atomic, but the manner in which these indivisible elements combine to form human life includes such degrees of freedom, such chance assemblies, as to render the overall scheme "free enough."

C. What can we say about the fate of Aristotle and Plato as these Stoic and Epicurean schools developed?

1. Certainly, Aristotle and Plato had a strong influence on Stoic thought, because both gave pride of place to rationality and to the rule of reason over passion.

2. Neither Aristotle nor Plato, however, translates directly into Stoicism or Epicureanism.

3. Stoicism was a new influence in the house of intellect that would guide and direct a new empire lasting a thousand years.

Recommended Reading:

Epictetus. *Discourses*, 2 vols. London, 1995.

Long, A. A. *Hellenistic Philosophy*. Berkeley, 1986.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether language is reserved exclusively to human beings.

2. Identify the status that would be endured by non-verbal human beings in the Stoic order.

3. Identify what it is in Stoic teaching that conduces to that famous "stoic resignation" we find in Epictetus.

Lecture Sixteen
The Stoic Bridge to Christianity

Scope: The Jewish Christians, whether "Hellenized" or orthodox, defended a monotheistic source of law rendering both the cosmos and the human condition intelligible. The spread of Christianity occurred in a world long dominated by Rome and Rome's own "Hellenized" philosophical worldview. To establish Christian teaching on grounds that would make sense to those Hellenized intellectuals, the early fathers of the church would find the central tenets of Stoicism serviceable, though in Christian interpretation, these tenets raised problems for the future to deal with.

Outline

I. The Hellenized Jews of the 1st century A.D., including Paul and Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 B.C.–50 A.D.), attempted to integrate systematically the thought of the major Greek philosophers and the scriptural truths of the Old Testament.

- **A.** When the early Jewish Christians began the formulation of what would come to be called Christianity, their appeals were within a philosophically competitive context that included Stoicism at its center.
- **B.** Thus, in the writings of Paul, one will find ideas drawn from Stoic teaching (for example, I Corinthians 11:14). So, too, are Stoic influences evident in his treatment of one's belief in God as similar to a "natural" inclination, not unlike the Stoic theory of affinities.
- **C.** Indeed, that Stoicism was recognized as perhaps the worthiest adversary is clear from the arguments of the early fathers of the church against such ideas as the physicality of God.
  - **1.** The early church fathers had to reconcile the teachings of the church, the message contained in the life of Christ himself, with a philosophy respected as one of the great achievements of human thought, even if "pagan" thought.
  - **2.** There is not, therefore, an unbridgeable distance between the lessons of faith and the lessons of philosophy. Indeed, there is much intellectual energy devoted to having the philosophical light—primarily the Stoic light—brought to bear on the authority of faith.

II. We begin, then, by considering some of the features of Stoicism as these might be promulgated at the time of the Jewish Christians and incorporated into the writings of Philo and others. There are obvious points of compatibility, but also problems that must be dealt with.

- **A.** First, what might be called the "god of the Stoics" is not a personal being concerned with human welfare but a powerful "divine fire" working through physical and material modes of operation. Nonetheless, this force is rational in its essential nature and immortal.
  - **1.** The defining features of the creative power of the universe are its inexhaustibility and its rationality. Stoicism offers the obvious proof for this: Consider only the lawfulness of the cosmos itself.
  - **2.** In Stoic teaching, then, particularly later Stoic teaching, knowledge of this kind of divine influence is one of the preconceptions that a rational being has.
  - **3.** In other words, a rational being, recognizing the orderliness and lawfulness of the cosmos, must match that up, without further deliberation, with the notion of some rational agency behind it, recognizing that nothing of this sort occurs accidentally.
- **B.** The god of the Stoics, however, is material, and the god of a material universe must have the power to work in it. Further, the events of the physical and natural world are dynamic, and these attest to the constant participation of the divine fire, the *logos*, the creative force.
- **C.** Putting these notions together, we reach the possibility of a physically present and knowable God. That is, we discover a power not unlike the God of the Hebrews, having a rational plan and order of things, being present in the world, revealing himself through his works, and working on matter in a divine way to realize divine purposes.
  - **1.** However, the Jews, the Christians, and the Jewish Christians deny the materiality of God as envisaged by Stoic philosophy; thus, this aspect of Stoic teaching had to be transformed.
  - **2.** The material incarnation of Jesus—the son of God—reconciles, if awkwardly, the Stoic theory of the divine presence and the Judeo-Christian theory of the immateriality of the divine.

D. In the Stoic account, the mode of causation employed by God is *nomological*; that is, the affairs of the cosmos are controlled by immutable laws. This aspect of Stoic teaching matches up perfectly with the God of the Hebrews who gave us the Ten Commandments.

E. Why has the creator brought about this universe? Stoicism tends to leave this question unanswered, but the Jewish Christians do not.

1. The cosmic creation must have been undertaken for a reason. Having ordered the entire universe, the creator must take an interest in it.

2. At work here is not an Aristotelian rational plan or the god of the Stoics. It is a providential God who takes an interest in his creation, particularly that part of the creation that most reflects his goodness and perfection, that part of the creation that is, although fallen, in some sense, perfectible. This is the God of the Jews, of Islam, of Christianity.

3. How distant this is from Olympianism and the divine fire of the Stoics! This God offers what is good for us for our sake; he has befriended mankind as a father does his children.

4. Therefore, all men—the Stoics' linguistic universal *polis*—are brothers, of whatever country or social standing; no one is of greater moral worth than another.

III. The Stoic conception as interpreted by Hellenized Jewish Christians raised some central philosophical difficulties.

A. First of all, if a providential creator made an entirely rational and perfect universe inhabited by rational souls, how is the problem of evil to be explained?

B. Further, if this providential divinity is, by its very nature, an omniscient and omnipotent entity, a God who could have made things any way he wanted to have them, that must mean that the individual's fate is predetermined. Is this a fatalistic doctrine?

1. To accept Stoicism totally is to accept a rational order that is so inflexible that everything is determined by it, but the Stoics were deterministic in their physics, not their psychologies. Stoicism is an ethical philosophy that must allow both the power of reason and the power to defy reason.

2. But why would the omniscient, omnipotent, and providential God of the Jews and Christians constitute us in such a way that we could defy reason?

3. The answer is found in the Stoics' *apatheia*, which becomes a way of reconciling oneself not to the nomological framework of a rationally ordered universe but to the will of God. *Apatheia* also grounds the Christian belief that the goodness of God is, ultimately, the cause of all things.

IV. The period of early Christianity was a quite cluttered time in the history of ideas, replete with Greek and Roman influences colliding with already ancient Hebraic teachings and the authority of Scripture.

A. Christian fathers, such as Origen and Tertullian, wanted to dismiss the whole of Greek and Roman philosophy—look what a mess these fine thinkers had made of their world! The teachings and example of Jesus Christ were all that was needed.

B. There is in this a kernel of anti-intellectualism in the early church and it, too, must be dealt with if the church itself is to be erected on a broad intellectual, rational, and teachable foundation that will appeal to the thinking parts of the world.

C. Again, this is all taking place in that period of Roman hegemony that depends on a civil world that is unraveling. It is the ancient world of the Hebrews, a monotheistic world that turns its back on Rome. It is a world of Jewish scholarship that finds in Athens an illumination that cannot be found in Scripture. It is a world that is regrouping.

D. Stoicism provides a bridge from the classical world to the one that will be recognizably Christian. It does so by its teaching, by its influence on Rome and Roman administrative law, and by certain philosophical precepts that match up with what Christians adopt as a matter of faith.

1. Some of the early church fathers took the divinity of Jesus Christ as establishing the epistemic and moral authority of earlier teachings. The teachings of Christ were the last word on all things true, but these teachings were not available to earlier philosophers.

2. However, given that the teachings of Christ are now available, the earlier pagan thought is a distraction.

3. Christianity had to be based on something firmer than mere "productions of philosophy"—it had to be based on truths, creations of divinity made available to us by the grace of God.

Recommended Reading:

Bede. *A History of the English Church and People*. Penguin, 1968.
Brown, P. *The Body and Society*. Columbia, 1988.
Oates, W., ed. *The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers*. New York, 1940.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how the notion of a "providential" god can be reconciled with the manifest evil in the world.
2. Contrast the difference between *apatheia* and mere carelessness.
3. Explain how one might extract the principle of *apatheia* from Plato's and Aristotle's ethical works.

Lecture Seventeen

Roman Law—Making a City of the Once-Wide World

Scope: It is often observed that the greatness of Rome is by way of nothing more than the enlargement, imitation, and promulgation of that which was "Greek," a claim that is defensible when considering much of Roman art, architecture, education, and philosophy. But the Roman development of law based on a conception of nature and of human nature is one of the signal achievements in the history of civilization.

Even as barbarian invasions and occupations of Rome transformed the cultural dimensions of life in the city, the staying power of the Roman rule of law asserted itself. The political and social character of what we take to be "Western civilization" is simply unimaginable in the absence of this influence.

Outline

I. It is a commonplace to note that Rome, in its art, architecture, sculpture, philosophy, and much of its literature is beholden to Greek originals, but if there is a contribution that the Roman world made to civilization and the history of ideas, that contribution would be Roman law.

II. Cicero's *De Legibus* offers an eclectic assimilation of Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic philosophies into a treatise on the nature of law, the varieties of its expression, and its ultimate grounding.

- **A.** In this essay, Cicero comes to grips with the questions: What is the essence of law? What forms of law are there? How should the law be understood? What is it that the law matches up with in us?
- **B.** Cicero makes a distinction between law as it operates differently in different jurisdictions and law as it seems to function everywhere.
- **C.** The type of law that displays variation is what Cicero refers to as the *ius civile*, what we would translate as "civil law" but in the sense of jurisdictional law. This law is an expression of local values and peoples.
- **D.** Cicero observes, however, that in every known community, there are certain precepts that are honored without exception.
  1. These precepts seem to be universally understood and adopted: precepts regarding violent and lethal assaults on an innocent other, precepts involving the appropriation of what is recognized to be the property of another, precepts regarding fraud and deception in business transactions.
  2. With respect to offenses of this sort, Cicero reasons as Aristotle does in the *Politics*. Both note that there are jurisdictional differences when it comes to law, but the core principles of equity, Aristotle says, are "universal and everywhere the same."
  3. Aristotle offers Antigone's defense as exemplary: For a sister to bury her dead brother is an act that could be defended before the gods themselves.
  4. In other words, Aristotle defines what he means by a universal principle of equity: Certain notions of fairness virtually express our rationality. These do not vary from place to place. An entity in whom these principles are not operative is one that might be human in name only but is utterly lacking in one of the defining attributes of a human being.
- **E.** Cicero labels these principles the *ius gentium*, the law or the judicial principle of nations.
  1. The *ius gentium* is not transmitted from one people to another but inheres in our very nature as rational beings.
  2. By the end of the 1st century A.D., this concept will be referred to as the *ius naturale*, the "natural law."
- **F.** Here, Cicero is laying the foundations for one of the most developed theories in the philosophy of law: the theory of natural law. It will, of course, be famously promulgated by Thomas Aquinas.
  1. Ignorance of this law is no excuse. One cannot commit murder and mayhem and claim as a defense that these crimes are not recognized as such among one's own people.
  2. This aspect of the rule of law is more fundamental than statutes and local ordinance. It affirms those core principles possessed by any being who is fit for the rule of law. Not to know this much is to be outside the rule of law. It is to be an unnatural or defective kind of being, part of no *gens* ("tribe," "nation") at all.

III. Roman law successfully permitted Rome to administer the known world for centuries.

A. One of the most poignant documents of antiquity appears when the Visigoths had sacked Rome and taken it over, in the 5th century A.D. One of the first items promulgated by the leaders of the Visigoths is titled *lex romana Visigothorum*: "the Roman law of the Visigoths."

1. This document commits the new rulers to the Roman rule of law, to the possibility of settling disputes without violence, and to the respect for individuals implicit in the idea that they will be able to understand and obey the law.

2. By the 5th century A.D., Rome was no longer the unopposable force it had once been. What was durable in Roman civilization was neither the military nor the city itself, but the law of Rome, the administrative machinery, governed by principle and administered by legally trained and sophisticated and subtle minds.

B. Justinian's *Institutes*, or elements of law, provide a 6th-century consideration of juridical principles developed by Roman lawyers over the course of centuries.

1. The *Institutes*, which are the work of Tribonian and his colleagues commissioned by Justinian, begin with this statement:

> The law of nature is the law instilled by nature in all creatures. It is not merely for mankind but for all creatures of the sky, earth and sea.... All peoples with laws and customs apply law which is partly theirs alone and partly shared by all mankind…. The law which natural reason makes for all mankind… is called "the law of all peoples" [*ius gentium*].

2. Could Stoicism have said it any better? What is taken for granted is that nature does nothing without a purpose, that there is an order and reasonableness to the world, and that human affairs are to be governed by the same rationality.

C. Consider what is meant in the *Institutes* by nature fitting out all creatures with law.

1. The animal kingdom does instinctually what is required for its own survival and flourishing. So, too, are peoples fitted out by nature with certain intuitive understandings essential to a life that will be flourishing, coherent, and culturally continuing.

2. And how does nature do this? By making us aware at the most fundamental and intuitive level of core precepts of equity.

IV. The *ius gentium* is a unifying principle capable of smoothing out the differences of culture and custom and providing at least the possibility of a shared civic life. What is the status of the *ius gentium* in the multicultural world of the 21st century?

A. What Roman law reduced to written form was understood to reach all who qualify as rational beings, and the Roman Empire was about as "multicultural" as any nation in the history of the world.

B. The ancient world, for all its elitism, recognized a fundamental, unifying force according to which we have a shared psychology, a shared spirituality, and a common humanity. The law in its developed form must appeal to that.

C. Find a creature that cannot be appealed to at that level, and the best explanation is not that the creature is the product of a different culture, but that the creature is incomplete in its humanity, outside the natural order of humanity.

D. In contrast, find a mature, healthy adult anywhere in the world, and that person, in virtue of his or her rationality, will recognize certain precepts as unchallengeable. Were the world otherwise, it would be impossible even to engage in trade or to explain why punishment is imposed for certain transgressions or why rewards are given.

E. The cultural variations we observe are not merely artificial entries that obscure what is, indeed, homogeneity. No, there is great heterogeneity from culture to culture. Rome was persuaded, however, that such heterogeneity did not extend to the level of rationality itself; therefore, all people, wherever they were from, whatever they believed, and whatever their customary practices were, were fit for the rule of law and could be brought up to be worthy of the rule of law.

F. After the Goths had sacked Rome, a number of Romans came back to their defeated city to see what was left. One of these men, Rutilius Namatianus, wrote these lines about Rome:

Thou has made of alien realms one fatherland. The lawless found their gain beneath thy sway. Sharing thy laws with them, thou hast subdued, thou hast made a city of the once-wide world.

It was the promulgation of Roman law that would make a city of the once-wide world and create a coherent Western civilization.

1. Our conceptions of justice and the dignity of the individual when he or she appears before the bar of justice are developments of Roman lawyers.
2. It is no exaggeration to say that Western civilization, although it owes an undeniable debt to Greek sources, would be unimaginable without the developments and institutions of law created and perfected in ancient Rome.

Recommended Reading:

Birks, P., and McLeod, G., trans. *Justinian's Institutes*. Cornell, 1987.

Robinson, D. N. *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours*. Harvard, 1996 (chapters 1–3).

Honore, A. *Emperors and Lawyers.* Oxford University Press, 1994.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether the Roman sense of *ius gentium* is defeated by what are now recognized as highly diverse cultural values in non-Western communities.
2. Summarize how the Roman notion of a "law of nature" is reconciled to the manifest lawlessness of whole legions of persons.

Lecture Eighteen

The Light Within—Augustine on Human Nature

Scope: Patristic thought culminates in the teachings and deeply self-examining works of St. Augustine, who finds in the twin nature of humanity the powers of good and evil. The city of man is by nature ephemeral; our true loyalty is to the city of God.

Augustine's religious philosophy restored an intellectual and analytical rigor to the teachings of the Christian faith, a rigor that had been abandoned by many of the earlier fathers of the church, satisfied that pagan philosophy had little to offer of lasting value. Augustine engaged the great problems of knowledge, conduct, and governance within a broadly Christian framework established by an omniscient and providential God who has bestowed the gift of faith.

Outline

I. Augustine dearly loved the city of Rome and, by his own admission, engaged in debauchery there as a youth. In maturity, however, he came to understand the transitory nature of even the greatest of empires—of merely human creations.

A. Augustine (354–430) was born in Tagaste, now the city of Souk Ahras, Algeria, then controlled by Rome. His mother, Monica, was Christian, but his father did not convert until the hour of his death.

B. The modest means of the family barely supported an education for Augustine until, with the help of relatives, he was able to attend the college in Madaura, then later in Carthage. To this point, there is no sign of the genius who would lay the philosophical foundations for much of Christianity.

C. In Carthage, he fathered a son with a woman who would be his constant companion for 10 years, only to see him leave for a better marriage in Milan. In studying the moral reasoning of Cicero, Augustine began to question his own life and its aimlessness.

D. Of the quasi-philosophical schools competing for adherents at the time, the Manicheans, originating in Persia, had attractive features.

1. The problem of evil is readily solved by positing a cosmos in which two great forces—good and evil—contend with each other, the latter having special access to the earthly realms of matter.

2. Augustine was attracted to this sect and eagerly sought to meet one of its chief prophets, Faustus. We learn from Augustine's *Confessions*, however, that this sage proved to be a dullard.

E. At 30 years of age, Augustine was appointed professor of rhetoric in the imperial court at Milan. There, he attended lectures by St. Ambrose, then Bishop of Milan. Ambrose conveyed to Augustine the power of Christian teaching and the divine power of Christ himself.

II. By the time of St. Augustine's philosophical flourishing, the early fathers of the church and their authority had put a stamp of anti-intellectualism on the faith. Augustine was ideally suited to reassess the place of intellect and philosophy within a life of faith and devotion.

A. We should note that the attitude of the church fathers was a principled anti-intellectualism in most instances. After all, we must ask, what would the early Christian find in consulting the greatest teachers of antiquity?

1. In Plato's *Republic*, he would learn that the guardians of the state are produced by selective breeding, would surrender their offspring and wives to a common pool, and would protect a world in which the populace was regarded as a kind of mob. If this is the best the classical world of the pagan can produce, the sober Christian can well deprive himself of such wisdom!

2. If our early Christian consults Aristotle, he will discover a philosopher much taken by the natural world. He doesn't find in Aristotle material that matches up with the central tenets of faith and devotion: a providential and loving God in whose image we are made, a God who cares for us and is ever present in the affairs of the world. Aristotle, too, is just another pagan distraction.

B. All told, there is a skepticism about philosophy as the right guide. In contrast, the Christian believes that he has the right guide in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The problems of knowledge and conduct no

longer refer merely to this world or even significantly to this world. As for the problem of governance, the city of man and the city of God are radically different.

C. Whatever one takes to be the validity of the religious tenets of the Christian religion, history teaches that the likely success of a faith is greatly reduced when it has an officially anti-intellectual attitude. A successful religion is one that has been promulgated by teaching, rather than by force.

D. The anti-intellectualism of some of the early fathers often takes the form of quite interesting and profound treatises. As we know, only a person of broad learning knows the enemy well enough to mount a worthy challenge. At this juncture enters Augustine, who sets for himself the task of recovering the philosophical wisdom of the ancients in order to render it serviceable to the cause of Christianity.

III. In Greek philosophy, the problem of knowledge is settled by rational analysis or as a result of some sort of intuitive power, or is abandoned as a casualty of the Skeptic's weapons. But as Augustine makes clear in the *Confessions*, the knowledge sought by the Christian is unattainable without faith, with reason now a secondary consideration.

A. Augustine writes of the ascent toward knowledge made with his mother, Monica, where the ascent itself is impelled by a sincere love of God that allows one to reach planes of understanding unreachable by reason or the arts of the metaphysician.

B. Man is, as Aristotle teaches, by nature, a social animal. But in the perfectionist moral philosophy of Aristotle, there would seem to be little room for the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, which for Augustine, are essential to full development of our humanity.

C. The ancient philosophers were skeptical about knowing the truth once and for all, and Augustine, too, writes of the fallibility of human knowledge. But through the grace of God, the truth may be gleaned by the unified and immortal soul. As the truths of mathematics do not depend on our senses or even our rationality, there are truths beyond the reach of reason, grasped intuitively by some inner light.

D. The ancient schools were elitist, utterly incompatible with a vision of universal brotherhood, except in the rather rationalized version of some Stoic philosophy. It is just this brotherhood, however, that is the cornerstone of the teachings of Christ.

E. Unencumbered by a providential monotheistic religion, the pagan world of Greek philosophy did not have that problem of evil that plagues the Christian apologists.

1. Much that we regard as "evil" arises from our own conduct, prompting us to ask: "Why would God allow us to do such horrid things?" The stock answer is that we do such things freely and, thus, are fully responsible.

2. But if we are free to this degree, then God either could not prevent what we do—and, thus, is not omnipotent—or didn't know we were going to do it—and, thus, is not omniscient.

3. In his treatise on freedom of the will, Augustine has two discussants, both of whom have faith, take up this problem. They begin from the premise that God knows everything that is going to happen and is capable of controlling everything. How, then, can the will be free? And if the will isn't free, how can I be held accountable for what I do?

4. The Augustinian solution is not entirely successful, as illustrated by the example of the traveler: A guest is forced to switch his means of transportation from plane to train but is nonetheless met by his host, who accurately predicted the guest's arrival at the train station. To know that an actor will take a certain course is not to strip the actor of intentionality.

5. From the fact that God knows, in virtue of his omniscience, everything that we will do, it does not follow that when we do it, we do not do it volitionally. The will can be free, and God can know exactly how it will be exercised.

IV. We see in Augustine the introduction of a method that will become common in the intellectual history of the church: an analytical, dialectical approach.

A. Consider again the problem of knowledge, but this time, the special problem of knowledge of God: How do we know about God? On most philosophical accounts, knowledge begins with experience. For the Christian, having accepted that God is an immaterial, massless entity, how can any epistemic claim be made at all?

B. Augustine approaches the problem through a systematic, dialectical, psychological inquiry, not unlike Socrates's approach in Plato's *Meno*.

1. Thus, everyone can perceive a square, a four-sided figure in which all sides are equal. Not only can we *perceive* a square, but we can also *conceive* of a square.

2. However, no one can perceive a *chiliagon*, which is a thousand-sided figure, for such a figure will be seen as a circle or an oval. Nonetheless, we are capable of conceiving such a figure. That is, we are capable of knowing by conception what could not be known by perception.

3. Thus, it does not follow from the fact that we cannot *sense* the attributes of God that we cannot *know* them.

4. In this, Augustine, for reasons of religious philosophy, is actually making a quite significant contribution to our understanding of psychology and epistemology: the distinction between knowing by perception and knowing by understanding.

C. Augustine's *Confessions* is a profound, inspired, and inspiring work and a work of great courage. The author discloses the kind of life he once lived, what changed him, the sources of his deep confusions about things, and his recognition that, ultimately, his salvation is by way of faith—a faith seeking reason.

1. As a rational being, he knows he owes it to himself to provide something of a gloss on what faith has revealed. Here's the duplex nature of the human enterprise: We are endowed at an intuitive level with certain understandings that we can't justify rationally. There are certain basic acts or precepts of the mind that must be operative if analysis itself is to be possible.

2. These necessary cognitive starting points cannot be reduced or analyzed to something else. In religious terms, there are things understood at the level of faith that are not subject to rational proof. But can these things be *reconciled* to the requirements of reason?

D. Augustine wrote some 50 million words, facing with courage and conviction the challenges of Skeptical philosophy. In the process, he put indelibly on the map of Christian thought the obligation to take reason as far as it will take one, understanding that at the end of the day, it is faith and the grace of God on which one must rely.

Recommended Reading:

Augustine. *On Free Choice of the Will*. T. Williams, trans. Cambridge, 1993.

———. *Confessions.* Oxford University Press, 1992.

O'Daly, G. *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*. Berkeley, 1987.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how a god that is both omniscient *and* omnipotent can permit evil in the world and still be regarded as perfected goodness.

2. Conclude whether "free will" means that actions are uncaused.

Lecture Nineteen
Islam

Scope: In 632 A.D., the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message that would be faithfully recorded in the Koran. The message contains not only powerful religious and ethical teachings but directives of an essentially intellectual nature. Thus, Islamic scholarship—a reverence for learning—is an integral feature of Islam.

Though Islam would emerge in the form of a religious state, which is to say, a political world organized around religious teachings, room for independent philosophical thought was ample and progressively enlarged. Thus, during the several centuries denominated as the "Dark Ages" in the West, scholarship thrived in the Islamic world, scholarship that would be nourished by translations of Greek works of logic, science, psychology, ethics, and philosophy. By the 12th century, there would be Latin translations of these works, disseminated into centers of scholarship and teaching in the West and laying the foundations for the developed Scholastic philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and his notable contemporaries.

Outline

I. In 632 A.D., the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message, which would come to be recorded in the Koran, and Islam was founded.

- **A.** Although many in the Islamic world believe that this holy text has remained unchanged since its original composition, recent evidence suggests that this may not be so. In 1972 in Yemen, a thick band of parchment was discovered in a gravesite. After extensive cleaning, it became clear that this document was a Koran dating from perhaps the 7th century and, thus, the oldest in existence.
- **B.** Not until 1997 were the thousands of sheets fully assembled and photographed, and few scholars have had access to the full set or the earlier sets. This is a sensitive matter because a core belief in Islam is that the Koran is not a product of history but the revealed word of God and, as such, is not subject to variation of any kind.
- **C.** Fortunately for the history of ideas, the divine message itself has encouraged and supported a rich and flourishing intellectual life. Islamic faith is, at once, a culture, an ethics, a mode of philosophical inquiry, and a commitment to what might be called a reflective life. Indeed, had it not been for the Islamic scholars of the 9th–11th centuries, the West may never have fully reclaimed its own classical Aristotelian and Platonic canon.

II. The year 632 locates the Prophet in an era widely regarded as a "dark age" in the West.

- **A.** We are inclined to think of the period 650 to 850 as "dark" because we see very little by way of philosophical energy or originality in the West during this time. Such a culture of thought would again be characteristic of the medieval period, particularly the Scholastic Age.
- **B.** One of the main reasons for this darkness is that Western communities at the time were under frequent attack from almost every direction except the Atlantic Ocean. The Mediterranean Sea—which had been the sea on which Western culture refined and promulgated itself—was under Islamic control. Even papyrus for writing was forbidden to be exported from Egypt to infidels.
- **C.** Further, Vandals and Saracens and Gothic tribes, the collapse of Rome, the breakdown of political institutions—all these conduced to a disordered, fragmented, and to some extent, quasi-nomadic form of life in what we would now identify as the Anglo-European world.
- **D.** In contrast, the Eastern world was the beneficiary of much of the scholarship that was moved by Constantine when the Roman Empire was centered in the East.

III. By the time Islam was militarily successful enough to occupy the Byzantine world, it found itself with ready access to a cultural that included the philosophic thought of Plato, Aristotle, and other leading thinkers.

- **A.** Early in the 10th century, al-Farabi (870–950) used Plato's *Republic* as the model for his inquiry into the nature of the right form of civic life. He insisted, however, that what is needed for leadership is more than Plato's philosopher-king; what is needed is one who is also a prophet.

B. Very early, the Islamic commitment is to see to it that all political, naturalistic, and scientific writings record respect for, and derive their intellectual inspiration from, the teachings of the Prophet. The Koran is the sole authority on all that matters to the faithful, and to reject that authority is to be an infidel.

C. We must note, however, that there was still an independent philosophical movement within Islam. In the 10th and 11th centuries, we begin to see philosophy as a core interest of Islamic commentators. There is a recognition that fields of inquiry can be developed while holding theology constant.

1. One of the first of the important Islamic philosophers, al-Farabi, will reveal the influence of Aristotelianism in claiming the authority of reason to be greater than that of revelation. His attempt to reconcile Aristotelian and Platonic thought records a deep respect for the philosophical originality and power of the classical world.

2. The celebrated Avicenna (980–1037) would find in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* a philosophical justification for a universe ordered at the level of matter, an order continuing into spiritual and civic life.

D. Avicenna's commentaries on Aristotle put Arab scholarship and Islamic thought at the center of naturalistic and scientific thinking. The importance of this can't be underestimated, because it was ultimately the Islamic community that put the West back on the path toward an intellectually and scientifically powered course of discovery, using the tools of ancient Greek thought.

IV. By the 11th and 12th centuries, the East and the West were divided into two intellectually warring camps, with two different conceptions of human nature and its purposes and two different conceptions of truth at the most fundamental religious level. Each camp used classical philosophy as a means of validation.

A. Here arises a wonderfully rich interpretative exercise as to what Aristotle really meant, what Plato really meant, whether something can be known as a result of prophetic insights or by experience or by reason alone, and so on.

B. At this point in both cultures, philosophical positions may come to be judged as heresies. Once we begin to use philosophy as a way of vindicating or verifying what is essentially a religious position, the wrong interpretation may qualify as an offense against the religion.

C. It should come as no surprise that as the Christian church solidified its own position politically, economically, and socially, it found itself doing constant battle with heresies. Why is this sequence of events perhaps inevitable?

1. A religion solidifies its position by developing an official canon. This now becomes a body of knowledge that can be taught to the faithful, and the faithful are understood to be those who are prepared to be obedient to this teaching.

2. But once positions become solidified and burdens are imposed on those who are not prepared to accept their validity, the philosophical program stalls.

3. Thus, as the writers and thinkers in the Christian world begin to take on the challenges that come from the East and, as a result of those challenges, work out an ever clearer version of the canon, debates break out within the Christian community.

4. As we will see in a later lecture on the witch panics, certain forms of conduct now take on a new color. Disorders and diseases of a certain kind suggest mysterious, even sinister, causes. As mentioned earlier, this was not the case in the Islamic East.

D. The tension between Islam and Christianity, coupled with the recovery of ancient Greek thought, would cause a fruitful resumption of the "long debate."

1. The "long debate" is the debate about knowledge, conduct, and governance, which had animated the earliest philosophical inquiries into the nature of things.

2. The debate had been discontinued by the need of Christianity to solidify its religious position.

3. The greatest opponent of debate is orthodoxy, and Christian orthodoxy arises out of several core concepts: the old anti-intellectualism the church fathers, the social ambitions of the church to build and run a new society, and the Augustinian conception that while reason has its use, faith is paramount.

4. The combination of these elements resulted in a degree of fundamentalist conviction that was hostile to debate. If not a heresy, debate is at least an insult to the faithful and the faith.

5. The contribution of Islamic culture was to show the West that there is more than one book of truth and more than one set of prophecies, more than one language used to express thanks to God, and more than one culture that might ground a spiritual life.

E. When the long debate is resumed, the question again is whether the best route to truth is by reason, intuition, faith, or naturalistic observation. The same question may be asked regarding ethical and moral issues. Again, the seeds of heresy and skepticism are planted, the inevitable products of authentic and disinterested inquiry.

F. The pressures against sustaining the long debate are always great, but the contemplative life that the Koran requires of the faithful is entirely compatible with this sustained inquiry. Indeed, the Islamic commitment to analysis and debate would make possible much of the philosophical program of the Scholastic Age in Western civilization.

Recommended Reading:

Walzer, R. *Greek into Arabic: Essays in Islamic Philosophy*. South Carolina, 1970.

Questions to Consider:

1. Summarize how Western civilization might have developed in the absence of the Islamic recovery of classical philosophy.
2. Summarize what the "Dark Ages" tell us about the conditions necessary for the preservation of the culture of thought.

Lecture Twenty

Secular Knowledge—The Idea of University

Scope: The medieval age lays claim to the great achievements in art and architecture, to the founding of the university in the modern sense, and to the creation of a form of social and political organization that provided stability and predictability in an otherwise perilous world. Its universities revived the culture of thought and laid the foundations for the rise of experimental science. Its special centers for medical and legal training would supply the civilized world with a cadre of professionals able to promulgate and develop the arts of healing and of politics. The "Gothic" cathedral and the institution of chivalry express the relation of God, man, and society that continues the central precepts of Western philosophy.

Outline

I. The achievement of Charlemagne (742–814) was to unite crown and church in a symbolic coronation by the pope—the central act of a statesman who did more by persuasion and maneuvering than by battle.

A. Charlemagne's administration focused on the needs of the poor and the protection of the church. His kingdom was divided into counties, each jurisdiction with its bishop and mayor, with emissaries from his court reporting to him regularly on the state of security in each region.

B. We know that one of Charlemagne's edicts required abbey schools to undertake the task of teaching people how to read and write, although there is some evidence to suggest that Charlemagne never mastered writing himself.

C. He was an extraordinary military leader, personally leading more than 50 campaigns and christianizing nearly all the nations of Europe. He made military service the prerequisite for property ownership and otherwise made civic duties the foundation of daily life.

D. In the later years of his reign, there is little evidence of Charlemagne's rule being punctuated by major military engagements. There were important military events and the like, but in fact, he was able to stabilize the European continent and, to a considerable extent, integrate these diverse peoples through skill and planning

1. On November 28, 800, Charlemagne knelt before the pope and permitted his temporal rule to be validated by the church.

2. In a matter of days and weeks, nothing less than a Holy Roman Empire replaced what had been merely an assortment of principalities governed for decades by tribal chieftains.

3. In this same measure, Charlemagne established royal rule on a religious foundation; the "rights" of kings were now understood to be divine rights.

E. Charlemagne now ruled by the authority of the great hegemonic Christian Church, which had begun to articulate its canonical teachings. In joining crown and cross, Charlemagne achieved a spiritual and transcendental authenticity equal to anything that might be claimed by the sons of Islam.

1. He would unite the West further by instruction, by generous laws, and by the fuller participation of the church in daily life.

2. Recognizing that cohesion comes about, in large measure, as a result of a common language, Charlemagne made Latin the official language for the business of court, for legal documents, for transactions involving property, and the like.

II. Teachers were needed to bring about these changes, and Charlemagne recruited them from England and Ireland.

A. One of Charlemagne's recruits was Alcuin (732–804) of Britain, who would become one of the most influential figures in the restoration of scholarship in the Western world.

1. Alcuin had already distinguished himself as the founder of schools and a great library in York. On an official visit to Rome, he met Charlemagne in Parma and was enticed to leave Britain for the great projects that the king envisaged.

2. With Charlemagne's patronage and as head of the palace school, Alcuin was able to influence the educational initiatives that brought literacy to the European clergy and many in their flocks.

3. By the time of Alcuin's death, schools at every level and throughout the now vast Western empire were staffed by his former pupils. Thanks to the preservation of classical scholarship by the Irish of Iona and their kindred spirits in Britain, foundational subjects were available to these teachers, and the modest abbey schools benefited from instruction by informed minds and a carefully crafted curriculum.

B. Shared learning is part of a shared culture. Alcuin the Latinist and classicist realized that diverse peoples could be brought together under the blanket of a culture of learning. He determined the core liberal arts subjects that would prepare the teaching clergy, and they in turn, would bring a more limited set of subjects to bear on the task of elevating literacy in the realm.

1. The three basic subjects comprising the *trivium* were grammar, rhetoric, and logic. These would evolve and expand over the decades and centuries following the era of Charlemagne and his trusted educator.
2. By the 12th century, there were seven subjects, the *trivium* and a *quadrivium*, consisting of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy.

C. The abbey schools had changed by the 12th century, as well. As a result of an application to Rome, the assembly of students at the great cathedral in Paris was constituted as a *universitas*.

1. Universities are veritable engines of self-perfection, fostering a life of contemplation such as Aristotle said was the life of those in the Isles of the Blest.
2. The life was religious but also critical and rational, doubting and questioning, the life of reason that may end with religious resignation but only after a productive struggle.

D. The original university also had as its practical mission the education of those who would become skilled in the law and rhetoric and would take a proper place as preachers and teachers, as priests and emissaries. In this regard, the University of Paris might be contrasted with older institutions that were directly committed to practical considerations, such as the schools at Bologna and Salerno in Italy, devoted to the specialties of law and medicine.

E. The University at Paris, and those modeled on it, had a different set of objectives than institutions devoted to practical training. The objectives here were scholarly: Students listened to disquisitions, asked questions, submitted themselves to examination, and constructed their own glosses on philosophical works, and all within a community of scholars, each of whom had equal moral standing.

F. The students formed guilds to deal with town-gown tensions and the budding bureaucracy of the university. When they saw the bureaucratic measures of the university gaining a certain hegemony, many scholars set out for Oxford.

G. These developments signal the appearance of a genuinely academic class of philosophers, persons whose lives are devoted to a disciplined, systematic form of study and to shaping the minds of students.

III. Another of the great achievements of the period rather derisively referred to as "medieval" is the Gothic cathedral, more than 100 of which were erected in Europe and Britain between 1150 and 1300.

A. These extraordinary creations of technology differ from the art of the Renaissance in a central way: Where even the smallest work of the Renaissance was signed, the huge cathedrals are, effectively, anonymous.

B. The cathedral and its glass windows reflect the medieval worldview: earthly life as metaphor.

1. The medieval world is grounded in the idea of harmony and cyclical recurrences, not progress.
2. For example, the serf served the lord of the manor as that lord served the Lord of all. In this sense, subservience need not be denigrating but is part of a divine plan.
3. Serfs, it should be noted, had rights, including the right to bring their lords to court for abuse. The lord of the manor, in turn, had his special duties, as did clergy, the knights errant, and so on. The message to all was that the faithful servant's task is to preserve that good order and to promote what is most worthy within it for the greater glory of God.

C. The 19th-century aesthete who helped restore respect for the Gothic was John Ruskin. In *The Stones of Venice*, he writes that late-Renaissance architecture, with its line and angle precision, lacks human freedom. The Gothic, on the other hand, with all its ostensible imperfections and mythic absurdities, is a full expression of the free imagination in devotional commitment to the divine.

D. The Gothic cathedral is a rhetorical statement; it's a statement that at once captures mystery, truth, power, scale, proportion, beauty, ambiguity. Does it make us feel small? Yes, but only in relation to the divine.

IV. The third great institutional creation of the medieval period was chivalry, a symbology that expresses faith, devotion, purity, and a longing for the unattainable.

A. The word *chivalry* brings to mind the knight-errant with his preposterous manners, as well as those incredible jousting matches where otherwise intelligent men mount horses and kill each other in the interest of gaining love. What was the point of all this, and how did it bear on what we have called the problem of conduct?

B. First, it is important to identify the chivalric knight as, essentially, a "secular priest." He is the executive branch of a government, at the top of which is the church itself, the repository of that rational and divine template that should govern the work of the world.

1. Right reason is the reason of the church because it is directly inspired by God. And the reason of God must now express itself through a willful, faithful, and "iconic" medium, who is the knight-errant.

2. In this, we have the arrangement of what Plato argued was the nature of human nature: a soul, the tripartite elements of which are the rational, the passionate, and the volitional. It is also akin to the Holy Trinity, a unity within diversity.

3. The knight's code features ritualized self-sacrifice as a form of nobility. His politeness symbolizes his strength, for he is reserved and retreating by choice. He has complete control of his emotions, which is why he can serve any one of the causes of justice. The only insult is an insult to honor.

C. Chivalry is one of the great civilizing influences in the history of Western civilization. It could be given to certain excesses and lend itself to comic renditions, but in this institution, we find the incorporation of some of the most deeply held precepts of classical philosophy and the Christian ethic.

Recommended Reading:

Ferruolo, S. *The Origins of the University*. Stanford, 1985.

Keen, M. *Chivalry*. New Haven, 1984.

Lerner, R., and Mahdi, M., eds. *Medieval Political Philosophy*. Ithaca, 1963.

Questions to Consider:

1. Consider the role of the university as an institution in the history of Western civilization. Explain whether it is still playing the role for which it was originally conceived.

2. Compare how the hierarchic ordering of the medieval world matches up with Plato's *Republic* and conclude how the two are different—especially in light of the particulars of Christian faith.

Lecture Twenty-One
The Reappearance of Experimental Science

Scope: The medieval universities yielded not only that famous form of "logic-chopping" that today would be honored by the title "Analytical Philosophy" but a renewed commitment to natural science. This amounted to a renewed interest in the creation as a reflection of the divine, a belief that will be bequeathed to a Western community able to move forward with it to a new kind of science. It is at Oxford in the 13th century that Roger Bacon and others will recover the spirit of experimental modes of inquiry. Here, then, is the first of the two great *Renaissances*.

Outline

I. Intellectual historians point to a "renaissance" in the 13th century partly to call attention to the fact that the term *Renaissance*, used of the 15th century, was itself an invention of the 19th century, coined chiefly by scholars in the fields of the history of art and architecture.

A. What does one mean by a *renaissance*? A "rebirth" presupposes that something once born in the past has died and is now to be revived.

B. The Italian Renaissance considered the ancient and humanistic values of Greece and Rome to have been set aside during the "medieval" period. But in light of the rich philosophical undertakings of the later medieval period, there is no basis on which to suggest that this part of the classical achievement had in any sense "died."

C. It would be no exaggeration to say that if we wish to consider the rebirth of one of the defining features of the classical world, our attention should be focused on the Islamic commentators on Aristotle in the 11th century and on the medieval universities of Britain and the European continent in the 12th and 13th centuries. It is in these developments that we find a more secure and settled West recovering its own traditions.

1. Consider Peter Abelard (1079–1142), one of the most celebrated teachers of his time; his treatise *Sic et Non* ("*Yes and No*") allowed readers to see the contradictions and inconsistencies in the works of the early church fathers. His autobiography, which he titled *Historia Calamitatum* ("*An Account of [My] Misfortunes*"), is a summary of the envy and resentment aroused by his formidable intelligence and philosophical powers and by his tragic love affair with the brilliant Heloise.

2. *Sic et Non* employs a method of teaching that calls for the presentation of a major thesis or proposition, the arguments favoring it, the arguments opposing it, and a conclusion judged to be warranted by the force of argument on each side.

3. In *Sic et Non*, 158 such propositions are submitted to analysis, covering a range of problems in metaphysics, theology, and ethics. A burning issue at the time—and one that still warrants careful consideration—concerns the ontological status of *universals*. Abelard drew attention to the idleness of such controversies and to the limitations of radical positions on both sides of the issue.

II. The first half of the 13th century also hosted a revival of experimental science.

A. By way of background, we should note that secondary sources routinely highlight the achievements in abstract philosophy of the ancient world at the expense of its scientific achievements.

1. As we've seen, the ancients made a number of contributions in medicine, biology, physics, astronomy, and so on.

2. Further, thanks to Islamic commentaries on Hellenic texts, the West began to recover the natural science works of Aristotle and see in these the possibility for progressive knowledge.

B. Two figures of immense importance are found at the University of Oxford, both members of the Catholic clergy and both among the most instructed minds of their century. First, in Robert Grosseteste (1175–1253), bishop of Lincoln, we find a scholar as much at home with optics as with theology. Grosseteste studied and wrote on Aristotle's ethical treatises, as well as the *Physics*. By the time of his death, he had created at Oxford an interest in what his student Roger Bacon would come to call *experimental science*.

C. Roger Bacon and the late-Scholastic dons of Oxford would lay the foundations for the fruitful controversies and new methods of the 16th- and 17th-century modern scientific movement.

1. Scholasticism was an attempt to rationalize the teachings of the church. Doctrinal decrees in the 13th century left no doubt but that God had created the universe out of nothingness and that, as an expression of the divine mind, this same universe was ordered in a rational manner. Both of these doctrines were an invitation to forms of inquiry that would evolve into experimentation.
2. The further understanding, reinforced by the works of Thomas Aquinas, is that Christian faith and the facts of science can't be in conflict, because both reach truths about the same creation. One might need some sort of algorithm or translation device to get from one to the other, but there is no fundamental tension between the perspective of the natural philosopher or the natural scientist and the perspective of the theological or religious person.
3. The Scholastics also owed a debt to Augustine and some of the early church fathers in the assertion that we have an obligation to know God and that the way to do so is by his works. Thus, Scholastic scholarship recognizes the central place of scientific inquiry in a life of faith.

D. Experimental science also engages us in applying our senses to God's creation and integrating the evidence of the senses into a more rational framework. As Bacon says in his *Opus Maius*: "I now wish to unfold the principals of experimental science, since without experience nothing can be sufficiently known."

1. Absent direct, sensory commerce with the physical world, knowledge is empty. Bacon goes on to say:

   For there are two modes of acquiring knowledge, namely, by reasoning and experience. Reasoning draws the conclusion, and makes us grant the conclusion, but does not make the conclusion certain, nor does it remove doubt so that the mind may rest on the intuition of truth, unless the mind discovers it by the path of experience.

2. Bacon understands that we are equipped with two modes of knowing and that the problem of knowledge must be addressed via two paths: One cannot know anything merely by fashioning abstract, rational depictions of what it might be. What must be combined with rationality is knowledge gleaned by the senses. By the same token, experience must be disciplined and ordered, and this is what "experimentation" achieves.
3. The actual experiments conducted by Roger Bacon and his colleagues are interesting, but more important were his thoughts on what he called "the sin of ignorance" and the need for the clergy to be scientifically informed.
4. Experimental science, in the hands of Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon, becomes part of the ethics of Christian life. It's not a depreciation of the world to examine it at the sensory level, but it would be a depreciation to leave it there.

E. The great medieval Christian philosopher Duns Scotus put the case in yet another way:

As for what is known by experience, I have this to say. Even though a person does not experience every single individual, but only a great many, nor does he experience them at all times, but only frequently, still he knows infallibly that it is always this way, and holds for all instances.

1. In other words, once we have sampled a number of cases and have seen how things work out in general, then we can lay claim, by logical inference, to understanding how an individual instance will work under all circumstances.
2. Moreover, Duns Scotus knows this method of inquiry intuitively, in virtue of something "reposing in his soul."

F. Duns Scotus, Robert Grosseteste, and Roger Bacon are defending a mode of thought in the Scholastic period that is "characteristic" of that period, though also original and groundbreaking. This is not an age hostile to the senses, indifferent to experimental modes of inquiry; there's nothing dark about this period at all. Indeed, the labors of medieval scholarship, particularly in the context of the university—the corpus of Scholastic teaching, methodology, criticism, and analysis—will revive the noblest traditions of the West.

Recommended Reading:

Haskins, C. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Harvard, 1927.

Questions to Consider:

1. As the Scholastic thinkers saw no conflict between science and religion, the widely perceived conflict must be of a later date. Summarize what later developments might be the chief source of this conflict.
2. Given that experimental science results not in certainties but only in certain general trends, identify on what basis the Scholastic thinker might still have confidence in what he discovered. Conclude what, in Aristotle's philosophy of science, might have supplied this confidence.

Lecture Twenty-Two
Scholasticism and the Theory of Natural Law

Scope: Thomas Aquinas is the most celebrated of the scholastic philosophers. His treatises on law would form the foundation of critical inquiry in jurisprudence for centuries. But his "natural law" theory is also a gloss on Thomistic psychology, for as he says, "If our natures were different, our duties would be different." Thus do we find Thomas Aquinas defining law as *an ordinance of reason,* promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community. In other words, the Thomistic psychology is derivable from an analysis of the form of life most able to realize human potentialities most fully. A rule of law is "natural," then, when its aim is the provision of those basic goods that are, at once, basic and good in virtue of the nature of human nature.

Outline

I. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was the great 13th-century Dominican figure whose Scholastic philosophy continues to dominate thought in the religious philosophy of the Catholic Church.

- **A.** Thomas was a child of privilege. His father was Count of Aquino and his mother, Theodora, Countess of Teano. His early promise as a child schooled by the Benedictines resulted in advanced study in the liberal arts at Naples, where he committed himself to a religious vocation. By the age of 20, he was a Dominican friar.
- **B.** In Cologne, under the teaching of Albertus Magnus, Thomas's full promise became apparent. He earned a teaching position at Paris, where he would also earn a doctorate. By the time of his early 30s, he was a celebrity, attracting the best students and serving as an intellectual resource to the princes of the church.
- **C.** Outside of Catholic philosophy, Aquinas is probably best known and most widely read for his treatises on natural law. He was tutored in the law, and in the 13th century, the European world again was in possession of Roman law. At the same time, the church required legally trained scholars to fight the daily wars on heresies and address the complexities of relationships between the secular and clerical worlds.

II. For a mind of the quality of Aquinas's, however, law was much more than a set of procedures for settling disputes. It was recognized as an expression of the rational order itself and was not removed from human psychology, ethics, philosophy, politics, and religion. We find his most systematic treatment of law in Questions 90 to 108 of his *Summa Theologiae*.

- **A.** The place to begin, however, is in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*, Questions 75–89, which summarize his position on human nature. The format is the established one, found in Abelard's *Sic et Non.* We begin with a question, whether the soul is a body, for example, then confront arguments for and against.
  1. The first objection to the proposition that the soul is a body is: "It would seem that the soul is a body, for the soul is the moving principle of the body, nor does it move unless moved."
  2. Against such objections is placed the contrary position: "Augustine says that the soul is 'simple' in comparison with the body, inasmuch as it does not occupy space by its bulk."
  3. Then, Aquinas offers his own answer, followed by statements designed to meet all the objections. His reply to Objection 1, for example, is: "As everything which is in motion must be moved by something else, a process which cannot be prolonged indefinitely, we must allow that not every mover is moved."
  4. Here, then, is the essential form of the discourse. On the question of human nature, following Aristotle, Thomas adopts the *hylomorphic* thesis: Man is a composite of body and soul, where the soul is "the form of the body." Just as the process of sensation is both a power of the soul and a process that requires material organs, so the whole man is an enmattered being whose psychic processes are realized through corporeal operations.
- **B.** On the question of knowledge, Aquinas distinguishes the human and divine intellect, the latter being in the very essence of God, whereas the former is but a power or faculty of the soul.
  1. In this, it is included among several powers, such as sensation, appetite, and the will.

2. It is by way of the rational power of the intellect that one is able to obtain or avoid that which the appetites crave. There is sufficient control of the will that it becomes possible to suppress appetite by shifting one's attention, by considering other options.

C. The issue of free will is central to the concept of law itself, because it is the law—both divine and temporal—that holds one responsible solely for what one does or forbears from doing. In Question 83 of his *Treatise on Man*, Aquinas summarizes the objections to the theory of freedom of the will, the objections taken from Scripture itself!

1. One such objection is from Romans 7:19: "For the good which I will, I do not, but the evil which I will not, that I do."
2. Often the commonsense psychologist, Aquinas replies that evidence for freedom of the will is provided by the fact that, were the will not free, "…counsels, exhortations, commands, prohibitions, rewards and punishments would be in vain."
3. That is, the very evidence some might take to support determinism—the effects of reward and punishment in controlling behavior—Aquinas shows to entail freedom.
4. The animal kingdom includes instinctual behavior, or "natural judgment." Man, however, judges on the basis of reason, apprehending what *should* be done. Herein is the basis on which the law may condemn and punish.

D. Question 90 begins the treatise on law with a definition. The proposition to be considered is whether law is something pertaining to reason, and the first objection to this is again based on Romans (7:23): "I see another law in my members…"

1. In other words, we are ruled not by reason but by something that reaches the sensitive and appetitive part of our nature.
2. Aquinas replies to the various objections, having asserted: "Law is a rule and measure of acts, whereby man is induced to act…now the rule and measure of human acts is reason, which is the first principle of human acts…"
3. Aquinas claims that if our natures were different, our duties would be different. What he seems to be saying is that to engage political and juridical questions, one must be clear as to the nature of those who would be ruled.
4. But Aquinas doesn't see the task of understanding the nature of human nature as an essentially observational or inductive enterprise. Rather, we gauge the nature of human nature through the arts and sciences of reason.
5. In other words, we first assemble a rational picture of the flourishing, healthy, wholesome human life, then, given that ideal, we see how the law and various political arrangements conduce to lives lived according to that model.
6. Is this approach backwards? Shouldn't we take the facts of human nature as we find them, then establish laws and political institutions? No, we must step back from the mere contingent characteristics of human beings and ask what is the *essential* nature of human life; then, in light of that nature, what is "the good life"?

III. Aquinas's deep respect for Aristotle has him invariably referring to Aristotle as simply "the Philosopher," but Aquinas's reliance on Aristotle must be seen in light of his commitment to service in the church.

A. What Aquinas is attempting to get right is the spiritual dimension of human life, the obligations that we have to God, to conduct our lives in such a way as to be worthy of the salvation that was secured through the death of Jesus Christ.

B. He certainly is not going to settle for the philosophical musings—no matter how penetrating they might be—of a pagan philosopher who died in the 4th century B.C. To make the point briefly, we should not read Thomistic philosophy as a gloss on Aristotelianism.

C. Aristotle is important to Aquinas, however, because he understood the utterly integrated nature of those factors participating in the realization or the stultification of our humanity: the political world in which we find ourselves, the disciplining influences of law, the importance of early instruction, the sources of self-corruption.

D. This helps explain why, when Aquinas considers Aristotle's treatment of the virtues, he concludes that the account ignores the foundational theological virtues. *Episteme* is the means by which we comprehend the affairs of the world, but this intellectual virtue cannot help us reach the divine essence.

E. Further, to the intellectual virtues of Aristotle must be added the theological virtues infused in us by God: faith, hope, and charity.

1. What would Aristotle make of charity? He describes magnanimity as a virtue: Not only should we be virtuous, but we should be virtuous in a large-hearted and generous way, not grudgingly. This is as close as Aristotle comes to charity.

2. Christian charity, in contrast, is not putting oneself forward but sharing what one has, not taking for oneself even what one deserves if another is in need. Absent this theological virtue, the Christian cannot know salvation.

3. *Faith*, as Aquinas means it, would be almost repugnant to Aristotle. If the word refers to a superstitious rejection of the evidence of sense and the counsels of reason, it cannot be a virtue.

4. On the Thomistic account, if our duty is to know the divine essence, we must recognize that rationality and the evidence of the senses will take us in that direction but can never help us achieve the goal completely. There are mysteries in creation that only faith can reach, most importantly, God's offer of salvation.

IV. The problem of conduct for Aquinas is the problem of reconciling us to the eternal law. It is the path to or away from salvation and eternal happiness.

A. Right conduct is not simply a matter of making sure one's life in the political community is a decent one, that one is civically responsible, and so on. The problem of conduct now is inextricably bound up with notions of a life that is committed to knowing God, to loving God, and to becoming worthy of God's presence in the life to come.

B. In this undertaking, the rule of law guides and serves. Defined by Aquinas as "an ordinance of reason promulgated by one who has responsibility for the good of the community," law appeals to the rational side of our nature. The Thomistic theory of law is a natural law theory, much in the sense that Aristotle, Cicero, and the Roman law itself understood the relationship: Law is "natural" to creatures of a certain kind.

C. In the thrall of addiction to our own desires and their satisfaction, we neglect those basic goods by which a flourishing and worthy life is served.

D. How do we protect against ourselves in this regard? Apart from the gift of grace and the blessings of heaven, there are more immediately perceptible means of improvement and immunity: the well-ordered state and the realm of justice.

E. Taking human nature to be an expression of divine love, Aquinas finds the children of God placed here for a purpose. That purpose is for what is best in us to flourish, and what is best in us is the capacity for an integrated, wholesome family life; for responsibilities to the church; to conduct ourselves in a prudent manner; to desire the good and to shun evil; and to shun what cannot be in the interest of a rational being.

F. We do have the potentiality for developing the moral and intellectual virtues by study and contemplation. We must also deploy, finally, the theological virtues so that the form of life we live matches up in a proper way with the life that Jesus lived.

V. Stepping out of the context of religion, we find in Thomas Aquinas a towering intellect, yet toward the end of his life, he turned away from scholarship. He thought so deeply and persistently on the meaning of life that he came to find words incapable of expressing truths that can only be known by the grace of God.

Recommended Reading:

Finnis, J. *Natural Law and Natural Rights*. Oxford, 1980.

George, R., ed. *Natural Law Theory*. Oxford, 1992.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether one can actually develop psychology "backwards," that is, by starting with a theory of basic goods for human beings and, from this delineation of goods, constructing a theory of human nature.

2. Explain on what grounds the fall of Adam in some way would "justify" or render reasonable the institution of slavery.

Lecture Twenty-Three
The Renaissance—Was There One?

Scope: From Petrarch in the south to Erasmus in the north the spread of humanistic thought would collide with the deeper convictions of an age seeking to refine and defend the faith. Renaissance humanism, with its emphasis on human dignity and a progressivism based on the power of knowledge, wealth, and political influence, would alarm many of the deeply religious minds of the age.

The Renaissance hosted an especially intense form of the age-old conflict between faith and reason, the sacred and the profane, the temporal and the eternal. Two figures vividly exemplify the possibilities: Erasmus and Luther. But there are also such luminaries as Valla and Ficino, Savanarola and Giordano Bruno, Michelangelo and Leonardo. Here in the Renaissance of the south and of the north natural magic will begin to evolve into natural science, and the revival of classical humanistic thought would occur in the context of vulgar extravagance, crass commercialism, and witch hunts.

Outline

I. In this lecture, we return to the question: "Was there a Renaissance?" but this time, we look at the Renaissance that began in Florence in the *quattrocento*.

A. The civic dimensions of life were of utmost concern at the time. The mathematician Alberti's (1404–1472) text on architecture, *De architectura*, records the relationship between the physical structure of the city and the quality of life therein.

1. Alberti's discussions of the sheer joy of his villa and its gardens find him citing Horace and Pliny, revealing one of the characteristics of Renaissance writers: their personal identification with leading figures of the classical period. Alberti sees in Rome a heavenly combination of vernal beauty and cleansing atmosphere, and he emphasizes the idea that architectural principles work toward such ends.

2. The design of buildings, he says, must be based on "main lines in strict proportion and regularity, lest the pleasing harmony of the whole should be lost in the attraction of individual parts." No Gothic cathedral would meet these criteria!

3. In 1452, Alberti's treatise *De Re Aedificatoria* appeared and would come to be the bible for Renaissance architects. Dedicated to Pope Nicholas V, it defended the classical, harmonious, and essentially "musical" structure of art—its conformity with principles of harmony as abstractly revealed in mathematics.

B. In working with two popes and many patrons, Alberti led an aesthetic movement in which politics, finance, piety, and civics were integrated, much to the benefit of all. Concern throughout was with just what it is about a city that makes it the right kind of place to live.

C. The city was now understood as having definite moral purposes. It is a place in which we learn lessons and realize possibilities, a place in which an essentially progressive being can make his way.

1. To be sure, the ancient *polis* was also understood as having centrally moral purposes, but Athens was not the place where one came to make one's mark as a progressive, organic being, defining oneself anew, concealing a lackluster past, or parleying one's talents into sources of wealth and standing.

2. The Renaissance, however, embodies this idea of progress: Depending on one's initiative, one's life, no matter where it begins, can end in a different place. People can move about and engage in different kinds of business. This is a safer and more mobile world, and with that mobility, complex social issues arise.

II. Let us briefly consider another Florentine, by adoption, Leonardo Bruni (1369–1444). Bruni served as secretary to successive popes and briefly as chancellor of Florence in 1410, returning there in 1415 and remaining for the rest of his life. Bruni writes a history of Florence so well received as to have Florentine citizenship conferred on him and his progeny.

A. Bruni was the leader of a movement of thought and culture that revived the Greek classics through Latin translations of Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, and Demosthenes. His history of Florence emphasizes the freedoms long enjoyed by Florentines, who were never under the control of imperial Rome. Bruni's

historical volumes tell Florentines what they will agree with, because by the time of their publication, Florence is the center of Renaissance humanism.

B. In his biographies, Bruni devotes the same attention to Petrarch (1304–1374) and Dante (1265–1321) as to Aristotle and Cicero! Both were geniuses of the 1300s, closer to the culture of the High Middle Ages than to that of Renaissance Florence.

1. Dante's love of Beatrice began when the poet was 9 years old and would continue over the course of decades. In his first book, *Vita Nuova*, he confesses this love and will spend years seeking an idiom of perfected love with which to record what he judges Beatrice to deserve.

2. Where does he find this elusive idiom? In philosophy and, more particularly, in Scholastic philosophy. His masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy*, presents the journey out of hell as a journey from darkness to light by way of the moral and intellectual virtues under the light of natural reason.

3. Who in this allegory represents Divine Philosophy? None other than Beatrice, who helps the author complete his journey to true Paradise, which is the sight of God. In this, might we not regard the *Divine Comedy* as the last great romance of the High Middle Ages?

4. Petrarch is well known for his vast classical knowledge and glorious poetry. He also wrote treatises bearing such titles as "Concerning contempt of the world," as well as dialogues between himself and St. Augustine conducted before Truth.

5. To these might be added his famous *Trionfi*, in which the triumphal procession is led by Love, Death, Fame, Time, Chastity, and Divinity, the last triumphing over all. Again, this seems very much in the mode of medieval expression and tied to the substantive concerns of the medieval world.

C. The Florentines thought of themselves as recovering something that had been lost, that is, the classical worldview. This view included a devotion to the humanizing and humanistic arts and to a centered perspective on human nature and what is right for it. They thought what had been lost was all of the poetry and music and splendor of life—the great sculpture, the great orderliness, the great beauty.

D. One of the great paintings of the time is surely Raphael's *School of Athens*, which conveys one of the characteristic themes of the Renaissance: the world of classical genius.

1. The subjects depicted, however, constitute the curriculum of the medieval university. The liberal arts surround mathematics, which is the queen of the sciences. Logic is central.

2. Aristotle and Plato are represented, with Plato pointing up toward considerations of a transcendent nature, and Aristotle keeping himself and everything else at ground level.

3. We even have an Arab scholar, maybe the Prophet himself, illustrating the Hellenic-Islamic connection so fruitful and so problematic throughout the High Middle Ages.

III. The Renaissance certainly saw a renewed interest in the purely human and earthly dimensions of life and the part played in that life by art, architecture, poetry, song, and drama. Those who engaged in studies of this kind referred to themselves as *umanisti*, "humanists."

A. Although humanistic enterprises flourished in the classical period, it is less these than the power and originality of philosophy that characterizes the Hellenic and Hellenistic achievement. But by that standard, the term *Renaissance* would seem especially misleading, because the Renaissance produced no philosophers of significance.

B. The Renaissance is remarkable in the number of patrons arising at the time, many of whom were wealthy merchants and bankers. Cosimo de' Medici, for example, supported the artists, writers, and scholars of his age. He also supported the formation of a center in Florence, rather presumptuously called The Academy.

1. In 1460, Brother Leonardo of Pistoia delivered to Cosimo the Greek-language edition the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a body of scientific writings presumably inspired by the god Hermes. The Latin translation of this work, *Pimander*, was published in 1471 and would go through 16 editions before the end of the 16th century.

2. We discover here something revealing about the science of the period. If the Renaissance is to be seen as the birth of the modern world and if we identify modernity with scientific achievement, what do we make of the *Pimander*, with its nonsensical cures and theories and with whole communities of Florentine savants accepting these as pure wisdom?

C. Perhaps the best view of the Renaissance is as a transitional period. It is an age that spends more time looking back to antiquity than forward to modernity—or perhaps we should say that it's an age that is trying to look in both directions at the same time.

IV. In some respects, the two sides of the Renaissance can be seen in two of the great thinkers of the age, Luther (1483–1546) and Erasmus (c. 1469–1536).

A. Martin Luther would become one of the most powerful figures in the history of Western civilization, though again, his principal contributions are not philosophical. The book that counts most with Luther is the Bible.

B. Erasmus was among the most shining intellects ever to cast light on the subjects that amuse and confuse rational beings. When he was 15, he was sent to monastery school, and although the clerical life was a source of disappointment to him, it provided him with scholarly resources that he used to great effect.

C. In Luther and Erasmus, we discover the most decisive voices of a Reformation based on the rejection of Scholasticism and the restoration of evangelical Christianity. In place of what he regarded as Scholastic hair-splitting, Erasmus would install the pure and perfect "philosophy of Christ," an ethical ideal readily guided by wisdom reached through humanizing influences.

D. Neither Erasmus nor Luther aspired to be a philosopher. In this, too, there is a revealing aspect of the humanism of the period.

1. Consider Petrarch on the same subject: Writing "On his own ignorance and that of many others," Petrarch says that as far as he is concerned, he can get as far as one would wish with the Bible, Cicero, and the folk-wisdom of his fellow citizens.

2. He specifically eschews what he regards as the speculative confusion and ignorance of the ancient philosophers. Again, the humanist is skeptical toward what the ancient world offers as perhaps its greatest achievement.

V. The Renaissance conception of virtue is not one that would be wholly endorsed by Plato and Aristotle.

A. Virtue is now more publicly observable, more external than internal. The Medicis will show their virtue by the patronage they give to the artists, sculptors, and architects of the period.

B. Along with this development goes a gospel of success that gives rise to excess at the cost of piety, a shift that the Reformation sought to halt.

C. For Luther, the project of the Reformation is summarized in his *Concerning Christian Liberty* (1520): "The soul can do without everything except the word of God." One begins with the word of God, and no Greek pagan is needed to tell us how to live our lives.

Recommended Reading:

Cassirer, E. et al. *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*. Chicago, 1967.

Erasmus. *Ten Colloquies*. Liberal Arts Press, 1957.

Yates, F. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*. Chicago, 1964).

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how the Renaissance conception of human dignity relates to the Christian sense of man as fallen.

2. Conclude whether patronage is a credible reflection of virtue.

3. Give examples of today's "patrons," in the sense of the Medicis.

Lecture Twenty-Four
Let Us Burn the Witches to Save Them

Scope: Natural magic, natural science, and the witch panics form a rich and ominous mixture in the age we revere with the title "Renaissance." Here is an age when theory and imagination, fortified by revelation and high-stakes politics, yield much of the best and the worst in us all.

As a preoccupation of sorts throughout Europe and the British Isles from 1400 to 1700 (and later), the prosecution and execution of witches would be justified by Scripture, by moral philosophy, and by science. The theoretical grounding of the practice was firm and carefully worked out and was adopted by some of the best minds of the ages in which the practice was common. A review of this episode in Western history reveals the purposes to which great philosophical ideas might be put.

Outline

I. The witch hunts spanned three centuries of European history, from about 1400–1700 and were, contrary to what we might think, based on deeply thought-out considerations on the nature of sin, the nature of human nature, the nature of law, and the nature of crime and punishment.

- **A.** Witch persecutions tell us something about the intellectual ethos of a period in which the modern world would be introduced to extraordinary scientific achievements. The period includes the lives of Descartes, Newton, Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler, and Brahe.
- **B.** The witch persecutions constitute an official, systematic program of arrest, interrogation, and trial—the application of developed principles of Roman law—presided over by magistrates. Documents are written and promulgated that alert officials as to how these trials are to be conducted, what scientific tests and evidence should be used, what punishments are fitting, and so on.
- **C.** This is an illuminating chapter in the history of ideas, though not a proud one.

II. Every age has its witches, and every age has a theory that confirms the fact that those targeted for scrutiny or abuse are the right ones. This theory is usually based on the view that someone's conduct or perspective is so unorthodox as to constitute a threat to the received wisdom and core values that keep the community together.

- **A.** The history of law includes ample evidence that witchcraft has always been a common target of concern. Western law made provision for witches from Roman times until the 19th century. Even the ancient Greeks had to deal with property damage brought about by witchcraft.
- **B.** By the middle of the 19th century, this way of understanding offenses would be relegated to the dustbins of failed theory, as the rise of medical jurisprudence replaced the witch theory with the brain theory.
- **C.** The Romans understood witches as people who seem to have special powers that are beyond our own powers of explanation.
  1. We see, for example, herbalists in ancient Rome, mostly widows who sell concoctions of herbs to cure various ailments. They are members of the class of benevolent witches that the Romans referred to as *lamia*, the "white witch."
  2. The law took no notice of the harmless practices of such herbalists but did address forms of witchcraft that were harmful or destructive.
  3. In ancient Roman law, witches who were judged responsible for the death of cattle or for barns burning, for example, faced penalties determined solely by the damage done. They were not punished because their acts were brought about by witchcraft.

III. Christianity introduces a new set of problems regarding witchery, based on the central teaching that our worthiness for praise and blame is logically tied to our moral freedom.

- **A.** Praise and blame are reserved for those actions over which we have moral control, those things that come about as a result of our intentions; in the law, this is referred to as *mens rea*. One must have the power to frame the evil intent in the mind.
- **B.** This concept is co-extensive with juridical reasoning throughout history. The law punishes what the actor does when the actor in the circumstance could have done otherwise; the mitigating circumstances of

coercion, sickness, insanity, and the like have always been recognized. However, the emphasis that Christian teaching will place on moral freedom is new and more significant, because the stakes are now nothing less than eternal salvation.

C. Part of this teaching is that the powers of Satan cannot be deployed in such a way as to rob us of our moral freedom; if that were the case, there would be no basis on which to judge us at all. The law could never tease out the difference between someone acting in a malign way by intention and someone whose intentions had been so corrupted that the person was merely an instrument of Satanic purposes.

D. On this understanding, how do we account for any supernatural event—any occurrence that is outside the natural order of things?

1. Miracles are one form of supernatural event and are performed by saints. The power to perform miracles comes only from God.

2. The witch's supernatural power, in contrast, comes by way of the devil. It makes no difference, then, whether she uses that power to perform acts that are harmless or hurtful. Obviously, she has entered into a pact with the devil.

3. In this way, the act of witchery becomes a crime of heresy, which may be punishable by death.

IV. By this time, formal trial procedures for witchcraft had already been rediscovered, replacing medieval tests of trial and ordeal. The 13th-century European courts, both secular and ecclesiastical, were in full possession of Roman legal procedure.

A. One of the benefits of the recovery and dissemination of Roman law was the replacement of the *accusatorial* scheme with an *inquisitorial* procedure, but this proved to be a mixed blessing.

1. Before the recovery and the reapplication of developed Roman law, complaints between parties were generally in the form of accusations. The accuser must make his case against the accused or himself face multiple penalties.

2. In the medieval period, the way some of the more serious charges were judged was through trial, ordeal, and compurgation. A defendant could choose between trial by jury or by God. In the latter case, under the supervision of the coroner, the defendant passed barefoot over burning coals, or carried white-hot metal by hand, or was tested in scalding water for burns.

3. Compurgation was based on a different principle. Here, the defendant was required to summon a fixed number of persons willing to swear before God that they believed the defendant's oath of innocence. The outcome depended as much on the faithful performance of the required procedures as the credibility of the compurgators. This mode of trial, however, was not available for those charged with witchcraft.

4. On the whole, the inquisitorial procedure was an advance in adjudication. Through it, the authorities did not have to wait for a complaint but could bring an action, engage in an inquisition, compile evidence, take testimony, and order the appropriate remedies. Properly applied, the inquisitorial procedure functioned much like a grand jury in our system of law.

5. This system worked to the disadvantage of those tried for witchcraft, because now the accuser did not have to face the accused. The inquisitor could bring the charge, never divulging the names of those who made the accusation.

6. Torture was permitted, but no confession made in the torture chamber would count as evidence against the witch. Rather, a period of time had to elapse, two or three days, and the same admission would have to be made in open court. Torture typically was not needed, however, because many of those charged with witchcraft, typically older, eccentric women, actually admitted to the charges!

B. The number of executions cited in the literature ranges from hundreds of thousands to a million and upwards. Witches could offer very little by way of self-defense in these actions, and their execution would have had the necessary chilling effect on the community. The church authorities knew that it was far more important to save the soul than to preserve the body, and if burning the witch is a means to salvation, then in the flames one will find redemption.

C. What kind of evidence was relevant in a trial for witchcraft? The offenses themselves were not enough, because such outcomes could arise from accident or from uncomplicated criminal motives. It was not sufficient that someone has accused another of witchery. Substantial and incriminating evidence was required.

1. First, the courts required a document aimed at dealing with these difficult cases, a text that spelled out the salient characteristics of the witch and how these are to be uncovered. Such information would allow trial procedures, evidence, and sentencing to be applied in an even-handed way.
2. The book was the *Malleus Maleficarum*. The authors were two Dominicans, and the pope put his seal of approval on it, as did the kings and princes of Europe. The *Malleus* reached a prominence comparable to that of the Bible itself over the course of its numerous printings.
3. The text tells us without a doubt that witches exist and that anyone who expresses skepticism toward the concept is a heretic.
4. On the matter of evidence, it is sufficient to note that the witch has entered into a pact with the devil and, thus, has lost the capacity for remorse.

D. In all this, we see how easily a wrong-headed theory can wreak misery and shame on its victims. The lesson we learn is to choose our theories carefully.

Recommended Reading:

Larner, C. *Witchcraft and Religion*. Blackwell, 1984.

Levack, B. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. Longman, 1995.

Robinson, D. N. *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours*. Harvard University Press, 1996 (chapter 3).

Questions to Consider:

1. Do you agree that there is a similarity between current attitudes toward the insane and the inexplicable, and Renaissance attitudes toward the witch?
2. Explain the nature of witchcraft—and the basis for your explanation.

Timeline

800–600 B.C.E.	Morality tales, such as the Hindu Upanishads, appear in many settled communities.
~750 B.C.E.	Homer composes *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
700 B.C.E.	Colonization of Sicily, the east coast of Italy, and islands off the coast of Asia Minor begins, primarily to grow produce that can be sent back to mainland Greece.
6th century B.C.E.	Schools of critical inquiry emerge in ancient Greece. Parmenides and other pre-Socratic philosophers emerge. *Empirkoi*, or empirical practitioners who followed Hippocrates's philosophy, make up the dominant school of Greek medicine.
570 B.C.E.	Birth of Pythagoras.
551 B.C.E.	Birth of Confucius.
4th century B.C.E.	Isocrates composes the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.
479 B.C.E.	Death of Confucius.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Hippocrates.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Socrates.
446 B.C.E.	Birth of Isocrates.
427 B.C.E.	Birth of Plato.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Hippocrates.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Socrates.
384 B.C.E.	Birth of Aristotle.
360 B.C.E.	Plato writes his dialogue *The Republic*, generally considered to be the foundational work in political science. It addresses the question of how a man's virtue may be measured.
347 B.C.E.	Death of Plato.
338 B.C.E.	Death of Isocrates.
322 B.C.E.	Death of Aristotle.
300 B.C.E.	Stoic philosophy develops.
106 B.C.E.	Birth of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
43 B.C.E.	Death of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
1st century C.E.	"Hellenized" Jews build Christianity.
354 C.E.	Birth of St. Augustine.
397 C.E.	St. Augustine publishes *The Confessions*, a personal, introspective work of psychology.
430 C.E.	Death of St. Augustine.
476 C.E.	Fall of Rome.
632 C.E.	According to the teachings of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message that would be faithfully recorded in the Koran.

650–850 C.E. ..... The Dark Ages.

1150–1300. ..... Medieval period.

13th century ..... Advent of a "renaissance" of scholarly thought, with Roger Bacon and others recovering the spirit of experimental modes of inquiry.

1214 ..... Birth of Roger Bacon.

1225 ..... Birth of Thomas Aquinas.

1274 ..... Death of Thomas Aquinas.

1294 ..... Death of Roger Bacon.

1304 ..... Birth of Francesco Petrarch.

1374 ..... Death of Francesco Petrarch.

15th century ..... The Italian Renaissance.

1452 ..... Birth of Leonardo da Vinci.

1483 ..... Birth of Martin Luther.

1497 ..... Savonarola burns the vanities.

1517 ..... Martin Luther protests aspects of the Catholic Church.

1519 ..... Death of Leonardo da Vinci.

1546 ..... Death of Martin Luther.

1546–1648 ..... The Protestant Reformation, launched by Martin Luther's 1517 protest against aspects of the Catholic Church.

1561 ..... Birth of Francis Bacon.

1588 ..... Birth of Thomas Hobbes.

1596 ..... Birth of René Descartes.

1626 ..... Death of Francis Bacon.

1632 ..... Birth of John Locke.

1633 ..... Galileo is called before the Inquisition.

1642 ..... Birth of Isaac Newton

1646 ..... Birth of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1650 ..... Death of René Descartes.

1660 ..... The Royal Society becomes the center of a growing culture of science.

1660 ..... Thomas Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*.

1679 ..... Death of Thomas Hobbes.

1685 ..... Birth of George Berkeley.

1694 ..... Birth of François Marie Arouet, who wrote under the name Voltaire.

1699 ..... Lord Shaftesbury publishes *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, offering an explanation of moral conduct based on the notion of natural dispositions and affections.

1704 ..... Death of John Locke.

1705 ..... Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz offers a significant critique of the Lockean view in *New Essays on Human Understanding*.

1709 ..... Birth of Julian Offray de La Mettrie.

1710 ..... George Berkeley publishes his critique of the Lockean view, *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*.

1710 ..... Birth of Thomas Reid.

1711 ..... Birth of David Hume.

1712 ..... Birth of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1715 ..... Birth of the French philosopher Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1715 ..... Birth of Etienne Condillac, John Locke's translator in France.

1716 ..... Death of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1724 ..... Birth of Immanuel Kant.

1729 ..... Birth of Edmund Burke.

1734 ..... Voltaire writes his *Letters on the English*.

1739 ..... David Hume publishes *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which aimed to defeat Skepticism by putting philosophy on a firmer footing, grounding morality, science, and politics in the realm of experience.

1743 ..... Birth of Condorcet.

1748 ..... La Mettrie publishes the banned book *Man—A Machine*, which extends the materialistic drift of Descartes's psychology.

Mid-18th century ..... The "Scottish Enlightenment."

1751 ..... Death of La Mettrie.

1757 ..... Birth of Pierre Cabanis.

1758 ..... Birth of Franz Joseph Gall.

1764 ..... Thomas Reid publishes *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*.

1770 ..... Birth of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1771 ..... Death of Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1772 ..... Helvetius's *A Treatise on Man*, which maintains that human essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world, published posthumously.

1773 ..... John Locke's *Two Treatises* is published in colonial America.

1776 ..... Death of David Hume.

1778 ..... Death of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1778 ..... Death of François Marie Arouet (Voltaire).

1780 ..... Death of Etienne Condillac.

1781 ..... Immanuel Kant publishes his *Critique of Pure Reason*, which credits David Hume with awakening Kant from his "dogmatic slumber."

1783 ..... Death of George Berkeley.

1787 ..... The U.S. Constitution is forged in Philadelphia. During the subsequent ratification period, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay write essays in the New York newspapers addressing and countering the various

	arguments that had been advanced against the Constitution and the federal model of governance. These essays became known as *The Federalist Papers*.
1794	Death of Condorcet.
1794	Death of Pierre Flourens.
1795	Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* published posthumously.
1796	Death of Thomas Reid.
1797	Death of Edmund Burke.
1804	Death of Immanuel Kant.
1806	Birth of John Stuart Mill.
1808	Death of Pierre Cabanis.
1809	Birth of Charles Darwin.
1818	Birth of Karl Marx.
1822	Birth of Francis Galton.
1828	Death of Franz Joseph Gall.
1830	Auguste Comte publishes his *Course of Positive Philosophy,* which reflected on the achievements of the Enlightenment and concluded that human thought passes through distinct stages.
1830s	The British Reform Act ends British participation in the slave trade and extends political rights to those long denied the franchise, including those not members of the Church of England.
1831	Death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.
1833	Charles Lyell publishes his *Principles of Geology*, which provided a time frame compatible with the requirements of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.
1842	Birth of William James.
1844	Birth of Friedrich Nietzsche.
Mid–late 19th century	The Aesthetic movement.
1856	Birth of Sigmund Freud.
1859	John Stuart Mill publishes *On Liberty*.
1862	In November of this year, Hermann von Helmholtz gives a lecture on conservation of energy at Heidelberg, where he addresses, among other issues, the relatively new division between leading scientists and philosophers.
1867	Death of Pierre Flourens.
1869	Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin, publishes his studies of hereditary genius, which conclude that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.
1871	Charles Darwin publishes *Descent of Man*, which puts forth his theory of natural selection.
1872	Friedrich Nietzsche publishes his first notable work, *The Birth of Tragedy and the Spirit of Music*.

1873 ..... Death of John Stuart Mill.

1875 ..... Birth of Carl Gustav Jung.

1882 ..... Death of Charles Darwin.

1883 ..... Death of Karl Marx.

1889 ..... Birth of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1890 ..... William James publishes *The Principles of Psychology*.

1896 ..... Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Studies of Hysteria*, in which the theory is advanced that hysterical symptoms are the outcome of repression.

1900 ..... Death of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1910 ..... Death of William James.

1911 ..... Death of Francis Galton.

1912 ..... Birth of Alan Turing.

1938 ..... Death of Sigmund Freud.

1950 ..... Alan Turing publishes his *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*.

1951 ..... Death of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1954 ..... Death of Alan Turing.

1961 ..... Death of Carl Gustav Jung.

Glossary

Apatheia: Freedom from pathos and suffering.

Atman: The soul, or core reality of the human individual. Hindu.

Brahma: The "creator" within the Hindu divine triad—Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.

Categorical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made on principles whose moral authority takes precedence over any merely hypothetical imperative. Categorical imperatives derive from the intelligible realm governed by "the laws of freedom," rather than the natural realm of physical determination. Unlike hypothetical imperatives, they must be universally applicable. That is, they do not depend on a calculation of utility or on any calculation of possible consequences in particular circumstances.

Chthonic religion: Earth-centered religion, in which women or female deities are central figures because of their procreative power. Common in matriarchal societies.

Common sense: Scottish school of thought from the 18th and early 19th centuries, holding that in the perception of the average, unsophisticated person, sensations are not mere ideas or subjective impressions but carry with them the belief in corresponding qualities as belonging to external objects.

Contiguity: Similarity in time or place.

Ecstasis: Greek; "ecstasy." Stepping outside oneself or being removed from oneself.

Ego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The ego is purported to stand between the id and the superego to balance our primitive needs and our moral/ethical beliefs.

Eidola: "Phantoms," or atomic emanations from material objects that have some access to the organs of sense. Concept proposed by ancient atomists to explain hallucinations, dreams, religious visions, and so on.

Empiricism: The philosophical view that all human knowledge is derived from experience and that which cannot be confirmed via experience is not naturally known.

Enlightenment: Eighteenth-century European intellectual movement that rejected the presumptive authority of the past in favor of a reliance on experience and reason/science.

Enthousiasmos: Greek; "enthusiasm." Presenting oneself in such a way that the gods can enter the self.

Ephistemonikon: Abstract and universal statements.

Episteme: Scientific knowledge.

Epistemology: The study of how we know what we know and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible, one of the central questions in the study of metaphysics. Examines the question of knowledge and attempts to characterize the nature of truth and science.

Eudaimonia: The doing of something for its own sake, as the gods do. "Happiness."

Experimenta fructifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these consequential experiments are designed to allow the observer to choose between competing accounts of facts on hand.

Experimenta lucifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these "light-shedding" experiments alert the observer to factors operative in the causal matrix that brings things about. Such studies are essentially exercises in fact gathering.

Fallibilism: View that there is always *more* to the account than any current version *can* include, because other experiences, beliefs, and needs are always in existence.

Fatalism: The belief that every event is bound to happen as it does no matter what we do about it. Fatalism is the most extreme form of causal determinism, because it denies that human actions have any causal efficacy.

Functionalism: The view that consciousness is not a material entity attached to the brain, but a process, a stream of experiences knitted together as they flow by a supernumerary intelligence.

Hedonism: Doctrine holding that pleasure is the highest good.

Hypothetical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made to attain a specific end. Hypothetical imperatives are contingent; they are tied to a particular context and to the needs and desires of natural creatures under the press of the needs to survive, to avoid pain, and to gain pleasure. Decisions thus grounded are non-moral, because they arise from our natures as merely human beings, not as rational beings; that is, they are essentially reactions.

Id: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The id is purported to represent primary process thinking—our most primitive need-gratification thoughts.

Intuition: An instinctive knowing, or impression that something might be the case, without the use of rational processes.

Ius civile: Expression of local values and interests, which differs from place to place and people to people.

Ius gentium: Universally adopted precepts of those who live under any rule of law, such as the idea that harm done to another without cause is wrong, as is the taking of what clearly belongs to another.

Jainism: Ethical school based on the Pythagorean teachings, which emphasizes the celebration of all that lives.

Labor theory of value: The concept that property is worth only as much as the labor invested in it; the surplus is profit, which accumulates as capital.

Logos: The aims and goals generated by the rational intelligence behind the order of the cosmos.

Lyssa: "Wolf's rage"; extreme anger in the heat of battle.

Malleus maleficarum: A coherent theory of witchcraft, a set of tests to determine witchcraft, and a list of appropriate punishments used during the witch hunts from 1400 to 1700 and beyond.

Marxism: A form of communism based on the writings of Karl Marx, who theorized that actions and human institutions are economically determined, that the class struggle is the basic agency of historical change, and that capitalism will ultimately be superseded by communism.

Metaphysics: Concept referring to two distinguishable but interconnected sets of questions: first, the question of what really exists and, second, the question of how we know such things and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible or defective. The term is derived from the writings of Aristotle.

Mimesis: The imitative representation of nature or human behavior.

Mythos: The complex of beliefs, values, and attitudes characteristic of a specific group or society.

Naturalism: The meta-ethical thesis that moral properties are reducible to natural ones or that ethical judgments may be derived from non-ethical ones. Also, a scientific account of the world in terms of causes and natural forces that rejects all spiritual, supernatural, or teleological explanations.

Natural law: An ethical belief or system of beliefs supposed to be inherent in human nature and discoverable by reason rather than revelation. Also, the philosophical doctrine that the authority of the legal system or of certain laws derives from their justifiability by reason and, indeed, that a legal system that cannot be so justified has no authority.

Natural rights: Rights inherent in a being because of its nature as a being of a certain sort.

Nomological: The mode of causation employed by God, according to the Stoics; immutable laws control the affairs of the cosmos.

Nomos: Prevailing social expectations and requirements, or "the law of the land."

Noumena/Phenomena: According to Immanuel Kant, knowledge arises from experience; therefore, it must be knowledge of *phenomena*, that is, of things and events as these are delivered by the senses. From the evidence at the phenomenal level, we can reason to the fact that there is a *noumenal* realm of being. Thus, we can know *that* it is

but cannot know *what* it is. Ultimately, our knowledge claims must be utterly bounded by the pure intuitions of time and space and the pure categories of the understanding.

Ontology: The study of what really exists, one of the key questions central to the concept of metaphysics.

Philosophy: The rational pursuit of truths deemed to be answers to perennial questions, as well as a historical study of intractable problems; literally, the love of wisdom.

Phrenology: A Victorian-era science of character divination, faculty psychology, and brain theory derived from the Viennese physician Franz Joseph Gall's system, which held that the surface of the skull could be read as an accurate index of an individual's psychological aptitudes and tendencies.

Phronesis: Greek term for practical wisdom or prudence; the application of good judgment to human conduct, in contrast with the more theoretical inquiry leading to *sophia*, or wisdom generally.

Phusis: Greek, "nature."

Physiognomy: The study of the shape and configuration of a person's face to determine his or her character and intelligence.

Pluralism: The philosophical doctrine that reality consists of several basic substances or elements.

Polis: Life within a settled community, in which one participates and from which one draws lessons for life.

Positivism: A form of empiricism that bases all knowledge on perceptual experience, rather than on intuition or revelation.

Pragmatism: The doctrine that practical consequences are the criteria of knowledge, meaning, and value.

Providential: The mode of causation employed by God, according to Hellenistic philosophy. The cosmos is created and ordered by a perfect rational entity, whose knowledge is also perfect. The creative entity takes an interest in its creation.

Pyrrhonism: An early Greek form of Skepticism.

Pythagorean theorem: One of the earliest theorems known to ancient civilizations; named for the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras. The Pythagorean theorem states: "The area of the square built upon the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the areas of the squares upon the remaining sides."

Res cogitans*/*res extensa: The metaphysical dualism on which the Cartesian philosophical system rests. *Res cogitans* is God and the human soul; *res extensa* is the corporeal world.

Revelation: An enlightening or astonishing disclosure. Also, communication of knowledge to man by a divine or supernatural agency.

Romanticism: A movement in literature, art, and intellectual thought during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that celebrated nature rather than civilization and valued imagination and emotion over rationality.

Sophia: Greek, "wisdom."

Sophists: Greek philosophers who showed complete indifference to the problems of the world of matter and centered their efforts on man. But man can be an object of study in his sense knowledge, as well as in the more profound world of reason. The Sophists stopped at the data of experience—at empirical, not rational, knowledge—and from this point of view, they wished to judge the world of reality.

Stoics: Greek philosophers whose worldview was one of a rationally governed universe of material entities, each answering to its controlling principle and, thus, participating in the overall cosmic *logos*. In its most developed form, Stoicism takes the lawfulness of the cosmos as the model on which human life is to proceed. The rule of law is the defining mark of our humanity, according to this philosophy.

Sturm und Drang: German; "storm and stress." Romanticism perceived this evolutionary struggle that produces new and better things not predictable in a mechanistic view.

Superego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The superego is purported to represent our conscience and counteract the id with moral and ethical thoughts.

Tabula rasa: A blank slate. In the Lockean view, the condition of the human mind at birth.

Teleia philia: Perfected or completed friendship, the aims of which do not go outside the friendship itself.

Teleology: The philosophical study of purpose; a doctrine that assumes the phenomena of organic life, particularly those of evolution, are explicable only by purposive causes and that they in no way admit of a mechanical explanation or one based entirely on biological science.

Tetraktys: In Pythagorean philosophy, the sacred integers: 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Thomistic theory of law: Philosophical approach predicated on what is taken to be good for man, given the character of human nature. As "an ordinance of reason," law gives and honors good reasons for certain actions and good reasons for forbearing to act in certain ways. An action is good when it is in accord with the basic goods. A desire is bad when its fulfillment is in defiance of good reasons for action.

Turing machine: An algorithm—not a machine as such—that translates any input signal into a determinate output.

Ubermensch: Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "superman," an exemplar of self-creation who is free from the influence of the general populace.

Unconscious motivation: Concept central to Sigmund Freud's theories of human behavior; the idea that the subconscious portion of the mind plays a larger role in determining behavior than does the conscious portion.

Upanishads: Pre-philosophical Hindu morality tales that address questions of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

Biographical Notes

Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.): Earliest of the three greatest Greek tragedians, the others being Sophocles and Euripides; known for his masterpiece, *The Oresteia* trilogy. Aeschylus's greatest contribution to the theater was the addition of a second actor to his scenes. Previously, the action took place between a single actor and the Greek chorus.

Anaximenes (585–525 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who held that the air, with its variety of contents, its universal presence, and its vague associations in popular fancy with the phenomena of life and growth, is the source of all that exists.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274): Dominican priest and scholastic philosopher whose "natural law" theory defined law as an ordinance of reason, promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community. His treatises on law would form the foundation of critical inquiry in jurisprudence for centuries, integrating classical and Christian thought.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.): Greek philosopher who, along with Plato, is often considered to be one of the two most influential philosophers in Western thought. Aristotle most valued knowledge gained from the senses and would correspondingly be classed among modern empiricists. Thus, Aristotle set the stage for what would eventually develop into the scientific method centuries later.

St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.): Roman Catholic bishop and Christian Neo-Platonist who was a leader in the widespread merging of the Greek philosophical tradition and Judeo-Christian religious and scriptural traditions.

Avicenna (980–1037): Inspired by Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, articulated a mode of philosophical reasoning that would virtually define medieval thought and scholasticism. Put Arab scholarship and Islamic thought at the center of naturalistic and scientific thinking.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626): Generally considered the "prophet" of Newton and the father once removed of the authority of experimental science. Known for his groundbreaking *Novum Organum* ("*New Method*"), which established the authority of observation in discovering the nature of the external world and the authority of the experimental method as the way to select the correct from competing theories of causation.

Roger Bacon (1214–1294): Thirteenth-century English scholar who stated the basic program of experimental science. Known for his *Opus Maius*, considered one of the foundational works in the modern scientific movement.

George Berkeley (1685–1783): Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland and a scientist. Offered a critique of the Lockean view in his *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, which attempts to defeat materialism and the skepticism it spawns by establishing the essentially mental preconditions for a material world to exist at all.

Josef Breuer (1842–1925): Viennese neurologist who worked with Sigmund Freud on the theory of repression.

Ernst Brucke (1819–1892): One of Sigmund Freud's teachers, along with Hermann von Helmholtz, Karl Ludwig, and DuBois-Reymond.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797): British political writer and statesman. Burke's essay on the sublime, written in the period of the Enlightenment, prefigures the Hegelian worldview, defining the *sublime* as that which strikes awe and terror in the heart.

Pierre Cabanis (1757–1808): One of the leaders of thought in the French materialist tradition, known for his series of essays on the relationship between the psychological and physical dimensions of human life.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.): Roman orator, lawyer, politician, and philosopher who considered philosophical study most valuable as the means to more effective political action.

Auguste Comte (1798–1857): French writer whose works—a series of essays published collectively under the title *A Course of Positive Philosophy*—influenced John Stuart Mill. One of the fathers of a version of positivism.

Etienne Condillac (1715–1780): Locke's translator in France, who offers the model of the "sentient statue" whose character, knowledge, and conduct are carved into it by a ceaselessly impinging environment.

Condorcet (1743–1794): French philosopher whose *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, written while he was hiding from France's new "liberators" during the Reign of Terror, delivers the idea of

progress in one of its most summoning forms. The mind has progressed from murky superstition and timidity toward the light of reason in stages, each stage requiring the abandonment of ancestral ignorance. The advent of the scientific worldview now abets this progress.

Confucius (551–479 B.C.): Chinese philosopher who maintained that adherence to traditional values of virtue is necessary to achieve a state of orderliness and peace.

Charles Darwin (1809–1882): British naturalist who developed the theory of evolutionary selection, which holds that variation within species occurs randomly and that the survival or extinction of each organism is determined by that organism's ability to adapt to its environment.

Democritus (460–370 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who taught an atomic theory of reality, that all things are made of atoms and void.

René Descartes (1596–1650): Discovered analytical geometry, was an important contributor to the physical sciences, and was, perhaps, the most important figure in that branch of philosophy called *philosophy of mind*. Known for his proof of existence: "I think, therefore I am."

Denis Diderot (1713–1784): Most prominent of the French Encyclopedists. In the circle of the leaders of the Enlightenment, Diderot's name became known especially by his *Lettre sur les aveugles* (London, 1749), which supported Locke's theory of knowledge.

Diogenes (4th century B.C.): Leading philosopher of the pre-Socratic school of Cynicism. Diogenes practiced self-control and a rigid abstinence, exposing himself to extremes of heat and cold and living on the simplest diet.

Erasmus (1469–1536): Fifteenth-century humanist. His best known work is *Praise of Folly*, a pamphlet mainly directed against the behavior of ruling classes and church dignitaries while exposing the irony of mankind's vanities.

Euripides (480–406 B.C.): Greek playwright best known for the tragedy *Medea*.

Pierre Flourens (1794–1867): French physiologist who—along with François Magendie and Xavier Bichat—surgically destroyed selective regions of animals' brains and observed the behavior of the survivors. Through this technique, Flourens discovered that the areas of the brain that Franz Joseph Gall had identified with certain specific functions were not connected with those specific functions.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1938): The father of psychoanalysis. Freud, in collaboration with Joseph Breuer, articulated and refined the concepts of the unconscious, infantile sexuality, and repression and proposed a tripartite account of the mind's structure, all as part of a then–radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions.

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828): Leading neuroanatomist of his time; propounded the "science" of phrenology, a theory that brain structures are related to brain functions, which became dominant in the scientific thinking of the 19th century and thereafter.

Francis Galton (1822–1911): Cousin of Charles Darwin. Published his studies of hereditary genius in 1869, stating that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832): Eighteenth-century writer best known for *Faust*.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831): German philosopher who merged and synthesized many of the strongest tendencies in Romantic thought. First is the idea of progressive and evolving reality—not the staid mechanical repetitiousness of mere causality, but an active principle at work in the natural world. Second, there is the criticism of science as not being up to the task of comprehending this world, tied as it is to reductive schemes.

Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894): Nineteenth-century physicist and physiologist; one of Sigmund Freud's teachers. In a November 1862 lecture at Heidelberg, Helmholtz tried to clarify why leading scientists visibly shunned philosophers, when previously, the natural philosopher was the natural scientist.

Claude Adrien Helvetius (1715–1771): French philosopher who, in his *A Treatise on Man*, puts forth a radical environmentalism, which holds that our essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world; rather, it is a record of those experiences.

Herodotus (5th century B.C.): Greek scholar said to be the first historian in the modern accepted sense of the term; the "father of historical scholarship." Known for his treatise *The Persian Wars*.

Hippocrates (469–399 B.C.): Greek physician considered to be the father of modern medicine.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679): British philosopher who rejected Cartesian dualism and believed in the mortality of the soul; rejected free will in favor of a determinism that treats freedom as being able to do what one desires; and rejected Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy in favor of the "new" philosophy of Galileo and Gassendi, which largely treats the world as matter in motion. Hobbes is perhaps most famous for his political philosophy, which maintained that men in a state of nature, without civil government, are in a war of all against all in which life is hardly worth living. The way out of this desperate state is to make a social contract and establish the state to keep peace and order.

Homer (~ 750/800 B.C.): Blind Greek poet who wrote about the Trojan War, considered a defining moment in Greek history and presumed to have concluded a half-millennium earlier. Best known for his two epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

David Hume (1711–1776): One of the most influential philosophers to have written in the English language, Hume offered an experiential theory of knowledge, morality, and religion. He made more credible the notion that a bona fide *science of the mind* was within reach.

T. H. Huxley (1825–1895): British physician and surgeon who was one of the first adherents to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection; Huxley did more than anyone else to advance the theory's acceptance among scientists and the public alike.

Isocrates (446–338 B.C.): Greek philosopher who lived and wrote in the same cultural situation as Plato. Isocrates held that reality is immediate human experience and metaphysical speculation is a waste of time and energy. He also said that all knowledge is tentative and values are relative. Composed the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.

William James (1842–1910): American psychologist and philosopher who maintained that every idea belongs to someone, that mental life is not an empty container filled with experiences agglomerating with one another. Thus, the external world is chosen for the content that will be experienced and associated.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961): A younger colleague of Sigmund Freud, Jung divided the psyche into three parts: the ego, or conscious mind; the personal unconscious, which includes anything that is not currently conscious but can be; and finally, the collective unconscious, or reservoir of our experiences as a species, a kind of knowledge with which we are all born but are never directly conscious of. The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*, unlearned tendencies to experience things in a certain way. The archetype has no form of its own, but it acts as an "organizing principle" on the things we see or do.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): Kant's most original contribution to philosophy is his Copernican Revolution that the representation makes the object possible, rather than the object making the representation possible. This introduced the human mind as an active originator of experience, rather than a passive recipient of perception.

Julian Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751): French philosopher whose naturalism tends toward materialism. His *Man—A Machine* extends to its logical conclusion the materialistic drift of Descartes's own psychology.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716): Offered a significant critique of the Lockean view in his *New Essays on Human Understanding*, which concluded that an organizing and rationally functioning mind must be present for there to be coherent experience and that nothing in the operation of the biological senses can constitute a thought or an idea.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519): Italian painter, architect, engineer, mathematician, and philosopher who is widely considered to represent the Renaissance ideal.

John Locke (1632–1704): Physician and one of the "fathers" of British empiricism. Locke set out in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to defend a naturalistic account of mental life and a reductionistic strategy for studying and explaining that life. Accordingly, both knowledge and self-knowledge are derived from experiences and the memory of them. One's very personal identity is but that collection of entities in consciousness entering by way of experience.

Martin Luther (1483–1546): Began the Protestant Reformation with his protests against aspects of the Catholic Church.

Ernst Mach (1838–1916): German physicist who formulated a positivist creed in science that John Stuart Mill would develop. Mach said that we recognize our work as science to the extent that it is *not* metaphysics and that physical laws are only systematic descriptions of sense data that need no metaphysical description or underpinning.

Karl Marx (1818–1883): Philosopher, social scientist, historian, and revolutionary who developed a socialist system that came to be used as the basis for many regimes around the world.

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873): Known for his *System of Logic*, published in 1843, which analyzed inductive proof. Mill provided the empirical sciences with a set of formulas and criteria to serve the same purpose for them as the timeworn formula of the syllogism had served for arguments that proceeded from general principles. Mill's work is not merely a logic in the limited sense of that term, but also a theory of knowledge such as Locke and Hume provide.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900): German philosopher who sharply criticized traditional philosophy and religion as both erroneous and harmful for human life, arguing that they enervate and degrade our native capacity for achievement. Best known for developing the concept of the *Ubermensch*, or "superman," a rare, superior individual that can rise above all moral distinctions to achieve a heroic life of truly human worth.

Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374): Father of humanism. An Italian scholar and poet who is credited with having given the Renaissance its name.

Plato (427–347 B.C.): Greek philosopher and student of Socrates whose writings convey the spirit of his master's teachings on the theory of forms, the problem of knowledge, cosmological speculations, and the treatment of government.

Protagoras (490–420 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher. A leading figure in Sophist thought, he proposed that "Man is the measure of all things."

Pyrrhon of Elis (360–272 B.C.): Greek philosopher known as one of the great fathers of Skeptical thought.

Pythagoras (~530 B.C.): Greek philosopher who maintained that the ultimate reality was abstract and relational, depending on numbers. His harmonic view of the universe provided one of the foundations for Platonic philosophy. The first person to demonstrate the theorem that with any right triangle, the sum of the squares of each of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.

Thomas Reid (1710–1796): Father of the Scottish Common Sense School. Scottish philosopher who laid the foundations for a "common sense" psychology based on the natural endowments by which we (and the animals) understand the world and act in it. His influence was broad and deep, reaching the leaders of thought at the American founding. Reid was the leading figure in a group of scholars and scientists at Aberdeen committed to the larger Newtonian perspective. He also was David Hume's most successful critic.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778): Swiss-French philosopher, author, and political theorist whose work largely decried the harmful effects of modern civilization.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498): Italian religious reformer best known for his attempt to reform Renaissance Florence society and the Catholic Church from the vices of modern life as he knew them.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805): German historian, philosopher, and dramatist; his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* maintained that it is freedom that creates, determinism that limits and kills. Friend of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Socrates (c. 469–399 B.C.): Greek philosopher committed to objectifying the self and holding it up to scrutiny in order to examine human nature. Developed the Socratic method, which tests every assumption for its grounding and implications.

Sophocles (496–406 B.C.): One of the great playwrights of the Greek golden age; known for his tragedy *Antigone*.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903): British philosopher and sociologist who supplied the phrase "survival of the fittest" and gave Darwinism its most portentous set of social implications.

Alan Turing (1912–1954): Mathematician and cryptographer who developed the concept of the computable algorithm.

Voltaire (1694 –1778): French Enlightenment writer and philosopher who maintained that our experience is the key to understanding human nature and the nature of the world around us. His real name was François Marie Arouet.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913): Worked with Charles Darwin to develop the theory of evolution by natural selection. Wallace concluded that he could not see natural selection at work in three domains: (1) abstract thought, which seems to serve no evolutionary purpose; (2) art, in which resources are willingly squandered in the service of the merely beautiful; and (3) moral thought and ethics, where we sacrifice our own most cherished interests in the service of others.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951): Austrian philosopher whose *The Tractatus* stated that the world consists entirely of independent, simple facts out of which complex ones are constructed. Language has as its purpose the stating of facts by picturing these facts.

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Part III

Professor Daniel N. Robinson

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®.

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Daniel Robinson is Distinguished Professor, Emeritus, Georgetown University, where he taught from 1971 to 2001. He is a member of the philosophy faculty of Oxford University and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. Although his doctorate was earned in neuropsychology (1965, City University of New York), his scholarly books and articles have established him as an authority in the history and philosophy of psychology, history of ideas, philosophy of mind, and kindred subjects.

Dr. Robinson's books include *The Enlightened Machine: An Analytical Introduction to Neuropsychology* (Columbia, 1980), *Psychology and Law* (Oxford, 1980), *Philosophy of Psychology* (Columbia, 1985), *Aristotle's Psychology* (1989), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), and *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard, 1996). He has served as principal consultant to PBS for the award-winning series *The Brain* and the subsequent nine-part series *The Mind*. He is past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association: the Division of the History of Psychology and the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Dr. Robinson also serves on the Board of Scholars of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, is a member of the American Philosophical Association, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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Part III

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Scope:

This course of 60 lectures is intended to introduce the student to main currents and issues in philosophical thought from the founding of the subject in ancient Greece to more contemporary studies. The lectures are organized around three abiding problems: the problem of knowledge (epistemology and metaphysics), the problem of conduct (ethics and moral philosophy), and the problem of governance (political science and law). Each of these has by now evolved into a specialized subject treated rigorously in professional texts and journals. But even in these more technical projections, the problems remain largely as they were when the schools of Plato and Aristotle dealt with them and imposed on them the features they still retain.

More than a series of lectures on the great philosophers, this course is designed to acquaint the student with broader cultural and historical conditions that favored or opposed a given philosophical perspective. Attention is paid to the influence that scientific developments had on the very conception of philosophy and on the scientific rejection of "metaphysics" that took place when the "two cultures" began to take separate paths.

Needless to say, the vast terrain that philosophy seeks to cover extends far beyond what can be explored in 60 lectures—or in 200 lectures! Entire areas of active scholarship have been ignored. But still other areas have been more carefully examined than is customary in an introductory course: philosophy of law, philosophy and aesthetics, evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory. The hope and expectation is that, informed by these lectures, the interested student will press on, will fashion a fuller curriculum of study, and will return to these lectures for the more general framework within which the specialized knowledge ultimately must find a place.

Lecture Twenty-Five
Francis Bacon and the Authority of Experience

Scope: Francis Bacon (1561–1626) would come to be regarded as the "prophet" of Newton and the father once removed of the authority of experimental science. The Elizabethan Age, which nurtured his earlier years, was an epoch of imperial expansion and growing confidence, and in his philosophical works, Bacon deploys his great literary style—and a depth of thought at once original and powerful—to argue for a *Great Instauration*, or "new beginning" of knowledge.

In his groundbreaking *Novum Organum*, Bacon establishes the authority of observation in discovering the nature of the external world—the authority of experimental method as the way to select the correct from competing theories of causation.

Less a critic of antiquity than one who recognizes its deadening effect on the present, Bacon would lead his contemporaries and successors along the path less taken. Disinterested and objective inquiry, with the results added steadily to the *Table of Discovery*, will alone enlarge our understanding and, at key points, raise theoretically rich and revealing possibilities.

Outline

I. Experimental science is not "play" for individuals who just want to keep their hands busy, following a template or model that is used in higher science.

- **A.** In experimental science, all the "good" thinking should be done before one goes into the lab. The work in the laboratory is where one finally settles on one of several possibilities—all of which are equally plausible at the start—and determines what conclusion the experimental findings favor.
- **B.** When the writers of the 18th-century Enlightenment looked back at the preceding century, they judged it to be the dawn of the new age of science, the age of the great Isaac Newton, whose name is frequently paired with that of Francis Bacon. Bacon is considered to be a prophet of Newton. The Renaissance can be seen as an age in transition, looking for inspiration both forward and back. Bacon and the Elizabethans were firmly looking toward tomorrow.
- **C.** The Elizabethans and Elizabeth herself believed that her reign was a singular one, out of which something new would come. If the Renaissance was an age in transition, the age of Elizabeth was an age that understood itself and saw itself largely in futuristic and evolutionary terms; this was an age looking toward tomorrow, not being distracted by the celebrated achievements of the past.
- **D.** Bacon's *Novum Organum*—"*New Method*"— is central to a *Great Instauration*, or "new beginning." Bacon is not setting out to disparage but to move on from what he takes to be the ancient world. The *Novum Organum* proclaims the epistemological authority of experimental science.
- **E.** Bacon truly does offer a more modern conception of the nature and promise of a developed experimental science. The foundation of modern experimental science can be found in what Bacon calls the *Table of Discovery*, a set of disciplined and systematic observations.
- **F.** Even Bacon's powerful prose style urges us to prepare for a new age. His considerable eloquence as a moral and legal essayist is put to use prosecuting the agenda of what is recognizable to us as *science*.

II. What, then, is Bacon's new method? Is it more than mere fact-gathering? The right method by which to uncover nature's secrets is the *experimental* method, which can be divided into two categories.

- **A.** The *experimenta lucifera* are the "light-shedding" experiments, alerting us to factors operative in the causal matrix that brings things about.
  1. In and of themselves, these studies are mere exercises in fact-gathering—systematic studies of the influence of A on B; the routine mechanical, causal relationships that one observes among events in the external world. The results are stored in the ever-expanding Table of Discovery.
  2. Nothing is off limits! Things that are "mean and sordid" may be explored (including dissection of corpses). "What there is" is what the *experimenta lucifera* are all about.
  3. The gradual expansion of the Table of Discovery leads inevitably to telling questions regarding basic laws.

B. This expansion, however, does not necessarily lead to useful new conclusions. The *experimenta fructifera* are designed to permit us to choose between competing accounts of the facts on hand. These experiments are consequential and look forward to Karl Popper's 20th-century criterion of falsification, which essentially states that no number of experiments will ever confirm a universal law, because such a law refers to an infinite number of possible outcomes. However, one instance of falsification is enough to prove a universal law invalid.

III. Science has no reason to stop short of examining the mental workings of the scientist himself. Bacon calls this study "human philosophy"; we refer to it as *psychology*. Bacon understood that there are observations that will tell for or against certain theories of human behavior. There are two branches of this science, one *segregate* and one *aggregate.*

A. One branch of the science of humanity is patterned on the model of the Hippocratic physicians. Bacon recognizes that a systematic scientific psychology will, to some extent, be a physiological or medical psychology. The study of the individual or "segregate" person is an essentially biological or medical mode of inquiry into the manner in which the body functions.

B. The study of the "aggregate," however—of mankind—is in the patrimony of Aristotle, in whom Bacon finds an appreciation of the fact that a developed psychology is, at once, politics, ethics, moral thought, and biology. In this branch of the science of humanity, man is very much a product of experiences, of social and moral interpersonal influences.

IV. In what sense can we say that Bacon's method and attitude depart from that of the ancients and point to Newton? He did not dismiss previous scientific discovery; science was going on apace in the ancient Greek world.

A. Hippocratics were aware of systematic observation and were favorably referred to by Bacon himself.

B. By the 2nd century A.D., Galen provided ample evidence of a sophisticated understanding of how experimental science is conducted. Galen's record of surgical studies is prolific, if grimly unkind. His biological discoveries rendered him the authority in medicine for centuries, well into the Renaissance.

C. When Francis Bacon talks about a *new* method, he's not referring to something new to the world. Instead, he's referring to something new given the most recent traditions of knowledge gathering, as we see it in the Scholastic period and in the "natural magic" of the Renaissance. When he urges the development of a science of humanity, it should be no surprise that he reaches back to Hippocrates and Aristotle.

V. Bacon does initiate a Great Instauration: the invitation to a method to extract secrets from nature that was not unknown to antiquity but was long in disuse and was available now in new and more rigorous forms. The light of experience and the discipline of experiment are the right means by which to address the problem of knowledge. It is not by philosophical chatter that we uncover the laws of nature: "Words are but the images of matter.…To fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture."

Recommended Reading:

Bacon, F. *Novum Organum*, edited and translated by P. Urbach and J. Gibson. Open Court, 1994.

Quinton, A. *Francis Bacon*. Hill and Wang, 1980.

Robinson, D. *An Intellectual History of Psychology*. 3rd ed. University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, chapter 7.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain the difference between mere busywork and Bacon's *experimenta lucifera*.

2. Conclude whether we have a Table of Discovery.

3. Summarize what would it mean to say that mind is subject to "the laws of matter."

Lecture Twenty-Six
Descartes and the Authority of Reason

Scope: René Descartes (1596–1650) is one of the fertile minds in the history of ideas. He discovered analytical geometry, was an important contributor to the physical sciences, and was perhaps the most important figure in that branch of philosophy called *philosophy of mind*.

Like Bacon, he was in search of a reliable method. He was alive when Bruno was burned at the stake (1600) and an accomplished scholar when Galileo was called before the Inquisition (1633). He was well aware of the superstitious excesses of the "natural magic" group that dominated Renaissance science. Then, too, always fashionable forms of skepticism and vulgar materialism were enjoying the usual following.

In his deliberate, rather geometric fashion, Descartes sought an axiomatic method of proof capable of both establishing incontrovertible propositions and defeating radical skepticism. His commitment was to accept no product of his own thought until it reached a level of clarity and indubitability that could not be reasonably challenged.

Outline

I. The philosophical power of Descartes is a matter of record. In some accounts, the modern period of philosophy is said to begin with Descartes (1596–1650). His was among the most fertile imaginations in the scholar's pantheon. He is the recognized founder of analytical geometry and made important contributions to optics and physiology.

- **A.** Descartes's mother died within a year of his birth. The grandmother who then took responsibility for him passed on when Descartes was 10 or 11.
- **B.** On his grandmother's death, Descartes was enrolled in the new Jesuit school at La Fleche, where he remained for nine years. During this time, he was also in regular correspondence with the leading lights of the European intellectual and scientific community and was seen by them as a force to be reckoned with.
- **C.** He earned a law degree at Poitiers and, at the age of 22, fought as a mercenary in the Dutch army's war of independence against Spain. This service introduced him to a prominent Dutch mathematician, Isaac Beeckman, who encouraged Descartes to compose a mathematically based treatise on music.
- **D.** In 1619, while serving as a mercenary in the army of the Duke of Bavaria, Descartes had three vivid dreams, which he took to be a summons to create an original and daring path to knowledge, a *mirabilis scientiae fundamenta*.

II. What Descartes finds in the Scholastic lessons of his early schooling is a logical rigor with no power of discovery. Renaissance "science" is merely dogma posing as knowledge. Thus, like Bacon, Descartes looks for a method of scientific discovery. He summarized his method in two monumentally influential works, published four years apart: *Discourse on Method* (1637) and *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641).

- **A.** Diversity of opinions and tendency toward error arise not from unequal or insufficient rational power but from faulty methods of inquiry and discovery. Every factual claim grounded in perception is subject to distortion.
  - **1.** The study of history removes one from the very context in which the demands for knowledge are most insistent. No two historical events are ever precisely the same, and all that can be gleaned from that kind of inquiry are generalities subject to interpretation.
  - **2.** Philosophy doesn't have a single method; the great philosophers of history scarcely agree with one another on any major point.
  - **3.** Mathematics can formulate indisputable truths at a certain level of abstraction but cannot be a method of *discovery*.
- **B.** It is the purpose of the *Discourse on Method* to reveal how Descartes has fashioned a mode of inquiry designed to save himself from error. For him, the right method begins with an utterly skeptical position and a profession of ignorance.

1. This standard essentially rules out the objects of perception.
2. Perceptions and feelings aside, there is another activity of the soul—thinking.

III. "I think, therefore I am," Descartes's well-known but misunderstood "proof" of his existence, is actually a summary of the grounds on which he would base *all* valid knowledge claims.

A. Descartes began by assuming that one cannot say, with epistemic authority, that one is an extended thing, a *res extensa*, because descriptions about actions one takes or physical characteristics clearly could be subject to self-deception or deception by a malignant demon.
1. One might never be able to distinguish between reality and a dreamed reality.
2. All empirical modes of verification are vulnerable to the same demonic deception.
3. Nothing external to the mind, as such, will count against this demon theory.

B. The one thing that clearly is inseparably bound up with the reality of one's being is thought. In this, one cannot be deceived, because it is only insofar as an individual is a thinking thing that he or she is subject to deception.

C. This is the point of *cogito ergo sum.* It is not a device that Descartes needs in order to deduce his existence. What Descartes searches for is the necessary precondition for skepticism, which turns out to be thought itself or, more generally, the reality of the mental, which is affirmed even in the act of doubting it.

IV. Descartes arrived at his discovery through a form of rational analysis, a kind of axiomatic method, not unlike what one finds in mathematics and geometry, which is outlined in his *Discourse on Method*. There are four main points set forth in the work:

A. Accept nothing as true except what presents itself with a clarity and vividness that is irresistible.

B. Divide each problem into as many smaller steps as possible.

C. Work from the solution of the smallest problem to the solution of problems of greater complexity.

D. Test the general solution with persistence, assuring yourself that it suffers from no exceptions.

V. Fortified with a method of inquiry, Descartes would turn his attention productively to what comes down to us as *philosophy of mind*, the nature of the relationship between a *res cogitans* and a *res extensa*. What can an extended thing and a thinking thing have in common? If they have nothing in common, how can one influence or in any way interact with the other?

A. In sharply distinguishing between the *res extensa* and the *res cogitans*, Descartes gave the fullest modern expression to the mind/body problem, either not appreciated by earlier philosophers or not directly addressed by them.
1. How can a material body cause the mind to think?
2. How can an unextended immaterial mind cause a material body to move?

B. Descartes's perceptual and motivational theories are unabashedly physiological.
1. Fine fluids or spirits move in the body to bring about motion hydraulically. The mind can, in some fashion, move the body— this can be proved by lifting your arm.
2. The physics of motion can account for rudimentary sensory-motor functions but cannot be the cause of *definitive* mental events and the purely abstract features of mental life.

C. Descartes offers a thought experiment our age would describe as one involving artificial intelligence: Given that so much of our behavior and perception are easily explained mechanistically, might we be able to make a device indistinguishable from a human being?
1. Such a device would never attain the idea of God.
2. It would never be able to traffic in abstract reasoning, such as is common in mathematics.
3. It would never be able to use language in a creatively discursive fashion.

VI. Descartes is famous (and infamous) for espousing "innate ideas," over which even his contemporaries argued with him. According to his theory, some things that are obviously and universally known, and could not possibly be known as a result of experience, can be accounted for only on the basis of the existence of some innate, or intuitive, rational power.

A. In countering a caricature version of his thought, Descartes explicitly denies *in print* that he ever subscribed to such a notion.

B. There is, however, at least one thing known—and known certainly to everyone—that could not have been acquired by way of learning.

1. If our own experiences are all that possibly could occupy the mind—namely, the sensory experiences—there would be absolutely no basis for assuming that there is an external material world that is causally bringing these sensations about.

2. Nonetheless, everyone in fact does know that sensations and perceptions are the consequence of an external material world impinging on the organs of sense. Nobody is doubtful about the existence of an external material world.

3. Now we can put these two facts together: Everyone knows that there is an external material world. No one could arrive at the idea of "matter" from the phenomenology of experience. How, then, from the facts of experience, do we reach the understanding or possess the certain knowledge that our experiences are, in fact, experiences of a material something?

VII. Descartes's new method begins as skepticism and uses reason and rational argument systematically. This presents an axiomatic, analytical approach to solving the problem of knowledge, characteristic of developments in mathematics and now brought to bear more generally on affairs of life and the mind. The modern age is upon us, replete with a new and different interest in the subtle operations of mind itself.

Recommended Reading:

Cottingham, J., et al., eds. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* 2 vols. Cambridge, 1988.

Questions to Consider:

1. Summarize what makes an idea "clear."

2. Explain why the evil demon can't simply deceive us into thinking an idea is "clear."

3. Conclude whether science is the sort of "bottom-up" process advocated by Descartes.

Lecture Twenty-Seven
Newton—The Saint of Science

Scope: In the century following his death, Newton had the status of a veritable icon. The major architects of reform and revolution in the Enlightenment routinely defended their ideas by way of "Newtonian" science and its implications.

In these respects, Newton is really the central figure in a veritable movement, a 17th-century movement that will stand as the first great age of science in the modern world. It is the age of Newton, Boyle, Galileo, Descartes, Wren, Huygens; the age in which the Royal Society is founded—"on the words of no man" is the motto—the age in which tradition, Scripture, rank, and power are all put on notice as science is found to be, at once, the engine of progress and the ultimate arbiter on matters of truth.

Newton's *Regulae*—his "rules" of philosophizing—establish the official relationship among conjecture, observation, experiment, and theory. Newton's great achievements leave no doubt but that natural philosophy has the intellectual resources with which to both explain and change the world.

Outline

I. The 17th century is not just the age of science; it's the age of Isaac Newton who, by the lights of the 18th century, was a veritable saint of science. Newton's achievements were a source of inspiration and confidence. Though his methods were utterly secular, forward-looking, and analytically rigorous, the idolized Newton was rather more interested in Scripture and the teachings of the Christian Church than in the laws of gravity.

- **A.** Newton formulated the law of universal gravitation.
- **B.** He provided mathematical solutions to problems involving the motion of heavenly bodies.
- **C.** He showed how to quantify the density of the Earth, the trajectory of comets, and the mass of the Sun.
- **D.** He explained the motion of the tides.
- **E.** He developed and named the concept of centripetal force, by which an object could, in principle, be made to orbit the Earth.
- **F.** He was the first to develop a new method of mathematics for the express purpose of solving problems in physics. Newton's invention (along with Leibniz) of the calculus and its application to dynamics and astronomy is not prefigured in the works of Kepler or Copernicus.

II. There is always the temptation in examining the lives of scientists to see in their achievements a continuation of traditions long in place. But Newton ushered in a revolutionary perspective in science that can't be explained merely as his continuing work already in progress.

- **A.** When we consult Kepler on the laws of motion, we find Kepler insisting that motion will cease when force is no longer applied. This theory is replaced and defeated by Newton's laws of motion. Newton reduces the problem to that of an ideal mass—a point—revolving around an abstract center of force.
- **B.** Only in the ideal world of mathematics do Kepler's laws hold up. In the world of actual physical things, there are discrepancies. Thus, Newton distinguished between truth and approximations (which he called "hypotheses"), providing an ideal standard by which one can gauge the adequacy of empirical data and theories. This relationship between the ideal model, as a test of theories, and progress in science is a central procedure in science to this day.
- **C.** Though Galileo may seem a better candidate for having established the sciences seen as anticipating Newton's methods, his foundational research in mechanics still leaves no possibility, for example, for the tides to be influenced by the Moon. This is integral to the correct universal law of gravitation.

III. Despite his pioneering scientific discoveries, Newton did not utterly shun some of the natural magic–natural science dimensions of late-Renaissance scientific thought.

- **A.** Though he likely had no more than casual interest in astrology, Newton did have more than a casual interest in alchemy. His unpublished work includes hundreds of pages devoted to alchemical theory and research.

B. A lifelong student of the Bible, Newton never lost faith in the central proposition that the harmony and lawfulness he discovered was a reflection of God's plan for the universe.

C. Newton had several periods of deep depression in his life, the worst being in 1693, perhaps occasioned by the end of a valued relationship with a young Swiss mathematician named Fatio De Duillier. Mathematics problems may well have lifted the clouds.

IV. Newton is an icon himself but also representative of an age caught up in the "romance of science." The 17th century was a busy commercial age, engaged in worldwide trade, which generated technical problems ranging from currency to ship-building that would look to science for answers.

A. The Royal Society (1660) became the center of a growing *culture of science*.

1. It was devoted to useful knowledge and opposed to the authority of any single person.

2. It became the repository of the world's clearest scientific thinking. Its members were enlisted to look into rumors of strange occurrences and monstrous births that once the clergy would have looked into, as well as to solve problems of commerce, economy, politics, and society.

3. Newton was one of the Royal Society's presidents, adding luster to a congress of inquiring minds that would come to include the greatest figures in the modern history of science, such as Robert Hooke, Robert Boyle, Christian Huygens, and Christopher Wren.

B. The "Age of Newton" launched the age of science. By the 18th century, the authority of science was widely accepted, and when dilemmas of social organization, morals, health, commerce, or industry arose, scientists would be called on to resolve them.

V. The age of Newton is a new chapter in the history of ideas; it is an age that establishes the scientific worldview as authoritative and science as the engine of progress.

A. We are indubitably the children of that age; faced with problems of any kind, we turn to scientists to solve them. We have inherited the ethos that no problem is real unless it admits of a solution reached by some specialized mode of attack, and any bona fide problem is soluble by some formulaic method or measurement. It is the age of Newton—the scientific worldview—that has shaped and guided this perspective

B. Conversely, according to the ancient Greek thinkers, some problems are simply intrinsic to the very life and nature of humanity. The right task is not to look for a solution but to look around for an accommodation. This possibility is sometimes obscured by the success of science.

Recommended Reading:

Cohen, J. B. *Revolution in Science.* Harvard, 1994, chapter 3.

Westfall, R. *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton.* Cambridge, 1994.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how one reconciles Newton's scientific genius with his forays into alchemy and (even) numerology.

2. Newton's interest in Scripture was lifelong, and he regarded his scientific efforts as upholding the core teachings of religion. Conclude whether he was right.

Lecture Twenty-Eight
Hobbes and the Social Machine

Scope: Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) flourished in the age of Bacon, Galileo, and Newton, and the implications of the age were not lost on him. If all of physics and mechanics could be reduced to systematic laws, it would be strange indeed if society could not be. Loose thinking, absurd confusions between material and immaterial, actual and metaphorical, must be swept away in order to do this work.

Hobbes's *Leviathan* is a work of social engineering: The overall plan of this uneven but ultimately influential work was to devise a system for averting civil strife by understanding the purpose of the state and the nature of those living in it.

In Hobbes's view, men are human objects in motion and can be studied as such; driven toward what they desire and away from what they fear, they establish monarchs amongst them to protect themselves from one another. Hobbes's controversial treatise helped to "naturalize" the civic realm and ready it for scientific treatment.

Outline

I. The age of René Descartes, Isaac Newton, Robert Hooke, and Galileo is also the age of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Hobbes believed that if the universe could be reduced to systematic laws, society itself should embrace the same rational approach to problem-solving. His *Leviathan* is a work of social engineering meant to express that judgment.

- **A.** During Hobbes's life, momentous political, intellectual, and scientific events took place in England and Europe.
- **B.** Hobbes was classically educated and served as personal secretary to Francis Bacon for five years.
- **C.** At age 15, Hobbes entered Magdalen College, Oxford, where he studied Scholastic philosophy, graduating with no taste for it and taking the post of tutor. His continental journey of 1610 further weakened his respect for the "old philosophy."
- **D.** His growing interest in the politics of his time led to his 1628 translation of Thucydides, whose account makes a good case against extreme forms of democracy.
- **E.** On his return home in 1636, Hobbes became associated with a circle of intellectuals through Father Marsenne in France and befriended Pierre Gassendi, at the time, the chief expositor of a thoroughly materialistic philosophy and psychology. Even more important, Hobbes met Galileo and began to consider the application of the "new science" of mechanics to the social and political world.
- **F.** Hobbes exiled himself in France in 1640 after publishing his *Elements of Law*, a work that lays the foundation for the absolute power of the monarch. During his exile, Hobbes tutored the future Charles II who, 16 years later, would grant a Royal Charter to the Royal Society.
- **G.** Back in England, Hobbes published *Leviathan* in 1651 and undertook a number of significant disputes in print on the issues of free will, determinism, and the nature of human nature.

II. Hobbes holds that society is part of the natural world. Newton and Galileo showed that we can comprehend causal laws that govern the physical universe—why not, therefore, the smaller world of human society?

- **A.** Hobbes takes an approach similar to Galileo's "compositive-resolutive" approach in physics—breaking down a complex phenomenon into parts and building it up again through systematic observation.
- **B.** *Leviathan* begins with an examination of the senses, the means by which we know the external world; then imagination, which reaches possibilities beyond immediate experience; then the train of associations that lead thought in new and different directions.
- **C.** The natural tendency of imagination is toward discovery and invention, this distinguishing man from other animals.

D. Society is a fit subject for scientific study, but first, the absurdities must be identified and eliminated. Hobbes gives central importance to speech. Although speech confers power and aids memory, it also lends itself to abuses.

1. We reason with terms that have no settled meaning. Something about the way in which we represent problems to ourselves in words makes them soluble or not, clear or obscure.

2. We fail to distinguish between real bodies and spirituous, immaterial things; we speak of "infusing faith" into somebody, thus signaling profound ignorance of what can do the infusing and be infused.

3. We remain tied to that old Platonic mistake, according to which "universals" are granted real existence. Only particular things have existence.

4. We treat metaphors as if they were real, and we complacently adopt terms for which there are no real-world referents. The Scholastics are to blame for this.

E. Reality is physical reality, *material* reality. If we are to have a scientific understanding of man, then man must be accepted as a material entity.

F. Society, composed of such entities, is then understood as a complex system made up of (human) matter in motion.

1. Motion is either involuntary and reflexive ("vital") or intentional.

2. Our motives and desires prompt intentional movements; we move toward what we want and away from what we fear or dislike. The root motives are grounded in pleasure versus pain.

3. The most fundamental desire is that of survival.

4. All our moral and ethical standards inherited from philosophy and religion are actually grounded in considerations of personal survival. *Good* and *evil* are not devoid of meaning, but they mean simply "pleasure" and "pain."

G. It is fear of a violent death that moves us to enter civil society.

1. Men gather in groups to prevent their destruction by other men.

2. Within society, members differ in ability but are sufficiently equal that no one of them could singly resist the power exerted by a combination of them.

3. Therefore, they invest a protector with such power as is necessary to protect each of them from the others in the same group. This monarchical power is the "leviathan"—the state.

4. We give up enough of our power to the monarch that he will have sufficient options to protect us. But our allegiance to the leviathan—and, hence, the monarch's power—lasts only as long as he is able to protect us, our interests, and our lives.

III. Hobbes's entire thesis is based on a hedonistic psychology, and Hobbes is not at all sheepish about stating as much.

A. In a nutshell, the sovereign has the power of reward or punishment. It is by that power that we move—away from punishment and toward reward. What passes for altruism or Christian charity is itself an expression of self-regard and self-preservation, based either on a desire for honor or eternal reward or on a fear of reprisal.

B. Concord in the state is the equivalent of health in the body. Sedition is sickness. Ultimately, sedition leads to civil war, and civil war is death—it kills civic life. These are not metaphors but exact correspondences.

IV. Hobbes's critique of Descartes is cogent, and Descartes's extended reply is not entirely convincing.

A. Asked by Marin Mersenne to offer (along with Pierre Gassendi, now known chiefly as the 17th-century writer who revived Epicurean philosophy, and Mersenne himself) a critique of Descartes's work, Hobbes took issue with Descartes's rationalistic mind/body distinction.

B. Instead, Hobbes offers a view of human nature as a part of nature, subject to the same governing laws. The tools developed to study and discover the laws and principles of nature can be applied to human nature.

V. The age of Newton came to host increasingly mechanistic conceptions of the body politic and of society at large. Hobbes's *Leviathan* illustrates this turn of mind vividly. Thus, in this age, the prospects for a social science are recognized and considered optimistically. Science now begins to take on a "scientistic" flavor such that statements and judgments, in order to be credible, must be rendered in ostensibly scientific fashion. The Enlightenment is at hand.

Recommended Reading:

Hobbes, T. *Leviathan.* New York, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether it follows from the success achieved by Newton and others in physics and astronomy that the same methods are applicable to social and psychological phenomena.
2. Summarize whether "fear of a violent death" is a credible causal explanation for the social tendencies displayed by human beings.

Lecture Twenty-Nine
Locke's Newtonian Science of the Mind

Scope: If all of physical reality is reducible to elementary "corpuscular" entities, might not mind itself be but the repository of comparably corpuscular elements? And might these not be held together by something akin to gravitational forces? Is *mind* anything but a unitary record of experiences? And are there not, in this, profound implications for morality and politics?

John Locke (1632–1704) is one of the "fathers" of a British *Empiricism* that will come to include some of the most influential philosophers in modern history: George Berkeley, David Hume, John Stuart Mill. Satisfied that Newton's science and method were both applicable to the mind itself, Locke set out in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to defend a naturalistic account of mental life and a reductionistic strategy for studying and explaining that life. He developed arguments against theories of "innate ideas," insisting that the mind becomes furnished solely by way of experience. Accordingly, not only knowledge but also *self-knowledge* is derived from experiences and the memory of them. One's very *personal identity* is but that collection of entities in consciousness entering by way of experience.

Outline

I. The age of Newton also hosts the first Newtonian psychology—developed by John Locke, a young admirer of Newton who would become his friend. Locke was also a physician and a man well-trained in the sciences of his day.

- **A.** Locke entered Oxford in 1652 and remained there for about 15 years, until he became personal physician and friend to Ashley Cooper, first Earl of Shaftesbury, in 1667.
- **B.** During his time in Oxford, Locke discovered Descartes's work and recognized its clear superiority over the Scholastic philosophy that had been a staple of his own education.
- **C.** Trained as a physician, Locke was one of the few people elected Fellow of the Royal Society during that body's early decades chiefly on the basis of philosophical contributions, rather than those of an experimental or scientific nature.

II. Locke was committed to a scientific approach to the mind and society. His *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* makes it clear that progress in this area must be slow and deliberate.

- **A.** Such progress will occur only when we adopt the methods and perspectives characteristic of Newtonian science. This view makes Locke a central figure in that part of the history of philosophy called Empiricism, which begins with Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*.
- **B.** The scientific method of analysis established by Bacon and Newton called for the particularizing of complex phenomena—reducing them to some "ideal" state, then determining the principles by which they come to have their complexity and dynamics.
  1. Newton develops a simple model, in which only one or two variables are operating, to see how the phenomenon comes out in the ideal case. Then, he will try to approximate ever more closely the actual physical situation through observation and experiment.
  2. Newton also begins with the assumption that the ultimate constituents of reality are obviously not in the visible, palpable form presented to the senses but in a more elementary, ultimately atomic, form—to use the Newtonian term: *corpuscles*. This ontology is not unlike what is defended by Pierre Gassendi.

III. What *are* the most elementary ingredients of the human understanding? The central question of Locke's *Essay* is how the mind comes to be furnished.

- **A.** There are some things that we obviously do not need experience to know. An example is the law of contradiction: A thing cannot simultaneously be and not be. There are some things we know immediately and certainly on first examination, indicating a mental power that is generally called *intuitive*.

B. Other things can be known to be universally true. The proofs of geometry are an example. This sort of knowledge, however, must be proven through a series of formal arguments. This is not an instance of intuitive knowledge, but of what Locke calls *demonstrative knowledge*.

C. The most elementary contents of the mind are sensations. All the facts of the external world present themselves to and through our sensory channels. Our knowledge of the natural world and of things that have real existence is by way of perception.

1. In his *Essay*, Locke rehearses the famous Molyneaux problem—whether a man, born blind and given sight via surgery, would be able to recognize visually what he had long learned how to recognize tactually.

2. Locke answers the problem as you might expect. On gaining sight, the person could have no appreciation of objects' shapes or colors. Elementary sensations must be combined and held together in some fashion.

D. The elementary sensations that form our perceptions are joined together much as the corpuscular elements of the physical world are held together by gravity to form more complex structures.

1. Locke does not examine the mechanisms in any detail and makes clear that he is content not to speculate.

2. Sensations are held together by an essentially associative process. Events we experience together frequently come to be associated together. Out of these elementary sensations, we are able to form, by an associative process, what Locke refers to as simple ideas.

IV. The contents of consciousness, to be understood, must be reduced to their most elementary constituents: bare sensations.

A. Experiences of objects of sensation are of two kinds: primary and secondary.

B. Direct experiences of the physical quality of an object—for example, its shape, its hardness, its weight—are experiences of the *primary qualities* of the thing.

C. Other experiences arise from interaction between the primary quality of the object and the properties of the sensory systems themselves, providing experience of a *secondary quality*—for example, the color of things.

V. If all we know we know from experiences associated in the mind, old problems of knowledge are raised. Locke's *Essay* nods toward a materialistic theory of mind even if it does not explicitly embrace such a theory.

A. Locke distinguishes sharply between two senses of "essence" at the fundamental ontological level.

1. We do not know the "real essence" of things, because we have no perceptual power equal to the task of discovering the essence. But the real essence of material objects is what stimulates and brings about experiences, and on the basis of these experiences, we come to classify things according to properties.

2. The classifications are in the form of names we give to things, such as animals, fruits, furniture, wagons. Such designations are what Locke calls the *nominal essence*, which is based on conventional and pragmatic considerations.

B. All this leaves room for a certain skepticism about our knowledge claims.

1. How is it, in a sea of change, that Smith remains *himself*? Is the "ship of Theseus" the same ship, even after each of its planks is replaced over a course of years by a new one?

2. Locke regarded our personal identities as the gift of experience. Our memories—present in consciousness and held together in understanding—constitute our continuing personal identities.

VI. It was easy to make fun of Locke's aggregate picture of persons, and Enlightenment wits would poke fun at the reductionist idea that a man who commits a crime is not the same man who is later tried for it, having by then accumulated different experiences. But Locke's writings further established the authority of experience over intuition, reason, and the like and established it as the source of our knowledge of both the external world and the internal world—though his Newtonian psychology has non-Hobbesian political outcomes.

Recommended Reading:

Locke, J. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Prometheus Books, 1995.

Yolton, J. *Thinking Matter*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1983.

Questions to Consider:

1. If "association" acts in a manner akin to gravitational forces, summarize whether we have any power over the associations we form mentally.
2. Locke's method is not experimental but *introspective*. Conclude whether this is "Newtonian," and if so, in what sense.

Lecture Thirty
No Matter? The Challenge of Materialism

Scope: Locke's corpuscular psychology fortified the radically materialistic psychologies of the neo-Epicureans (e.g., Gassendi); at the same time, it summoned others to significant critiques of the Lockean view. One of these was developed by Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716), in which the limitations of empiricism are examined: His *New Essays on Human Understanding* led to the conclusion that an organizing and rationally functioning mind must be present for coherent experience to exist and that nothing in the operation of the biological senses can constitute a thought or an idea.

Another critic was George Berkeley (1685–1783), who carries empiricism to the end of its logical tether and reaches nothing less than a radical critique of materialism itself. In *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, he attempts to defeat materialism and the skepticism it spawns by establishing the essentially *mental* preconditions for a material world to exist at all!

Berkeley, too—who would become Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland—was a scientist-philosopher, his originality expressing itself chiefly in optics and in what might be called the biophysics of depth perception. He lived for a time in the American colonies, building a house in Newport, Rhode Island, which still stands and where one of his daughters was born. It was both his religious conviction and his philosophical hardheadedness that brought him into conflict with the now fashionable "materialism" of the world of Anglo-continental thought.

Outline

I. In a couple of words, we can find a number of positions on philosophy of the mind. In particular, these few words can express the two poles of materialism and rationalism.

- **A.** "No matter? Never mind." This statement demonstrates the classic materialist position: Absent material organization, there could not be mental life.
- **B.** "No mind? Never matter." This suggests that the material world, to have any kind of existence at all, presupposes a thinking entity or the realm of idea in which the material world might inhere.
- **C.** Locke's *Essay* was widely understood to assert that "mind," as such, is nothing but a collection of current and stored experiences held together as a result of habitual encounters with objects in the internal world. To some influential philosophers of his time, Locke seemed to underestimate the activity, complexity, and creative power of mind. His view seemed to be nothing more than the old *tabula rasa* theory.

II. Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716) is one of the great figures in the history of philosophy.

- **A.** Leibniz was a statesman and an inventor of the calculus, along with Newton.
- **B.** Many of his writings were foundational for probability theory.
- **C.** Leibniz responded to Locke's famous *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* with an essay of his own: *New Essays on Human Understanding*. He raised fundamental questions that constitute a formidable challenge to the empiricist philosophy of mind.
  - **1.** Leibniz takes Locke to be saying that nothing is in the mind at all, except what was first in the senses.
  - **2.** Leibniz, in disputing Locke, offers the rationalist answer to empiricism, saying that nothing is in the intellect that was not first in the senses *except the intellect itself* ("*nisi intellectus ipse*"). Unless there is already in place an organizing, self-reflecting power—the intellect—experience would count as nothing.
  - **3.** Leibniz distinguishes between the sort of "nullity" that might be a useful concept in mathematics—such as a "point"—and anything that has real existence, such as a mind.
  - **4.** Leibniz claims that knowledge is not just a collection of sensations pulled together to form elementary ideas, which are then pulled together to form complex ideas.
- **D.** He argues further that perception is inexplicable on mechanical or material grounds. To demonstrate this, he constructs an "ideal model."
  - **1.** Consider a machine that can think, feel, and have perception.

2. Make it large enough so that we can enter it and look around.
3. We will see moving parts but "never anything by which to explain a perception." Never an idea, never a color, none of the things that we say the mind contains.
4. This will be true however complex the machine is made.

III. George Berkeley (1685–1753), bishop of Cloyne in Ireland, scientist and clergyman, will reach a similar conclusion from a different direction. He asserts that materialism is untenable because the material world has no *independent* existence at all.

A. Berkeley was recognized as preeminent in the field of optics.

B. He was among the first to set down the basic principles of monocular and binocular depth perception. He was also an expert on the subject of perspective.

C. Berkeley's *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Knowledge* begins with a commonsense account of what we can plausibly claim to know—ideas actually imprinted on the senses, perceived by the operations of the mind, or formed via memory and imagination.

D. Added to ideas thus formed is a perceiving, active entity, which Berkeley calls "mind, spirit, soul, or myself. By which words I do not denote any one of my ideas, but a thing entirely distinct from them."

E. This leads Berkeley to his famous position on the theory that there is an independently existing material world. Against Locke's division of qualities, Berkeley contends that the distinction is empty. The so-called primary qualities and secondary qualifiers are ideas and, as such, can be like nothing but another idea.

F. Moreover, Berkeley asks how it is possible for there to exist independent material bodies needing no mind as a condition of their existence. He asserts all that is knowable are ideas (perceptions, sensations, images, and thoughts all being "ideas") and that an idea can only be like another idea.

1. The idea of a chair is not itself wooden, angular, and subject to be sat upon! As in Leibniz's machine, there is no material chair discoverable inside our heads.
2. A chair, *as an ontologically existing entity*, is only an aggregate of all its attributes.
3. Thus everything remains: tables and chairs and stars and sunsets. We must, however, change our definition of what these things are. They are ideas that *subsist* (not *exist*) in the mind of a percipient: ourselves, in the case of particular things; God, in the case of the whole.

IV. Berkeley, quite comfortable with an empiricistic ontology, stretched it to the end of its conceptual tether in an argument that is both amusing and not transparently false—that the material world has no existence independent of our (or God's) idea of it.

Recommended Reading:

Berkeley, G. *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*. Oxford University Press, 1997.

Leibniz, G. *The Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings*. Robert Latta, trans. Oxford University Press, 1981

Luce, A. A. *Berkeley's Immaterialism*. New York, 1968.

Questions to Consider:

1. Appraise the validity of the following: If a tree falls in a forest and is never heard, *does* it make a sound?
2. Explain whether Berkeley is denying that there is an external world of matter.
3. If Leibniz is right, conclude whether it is even possible that the brain *causes* perceptions or has anything in common with them.

Lecture Thirty-One
Hume and the Pursuit of Happiness

Scope: Perhaps the most influential philosopher to have written in the English language, David Hume (1711–1776) carried the empiricistic tradition to its most developed expression. He developed the laws and principles of association in such a way as to render the Lockean account of the mind more systematic; he made ever more credible the notion that a bona fide *science of the mind* was in reach; he located our morality in the natural sentiments we possess that allow us to survive in the world; and he cast doubt on the ultimate rationality of our concept of causation, without denying its reliability as a source of knowledge.

By offering an experiential theory of knowledge and morality—not to mention religion itself—Hume found himself a controversial figure, regarded by many as an out-and-out skeptic. To others, and to much of posterity in the English-speaking world of philosophy, he is among the handful who recognize that philosophical and scientific thought is a distinctly *human* enterprise and, thus, limited and shaped by the vagaries of human nature and its habitual modes of activity and expression.

Outline

I. David Hume is a central figure of the Scottish Enlightenment, a period roughly between 1700 and 1850, of great and flourishing art and scholarship and science in Scotland, particularly in Edinburgh.

- **A.** As with many of his contemporaries, Hume was widely read in Stoic philosophy and conducted himself in many ways according to Stoic teaching.
- **B.** Though Hume is routinely cast in histories of philosophy as the "Great Skeptic," he actually set out in his philosophy to defeat skepticism, to put knowledge on a firm foundation.
- **C.** He has in mind not causing trouble but creating clarity by replacing what he takes to be the utter speculation of previous writers with something different. In the acknowledgment page of *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume notes the important contributions of a number of British thinkers who had already taken steps toward establishing a scientific and naturalistic perspective on human understanding:
  1. Francis Hutcheson, in the tradition called *British sentimentalists*, defended a theory of the moral sense, innately planted and inclining human beings to act for the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.
  2. Bernard Mandeville argues that public virtue arises from the private vice of those who seek nothing more than personal gain.
  3. Lord Shaftesbury's *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit* (1699) offered an explanation of moral conduct based on the notion of natural dispositions and affections.
- **D.** From these writers, Hume adopts the concept that men are equipped by nature with certain sentiments that are the grounding of our values, for example, benevolence.

II. An empiricist, Hume was influenced by Bacon, Berkeley, and Locke. Developing Locke's program, Hume argues that the mind is formed out of sensory experience, that this is where everything begins. The external world impresses itself on the organs of sense.

- **A.** By the revival of earlier perceptions, the mind is capable of the act of reflection.
- **B.** But while the external physical world is capable of exciting the senses, the contents of the mind are just copies of what is occurring at the level of sensation.
- **C.** This yields a theory of knowledge as always mediated. We never have an immediate knowledge of the external world, only the mediated knowledge that comes by way of this intermediary—the perceptual or sensory capabilities of a creature of the sort we are.
- **D.** A century before Charles Darwin, Hume offers a quasi-Darwinian worldview, proposing that the creatures of nature survive by having the kind of constitution that renders survival more likely.

III. Hume is famous for raising questions about the concept of causation and how we arrive at the concept of causation.

- **A.** He is known for developing core principles of association to account for how the mind comes to work on the evidence gleaned by the senses.

1. All other things being equal, A becomes associated with B when A and B have been present frequently in experience.
2. Repetition becomes one of the principles. All other things being equal, when A and B occur together frequently, A and B become more strongly associated.

B. Causation, then, is simply what the mind assigns to constantly conjoined experiences.

C. Hume also writes, however, that the concept of causation is not a recording of something observed in the external world. Rather, it's a habitual mental process; the determinants of the concept of causality are inherent in our mental operations themselves.

D. The categories of moral right and wrong, likewise, are reflections of human dispositions and sentiments. Certain characteristics we have in our very biological constitutions, along with experience, determine what we will come to call right and wrong.
1. Hume does not so much relativize morality as he psychologizes it.
2. Morality, then, should be looked at as social constructions designed by creatures of a certain kind who are trying to maximize something as best they can. Hume has a word for what they are trying to maximize—*utility*.
3. Although Hume would reject all forms of moral realism, he is not skeptical about morality. Rather, he seeks to show how our constitutive nature brings about moral judgments.

IV. Hume has tied the concept of causation to certain habitual modes of thought. He contends that passion must rule reason. The reasoning for this is Darwinian: Our survival depends on our ability to avoid pain and seek pleasure. Reason becomes the deliberative means of securing what the appetites and passions of life require.

A. We are all children of Hume. We understand that functions of government are to be understood in chiefly utilitarian terms. We understand that the world as we know it is the creation of our own mental machinery.

B. A further concept of Hume's is the *problem of induction*, which states that the future is under no obligation to mimic the past. Any inference we might make about what will happen in the future based on past experience has no rational warrants.

Recommended Reading:

Hume, D. "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding," in *Essential Works of David Hume*, R. Cohen, ed. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether you regard all regularly occurring pairs of events as causally related.
2. Explain what makes a "complex" idea more complex than a "simple" idea and give examples of both.

Lecture Thirty-Two
Thomas Reid and the Scottish School

Scope: Hume's most successful critic, Thomas Reid (1710–1796) laid the foundations for a "common sense" psychology based on the natural endowments by which we (and the animals) understand the world and act in it. His influence was broad and deep, reaching the leaders of thought at the American founding.

Reid was the leading figure in a group of scholars and scientists at Aberdeen who were committed to the larger Newtonian perspective and who would find in it evidence of a providential God. Admiring Hume, Reid examined his and Locke's foundational assumptions and discovered them to be defective. All knowledge is *not* mediated, Reed showed; the Lockean aggregate cannot account, logically or evidentially, for persons, nor can Humean hedonism account for the historical evidence of human altruism.

Outline

I. Thomas Reid (1710–1796) has come down to us as the "Father of Common Sense Philosophy." Until quite recently, Reid was largely ignored, and only in the last 10 years has he been restored to a position of philosophical eminence.

- **A.** Reid's contemporaries considered him an exceptional person.
- **B.** He studied for the ministry and held a position in the church at New Machar for a period of years before teaching at his alma mater, Marischal College, University of Aberdeen.
- **C.** Even before publication of his *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*, Reid was called to Glasgow to take the position recently relinquished by Adam Smith.
- **D.** At Aberdeen, he founded what came to be called the Wise Club, which met every fortnight, engaged all the major philosophical issues, wrote papers, and planned longer treatises. A number of the club's productions turned out to be important philosophically.
- **E.** In his *Inquiry*, Reid anticipated by a half century Reimann's non-Euclidian geometry.
- **F.** Reid also was a master of the science of optics. On his mother's side, he was related to the famous Cambridge University Gregory family, known for work in optics and mathematics. Reid, too, wrote but did not publish original work in mathematics and astronomy.
- **G.** His writings were widely respected in the United States where, in the years leading to and just following the founding, Scottish thought was profoundly influential.

II. By *common sense*, Reid always referred to what was universally and pragmatically represented in nature, including human nature, as part of the "constitution" of the being in question, whether caterpillar or man.

- **A.** The principle of common sense, for Reid, does not mean the wisdom of the crowd. It doesn't mean the prevailing opinions, the settled ethos of a given community.
- **B.** Rather, it is that which we are under an obligation to accept in all of the ordinary affairs of life. Reid illustrates the point with the "lowly caterpillar" that will crawl across a thousand leaves until it finds the one that's right for its diet.

III. At the core of Hume's epistemology is the theory that all our knowledge is mediated. Hume, thus, continues a long, almost uninterrupted philosophical tradition that says the eternal world comes to be represented in some way via mediation by the senses, a view with which Reid disagrees.

- **A.** These philosophers conclude that, because all our knowledge is filtered through our senses, we can never know the real world except by way of these representations.
- **B.** What results are "ideas" about the external world, but there is no way of determining the adequacy of such ideas as actual records or copies of the world.
- **C.** If this were so, then skepticism is entirely appropriate.

IV. Reid rejects this so-called "copy theory." More to the point, however, his analysis of the problem in this manner is intended to convey an experimental approach of the Baconian-Newtonian variety.

- **A.** There is no evidence to support the view that the "impressions" made on the sense organs are what the mind becomes aware of. Not even philosophers are aware of their sensory impressions.
- **B.** There is, therefore, no evidence that the ideas or knowledge we have should be thought of as some sort of "copy" of these impressions.
- **C.** Reid's experiments demonstrate to him that the image of a right triangle projected on the spherical retina of the eye is itself curved; what we *see*, however, is not a curved triangle but the triangle as it is actually configured. *We see what is there*!
- **D.** In fact, what happens is that physiological activity presents to the mind a system of natural signs; by a means Reid confesses he does not understand, the mind can decode these signs and move from the sign to the thing signified. There is a fit between our biology and the external world such that we are able to live in it.

V. The Humean conception of causation is at the very core of Hume's skepticism. It is flawed in the same way, according to Reid.

- **A.** Constant conjunction of two things cannot be the grounding of our belief that one causes the other.
  - **1.** No two things are more constantly in temporal conjunction than day and night, yet no one thinks, "Day is the cause of night."
  - **2.** From constant conjunction alone, the concept of a "cause" would never arise.
- **B.** The actual source of this concept is our own *active powers*. We know from infancy that we are able to bring things about; from this, we are led to the inference that events external to us are similarly produced by other powers.

VI. In the same way, the ethical theory according to which morality is an essentially passion- or emotion-based set of self-interested actions is not the result of systematic inquiry and is defeated by such an inquiry.

- **A.** Even the hedonist must calculate long-range consequences. Immediate sensations of pleasure and pain cannot account for our ability to swallow a nasty medicine for eventual benefit. Rationality is a necessary presupposition even on the Humean account.
- **B.** Philosophical principles ought to be able to account for evidence gathered in the real world. The long human record of altruism is not adequately explained by the Humean theory of it.
- **C.** There must, in fact, be first principles of morals within us guiding our daily behavior, just as the caterpillar is guided to find the right leaf among thousands.

VII. Hume on personal identity argues that the continuity of identity is based on the same principles that preserve the continuity of a parade formation of soldiers: As one or another marcher drops out, another takes his place, so that the "bundle of perceptions" is held together.

- **A.** This is based on Hume's theory of causation as "constant conjunction." Because Reid considers this theory to be flawed, he does not believe it will work here either.
  - **1.** Hume says, "When I observe myself, I see nothing but a bundle of perceptions." And who, then, is doing the observing?
  - **2.** For there to be treason, there must be a traitor; for there to be a "bundle of perceptions," there must be a percipient.
- **B.** Reid saw Locke's theory (upon which Hume's was based) as hopeless from the outset: Remembering the loss of the Battle of Waterloo does not make one Napoleon!
  - **1.** A man remembers himself to have once been a boy and knows that he is today a brave young officer; an aged general remembers that he was once a brave young officer but no longer remembers he was a boy.
  - **2.** Thus, A = B and B = C, but A does not equal C!

VIII. Against the "idea" theory and its resulting skepticism, Reid offered a naturalistic, "common sense" alternative, according to which the creatures of nature, including human beings, are fitted out with what is needed for survival, for shared actions, and for valid knowledge of the external world. He insisted that Hume and Locke

before him were not always faithful to the observational methods of Bacon and Newton, nor to their means of testing competing accounts.

Recommended Reading:

Reid, T. *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*. Timothy Duggan, ed. Penn State University Press, 1997.

Barker, S., and Beauchamp, T., eds. *Thomas Reid: Critical Interpretations*. (*Philosophical Monographs*), vol. 3., 1976.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether an innate principle of common sense should enjoy instant validity over a competing claim raised by philosophers.
2. Explain how one might distinguish between that which is widely shared (though only a custom) and the Reidian principle of common sense.

Lecture Thirty-Three
France and the Philosophes

Scope: France in the 18th century was the nation of Voltaire, La Mettrie, Rousseau, Helvetius, Condorcet, D'Alembert, and Diderot, thinkers who appealed directly to the ordinary citizen and encouraged a widespread skepticism toward traditional forms of authority. These were the leaders of the French Enlightenment. They changed the world and supplied it with an idiom that still dominates political and social thought. If their collective effort was not a deep and enduring contribution to philosophy, it must rank as one of the greatest attempts to translate philosophy into social and political action. It is in their collective effect that the wider world would attach itself to scientific modes of analysis and scientific programs of reform. By providing ordinary citizens with encyclopedic accounts of the principles and discoveries of science, they aimed to defeat superstition and the tyranny of the lettered classes over the untutored. In the process, they did much to weaken the authority of religious teaching, including its moral lessons, and much to weaken the political authority that rested on this teaching.

Outline

I. What we take to be the modern worldview is less a contribution of the Renaissance than of the age of science that followed in the 17th century. But consider this pair of quotations:

- **A.** "My works are the issue of pure and simple experience, who is the one true mistress. These rules are sufficient to enable you to know the true from the false" (Leonardo da Vinci [1452–1519]).
- **B.** "Let us console ourselves for not knowing the possible connections between a spider and the rings of Saturn, and continue to examine what is within our reach" (Voltaire [1694–1778]).
- **C.** Leonardo and Voltaire have much in common, though much, of course, divides them. Both are satisfied that the light of experience casts sufficient illumination for us to understand the nature of our difficulties. As vindication of his belief in experience, Voltaire had what Leonardo did not have: the inspiration and achievement of Newton.

II. We do not generally think of the witty and discerning minds of the Paris salons as "philosophers." Few, if any, philosophy journal articles are written now on the musings of Diderot, Holbach, Helvetius, Condorcet, Voltaire, La Mettrie, and others of their ilk.

- **A.** The so-called *salon philosophes* invited the intelligent parts of the world into the long debate. They did not reserve philosophy to the philosophers. They opened up, into the public discourse, issues that long had existed primarily at the level at abstract philosophy.
- **B.** But sometimes, the wit and wisdom of the *philosophes* is in danger of losing the refinement of philosophy and dropping to the level of rank propaganda.
- **C.** However, the *philosophes* weren't actually out to prosecute the agenda of academic philosophy. They were out to change the world.
  - **1.** To change the world is to change minds. The only alternative is tyrannical oppression.
  - **2.** This aspect of the Enlightenment project is most apparent in the publication of Diderot's *Encyclopedia*, which focused on the authority of experience, absent any dogmatic teaching or religious overtones.
  - **3.** The outline of the massive project was given in the form of a "Tree of Human Knowledge," developed by Diderot and d'Alembert, that includes everything from working with slate to our knowledge of God.

III. Voltaire (1694–1778) was a powerful influence on what became this Age of Enlightenment.

- **A.** As with Descartes, he had been educated by the Jesuits.
- **B.** At 23, he is found serving nearly a year in the Bastille for derisive criticism of the government. This event was a harbinger, for within a decade, Voltaire was exiled to England for offending the chevalier de Rohan.
  - **1.** Voltaire's reverential attitude toward Newton is part of his general judgment that British philosophy has triumphed over Cartesianism.

2. His *Letters on the English* makes this clear and ties the achievements in Britain to the intellectually liberated climate of thought: He compares membership in the Royal Society (science and achievement) to the French Academy (birth and orthodoxy).

IV. Voltaire has a splendid model for this mode of casual criticism—Michel de Montaigne, whose famous *Essais* (1575) celebrates secular knowledge, common sense, common decency, the right way to work through problems, the philosophies worth having, and the gentle ridicule of the pomposity of self-appointed authority.

A. With Montaigne, too, there is an enlargement of the discursive community, a movement toward the democratization of knowledge.

B. Voltaire is in the direct patrimony of Montaigne: Knowledge is not meant to vindicate belief but to help us determine which beliefs are worth having.

V. The wit and iconoclasm, the attention to precision and machines duly noted, it is time to turn to a mind of a radically different cast, that of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778).

A. Against the attention to science and technology, Rousseau looks to nature in the raw, unanalyzed, spared the "resolutive-compositive" methods of the tinkering classes.

B. Against the rationalism of the Enlightenment—its contempt for superstition and its reverence for high civilization—Rousseau draws attention to the inauthentic lives constrained and corrupted by civilization.

C. Rousseau is the harbinger of the *Romantic rebellion* but bears the same tools of high culture and literary astuteness that are the mark of Enlightenment thought.

D. In *Emile*, Rousseau takes the position that civilization works to the disadvantage of what is most authentic about us, that the very process of civilizing someone strips him of certain natural tendencies and sentiments.

E. In *Du Contrat Social* (1762), Rousseau offers one of the most summoning lines in all of political philosophy: "Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains."

1. Rousseau referred to the chained mind—the mind tied to orthodoxies that render it incapable of its own natural functions.
2. We find in Rousseau, too, a particular form of naturalism, a concession to nature as the last word, a skepticism toward merely human contrivances and merely habitual modes of conduct.

VI. In La Mettrie (1709–1751), naturalism tends toward materialism. *Man—A Machine*, La Mettrie's banned book of 1748, extends to its logical conclusion the materialistic drift of Descartes's own psychology.

A. The human body is a machine that winds its own springs. It is the living image of perpetual movement.

B. Given that all the faculties of the soul depend on the actions of the body, the soul is an "enlightened machine."

C. La Mettrie calls on the reader to come to grips with the fact that human life is biologically organized and that this organization is shaped by external conditions.

VII. Locke's translator in France, Etienne Condillac (1715–1780), introduces in his 1754 *Treatise of Sensation* the model of the *sentient statue*, a block of stone, shaped by its environment.

A. As the result of an incessant interaction with a stimulating environment, the statue comes to form elementary Lockean sensations, ideas, and more complex ideas.

B. The point, of course, is that our essence does not precede our actual existence in the world and that the kinds of beings we are serve as a record of the experiences we've had.

C. Not long after this, Thomas Paine, in his *Common Sense*, will speak of rank and titles as "a magician's wand, which circumscribes human felicity." Again, the guide in all things is nature. Newton and Bacon instructed us in how to read the book of nature without adding our own preconceptions to the facts.

VIII. Helvetius is in the same tradition of a radical environmentalist.

A. But Helvetius recognizes that the classes that exist in this world must have been made, because it is obvious that political forces are needed to preserve them.

B. Given that so much energy is needed to keep this sort of social organization in place, there must be something horrifically unnatural about it. If that much work has to be done to preserve it, it must be because it opposes natural forces.

IX. Condorcet (1743–1794), at the end of the century, offers the promise of progress. To my mind, he represents what is most defining in this age of Enlightenment.

A. Jesuit-educated Condorcet established his originality in mathematics early, publishing a treatise on integral calculus in 1765.

B. Four years later, he was elected to the *Academie des Sciences,* rising to the prestigious office of Secretary of the Academy in 1777. A master of the emerging field of probability theory, Condorcet may be accorded a place among those who have developed what is called *decision theory*. His 1785 treatise on the subject of majority decisions is still instructive.

C. Condorcet supported the Revolution, served as a member of the Assembly, and drafted a plan of education for the coming Republic.

D. Though a son of the Revolution, he was committed to the more moderate Gerondist faction, arguing against the killing of the king and other extreme measures of the Jacobins. This landed him in prison, courtesy of Robespierre. In 1793, Condorcet went into hiding. During this period, he composed his *Sketch for an Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind.*

E. In 1794, Condorcet was discovered, arrested, and imprisoned; he was found dead in his cell within two days.

F. Condorcet reflects the dominant idea of his age and does so with special brightness and poignancy. It is the idea of progress.

1. In its Enlightenment form, it is more analytical and scientific, more political and self-conscious than the earlier Renaissance version.

2. Whereas the classical worldview conceives of a cosmos organized by principles of harmony and proportion, the notion of progress says that what is stationary is stagnant and the future is under no obligation to mimic the past.

3. Condorcet's *Sketch* defends the plan to liberate the human imagination and, in the process, achieve something new, untried in world history.

4. He concludes—in the shadow of his own impending death—with the hope that a grand association of the scientifically enlightened, drawn from diverse nations, "would meet no obstacles; and it would assure among all the sciences and all the arts directed by their principles… an equilibrium of knowledge, industry, and reason necessary for the progress and the happiness of the human race."

X. The Enlightenment is, at once, a critique of traditionalism and a forward-looking movement of thought and action impelled by the methods and perspective of science. France would host some of the movement's most persuasive writers and thinkers, including Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, and Condorcet. Their revolution in thought was to be matched by political and social revolutions based on the recovery of natural rights.

Recommended Reading:

Condorcet. *Selected Writings*. K. Baker, ed. Bobbs Merrill, 1976.

Rousseau, J. J. "The Social Contract," in *Social Contract and Discourses*, E. Barker, ed. Dent, 1993.

Voltaire. *Philosophical Letters*. Downloadable at www.classicsnetwork.com.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether there is good evidence to support the view that it is by way of science that society's most enduring problems are to be solved.

2. Summarize whether it is obviously the case that, only through the appearance of modern science can we say that the human mind has significantly *progressed* over the state it was in at the time of, say, Socrates.

Lecture Thirty-Four

The Federalist Papers and the Great Experiment

Scope: In the summer of 1787, the Constitution of the United States was forged in Philadelphia. During the subsequent ratification period, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay wrote essays in the New York papers addressing and countering the various arguments that had been advanced against the Constitution and against the federal model of governance: *The Federalist Papers*. No other set of essays compares as an education in the founding of a nation. Here was applied political philosophy on a grand scale, written by men of affairs and of generous learning, living in tumultuous times.

Those who defended and defined the fledgling Constitution and the "new order of the ages" they believed it signaled were young yet wise; schooled in the patrimony of the Newtonian achievement; and confident that things that have never been done cannot be done save by methods never tried. Aware that republics have always failed, they sought the grounds—both political and ethical—for theirs to survive.

Outline

I. William Gladstone, who served on and off as Britain's prime minister between 1868 and 1894, declared the Constitution of the United States to be "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

A. Between May and September of 1787, a group of men convened in the State House in Philadelphia. They were there for the express purpose of creating a nation, but this was a purpose many reached with reluctance bordering on outright refusal. The measure that created the Constitutional Convention had been adopted the previous fall at the Annapolis Convention.

B. Of the 55 delegates, some had formal college education, while others did not. It is clear from notes taken by James Madison that the quality of discourse reveals no difference between those with and without degrees.

C. The one delegate who certainly knew all along that a *nation* had to be created in Philadelphia was Alexander Hamilton.

1. Hamilton's plan was extreme. It called for a president for life with total veto power over all legislative enactments.

2. But Hamilton also contributed among the most incisive, informed, and prescient ideas produced by this extraordinary assembly.

D. Rather than a meeting of wise old heads, this was more a young man's achievement or at least the achievement of a vigorous assortment, ranging from Jonathan Dayton (26) to Ben Franklin (81).

E. George Washington, already a national icon, presided over the meetings.

1. Because we've mythologized Washington and because we're skeptical of our own mythologies, there is a tendency to underestimate the significance of this man in the forging of the American Republic.

2. In examining the cultural history of America at the founding, however, Washington would be the central figure, the embodiment of what, at least on the level of rhetoric, was taken to be the animating principles of the new republic.

F. The document that came out of the 1787 deliberations seemed to be lacking in something. When the press publicized the drafts, much of the collective conscious was startled by the absence of a Bill of Rights.

1. This obstacle to ratification would be removed by Madison's drafting of the amendments that still stand as the Bill of Rights.

2. But the fate of the draft Constitution was in doubt.

II. *The Federalist Papers*—put together by Madison, Hamilton, and John Jay chiefly to win New York over to the ratification of the Constitution—are among the great contributions to political philosophy. Though not intended as such, the essays constitute a work of original practical philosophy in the tradition of Plato and Aristotle.

A. The sheer realism of these essays, which offer the philosophical background to the Constitution, place them higher on the scale of political *science* than any other set of essays or dialogues.

B. When one contrasts the arguments in *The Federalist Papers* with the dominating political treatises of the time—Locke or Montesquieu or Rousseau—the obvious difference is that one set of arguments is actually the template for a national government. This is the main reason the so-called "American experiment" has been repeated often and successfully by newer sovereign states over the past two centuries.

C. Though the contributors to *The Federalist* did not cite well-known philosophers of their time and before, they were well read in political science and political philosophy, as well as in world history and law.

1. The writers recognized their audience to be a various, large, and pluralistic community of a persons whose support and allegiance depended on specific arguments confronting specific criticisms.

2. There is simply no anticipation of this in the record of political philosophy.

D. The three authors of *The Federalist* published 85 essays in New York newspapers between October 1787 and April 1788 under the name Publius.

1. Alexander Hamilton planned the project and contributed the largest share, followed closely by Madison. Jay's contribution was slight in number of pages but addressed important points.

2. James Madison, more than any other of the delegates, earns the praise for giving Americans their Constitution. A graduate of Princeton, Madison brought to *The Federalist* not only an education steeped in the Scottish common sense philosophy but also a wealth of political experience.

III. Did we get a republic? What is a republic?

A. Madison says that a political regime is a republic only when the government's power is derived entirely from the people and "administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure, for a limited period, or during good behavior."

1. Nothing in this is new or controversial. But Madison observes that history shows the closer something comes to *that* sense of a republic, the sooner it dies.

2. The republics that seem to make it are what he refers to as a kind of puritanical republic.

B. John Adams was behind that view of republics. He said that only "pure religion or austere morals" will be capable of holding a republican form of government together.

C. With these concerns at the forefront, Madison distinguishes between pure democracies, subject to the factionalism that leads to anarchy, and the right sort of republic, in which power is delegated by the people.

D. The nearly paralyzing tension, of course, arises from the need for a central government that is able to secure the finances and defense of the nation and the jealously guarded freedoms of the individual states.

IV. The Bill of Rights: Was it necessary?

A. A remarkable feature of the Convention of 1787, which drafted the Constitution, is that it specifically refused to incorporate a Bill of Rights. The omission was a deliberate act based on vitally important understandings.

B. A self-governing people should decide what its own rights are—to list them is to limit them.

C. The federal government should not trump the communities that compose the federation: The people of Maryland or New York have formed self-governing communities based on their own views of their rights.

D. You have no need of federal guarantees of your rights against your local community: Its laws and principles are your own, and you need no defense against it.

V. The lesson taught by Montesquieu was that there are at base only three types of government:

A. A despotism rules by will, and in it, the people must cultivate reverential fear.

B. A monarchy, with rule by law in the hands of a single person, calls for the cultivation of honor.

C. A republic depends on the cultivation of virtue. Power must be separated lest its concentration convert the republic into a tyranny.

1. We find this in the Stoic outlook of Washington and many of the other founders—the recognition that the republic will succeed, because we have the resources to create and preserve lives of virtue and self-sacrifice.

2. Power in this new republic (as the founders of the American Republic believed) would come to be taken by a natural aristocracy that would arise when the free exercise of virtue is permitted and encouraged.

VI. *The Federalist Papers* and the grand experiment in self-governance mark a special chapter in human history, a chapter in which there would be a convergence of political, scientific, and moral energies capable of overturning the old order by which most of life was shaped. But the signal feature of the enterprise was the direct, open, respectful address to *the people*, an attempt to gain support by appealing to the common sense and mature political understanding of those who, in virtue of being fit for the rule of law, are fit to rule themselves.

Recommended Reading:

McDonald, F. *Novus Ordo Seclorum*. University Press of Kansas, 1985.

Rossiter, C. *The Federalist Papers.* Anchor, 1963.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the "checks and balances" of the Constitution have worked according to plan.
2. Conclude whether the national government is still (or ever was) formed by election of those abundant in virtue and merit.

Lecture Thirty-Five
What Is Enlightenment? Kant on Freedom

Scope: One of Kant's last contributions was an essay titled "*Was ist Aufklarung*?" ("What Is Enlightenment?"). And he answers his question in a word: freedom. Here, the limits of reason and the very framework of thought both complete and, in another respect, undermine the very project that was the Enlightenment. Kant developed a moral theory based on the powers of a rational being, a theory that placed such a being outside the natural realm of *causation* and within the *intelligible* realm of freedom. He developed a solution to the problem of knowledge that subsumed all knowledge under various forms—within "pure categories"—that exhausted the epistemological possibilities. His famous "answer" to Hume, read in a certain light, might be thought of more as completing than wrecking Hume's project of absorbing knowledge, morality, and science itself into the domain of mental life and mental constructions.

Outline

I. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) devoted most of his adult life to the three following questions: "What can I know, what ought I to do, what can I hope?"

- **A.** In one of his more accessible essays—"What is enlightenment?"—he asked and answered a different question
  - **1.** His answer was that enlightenment was synonymous with intellectual freedom, with expressing one's own authentic ideas, not echoing the thoughts of others.
  - **2.** "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity… For enlightenment of this kind, all that is needed is freedom. And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all: freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters."
- **B.** Kant is, at once, the culmination of Enlightenment thought and the author of a philosophy that would set worrisome limits on the entire Enlightenment project.
- **C.** Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* credits Hume with awakening the author from his "dogmatic slumber."
  - **1.** Hume argued convincingly that that everything we know is the product of experience. The concept of causation should be understood chiefly as a kind of habitual mode of mental operation. Morality is the domain of passions and sentiments, grounded in considerations of self-interest and utility.
  - **2.** Kant can also be shown to have been influenced by Reid's concept of common sense.
- **D.** Kant's *Critique* (not a broadside or polemic against reason but an inquiry into it, into what can be known using our rational resources and what cannot) takes up these challenges.

II. In his "first critique" (the second is the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the third, his *Critique of Judgment*), Kant agrees with Hume in insisting that all of our knowledge arises from experience. However, he makes a fundamental distinction, saying it is a mistake to assume that because our knowledge *arises* from experience, that it is *grounded* in experience.

- **A.** According to Hume's theory of causal concepts, we come to regard A as the cause of B, when A and B have been constantly conjoined in experience. This is not the conclusion of an argument but merely a habit of the mind.
- **B.** In Kant's terminology, cognitive or epistemic holdings that are not the result of experience are referred to as "pure."
  - **1.** *Pure* in Kant's sense refers to what is non-empirical.
  - **2.** A *Critique of Pure Reason* means a critical examination of the forms of rationality that could not come from experience but make up the framework within which experience is possible.
  - **3.** There cannot be experience except by way of time and space. Thus, Kant reaches the concept of the pure (non-empirical) intuitions of time and space. Kant uses the word *intuitions* to mean a necessary precondition for something else to come about.
  - **4.** Logically, then, this precondition must be prior to all experience—Kant's famous terminology *a priori*—or there could be no experiences.

III. Kant argues that there is something fundamentally lacking in Hume's account of "knowledge" and experience. Again, all knowledge may be said to arise out of experience but may not be grounded in experience.

A. In his "Analytic of Concepts," Kant seeks to provide the framework for all knowledge. He contends that in all instances, knowledge involves a judgment, formed within a universal categorical framework that includes entities that could not possibly be gained by experience.

B. Kant presents four "Pure Categories of the Understanding" that could not be "given" in experience and that admit of no possible exceptions:

1. There are categories of *quantity*: unity, plurality, and totality.

2. There are categories of *quality*: reality, negation, and limitation.

3. There are categories of *modality*: possibility, existence, and necessity.

4. And there are categories of *relation*: inherence, causality, community, and correlation.

C. Certain categories may be given by experience, but nothing in experience "gives" *totality* or *necessity*, for example,

1. We can know unity, and we can know plurality, but nothing in experience allows us to know *totality*. Nonetheless, we know, without counting, that there is an infinite number of integers.

2. Likewise, nothing in the world of sensible matter can be known to be *necessarily* the case—anything could imaginably be different. Experience can only lead to inferences of greater or lesser probability.

3. But even those inferences are intelligible only within the framework of necessity: That is, something is "probable" to the extent that it is not *necessary*.

D. If, however, we were beings of a different sort, would the categories be different? Do they arise out of our natures? No, they are the necessary conditions for knowledge of anything. As the pure intuitions are the necessary forms of experience, the pure categories are the necessary forms of knowledge.

IV. Kant claims that Hume is wrong to say that no "synthetic" propositions can be known to be true *a priori*, only "analytic" ones. What is meant by these terms?

A. An *analytic* proposition is one in which subject-term and predicate-term are essentially synonymous: All bachelors are unmarried men. The truth of analytic propositions is known *a priori*, which is to say, prior to, and independently of, experience, for what is involved here are mere truths about words.

B. A *synthetic* proposition is a factual statement about items and events in the world: Bill is wearing shoes. In Hume's epistemology, no synthetic proposition can be known to be true except by way of experience, that is, *a posteriori*.

C. The Kantian rebuttal depends on the pure intuitions and pure categories.

1. Every experience we shall ever have is within the intuited framework of space and time.

2. All our knowledge claims will match with the categories of quantity, quality, and so on.

3. Thus, every empirical statement we make will have certain properties that can be established *a priori*.

4. Therefore, we *can* make synthetic statements whose truth is known *a priori*; for instance, "Every experience will take place in space and time."

V. Forms of knowledge, like forms of experience, are not themselves given in experience but determine the ordering, organizing, and patterning of all possible knowledge.

A. Thus, in a manner of speaking, for Hume to be right, Kant has to be right. The Kantian *a priori* framework is required for Hume's account of causation and knowledge to work.

B. When Kant grants that Hume was right to conclude that all knowledge comes from experience, he is recording his own modest credentials as an empiricist. He is also stating his position to be in the province of the ideal theorist, as Reid used the term.

C. The world known and the world knowable is the world as processed by the organs and principles of perception.

1. What we know of the external world factually takes the form of *phenomena*. The question is: How accurately does our mental representation of reality reflect actual reality?

2. Kant makes a distinction between phenomena and the realm beyond experience, which he refers to as *noumena*—the thing as it really is. The phenomenon is the experience it creates in a percipient.

3. The knowable is confined to the categorical framework within which all elements of the understanding are located. Reason can step outside of this and, thus, has a certain reach superior to the understanding, but its reach is not limitless.

VI. There is a lot of Hume in Kant and very little Kant in Hume. But in Kant, we begin to see what a rationalist critique of a systematic and relentless empiricism looks like—it looks a lot like Kant's first critique.

Recommended Reading:

Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*. N. K. Smith, trans. St. Martin's, 1965.

Questions to Consider:

1. Given that all knowledge is shaped and determined by the pure categories and the pure intuitions and that we know only *phenomena* rather than *noumena*, explain whether Kant doesn't end up *supporting* Hume.
2. Conclude whether Kant's categories are mere descriptions of "human" ways of knowing or formal features of knowledge as such.

Lecture Thirty-Six
Moral Science and the Natural World

Scope: The empiricistic-sentimentalist tradition "naturalized" morality by grounding it in certain human instincts, sentiments, and passions. Kant rejects this class of theory. But Kant's analysis of this feature of empiricism led him to conclude that it was hopelessly defective as a moral theory, because it failed to address just what it is about an act that locates it in the *moral* domain in the first place. Morality presupposes freedom of a certain kind, which by its very nature, removes it from the context of natural, causal determination.

Outline

I. Hume had made a strong case for the proposition that the grounds on which we judge things to be good or bad is not some abstract external moral reality, but the manner in which the event in question affects us cellularly and physiologically.

- **A.** Hume's moral theory arises from his epistemology. Once the problem of knowledge is "solved" in favor of impressions and ideas, moral issues can be collapsed into questions about impressions and ideas.
  - **1.** But "since morals, therefore, have an influence on the actions and affections, it follows that they cannot be deriv'd from reason, and that because reason alone, as we have already prov'd, can never have any such influence."
  - **2.** "Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is utterly impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason."
- **B.** The principal adversary to latter-day versions of utilitarianism is in the form of moral theories patterned after Kant's and referred to as *deontological* theories.
  - **1.** Central to any deontological moral theory is the idea that it takes the imperative of certain moral precepts to be unconditional (that is, a given action is right or wrong under all circumstances).
  - **2.** Deontological moral theories are explicitly opposed to utilitarian theories, to the idea that something is right because it achieves good or desirable outcomes.

II. Kant accepted an essentially scientific conception of human nature but rejected the proposition that the merely natural dimensions of human life exhaust the characteristics of our humanity.

- **A.** However, in addition to being subject to the laws of nature, human beings are also *rational* beings. What that means is that in addition to occupying the natural realm, we occupy what Kant calls the *intelligible realm*.
  - **1.** In the intelligible realm, we account for events not by invoking physical causes but by examining reasons.
  - **2.** We understand the course of action taken in the intelligible realm by understanding the reasons that guide the action.
- **B.** The other feature central to Kant's moral theory is autonomy of the will.
  - **1.** If our actions were entirely determined by our physical constitutions, they would simply be reactions.
  - **2.** Autonomy is the necessary condition for any moral ascriptions or judgments to apply to any actions.
- **C.** Kant argues that we arrive at the concept of freedom via our intuitive awareness of moral law.
  - **1.** The means by which the concept is reached is rational, not empirical. There can be no "scientific" proof of freedom.
  - **2.** "Laws of freedom" sounds contradictory, but only because one thinks of laws in the scientific sense of strict determinism.
  - **3.** The morally autonomous person is one whose freedom is governed by laws he gives himself.

III. The reasons to act in one way or another are of two sorts: hypothetical imperatives and categorical imperatives.

- **A.** If the choice of one alternative over another is made to attain a specific end, it is called a *hypothetical imperative*.
  - **1.** Hypothetical imperatives are tied to a particular context and to the needs and desires of natural creatures under the press of the need to survive, to avoid pain and gain pleasure.

2. Decisions thus grounded are non-moral, because they arise from our natures not as rational beings but merely as human beings: They are essentially reactions.

B. The *categorical imperative*, on the other hand, declares an action to be morally necessary in itself, without reference to any purpose.

1. Morality begins with a rational and autonomous being in the intelligible realm, where we are called on to have reasons for action.
2. We must find a rule or precept or principle that guides actions of a given kind and that is universal.

IV. The categorical imperative is not tied to a particular desire or impulse or motive; rather, it asserts its own moral authority.

A. One of the characteristics of a moral precept is that it's universalizable, not tied to a particular condition and, hence, dependent on the contingent facts of the natural world.

B. Moral maxims, as reasons for acting, are applicable to all situations in which generically that given kind of action might take place.

1. The categorical imperative is not tied to a particular desire or impulse or motive; rather, it asserts its own moral authority.
2. The authority of the imperative is contained in the maxim itself, not something that it brings about, not some contingent outcome.

C. John Stuart Mill believed that Kant's categorical imperative was a license to perform absolutely hideous acts.

1. Kant's pure categories of the understanding do not supply content but the framework governing the possibility of understanding.
2. Kant advised that we "act in such a way that the maxim of your action would, if you were able, be instituted as a universal law of nature."
3. What troubled Mill was the prospect of, say, an arsonist invoking the categorical imperative and wishing to install as a universal law of nature the successful destruction of property by fire.

D. This fear can arise only from a misunderstanding of Kant's entire argument.

1. Any ignoble end or any end whatever tied to considerations of pleasure or keen desire or emotion comes under the heading of a hypothetical imperative, not a categorical imperative.
2. The imperative is a law the will gives to itself. There are sufficient resources within Kantian moral thought to rule out arson as a candidate universal law!

E. Kant offers another version of the categorical imperative: "Man is never merely a means to an end, but always an end unto himself."

1. To use another person as a means or a tool is to deny that person the very moral autonomy on which "right" and "wrong" become possible.
2. To do so would mean that you qualify for the same treatment. As Abraham Lincoln said, "As I would not be a slave, I would not be a master."
3. Kant is famous for concluding from this that one must never lie. If Smith lies to Jones to get Jones to do something that Jones would not do if properly informed, Smith trumps Jones's moral autonomy, thus violating the categorical imperative.

V. Kant's epitaph summarizes much about him: "The starry sky above him, the moral law within him." Kant gives us moral law, not as a means to seek pleasure or avoid pain, but as a way of doing the right thing and, thus, substantiating ourselves as moral beings.

Recommended Reading:

Kant, I. *Critique of Practical Reason*. Cambridge, 1997.

———. *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*. H. Paton, trans. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Questions to Consider:

1. A hypothetical: Only five persons can survive in the lifeboat, but there are six still alive after the ocean liner has sunk. Summarize how Kant's moral precepts would determine the course of action.
2. If you would not kill five innocent persons to save another, explain whether you would kill a thousand innocent persons to save the world.

Timeline

800–600 B.C.E.	Morality tales, such as the Hindu Upanishads, appear in many settled communities.
~750 B.C.E.	Homer composes *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
700 B.C.E.	Colonization of Sicily, the east coast of Italy, and islands off the coast of Asia Minor begins, primarily to grow produce that can be sent back to mainland Greece.
6th century B.C.E.	Schools of critical inquiry emerge in ancient Greece. Parmenides and other pre-Socratic philosophers emerge. *Empirkoi*, or empirical practitioners who followed Hippocrates's philosophy, make up the dominant school of Greek medicine.
570 B.C.E.	Birth of Pythagoras.
551 B.C.E.	Birth of Confucius.
4th century B.C.E.	Isocrates composes the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.
479 B.C.E.	Death of Confucius.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Hippocrates.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Socrates.
446 B.C.E.	Birth of Isocrates.
427 B.C.E.	Birth of Plato.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Hippocrates.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Socrates.
384 B.C.E.	Birth of Aristotle.
360 B.C.E.	Plato writes his dialogue *The Republic*, generally considered to be the foundational work in political science. It addresses the question of how a man's virtue may be measured.
347 B.C.E.	Death of Plato.
338 B.C.E.	Death of Isocrates.
322 B.C.E.	Death of Aristotle.
300 B.C.E.	Stoic philosophy develops.
106 B.C.E.	Birth of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
43 B.C.E.	Death of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
1st century C.E.	"Hellenized" Jews build Christianity.
354 C.E.	Birth of St. Augustine.
397 C.E.	St. Augustine publishes *The Confessions*, a personal, introspective work of psychology.
430 C.E.	Death of St. Augustine.
476 C.E.	Fall of Rome.
632 C.E.	According to the teachings of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message that would be faithfully recorded in the Koran.

650–850 C.E. ..... The Dark Ages.

1150–1300. ..... Medieval period.

13th century ..... Advent of a "renaissance" of scholarly thought, with Roger Bacon and others recovering the spirit of experimental modes of inquiry.

1214 ..... Birth of Roger Bacon.

1225 ..... Birth of Thomas Aquinas.

1274 ..... Death of Thomas Aquinas.

1294 ..... Death of Roger Bacon.

1304 ..... Birth of Francesco Petrarch.

1374 ..... Death of Francesco Petrarch.

15th century ..... The Italian Renaissance.

1452 ..... Birth of Leonardo da Vinci.

1483 ..... Birth of Martin Luther.

1497 ..... Savonarola burns the vanities.

1517 ..... Martin Luther protests aspects of the Catholic Church.

1519 ..... Death of Leonardo da Vinci.

1546 ..... Death of Martin Luther.

1546–1648 ..... The Protestant Reformation, launched by Martin Luther's 1517 protest against aspects of the Catholic Church.

1561 ..... Birth of Francis Bacon.

1588 ..... Birth of Thomas Hobbes.

1596 ..... Birth of René Descartes.

1626 ..... Death of Francis Bacon.

1632 ..... Birth of John Locke.

1633 ..... Galileo is called before the Inquisition.

1642 ..... Birth of Isaac Newton.

1646 ..... Birth of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1650 ..... Death of René Descartes.

1660 ..... The Royal Society becomes the center of a growing culture of science.

1660 ..... Thomas Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*.

1679 ..... Death of Thomas Hobbes.

1685 ..... Birth of George Berkeley.

1694 ..... Birth of François Marie Arouet, who wrote under the name Voltaire.

1699 ..... Lord Shaftesbury publishes *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, offering an explanation of moral conduct based on the notion of natural dispositions and affections.

1704 ..... Death of John Locke.

1705 ..... Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz offers a significant critique of the Lockean view in *New Essays on Human Understanding*.

1709 ..... Birth of Julien Offray de La Mettrie.

1710 ..... George Berkeley publishes his critique of the Lockean view, *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*.

1710 ..... Birth of Thomas Reid.

1711 ..... Birth of David Hume.

1712 ..... Birth of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1715 ..... Birth of the French philosopher Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1715 ..... Birth of Etienne Condillac, John Locke's translator in France.

1716 ..... Death of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1724 ..... Birth of Immanuel Kant.

1729 ..... Birth of Edmund Burke.

1734 ..... Voltaire writes his *Letters on the English*.

1739 ..... David Hume publishes *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which aimed to defeat Skepticism by putting philosophy on a firmer footing, grounding morality, science, and politics in the realm of experience.

1743 ..... Birth of Condorcet.

1748 ..... La Mettrie publishes the banned book *Man—A Machine*, which extends the materialistic drift of Descartes's psychology.

Mid-18th century ..... The "Scottish Enlightenment."

1751 ..... Death of La Mettrie.

1757 ..... Birth of Pierre Cabanis.

1758 ..... Birth of Franz Joseph Gall.

1764 ..... Thomas Reid publishes *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*.

1770 ..... Birth of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1771 ..... Death of Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1772 ..... Helvetius's *A Treatise on Man*, which maintains that human essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world, published posthumously.

1773 ..... John Locke's *Two Treatises* is published in colonial America.

1776 ..... Death of David Hume.

1778 ..... Death of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1778 ..... Death of François Marie Arouet (Voltaire).

1780 ..... Death of Etienne Condillac.

1781 ..... Immanuel Kant publishes his *Critique of Pure Reason*, which credits David Hume with awakening Kant from his "dogmatic slumber."

1783 ..... Death of George Berkeley.

1787 ..... The U.S. Constitution is forged in Philadelphia. During the subsequent ratification period, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay write essays in the New York newspapers addressing and countering the various

arguments that had been advanced against the Constitution and the federal model of governance. These essays became known as *The Federalist Papers*.

1794 ..... Death of Condorcet.

1794 ..... Death of Pierre Flourens.

1795 ..... Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* published posthumously.

1796 ..... Death of Thomas Reid.

1797 ..... Death of Edmund Burke.

1804 ..... Death of Immanuel Kant.

1806 ..... Birth of John Stuart Mill.

1808 ..... Death of Pierre Cabanis.

1809 ..... Birth of Charles Darwin.

1818 ..... Birth of Karl Marx.

1822 ..... Birth of Francis Galton.

1828 ..... Death of Franz Joseph Gall.

1830 ..... Auguste Comte publishes his *Course of Positive Philosophy,* which reflected on the achievements of the Enlightenment and concluded that human thought passes through distinct stages.

1830s ..... The British Reform Act ends British participation in the slave trade and extends political rights to those long denied the franchise, including those not members of the Church of England.

1831 ..... Death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1833 ..... Charles Lyell publishes his *Principles of Geology*, which provided a time frame compatible with the requirements of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.

1842 ..... Birth of William James.

1844 ..... Birth of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Mid–late 19th century ..... The Aesthetic movement.

1856 ..... Birth of Sigmund Freud.

1859 ..... John Stuart Mill publishes *On Liberty*.

1862 ..... In November of this year, Hermann von Helmholtz gives a lecture on conservation of energy at Heidelberg, where he addresses, among other issues, the relatively new division between leading scientists and philosophers.

1867 ..... Death of Pierre Flourens.

1869 ..... Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin, publishes his studies of hereditary genius, which conclude that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

1871 ..... Charles Darwin publishes *Descent of Man*, which puts forth his theory of natural selection.

1872 ..... Friedrich Nietzsche publishes his first notable work, *The Birth of Tragedy and the Spirit of Music*.

1873 ..... Death of John Stuart Mill.

1875 ..... Birth of Carl Gustav Jung.

1882 ..... Death of Charles Darwin.

1883 ..... Death of Karl Marx.

1889 ..... Birth of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1890 ..... William James publishes *The Principles of Psychology*.

1896 ..... Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Studies of Hysteria*, in which the theory is advanced that hysterical symptoms are the outcome of repression.

1900 ..... Death of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1910 ..... Death of William James.

1911 ..... Death of Francis Galton.

1912 ..... Birth of Alan Turing.

1938 ..... Death of Sigmund Freud.

1950 ..... Alan Turing publishes his *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*.

1951 ..... Death of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1954 ..... Death of Alan Turing.

1961 ..... Death of Carl Gustav Jung.

Glossary

Apatheia: Freedom from pathos and suffering.

Atman: The soul, or core reality of the human individual. Hindu.

Brahma: The "creator" within the Hindu divine triad—Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.

Categorical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made on principles whose moral authority takes precedence over any merely hypothetical imperative. Categorical imperatives derive from the intelligible realm governed by "the laws of freedom," rather than the natural realm of physical determination. Unlike hypothetical imperatives, they must be universally applicable. That is, they do not depend on a calculation of utility or on any calculation of possible consequences in particular circumstances.

Chthonic religion: Earth-centered religion, in which women or female deities are central figures because of their procreative power. Common in matriarchal societies.

Common sense: Scottish school of thought from the 18th and early 19th centuries, holding that in the perception of the average, unsophisticated person, sensations are not mere ideas or subjective impressions but carry with them the belief in corresponding qualities as belonging to external objects.

Contiguity: Similarity in time or place.

Ecstasis: Greek; "ecstasy." Stepping outside oneself or being removed from oneself.

Ego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The ego is purported to stand between the id and the superego to balance our primitive needs and our moral/ethical beliefs.

Eidola: "Phantoms," or atomic emanations from material objects that have some access to the organs of sense. Concept proposed by ancient atomists to explain hallucinations, dreams, religious visions, and so on.

Empiricism: The philosophical view that all human knowledge is derived from experience and that which cannot be confirmed via experience is not naturally known.

Enlightenment: Eighteenth-century European intellectual movement that rejected the presumptive authority of the past in favor of a reliance on experience and reason/science.

Enthousiasmos: Greek; "enthusiasm." Presenting oneself in such a way that the gods can enter the self.

Ephistemonikon: Abstract and universal statements.

Episteme: Scientific knowledge.

Epistemology: The study of how we know what we know and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible, one of the central questions in the study of metaphysics. Examines the question of knowledge and attempts to characterize the nature of truth and science.

Eudaimonia: The doing of something for its own sake, as the gods do. "Happiness."

Experimenta fructifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these consequential experiments are designed to allow the observer to choose between competing accounts of facts on hand.

Experimenta lucifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these "light-shedding" experiments alert the observer to factors operative in the causal matrix that brings things about. Such studies are essentially exercises in fact gathering.

Fallibilism: View that there is always *more* to the account than any current version *can* include, because other experiences, beliefs, and needs are always in existence.

Fatalism: The belief that every event is bound to happen as it does no matter what we do about it. Fatalism is the most extreme form of causal determinism, because it denies that human actions have any causal efficacy.

Functionalism: The view that consciousness is not a material entity attached to the brain, but a process, a stream of experiences knitted together as they flow by a supernumerary intelligence.

Hedonism: Doctrine holding that pleasure is the highest good.

Hypothetical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made to attain a specific end. Hypothetical imperatives are contingent; they are tied to a particular context and to the needs and desires of natural creatures under the press of the needs to survive, to avoid pain, and to gain pleasure. Decisions thus grounded are non-moral, because they arise from our natures as merely human beings, not as rational beings; that is, they are essentially reactions.

Id: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The id is purported to represent primary process thinking—our most primitive need-gratification thoughts.

Intuition: An instinctive knowing, or impression that something might be the case, without the use of rational processes.

Ius civile: Expression of local values and interests, which differs from place to place and people to people.

Ius gentium: Universally adopted precepts of those who live under any rule of law, such as the idea that harm done to another without cause is wrong, as is the taking of what clearly belongs to another.

Jainism: Ethical school based on the Pythagorean teachings, which emphasizes the celebration of all that lives.

Labor theory of value: The concept that property is worth only as much as the labor invested in it; the surplus is profit, which accumulates as capital.

Logos: The aims and goals generated by the rational intelligence behind the order of the cosmos.

Lyssa: "Wolf's rage"; extreme anger in the heat of battle.

Malleus maleficarum: A coherent theory of witchcraft, a set of tests to determine witchcraft, and a list of appropriate punishments used during the witch hunts from 1400 to 1700 and beyond.

Marxism: A form of communism based on the writings of Karl Marx, who theorized that actions and human institutions are economically determined, that the class struggle is the basic agency of historical change, and that capitalism will ultimately be superseded by communism.

Metaphysics: Concept referring to two distinguishable but interconnected sets of questions: first, the question of what really exists and, second, the question of how we know such things and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible or defective. The term is derived from the writings of Aristotle.

Mimesis: The imitative representation of nature or human behavior.

Mythos: The complex of beliefs, values, and attitudes characteristic of a specific group or society.

Naturalism: The meta-ethical thesis that moral properties are reducible to natural ones or that ethical judgments may be derived from non-ethical ones. Also, a scientific account of the world in terms of causes and natural forces that rejects all spiritual, supernatural, or teleological explanations.

Natural law: An ethical belief or system of beliefs supposed to be inherent in human nature and discoverable by reason rather than revelation. Also, the philosophical doctrine that the authority of the legal system or of certain laws derives from their justifiability by reason and, indeed, that a legal system that cannot be so justified has no authority.

Natural rights: Rights inherent in a being because of its nature as a being of a certain sort.

Nomological: The mode of causation employed by God, according to the Stoics; immutable laws control the affairs of the cosmos.

Nomos: Prevailing social expectations and requirements, or "the law of the land."

Noumena/Phenomena: According to Immanuel Kant, knowledge arises from experience; therefore, it must be knowledge of *phenomena*, that is, of things and events as these are delivered by the senses. From the evidence at the phenomenal level, we can reason to the fact that there is a *noumenal* realm of being. Thus, we can know *that* it is

but cannot know *what* it is. Ultimately, our knowledge claims must be utterly bounded by the pure intuitions of time and space and the pure categories of the understanding.

Ontology: The study of what really exists, one of the key questions central to the concept of metaphysics.

Philosophy: The rational pursuit of truths deemed to be answers to perennial questions, as well as a historical study of intractable problems; literally, the love of wisdom.

Phrenology: A Victorian-era science of character divination, faculty psychology, and brain theory derived from the Viennese physician Franz Joseph Gall's system, which held that the surface of the skull could be read as an accurate index of an individual's psychological aptitudes and tendencies.

Phronesis: Greek term for practical wisdom or prudence; the application of good judgment to human conduct, in contrast with the more theoretical inquiry leading to *sophia*, or wisdom generally.

Phusis: Greek, "nature."

Physiognomy: The study of the shape and configuration of a person's face to determine his or her character and intelligence.

Pluralism: The philosophical doctrine that reality consists of several basic substances or elements.

Polis: Life within a settled community, in which one participates and from which one draws lessons for life.

Positivism: A form of empiricism that bases all knowledge on perceptual experience, rather than on intuition or revelation.

Pragmatism: The doctrine that practical consequences are the criteria of knowledge, meaning, and value.

Providential: The mode of causation employed by God, according to Hellenistic philosophy. The cosmos is created and ordered by a perfect rational entity, whose knowledge is also perfect. The creative entity takes an interest in its creation.

Pyrrhonism: An early Greek form of Skepticism.

Pythagorean theorem: One of the earliest theorems known to ancient civilizations; named for the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras. The Pythagorean theorem states: "The area of the square built upon the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the areas of the squares upon the remaining sides."

Res cogitans*/*res extensa: The metaphysical dualism on which the Cartesian philosophical system rests. *Res cogitans* is God and the human soul; *res extensa* is the corporeal world.

Revelation: An enlightening or astonishing disclosure. Also, communication of knowledge to man by a divine or supernatural agency.

Romanticism: A movement in literature, art, and intellectual thought during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that celebrated nature rather than civilization and valued imagination and emotion over rationality.

Sophia: Greek, "wisdom."

Sophists: Greek philosophers who showed complete indifference to the problems of the world of matter and centered their efforts on man. But man can be an object of study in his sense knowledge, as well as in the more profound world of reason. The Sophists stopped at the data of experience—at empirical, not rational, knowledge—and from this point of view, they wished to judge the world of reality.

Stoics: Greek philosophers whose worldview was one of a rationally governed universe of material entities, each answering to its controlling principle and, thus, participating in the overall cosmic *logos*. In its most developed form, Stoicism takes the lawfulness of the cosmos as the model on which human life is to proceed. The rule of law is the defining mark of our humanity, according to this philosophy.

Sturm und Drang: German; "storm and stress." Romanticism perceived this evolutionary struggle that produces new and better things not predictable in a mechanistic view.

Superego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The superego is purported to represent our conscience and counteract the id with moral and ethical thoughts.

Tabula rasa: A blank slate. In the Lockean view, the condition of the human mind at birth.

Teleia philia: Perfected or completed friendship, the aims of which do not go outside the friendship itself.

Teleology: The philosophical study of purpose; a doctrine that assumes the phenomena of organic life, particularly those of evolution, are explicable only by purposive causes and that they in no way admit of a mechanical explanation or one based entirely on biological science.

Tetraktys: In Pythagorean philosophy, the sacred integers: 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Thomistic theory of law: Philosophical approach predicated on what is taken to be good for man, given the character of human nature. As "an ordinance of reason," law gives and honors good reasons for certain actions and good reasons for forbearing to act in certain ways. An action is good when it is in accord with the basic goods. A desire is bad when its fulfillment is in defiance of good reasons for action.

Turing machine: An algorithm—not a machine as such—that translates any input signal into a determinate output.

Ubermensch: Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "superman," an exemplar of self-creation who is free from the influence of the general populace.

Unconscious motivation: Concept central to Sigmund Freud's theories of human behavior; the idea that the subconscious portion of the mind plays a larger role in determining behavior than does the conscious portion.

Upanishads: Pre-philosophical Hindu morality tales that address questions of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

Biographical Notes

Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.): Earliest of the three greatest Greek tragedians, the others being Sophocles and Euripides; known for his masterpiece, *The Oresteia* trilogy. Aeschylus's greatest contribution to the theater was the addition of a second actor to his scenes. Previously, the action took place between a single actor and the Greek chorus.

Anaximenes (585–525 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who held that the air, with its variety of contents, its universal presence, and its vague associations in popular fancy with the phenomena of life and growth, is the source of all that exists.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274): Dominican priest and scholastic philosopher whose "natural law" theory defined law as an ordinance of reason, promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community. His treatises on law would form the foundation of critical inquiry in jurisprudence for centuries, integrating classical and Christian thought.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.): Greek philosopher who, along with Plato, is often considered to be one of the two most influential philosophers in Western thought. Aristotle most valued knowledge gained from the senses and would correspondingly be classed among modern empiricists. Thus, Aristotle set the stage for what would eventually develop into the scientific method centuries later.

St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.): Roman Catholic bishop and Christian Neo-Platonist who was a leader in the widespread merging of the Greek philosophical tradition and Judeo-Christian religious and scriptural traditions.

Avicenna (980–1037): Inspired by Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, articulated a mode of philosophical reasoning that would virtually define medieval thought and scholasticism. Put Arab scholarship and Islamic thought at the center of naturalistic and scientific thinking.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626): Generally considered the "prophet" of Newton and the father once removed of the authority of experimental science. Known for his groundbreaking *Novum Organum* ("*New Method*"), which established the authority of observation in discovering the nature of the external world and the authority of the experimental method as the way to select the correct from competing theories of causation.

Roger Bacon (1214–1294): Thirteenth-century English scholar who stated the basic program of experimental science. Known for his *Opus Maius*, considered one of the foundational works in the modern scientific movement.

George Berkeley (1685–1783): Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland and a scientist. Offered a critique of the Lockean view in his *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, which attempts to defeat materialism and the skepticism it spawns by establishing the essentially mental preconditions for a material world to exist at all.

Josef Breuer (1842–1925): Viennese neurologist who worked with Sigmund Freud on the theory of repression.

Ernst Brucke (1819–1892): One of Sigmund Freud's teachers, along with Hermann von Helmholtz, Karl Ludwig, and DuBois-Reymond.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797): British political writer and statesman. Burke's essay on the sublime, written in the period of the Enlightenment, prefigures the Hegelian worldview, defining the *sublime* as that which strikes awe and terror in the heart.

Pierre Cabanis (1757–1808): One of the leaders of thought in the French materialist tradition, known for his series of essays on the relationship between the psychological and physical dimensions of human life.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.): Roman orator, lawyer, politician, and philosopher who considered philosophical study most valuable as the means to more effective political action.

Auguste Comte (1798–1857): French writer whose works—a series of essays published collectively under the title *A Course of Positive Philosophy*—influenced John Stuart Mill. One of the fathers of a version of positivism.

Etienne Condillac (1715–1780): Locke's translator in France, who offers the model of the "sentient statue" whose character, knowledge, and conduct are carved into it by a ceaselessly impinging environment.

Condorcet (1743–1794): French philosopher whose *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, written while he was hiding from France's new "liberators" during the Reign of Terror, delivers the idea of

progress in one of its most summoning forms. The mind has progressed from murky superstition and timidity toward the light of reason in stages, each stage requiring the abandonment of ancestral ignorance. The advent of the scientific worldview now abets this progress.

Confucius (551–479 B.C.): Chinese philosopher who maintained that adherence to traditional values of virtue is necessary to achieve a state of orderliness and peace.

Charles Darwin (1809–1882): British naturalist who developed the theory of evolutionary selection, which holds that variation within species occurs randomly and that the survival or extinction of each organism is determined by that organism's ability to adapt to its environment.

Democritus (460–370 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who taught an atomic theory of reality, that all things are made of atoms and void.

René Descartes (1596–1650): Discovered analytical geometry, was an important contributor to the physical sciences, and was, perhaps, the most important figure in that branch of philosophy called *philosophy of mind*. Known for his proof of existence: "I think, therefore I am."

Denis Diderot (1713–1784): Most prominent of the French Encyclopedists. In the circle of the leaders of the Enlightenment, Diderot's name became known especially by his *Lettre sur les aveugles* (London, 1749), which supported Locke's theory of knowledge.

Diogenes (4th century B.C.): Leading philosopher of the pre-Socratic school of Cynicism. Diogenes practiced self-control and a rigid abstinence, exposing himself to extremes of heat and cold and living on the simplest diet.

Erasmus (1469–1536): Fifteenth-century humanist. His best known work is *Praise of Folly*, a pamphlet mainly directed against the behavior of ruling classes and church dignitaries while exposing the irony of mankind's vanities.

Euripides (480–406 B.C.): Greek playwright best known for the tragedy *Medea*.

Pierre Flourens (1794–1867): French physiologist who—along with François Magendie and Xavier Bichat—surgically destroyed selective regions of animals' brains and observed the behavior of the survivors. Through this technique, Flourens discovered that the areas of the brain that Franz Joseph Gall had identified with certain specific functions were not connected with those specific functions.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1938): The father of psychoanalysis. Freud, in collaboration with Joseph Breuer, articulated and refined the concepts of the unconscious, infantile sexuality, and repression and proposed a tripartite account of the mind's structure, all as part of a then–radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions.

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828): Leading neuroanatomist of his time; propounded the "science" of phrenology, a theory that brain structures are related to brain functions, which became dominant in the scientific thinking of the 19th century and thereafter.

Francis Galton (1822–1911): Cousin of Charles Darwin. Published his studies of hereditary genius in 1869, stating that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832): Eighteenth-century writer best known for *Faust*.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831): German philosopher who merged and synthesized many of the strongest tendencies in Romantic thought. First is the idea of progressive and evolving reality—not the staid mechanical repetitiousness of mere causality, but an active principle at work in the natural world. Second, there is the criticism of science as not being up to the task of comprehending this world, tied as it is to reductive schemes.

Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894): Nineteenth-century physicist and physiologist; one of Sigmund Freud's teachers. In a November 1862 lecture at Heidelberg, Helmholtz tried to clarify why leading scientists visibly shunned philosophers, when previously, the natural philosopher was the natural scientist.

Claude Adrien Helvetius (1715–1771): French philosopher who, in his *A Treatise on Man*, puts forth a radical environmentalism, which holds that our essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world; rather, it is a record of those experiences.

Herodotus (5th century B.C.): Greek scholar said to be the first historian in the modern accepted sense of the term; the "father of historical scholarship." Known for his treatise *The Persian Wars*.

Hippocrates (469–399 B.C.): Greek physician considered to be the father of modern medicine.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679): British philosopher who rejected Cartesian dualism and believed in the mortality of the soul; rejected free will in favor of a determinism that treats freedom as being able to do what one desires; and rejected Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy in favor of the "new" philosophy of Galileo and Gassendi, which largely treats the world as matter in motion. Hobbes is perhaps most famous for his political philosophy, which maintained that men in a state of nature, without civil government, are in a war of all against all in which life is hardly worth living. The way out of this desperate state is to make a social contract and establish the state to keep peace and order.

Homer (~ 750/800 B.C.): Blind Greek poet who wrote about the Trojan War, considered a defining moment in Greek history and presumed to have concluded a half-millennium earlier. Best known for his two epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

David Hume (1711–1776): One of the most influential philosophers to have written in the English language, Hume offered an experiential theory of knowledge, morality, and religion. He made more credible the notion that a bona fide *science of the mind* was within reach.

T. H. Huxley (1825–1895): British physician and surgeon who was one of the first adherents to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection; Huxley did more than anyone else to advance the theory's acceptance among scientists and the public alike.

Isocrates (446–338 B.C.): Greek philosopher who lived and wrote in the same cultural situation as Plato. Isocrates held that reality is immediate human experience and metaphysical speculation is a waste of time and energy. He also said that all knowledge is tentative and values are relative. Composed the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.

William James (1842–1910): American psychologist and philosopher who maintained that every idea belongs to someone, that mental life is not an empty container filled with experiences agglomerating with one another. Thus, the external world is chosen for the content that will be experienced and associated.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961): A younger colleague of Sigmund Freud, Jung divided the psyche into three parts: the ego, or conscious mind; the personal unconscious, which includes anything that is not currently conscious but can be; and finally, the collective unconscious, or reservoir of our experiences as a species, a kind of knowledge with which we are all born but are never directly conscious of. The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*, unlearned tendencies to experience things in a certain way. The archetype has no form of its own, but it acts as an "organizing principle" on the things we see or do.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): Kant's most original contribution to philosophy is his Copernican Revolution that the representation makes the object possible, rather than the object making the representation possible. This introduced the human mind as an active originator of experience, rather than a passive recipient of perception.

Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751): French philosopher whose naturalism tends toward materialism. His *Man—A Machine* extends to its logical conclusion the materialistic drift of Descartes's own psychology.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716): Offered a significant critique of the Lockean view in his *New Essays on Human Understanding*, which concluded that an organizing and rationally functioning mind must be present for there to be coherent experience and that nothing in the operation of the biological senses can constitute a thought or an idea.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519): Italian painter, architect, engineer, mathematician, and philosopher who is widely considered to represent the Renaissance ideal.

John Locke (1632–1704): Physician and one of the "fathers" of British empiricism. Locke set out in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to defend a naturalistic account of mental life and a reductionistic strategy for studying and explaining that life. Accordingly, both knowledge and self-knowledge are derived from experiences and the memory of them. One's very personal identity is but that collection of entities in consciousness entering by way of experience.

Martin Luther (1483–1546): Began the Protestant Reformation with his protests against aspects of the Catholic Church.

Ernst Mach (1838–1916): German physicist who formulated a positivist creed in science that John Stuart Mill would develop. Mach said that we recognize our work as science to the extent that it is *not* metaphysics and that physical laws are only systematic descriptions of sense data that need no metaphysical description or underpinning.

Karl Marx (1818–1883): Philosopher, social scientist, historian, and revolutionary who developed a socialist system that came to be used as the basis for many regimes around the world.

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873): Known for his *System of Logic*, published in 1843, which analyzed inductive proof. Mill provided the empirical sciences with a set of formulas and criteria to serve the same purpose for them as the timeworn formula of the syllogism had served for arguments that proceeded from general principles. Mill's work is not merely a logic in the limited sense of that term, but also a theory of knowledge such as Locke and Hume provide.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900): German philosopher who sharply criticized traditional philosophy and religion as both erroneous and harmful for human life, arguing that they enervate and degrade our native capacity for achievement. Best known for developing the concept of the *Ubermensch*, or "superman," a rare, superior individual that can rise above all moral distinctions to achieve a heroic life of truly human worth.

Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374): Father of humanism. An Italian scholar and poet who is credited with having given the Renaissance its name.

Plato (427–347 B.C.): Greek philosopher and student of Socrates whose writings convey the spirit of his master's teachings on the theory of forms, the problem of knowledge, cosmological speculations, and the treatment of government.

Protagoras (490–420 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher. A leading figure in Sophist thought, he proposed that "Man is the measure of all things."

Pyrrhon of Elis (360–272 B.C.): Greek philosopher known as one of the great fathers of Skeptical thought.

Pythagoras (~530 B.C.): Greek philosopher who maintained that the ultimate reality was abstract and relational, depending on numbers. His harmonic view of the universe provided one of the foundations for Platonic philosophy. The first person to demonstrate the theorem that with any right triangle, the sum of the squares of each of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.

Thomas Reid (1710–1796): Father of the Scottish Common Sense School. Scottish philosopher who laid the foundations for a "common sense" psychology based on the natural endowments by which we (and the animals) understand the world and act in it. His influence was broad and deep, reaching the leaders of thought at the American founding. Reid was the leading figure in a group of scholars and scientists at Aberdeen committed to the larger Newtonian perspective. He also was David Hume's most successful critic.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778): Swiss-French philosopher, author, and political theorist whose work largely decried the harmful effects of modern civilization.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498): Italian religious reformer best known for his attempt to reform Renaissance Florence society and the Catholic Church from the vices of modern life as he knew them.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805): German historian, philosopher, and dramatist; his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* maintained that it is freedom that creates, determinism that limits and kills. Friend of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Socrates (c. 469–399 B.C.): Greek philosopher committed to objectifying the self and holding it up to scrutiny in order to examine human nature. Developed the Socratic method, which tests every assumption for its grounding and implications.

Sophocles (496–406 B.C.): One of the great playwrights of the Greek golden age; known for his tragedy *Antigone*.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903): British philosopher and sociologist who supplied the phrase "survival of the fittest" and gave Darwinism its most portentous set of social implications.

Alan Turing (1912–1954): Mathematician and cryptographer who developed the concept of the computable algorithm.

Voltaire (1694 –1778): French Enlightenment writer and philosopher who maintained that our experience is the key to understanding human nature and the nature of the world around us. His real name was François Marie Arouet.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913): Worked with Charles Darwin to develop the theory of evolution by natural selection. Wallace concluded that he could not see natural selection at work in three domains: (1) abstract thought, which seems to serve no evolutionary purpose; (2) art, in which resources are willingly squandered in the service of the merely beautiful; and (3) moral thought and ethics, where we sacrifice our own most cherished interests in the service of others.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951): Austrian philosopher whose *The Tractatus* stated that the world consists entirely of independent, simple facts out of which complex ones are constructed. Language has as its purpose the stating of facts by picturing these facts.

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Part IV

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Dr. Robinson's books include *The Enlightened Machine: An Analytical Introduction to Neuropsychology* (Columbia, 1980), *Psychology and Law* (Oxford, 1980), *Philosophy of Psychology* (Columbia, 1985), *Aristotle's Psychology* (1989), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), and *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard, 1996). He has served as principal consultant to PBS for the award-winning series *The Brain* and the subsequent nine-part series *The Mind*. He is past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association: the Division of the History of Psychology and the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Dr. Robinson also serves on the Board of Scholars of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, is a member of the American Philosophical Association, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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Part IV

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Scope:

This course of 60 lectures is intended to introduce the student to main currents and issues in philosophical thought from the founding of the subject in ancient Greece to more contemporary studies. The lectures are organized around three abiding problems: the problem of knowledge (epistemology and metaphysics), the problem of conduct (ethics and moral philosophy), and the problem of governance (political science and law). Each of these has by now evolved into a specialized subject treated rigorously in professional texts and journals. But even in these more technical projections, the problems remain largely as they were when the schools of Plato and Aristotle dealt with them and imposed on them the features they still retain.

More than a series of lectures on the great philosophers, this course is designed to acquaint the student with broader cultural and historical conditions that favored or opposed a given philosophical perspective. Attention is paid to the influence that scientific developments had on the very conception of philosophy and on the scientific rejection of "metaphysics" that took place when the "two cultures" began to take separate paths.

Needless to say, the vast terrain that philosophy seeks to cover extends far beyond what can be explored in 60 lectures—or in 200 lectures! Entire areas of active scholarship have been ignored. But still other areas have been more carefully examined than is customary in an introductory course: philosophy of law, philosophy and aesthetics, evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory. The hope and expectation is that, informed by these lectures, the interested student will press on, will fashion a fuller curriculum of study, and will return to these lectures for the more general framework within which the specialized knowledge ultimately must find a place.

Lecture Thirty-Seven

Phrenology—A Science of the Mind

Scope: Even as the philosophers speculated throughout the 17th and 18th centuries about whether or not a science of the mind was possible, the more medically and biologically oriented thinkers had already satisfied themselves that the answer was "yes."

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828) was one of leading neuroanatomists of his time. On the basis of his studies of the brain, he propounded a theory that would explain the psychological dimensions of life by way of the structural and functional features of the brain. Gall's "science" of phrenology would become all the rage, only to fall on hard times, but the larger perspective that supported it—that brain structures are related to brain functions—would come to be dominant in the scientific thinking of the 19th century and thereafter.

Outline

I. Even as Hume, the *philosophes*, Kant, and other major philosophers of the Enlightenment were changing the map of thought, the scientific imagination of the period was scarcely at rest.

- **A.** Pierre Gassendi, who helped to revive Epicurean philosophy and the ontology of Democratus and the atomists, argued that, ultimately, everything is reducible to an atomic particulate form.
- **B.** Newton's physics is corpuscularian, and his methods, as well as Galileo's, sanctioned a reductionistic approach to complex problems.
- **C.** Locke's philosophy of mind is corpuscular—reduce mind to its elementary sensations, then figure out the principles by which it is built into more complex ensembles.
- **D.** Despite the claims of his mind/body dualism, Descartes's psychology is radically biological.
  - **1.** Descartes eventually finds a super-rational, abstract, theorem-generating part of the mind that saves the whole system from vulgar materialism.
  - **2.** Except for the uniquely rational powers conferred on human beings by Descartes's philosophy, the rest of his philosophical psychology is entirely biological.
  - **3.** Descartes establishes a solid philosophical foundation for a materialistic approach to issues of mind and mental life.
- **E.** La Mettrie's *Man, A Machine* becomes almost a rallying cry for those who think that scientific understanding of the brain is the key to solving the problems of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

II. By the end of the 18th century, commitment to this precept was increasing in scientific and medical circles.

- **A.** The Swiss naturalist Joseph Lavater developed the theory of physiognomy, which correlated human facial characteristics with various social types, such as artists, geniuses, and criminals.
- **B.** Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828) developed a similar scientific theory meant to explain the complexities of human personality.
  - **1.** Born in Baden, Germany, Gall studied medicine at Strassburg and the University of Vienna.
  - **2.** Gall formed the theory in his youth that a close relationship obtained between large eyes and a large memory and, more generally, that one might be able to judge all sorts of talents by examining physical features.
  - **3.** By 1791, in his early 30s, Gall committed himself to his first full-blown theory—cranioscopy, which held that careful examination of the cranial formations allows a doctor to assess a patient's underlying mental and moral faculties.
  - **4.** Concerned that Gall's theory—now dubbed *phrenology*—led to a materialistic, atheistic account of human moral and mental powers, the clergy successfully had government sanctions imposed on Gall in 1802.
  - **5.** Gall abandoned Austria and made his way as a lecturer in various German university towns, settling finally in Paris in 1807.
  - **6.** Over the next years, Gall would answer charges of atheism, fail to be elected to the French Academy of Sciences, and otherwise spread his celebrity with multivolume treatises on the functions of the brain.

C. Though his system would be mocked as "bumpology" and later appear as a kind of charlatanism or parlor game, Gall was, in fact, one of the great neuroanatomists of his time and established his theory with compelling evidence.

1. He examined changes in brain mass of human fetuses spontaneously aborted during various periods of gestation, thus laying the foundations for human developmental neuroanatomy.

2. He made similar observations of the non-human species, thus carrying further the specialty of comparative neuroanatomy.

3. He made studies of the cranial features of living celebrities, criminals, mental defectives, and insane patients and of their brains after they had died.

D. On the basis of a substantial database, he offered what he called "four incontestable truths":

1. Every mental and moral faculty of the mind is associated with a specific "organ"—a functional unit or what today might be called a *module*—in the brain.

2. The degree of a faculty that a person possesses is associated with the relative mass of brain connected to that faculty.

3. The mental and moral faculties are innate—by *moral*, Gall means the temperamental and dispositional.

4. The conformation of the adult skull provides at least a good first approximation to the dominant or deficient moral and intellectual faculties of the underlying brain, thus, of the person.

III. It would be but a matter of a few years before physiologists begin to test Gall's theory directly, putting France at the center of the field that would become psychobiology or physiological psychology.

A. The technique of choice—practiced by Francois Magendie and Xavier Bichat, among others—was to surgically destroy selective regions of the brains of unanesthetized animals and observe among the survivors whatever deficits were produced by destruction of areas of the brain.

B. In the early 1840s, Pierre Flourens performed such research and published his findings, along with a careful critique, in his *Phrenology Examined*.

1. Flourens discovered that the areas of the brain Gall had linked with certain functions were not identified with those functions.

2. But Flourens's work did show evidence of just the sort of localized function that was at the center of Gall's theory.

C. Gall had put on the map of scientific thought a problem that continues to animate current cognitive and brain research—localization of function.

IV. Though phrenology proved a waste, Gall's larger achievement was to rescue philosophy of mind from speculative philosophy and locate it in the sciences. He played an important part in the emergence of psychology as an independent experimental discipline.

A. The speculative approach of Locke or Hume was now complemented, if not replaced, by clinical and experimental inquiries into the relationship between psychic and physical processes. From a few suggestive studies to what arose as a veritable movement, the "brain sciences" would take on profound philosophical importance.

B. If Gall is not the father of that movement, he is surely one of it most influential modern tutors.

Recommended Reading:

Borst, C. V., ed. *Mind/Brain Identity Theory.* New York, 1970.

Robinson, D. *The Enlightened Machine*. New York, 1980.

Churchland, P. *Neurophilosophy.* Cambridge, 1986.

Questions to Consider:

1. If salient aspects of human mental and emotional life are conditional on particular states and processes in the brain, explain why anyone should be held responsible either for knowledge or for conduct.

2. Infer what Descartes might have said about Gall's theory.

Lecture Thirty-Eight
The Idea of Freedom

Scope: The late Enlightenment hosted a counterculture, centered in the little duchy of Weimar and featuring Goethe, Schiller, and other luminaries. Though the sources of the *Romantic rebellion* lay largely in the work of the rationalist empiricists of the previous 100 years, the German Romantics and their followers were convinced that the mechanistic philosophies developed in the wake of the Newtonian achievement were both incomplete and misleading. They returned to the book of nature, wherein they found mystery and transcendental powers, powers of an essentially aesthetic character grounded in freedom. In Goethe's *Faust* and in Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, freedom is offered as the very definition of our humanity.

Outline

I. Romanticism is one of the perennial achievements of the human imagination and, in its philosophically developed expression, one of the significant productions of the 19th century.

- **A.** If Romanticism is a reaction to and rejection of the Enlightenment, its origins are clearly traced to the Enlightenment itself.
  - **1.** The principle agenda of the Enlightenment is to challenge traditional authority through the tools and resources of a scientific worldview.
  - **2.** Thus, the Enlightenment sets itself up against what is taken to be artificial contrivances—the overly analytical Scholastic philosophies, the authority of Scripture or revelation, the invented powers of rank and title, and slothful acceptance of tradition and the alleged wisdom of bygone times.
  - **3.** If Descartes is one of the fathers of the modern worldview, let us recall that he helps to set the stage for the Enlightenment by rendering doubt the beginning of all knowledge.
- **B.** With Rousseau, we get what might be regarded as the beginning of a veritable religion of nature. His writings show what was immanent in the ethos of the Enlightenment from the first: namely, a religion of nature that cannot be fully described with the artificial instrument of language.
- **C.** Kant inserted this insuperable barrier between the world of phenomena and the noumenal reality behind that world.
  - **1.** Kant's philosophy at once entices us to get to the bottom of things, to see what's behind the screen, and to understand at the outset that the formalisms that guide and edit perception are of little avail.
  - **2.** But if perception in this rule-governed sense will not disclose the real nature of things, and if science is based primarily on observation, and if we know that observation reveals merely phenomenal, not noumenal, reality, then science has built-in limitations.
  - **3.** Kant's moral theory also places us as rational beings in that "intelligible realm" outside the causal order of the natural sciences.
- **D.** We now begin to hear deep resonances to the effect that what really defines us is our freedom, that freedom renders us unique in the entire cosmos, apart from all other things.
  - **1.** Consider the appearance in the late 18th century of the Gothic novel, such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*.
  - **2.** What are these horror stories all about? The revelation of mysteries and half-seen, half-grasped realities.
  - **3.** Likewise, Blake and Fuseli see the realm of fact driven by hidden and mysterious forces. In Fuseli's "Polyphemus," the blind monster suggests the realms of truth inaccessible to the eye and, therefore, inaccessible to the light of science.

II. The so-called *Romantic rebellion* conveys the sense of the mystery behind the reality, which somehow is uncovered through the genius of art and literature. It's not accessible to the eye until the eye is liberated from the formalisms of science, logic, and philosophy itself.

- **A.** Goethe (1749–1832) is one of the very souls of Romanticism. His *Farbenlehrer* (1810) is one of the most detailed analyses to that date of color vision! Goethe argues that the Newtonian theory of light explains everything except *what we see*!

1. There is nothing in the physics of light that tells us anything about how the world appears to us.
2. It tells us nothing about the perception of beauty.

B. Goethe's 10-year friendship with Friedrich Schiller was decisive in Goethe's writing of *Faust.* In Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, freedom creates and determinism limits and kills.

1. We are never our authentic selves so fully as when at play.
2. The idea is that the divinity within us expresses itself most fully when we do something for the sheer intrinsic worth of the activity itself and not for anything external to it.
3. This is Schiller's sense of the authenticity of play, his aesthetic creed.

III. The Faust legend depicts the limits of science and the transcendental nature of freedom.

A. The Faust of Part 1 is the bored polymath who, knowing everything, finds nothing in knowledge that offers abiding pleasure. What it would take for Faust to pledge his soul is for Mephistopheles to create in him an experience of such a nature that he would never tire of it.

1. "What would you sell your soul for?" is the question at the bottom of the play.
2. What is clear is that a scientific knowledge of the world does not make us at home in it.
3. Clear, too, are the lengths to which one goes in order to achieve the transcendent—an experience of such quality and sublimity as to command time to stop in her tracks.
4. It is only our autonomy, our radical freedom, that allows us to enter into such "Faustian bargains"—the soul being bet on the possibility of total satisfaction.

B. The Faust of Part 2, created by Goethe years later, is one for whom the transcendentally joyous experience is the *freedom of others*: the spectacle of a free people, engaged in the art of life. The question in Part 2 is how this whole Faustian bargain is going to work out.

1. Complete freedom is the authenticity that comes from what we have freely chosen to do.
2. The German philosopher Johann Fichte, one of Kant's young contemporaries, asked: How do we know when we are free? He answers: when we meet opposition.
3. Having gone through the range of possibilities that only the devil can present, Faust has an utterly novel experience—the transcendent joy of having his lands given over to all the people who have toiled on them.
4. Romantic freedom is ultimately selfless, the absorption into a totality, freely giving up private freedom for the sake of others.
5. Thus, Faust is redeemed in the end of the story.

IV. The idea of freedom, central to Kant's moral philosophy and celebrated by Goethe, Schiller, and their kindred "Romantic idealists," is an informing chapter in the long debate.

A. What the aesthetes concluded was that science in the wake of Newton had become mechanical, reductive, indifferent to the human condition, and depreciating of the human condition when it does consider it.

B. What they would put in its place is the truth of nature against the fabrications of the natural philosopher, a generous recognition of the creative power of genius, and the transcendent sources of beauty and wonder. The attribute of wonder is central to our humanity in the Romantic view. Any philosopher who would explain the world mechanically has not seen the world.

Recommended Reading:

Bate. W. *From Classic to Romantic*. Harvard University Press, 1946

Clark, K. *The Romantic Rebellion*. J. Murray, 1973.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the problem of the received sciences is that they are too narrow or that they are simply unable in principle to inform us on matters of deepest concern.
2. Conclude whether an "authentic" life is possible—or even desirable—in light of the "freedom of play" that Schiller takes to be its essence.

Lecture Thirty-Nine
The Hegelians and History

Scope: From the middle of the 19th century to the present, the philosophy of Hegel (1770–1831) would have a profound influence, at times a nearly revolutionary influence. In Hegel, one finds the merging and creative synthesis of many of the strongest tendencies in Romantic thought. First is the idea of progressive and evolving reality—not the staid mechanical repetitiousness of mere causality, but an active principle at work in the natural world. Second, there is the criticism of science as not being up to the task of comprehending this world, tied as it is to reductive schemes.

The first step in the direction of understanding, then, is the identification not of a *cause* but of a *reason*. Hegel has as the reason for the evolution of human mind and society a rather Gothic and terrifying "Absolute" that uses the conflicts of history to realize itself ever more fully. The modern state is seen as the culmination of this struggle.

Outline

I. It is difficult to fully discuss Hegel's thought within the scope of a 30-minute lecture. However, Hegel, a product of both the German Enlightenment and Romantic thought, accepted the essential Romantic critique of science as one-sided, narrow, and largely incapable of explaining the natural world.

- **A.** Hegel's early education featured the classics and was preparatory for theological studies, which in time, proved boring to him. At Teubingen's Stift Theological Seminary, Hegel was judged to be of "middling industry and knowledge."
- **B.** There, he roomed with two young men who would distinguish themselves in future years, the poet Holderlin, whose two-volume *Hyperion* is a classic in German literature, and Schelling, who will be associated with Hegel in years to come and figure importantly in what came to be known as German Idealism.
- **C.** The academic world of Germany and of Teubingen, especially, was in turmoil as a result of the French Revolution and the ideas surrounding it. Hegel is among that intellectual elite aware of the debts to the past but aware, as well, of the changing conditions of the world.

II. Hegel shares with his immediate predecessors, and with Romanticism at large, the judgment that science, as traditionally understood as "perfected" in the age of Newton, is a narrow, one-sided, misleading affair.

- **A.** If science stays at the level of mechanistic explanation and the particularization of the complex into some reduced non-reality, then it will be capable of explaining very little. Science will, in fact, become merely an exercise in the vindication of its own flawed methods.
- **B.** The subject of truth itself is what has real being, in the sense of nothing being added or modified by peculiar or merely conventional modes of analysis.
- **C.** Descartes's own revolution was never lost on Hegel. As understood by Hegel, Descartes's achievement was to recognize that knowledge in all its forms is but "the unity of thought and being."
- **D.** Though he admires Newton, Hegel regards Newton's work as making it possible for Locke's philosophy to become nearly official. The commitment to perceptual modes of knowledge and the shunning of deeper metaphysical considerations are products of this mode of thinking.
  - **1.** If the world is defined as merely the action of corpuscles, the laws governing corpuscles will be all that will be studied; everything else will be ignored.
  - **2.** And the discovered causal laws could, in fact, be entirely different without raising any surprise or concern. If instead of $F = ma$, the relationship had been $F = 5m + 3.2a$, it would be no occasion for debate.
  - **3.** Thus, the scientist gives us no complete comprehension of the natural world. Through these mere summaries of correlations and cause-effect sequences, he never arrives at what the rest of us call "reality."
- **E.** Nothing in the Newtonian achievement explains just *why* the laws are as they are. Why is everything the way it is and not some different way instead?

F. To include Hegel within the tradition of Romanticism or German Romantic Idealism requires that we turn to Johann Fichte. Indeed, the famous "Hegelian" triad of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis is actually Fichte's contribution and was rarely employed by Hegel himself.

1. Fichte recognized a fundamental conflict in Kant's epistemology: If there is a conceptual or logical barrier between reality as it is and reality as it is perceived, philosophy must commit to either bypass mind in every possible way or to accept that it is mind that is the worthy object of attention.

2. Fichte argues that the ultimate reality is that of idea, the starting point of philosophy then being the transcendental ego.

3. According to Hegel, we ought to be looking not merely for those causal connections revealed in scientific laws but for the reason behind the laws, because reality is rational.

G. To understand an event is finally to identify the reason behind it, and reasons are not "causes" by another name.

1. Causes can be final or merely efficient, but they carry no sense of necessity with them; they are merely contingent facts of the world.

2. But knowing the *reason* for an event is to understand that the event had to take the form it did.

III. Hegel applies this to human history itself. There is a distinct evolutionary perspective in Romanticism. There must be a reason for human development: from basic survival to human communities to literacy and rationality, each stage higher than the previous one.

A. Romanticism perceives an evolutionary struggle—*Sturm und Drang*—that produces new and better things not predictable in a mechanistic view.

B. Human history is the result of something trying to work itself out or realize itself through this great evolutionary struggle. It is out of the struggle itself that something gets resolved. And it is in the resolution that we find life lived at a higher plane. There is reason in human history.

C. Hegel gave several names to this something, most commonly "the Absolute" but also "soul" or "spirit"—*Geist*.

D. In Hegel's day, the Absolute expresses itself in the *state*, declared by Hegel to be "the march of God in the world"! So-called "Hegelians of the right" would defend the claims of the state against any and every claim from the mere individuals who live in it.

IV. Hegel finds that the state, as the ethical aspect of the Absolute, takes precedence over Kant's "good will" of the individual.

A. Kant claimed that good will was the only pure good in the universe: the will to bring about, if we could, that which we would bring about in our most rational moments.

B. For Hegel, this dependence on the will of the moral agent leaves room for arbitrary and even wicked conduct. The claims of conscience have a moral superiority over mere convention but cannot be substituted without peril for the commands of the just state.

C. Hegel prefers the formulations of the brilliant young philosopher Fichte: The greatest freedom of the will consists in surrendering freedom for the sake of the whole.

V. What really exists does so in virtue of an essentially dialectical process. Reality is the synthetic outcome of affirming and negating forces.

A. Fichte is important philosophically as the architect for the Hegelian ontological logic that features the famous dialectical triad of *thesis*, *antithesis*, and *synthesis*—the progress through conflict, reality arising from opposing tendencies.

B. Fichte's description of the dialectical realization of human freedom is an example:

1. Man is born free (thesis).

2. But he cannot know this until his freedom is first opposed and constrained by others (antithesis).

3. In the synthesis, or final stage, man passes the stage of freedom for its own sake and comes to know freedom as an instrumentality to be used for the good of all.

C. The dialectical ontology defended by Fichte enters Hegel's metaphysics at every point.

VI. Romanticism brings the recognition that with the sublime comes a dialectic of terror and conflict and conflagration, that progress is won at a price, that history is organic. Nothing stays in place. And reality is always more than what we see.

Recommended Reading:

Stace, W. *The Philosophy of Hegel.* Dover, 1955.

Findlay, *Hegel: A Reexamination*. London, 1958.

Questions to Consider:

1. Compare Hegel's thinking of the state as "the march of God in the world" and Hitler's development of "the maximum State."
2. Infer whether Hegel read Kant's categorical imperative correctly. Conclude whether the good will is really that which causes moral mischief and evil in the world.

Lecture Forty

The Aesthetic Movement—Genius

Scope: Whether or not inspired by Hegel and other figures in German philosophy and letters, the Anglo-American world of the second half of the 19th century had a renewed respect for the creative power of art and its elusive sources. The Aesthetes combined a transcendentalist philosophy of freedom with a zeal for reshaping the world. Art now was not decorative but expressive of what is best in nature and in human nature. Freedom is not merely a political bequest or the promise of law but the essence of man as such.

As technology and the impulses of the Enlightenment combined to transform and reform daily life and the life of the laboring classes, leaders of thought, such as Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin, defied the smug certainty that science and progress were synonymous. They turned the debate to considerations of culture, beauty, art, and all that might re-humanize a human being now vulgarized and materialized by the modern form of life.

Outline

I. By the middle of the 19th century, a divorce had taken place between philosophers—especially aestheticists in the tradition of Hegel—and scientists.

A. The great physicist and physiologist Hermann von Helmholtz put it this way during a lecture at Heidelberg (Nov. 22, 1862):

[Hegel's] system of nature seemed, at least to natural philosophers, absolutely crazy….Hegel…launched out with particular vehemence and acrimony against the natural philosophers, and especially against Isaac Newton. The philosophers accused the scientific men of narrowness; the scientific men retorted that the philosophers were insane.

B. The rift between aesthetes and men of science was not complete by 1862, but it was certainly on the way to becoming so.

1. The Romantic movement held that a mechanistic science was incapable of seeing anything clearly and truthfully.

2. We are much more likely to find an underlying, fundamental noumenal reality in the great productions of art.

3. This division all took place in the Aesthetic movement, from the middle to the end of the 19th century.

II. The Aesthetic movement did not have the 19th century to itself; it nourishes and is nourished by other movements. The 19th century was the great age of reform, of the effort to relieve the masses of people from traditional patterns of oppression. The roots of this great effort lay both in the Enlightenment and in the Romantic "rebellion" against it.

A. Many reforms were on the inspiration of the Earl of Shaftesbury and other leaders of what were regarded as radical groups, including John Stuart Mill's father, James Mill.

B. Many of the changes advocated and philosophically bolstered during the Enlightenment materialized in the success of the American experiment and the Constitution of the United States.

C. However, the American institution of slavery doesn't quite go along with this.

1. Antislavery rhetoric is among the finest productions of the entire history of humanitarian discourse. The antislavery movements in the United States were launched by some of the best minds in the country.

2. In the Romantic tradition, there is a growing sense that our sentiments of benevolence are our noblest sentiments. If, in fact, the defining feature of human nature is its moral freedom, nothing can be worse than to institutionalize that which denies the very exercise of moral autonomy.

D. The great promise of the Enlightenment was that social problems—traditional modes of oppression and narrow-mindedness—could be conquered with scientific solutions.

III. There was already within Romanticism a recognition that science's understanding of nature is incomplete.

Additionally, Romanticism recognized that we become more aware of our essential nature through the arts. Through an understanding of that nature, we also become more aware of the kind of world we should try to bring about.

A. A particularly convenient way to illustrate the tension and competing perspectives between the Romantic and Aesthetic movements can be found in a speech by Thomas Henry Huxley given at the founding of the University of Birmingham and a reply to that speech by Matthew Arnold, one of the saints of the Aesthetic movement.

1. Huxley raises a question that continues to animate discussions of higher education: Should a youngster making his way in the world study natural science or "two dead languages"? The answer he gave was obvious. Greek and Latin might be proper if one intended to review books; the rest of the world was the domain of science.

2. Huxley characterizes Matthew Arnold as a "Levite of culture" carrying with him a hieratic and remote past into an age overtaken by scientific advances.

B. Arnold replied by asking how human nature is to be understood. Can it be understood simply by digging into its remote biological past?

1. He quotes Darwin's statement that our ancestor must have been a hairy quadruped, with pointed ears and a tail, "arboreal in nature."

2. Assume it to be so, says Arnold: There was yet something in that quadruped that "inclined him to Greek." There must have been, because Greek is what he became!

3. Consider what we achieve when we look inside ourselves and know that we are not complete, when we are driven to perfect ourselves in works of art and in the words of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

4. The whole point of classical study, like the whole point of the Aesthetic movement, is not to prepare for the life of a book reviewer but to prepare for the life of a rational being.

C. The whole point of culture, Arnold says, "is to make a rational being ever more rational" and to achieve what Arnold famously refers to as "sweetness and light." But this is the age of atomic and thermonuclear weaponry, and the National Football League, and vicious stock transactions on Wall Street. What are we to make of "sweetness and light?"

IV. Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* inspired the Victorian age to rediscover the power of the Gothic.

A. In his "Seven Lamps of Architecture," Ruskin included the "Lamp of Obedience": In an age (such as his own) that is without originality or creative force, the best thing to do is to copy the work of a better age.

B. Ruskin contrasted the free play of form and invention in the Gothic with late-Renaissance symmetrical and geometrical design, which he denounced as the "servile ornamentation of the Ninevite."

1. Renaissance decoration might have been produced by a stamping machine of his own century: It reduces the craftsman to the status of machine.

2. The Gothic is the *free* expression of those who have not been reduced to machinery.

V. One of Oscar Wilde's more devastating epigrams declared that "the birth of America was the death of art." What Wilde was pointing to is the conflict between the ideal and the practical, between the world of spirit and the world of things.

A. A more discerning critic of America—Matthew Arnold—wrote two lengthy essays on culture in America. One was published before he had ever visited the United States; the second, after a tour of the States in which he was wined and dined at the White House and otherwise lionized as the ultimate arbiter of 'high culture."

B. In his *Last Words on America*, Arnold rehearsed a judgment made earlier by Sir Lepel Griffin in print. He concludes that America has largely solved the political problem, the problem of poverty, and the social problem, but not the human problem.

1. What Griffin is getting at is this: America is vast, rich, and getting bigger all the time. The problem is that it is not interesting.

2. What makes a nation interesting is its capacity to inspire awe, which it does chiefly through the creation of beauty. And until America makes itself awe-inspiring by an attachment to beauty, it will remain uninteresting. For this reason, the gentle spirit will not find a home there.

VI. The aesthetes of the 19th century were not simply proclaiming the value of art but its creative power. They

insisted that our very character is formed by our practices and perceptions, that as these become more mechanical and tied to vulgarizing features of the world, we are transformed into something less than we were. Art, on the other hand, is the supreme instance of Schiller's insight that "men are never so free as when they are at play": Art is the free play of the spirit bringing into being what could not have been predicted in advance.

Recommended Reading:

Ruskin, J. *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 1. Smith, Eldeer & Co., 1853.

Arnold, M. *Culture and Anarchy*. Yale University Press, 1994.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether the "freedom" of the Gothic and the diminished freedom of the high Renaissance is obvious to you.
2. If architecture has a moral side, explain what contemporary architectural genres teach and affirm.

Lecture Forty-One
Nietzsche at the Twilight

Scope: A student of the classics and a servant of genius, Nietzsche (1844–1900) saw that, in the ancient world, the Apollonian stood in dialectical relation to a Dionysian impulse: Thus, it was a world of light *and* darkness, optimistic rationalism *and* destructive passion. Nietzsche's aphoristic writings force on the reader the yawning gap between an authentic life and the one lived by most persons: cowardice in the face of life's actual destructive and creative impulses.

The basic impulse is the *will to power*—power that is wanted for itself, apart from its instrumental value. This power must, in the exceptional person, include power over oneself and one's passion. The *Oberman* lives a controlled and integrated life. Goethe is given as an example. But no one enjoys this status; one can only approximate it. It is the assertion of the *self*—the defiance of fate and death and society—that marks out the path to an authentic life, a life lived by very few and condemned by very many.

Outline

I. There are two ways to contribute originally to the study of philosophy.

- **A.** One well known way is through rigorous analysis, built on the foundation of logic.
- **B.** Another way is by the use of aphorisms, by use of penetrating personal reflection. In modern times, no one enjoys the status of wielding this kind of influence more than Friedrich Nietzsche.
- **C.** Nietzsche, born in a rural region of Germany in 1844, would require care either within institutions or in the home of his mother or sister from 1888 until his death in 1900.
- **D.** Despite his troubled life, however, Nietzsche was a writer of great power and a thinker of dark, suggestive, and daring ideas.
  - **1.** His ideas run far afield of Matthew Arnold's "sweetness and light."
  - **2.** Nonetheless, there was a common bond between Arnold and Nietzsche: Their arguments are addressed to the public at large, not to the "schoolroom."
  - **3.** Arnold's "something in us that inclines us to Greek" leaves aside the question: Which Greek? Apollo and reason are but one face of the classical world—the other face is Dionysian and ecstatic.
- **E.** Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1819) greatly influenced Nietzsche.
  - **1.** The first and irrefutable fact that Schopenhauer presents is that "the world is my idea…No truth is more absolutely certain than that all that exists for knowledge and, therefore, this whole world, is only object in relation to subject—in a word, idea." This is the subjectification of knowledge that was to be a starting point for Nietzsche.
  - **2.** As for the interests and aims, Schopenhauer held that the primary, basic aim is self-preservation.
  - **3.** In time, however, Schopenhauer's philosophy would wear thin for Nietzsche. The will to live was radically transformed into the will to power. If, indeed, progress is won by destruction, then progress may be less the aim than the consequence of this motive—a side of the Greek that we don't see when we fix our gaze on Apollo.

II. In his first notable work, *The Birth of Tragedy and the Spirit of Music* (1872), Nietzsche contrasted the Apollonian and the Dionysian, these two faces of the Greek world—the two "art deities" of the Greek world.

- **A.** Greek tragedy aims to resolve the conflict or relax the tension between these two art deities by giving the Dionysian element the means by which to give the fullest expression of pent-up emotions, passions, dread, and madness but all framed within the Apollonian framework of story, plot, coherence.
- **B.** Nietzsche said it was the fault of Socrates and the Greek academic philosophers to give too much to the Apollonian at the expense of the Dionysian.
- **C.** Terrified by pessimism: This is all-prevailing in Nietzsche's thought as he looks at the world around him.

III. Nietzsche was an admirer and one-time friend of Wagner, whose operatic characterization of the natural though godlike man surely shaped Nietzsche's conception of that *Oberman* who would come to replace the weak and degraded contemporary man.

- **A.** Both Nietzsche and Wagner were influenced by Schopenhauer.
- **B.** Both were drawn to the world of the classical Greeks.
- **C.** Both sought to restore to art what was lost to convention and reasonableness.
- **D.** Wagner's operas were northern myth, rather than Apollonian, and they abandoned Christianity for the secular and cultural.
- **E.** Nietzsche broke with Wagner over Wagner's vulgar anti-Semitism and Wagner's last opera, *Parsifal*, with its open recovery of the Christian mythos.

IV. Society must tame the destructive Dionysian passions and the uncontrolled will to power by taming persons.

- **A.** Nietzsche understands that much of what we do during our conscious daily lives is actually a sublimation of the very basic instinctual impulses that we refuse to face. He is the first to use the term *sublimation* in a way that it will come to figure in Freud's psychoanalytic theory.
- **B.** The man capable of living an authentic life in the face of society's bribes and corruptions embodies the *Oberman*.
  - **1.** Nietzsche surely does not regard himself as the *Oberman*.
  - **2.** His candidate is Goethe, whom Nietzsche believed lived his life authentically, faithful to his vocation.

V. The Enlightenment and even the Darwinian picture is one of *progress*: constant improvement and refinement. But this is not what the record of human history reveals.

- **A.** Even less does it reveal that divine progression in which the "absolute" realizes itself.
- **B.** What history reveals are cycles of brutality interrupted by seasons of creative energy. Every act of creation is a destruction, as every lived moment is a movement closer to death.
- **C.** The Judeo-Christian teaching, with its emphasis on guilt, redemption, sacrifice, and turning the other cheek, is what keeps us from feeling this summons to creation and destruction.
  - **1.** The teaching of Jesus (an ineffectual, unworldly innocent) weakens those who believe it; it makes them more servile and tractable.
  - **2.** Christian teaching is devoid of the impulse to power.

VI. It is a maxim in Nietzsche's philosophy that suffering, mistrust, self-loathing, and rejection of all comforting superstitions are the staples of a defensible conception of life. Suffering has to be almost a goal.

- **A.** The lived life must be defeated once we recognize that our lives have been inauthentic, our natures corrupt and corrupting.
- **B.** We will suffer, knowing there is no light at the end of the tunnel, but our suffering confers a certain kind of dignity that makes us worthy of ourselves.
- **C.** Not long before his death at the age of 56, Nietzsche caused a stir by collapsing in a public street in Turin, Italy. He had been embracing and comforting a cart horse that had just been abused by the coachman. Perhaps he had seen in its condition all that human beings deny in their own natures and, in their denial, inflict suffering on innocent beings.

Recommended Reading:

Hollingdale, R. *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy*. Louisiana State University Press, 1965.

Kaufmann, W. *The Portable Nietzsche*. Viking Press, 1961.

Questions to Consider:

1. Identify in what senses Nietzsche might be classified as both "classical" and "Romantic."
2. Summarize how Aristotle might have judged a theory of authenticity based on the need for self-assertion and the will to power.

Lecture Forty-Two
The Liberal Tradition—J. S. Mill

Scope: After Hume, who profoundly influenced him, John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) is the most influential philosopher to write in English. His political treatises were read and revered by ordinary citizens in his own time, selling, as his friend John Morely would say, for the price of a railway novel. His father, James Mill, had been one of the "radicals" behind the reform movements of the 1830s. His friends included some of the most talented essayists, journalists, philosophers, and scientists of Britain.

Mill's philosophy, his science, and his psychology are of a piece. He is an empiricist without hesitation in approaching the problem of knowledge and an empiricist, as well, in defending a utilitarian theory of ethics. His defense of liberty is based on utilitarian precepts and that resigned *fallibilism* that is the mark of the anti-rationalist.

When is the coercive power of the state or of the majority permissibly exercised against the actions of the individual? The modern liberal tradition was installed by Mill in a manner that gave it nearly unchallenged authority for more than a century, owing largely to Mill's positivistic and "scientific" psychology as an approach to the issue.

Outline

I. Along with David Hume, John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) might be properly regarded as the most influential of philosophical scholars in the English language. He laid the foundations for what we would take to be the scientific psychology of the 20th century.

- **A.** His essay *On Liberty* is probably one of the most widely assigned in the university curriculum, the *locus classicus* for arguments that oppose state and moral paternalism.
- **B.** Mill's *System of Logic* stands as a "bible" for experimental science.
- **C.** His defense of utilitarianism remains perhaps the clearest and most supple.
- **D.** He has placed his mark on the widest range of issues in science, politics, and ethics.
- **E.** Mill's autobiography thoroughly outlines his life.
  1. Mill was home-schooled, with a grounding in Latin and Greek classics, economic philosophies, world history, logic, and mathematics.
  2. Mill's father insulated him from other boys and from influences that might infect his thinking with vulgar or mundane habits.
  3. Thanks to the patronage of the Stuart family, Mill received instruction at Edinburgh.
  4. Though educated for the clergy, Mill was a strident atheist and proceeded to make do as an occasional writer for profit and as an employee of the East India Company. In that post, he composed the authoritative *History of India*.

II. Early influences on Mill included Bentham, Coleridge and the French writer Auguste Comte (1798–1857), one of the fathers of a version of what is called *positivism*. Distinctions are in order, however, when that term is used.

- **A.** Comte's use of the term *positivism* is perhaps most divergent from the sense now employed by philosophers. Comte's thesis is that human thought, as it must address pressing problems, passes through distinct stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive.
  1. The first of these stages he regards as the age of superstition, with belief in occult and personal but supernatural agents directing the affairs of the cosmos.
  2. This gives way, in the second stage, to what appears to be a demystified set of beliefs. In fact, however, the mind sees—instead of supernatural beings—entities that may be invoked to "explain" things.
  3. Inevitably, this all must give way to the third stage, in which the mind applies itself to the study of natural laws.

B. In the final state, we're all supposed to be Humeans! This is key, because Mill's philosophy is so closely mapped onto Hume's that his affinity for Comte was predictable, if not entirely long-lived.

C. Note that the term *positivism* is also used in connection with a certain philosophy of law, as in *legal positivism*, the subject of a later lecture.

D. A third sense of *positivism* gets closer to Comte's use of the term and to what Mill works to develop in his philosophy of science.

1. Its most cogent defense comes from Ernst Mach, a great figure in physics at the University of Vienna late in the 19th century.

2. His *An Analysis of Sensation* is part of his larger project of ridding science of all metaphysical speculation. In a word, you can tell you're engaged in a scientific enterprise to the extent that you are *not* engaged in metaphysical speculations.

III. John Stuart Mill should be understood as promoting a philosophy of science compatible with Mach's and with the general positivistic view of science.

A. Science is what takes place in the domain of experience. It is an empirical enterprise.

B. Mill goes so far as to define matter itself as but "the permanent possibilities of sensation," meaning that the material world is a permanent possibility of sensation. Reality exists insofar as it is the subject of experience.

1. He rejects rationalist arguments of philosophy, saying that the introspective method employed is faulty. By reflecting on what we recall from our early years, we fail to come up with any experience that might have conveyed an idea and incorrectly conclude that our current awareness is "intuition."

2. Mill places in opposition to this what he calls the *psychological method*. He argues that we learn things in the present by being presented with what it is to be learned, being rehearsed through repeated presentations, and forming the necessary associations. Mill is very much the echo of Hume in this argument.

C. With Mill, the problem of knowledge solves itself in that well-known empiricistic way, fortified by methods of experimental inquiry. In Mill's treatise on inductive logic, he actually sets forth a methodology for experimental science.

1. According to the *principles of concomitance*, A is the cause of B whenever, in presenting A, you can bring B about.

2. The *method of agreement* would have the experimenter record all factors present whenever B occurs.

3. The *method of difference* is comparable; now we look to see if there is an event whose presence is always the case when B occurs, but whose absence is matched by the absence of B.

4. There are other "methods" and various refinements of each. In the end, a manipulability hypothesis grounds the entire approach: A is the cause of B when—taking B to be an empirical feature of the world—A can be used to manipulate that feature of the world.

IV. In the matter of ethics—the problem of conduct, as we've called it—Mill says the right test ethically is not whether something holds up in logic but whether it holds up in life.

A. He thinks that, with some significant modifications, Bentham got it right. We do what we do chiefly as creatures of nature, constituted in such a way as to maximize our pleasures and minimize our pains.

B. What Mill concludes is that the most significant sources of human activity are grounded in considerations of utility. The ultimate test of a course of action is whether it is useful, whether it serves some fundamental human purpose.

C. But Mill does not want to be misunderstood in affirming utilitarianism as the standard by which we judge the ethical content of actions.

1. He rebukes those who see utilitarianism as a caricature of the Epicurean: "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you shall die."

2. Mill's thesis is that when people set out to assign utilities to courses of action, what they include is what makes life more meaningful, more developed, more purposive, and more under rational control.

3. The ultimate pain is a life that is not authentically one's own, and what is profoundly useful is a meaningful and fully lived life.

4. In this same connection, Mill argues that we develop a sense of duty, which is the chief motive impelling us to promote the general welfare.

V. Mill's position on freedom is also utilitarian. If the wildest, most pernicious and degrading view is false, we can discover its falsity only by exposing it to criticism. If, instead, what seems to be patently false, reckless, and destructive turns out to be true, it's a truth we would deny ourselves were it to be silenced by the censor.

A. John Stuart Mill presents the liberal position on freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression, the free marketplace of ideas.

1. It has become almost a mantra in modern times, but Mill sees in this freedom the surest engine of progress.
2. No one's ideas, by virtue of personal authority, take precedence over anyone else's. Precedence is won by being earned, and it is earned in the arena of utility, usefulness, what finally works in the public interest, for the general good.

B. Liberty extends to a liberty of conscience, because anyone may be wrong and certainly may be wrong at the level of basic moral precepts.

1. Everyone has a right, in virtue of his or her own autonomy and dignity, to frame a form of life that makes sense to that person.
2. There are limits on this, however; liberty must be used in such a way as not to limit the liberty of others.

Recommended Reading:

Mill, J. S. *Autobiography.* Penguin, 1989.

Mill, J. S. *On Liberty*. Prentice Hall, 1996.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain how one determines what is "useful."
2. Conclude what might be Mill's recipe for cases in which what Smith takes to be useful, Jones takes to be painful—and where Smith and Jones are whole nations?

Lecture Forty-Three
Darwin and Nature's "Purposes"

Scope: Though not without earlier foreshadowings, the Darwinian revolution or theory would install a set of precepts at variance with both classical and Enlightenment assumptions. It was also at variance with the sophisticated judgments of those who were at once good Christians and scientifically informed. The theory allowed for the creation and disappearance of entire species; it called for a span of geological time that did not appear to match up with the data; and its predictions seemed contradicted by the fossil record, not to mention by centuries of selective breeding that never succeeded in producing a new species.

But with growing scientific support, the theory was installed as the most authoritative and coherent account science had ever produced on the question of man's place in nature and was soon applied (more arguably) to human societies and nations, as well. Against the background of benevolent egalitarianism espoused by the Victorian reformers, evolutionary theory gave support to the notion of exceptional types who carried the burden of preserving the race. Those unable to keep up with changing conditions and new demands would be replaced quite *naturally* and by processes not obedient to the rational schemes of our or any other species. Nature might be blind, but there was no other engine of progress.

Outline

I. Charles Darwin revolutionized modern thought and, in the process, revolutionized much in the traditional subject matter of philosophy. His influence stretches across the humanities and the social sciences, biology and genetics, ethics and political theory.

A. As a result of the Darwinian perspective, the traditional problems of knowledge, conduct, and governance refer not to abstract principles but to various modes of adaptation to environmental pressures.

B. However, Darwin comes out of what is very much an Enlightenment context. The Enlightenment, after all, is a period that venerated the idea of progress through conflict and competition.

C. Darwin's early influences provide a picture of the context in which his own ideas formed.

1. Darwin was born in Shrewsbury in 1809 to a physician father and to the daughter of Josiah Wedgwood. the family famous for porcelain china.

2. He entered Edinburgh with a view toward medicine, then moved to Cambridge with a plan to study for the ministry. There, however, he befriended John Henslow, who helped turn Darwin's attention to biological subjects.

3. Darwin took field trips with the geologist Adam Sedgwick.

4. Encouraged by Henslow, Darwin served as Naturalist on H.M.S. *Beagle* from 1831 to 1836. At the conclusion of the long voyage, he had a mountain of notes and a thoroughly focused mind.

5. In considering the influences on Darwin's thought, we mustn't overlook his grandfather, Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802), a physician who studied at Edinburgh and Cambridge, as well as an accomplished poet and inventor, who theorized that all varieties of living things evolved from an original type.

II. These influences do not lessen Darwin's originality. Although others had written about the plan and order of nature, the fitness of plants and animals to meet the challenges of the natural world, Darwin proposed the concept of design without a designer—a theological theory about ends being served by variation but not contrived by some providential super-intelligence.

A. Darwin published *Origin of Species* in 1859. The allegedly great and hostile controversy that surrounded its appearance is largely fiction. Critical reviews were remarkably detailed and highly positive.

B. Eleven years later, *The Descent of Man* saw quite a different reception.

1. There is an argumentative tone in *Descent of Man*, and of course, there is that great inductive leap according to which the particular characteristics of our humanity are to be understood as lying along the same continuum that covers all of animal life.

2. There is no room for qualifying the radical implications of Darwinian thought. We now confront an uncompromisingly evolutionary psychology in which human nature is not separated in any way from the balance of nature.

C. Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830–1833) provided a time frame compatible with the requirements of Darwin's theory.

1. Lyell's *uniformitarian* theory (that the same geological forces that operated in the remote past were still operating and in the same fashion) meant that there was enough time in the earth's past for evolution to work.
2. Lyell had also proposed, based on the fossil record, that older species had died out and been replaced. (Lyell, however, believed that progress was not by way of modifying existing species but by their replacement.)

III. Some of Darwin's critics, as late as the second half of the 19th century, insisted that he had not proceeded according to the established methods of Bacon and Newton, reaching broad generalizations without the necessary step-by-step inductive process. Even in our own time, scientists have concluded that the "natural selection" account is farfetched.

A. A scientific theory is expected to be both *retrodictive*, in that it explains how things came to be the way they are, and *predictive*. Thus, gravitation laws not only explain why objects have fallen but also predict *that* and *how* they will fall.

B. Evolutionary theory, however, is non-predictive: It is impossible to tell how natural selection will work in the future. Darwin himself called his method a kind of natural history.

C. Some also argued that the fossil record—which Darwin insisted was incomplete—was actually too good.

1. These critics said that the record was quite complete but failed to reveal the minute progression of change and gradual appearance of new species that the theory required.
2. Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-discoverer of the theory and a distinguished scholar in his own right, answered these criticisms, saying that although the fossil record is complete, it is not an accurate record because of the upheavals that have taken place at the level of the strata. They provide a broken and shifted record. Were the record undisturbed, it would support the theory.

D. Many pointed out that though farmers and breeders had been selectively breeding livestock and domestic animals for millennia, they had never been able to create a new species.

IV. More significant for most was Darwinism's implication that nature has its own creative and renewing resources, deployed with no plan or intention.

A. Evolutionary theory does not offer the peaceable kingdom of a providential God, but a hellish place of competition, and conflict.

1. Herbert Spencer first used the expression "survival of the fittest" in his *Social Statics*, published eight years earlier than *Origin*.
2. Darwin borrowed the phrase but remained aloof to the radical libertarianism and "social Darwinism" advocated by Spencer.
3. The evolutionary principles advanced by Spencer were, unlike Darwin's, forged into a moral imperative: Given that progress depends on the achievements of the best, these are not to be held back by accommodating the needs of the less talented.

B. Yet another implication of evolutionary theory is that what matters are collectives, not individuals.

1. It is not coincidental that Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton, was writing on hereditary genius in 1869. He made the point that, in a large sample of human beings, there will be a negligibly small number of truly exceptional instances, but the entire race ultimately depends on the achievements of that small group.
2. Galton himself was totally committed to the hereditarian view of natural variations and to the need to improve society by genetic means, even proposing cash payments for voluntary sterilization to those measuring low in estimates of intelligence.

C. If nature can prune and purify at the level of intellect, it can also select moral predispositions, if these enhance the species' adaptive potential.

1. Ethics thus boils down to biology.

2. There is room for altruism but only as defined biologically: It is the behavior of individuals that favors the survival of the species as a whole. This is not what moral theorists call "altruism," which depends on intentionality and consciousness.
3. Darwin's proponent Thomas Huxley wondered whether natural selection could ever match with human moral conceptions.

V. Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-founder of the theory and a man deeply admired and respected by Darwin, ultimately asks whether the theory of natural selection succeeds as an explanation of human nature. He identifies three domains that are so distinctly removed from the theory as not to be assimilated by it.

A. Purely abstract thought seems to serve no particular evolutionary end.

B. In the domain of aesthetics, resources are squandered in the interests of what is merely beautiful, and that surely cannot serve the kinds of ends envisaged by the theory itself.

C. In the domain of moral thought and ethics, we intentionally sacrifice our most cherished interests for the benefit of others.

VI. The Darwinian theory, though it met opposition, was rapidly and universally successful as a description and as a method. The question may be asked, however, whether this theory can tell us finally who we are and how we should live. Yet, in our Darwinian world it seems almost no longer possible to think in terms that are non-Darwinian, let alone anti-Darwinian.

Recommended Reading:

Darwin, C. *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. New York, 1998 (1896).

Galton, F. *Hereditary Genius*. New York: 1978.

Young, R. *Mind, Brain and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford, 1970.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude how sound the proposition is that the defining psychological attributes of different species vary only in degree, rather than in kind.
2. Darwin regards altruism as having positive adaptive value. Explain whether this is consistent with "survival of the fittest."

Lecture Forty-Four
Marxism—Dead But Not Forgotten

Scope: Marx (1818–1883) defended a theory of economic determinism grounded in a more general theory of *dialectical materialism*. The central thesis is that society does not create but is a creation of economic forces based on a given society's forces and modes of production. The state arises simply to protect the interests of those who command the productive forces. In capitalism, a class structure evolves, in which workers create value by their labor, which is expropriated as profit by the owners of the means of production and accumulated as capital. The exploitation of the working class is necessary in the capitalist state, whose overthrow can be achieved only by revolutionary means. Ultimately, there follows from a classless state the dissolution of the state itself. The workers of the world have united!

The Marxist critique of society is now more a subtext than a guiding bible of reform. What survives, apart from lingering ideological loyalties, is the promise of a bona fide *social science* capable of explaining the social determinants of personal identity and analyzing perceived injustices.

Outline

I. It is difficult to bring a balanced, neutral perspective to bear on Karl Marx or Marxism. We associate much of the second half of the 20th century, politically, with his writings and teachings. We probably pay him too much credit or heap too much scorn on him.

A. Much of what comes down to us as Marxism is by way of Mao Tse-tung, Lenin, and Stalin. In these characters, there is very little that matches the depth of Marx's own systematic writings.

B. Marx (1818–1883) was quite assiduous in declaring that he was not a philosopher.

1. He considered philosophical speculation an activity that goes on because of the undeveloped nature of societies. Marx posited that a successful scheme of social revolution would put an end to philosophy.

2. Marx regarded himself as a social scientist making contributions chiefly to economic and social theory. He regarded his method and his mode of explanation as drawn from the sciences and specifically *not* philosophy.

3. Nonetheless, his ideas have animated philosophical discourse almost since the time they were recorded on paper. There is no doubt that, whatever Marx thought he was doing, his principal contributions will be to that part of the history of ideas in which we find philosophy itself.

C. Marx was born in Prussia to a middle-class family that claimed a long line of rabbis, though his father—to preserve his successful law practice—had converted to Protestantism.

1. Karl Marx followed in his father's footsteps, attending Bonn University's Faculty of Law, where he met and became engaged to a daughter of the aristocracy, Jenny von Westphalen.

2. Shortly after, his studies took place at the University of Berlin, where he joined the Young Hegelians.

3. At age 26, he was appointed editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* and guided it quickly toward dissolution at the hands of the Prussian authorities.

4. His movements, with faithful Jenny and a growing family, were frequent, until he settled in London. He is buried in Highgate Cemetery.

D. In his writings, we can feel Marx's impatience with the standard problems of philosophy.

1. His contributions as a scientist, social or otherwise, are negligible compared with their influence.

3. He earns less dubiously the title of non-philosopher, because he paid rather little attention to systematic philosophies and the abiding problems in philosophy.

4. For example, the mind-body problem is surely an abiding problem in philosophy. But when Marx briefly engaged an issue such as this, one can almost feel his impatience.

5. Amidst the European revolutions of 1848, the idea of sitting around and asking a question like that would have struck Marx as an example of how effete thought and thinkers had become by the mid-19th century.

6. On the mind-body problem (in *The Holy Family*), he accepts Gassendi's atomistic materialist solution, just to set the problem aside.

E. Marx is a materialist, but not a Democritean or mechanistic Gassendian one. His materialism is dialectic.

1. He is a Hegelian who stands Hegel on his head: The struggle to bring forth new forms of human life does not take place on the level of the spirit or the Absolute but on the level of economics.
2. If we were to classify Marx as a materialist, it would be what he himself referred to as a *dialectical materialist*, more in the tradition of Hegel.
3. Dialectical materialism accounts for all change in terms of the *struggle of opposites*. It is on this basis that progress becomes possible; change comes through conflict.
4. The class struggle is the engine of progress through history.

II. As a "social scientist," Marx is convinced that determinative laws operate at the level of society and throughout history. This determinative process is entirely materialistic, though not mechanistic, and works through economic forces.

A. The Darwinian model was a source of inspiration for Marx, who wrote, "Darwin's work…serves me as a natural scientific basis for the class-struggle in history," and he dedicated his *Das Capital* to Darwin.

B. In proposing that it is economics that imposes change on societies and on persons, Marxism represents a reversal of the traditional way of looking at how systems and institutions come about.

1. Aristotle, for example, argued that the political and legal framework of society shapes the moral character of citizens, and that this—surely not anything "economic"—represented the decisive factor in social life.
2. The Marxist version turns this around.

C. Every society depends on given *forces of production*.

1. We begin with the productive resources that a tribal enclave, a small community, or an entire empire might claim for itself. This inevitably recruits the physical power of a laboring class.
2. The laboring class becomes the instrument by which production becomes possible. In the process, things are produced more efficiently by cooperation, because the agricultural yield works to the advantage of all.
3. In time, possession of property is taken, thus establishing class distinctions between the propertied class and the laborers. It becomes necessary for the propertied class to devise means by which to safeguard its possession; hence, this same class proceeds to write the laws and exact the punishments.
4. For the Marxist, law is a class concept and a class tool, arising from the material interdependencies of bourgeois and proletarian classes.

D. The reaction to unionization in the 19th century was the sort of datum that Marx could adduce in support of such a theory.

III. Capitalism depends for its success on selling products for more than they cost to produce. The cost is chiefly labor; the surplus is profit, which accumulates as capital. This is Marx's *labor theory of value*.

A. Feudalism did not follow the rules of capitalism. Social class was not a measure of ultimate personal worth; the feudal lord was not amassing capital but preserving a society that was the image of God's providence.

B. Capitalism, however, must grow to survive. Once basic needs are met, artificial desires must be created in order to keep demand high. A *consumer society* must be created and enlarged.

IV. Only through a revolt of the laboring class can such a system be destroyed. The owning class has the means to fend off this outcome, though not to prevent it finally.

A. Those in control of the means of production also control and define the consciousness of the oppressed.

B. The model for this type of control is religion, what Marx famously called "the opiate of the masses." Religion is always handed down from upper to lower classes.

C. Class consciousness is the necessary first stage in transforming the power relations, and class struggle, the inevitable next stage.

1. Class consciousness becomes the necessary engine of revolutionary change and progress.
2. The first thing a worker must recognize is that he has been exploited and is being manipulated, that in fact, those who are availing themselves of his labor are not acting in his interests but in the interest of preserving a system in which they happen to be successful. Their success depends centrally on the worker's failure, namely, his failure to change anything materially about the nature of his life and social arrangements.

3. What is needed is a revolutionary change. And that revolution cannot be bloodless, because those in power do not relinquish power. Power is taken from them.
4. Revolutionary upheavals, then, are the only basis on which an economic and social stasis is impelled to change and, indeed, compelled to change.

D. In the ordinary run of things, science and technology alone radically alter the means of production.
1. Tremendous changes in the productive resources of a society can occur because of science and technology, recasting labor in a radically different mold.
2. Workers might now require great technical skills and education, gaining a much greater sense of themselves and their place within the productive scheme of things.
3. This class consciousness, however, recognizes its essentiality to the entire social life. This sort of change can take place without any adjustments in the social structure at all.

V. Marxist theory leaves no room for revolutionary changes effected technically and scientifically. It is a "deterministic" theory, defeated by actual persons living real lives on their own terms. In practice, it fails to explain and fails to achieve what its defenders promised. But it has altered perspectives in an enduring way and remains in the background of the "constructionist" theory of personality, personal identity, and class consciousness.

Recommended Reading:

Lichtheim, G. *Marxism: A Critical Analysis*. Praeger, 1961.

Marx, K. *Selected Writings*. Hackett, 1994.

Questions to Consider:

1. Marx obviously accepts the forceful powers of the individual, or his summons to revolution would be meaningless. Explain how "deterministic," then, are the economic forces operating on the individual.
2. Conclude whether the economic failure of all 20th-century "Marxist" states is evidence enough that the theory in part and in total is hopelessly flawed.

Lecture Forty-Five
The Freudian World

Scope: To a considerable extent, the Western intellectual community is still beholden to an essentially Freudian conception of human nature, even if few will continue to argue that that conception is scientific, either in form or in content or in accessibility to refutation.

Freudian theory is the culmination of the "Victorian" science of dynamics, opposition, conflict, and "conservation." Freud (1856–1938) was trained in medicine and was indoctrinated in the essentially positivistic orientation of the science of the time. He also took more or less for granted the idea that human psychic processes have a lineage extending into the non-human animal world in which survival is the abiding challenge.

Freud's theory of mind posits unconscious dialectical oppositions between the pleasure/pain principle of Darwinian survival and the social realities of morality and conformity, internalized as conscience. In this struggle, the conscious self is formed, forever inauthentic, only able to understand itself through lengthy analysis of repressed desires revealed in dream and symbol.

Outline

I. Some of the great ideas in philosophy have not been contributed by philosophers. The list of contributors is long and the specialties are diverse. Sigmund Freud is on the list but less by way of medicine than through a specialty he personally did much to create.

A. Freud needs no introduction. He has shaped contemporary perspectives on the nature of knowledge, our understanding of the sources of our conduct, and our sense of the very nature of the person. He has profoundly influenced thought across the board in aesthetics, literary criticism, moral philosophy, and indeed, philosophy—to such an extent that one has good reason to refer to the "Freudian World."

1. After graduating from the *Gymnasium* first in his class, Freud studied medicine at the University of Vienna when he was 17.

2. There, he came under the influence of one of the significant scientists of that period, Ernst Brucke, who was associated with Johannes Mueller, as well as Karl Ludwig, Emil DuBois-Reymond, and Hermann von Helmholtz.

3. Brucke and his compatriots agreed that they would accept no principle in biology that was not grounded in the basic sciences of chemistry and physics.

4. Helmholtz delivered a groundbreaking lecture on the principle of the conservation of energy, the main points of which are that we can get no more from a physical system than the energy it begins with; there is no perpetual-motion machine; and biological systems are physical systems.

B. The *conservationist* principles of Helmholtz are central to Freudian theory, particularly Freud's theory of hysterical symptoms as conversion reactions; that is, that hysterical blindness, paralysis, or deafness is just the physical manifestation of something occurring at the level of psychic energy.

C. Far more important to Freudian theory than conservationist principles in physics was the Darwinian revolution, which Freud accepted, chapter and verse.

1. Darwinian theory gave us, as mentioned in a previous lecture, design without a designer and design features coming about as a result of raw, brutal, daily biological conflict and collision.

2. Survival is dependent on the constant selfish struggle to get pleasure and avoid pain.

3. It was, thus, impossible to construct a biological psychology such as Freudian analysis without the principles of evolution.

D. Freud's ambitions were fairly modest to begin with. He wanted to be a research scientist in medicine and hold an academic post at Vienna.

1. It was clear that Freud, as a Jew, was going to face a fairly low ceiling in the very Catholic city of Vienna, as far as academic prospects were concerned.

2. For this reason, he began to practice neurology, which is what he was trained in.

II. In his practice, Freud would see a variety of "hysterical" symptoms—blindness, insensitivities, paralysis—that had no physical basis.

A. *Hysteria* takes its name from the Greek word for "uterus." Pre-19th century, it was widely thought that conditions of this kind occurred only in women and generally as part of the complexities of their reproductive biology.

B. Freud was not the one who turned things around on that. Between 1885 and 1886, Freud studied under Charcot, who was reporting some success in treating hysterical patients with hypnosis.

1. Freud would imaginatively develop the idea that traumas generate physical symptoms by way of unconscious processes.

2. With six months of experience behind him, Freud returned to his practice in Vienna and, for a time, used hypnosis, giving it up chiefly because of what he took to be its "mysteriousness."

C. Meanwhile, Freud's friend and colleague Josef Breuer, also a practicing neurologist, reported success in one patient—the famous Anna O, who suffered from a persistent cough, a paralysis on the right side of her body, sensory disturbances, and even hallucinations—by a "talking cure." The two determined that the hysterical symptoms must be based on a blockage of some sort that is partially released by cathartic means. As a psychic disturbance, the hysteria must be the physical manifestation of events involving "psychic" energy.

1. With Breuer, Freud reached the conclusion that hysterical symptoms were the result of a psychic mechanism: *repression*.

2. Repression resembled a hydraulic principle: Things not able to be expressed at one level must be expressed at another.

III. Armed with these findings and inspired by evolutionary theory, Freud focused on survival mechanisms.

A. Our ancestry guarantees that the individual will do everything possible to promote survival, to enhance pleasure and minimize pain. That is the *pleasure principle*—that we come into the world designed in such a way as to enhance pleasurable experiences and minimize those that are in any way painful.

B. What Freud calls the *reality principle* lies in dialectical tension to the pleasure principle. Most of the time, we conduct ourselves in a way that denies us certain pleasures so as to exist in an integral society.

C. The primal unconscious instincts (the *id*) must be controlled through the cultivation of a moral conscience (the *superego*) derived from parental and, ultimately, from social strictures and constraints.

D. The self as known to the self, the person we know as "I," the person in the mirror (the *ego*), is constructed out of a process of socialization being brought to bear in opposition to impulses and drives at a level inaccessible to the actor.

1. The ego is the synthesis, as it were, of the dialectical tension between id and superego.

2. It is to the defense of the ego that the mechanisms of sublimation, repression, displacement, and so on are committed.

E. The tensions generated in the conflict between the pleasure and reality principles may, to some extent be relaxed but not eliminated. The demands of society being what they are, it is necessarily the case that the life we live will not be an authentic life.

F. Beneath surface rationality and simplicity is the busy workshop of the unconscious, directing and forming complex intuitions, causing weird dreams and disturbing symptoms, rendering one at once fit for, and discontented with, civilization. Examples include people waking up blind or with paralyses because they harbor horrid wishes they cannot face.

1. What kind of wishes might these be? Sexual, of course!

2. Here is the theory of the Oedipal complex. As a boy moves toward heterosexual sexuality, the obvious target of his affections will be the source of his preexisting gratification—his mother.

3. Socialization of sexuality requires redirecting the sexual energies to a socially acceptable target, a development that can be a profoundly traumatic experience.

IV. Freud faced criticism by his contemporaries perhaps less for the sexual content of the theory than for the fact that it was so theoretical itself.

A. In Freud's time, science is an essentially observational enterprise designed to generate general testable and refutable laws. What evidence is there for the unconscious at all?

B. How can repressed elements be uncovered? Dreams, slips of the tongue, humor, and other "psychopathologies of everyday life" reveal the symbolic disguise of basic drives toward self-gratification.
   1. Dreams disguise our forbidden desires at the same time that they reveal them—the disguise doesn't entirely work.
   2. The interpretation of dreams is "the royal road to the unconscious."

Recommended Reading:

Freud, S. *Interpretation of Dreams*. Penguin, 2003.

Sulloway, F. *Freud: Biologist of the Mind*. Basic Books, 1979.

Questions to Consider:

1. The hysterical symptoms encountered in his practice by Freud are quite rare now. And Freud scarcely considers depression, which is the now the most common psychological problem reported by those seeking therapy. Explain what this has to say about the generality of the theory.

2. Identify what is lacking in Freud's theory that prevents it from securing scientific status.

Lecture Forty-Six
The Radical William James

Scope: Mortally opposed to all "block universes" of certainty and to theoretical hubris, James (1842–1910) offered a quintessentially homegrown psychology of experience: Every thought is *someone's*—it is "owned." Thought is of a piece, not in pieces; thought entails selection from the welter of possible stimuli and, thus, is active and personal; and thought matches up with *interests*, which in the nature of things, are personal and unique to the percipient. He opposed the idealistic and Hegelian commitments of his leading contemporaries, yet insisted on a mode of philosophical thought that left out nothing that we know of experience, including the religious and the intuitive. He advocated a philosophy and a psychology that were faithful both to common sense *and* to the most developed ideas in science.

Outline

I. William James surely is the quintessential Yankee philosopher. He comes along when Hegelian thought and Romanticism are fixtures in the American philosophical world.

- **A.** Transcendentalist and back-to-nature movements—this is the world of Thoreau, Emerson, Channing—are prominent.
- **B.** James will not reject these perspectives but will bring his characteristically Jamesian view to bear on them.
- **C.** James comes along in a world of mystery. As late as 1907, Professor Henry Jones wrote, with a sense of alarm, about how Hegelian thought has overtaken English thought and the English universities. His fear is that the epidemic is spreading almost without challenge.
- **D.** James's project is to rescue thought from the seductions of the worlds of mystery, while preserving its fluidity, purpose, and variegated nature.
  1. James, the eldest of four children and grandson of a multimillionaire, arrived at his project in a rather plodding way.
  2. James took longer than usual to complete his studies at Harvard, because of interruptions by bouts of illness. He read voraciously and retained what he learned.
  3. He spent six years (1863–1869) completing required studies for a medical degree. He dropped out once for what proved to be an unsatisfying exploration of the Amazon conducted by Louis Agazzis and a second time for travels in Germany, where lectures by Helmholtz and Wundt aroused James's interests in sensory processes and psychology.
  4. After completing his medical training at Harvard, James joined the faculty there in 1872. Within a few years, we find him giving lectures in physiological psychology and presiding over some experiments.
  5. Still, James suffered from various maladies and was beset by interludes of fear and depression. He treated his psychological turmoil by wide and deep reading.
- **E.** There were questions about whether Wundt or James deserves the title of the first academic experimental psychologist.
  1. James was a bit prickly on this subject, insisting that he didn't really get the credit he deserved.
  2. His work *The Principles of Psychology*, however, remains perhaps the classic treatise in academic psychology.

II. After the completion of *The Principles of Psychology*, almost all of James's writing addresses chiefly the grounding of our knowledge, as well as the ethical dimensions of life, for reasons that grow out of what he called his *radical empiricism*.

- **A.** The usual adoption of, or concession to, empiricistic philosophies is hedged—though there are some things we cannot know by way of experience; by and large, we use our senses to gather information about our world in most of the ordinary business of life.
- **B.** This most assuredly is not the position of a radical empiricist. Radical empiricism maintains that no set of experiences has an authority superior to some other set of experiences. It is not the province of science or philosophy to declare, for instance, that religious experiences and visions are more or less valid than other experiences.

III. What figures in the human imagination in a reliable way must be dealt with on its own terms. This is the core of James's famous critique of associationist thought and philosophy.

A. The associationist theory of mind is based on the notion that corpuscular and elemental mental entities are somehow held together as a result of repetition and, thus assembled, stand as real ideas.

B. In so many words, he asks, "How did philosophy ever come to a view like that?"

1. It surely could not be on the basis of experience. Nobody has ever had an experience of that kind.

2. Give each of seven men one word of a sentence, none of them knowing words assigned to the other six, and not one of them will have the meaning of the sentence itself.

C. James refused to make "consciousness" into a palpable entity or a "substance," but he insisted that, as a process, it introduced something new into the ontological realm.

1. Every idea is *someone's*; it is owned. Mental life is not an empty container filled with experiences agglomerating with one another. A thought is not *a* thought; it is *my* thought.

2. The external world is *chosen* for the content that will be experienced and associated. *Selection* is at the core of experience.

IV. Where does this consciousness come from?

A. Evolution offers a kind of progressive, associational sort of theory. On the matter of mental life, James is satisfied that it, too, has followed an evolutionary course in the animal kingdom.

B. But we now have to consider whether this settles or even recognizes the problem of the origin of consciousness.

1. Darwin's is a continuity theory, according to which what we find at the level of human psychology is approximated to some degree further and further down in the phylogenetic series.

2. If we find some creature that has a bit less consciousness and then another with even less, have we explained or settled the problem of consciousness?

3. James knows that we do not explain consciousness by pointing to earlier manifestations that are small consciousnesses. The small consciousness is as difficult to explain as the larger ones.

C. There are two ways we can consider survival of the fittest, or evolutionary pressures conducing to adaptive behavior.

1. It can be seen from the outside, as a natural process working on attributes, selecting the more useful ones and eliminating the lesser.

2. In the realm of experience, it appears very differently: as an intention to survive.

D. James asks us to consider what happens when we consult again the authoritative realm, which is the realm of experience:

> We treat survival as if it were an absolute end, existing as such in the physical world, a sort of actual *should be*... We forget that in the absence of some such superadded commenting intelligence... the reactions cannot be properly talked of as "useful" or "hurtful" at all.… The moment you bring consciousness into the midst, survival ceases to be a mere hypothesis. No longer is it "*if* survival is to occur...." It has now become an imperative degree: "Survival *shall* occur...." *Real* ends now appear for the first time upon the world's stage.

V. James was among the first of the scientific community to accept the criticism that the Hegelian camp had assembled an associationist psychology and atomist science, but James put it to constructive use.

A. James exposed a dangerous and overlooked connection in scientific work between the phenomena to be studied and the method of investigating it.

1. James called "the psychologist's fallacy" the fallacy of assuming that the mental process to be studied operates in the same manner as the experiment works.

2. Methods that study memory by giving subjects repeated exposure to materials, then testing how much is retained after certain frequencies of repetition, *assume* that repetition is what forms memories.

B. What is called for is the adoption of experimental modes of inquiry able to accommodate mental processes as they actually take place. Don't abandon the laboratory; make it sensible!

VI. James took up the "common sense" tradition of Thomas Reid that had been lost during the ascendance of John Stuart Mill.

A. Common sense is how a species meets daily challenges—to be skeptical about its existence is pointless.

B. But the common sense of one species is not that of another, as the challenges to one species are not that of another.

1. James sits and reads a book, his eyes slowly passing over one line at a time; his dog watches this unintelligible behavior.

2. Is one set of experiences authentic, the other not?

VII. James preserved the scientific perspective and approach to the nature of mind but required science to come to terms with the facts of mental life. He rejected all attempts to filter experience such that only those contents compatible with favored theories were preserved.

A. Adopting a common-sense realist position, James was able to fend off the Hegelian criticism of science's one-sidedness and honor that criticism that requires science to be faithful to the complexities of its subject matter.

B. We are fire *and* clay; consciousness is not easily found in the body, but neither science nor philosophy advances by denying it is there.

Recommended Reading:

James, W. *Essays in Radical Empiricism* and *A Pluralistic Universe*. Phoenix Books, 1977.

Perry, R. B. *The Thought and Character of William James*. Vanderbilt University Press, 1996.

Questions to Consider:

1. Explain whether evolutionary theory honors the Jamesian sense of survivalism as a force in the natural world.

2. Summarize what theory of the "self" is needed in James's conception of mental associations.

Lecture Forty-Seven
William James's Pragmatism

Scope: If some broad "ism" is to be used as a label for the character of James's work, it would be *functionalism*. Both philosophy and science may ask about anything what it is *for*, what part it plays in the larger scheme of things, and within that larger scheme of things is where life is actually lived. The functionalist perspective translates directly into *pragmatism* and *pluralism.*

James's pragmatism ties truth to what are, in fact, the "highest interests" of those who pursue truth or attribute it to their assertions and negations. The basis on which even scientific theories stand or fall is *ultimately* pragmatic in this sense, for what cannot serve these highest interests must ultimately yield to what does. James's pluralism rejects rigid theories of the true and the false; there is no *final* word on the universe or on what the highest interests of beings such as ourselves may be.

Outline

I. We now move from William James's radical empiricism to his pragmatism and pluralism.

A. The practical side of James's philosophy begins with functionalism. His *Principles of Psychology* put in place an essentially functionalist psychology and formed the foundation for American behaviorism. James takes the position that the creatures of nature, via evolution, obviously are fit to deal with the environment they find themselves in.

B. There's a famous brief treatise by James on the question "Does consciousness exist?" The answer James gives is "yes and no."

1. If we think of consciousness as immaterial, spaceless, massless but nonetheless an ontologically real thing, no, that doesn't exist.

2. But if we think of it as a flow of ideas, the stream of perceptions and thoughts and feelings, the process by which a supernumerary intelligence knits together experiences over a course of time, then consciousness is indubitable.

C. Without invoking Aristotelian "final causes" or attaching himself to every feature of Darwinian biology, James nonetheless ties processes to functions, to larger purposes and possibilities.

D. What, then, is the function of consciousness? What is it *for*? What does it achieve that could be achieved in no other way?

1. The brain is a fabulously complex organ, consisting of millions of cells constantly at work processing sensory input. Yet the result is not simply a "blooming, buzzing confusion."

2. For survival, we must not only be able to sense our environment with great subtlety but react to stimuli instantly and correctly: This is the "hair-trigger" nature of brain functions.

3. Our conscious processes are declared to be necessary to regulate the flow of mental functioning, through such specifically conscious functions as *attention*, *selection*, and *will*.

E. It is out of experience that the will itself is constructed. This is James's *ideomotor* theory of the growth and function of the will:

1. It is under purely reflexive control at first, as the infant responds to stimuli.

2. These reflexive experiences continue, and they persist as a reservoir of behavior the individual can draw on.

3. By *attending* to the possibilities around us, we are able, in responding, to *select* one behavior over another from the reservoir we have accumulated.

F. For James, the will is simply part of our nature, as it must be if the game of living is to get going in the first place.

II. James's pragmatism is tied to his functionalism.

A. Critics of pragmatism often take pragmatists to be claiming, "If it works, it's true." On this understanding, there would be no way to distinguish between competing scientific worldviews if both of them led to comparable practical success.

B. This shortchanges James's version of pragmatism and that of Charles Sanders Pierce, with whom James was closely and not always happily associated.

1. James held that the pragmatic method is primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable by trying to trace each notion to its respective practical consequences.

2. Pierce had earlier framed his own version of pragmatism: "Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then the whole of our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object."

3. The two views are similar but different. Pierce preferred to refer to his position as "pragmatistic," James's as being "pragmatism." What they have in common is the standard to be applied in determining whether a concept or meaning is clearly comprehended.

4. Pragmatism on James's account matches up with James's notion of our interests. What we do, we do on behalf of our highest interests.

III. What, then, *are* our highest interests? Aren't they different for different people, at different times, in different cultures? James's pluralism will admit of answers, but no *final* answers.

A. For all we know, the universe itself is evolving such that, in its dynamism, even its own laws change. Thus does James reject the *block universe*, a static mass about which there is some last word that will be true of it for all time.

1. As the human race finds itself in different contexts, equipped with new and promising thoughts and possibilities, there is always another broad perspective that replaces an earlier one, a perspective that cannot be expected to be the same everywhere.

2. In their given context, and for the lives actually lived in that context, certain beliefs and attitudes directly fortify and give direction to those lives.

3. No unifying theory will replace this diversity of outlooks, because such a theory presupposes a uniformity (over time and context) of "highest interests."

B. James sees our highest interests as not tied to culture.

1. We cannot enforce our habits and practices on others, but we can discuss what our natures are and what the highest interests of natures such as ours might be.

2. If we have no higher interests in common, is it possible to bring moral claims against what the Nazis, the KKK, or the Mafia name as their highest interests?

C. James the pluralist is not a relativist of the modern stripe. He countered the reigning positivism of his day with *fallibilism*.

1. There is always *more* to the account than any current version *can* include, because there are always other experiences, other beliefs, and needs.

2. We must conduct ourselves in such a way as to record what we take to be our highest interests, while never knowing if we have them right or have matched our interests by our actions. There is no final word.

IV. William James was, above all, a realist: We must accept what is. Unlike the positivists, however, James took this to mean that we must accept that there is a religious element to life, because credible report points to the existence of one, as well as to a striving to perfect oneself and to needs that go beyond the individual soul or body. There are, however, things that we cannot finally know. The fallibilist doesn't deny that there is some absolute point of focus on which human interests can converge, but we are warned to be suspicious of those who come to us with final answers.

Recommended Reading:

James, W. *Essays in Radical Empiricism* and *A Pluralistic Universe*. Phoenix, 1977.

James, W. *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*. Harvard University Press, 1979.

Robinson, D. *Toward a Science of Human Nature*. Columbia University Press, 1982, chapter 5, "William James."

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether James's pluralism is simply relativism by another name.
2. Suppose our highest interests are simply features of our merely contingent biology. Summarize whether this implies that our developed knowledge, too, is simply something credible to an organism of a certain kind.

Lecture Forty-Eight
Wittgenstein and the Discursive Turn

Scope: Suppose one tried to give meaning to statements in a world with no other occupant. It's impossible. Meaning is discursive: It arises from conventions that presuppose not only a social world but one in which the meaning-bearers share the interests and aspirations of those whom they would engage. Accordingly, all we can know or express must bear the stamp of culture, context, and a given shared form of life.

This is the conclusion forced on contemporary philosophy by the penetrating, often enigmatic and aphoristic writings and sayings of Ludwig Wittgenstein, perhaps the most influential of 20th-century philosophers. Meaning (thus, knowledge and conduct) is now stripped of abstract, once-and-for-all features and is seen as entirely constructed.

Outline

I. In his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein answers the question "What is your aim in philosophy?" by saying: "To show the fly the way out of the bottle."

- **A.** One of the most influential 20th-century philosophers, Wittgenstein tended to express himself in homiletic or aphoristic ways, leaving it to others in the philosophical world to plumb them for their deeper meaning and significance.
  - **1.** Wittgenstein changed the way we understand the very problems in philosophy.
  - **2.** Indeed, if he is right, there are no "problems" as such, only misunderstandings and puzzles arising from errors in using the logic and grammar of language itself.
- **B.** His only book published in his lifetime bears the daunting title *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, known simply as his *Tractatus*.
  - **1.** The problem of knowledge must ultimately be rooted in how we describe the world, then link these descriptions in such a way as to arrive at correct accounts of "the case" at hand.
  - **2.** "The case" at hand must be part of the world, because that is the realm in which any and every case occurs.
  - **3.** To state the case is to offer a proposition, a picture of reality. To give the essence of a proposition means to give the essence of all description and, thus, the essence of the world.
  - **4.** The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.
- **C.** This sort of approach clearly will not work, because there is little in the propositions that convey any sort of picture at all.
  - **1.** The "picture theory" of meaning is one that Wittgenstein could not retain.
  - **2.** However, the *Tractatus* sets the stage for a more penetrating examination of the role of language.

II. Who was Ludwig Wittgenstein?

- **A.** He was born in Vienna in 1889, the youngest of eight children in a wealthy family. Three of his four brothers were suicides, and Ludwig himself had a lifelong problem with depression and anxiety.
- **B.** In 1908, Wittgenstein enrolled in the engineering program at Manchester, England. Exposure to mathematics drove him to question the very foundations of mathematics.
- **C.** Wittgenstein moved on to Cambridge, where Bertrand Russell was engaged in pioneering work in mathematical logic.
- **D.** After serving on the Austrian side in World War I, Wittgenstein returned to Cambridge. His *Tractatus* was the result of his years with Russell.
- **E.** Regarding the book as having solved all of philosophy's "non-problems," Wittgenstein simply dropped all scholarly projects and took a position in Austria teaching children in elementary school.

III. As long as we subscribe to a "picture theory," we can tap into the knowledge of another only through the other's introspective reports. Likewise, we publicize our knowledge by revealing "our pictures" to others.

A. My knowledge, as regards my own mental life, is private and incorrigible. It can't be corrected by anybody else.

B. The central claim of science, in the patrimony of Bacon and Newton, is that the suitable subject of scientific inquiry is that which is, in principle, accessible to observation.

1. But if the contents of my mental life are something over which I have total epistemological authority and if all of my mental life is filled up with the facts of the external world, solipsism seems to be lurking everywhere.

2. Thus, the problem of knowledge is just the problem of my knowledge of the external world

C. This is the received view, and Wittgenstein set out to show that it is based on any number of mistakes, largely grammatical. They have to do with the way we play what Wittgenstein famously refers to as the "language game."

D. To illustrate the necessity of such rules, Wittgenstein uses the *beetle in the box* exemplum:

1. Consider a room with a half-dozen persons, each with a small box.

2. No one can see the contents of any box but his own.

3. When questioned as to the contents of his box, each person responds, "Beetle."

4. Wittgenstein asks: If each person had his own private language, how could anyone know the meaning of the word *beetle* in any language but his own?

E. To carry the example further, suppose you are alone—the only thinking being in the cosmos—and wanted to identify the contents of the box. How to do it?

1. A name signifies something only to the extent that it is understood to stand for the thing signified.

2. But "to stand for" anything, a sign must be related to that thing by some sort of rule or conventional understanding.

3. But the adoption of conventions is a social act. Conventions are part of the actual practices of people in the world.

4. It is simply impossible to apply a private rule to a private occurrence! You can't even *violate* the rules of the language game unless there are other players.

F. Wittgenstein concludes that our minds are not black boxes to which we alone have access, whose contents we name for ourselves. How could anyone, seeing only *something* in the box, know it to be a beetle, without prior agreements on what a beetle is?

IV. Thomas Reid took the position that if there were not a *natural* language, there could never be an artificial language of cooperative and expressive content. It is a language of sounds and facial expression, of intonation and posture. Wittgenstein takes very much the same position.

A. The natural language of pain, for instance, is grimacing, crying and cringing.

1. This is not something that's learned; it is in place.

2. Artificial, conventional forms and signs can be grafted onto that natural language.

B. We use the resources of our natural language to build the shared reality represented in our artificial language.

V. Where there is meaning, there must be social conventions and social practices. There is a discursive history behind every experience by which that experience gains its meaning. It begins as a public phenomenon and might be internalized in some way thereafter.

A. Thus, the language game is a set of *social* practices not reducible to the experiences of any one person, not possibly confined to the arena of a private mind.

1. "Beetle" *refers* to an object that can be dubbed "beetle" only by those with a sufficiently shared form of life for such denominations to come to have settled meaning.

2. Thus, meaning is *socially constructed* through the actual practices of the community.

B. As philosophy is a search for meanings, a search for truth, a search for rules of conduct, and so on, it is an inevitably *social* undertaking proceeding according to accepted grammatical (rule-governed) forms.

1. Personal identity? Wittgenstein recalls Aristotle: Our names for ourselves—baker, Christian, father, child—do not inhere in us biologically.
2. Gender (though not sex), nationality, morality—the authority and creativity to bring about such identities—is social.
3. Wittgenstein offers that once this is understood, the fly might find the way out of the bottle—or Theseus out of the labyrinth.

VI. The problem of knowledge now becomes part of a language game. It becomes a problem of meaning, and what's called for here is an essentially linguistic analysis, rather than an epistemology or metaphysics. Metaphysics is built up linguistically.

A. Wittgenstein was keen to note that his purpose was not to solve problems but to show the fly the way out of the bottle.

B. This is not to change the nature of the fly. Out of the bottle, it's still a fly. Out of the bottle, it's still an entity that might be attracted to sweet things in the bottom of some other bottle. As Wittgenstein says in the *Philosophical Investigations*:

> Think of the tools in a toolbox; there is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a ruler, a glue-pot, nails and screw…. The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects… It is easy to imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle…. Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no. And innumerable others—*and to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life*.

Recommended Reading:

Budd, M. *Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Psychology*. London, 1989.

Wittgenstein, L. Philosophical Investigations. Blackwell, 1997.

Questions to Consider:

1. If the contents of the mind are not "private," infer just what is the domain reached by introspection.
2. Conclude whether there are no *natural* constraints on what things might mean.
3. Summarize whether philosophy is simply (or not so simply) a kind of word game.

Timeline

800–600 B.C.E.	Morality tales, such as the Hindu Upanishads, appear in many settled communities.
~750 B.C.E.	Homer composes *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
700 B.C.E.	Colonization of Sicily, the east coast of Italy, and islands off the coast of Asia Minor begins, primarily to grow produce that can be sent back to mainland Greece.
6th century B.C.E.	Schools of critical inquiry emerge in ancient Greece. Parmenides and other pre-Socratic philosophers emerge. *Empirkoi*, or empirical practitioners who followed Hippocrates's philosophy, make up the dominant school of Greek medicine.
570 B.C.E.	Birth of Pythagoras.
551 B.C.E.	Birth of Confucius.
4th century B.C.E.	Isocrates composes the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.
479 B.C.E.	Death of Confucius.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Hippocrates.
469 B.C.E.	Birth of Socrates.
446 B.C.E.	Birth of Isocrates.
427 B.C.E.	Birth of Plato.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Hippocrates.
399 B.C.E.	Death of Socrates.
384 B.C.E.	Birth of Aristotle.
360 B.C.E.	Plato writes his dialogue *The Republic*, generally considered to be the foundational work in political science. It addresses the question of how a man's virtue may be measured.
347 B.C.E.	Death of Plato.
338 B.C.E.	Death of Isocrates.
322 B.C.E.	Death of Aristotle.
300 B.C.E.	Stoic philosophy develops.
106 B.C.E.	Birth of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
43 B.C.E.	Death of Marcus Tullius Cicero.
1st century C.E.	"Hellenized" Jews build Christianity.
354 C.E.	Birth of St. Augustine.
397 C.E.	St. Augustine publishes *The Confessions*, a personal, introspective work of psychology.
430 C.E.	Death of St. Augustine.
476 C.E.	Fall of Rome.
632 C.E.	According to the teachings of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad had revealed to him a divine message that would be faithfully recorded in the Koran.

650–850 C.E. ..... The Dark Ages.

1150–1300. ..... Medieval period.

13th century ..... Advent of a "renaissance" of scholarly thought, with Roger Bacon and others recovering the spirit of experimental modes of inquiry.

1214 ..... Birth of Roger Bacon.

1225 ..... Birth of Thomas Aquinas.

1274 ..... Death of Thomas Aquinas.

1294 ..... Death of Roger Bacon.

1304 ..... Birth of Francesco Petrarch.

1374 ..... Death of Francesco Petrarch.

15th century ..... The Italian Renaissance.

1452 ..... Birth of Leonardo da Vinci.

1483 ..... Birth of Martin Luther.

1497 ..... Savonarola burns the vanities.

1517 ..... Martin Luther protests aspects of the Catholic Church.

1519 ..... Death of Leonardo da Vinci.

1546 ..... Death of Martin Luther.

1546–1648 ..... The Protestant Reformation, launched by Martin Luther's 1517 protest against aspects of the Catholic Church.

1561 ..... Birth of Francis Bacon.

1588 ..... Birth of Thomas Hobbes.

1596 ..... Birth of René Descartes.

1626 ..... Death of Francis Bacon.

1632 ..... Birth of John Locke.

1633 ..... Galileo is called before the Inquisition.

1642 ..... Birth of Isaac Newton.

1646 ..... Birth of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1650 ..... Death of René Descartes.

1660 ..... The Royal Society becomes the center of a growing culture of science.

1660 ..... Thomas Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*.

1679 ..... Death of Thomas Hobbes.

1685 ..... Birth of George Berkeley.

1694 ..... Birth of François Marie Arouet, who wrote under the name Voltaire.

1699 ..... Lord Shaftesbury publishes *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, offering an explanation of moral conduct based on the notion of natural dispositions and affections.

1704 ..... Death of John Locke.

1705 ..... Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz offers a significant critique of the Lockean view in *New Essays on Human Understanding*.

1709 ..... Birth of Julian Offray de La Mettrie.

1710 ..... George Berkeley publishes his critique of the Lockean view, *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*.

1710 ..... Birth of Thomas Reid.

1711 ..... Birth of David Hume.

1712 ..... Birth of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1715 ..... Birth of the French philosopher Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1715 ..... Birth of Etienne Condillac, John Locke's translator in France.

1716 ..... Death of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz.

1724 ..... Birth of Immanuel Kant.

1729 ..... Birth of Edmund Burke.

1734 ..... Voltaire writes his *Letters on the English*.

1739 ..... David Hume publishes *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which aimed to defeat Skepticism by putting philosophy on a firmer footing, grounding morality, science, and politics in the realm of experience.

1743 ..... Birth of Condorcet.

1748 ..... La Mettrie publishes the banned book *Man—A Machine*, which extends the materialistic drift of Descartes's psychology.

Mid-18th century ..... The "Scottish Enlightenment."

1751 ..... Death of La Mettrie.

1757 ..... Birth of Pierre Cabanis.

1758 ..... Birth of Franz Joseph Gall.

1764 ..... Thomas Reid publishes *An Inquiry into the Human Mind*.

1770 ..... Birth of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1771 ..... Death of Claude Adrien Helvetius.

1772 ..... Helvetius's *A Treatise on Man*, which maintains that human essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world, published posthumously.

1773 ..... John Locke's *Two Treatises* is published in colonial America.

1776 ..... Death of David Hume.

1778 ..... Death of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1778 ..... Death of François Marie Arouet (Voltaire).

1780 ..... Death of Etienne Condillac.

1781 ..... Immanuel Kant publishes his *Critique of Pure Reason*, which credits David Hume with awakening Kant from his "dogmatic slumber."

1783 ..... Death of George Berkeley.

1787 ..... The U.S. Constitution is forged in Philadelphia. During the subsequent ratification period, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay write essays in the New York newspapers addressing and countering the various

arguments that had been advanced against the Constitution and the federal model of governance. These essays became known as *The Federalist Papers*.

1794 ..... Death of Condorcet.

1794 ..... Death of Pierre Flourens.

1795 ..... Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* published posthumously.

1796 ..... Death of Thomas Reid.

1797 ..... Death of Edmund Burke.

1804 ..... Death of Immanuel Kant.

1806 ..... Birth of John Stuart Mill.

1808 ..... Death of Pierre Cabanis.

1809 ..... Birth of Charles Darwin.

1818 ..... Birth of Karl Marx.

1822 ..... Birth of Francis Galton.

1828 ..... Death of Franz Joseph Gall.

1830 ..... Auguste Comte publishes his *Course of Positive Philosophy,* which reflected on the achievements of the Enlightenment and concluded that human thought passes through distinct stages.

1830s ..... The British Reform Act ends British participation in the slave trade and extends political rights to those long denied the franchise, including those not members of the Church of England.

1831 ..... Death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

1833 ..... Charles Lyell publishes his *Principles of Geology*, which provided a time frame compatible with the requirements of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.

1842 ..... Birth of William James.

1844 ..... Birth of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Mid–late 19th century ..... The Aesthetic movement.

1856 ..... Birth of Sigmund Freud.

1859 ..... John Stuart Mill publishes *On Liberty*.

1862 ..... In November of this year, Hermann von Helmholtz gives a lecture on conservation of energy at Heidelberg, where he addresses, among other issues, the relatively new division between leading scientists and philosophers.

1867 ..... Death of Pierre Flourens.

1869 ..... Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin, publishes his studies of hereditary genius, which conclude that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

1871 ..... Charles Darwin publishes *Descent of Man*, which puts forth his theory of natural selection.

1872 ..... Friedrich Nietzsche publishes his first notable work, *The Birth of Tragedy and the Spirit of Music*.

1873 ..... Death of John Stuart Mill.

1875 ..... Birth of Carl Gustav Jung.

1882 ..... Death of Charles Darwin.

1883 ..... Death of Karl Marx.

1889 ..... Birth of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1890 ..... William James publishes *The Principles of Psychology*.

1896 ..... Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Studies of Hysteria*, in which the theory is advanced that hysterical symptoms are the outcome of repression.

1900 ..... Death of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1910 ..... Death of William James.

1911 ..... Death of Francis Galton.

1912 ..... Birth of Alan Turing.

1938 ..... Death of Sigmund Freud.

1950 ..... Alan Turing publishes his *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*.

1951 ..... Death of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

1954 ..... Death of Alan Turing.

1961 ..... Death of Carl Gustav Jung.

Glossary

Apatheia: Freedom from pathos and suffering.

Atman: The soul, or core reality of the human individual. Hindu.

Brahma: The "creator" within the Hindu divine triad—Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.

Categorical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made on principles whose moral authority takes precedence over any merely hypothetical imperative. Categorical imperatives derive from the intelligible realm governed by "the laws of freedom," rather than the natural realm of physical determination. Unlike hypothetical imperatives, they must be universally applicable. That is, they do not depend on a calculation of utility or on any calculation of possible consequences in particular circumstances.

Chthonic religion: Earth-centered religion, in which women or female deities are central figures because of their procreative power. Common in matriarchal societies.

Common sense: Scottish school of thought from the 18th and early 19th centuries, holding that in the perception of the average, unsophisticated person, sensations are not mere ideas or subjective impressions but carry with them the belief in corresponding qualities as belonging to external objects.

Contiguity: Similarity in time or place.

Ecstasis: Greek; "ecstasy." Stepping outside oneself or being removed from oneself.

Ego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The ego is purported to stand between the id and the superego to balance our primitive needs and our moral/ethical beliefs.

Eidola: "Phantoms," or atomic emanations from material objects that have some access to the organs of sense. Concept proposed by ancient atomists to explain hallucinations, dreams, religious visions, and so on.

Empiricism: The philosophical view that all human knowledge is derived from experience and that which cannot be confirmed via experience is not naturally known.

Enlightenment: Eighteenth-century European intellectual movement that rejected the presumptive authority of the past in favor of a reliance on experience and reason/science.

Enthousiasmos: Greek; "enthusiasm." Presenting oneself in such a way that the gods can enter the self.

Ephistemonikon: Abstract and universal statements.

Episteme: Scientific knowledge.

Epistemology: The study of how we know what we know and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible, one of the central questions in the study of metaphysics. Examines the question of knowledge and attempts to characterize the nature of truth and science.

Eudaimonia: The doing of something for its own sake, as the gods do. "Happiness."

Experimenta fructifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these consequential experiments are designed to allow the observer to choose between competing accounts of facts on hand.

Experimenta lucifera: One of two types of experiments described in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; these "light-shedding" experiments alert the observer to factors operative in the causal matrix that brings things about. Such studies are essentially exercises in fact gathering.

Fallibilism: View that there is always *more* to the account than any current version *can* include, because other experiences, beliefs, and needs are always in existence.

Fatalism: The belief that every event is bound to happen as it does no matter what we do about it. Fatalism is the most extreme form of causal determinism, because it denies that human actions have any causal efficacy.

Functionalism: The view that consciousness is not a material entity attached to the brain, but a process, a stream of experiences knitted together as they flow by a supernumerary intelligence.

Hedonism: Doctrine holding that pleasure is the highest good.

Hypothetical imperative: Driver for one alternative action over another made to attain a specific end. Hypothetical imperatives are contingent; they are tied to a particular context and to the needs and desires of natural creatures under the press of the needs to survive, to avoid pain, and to gain pleasure. Decisions thus grounded are non-moral, because they arise from our natures as merely human beings, not as rational beings; that is, they are essentially reactions.

Id: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The id is purported to represent primary process thinking—our most primitive need-gratification thoughts.

Intuition: An instinctive knowing, or impression that something might be the case, without the use of rational processes.

Ius civile: Expression of local values and interests, which differs from place to place and people to people.

Ius gentium: Universally adopted precepts of those who live under any rule of law, such as the idea that harm done to another without cause is wrong, as is the taking of what clearly belongs to another.

Jainism: Ethical school based on the Pythagorean teachings, which emphasizes the celebration of all that lives.

Labor theory of value: The concept that property is worth only as much as the labor invested in it; the surplus is profit, which accumulates as capital.

Logos: The aims and goals generated by the rational intelligence behind the order of the cosmos.

Lyssa: "Wolf's rage"; extreme anger in the heat of battle.

Malleus maleficarum: A coherent theory of witchcraft, a set of tests to determine witchcraft, and a list of appropriate punishments used during the witch hunts from 1400 to 1700 and beyond.

Marxism: A form of communism based on the writings of Karl Marx, who theorized that actions and human institutions are economically determined, that the class struggle is the basic agency of historical change, and that capitalism will ultimately be superseded by communism.

Metaphysics: Concept referring to two distinguishable but interconnected sets of questions: first, the question of what really exists and, second, the question of how we know such things and whether the way we go about knowing is defensible or defective. The term is derived from the writings of Aristotle.

Mimesis: The imitative representation of nature or human behavior.

Mythos: The complex of beliefs, values, and attitudes characteristic of a specific group or society.

Naturalism: The meta-ethical thesis that moral properties are reducible to natural ones or that ethical judgments may be derived from non-ethical ones. Also, a scientific account of the world in terms of causes and natural forces that rejects all spiritual, supernatural, or teleological explanations.

Natural law: An ethical belief or system of beliefs supposed to be inherent in human nature and discoverable by reason rather than revelation. Also, the philosophical doctrine that the authority of the legal system or of certain laws derives from their justifiability by reason and, indeed, that a legal system that cannot be so justified has no authority.

Natural rights: Rights inherent in a being because of its nature as a being of a certain sort.

Nomological: The mode of causation employed by God, according to the Stoics; immutable laws control the affairs of the cosmos.

Nomos: Prevailing social expectations and requirements, or "the law of the land."

Noumena/Phenomena: According to Immanuel Kant, knowledge arises from experience; therefore, it must be knowledge of *phenomena*, that is, of things and events as these are delivered by the senses. From the evidence at the phenomenal level, we can reason to the fact that there is a *noumenal* realm of being. Thus, we can know *that* it is

but cannot know *what* it is. Ultimately, our knowledge claims must be utterly bounded by the pure intuitions of time and space and the pure categories of the understanding.

Ontology: The study of what really exists, one of the key questions central to the concept of metaphysics.

Philosophy: The rational pursuit of truths deemed to be answers to perennial questions, as well as a historical study of intractable problems; literally, the love of wisdom.

Phrenology: A Victorian-era science of character divination, faculty psychology, and brain theory derived from the Viennese physician Franz Joseph Gall's system, which held that the surface of the skull could be read as an accurate index of an individual's psychological aptitudes and tendencies.

Phronesis: Greek term for practical wisdom or prudence; the application of good judgment to human conduct, in contrast with the more theoretical inquiry leading to *sophia*, or wisdom generally.

Phusis: Greek, "nature."

Physiognomy: The study of the shape and configuration of a person's face to determine his or her character and intelligence.

Pluralism: The philosophical doctrine that reality consists of several basic substances or elements.

Polis: Life within a settled community, in which one participates and from which one draws lessons for life.

Positivism: A form of empiricism that bases all knowledge on perceptual experience, rather than on intuition or revelation.

Pragmatism: The doctrine that practical consequences are the criteria of knowledge, meaning, and value.

Providential: The mode of causation employed by God, according to Hellenistic philosophy. The cosmos is created and ordered by a perfect rational entity, whose knowledge is also perfect. The creative entity takes an interest in its creation.

Pyrrhonism: An early Greek form of Skepticism.

Pythagorean theorem: One of the earliest theorems known to ancient civilizations; named for the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras. The Pythagorean theorem states: "The area of the square built upon the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the areas of the squares upon the remaining sides."

Res cogitans*/*res extensa: The metaphysical dualism on which the Cartesian philosophical system rests. *Res cogitans* is God and the human soul; *res extensa* is the corporeal world.

Revelation: An enlightening or astonishing disclosure. Also, communication of knowledge to man by a divine or supernatural agency.

Romanticism: A movement in literature, art, and intellectual thought during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that celebrated nature rather than civilization and valued imagination and emotion over rationality.

Sophia: Greek, "wisdom."

Sophists: Greek philosophers who showed complete indifference to the problems of the world of matter and centered their efforts on man. But man can be an object of study in his sense knowledge, as well as in the more profound world of reason. The Sophists stopped at the data of experience—at empirical, not rational, knowledge—and from this point of view, they wished to judge the world of reality.

Stoics: Greek philosophers whose worldview was one of a rationally governed universe of material entities, each answering to its controlling principle and, thus, participating in the overall cosmic *logos*. In its most developed form, Stoicism takes the lawfulness of the cosmos as the model on which human life is to proceed. The rule of law is the defining mark of our humanity, according to this philosophy.

Sturm und Drang: German; "storm and stress." Romanticism perceived this evolutionary struggle that produces new and better things not predictable in a mechanistic view.

Superego: According to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three parts that make up the self. The superego is purported to represent our conscience and counteract the id with moral and ethical thoughts.

Tabula rasa: A blank slate. In the Lockean view, the condition of the human mind at birth.

Teleia philia: Perfected or completed friendship, the aims of which do not go outside the friendship itself.

Teleology: The philosophical study of purpose; a doctrine that assumes the phenomena of organic life, particularly those of evolution, are explicable only by purposive causes and that they in no way admit of a mechanical explanation or one based entirely on biological science.

Tetraktys: In Pythagorean philosophy, the sacred integers: 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Thomistic theory of law: Philosophical approach predicated on what is taken to be good for man, given the character of human nature. As "an ordinance of reason," law gives and honors good reasons for certain actions and good reasons for forbearing to act in certain ways. An action is good when it is in accord with the basic goods. A desire is bad when its fulfillment is in defiance of good reasons for action.

Turing machine: An algorithm—not a machine as such—that translates any input signal into a determinate output.

Ubermensch: Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "superman," an exemplar of self-creation who is free from the influence of the general populace.

Unconscious motivation: Concept central to Sigmund Freud's theories of human behavior; the idea that the subconscious portion of the mind plays a larger role in determining behavior than does the conscious portion.

Upanishads: Pre-philosophical Hindu morality tales that address questions of knowledge, conduct, and governance.

Biographical Notes

Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.): Earliest of the three greatest Greek tragedians, the others being Sophocles and Euripides; known for his masterpiece, *The Oresteia* trilogy. Aeschylus's greatest contribution to the theater was the addition of a second actor to his scenes. Previously, the action took place between a single actor and the Greek chorus.

Anaximenes (585–525 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who held that the air, with its variety of contents, its universal presence, and its vague associations in popular fancy with the phenomena of life and growth, is the source of all that exists.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274): Dominican priest and scholastic philosopher whose "natural law" theory defined law as an ordinance of reason, promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community. His treatises on law would form the foundation of critical inquiry in jurisprudence for centuries, integrating classical and Christian thought.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.): Greek philosopher who, along with Plato, is often considered to be one of the two most influential philosophers in Western thought. Aristotle most valued knowledge gained from the senses and would correspondingly be classed among modern empiricists. Thus, Aristotle set the stage for what would eventually develop into the scientific method centuries later.

St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.): Roman Catholic bishop and Christian Neo-Platonist who was a leader in the widespread merging of the Greek philosophical tradition and Judeo-Christian religious and scriptural traditions.

Avicenna (980–1037): Inspired by Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, articulated a mode of philosophical reasoning that would virtually define medieval thought and scholasticism. Put Arab scholarship and Islamic thought at the center of naturalistic and scientific thinking.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626): Generally considered the "prophet" of Newton and the father once removed of the authority of experimental science. Known for his groundbreaking *Novum Organum* ("*New Method*"), which established the authority of observation in discovering the nature of the external world and the authority of the experimental method as the way to select the correct from competing theories of causation.

Roger Bacon (1214–1294): Thirteenth-century English scholar who stated the basic program of experimental science. Known for his *Opus Maius*, considered one of the foundational works in the modern scientific movement.

George Berkeley (1685–1783): Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland and a scientist. Offered a critique of the Lockean view in his *A Theory Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, which attempts to defeat materialism and the skepticism it spawns by establishing the essentially mental preconditions for a material world to exist at all.

Josef Breuer (1842–1925): Viennese neurologist who worked with Sigmund Freud on the theory of repression.

Ernst Brucke (1819–1892): One of Sigmund Freud's teachers, along with Hermann von Helmholtz, Karl Ludwig, and DuBois-Reymond.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797): British political writer and statesman. Burke's essay on the sublime, written in the period of the Enlightenment, prefigures the Hegelian worldview, defining the *sublime* as that which strikes awe and terror in the heart.

Pierre Cabanis (1757–1808): One of the leaders of thought in the French materialist tradition, known for his series of essays on the relationship between the psychological and physical dimensions of human life.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.): Roman orator, lawyer, politician, and philosopher who considered philosophical study most valuable as the means to more effective political action.

Auguste Comte (1798–1857): French writer whose works—a series of essays published collectively under the title *A Course of Positive Philosophy*—influenced John Stuart Mill. One of the fathers of a version of positivism.

Etienne Condillac (1715–1780): Locke's translator in France, who offers the model of the "sentient statue" whose character, knowledge, and conduct are carved into it by a ceaselessly impinging environment.

Condorcet (1743–1794): French philosopher whose *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, written while he was hiding from France's new "liberators" during the Reign of Terror, delivers the idea of

progress in one of its most summoning forms. The mind has progressed from murky superstition and timidity toward the light of reason in stages, each stage requiring the abandonment of ancestral ignorance. The advent of the scientific worldview now abets this progress.

Confucius (551–479 B.C.): Chinese philosopher who maintained that adherence to traditional values of virtue is necessary to achieve a state of orderliness and peace.

Charles Darwin (1809–1882): British naturalist who developed the theory of evolutionary selection, which holds that variation within species occurs randomly and that the survival or extinction of each organism is determined by that organism's ability to adapt to its environment.

Democritus (460–370 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who taught an atomic theory of reality, that all things are made of atoms and void.

René Descartes (1596–1650): Discovered analytical geometry, was an important contributor to the physical sciences, and was, perhaps, the most important figure in that branch of philosophy called *philosophy of mind*. Known for his proof of existence: "I think, therefore I am."

Denis Diderot (1713–1784): Most prominent of the French Encyclopedists. In the circle of the leaders of the Enlightenment, Diderot's name became known especially by his *Lettre sur les aveugles* (London, 1749), which supported Locke's theory of knowledge.

Diogenes (4th century B.C.): Leading philosopher of the pre-Socratic school of Cynicism. Diogenes practiced self-control and a rigid abstinence, exposing himself to extremes of heat and cold and living on the simplest diet.

Erasmus (1469–1536): Fifteenth-century humanist. His best known work is *Praise of Folly*, a pamphlet mainly directed against the behavior of ruling classes and church dignitaries while exposing the irony of mankind's vanities.

Euripides (480–406 B.C.): Greek playwright best known for the tragedy *Medea*.

Pierre Flourens (1794–1867): French physiologist who—along with François Magendie and Xavier Bichat—surgically destroyed selective regions of animals' brains and observed the behavior of the survivors. Through this technique, Flourens discovered that the areas of the brain that Franz Joseph Gall had identified with certain specific functions were not connected with those specific functions.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1938): The father of psychoanalysis. Freud, in collaboration with Joseph Breuer, articulated and refined the concepts of the unconscious, infantile sexuality, and repression and proposed a tripartite account of the mind's structure, all as part of a then–radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions.

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828): Leading neuroanatomist of his time; propounded the "science" of phrenology, a theory that brain structures are related to brain functions, which became dominant in the scientific thinking of the 19th century and thereafter.

Francis Galton (1822–1911): Cousin of Charles Darwin. Published his studies of hereditary genius in 1869, stating that natural selection yields a very few exceptional human types, but general human flourishing disproportionately depends on their merits.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832): Eighteenth-century writer best known for *Faust*.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831): German philosopher who merged and synthesized many of the strongest tendencies in Romantic thought. First is the idea of progressive and evolving reality—not the staid mechanical repetitiousness of mere causality, but an active principle at work in the natural world. Second, there is the criticism of science as not being up to the task of comprehending this world, tied as it is to reductive schemes.

Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894): Nineteenth-century physicist and physiologist; one of Sigmund Freud's teachers. In a November 1862 lecture at Heidelberg, Helmholtz tried to clarify why leading scientists visibly shunned philosophers, when previously, the natural philosopher was the natural scientist.

Claude Adrien Helvetius (1715–1771): French philosopher who, in his *A Treatise on Man*, puts forth a radical environmentalism, which holds that our essence does not precede our existence and experiences in the world; rather, it is a record of those experiences.

Herodotus (5th century B.C.): Greek scholar said to be the first historian in the modern accepted sense of the term; the "father of historical scholarship." Known for his treatise *The Persian Wars*.

Hippocrates (469–399 B.C.): Greek physician considered to be the father of modern medicine.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679): British philosopher who rejected Cartesian dualism and believed in the mortality of the soul; rejected free will in favor of a determinism that treats freedom as being able to do what one desires; and rejected Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy in favor of the "new" philosophy of Galileo and Gassendi, which largely treats the world as matter in motion. Hobbes is perhaps most famous for his political philosophy, which maintained that men in a state of nature, without civil government, are in a war of all against all in which life is hardly worth living. The way out of this desperate state is to make a social contract and establish the state to keep peace and order.

Homer (~ 750/800 B.C.): Blind Greek poet who wrote about the Trojan War, considered a defining moment in Greek history and presumed to have concluded a half-millennium earlier. Best known for his two epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

David Hume (1711–1776): One of the most influential philosophers to have written in the English language, Hume offered an experiential theory of knowledge, morality, and religion. He made more credible the notion that a bona fide *science of the mind* was within reach.

T. H. Huxley (1825–1895): British physician and surgeon who was one of the first adherents to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection; Huxley did more than anyone else to advance the theory's acceptance among scientists and the public alike.

Isocrates (446–338 B.C.): Greek philosopher who lived and wrote in the same cultural situation as Plato. Isocrates held that reality is immediate human experience and metaphysical speculation is a waste of time and energy. He also said that all knowledge is tentative and values are relative. Composed the *Panegyricus*, a work that raises the question of whether philosophy is something that just the Greeks do.

William James (1842–1910): American psychologist and philosopher who maintained that every idea belongs to someone, that mental life is not an empty container filled with experiences agglomerating with one another. Thus, the external world is chosen for the content that will be experienced and associated.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961): A younger colleague of Sigmund Freud, Jung divided the psyche into three parts: the ego, or conscious mind; the personal unconscious, which includes anything that is not currently conscious but can be; and finally, the collective unconscious, or reservoir of our experiences as a species, a kind of knowledge with which we are all born but are never directly conscious of. The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*, unlearned tendencies to experience things in a certain way. The archetype has no form of its own, but it acts as an "organizing principle" on the things we see or do.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): Kant's most original contribution to philosophy is his Copernican Revolution that the representation makes the object possible, rather than the object making the representation possible. This introduced the human mind as an active originator of experience, rather than a passive recipient of perception.

Julian Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751): French philosopher whose naturalism tends toward materialism. His *Man—A Machine* extends to its logical conclusion the materialistic drift of Descartes's own psychology.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716): Offered a significant critique of the Lockean view in his *New Essays on Human Understanding*, which concluded that an organizing and rationally functioning mind must be present for there to be coherent experience and that nothing in the operation of the biological senses can constitute a thought or an idea.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519): Italian painter, architect, engineer, mathematician, and philosopher who is widely considered to represent the Renaissance ideal.

John Locke (1632–1704): Physician and one of the "fathers" of British empiricism. Locke set out in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to defend a naturalistic account of mental life and a reductionistic strategy for studying and explaining that life. Accordingly, both knowledge and self-knowledge are derived from experiences and the memory of them. One's very personal identity is but that collection of entities in consciousness entering by way of experience.

Martin Luther (1483–1546): Began the Protestant Reformation with his protests against aspects of the Catholic Church.

Ernst Mach (1838–1916): German physicist who formulated a positivist creed in science that John Stuart Mill would develop. Mach said that we recognize our work as science to the extent that it is *not* metaphysics and that physical laws are only systematic descriptions of sense data that need no metaphysical description or underpinning.

Karl Marx (1818–1883): Philosopher, social scientist, historian, and revolutionary who developed a socialist system that came to be used as the basis for many regimes around the world.

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873): Known for his *System of Logic*, published in 1843, which analyzed inductive proof. Mill provided the empirical sciences with a set of formulas and criteria to serve the same purpose for them as the timeworn formula of the syllogism had served for arguments that proceeded from general principles. Mill's work is not merely a logic in the limited sense of that term, but also a theory of knowledge such as Locke and Hume provide.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900): German philosopher who sharply criticized traditional philosophy and religion as both erroneous and harmful for human life, arguing that they enervate and degrade our native capacity for achievement. Best known for developing the concept of the *Ubermensch*, or "superman," a rare, superior individual that can rise above all moral distinctions to achieve a heroic life of truly human worth.

Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374): Father of humanism. An Italian scholar and poet who is credited with having given the Renaissance its name.

Plato (427–347 B.C.): Greek philosopher and student of Socrates whose writings convey the spirit of his master's teachings on the theory of forms, the problem of knowledge, cosmological speculations, and the treatment of government.

Protagoras (490–420 B.C.): Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher. A leading figure in Sophist thought, he proposed that "Man is the measure of all things."

Pyrrhon of Elis (360–272 B.C.): Greek philosopher known as one of the great fathers of Skeptical thought.

Pythagoras (~530 B.C.): Greek philosopher who maintained that the ultimate reality was abstract and relational, depending on numbers. His harmonic view of the universe provided one of the foundations for Platonic philosophy. The first person to demonstrate the theorem that with any right triangle, the sum of the squares of each of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.

Thomas Reid (1710–1796): Father of the Scottish Common Sense School. Scottish philosopher who laid the foundations for a "common sense" psychology based on the natural endowments by which we (and the animals) understand the world and act in it. His influence was broad and deep, reaching the leaders of thought at the American founding. Reid was the leading figure in a group of scholars and scientists at Aberdeen committed to the larger Newtonian perspective. He also was David Hume's most successful critic.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778): Swiss-French philosopher, author, and political theorist whose work largely decried the harmful effects of modern civilization.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498): Italian religious reformer best known for his attempt to reform Renaissance Florence society and the Catholic Church from the vices of modern life as he knew them.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805): German historian, philosopher, and dramatist; his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* maintained that it is freedom that creates, determinism that limits and kills. Friend of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Socrates (c. 469–399 B.C.): Greek philosopher committed to objectifying the self and holding it up to scrutiny in order to examine human nature. Developed the Socratic method, which tests every assumption for its grounding and implications.

Sophocles (496–406 B.C.): One of the great playwrights of the Greek golden age; known for his tragedy *Antigone*.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903): British philosopher and sociologist who supplied the phrase "survival of the fittest" and gave Darwinism its most portentous set of social implications.

Alan Turing (1912–1954): Mathematician and cryptographer who developed the concept of the computable algorithm.

Voltaire (1694 –1778): French Enlightenment writer and philosopher who maintained that our experience is the key to understanding human nature and the nature of the world around us. His real name was François Marie Arouet.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913): Worked with Charles Darwin to develop the theory of evolution by natural selection. Wallace concluded that he could not see natural selection at work in three domains: (1) abstract thought, which seems to serve no evolutionary purpose; (2) art, in which resources are willingly squandered in the service of the merely beautiful; and (3) moral thought and ethics, where we sacrifice our own most cherished interests in the service of others.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951): Austrian philosopher whose *The Tractatus* stated that the world consists entirely of independent, simple facts out of which complex ones are constructed. Language has as its purpose the stating of facts by picturing these facts.

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Part V

Professor Daniel N. Robinson

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Daniel Robinson is Distinguished Professor, Emeritus, Georgetown University, where he taught from 1971 to 2001. He is a member of the philosophy faculty of Oxford University and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. Although his doctorate was earned in neuropsychology (1965, City University of New York), his scholarly books and articles have established him as an authority in the history and philosophy of psychology, history of ideas, philosophy of mind, and kindred subjects.

Dr. Robinson's books include *The Enlightened Machine: An Analytical Introduction to Neuropsychology* (Columbia, 1980), *Psychology and Law* (Oxford, 1980), *Philosophy of Psychology* (Columbia, 1985), *Aristotle's Psychology* (1989), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), and *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard, 1996). He has served as principal consultant to PBS for the award-winning series *The Brain* and the subsequent nine-part series *The Mind*. He is past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association: the Division of the History of Psychology and the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Dr. Robinson also serves on the Board of Scholars of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, is a member of the American Philosophical Association, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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Part V

The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition

Scope:

This course of 60 lectures is intended to introduce the student to main currents and issues in philosophical thought from the founding of the subject in ancient Greece to more contemporary studies. The lectures are organized around three abiding problems: the problem of knowledge (epistemology and metaphysics), the problem of conduct (ethics and moral philosophy), and the problem of governance (political science and law). Each of these has by now evolved into a specialized subject treated rigorously in professional texts and journals. But even in these more technical projections, the problems remain largely as they were when the schools of Plato and Aristotle dealt with them and imposed on them the features they still retain.

More than a series of lectures on the great philosophers, this course is designed to acquaint the student with broader cultural and historical conditions that favored or opposed a given philosophical perspective. Attention is paid to the influence that scientific developments had on the very conception of philosophy and on the scientific rejection of "metaphysics" that took place when the "two cultures" began to take separate paths.

Needless to say, the vast terrain that philosophy seeks to cover extends far beyond what can be explored in 60 lectures—or in 200 lectures! Entire areas of active scholarship have been ignored. But still other areas have been more carefully examined than is customary in an introductory course: philosophy of law, philosophy and aesthetics, evolutionary and psychoanalytic theory. The hope and expectation is that, informed by these lectures, the interested student will press on, will fashion a fuller curriculum of study, and will return to these lectures for the more general framework within which the specialized knowledge ultimately must find a place.

Lecture Forty-Nine
Alan Turing in the Forest of Wisdom

Scope: Alan Turing (1912–1954) was a brilliant mathematician and cryptographer. He led the team at Bletchley Park in World War II that broke the German Enigma code. He also addressed the famous mathematical problem of whether there was an algorithm of sufficient power and generality to solve in principle all mathematical problems! Turing was not able to achieve this—who could?—but he did develop a truly wonderful algorithm by which to determine whether or not a problem was computable.

Turing used his own (and, by generalization, *our* own) approach to calculations: We break problems down into repetitions of simple operations, each of which, at least in principle, could be solved by a suitably constructed mechanical device. Such a device might well be able to settle an infinitely various range of problems. Today's high-speed digital computers redeem Turing's theory—such symbol manipulation is at the very core of problem-solving. Is it at the core of intelligence? If it is, then *intelligence* refers to a set of functions that might be achieved by any properly configured and programmed device.

Outline

I. Alan Turing's writings and theorizing are so ever-present in this world of computer science and computational models of the mind that one gets the impression that he is still writing papers and guiding dissertations on these subjects.

- **A.** Born in 1912, British, Turing was a prodigious intellect, someone destined to be a mathematician and abstract thinker.
- **B.** At age 19, Turing entered King's College, Cambridge, and was elected Fellow of the College in 1935.
- **C.** He proposed his famous *Turing machine* in 1936.
- **D.** He earned a doctorate from Princeton, where he studied logic and number theory.
- **E.** During World War II, Turing was engaged in cryptographic and cryptological work aimed at breaking enemy codes, specifically Germany's Enigma cipher machine. He was instrumental in breaking what the German high command had declared to be an unbreakable code.
- **F.** Turing was elected as Fellow of the Royal Society in 1951. A year later, he was arrested for homosexual activity and was no longer able to hold a security clearance. He killed himself with cyanide on June 7, 1954.

II. Breaking a code is a mental activity that requires actually getting into the mind of another.

- **A.** In Turing's most famous accomplishments, we find the question: "How do problems get solved?"
- **B.** In 1936, Turing published a paper titled "On computable numbers, with an application to the *Entscheidungsproblem*."
  1. He established that there is no method by which to decide all mathematical questions.
  2. The method he developed to make this argument would prove to be the foundation for all of computer science.
- **C.** A mathematical problem is decidable when a problem-solving algorithm exists for it.
  1. The most common algorithm would be arithmetic.
  2. We can think of arithmetic as a "machine" for answering all questions about addition, subtraction, and so on—we will always get a right answer.
- **D.** Any number of mathematical problems were and are "undecidable": no algorithm exists by which they can be solved. For example, until 1994, when Professor Wiles produced his own brilliant proof, Fermat's last theorem was undecidable: The equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ has no solution in integers for any value of n larger than 2.

III. Turing did not solve the most-general-algorithm problem, but he succeeded in developing an algorithm by which to determine whether a problem is computable.

- **A.** Turing began by considering how he himself computed: In adding a long series, he performed the same small operation over and over as often as necessary.
- **B.** Therefore, a device could theoretically be constructed that could solve problems in the same way:
  1. Equip it with an infinitely long strip of tape and a means by which to either print or erase a limited set of symbols, for example, a 0 or *no* symbol, a 1 or *yes* symbol.
  2. Reduce a problem of any degree of complexity to a number of 1-0 or *yes-no* steps. (All numbers can be represented in a binary system by only two digits.)
  3. Solve the problem through an indefinitely large number of basic operations of an essentially computational sort.

IV. Thus, the *Turing machine*: an algorithm, not a machine as such, that translates any *input* signal into a determinate *output*.

- **A.** A vending machine is a complicated mechanical device working on precisely these terms:
  1. Put a quarter in the vending machine and the device yields a cupcake; put in a half-dollar and the device yields ginger ale.
  2. The child may imagine that there must be a person in the machine making these decisions, but there need not be. The problem is computable as input-output.
- **B.** The particular "machine" that instantiates these processes is irrelevant. *Function is all*! What determines the type of activity is the algorithm instantiated. It could be a pattern-recognizing device that turns on water or turns off the fire alarm.

V. Is the human being a Turing machine? Is there anything significant about us as intelligent beings that differs from a sufficiently powerful computational device?

- **A.** It is agreed by all philosophers that what is unique to human beings is the ability to reason. We can solve problems.
- **B.** An intelligent being is one able to perform a set of functions associated with intelligence, for example, solving problems.
- **C.** Turing addressed this in his *Computing Machinery and Intelligence* (1950) by applying the *Turing test*:
  1. Place a person and a device behind curtains and address each with questions: Are all bachelors unmarried? How do you get from Paris to New York?
  2. If the productions from behind one curtain match up well enough with those from the other, on what grounds would you deny the non-human entity status as an intelligent being, beyond prejudice?
  3. If the proper definition of a rational, intelligent being is one who is able to perform certain computational operations, to achieve certain ends by problem-solving, human beings just happen to be biological instantiations of something that can be instantiated non-biologically.
  4. The problem of knowledge becomes a computational problem.

VI. There's a problem with this Turing-like perspective on things that certainly Wittgenstein would be among the first to notice.

- **A.** The symbols of a Turing machine *mean* nothing in themselves, because meaning can only be agreed upon in a social context.
- **B.** John Searle developed a comparable criticism, exemplified in what came to be called his *Chinese room test*:
  1. A person ignorant of Chinese, alone in a closed room, has cards with Chinese ideograms on them and instructions in his own language to follow as to what shapes to search for and which shapes to put next to which others.
  2. The person constructs Chinese sentences by this means, meaningless to himself, but that Chinese speakers can understand.
  3. Does the person therefore "know Chinese"? Or does the *room*, containing speaker, ideograms, and instructions, "know Chinese"?

C. Searle thinks that the missing ingredient is intentionality, the term here referring to meaning itself.

VII. In the Upanishads, the disciple sitting "next to the teacher" (*upanishad*) in the Forest of Wisdom is asked, "When the sun is down, by what means do you see?" He answers, "by the moon."

A. And when the moon is dark? By a candle's light. And when the candle is out? Then the only remaining light is within, known but unseen, working toward the truth by means never found in the external world of flesh, blood, and dead matter.

B. Alan Turing lived much of his life in the Forest of Wisdom, searching by his own inner light. Like Pythagoras, he sought in a realm of symbols not instantiated by any physical beings but only in *relations*.

C. In part because of his search, our humanity now is understood not in biological terms but in informational terms, as a set of computational operations.

Recommended Reading:

Turing, A. "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." *Mind*, 1950, vol. 59, pp. 433–460.

Hodges, A. *Alan Turing: The Enigma of Intelligence*. New York, 1983.

Questions to Consider:

1. Conclude whether "intelligent" machines should have rights.
2. Explain whether the only difference between the "intelligent machine" and the person is to be found at the level of feelings.

Lecture Fifty
Four Theories of the Good Life

Scope: In the preceding 49 lectures, various solutions to the problems of knowledge, conduct, and governance have been reviewed. Various candidate "forms of life" have been described or at least hinted at. These include the contemplative, the active, the fatalistic, the hedonistic. There are developed arguments for each and serious limitations in all. In order to begin to choose among them, it is necessary to consider what sort of beings we are at bottom. And if in the end it is not possible to answer any of these questions, William James, among other great philosophers, will not be overly surprised—or aggrieved.

Outline

I. In this final lecture on the "big picture" part of the project, I hope to distill much of what has come before and address that aching question about the examined life and, yes, "the good life."

- **A.** It seems to me that the "theories of the good life" traditionally advanced by the most influential philosophers can be boiled down to four.
  - **1.** In choosing four—or, for that matter, 44—one has at least implicitly accepted an essentialist theory of human nature.
  - **2.** The good life, then, is good for a certain form of life, and as the pun would have it, one man's fish is another man's *poisson*.
- **B.** Aristotle, in his conception of the contemplative life, takes a page from the Socratic maxim that the unexamined life is not worth living.
- **C.** The same Aristotle—along with a whole legion of philosophers, some Stoic, some medieval—will offer the active life, which is lived, not just thought about, as the right sort of life.
- **D.** There is also a fatalistic model of the good life. The good life is something that you're extremely lucky if you end up living any part of your life in.
  - **1.** There is a sense of inevitabilities, that somehow the future is already known at some level and the most we can do is give it a good try.
  - **2.** A key element of fatalism is that resignation is an essential property in the good life. The good life is just coming to grips with inevitabilities and being realistic about one's chances.
- **E.** Finally, there is hedonism.
  - **1.** The true hedonist is not out for any and every pleasure.
  - **2.** The true hedonist is trying to track that narrow path between pain and pleasure, never wanting a pleasure so much that its deprivation constitutes pain and never avoiding pain so assiduously as to miss out on every and any conceivable pleasure.
  - **3.** The goal of a hedonistic life is tranquillity.

II. What sort of life do the saints or heroes choose?

- **A.** We think of saints as persons who have engaged in what ethicists call supererogatory actions, which is to say, actions above and beyond the call of duty.
- **B.** Yet saints and heroes do not usually think of themselves as such. "It gives me joy," says the saint. "It's just my job," says the hero.
- **C.** The lives of saints and heroes do not seem to match up with any of the schemes of the good life enumerated above; they seem rather to be *exemplary*: "Think of how I would have lived my life if I were as good as that person."
- **D.** This has to do with how we think about ourselves and others. How we think about anything depends on brain activity and the programming that we've gone through, life's experiences, the cultures that mold us.
- **E.** If all we know is just the result of a conditioning history, the best life could be supplied to us by artificial stimulation of our brains, separated from our bodies and nourished in a vat.
  - **1.** We could have pleasure *or* be saints and heroes.
  - **2.** Presumably, brain centers could be stimulated that would have us doing Fermat's last theorem.

3. Even activities could be simulated; what one can dream of experiencing can also be brought about by stimulating the brain.

III. If this option were available—to have any life of your choosing played into you—on what grounds would one reject it?

A. All students interested in philosophy should address this question. It raises the possibility that the esteem of others and ourselves, along with our experiences, may not be the core desires of the good life.

B. Aristotle's notion of *eudaimonia*—doing something for its own sake—can be translated as happiness or flourishing. If synthetically generated experiences are not acceptable, there must be something else.

C. The story of Cleobis and Biton, said by Solon to be "the happiest of men," suggests that the good life may be living a life you don't know is a good life.

1. Cleobis and Biton pulled their mother to the Temple of Hera so that she could implore the goddess Hera to see to it that her sons die the happiest of men. Cleobis and Biton never awaken.
2. If Cleobis and Biton indeed derived *eudaimonia* from their virtuous deed, they were not conscious that they would be so remembered, because they never awakened.
3. They may have been conscious of nothing more than the effort of the struggle to get mother to the temple on time; yet Hera guarantees they died the happiest of men.

IV. One of the lessons that comes from the lives of saints and heroes is that a saintly and heroic life is not lived self-consciously. Rather, it's lived in a way that's conscious of others. Hallucination won't do: We don't want the *sensation* of having done for others; we want to actually do it.

A. First off, one has to determine what is in the best and abiding interest of others. And I don't know how anybody can do that except through what is finally a *contemplative* mode of life.

B. Then, it's a matter of getting out there and doing it. And I don't know how anybody can do that except by way of what finally is an *active* form of life.

C. Because you have no promises in advance as to whether your actions will succeed or fail, or even how they'll be perceived, you must adopt an essentially *fatalistic* position.

D. A great and exalting pleasure comes from enlarging the possibilities in the lives of others; this has to meet the fundamental objectives of the *hedonistic* individual. Indeed, there must be great joy and pleasure in the life of a Mother Teresa, a deep sense of satisfaction for a hero knowing that he or she has saved a life.

Recommended Reading:

Consult *all* readings suggested for Lectures One through Forty-Nine.

Questions to Consider:

1. If philosophy doesn't presume to answer the very questions that bring one to philosophy, conclude what the use of it is.
2. If philosophical pluralism is unavoidable and even desirable, infer what the implications are for a sense of community among rational beings.

Lecture Fifty-One
Ontology—What There "Really" Is

Scope: From the Greek *ons*, *ontos*, there is a branch of metaphysics referred to as *ontology*, devoted to the question of "real being." Aristotle declared it to be "first philosophy" and identified it with both wisdom in the ultimate sense and with theology. At bottom, ontological questions resolve themselves into a criticism of knowledge: the warrants we have for believing something exists, the extent to which this belief is based on the imperfect apparatus of perception, and the extent to which rational analysis is able to overcome such limitations. Added to these problems are others based on skepticism regarding the stability of reality itself. If all is in flux, there cannot be a "knowledge" of what there really is, for what there really is undergoes continuous alteration. The most we can claim is a series of snapshots, taken from but one angle or a few and with instruments that inevitably presuppose but one mode of knowing, namely, our own.

At least since the time of Aristotle, ontological claims have been closely tied to the concept of "natural kinds" and "essences." The medieval philosophers debated at length on the question of whether the "universal" had real being or was but a verbal category by which to include particulars. To this day, controversy surrounds the question of whether an apple is "essentially" fruit, whether animals form a "natural class," and whether human beings constitute a "natural kind" of thing. Not a narrow academic debate, the ontological controversies have broad ethical and social implications.

Outline

I. In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle states: "There is a science which investigates being as being and attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature. This is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences, for none of these treats universally of being as being." What do we mean when we refer to "being" as such?

- **A.** In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant said that if the question has to do with "existence," it is important to understand that existence is not a predicate because it is logically or conceptually entailed by the subject of which it is supposed to be a predicate.
- **B.** Propositions, on Kant's account, are either analytic or synthetic.
  1. In the former, the meaning of the predicate is included in or synonymous with the meaning of the subject ("Bachelors are unmarried men").
  2. Synthetic propositions, on the other hand, are factual but subject to confirmation ("Some bachelors are tall").

II. The distinction between analytic and synthetic propositions is problematic in itself, as Willard Van Orman Quine pointed out in his 1951 article "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," published in the *Philosophical Review*.

- **A.** Quine notes that if analytic propositions are tautologies, whatever is true of the subject term will be true of the predicate term.
- **B.** With tautologies, there is free replacement and substitution of subject and predicate by each other with no loss of truth.
- **C.** But in "Bachelors are unmarried men," we could insert for *unmarried men* the phrase "*Bachelors* has less than 10 letters." The substitution fails and can be restored only using far more by way of conventional understandings than Kant's scheme allows.
- **D.** In Quine's account, it is folly to seek a boundary between synthetic statements, which hold contingently on experience, and analytic statements, which hold come what may.
- **E.** Any statement can be held true, come what may, if we are prepared to make drastic enough adjustments elsewhere in the "system" of conceptualized reality.

III. Unless the entire human race has been subject to constant hallucinations and delusions, common sense and daily experience testify to the truth of the claim: "There are things distinct from myself that continue in time and in space independently of my concepts of them."

- **A.** Matters become more daunting, however, once we set out to identify such things, classify them, and claim to have knowledge of their properties.

B. The inclination to classify is as common in childhood as it is in science and philosophy.
  1. One of the most general concepts employed in classifying things is that of *essentiality.* Certain objects are understood to be *essentially* what they are, no matter what merely accidental differences obtain among them (that is, all varieties of apples are still, essentially, apples).
  2. The "essence" of a thing is not limited by its observable features, but arises from a conception of some internal, intrinsic feature that causally brings about these features.
  3. Among these features is the concept of *executive causation*, the concept of a central cause that accounts for the observed properties of an object.
  4. Ruled out by this are properties that are merely correlated with the object.

IV. Taking an event or object to be what it is "essentially," however, raises the question about the nature of "universals" and the relationship between universals and particulars.

A. Some followers of Socrates thought that a higher-order plane or reality was necessary for particular things to have the properties they have. In other words, the actual particular "types" of things have their defining properties in virtue of the universal of which they are but instances.

B. Aristotle rejected this view, insisting that properties inhere only in particulars.

C. Medieval philosophy showed renewed interest in the so-called *nominalist-realist controversy*. Nominalists insisted that universals were the names given to collectives of particulars. Realists argued that the universal had to be real; otherwise, the particulars would have nothing from which to derive their essential natures.

D. Peter Abelard (1079–1142) made clear that universals are references to how *we* have conceptualized our experiences.
  1. Nonetheless, he granted validity to the realists' position, because universals encompass a limitless number of possible experiences.
  2. For instance, the term *mankind* is the conceptualized category into which we would validly place an indefinitely large number of instances; there is no "mankind," as such, just men, women, and children.

E. Locke distinguished between what he called the "nominal" and the "real" essence of things.
  1. The *real essence* of an object is determined by its ultimate microstructure, which we cannot perceive.
  2. But on the basis of experience, we come to treat certain reliable ensembles of properties as instances of a certain type of thing, thus giving the object its *nominal essence*.

V. On this account, ontological issues arise from different levels of reality—as perceived, as conceptualized, and as constructed by discourse.

A. At one level of reality, cyanide gas is a chemical composed of certain elements. At another level, the gas is a poison. And at still another level, it has been used suicidally. Is any one level in some way more "real" than the others?

B. Questions of "real being" also are complicated by development and change, metamorphosis and evolution. Though favoring conditions will cause a large oak tree to arise from an acorn, none of the superficial features of acorns predicts or explains the oak tree.

C. In his *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) made a sharp distinction between existence and essence.
  1. There is nothing "essential" about something before its existence.
  2. Man acts as though he were the master and shaper of language, but in fact, language remains the master of man.

D. The American philosopher Richard Rorty suggested that we give our own version of competing accounts priority in order to preserve solidarity. Thus, ontology becomes a branch of sociology.
  1. Rorty said, "Truth is simply a compliment paid to sentences seen to be paying their way."
  2. We attribute "truth" to sentences that allow us to get on with things, to get things done.

E. Against this line of thinking appears Roger Penrose, distinguished for his work in mathematics, who argued that the perceived reality is grounded in a mind-independent reality. What really exists, then, are formal relational properties constitutive of the cosmos and subject to mathematical representation.

F. In his *PersonalKnowledge*, the scientist-philosopher, Michael Polyani (1891–1976) opposed the notion of science as value-free, purely rational and empirical, fact-based and systematic.

1. Rather, the history of science is laced with intuitive leaps, leaps of faith, the effort that only passion can supply.
2. His concept of "tacit knowledge" connects discovery to intuition.

G. Polyani's theory resembles Kant's modality category, in which he places three pairs of subcategories: possibility-impossibility, existence-nonexistence, and necessity-contingency.

VI. Were knowledge confined to empirical facts and empirical modes of knowing, there could be no concept of necessity or impossibility. These modal categories raise yet another ontological question: From the fact that an apple now is on the table, it must be the case that at some previous time, this apple was a possibility. The question, of course, has to do with the ontological standing of "possibles."

A. There is widespread belief that, as difficult as the ontological questions are, we at least possess a method by which to test ontological claims when they are made. The method, of course, is science itself. What really exists, presumably, is what is predicted and explained by and obedient to the laws of science.

B. Even more basic than the ontological question of what really exists is the question of why anything exists, why there is something rather than nothing.

Recommended Reading:

Aristotle, *Metaphysics.* W. D. Ross, trans. (downloadable).

Loux, Michael. *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. Routledge, 2002.

Questions to Consider:

1. Identify in what senses an apple (a) really exists, (b) is a figure of speech, (c) is a "natural kind," and (d) is *essentially* a fruit.
2. If Rorty's sense of *truth* is taken seriously, how is the project of philosophy altered?

Lecture Fifty-Two
Philosophy of Science—The Last Word?

Scope: There is widespread confidence that fundamental questions, if they are to be answered with any precision and objectivity, will be answered by science. This confidence has been earned by the achievements of science and technology and by the evolution of powerful predictive laws and principles.

At the same time, history makes clear that what has been taken as a scientific truism in one age may well be exposed as error or folly in another. Moreover, activities that proceed under the banner of science are so various in methods and in reliability that one wonders just what criteria should be invoked when candidate "sciences" appear.

A number of influential conceptions of science have been advanced in recent years, not compatible with each other but each of them, in different ways, clarifying the essential nature of the scientific enterprise. One of these, largely the work of Carl Hempel, is the so-called *deductive-nomological model* of scientific explanation. Its assets and limitations are considered, as well as its implications for establishing the scientific standing of various disciplines. Still another conception is based not on the principle that science has uniquely uncovered the ultimate "reality" of the world, but that it has developed highly idealized ways of representing reality. On this account, what the laws of science refer to are idealized models, not reality itself.

From the realist side of the dispute comes the simple and powerful fact that science has taken us to the moon and back, not as an ideal but as a fact, and the inference warranted by this achievement is that success is based on the "reality" of the laws of science.

All said and done, science is certainly a human activity and must, therefore, bear some mark of its authorship. Thomas Kuhn's influential treatise on scientific revolutions is considered, and its implication, duly noted.

Outline

I. The 21st century is marked by the widespread conviction that the last word on the composition of reality and the principles that give it its character is finally drawn from the vocabulary and methods of science.

- **A.** The modern world is radically and qualitatively different from any preceding age, and the differences are largely the bequest of science.
- **B.** However, *science* is one of those troublesome terms that can seem to convey too little by standing for too much.
  - **1.** *Science* encompasses widely varied studies, ranging from physics to economics, both of which are areas for which Nobel prizes are awarded. The word *science* is applied to different disciplines, as well, including political science, social science, and cognitive science, to name a few.
  - **2.** The *philosophy of science* must analyze the various senses of the term and find such shared features as might justify the inclusion of otherwise disparate activities under the same general heading.

II. Carl Hempel advocated that the defining features of science are the logical form of scientific explanations and the restrictions on the class of events to be explained.

- **A.** Differences in subject matter, equipment, or methods of inquiry do not determine the status of a discipline as a science.
- **B.** That status is earned by the special "logic" of scientific explanations and by the class of occurrences for which there is to be such explanations.
- **C.** Hempel's model of science is actually a model of scientific explanation.
  - **1.** To warrant scientific explanation, the event in question must be empirical in principle.
  - **2.** There must be a universal law specified that covers events of this sort.
  - **3.** All conditions relevant to the particular event must be specified or otherwise controlled.
  - **4.** At the end of the exercise, the subject event and all such events are explained scientifically when they are *logically deducible* from a universal law known to be true.

D. Hempel's theory is called the *deductive nomological* (derived from the Greek word for "law," *nomos*) model of explanation. He contrasts this with explanations based on inferences from past occurrences, referring to this mode of explanation as *inductive statistical*, or what might be called the *inductive nomological* model.

III. The question arises, then, as to the status of those disciplines that lack universal laws and, thus, cannot explain events by deducing them from such laws.

A. This is where the *inductive statistical* model comes in.

1. Hempel acknowledged that the most stringent criterion for full-fledged scientific explanations was missing from many disciplines understood on commonsense grounds to be scientific.

2. These disciplines get their scientific "status" via their discovery of reliable relationships permitting accurate prediction.

B. For all its neatness and intuitive appeal, the Hempelian scheme is plagued with problems.

1. To some extent, the "statistical" nature of reality itself raises questions as to the adequacy of a model of scientific explanation calling for absolute and universal laws allowing perfect predictions.

2. Also, the logical structure of Hempelian explanation leaves room for nonsensical examples nonetheless qualifying as scientific explanations.

3. A further difficulty with the model is that it seems to permit spurious causal inferences.

C. The attempt to extend this model of explanation to the realm of social phenomena produces yet another wave of compelling criticism.

1. Historical events are nonrecurring. Accordingly, what a "general law" would cover in the realm of history isn't clear.

2. The character and intelligibility of a historical event derive from the specific persons, motives, and contexts involved.

3. What is true in history would be the same wherever actual persons, with their individuated needs, judgments, and aspirations, constitute the events to be explained.

IV. It would strain credulity to believe that the lawful and time-ordered sequences in the natural world come about without the participation of occult forces, hidden powers, and the like.

A. Gravitation, for instance, refers to a physical reality that causes objects to behave in predictable ways toward each other.

1. The behavior is not simply reliable but seemingly *necessitated*.

2. We find in the laws of science the *real* structure of reality, the truth behind the merely cluttered pictures of everyday life.

B. Realists regard the laws of science as reflecting reality as it really is. The anti-realist perspective takes such laws to be useful generalizations and valid within the contexts in which they were developed but insufficient to account for all that "really is the case."

1. Princeton's Bastian van Fraassen, a defender of the anti-realist school, argues that what counts as a good explanation is not the logical structure of the argument but the extent to which it answers a "why" question arising in a given context.

2. In her book *How the Laws of Physics Lie*, Nancy Cartwright suggested that the idealized world in which the laws are unfailing is a world occupied by no one in the real world, physicists included. Reality is disorderly, contextually fluctuating, resistant to any set of simple and simplifying laws.

C. The realist invokes the concept of *inference to the best explanation* as a defense of realism.

1. NASA's space program was based on the assumption that the laws of classical physics and the accuracy of available instruments provide an account of reality.

2. Based on this assumption, rockets were built, astronomical calculations were performed, a date was chosen, and a launch took place.

3. Astronauts reached the moon, then returned safely to earth.

4. The "best explanation" of the result is that the laws accepted and implemented capture the fabric of reality as such.

V. These debates illustrate a far less tidy world of science than the one depicted in textbooks. For all its technical and theoretical achievements, science is a human product and will always bear the mark of its maker.

A. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Thomas Kuhn drew attention to the guild-like nature of the scientific community.

1. Kuhn referred to this as "normal science," to distinguish it from those radical departures that constitute truly revolutionary changes.

2. A key feature of this enterprise is that the research guided by such considerations unearths only what was known in advance. The same set of commitments and method, the same paradigm, dictates that problems are chosen to the extent that they promise fairly ready solutions.

B. Karl Popper, the eminent philosopher of science and logician, criticized Kuhn's reliance on the concept of ruling paradigms as "the myth of framework."

1. Popper himself had made an important contribution to philosophy of science in his critique of *verificationism* and his alternative methodological standard, *falsificationism*.

2. In the scientific positivism of the 1930s and 1940s, the meaning of statements was nothing more than the method by which they could be verified. Any statements that did not lend themselves to empirical modes of verification were essentially meaningless or merely argumentative.

3. Popper observed that such a standard would render all the laws of science nonsensical. He replaced the concept of verification with falsificationism: Though a law cannot be verified an infinite number of times, it need only be falsified once to lose credibility.

Recommended Reading:

Hempel, Carl. *Aspects of Scientific Explanation*. Free Press, 1965.

Van Fraassen, Bas. *The Scientific Image*. Oxford University Press, 1980.

Questions to Consider:

1. If the laws of science do not reflect reality as it "really" is, how should we account for practical success?

2. How do the laws of physics "lie," and what standard is there for telling the difference between the truth and the lies?

3. Is the culture of science hostile to criticism and novelty of thought?

Lecture Fifty-Three
Philosophy of Psychology and Related Confusions

Scope: Psychology is a subject of wide-ranging interests but rather narrow modes of inquiry. Its history is one of aspiring to the status of a natural science and, as a result, committing itself to what it takes to be the methods of investigation and research common in the developed sciences. Initially, as with Locke, this commitment was expressed in the form of introspective inquiries into thought or, more generally, cognitive and emotional states. The private nature of these, combined with their "metaphysical" properties, resulted in the rejection of the mental by those in the positivist school of science. In keeping with the dictates of that school, psychology, early in the 20th century, subscribed to a theory-neutral and "purely descriptive" science of behavior. The failure of that science to account for any number of behavioral outcomes led to a restoration of cognitive, even "mental" states within psychology. This, in turn, set the stage for the cognitive neuroscience dominant today. Nonetheless, the defects and deficiencies of earlier schools have reappeared, owing to the same problems: the aptness of the science model in psychology, the nature of models themselves, and the uniqueness of psychological processes.

Outline

I. At least three times in the 20th century, psychology has settled on its subject matter, only to unsettle itself and adopt yet another "reality."

- **A.** The problem should not be attributed to psychology's alleged "youth."
  - **1.** Psychological laboratories do not appear that much later than laboratories in other disciplines.
  - **2.** Chemistry laboratories appear at universities no earlier than 1830.
  - **3.** Non-academic settings for research were numerous, and psychology experiments were performed in them as early as the 18th century.
- **B.** Psychology is a hybrid science, because its interest ranges over both scientific and humanistic issues.
  - **1.** The breadth and diversity of phenomena may be seen as excuse enough for psychology's unsettled nature as it seeks unity and disciplinary coherence.
  - **2.** The challenge is no greater, however, in psychology than in physics, which has made room for those interested in the red-shift of stars retreating from the Milky Way and those whose subjects of interest wink in and out of existence in less than a billionth of a second.
- **C.** The special subject of philosophical psychology also reflects on the disordered state of the discipline. Attempts to create order and a "system" must be arbitrary but are also necessary, or else there really would be no subject at all.

II. The starting point presumably is the identification of what psychology is *about*, what its practitioners identify as good reasons for having the discipline, and what other reasonably informed persons would reasonably expect of it.

- **A.** The *Oxford Pocket Dictionary* defines psychology as "the study of the human soul or mind; a treatise on or system of this," a definition that does little to clarify the discipline.
- **B.** A more informing approach would be to examine offered courses and assigned texts in major departments of psychology. These days, the courses and the activities would be highly particularized, focusing on any number of questions that, at best, relate obliquely to what has traditionally been understood to be human mental life.
- **C.** Aristotle used the term *psyche* in his treatise on the subject to mean the "first principle of living things."
  - **1.** What is "psychic" is a complex process, not a thing occupying a place and having some existence outside the creature so animated.
  - **2.** Also, this animating principle is expressed in various ways and confers different powers or faculties on different living things.
- **D.** With the 17th century's scientific achievements, Descartes, then Locke took a more daring approach to these concepts.

1. The two had in common the idea that fundamental questions in philosophy require a systematic treatment of psychological states and processes.
2. Locke and Descartes were virtually *inventing* psychology as an independent field of inquiry, developed via systematic observation.
3. One finds out about mental processes by consulting one's own patterns of thought.

III. It was not until the 20th century that cogent arguments against the philosophizing of psychology transformed the discipline into what many hoped to be a scientific psychology.

A. The late-19th–century movement toward scientific positivism was influential. In the early 20th century, America's John B. Watson (1878–1958) argued for the abandonment of all who continued to tie psychology to something reachable only by way of introspection. Watson insisted that, for a subject to earn scientific status, its subject matter had to be public, observable, and measurable. For all things psychological, it must be translated into behavioral terms and observations.

B. The behaviorist movement grew first slowly, then—primarily through the influence of B. F. Skinner—accelerated. By the 1960s, many psychology departments had come to identify themselves as departments of "behavioral science."

1. Behaviorism offered a purely descriptive science of behavior that was to be independent of, and indifferent to, events occurring under the skin.
2. The project of predicting and controlling behavior required no support and accepted no challenge from the biological sciences.

IV. Given this orientation, it is easy to see just where the resistance and criticism would come from.

A. Psychologists trained in neuropsychology and physiological psychology were aware that behavior depends on the biochemistry and electrophysiology of the nervous system. They were not prepared to abandon the important and long-productive program of research on brain-behavior relationships.

B. Studies of animal behavior turned up results that were simply uninterpretable in terms of external determinants.

1. In a 1948 article titled "Cognitive Maps in Rats and Men," E. C. Tolman summarized many studies, all pointing to the cognitive nature of problem-solving.
2. These, in conjunction with the long-standing Gestalt theory in psychology, required preservation of the "mental," if only as a way of rendering the results of behavioral studies coherent and intelligible.

V. The method to which psychology committed itself is loosely described as "experimental," but it carries much more baggage than the word suggests.

A. In most instances, the method of inquiry includes the following main ingredients.

1. First, some response-indicator is identified, drawn from the behavior of the subject and intended to signify the reception of a stimulus or successful performance of a task.
2. The response-indicators are sampled repeatedly, and the resulting dataset subjected to various analyses to determine the validity of the findings.
3. Every effort is made to control stimuli or experimental conditions and to establish the relationship between these and comparably restricted response-indicators.

B. These methods raise two fundamental questions:

1. To what extent is such an idealized context representative of the actual world and actual life in which the events and processes of interest routinely occur?
2. Do we find in such experiments how persons actually solve problems or comprehend stimuli, or are we merely calling on subjects to respond as if they see the world the way the experimenter would have it seen?

C. We can highlight the problem of validity by considering a frequently studied phenomenon in psychology—emotion.

1. The emotional aspects of life are profoundly important to behavior and thought.
2. However, attempts to predict and control behavior or model psychological life via examination of the emotions in the context of laboratory research ultimately are useless for real-world, practical purposes.

D. On top of all this, we must question the aptness of using statistical modes of analysis in the study of complex processes.

1. There are few instances in the developed sciences where the most common psychological experimental model—the *analysis of variance*—is employed.
2. In this model, one would identify the separate influences of several variables on the event or effect of interest.
3. Analysis of variance and comparable statistical analyses may actually describe or identify the effects of these variables on no one in particular within the sample of subjects.

E. The ultimate question is whether the right approach to understanding psychological processes and phenomena is nomothetic or idiographic.

1. The former—from the Greek *nomos* for "law"—searches for general laws describing trends and regularities in datasets.
2. The latter—from the Greek *idios* for "personal"—is sensitive to the unique and individuated nature of perception, comprehension, and adjustments to the surrounding world.
3. It is often assumed that the nomothetic approach must use large samples to obtain general laws. However, in basic research, a single observation often reveals the general law.

VI. To the extent that the discipline is or aspires to be scientific, another set of questions arises as to the proper model or template, for science itself is not singularly committed in this regard.

A. Being neither a physical science nor a biological science in the strictest sense, psychology has evolved as something of an engineering science.

1. The general approach to problem-solving in engineering is first to reduce the problem to a model, usually including a number of distinct modules.
2. The modules have such properties to encompass both the given function and the means by which that function can be integrated into the performance of the overall system.
3. Following this rationale, psychology attempts to use the laboratory context as a simplified model, with the experimental variables chosen to tap into one or another functional module.

B. Perhaps the most successful application of this line of thinking can be seen in contemporary cognitive neuroscience.

1. Any cognitive achievement, no matter how complex, is reducible to an ensemble of distinguishable functions.
2. Each function is accomplished by processes and networks in the central nervous system.
3. Manipulation of relevant variables in the controlled conditions of laboratory research is the means by which to put thought and action on a scientific foundation.

C. It does not take too much by way of objective distance to see that the entire undertaking rests on confusions and even mistakes. It is important to understand the difference between an engineering module that actually performs a task and a cognitive event subject to interpretation.

VII. Surprisingly, the leaders of the "cognitive revolution" have been aloof to a fruitful set of possibilities arising from the Wittgensteinian quarter.

A. There is great attention in psychology to language, especially language development, but little to the productive use and constitutive power of language.

B. It is time to step back and re-examine the methods.

Recommended Reading:

Flanagan, O. *Consciousness Reconsidered.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992.

Fodor, J. *The Modularity of Mind.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983.

Foster, J. *The Immaterial Self: A Defence of the Cartesian Dualist Conception of Mind.* London: Routledge, 1996.

Kim, J. *Mind in Physical World.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998.

Robinson, D. N. *Philosophy of Psychology*. Columbia University Press, 1982.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does a "descriptive science of behavior" leave out?
2. Can any science be "purely" descriptive?
3. Is science the right home for psychology?

Lecture Fifty-Four
Philosophy of Mind, If There Is One

Scope: Philosophy of mind, though a wide ranging subject, is heavily influenced by the mind/body problem and by methods and perspectives shaped by the position one takes on that problem. The principal grounds of disagreement within philosophy of mind center on the question of whether the right framework for considering issues is provided by the developed sciences or through more humanistic and, some would contend, realistic frameworks. Arguments favoring the former are often tied to an ontological *monism* admitting of only one kind of "stuff" comprising reality, and that a physical or material kind. This commitment may still result in a dualistic language but for reasons of convenience or convention. Related issues arise from the thesis that knowledge of the external world is always mediated by perceptual mechanisms and, thus, is never direct. Rather, the external world is "represented" in a manner that alters the reality thus represented. In any case, what is known and knowable on this account is exhausted by the material physical facts of reality. The famous "Mary problem" is a challenge to this and raises the general question of perceptual *qualia* and their place (if any) with a reductionistic and physicalistic philosophy of psychology.

Outline

I. Descartes drew a sharp distinction between himself as a thinking thing—*res cogitans*—and as an extended thing—*res extensa*—drawing criticism from the likes of Thomas Hobbes and Pierre Gassendi.

- **A.** Both would surely have agreed with the broad scientific perspective according to which the physical sciences are "complete."
  - **1.** That term refers to the view that nothing in the domain of the "really real" falls outside the realm of the "really physical," of physics.
  - **2.** In other words, reality is not composed of two radically different kinds of stuff but of one kind only—the physical.
- **B.** This position is referred to as *ontological monism* and stands in opposition to *ontological dualism*.
  - **1.** For the ontological monist, there is but one kind of furniture in reality.
  - **2.** For the ontological dualist, there are two; the dualist adds the mental to the physical.
  - **3.** Were the latter position to be correct, it is argued that physics would be "incomplete," because its laws and principles do not account for this other immaterial, non-physical aspect or part of reality.
- **C.** The ontological monist can retain mentalistic terms and concepts as a form of "folk" psychology.
  - **1.** For practical purposes, it may be impossible to conduct normal social and personal lives without this age-old language of mental states and mental events.
  - **2.** Donald Davidson dubbed this use of language *anomalous monism*: a recognition both of the validity of ontological monism and the fact that our mentalistic terms and concepts will never be reduced to physical events and processes.

II. The position one takes on the mind/body problem is likely—either implicitly or explicitly—to inform positions taken on a far wider range of issues within the philosophy of mind.

- **A.** The mere appearance of mentalistic terms and concepts will shape the more general approaches to problems in philosophy of mind.
- **B.** The problem of *representation* is a central part of the problem of knowledge and an enduring issue in philosophy of mind.
  - **1.** At the most fundamental ontological level, our experiences of the external world are complex arrangements of matter and energy.
  - **2.** We might ask whether we or a honeybee—whose vision is sensitive to an electromagnetic spectrum to which we are essentially blind—more accurately "represents" the properties of roses and lilies.
  - **3.** Thus , the question of representation can be stated: Is our knowledge of objects in the external world direct or mediated?

C. Locke and others emphasized that perceptual properties do not match up with the physical properties that cause them.

1. This account rejects the theory of *direct realism*, which says that we see the actual object, not a "representation" of it.

2. Presumably, any thorough account of the properties of an object will include such causal powers or measures of causal efficacy it possesses.

D. Without attempting to settle the problem, it is sufficient here to ask just how the external world could be "represented." As the concept is generally employed, the real external world is seen or heard or felt *as if* it holds certain properties.

E. In his 1986 article "What Mary Didn't Know," Frank Jackson suggested that Mary didn't know the experience of color until she saw it, despite a lifetime of learning about the physical properties of light and color perception.

1. Jackson reasoned that if physicalism is true, then to know everything physically the case about something is to know everything.

2. But physicalism is false, because Mary knows everything that is physically the case about light, but she does not know what it is like to see color until she leaves the isolation chamber.

3. One counter-argument is that, in the light of day, Mary does not come to know something about light but about experiences she has when exposed to certain stimuli.

F. The fact is that vision and sensory experiences in general comprise properties of a distinctly "experiential" quality.

1. Nothing we could know about the physics of roses would translate into a sweet smell, or sensory *qualia*, a term introduced in philosophy by C. I. Lewis in 1929 to refer to such properties as shape, color, or pitch.

2. The qualia of experience capture the "how it appears to us" feature.

3. A common feature of perception is "shape constancy."

4. For instance, a 25-cent coin is round.

5. However, only when it is projected onto the retina in a straight-on plane will it form a circular pattern on the retina. At any other angle, it will be elliptical.

6. But, knowing what the object is, it is invariably seen as round; the roundness thus experienced is a *quale*.

III. The decisive mark of the mental is consciousness itself, the theater within which qualia are featured. Some regard consciousness as *the* problem in philosophy of mind.

A. We can expect that there is some solution available, at least in principle, possibly from the realm of science.

1. Science is not expected to disprove that we have experiences, thoughts, motives, feelings, and desires.

2. However, it should be able to establish either the causal factors of those mental states or permit the conclusion that these states, long described in mentalistic terms, are actually physical states of the brain.

B. *Epiphenomenalism*, a term advanced in the 19th century by Thomas Henry Huxley, offers a solution to the problem of consciousness.

1. Mental states are mere byproducts of the complex operations taking place in the nervous system.

2. Consciousness arises from the operations of the nervous system but has no effect on these operations or on what they lead to.

3. Epiphenomenalism gives renewed vitality to the question of just what consciousness is for or even good for.

4. Though it may seen incredible to think human life could have amassed the same record of achievement without consciousness, it is not *logically* impossible.

C. Credible or not, epiphenomenalism does not do the work required by monistic materialism. To grant that there are bona fide mental states distinguishable from any and all physical states and events is to concede dualism.

D. A more promising theory is a version of the *identity theory*.

1. The first step in developing such a theory is to acknowledge the wide use of mentalistic terms and seek their reference.
2. Thus, with qualia terms, such as *red* or *melodic*, the question is just what in reality such terms refer to.
3. The answer is this: All such terms refer to states or events in the brain.
4. This does not confer infallibility on the percipient or rule out self-deception. Rather, it puts a dividing line between the epistemic standing of any third-person report and that of any first-person report where qualia are being reported.

E. In its most interesting and most extreme form, this approach gives rise to what is called *eliminative materialism*, which says that science need not worry about explaining the "mental," because there are not minds as such, nor is there anything mental to explain.

IV. To this point, reductionistic strategies by which to get from the mental to the physical have been emphasized. But philosophy of mind offers alternatives to brains and neural events.

A. Any number of animals succeed in negotiating the challenges afforded by the environment with nervous systems radically different from our own. What matters is that a given function is performed in such a manner as to yield adaptive success.

B. For some contemporary philosophers, the soundest approach to problems in philosophy of mind is to translate the mental into a set of functions.
1. Daniel Dennett recommended that one adopt what he calls the *intentional stance*.
2. Take the position that the actions of any complex system are goal-oriented, based on felt experiences, motives, and feelings.
3. Examine the functional components in virtue of which this sort of evidence is produced.
4. The *functionalist* account may well assume "mentality" or simply put it on "hold."

C. One version of functionalism that attracts wide attention is found in such specialized fields as artificial intelligence and expert systems.
1. IBM's chess-playing computer defeated Kasparov, one of the greatest chess masters of the age, in 1997.
2. What is philosophically interesting about such outcomes is not that computers can outperform human beings, but that the performance suggests that the best understanding of our own mental operations is computational.

V. There are sound philosophical and conceptual reasons for caution here. It's scarcely clear that a computer can "play" chess or can "play" any game at all or can, in any sense, have the cultural resources with which to recognize an activity as a game.

A. But imagine if, in some defensible respects, computers were intelligent, had expert judgment, and could see the world even more clearly than their inventors.

B. None of the issues in philosophy of mind would be settled, because now the same issues would arise as we discussed the mental life of computers!

Recommended Reading:

Robinson, D. N. *Philosophy of Psychology*. Columbia University Press, 1982.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is anomalous about anomalous monism?
2. Is epiphenomenalism finally a dualism after all?
3. If all knowledge is mediated and representational, what epistemological standard was employed to establish as much?

Lecture Fifty-Five
What Makes a Problem "Moral"

Scope: Philosophy and daily life present a variety of problems that seem to be associated with notions of praise, blame, obligation, and duty; others leading to pleasure or pain or discomfort; others calling for useful if costly solutions; and so on. In many such cases, there seem to be better and worse approaches, successes and failures, and even right and wrong answers. But in the moral realm, it's not always clear just what it is that makes the problem "moral" in the first place, nor is it clear that with respect to such problems, there are clear right and wrong solutions. Major schools of philosophy have grown up around these issues. Some, represented ably by David Hume, reject the idea that there is anything "moral" in the external real world, morality itself arising from our own sentiments about actions of a certain kind. Others have tied morality to the pursuit of happiness and the optimization of happiness or "utility." Still others have based morality on a rational foundation, its principles of duty being universal and exceptionless. Across these various formulations is a foundational question about whether there is a "moral reality" independent of us, our sentiments, and even our rationality.

Outline

I. In philosophy, as in life, there are moments when one cannot be sure whether the claims on conscience are a matter of custom, a dictate of reason, an expression of sincere feeling, or even a matter of taste.

- **A.** Both philosophy and daily life present problems when we attempt to develop a rigid scheme of classification for infractions.
  - **1.** Everyone is prepared to classify a given act as morally permissible or morally wrong, but we have difficulty making clear just what in the act—or in the judgment of the act—provides the distinguishing mark of the "moral."
  - **2.** The difficulty lies in the subjective nature of morals. What is ruled out in one culture is fashionable in another. What is a crime under one set of laws is an act of heroism a few miles down the road.
- **B.** Slavery offers an example. The majority of citizens in Western democracies would declare slavery to be morally wrong.
  - **1.** Nonetheless, the institution of slavery was a fixture during all of Western civilization until relatively recently and is still practiced in the non-Western world.
  - **2.** In many instances, those who bought and sold slaves declared the practice to be immoral but essential to the attainment of some allegedly higher good.
  - **3.** But is an immoral act justified if it leads to a greater good? And if so, is it still immoral, or might it be considered not only permitted but *obligatory*?

II. Philosophy has hosted diverse perspectives on morality, among whose subtle differences several distinct patterns have emerged.

- **A.** In one, the classification of actions in moral terms is based on rational principles, applicable across the board and independent of cultural values or merely personal inclinations. Moral precepts can be shown to be valid and binding through a process of rational analysis.
- **B.** David Hume, in the tradition of British sentimentalists, suggested that morality is based on human emotions, that virtue is what brings us pleasure, and that vice is what brings us pain.
  - **1.** In this, Hume reaches something found also in rationalist Thomas Aquinas's moral theory, according to which if our nature were different, our duties would be different.
  - **2.** Whatever has us judging actions and events in moral terms is universally distributed in the human community.
  - **3.** If there is some sort of moral "reality," it must be found empirically, its character determined by our empirical resources.
- **C.** Moral estimations of "right" and "wrong" are not in the external world but in the sentiments of the observer.

D. For a 20th-century perspective, A. J. Ayer suggests that moral concepts are pseudo-concepts; they cannot be plumbed for meaning as can terms referring to actual objects.

E. In the closing quarter of the 20th century, there have been further refinements and qualifications. For instance, Gilbert Harman states the case economically when he argues that no descriptive statement of fact entails a moral statement.

F. What is common across all these renderings is an opposition to the thesis that there are real moral properties to which we can have either experiential or rational access.

III. For all the support this tradition has gained in recent decades, it is clearly at variance with still other commonsense notions about morality.

A. More often than not, the dictates of morality require avoidance of actions that are otherwise pleasurable or performance of actions that are, in and of themselves, highly odious. In all, then, there seems to be something about moral imperatives not included in the catalogue of pleasure, pain, or even utility.

B. Such arguments seem to leave little room for a distinction between what is morally right and what we choose on the basis of taste.

1. If it is just an accident of evolution that we have a nearly universal set of emotions or sentiments, then the morality arising from these is itself an accident of evolution. Our current morality, then, could be replaced by one radically different if our evolutionary emotional makeup were to change in future generations.

2. Evolutionary theory has already been invoked to account for altruism and other seemingly ethical dispositions.

C. The same rationale must lead to moral skepticism. If the entirety of moral discourse and moral judgment is reducible to evolutionary pressures and utility-maximizing behavior, we must reject some standard of morality existing outside a given point in evolution and a given species evolving.

D. Also problematical within this sentimentalist tradition in moral philosophy is its failure to allow for any kind of moral disagreement.

1. About a century ago, G. E. Moore argued that two individuals, upon consulting their own feelings to judge a course of action, could arrive at different conclusions as to whether course of action X or Y was preferable.

2. Neither person can judge whether the other's sense of "more wrong" and "less wrong" is better.

3. Without the ability to argue the different points of view, the two individuals cannot refer to those sentiments that, according to Hume, are universally distributed in the community of human beings.

IV. We might find it more profitable to avoid notions of internal sentiment and consider the expression of sentiments in judgments of utility.

A. Hume emphasized considerations of utility in marking out moral boundaries. His disciple, John Stuart Mill, developed *utilitarianism* into a full-fledged ethical system.

1. But the very concept of utility leaves the door nearly wide open to all of the traditional moral theories. We must identify for whom, for what, and under what conditions a course of action is "useful."

2. It does not help to suggest that each person answer these questions individually, because no one has the right to impose standards of utility on another.

B. The frequency with which utilitarian factors match up with ordinary understandings of moral obligation would seem to make the thesis something of a happy accident from a moral point of view.

C. It becomes a serious contender, however, when the concepts of happiness and utility begin to take seriously what is generally regarded as Aristotle's sense of *eudaimonia*.

V. In his 1788 *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant presents an entirely different conception of morality.

A. Over and against considerations of desire or sentiment, Kant's moral theory ties good will to a willing and faithful allegiance to, and reverence for, law.

1. The law in question is not statutory or legislative but the moral law within each person.

2. It is applicable in all contexts, not subject to prevailing standards, local conditions, or situational nuances.

B. Kant suggests that the moral law is a categorical imperative, an imperative that applies *come what may.* Kant expresses the categorical imperative in several ways, one of them forbidding the use of another moral being merely as a tool, but always and only as an end in himself.

C. Kant's moral philosophy bases morality on reason and, thus, reserves the moral domain to creatures who are rational. This still leaves open the problem of moral relativism, in that human rationality routinely leads to different conclusions on matters of moral consequence.

VI. To gain greater clarity, we might consider the realist–anti-realist positions.

A. The realist takes the laws of science as *really* operating in the world, not as shorthand for perceptual regularities or abstractions based on an idealized world that has never been.

B. The anti-realist regards the laws as having great usefulness to aid our predictions and descriptions, but as tools of investigation, not as discoveries about reality itself.

C. Just as the scientific realist regards the properties of the physical world to be mind-independent, so, too, does the moral realist regard the moral properties of reality to be independent of human reason, passion, or perception.

1. The moral realist—at least a radical one—is prepared to argue that the cosmos itself includes relational features and requirements constitutive of a moral order.

2. Human perception and judgment might pick this up faintly and incompletely, though progressively.

3. If beauty has a comparable independence, a set of properties waiting for the prepared mind to recognize them, then perhaps Socrates was on the right track after all in contending that truth, beauty, and justice were not only real but, finally, the same.

Recommended Reading:

Hare, R. M. *Moral Thinking.* Oxford, 1981.

Mackie, J. L. *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Penguin, 1977.

Robinson, D. N. *Praise and Blame: Moral Realism and Its Application*. Princeton, 2002.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is a "moral" sentiment?

2. Is there any fact that could entail a moral "ought"?

3. How does Kant's conception of a "duty to the law" work when the law itself is immoral?

Lecture Fifty-Six
Medicine and the Value of Life

Scope: The arena in which moral theories vie for credibility is that of real life, where the stakes are high and the problems seldom simple. This is especially the case in medicine, where life-and-death decisions are made daily and where often it is the lesser of two evils that exhausts the choices. What guidance does moral philosophy provide in this domain? Illustrative cases can be examined as they would be informed by utilitarianism or by deontological moral theories. It becomes clear that neither of these dominant moral perspectives easily disposes of the actual cases confronted by physicians. Distinctions between killing and letting die, between letting die and assisting in suicides, between doing good with evil nonetheless foreseen and doing evil are examined. It becomes clear that there is no reliable unit of value with which to determine the value to be set on life. Nor are there easy answers to questions about which lives are to be saved and which forfeited under realistic conditions. In the end, moral philosophy is not really developed to the point of settling such matters, its proper function being the identification of the principles that seem to be at work as decisions are made.

Outline

I. There are three dominant schools of moral philosophy.

- **A.** One of these, beginning as a theory of the moral sentiments, Hume's moral theory, lays the foundation for utilitarianism based on the goal of optimizing pleasure and minimizing pain.
- **B.** Aristotelian "perfectionist" theories absorb the moral domain into that of character itself, where the decisive factor is the manner in which one's actions accord with the dictates of reason.
- **C.** On Kantian deontological grounds, morality arises from the autonomy of a rational being free to decide, to observe, or to defy the moral law. Kantian moral theory focuses on the intentions of the actor, not the consequences of the action.
- **D.** General theories of this sort are "abstract" in that they do not offer long lists of the actions required or forbidden by the terms of the theory. They do provide a framework within which to weigh significant actions for their moral worth.

II. All moral theories place a premium on actions capable of causing great harm to the innocent; thus, one of the richest arenas in which to test the applications and implications of competing theories is medicine. Our willingness to favor a given moral theory depends partly on whether, in concrete cases, it calls for actions that appear to be sound and justified, if not obligatory, or whether it seems to allow actions many would reasonably regard as unacceptable.

III. From a moral point of view, there are a variety of questions surrounding the taking of a life, including how one life may be valued as worth more or less than another, in different situations.

- **A.** With suicide, there is no complication arising from proxy decisions, nor is the judgment of the value of the life in question reserved to any party except the person whose life it is.
  - **1.** Kant argues that suicide is a moral wrong because the grounds on which such an act would be chosen—to create or change a state of feeling—entails using a rational being (oneself, in this case) as an instrument to bring about some desired state of affairs.
  - **2.** On the other hand, the ancient Roman Stoic Seneca says in his essay *On Fear* that a debilitating disease, for instance, would rob a person of the very dignity Kant accords rational beings.
  - **3.** Hume contends that God presumably gave human beings the power of free choice in order to promote their happiness and well-being and that both of these objectives may be best met by ending a life of misery and torment.
  - **4.** In his libertarian and utilitarian philosophy, John Stuart Mill places the freedom of the individual as a higher value than the paternalistic concerns of those who would thwart individual efforts and aims. Accordingly, the morality of suicide is to be weighted according to the utilities associated with continuing or ending a life of pain and misery.
- **B.** Great controversy has surrounded the question of physician-assisted suicide.

1. Proponents have argued that so momentous a decision is likely to be made by patients with degraded capacities under extremely difficult conditions.
2. Thus, the decision to end one's life made, the humane course of action would seem to be implementation by a qualified medical doctor.
3. If one judges outcome X to be morally and legally permissible and further judges that it is best brought about via medical procedure, then it would seem to follow that competent physicians should be prepared to assist as needed.
4. To absolve physicians from such a duty—in case they regard suicide as immoral—would call for a reassessment of the patient's own claim to have some sort of moral right to take his own life.

IV. Another controversial issue in medical ethics is the basis on which resources are committed to preserve life.

A. Technology has now reached a level where a person can be kept alive indefinitely—at least as a continuing and living physiological "preparation." This might require such life-support measures as intravenous feeding and a respirator, or more, in addition to staff, hospital facilities, and so on.

B. A chronically vegetative patient, such as Karen Quinlan, whose case came to the fore in 1975, is an example of what technically *can* be achieved in this arena. She survived in this state for a decade.

C. Why should a hospital bed, a respirator and feeding tube, nursing and medical specialists, and costly physical facilities be committed to preserving a life such as this?
1. On cost/benefit terms, the decision is simply unwarranted.
2. On Kantian terms, the patient is no longer a "moral" entity at all.
3. In such cases, the fear, of course, is the fear of the "slippery slope"; if Karen Quinlan has no right to be kept alive, owing to the loss of all cognitive and social capacities, what then of profoundly retarded persons? What of those not profoundly retarded but significantly sub-normal?

V. Even more controversial still is the ending of fetal life through elective abortions, as the entities destroyed in this way are not severely disabled or in states of pain and suffering.

A. Some moralists, granting that fetuses have a right to their lives, have denied that that right imposes a duty on anyone else to sustain and nurture it.

B. Other moralists have denied that fetuses have rights at all, on the grounds that rights properly understood are possessed only by those able to claim and use them.

C. On the other side, it is observed that the fetuses in question are fully human in the genetically identifiable sense, are alive, and are on one point along an unbroken continuum leading to full humanity. Taking their lives is a homicidal act.

D. None of the developed schools of moral philosophy has the resources to settle this matter decisively.
1. The basis on which one demands an abortion is that one has a "right" to this course of action. But moral philosophy and ethics have a notoriously difficult problem with the very concept of a right.
2. Moral philosophy is doubly vexed when occasions call for assigning relative weights to rights in conflict—in this case, the right of a woman to prevent others from requiring her to bring a pregnancy to term versus the fetus's assumed right to its own life.

VI. A final set of issues arises from developments in modern genetics. There are now more than a thousand disorders and diseases that can be matched up with genetic markers, even early in fetal life.

A. Parents might learn that a pregnancy brought to term would yield medical expenses that will impoverish them within a matter of a few years.

B. In addition to the obvious moral choices entailed by such cases, consider these questions:
1. At work here is the possibility of encouraging a decision to end a life by presenting information regarding risks. How should such possibilities and probabilities be dealt with?
2. Should insurance companies have access to such genetic profiles and be permitted to set premiums on the basis of risks?

VII. Moral philosophy, as such, is not a problem-solver or even a means by which to find the better of equally unwelcome choices.

- **A.** Moral philosophy can, however, make clear to those who must decide such matters the principle that appears to be guiding the decision and the implications arising from such a principle.
- **B.** Contemporary medical ethics recognizes the *principle of nonmaleficence*, which is different from beneficence.
  1. Beneficence is the disposition to bring about good effects.
  2. Nonmaleficence comes into play when the options are all likely to harm the patient in some way.
  3. "Do no harm" is modified to "Do the least harm where harm itself is unavoidable."
- **C.** But complications stalk the application of every principle. In many instances, a course of action may have both positive and negative effects.
  1. The textbook example features a pregnant woman suffering from a treatable cancer, but where the course of radiation therapy almost certainly will kill the fetus. Here we have the *double-effect*, one intended, the other foreseen but not desired.
  2. As far back as Thomas Aquinas we can find moral guidelines to help those facing such dilemmas.
  3. First, the action itself must not be one that is intrinsically wrong.
  4. Second, the sincere intention must be to save a life, not to take one.
  5. Third, the bad effect is not produced as the means by which to bring about the good one.
  6. Finally, the good achieved must be greater than the evil unavoidably associated with it.

VIII. The moral of this moral tale is that there was moral life before there was moral philosophy, and there were good and worthy citizens before there were treatises on ethics. The subject matter of philosophy is drawn from the actual practices and problems faced by real persons confronting the realities of life.

- **A.** It is not philosophy's mission to limit reality to problems it deals with adroitly. What is faced in the medical clinic and the surgery are issues of such novelty and seriousness that the least helpful instrument in the circumstance may well be the learned essay in ethics.
- **B.** It is a strength and a virtue, not a weakness or a vice, to know and acknowledge one's limits. Ethics as a philosophical subject is no stranger to limits.

Recommended Reading:

Brock, Dan. *Life and Death:* Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Cassell, E. *The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does one evaluate evils in order to determine which is the lesser?
2. Is Kant's categorical imperative even practicable within the real world of medical treatments and research?
3. Under what conditions, if any, would you sacrifice an innocent life to save two?

Lecture Fifty-Seven
On the Nature of Law

Scope: Philosophy of law begins with critical appraisals of the sources of law's authority. It is an ancient subject, already developed in Aristotle's political and constitutional writing and systematically considered by Cicero and others major figures in ancient Rome. For two millennia, the results of these inquiries favored what came to be called *natural law theory*, rooting the law's origins and authority in the laws of nature itself and in the rational nature of human beings. With the Enlightenment's broad critical attack on all sorts of conventional understandings and traditional institutions, law, too, came under scrutiny. Late in the 18th century, a number of major reformers, especially Jeremy Bentham, began to consider not the formal features of law but its functions, its utility. Bentham's student John Austin developed the perspective to the point of establishing analytical jurisprudence as an alternative to earlier approaches. The result was a theory of law that distinguished it from moral philosophy and moral aims. The resulting legal positivism offers law as a social product, devised to solve actual problems in ways that enjoy wide agreement in a particular community. An even less philosophical version of these developments is that *legal realism* that would reduce law to whatever it is that predicts the behavior of courts. Central to this notion is law as something made by judges. All this duly noted, the essential claims of natural law theory either are required for these other formulations to make sense or provide something essential that is missing from alternatives.

Outline

I. Philosophy of law, or jurisprudence, has long been of interest to philosophers.

- **A.** In his treatise on *Politics*, Aristotle defined law as "reason without passion."
- **B.** Cicero speaks of law as akin to "the mind of God" and distinguishes the natural law from both the law of nations and the civic law.
- **C.** To keep an already complex historical record and conceptual terrain manageable, I would stipulate that philosophy of law begins when we can identify a position taken on the origins and sources of law and its resulting authority.
  - **1.** On this understanding, the oldest tradition in philosophy of law is theological.
  - **2.** Times or settings in which this minimal theoretical framework is missing are best understood as pre-legal.
  - **3.** We see that the defining mark of philosophy is a mode of *criticism* designed to test the validity or truth of propositions.
- **D.** The standard legal "textbook" of the early medieval period—the *Institutes* of the emperor Justinian (A.D. 533)—divides law into the classification that Cicero had developed: *natural*, *common*, and *civic.* He preserves the sense of law as an expression of natural reason, tied to the happiness and security of the community.
- **E.** Seven centuries later, Thomas Aquinas will put his seal on natural law theory, declaring law to be "an ordinance of reason, promulgated by one who is responsible for the good of the community."

II. The Enlightenment, however, drew attention to the confusion between what many deemed the natural state of affairs and states of affairs that had simply gone on too long, with formidable powers seeking to preserve the status quo.

- **A.** One leader of the Reform movement was Jeremy Bentham, a profound influence on John Stuart Mill's early education.
  - **1.** Bentham's student John Austin, during his time in the Chair of Jurisprudence, prepared a volume that would profoundly affect how law itself is understood—*The Province of Jurisprudence Determined*.
  - **2.** It would be too much to say that Austin or any single book established the field of analytical jurisprudence.
  - **3.** Nonetheless, one searches without success for works before Austin's that so clearly distinguish moral and legal concepts and reserve independent status to each.

B. At the root, law is a command, perhaps in the form of a wish, covering a range of actions and declared by a sovereign. Law is not a moral maxim, a religious belief, the voice of conscience, an ordinance of reason, or the mind of God.

C. Here, then, is a succinct and early statement of *legal positivism*.
  1. Law is what is enacted or authoritatively promulgated and enforced.
  2. The focus is on the legal concepts themselves, not on their allegedly moral dependencies or sources.

III. Legal positivism, however, leaves the fundamental issues in philosophy of law more or less untouched.

A. On neither Austin's account nor those advanced by his successors in legal positivism is it clear just what enters into the concept of *sovereign*.
  1. Austin's *command theory* of law, which ties the command-function to little more than the power of enforcement, seems to confer the standing of legislator on unwanted types.
  2. The gun-toting thief who commands us to hand over our wallets seems to qualify as a lawgiver.

B. Hart's attempt to eliminate such counterintuitive possibilities is in the form of something he called the *rule of recognition*—to say that a given rule is valid is to recognize it as passing all the tests provided by the rule of recognition.
  1. We "recognize" the Motor Vehicle Bureau as the place that prints valid drivers' licenses; we recognize Congress as the body that passes valid laws.
  2. In this way, the rule of recognition corrects one of the basic flaws in the command theory and enables all to determine when a law is valid.

C. Lon Fuller provided a natural law critique of this entire line of reasoning.
  1. The moral and rational powers presupposed by the rule of law are also at work in distinguishing between *law* as something to be faithfully obeyed and *law* as but a word seeking to conceal arbitrary, immoral, and tyrannical modes of control.
  2. Fuller is prepared to insulate the rule of law from specific, substantive moral mandates but insists that the very concept of law requires a *procedural* morality ensuring the law's fairness, consistency, and clarity.

IV. Natural law theory and legal positivism do not exhaust the options in philosophy of law.

A. Ronald Dworkin's criticism of legal positivism begins with the observation that courts must often decide cases for which there are no precedents and nothing in the record of "social facts" sufficient to settle the matter.
  1. One instance he cited is *Riggs v. Palmer*, which had to decide whether a murderer was entitled to enjoy what his victim had bequeathed him in his will.
  2. Dworkin concluded that the authority and validity of law result from its embodiment of moral aims widely shared in the community and of a nature to justify the values and practices of the community.
  3. Judges, thus, should decide hard cases by interpreting the political structure of their communities.

B. However, much of the South—understood surely as a "community"—accepted slavery as a property right and, more important, the right to make that judgment as a state's right.

C. To some extent, Dworkin's theory descends from that *legal realism* that flourished in American jurisprudence under such defenders as Oliver Wendell Holmes, Rosco Pound, and Jerome Frank.

D. Kant composed an analytical exposition on the nature of law, understood as part of the metaphysics of morals.
  1. Kant says "the science of right" has the principle of law as its object, which can be promulgated by external legislation.
  2. The principle states that every action is *right* in itself or in the maxim on which it proceeds if it can coexist with freedom of the will in all circumstances.

E. Law, then, is derived from a principle that seeks to preserve and honor the moral liberty of rational beings. That freedom, too, comes under the direction of a universal law, which, as we have seen in an earlier lecture, is a moral law.

F. Of rights, Kant asserts that only one is a natural and inborn right; all others derived from positive law and tradition.
  1. Freedom is independence of the compulsory will of another.

2. So far as it can coexist with the freedom of all according to a universal law, it is the one sole original inborn right belonging to all people.

V. These lines provide a foundation for one of the most influential works in contemporary philosophy of law, John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*.

A. As with Kant, Rawls's goal is the preservation of freedom from the compulsory will of another.

B. Kant's categorical imperative supports what Rawls calls the *difference principle*: Social and economic inequalities should be arranged so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged before they improve the condition of the more advantaged.

C. However, Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* is incomplete. It is surely not a Kantian maxim that the claim one has on the general resources is proportioned to the degree of disadvantage.

D. There is a small step, actually, from the position that law is no more than a social instrument to the use of law to secure social conditions dictated by theories that are presented as if they were protected from criticism, rather than outcomes of criticism.

E. Philosophy of law is extremely useful at the level of criticism. It makes no promises, however, at the level of great abiding and true discoveries.

Recommended Reading:

Dworkin, R. *Taking Rights Seriously*. Harvard, 1977.

Finnis, J. *Natural Law and Natural Rights.* Oxford, 1980.

Hart, H. L. A. *The Concept of Law*. Oxford, 1961.

Questions to Consider:

1. How is natural law theory reconciled to the utter diversity of legal precepts in different cultures at different times?
2. Is Kant's philosophy of law in any sense a practical jurisprudence?
3. If law is sensitive to such factors as what a judge has for breakfast, what claim does it have on our fidelity?

Lecture Fifty-Eight
Justice and Just Wars

Scope: The ancient political philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero reserve extensive space for the concept of justice, treating it chiefly as a virtue to be cultivated in the formation of good character. What we would take to be matters of social justice or political justice are based on the same considerations of moderation, reasonableness, and the control of passions and enthusiasms of one sort or another. There is no principled objection to class distinctions, nor is the institution of slavery or gender-based discrimination regarded as unjust. The one school of ancient philosophy that includes such notions as universal brotherhood or respect for the dignity of every person is that of the Cynics. Their commitment to the most natural forms of life stands as a criticism of all sorts of affectation. It is with certain of the Stoic philosophers, however, that arguments are developed to the effect that the same rational principles operative in the cosmos must be respected in human affairs and that human rationality itself qualifies human beings for special standing. Only later, however, and under the influence of Christian theology, do these themes find development of the concept of natural rights possessed equally by all. Even adversaries in war are to be respected in ways that acknowledge their humanity.

Theories of the "just war," beginning with St. Augustine and including such later commentators as St. Thomas Aquinas, Francisco de Vittoria, and Francisco Suarez, set forth the principles by which engaging in and conducting war are justified. The ultimate justification for waging war is securing a durable and just peace. The manner in which the war is waged must be toward this end; actions proportioned to attain this end must be at minimal cost in pain and suffering and with no further and selfish objectives. But to do good and avoid evil, as a guide to governance, must also reflect back on the role of the state in relation to its own citizens, who are also subject to evil ends but capable of good and decent lives. Various defenses of coercion are considered in this connection.

Outline

I. The concept of justice as an issue of rights—of giving one what is due, respecting one's individual dignity, and so on—is a relatively late addition to questions of justice.

- **A.** Neither the ancient Greek nor ancient Roman world devoted much time or papyrus to the matter of individual rights.
  - **1.** To the extent that Socrates, for example, may have had justice as a central concern, the concept applied to the criteria by which we judge a person's character, rather than to the question of whether the state has been the source of justice.
  - **2.** In Plato's *Republic*, justice in the state is what leads to harmony and peace, but in the individual, it takes the form of a selfless and rational commitment to do the morally right thing.
  - **3.** For Aristotle and Cicero, justice is simply the "virtue of the magistrate" and, more or less, a matter of convention and of law.
- **B.** There are discussions of certain principles of justice, such as equity and fair distributions of goods. The emphasis is on reasonableness and moderation. Justice is what we are each obliged to strive for in our association with others and our dealings in the world.
- **C.** The ancient concept of justice is established in an intellectual framework that holds that there is a cosmic rational order and that a comparable rational order is the natural state of affairs for human societies.
  - **1.** Rational beings are to be ruled by law rather than by force, and actions by and toward them carry the burden of justification.
  - **2.** This line of thought, though foundational for all developed ideas of justice, does not conclude in clear statements of universal human rights.
- **D.** Once we remove this conception of justice as a virtue and turn to conceptions of social justice or the rights of man, the ancient world has much less to say.
  - **1.** Aristotle insists that it is right that Hellenes shall rule barbarians.
  - **2.** Plato's republic is anti-democratic, committed to eugenic forms of human breeding, and class-structured on meritocratic grounds.

3. Slavery is commonplace in all of recorded history and often predicated on the belief that some persons or tribes or religious groups or races are simply inferior to their enslaving masters.

E. The closest we come to a discussion of universal individual rights is in some of the precepts of the ancient Cynics.

1. Diogenes (412–323 B.C.) was a leader of this radically "democratic" school of philosophy, opposed to class hierarchies and even slavery.
2. Here, too, however, notions of universal brotherhood did not capture the sense of "rights" as such, but something more akin to a naturalism that requires social and political life to be stripped of what is merely artificial and self-serving.

II. Perhaps the most significant development in conceptions of justice was that introduced by the early church fathers, especially by St. Augustine in his discussion of conscience and freedom of the will.

A. *Justice* on this account is obedience to God's law, which may place a person in adversarial relationships with others and with the state.

B. Augustine is also important for his comments on slavery. He sees in slavery only the lust for domination, which condemns the master, but Augustine does not offer any political argument for abolition.

C. John Locke, regarded as the prophet of American liberty, in the preamble to the Constitution for Carolina in 1669, made express provision for the keeping of "leet-men," holdover serfs of medieval Europe, or slaves.

D. I know of no anti-slavery treatise based on the universal principle of human rights before the 17th century, when the Quakers protested the importation of slaves from Africa.

III. There are earlier treatises on "human rights" apart from the issue of slavery and its abolition.

A. The Magna Carta of 1215, signed by King John at Runnymede, affirms the rights of the Church against the Crown and grants individuals free exercise of their religious convictions.

1. The document neither affirms universal rights nor focuses on the individual as the bearer of such rights.
2. It lays the foundation for principles that will become more sharply defined in the Reformation and thereafter, as to the limits on royal prerogatives and clerical authority.

B. By the 18th century, the secular version of this conception of justice requires rule by right reason over and against any rule based on no more than revelation or tradition.

IV. Out of the religious wars between Christians and Muslims would come a most significant teaching on the rights of man—Francisco de Vittoria's (1480–1546) *De Indis* and his *De Jure Belli Relectiones*.

A. Vittoria insists that God's laws apply to the children of God and would preserve them from torture and torment. The religious ignorance or waywardness of a people cannot justify inhumane acts toward them, even during war.

B. Vittoria also proposes the idea of a "just war," beyond the ancient concept of "might makes right."

1. Christian theological virtues also must be adhered to, including the stipulation that "mercy is the perfection of justice."
2. Justice now is measured against motives, and the motives must be faithful to Christian values.

C. In the context of Christian teaching, the two most significant writers on the subject of the just war were St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

1. Augustine made clear that, at the personal level, only self-defense can justify the use of lethal force. At the level of nation-states, however, there is a larger purpose served: the preservation of peace. This view specifically rules out as permissible motives or justifications for war "the passion for inflicting harm, the cruel thirst for vengeance… the lust of power."
2. With Thomas Aquinas, we see the full development of a theory of just war in an attempt to remove the inconsistency that results in what he offers as the sole justifications for war. For a war to be just, three things are necessary.
3. The authority of a sovereign by whose command the war is to be waged.
4. A just cause, namely, that those who are attacked should be attacked because they deserve it on account of some fault.

5. The belligerents should intend the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil.

D. Once a war has begun, there are comparable principles determining what is justly done in the prosecution of the war. The main criterion is proportionality, recognized immunity of non-combatants.

1. Refinements were added over the centuries by such theorists as Francisco Suarez (1548–1617), Francisco de Vittoria, and Hugo Grotius (1583–1645).
2. The warring party, seeking no more than the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil, must itself avoid evil.
3. The war must be waged with restraint, applying no greater force than is needed to secure the desired good.
4. Its motivation must not be corrupted by considerations of wealth or power.

V. If these are principles that at least plausibly classify warfare as just, are they *mutatis mutandis*, applicable to relationships between the individual and the state? If a nation may justly make war to secure peace and resist evil, might it not also impose coercively on citizens forms of conduct and life also consistent with peace and decency?

A. In the liberal tradition, the state's justifiable use of force has been limited to the prevention of harm. John Stuart Mill made the harm principle the prime justification for the constraint of liberty.

B. But this is unhelpful until and unless the category of "harms" is worked out with some precision.

1. To the harm principle some have argued for the addition of "offense" and "nuisance."
2. Citizens should also be protected against actions that are so patently offensive as to diminish the dignity of civic life.
3. Coercive constraints in such cases must be applied in a measured and proportionate fashion, the motive again not corrupted by self-serving factors.

C. The problem with this reasonable paradigm is that it leaves plenty of room for excessive forms of state paternalism, as well as excessive forms of state paralysis. What standards are to be applied to notions of offense and nuisance or, for that matter, harm?

D. Paternalism is nearly unavoidable, except in total anarchies. The compulsory education of children is one expression of it, as are laws requiring seat belts, denying the right to smoke in public places, forbidding the sale of alcohol to minors, and so on.

1. Provable harm is not invariably at issue in these contexts.
2. Nor are those opposed to state paternalism comparably opposed to state welfarism. John Rawls, for example, requires a hands-off policy in the matter of individual liberty but a hands-on policy in compensating for marked inequality in wealth and opportunity.

VI. Virtue, of which justice is an instance, cannot be reduced to a formula nor manifested in the form of trappings and slogans. Justice in the state comes from just citizens, just magistrates, and just legislators.

A. To the extent that, at least metaphorically, we can speak of the state as "virtuous," we can mean only that its institutions and practices are designed to promote virtue and oppose evil.

B. "Do good and avoid evil" is a command accessible to those with common sense and sufficient civic breeding to understand how their actions contribute to the tone of life, their own included. Nothing serves them better than a political world in which the rule is the rule of law, understood to be an ordinance of reason.

Recommended Reading:

Augustine. *The City of God* (downloadable).

Paine, Thomas. *The Rights of Man* (downloadable).

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the right answer to the Athenian claim in the Melian dialogue?
2. Suppose the native population in the Americas were judged to be doomed to hell unless converted. What argument would still require tolerance and a respect for the autonomy of their beliefs?

3. Does the just-war theorist have an answer to the pacifist, and if so, what is it?

Lecture Fifty-Nine
Aesthetics—Beauty Without Observers

Scope: The subject of beauty is among the oldest in philosophy, treated at length in several of the dialogues of Plato and in his *Symposium*. There, in the voice of Diotima, the theory is advanced that beauty is a universal property, hinted at in some particular objects, but occupying a transcendent realm of reality. Medieval debts to, and extensions of, the Platonist conception subsume aesthetics under religious and moral categories, regarding aesthetics as a formal subject not unlike mathematics and astronomy. With the Reformation comes a movement against artistic representations of religious themes, again, however, subsuming art under the more fundamental categories of religion and morals. The Counter-Reformation returns art to a position of centrality in religious ritual and life. Bernini exemplifies the attempted integration of art, architecture, and sculpture in his creative Baroque style.

It is in the later 17th and 18th centuries that aesthetics is established as the study of taste, independent of religious or moral purposes and content. Shaftesbury, Hume, and other members of the British sentimentalist school of morals add the aesthetic sense to the list of mental or affective resources of human psychology. With Hume, there is a formal divorce between beauty and any real properties of the objects that lead to such ascriptions. Beauty is a product of the perceptual and emotional responses to an object, where the agreeable feelings are most reliably associated with judgments of aesthetic value. Burke's influential essay on the sublime and the beautiful reinforces theories of this sort, arguing that it is the perceived power and danger in the objects of our experience that lead to feelings of sublimity.

Against this school of aesthetics are more rationally and cognitively based aesthetic philosophies. The rationalist school takes aesthetics to include standards of taste and judgment permitting assessments of the good, the bad, and the prosaic. Feelings alone cannot account for the seemingly epistemic character of aesthetic judgment. Kant is most thorough in incorporating these ideas into a general theory of judgment, with particular attention to aesthetic judgments. What renders these unique (and different from feelings of pleasure or the sense of agreeableness) is that the judgments (a) are disinterested—they do not require or presuppose any feeling or sentiment whatever, (b) are understood as universal rather than merely personal, (c) are regarded as being grounded in a necessary connection between the object and its aesthetic value, and (d) find in the work judged signs of purpose or point.

On still another account, defended by G. E. Moore, the "beautiful" is a relational affair, akin to the formal relationships obtaining in mathematics, such that it does not require an observer for its existence.

Outline

I. In Plato's *Symposium*, Socrates recounts the lessons learned from Diotima, the mysterious woman from Mantineia, wise beyond measure. This is among the first philosophical inquiries into the nature of beauty.

- **A.** It speaks of the essence of beauty as distinct from the particular objects, sounds, and events that might be "beautiful" in the narrower sense.
- **B.** The beauty thus imagined does not depend on us or on any percipient for its reality. It is independent of mental representation or personal preferences.
- **C.** In addressing both the characteristics that constitute beauty in an object and the faculties an observer needs to experience the object's beauty, Plato establishes the *philosophy of aesthetics*.
- **D.** The observer, on this account, is to cultivate a native sensuous and reflective power, which when properly developed, expresses itself in the form of sound aesthetic judgment.

II. Aesthetics has not been understood in quite the same way in different historical epochs. Medieval conceptions were largely a merging of Greek and Hebrew sources, with Plato and the Old Testament enjoying special authority.

- **A.** The art form that dominated medieval aesthetics was music, one of the featured subjects of the medieval university curriculum.

B. The *quadrivium* comprised arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music, the common feature, of course, being the rational structure of all four.

C. The status of music was highest among the forms of art because of its mathematical structure, which grounded it in the eternal, immutable domain that Platonism reserves to the "true form" of things.

D. The same reasoning stands behind the medieval conception of beauty as a moral property and of morals as having an aesthetic quality.

1. This helps us understand why deviations from strict principles of harmony were regarded as moral offenses.

2. Whereas the classical world idealized nature, the medieval Christian world regarded what was earthly, physical, and accessible to the senses as transitory and misleading.

E. It is not until the Italian Renaissance that aesthetic theory turns away from the formalism of the object to the sensibilities of the observer and to the concept of *taste*.

1. Early in the 18th century, essays begin to discuss the measure of "good taste."

2. To possess good taste is, as the term will be applied later, to be an *aesthete*; to lack it is to be a *philistine*.

III. An issue regarded as pivotal during the Enlightenment especially pertains to the place of rationality itself in aesthetics.

A. Is the aesthetic "judgment" actually the report of the aesthetic experience, or is it a rational reflection on that experience?

1. Diderot regarded it as a faculty shaped by experience and instruction.

2. D'Alembert, treats it as a form of reasoning.

3. Montesquieu and others regard it as a distinct faculty.

4. Shaftesbury adds the aesthetic sense to the moral sense as a native feature of the human sentiments.

B. David Hume's philosophy challenges the proposition that taste somehow finds something in an object that is the source of its beauty.

1. *Beauty* itself refers to the manner in which the senses respond to an object.

2. Mental operations then fashion aesthetic judgments of it.

3. However, as in his moral theory, Hume discovers universal aesthetic tendencies, dispositions, and sentiments in the human race at large.

4. There are standards of taste and degrees of competence that qualify some as *connoisseurs*.

IV. An account of this kind seems to be challenged, however, by the radically different aesthetic styles that somehow all render experience highly agreeable or "right." It is doubtful that the best explanation of such developments can be rendered in terms of sentiment, let alone utility.

A. Consider the *Baroque* style of art and architecture that flourished in the 17th century.

B. This style became dominant in certain parts of Europe and rare or even condemned in other parts. Generally, it was featured in Roman Catholic countries, where the Counter-Reformation included a rejection of the spare, ascetic, and puritanical aesthetics of the Protestant reformers.

C. Giovanni Bernini (1598–1660) led the movement in sculpture and architecture, declaring that the various modes of art should be merged, not divided.

1. Concrete expressions of the thesis are the three magnificent chapels he created in Rome: the Fonseca Chapel, the Albertoni, and the domed Church of Sant' Andrea al Quirinale.

2. He is best known for the Basilica and the colonnades of St. Peter's at the Vatican.

3. In sculpture, perhaps his two most popular works are the *Fountain of the Four Rivers* in the Piazza Navona and *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa* in the Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome.

D. The Baroque movement underscores the diffuse influences of the wider culture on how aesthetic forms are received. This is not Hume's sentiment-based theory but a more complex, perspectival theory in which moral, political, and religious thought establish the framework within which art is "seen" and "heard."

V. The Baroque, for all its influence, was more or less stopped in its tracks by the revolutionary change in perspective in the Enlightenment of the 18th century.

A. The dominant aesthetic form now reverts to classicism and interest in the history of art and architecture, as well as history at large.

B. Of the many distinct characteristics of the Enlightenment, its identity as the "age of history" is especially revealing.

1. Joachim Winckelmann's (1717–1768) *History of Ancient Art* did much to shape attitudes and impart knowledge about the classical worlds of Greece and Rome.

2. His depictions of ancient Athens were actually rearrangements by Winckelmann himself, intended to give what he took to be greater coherence and "effect" than would be conveyed by the actual record.

3. His characterization of the ancient Greek aesthetic ideal may still be the most informing and surely the briefest word on the subject: "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur."

C. But if not for the contemporary movement of thought toward a secular culture, away from centuries of religious turmoil and its political effects, it is unlikely that a "classic" revival would have been received at the aesthetic level of experience.

VI. Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) gives us an anticipation of the irrationalism and "Gothic" mystery that will pervade the Romantic rebellion.

A. Burke seeks to identify the causes and sources of the experience of sublimity as it is aroused by poetry, art, architecture, painting, and even religion and other spheres of thought and feeling that seem to overcome the senses and the intellect. His thesis is that two dominating ideas stand at the bottom of sublimity: danger and power.

B. The most influential work in the philosophy of aesthetics in the 18th century was Kant's *Third Critique* (1790). With respect to aesthetic judgments, Kant identifies four characteristics that must be present for the estimation to be at once a judgment and a judgment at the level of aesthetics:

1. The judgment must be disinterested, in that considerations of utility are absent.

2. It must be offered as universal, not merely personal.

3. The judgment presupposes that there is a necessary connection between the relevant properties of the object and the aesthetic pleasure resulting from it.

4. The objects of aesthetic judgment are understood as having a purpose, though not intended to serve a purpose—they are "purposive without purpose." The beauty of a natural landscape matches and exceeds the beauty of a painting of the same, but both are conceived as "intended."

C. This leaves Kant with the question of just how aesthetic judgments are made, because they are neither elementary sensations nor compounds of these but decisively cognitive, even "epistemic" from the point of view of the beholder. Aesthetic judgments, on this account, are drawn from a framework or categorical scheme of possible judgments, a scheme that grounds all judgment and that is neither empirical nor logical but foundational.

D. No friend to the Romanticism of *Sturm und Drang,* Kant nevertheless presents artistic genius as instantiated in beings that nature speaks not so much "to" as "through."

VII. The combined influence of Hume and Kant has shaped the philosophy of aesthetics in such a way as to divorce it from the moral, religious and political worlds in which art originally found its place.

A. On the Humean account, aesthetics is that part of empirical psychology that identifies the features of the external world generally productive of agreeable feelings. How this works is really a matter of scientific research, all attempts to answer the question by examining the actual objects being futile.

B. On the Kantian account, the very disinterested nature of aesthetic judgment divorces it directly from such non-aesthetic judgments as are made in moral and political philosophy—"Art for the sake of art," as it were.

C. G. E. Moore, in his *Principia Ethica* (1903), offered a different and radical conception of beauty.

1. He posits two worlds: one of exquisite and uninterrupted beauty and one of rank and unrelieved ugliness.

2. He argues that the former is preferable and that this very preference defeats the claim that the concept of beauty is exhausted by the resources of experience and feeling or even those of human judgment.
3. He concludes:

> We shall have to include in our ultimate end something beyond the limits of human existence. I admit, of course, that our beautiful world would be better still, if there were human beings in it to contemplate and enjoy its beauty. But that admission makes nothing against my points. If it be once admitted that the beautiful world in itself is better than the ugly, then it follows, that however many beings may enjoy it, and however much better their enjoyment may be than it is itself, yet its mere existence adds something to the goodness of the whole: it is not only a means to our end, but also itself a part thereof.

Recommended Reading:

Burke, Edmund. *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful and Other Pre-Revolutionary Writings*. Columbia University Press, 1958.

Hume, David. *On the Standard of Taste*. Liberty Fund, 1985.

Moore, G. E. *Principia Ethica* (1903). New York: Prometheus Books, 1988.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is beauty in the eye of the beholder, and if so, what must be assumed about that "eye"?
2. Can art ever be totally disinterested in Kant's sense?
3. If genius is innate, why do we praise the genius?

Lecture Sixty
God—Really?

Scope: Aristotle regarded theology as the "first philosophy," foundational for both natural science and mathematics. Philosophy of religion is a various and profoundly important field of inquiry for both the obvious substantive reasons and because of its ability to illuminate and test resources used in many other areas of philosophy. Of these, special importance attaches to the nature of belief in relation to epistemology, the nature of free will in relation to determinism, and the basis of just deserts. The core question, of course, pertains to the existence of God and the grounds on which belief in that is defensible. The most venerable argument favoring the proposition is Thomas Aquinas's "five way" proof. The assets and liabilities of these proofs are rehearsed. Several of the more popular criticisms are answered by invoking the notion of strong and weak warrants of belief, reliance here on Thomas Reid and William James. Two special challenges come by way of the problem of evil and the alleged incompatibility of human freedom and divine omnipotence. Each of these challenges is summarized and rebuttals are offered.

Outline

I. In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle distinguishes between natural science, or physics, which is theoretical and deals with what is inseparable from matter, and theology, what he calls that "first philosophy," which is prior to all the rest, is not confined to matter, and embraces what is universal.

- **A.** Philosophy of religion is a thriving specialty within philosophy, as much for the richness of religious concepts requiring philosophical analysis as for the substantive claims of religion, the implications of which are judged to be the most momentous.
- **B.** As the claims of religion either transcend the level of experience or include possibilities not given directly in experience, their acceptance requires faith, which has much in common with ordinary belief.
- **C.** According to Reid, for a child to learn, at least two core principles must be at work; otherwise the child is uneducable.
  1. The *principle of veracity* holds that there must be a native and universal inclination to speak the truth.
  2. According to the *principle of credulity*, there must be an equally native and universal inclination to accept what others say as truthful.
  3. Without the former, there could be no possibility of cooperative behavior, no efficacy to contracts and agreements, no social life.
  4. Absent the principle of credulity, we would all begin life as skeptics. If skepticism of this sort were to be habitual, the resulting distrust would deprive us of the greatest benefits of society.
- **D.** Such basic principles are "intuitive" and foundational for other principles.
  1. The specific principle of credulity, for example, is clearly not the gift of philosophical reflection, because this presupposes an inclination to believe the implications and conclusions arising from such reflection.
  2. It is what makes the practice and the prospects of such reflection intelligible.
  3. Only insofar as one is strongly inclined to believe the evidence of sense, the canons of logic, the potential efficacy of one's actions is any initiative plausible or even conceivable.
- **E.** William James associates his concept of the "will to believe" with a passage found in Alexander Bain's treatise on *The Emotions and the Will*: "The leading fact in Belief, according to my view of it, is our Primitive Credulity. We begin by believing everything."
- **F.** Though life soon alerts the child to the painful fact that not everyone is trustworthy, credulity is a natural, not an acquired, disposition. It is strongest in childhood and diminished in strength by experience and greater independence of mind.

II. As credulity gives way to caution and critical appraisals, a standard is developed so that judgment is not arbitrary and counterproductive. In the ordinary course of events, that standard is a pragmatic one.

- **A.** To seek a "warrant" for a given belief is to seek a justification that would distinguish the belief from a merely preferred fantasy. James looked to life on the whole as the source of any such warrant.

1. The objects of the knowable world are made more or less vivid by the process of *selection*, a reflection of one's interests and aims.
2. Actions are then recruited in the service of these interests.

B. The pragmatic warrant defended by James is expressed this way:
1. A pragmatist turns away from abstraction and insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from bad a priori reasons, from fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins.
2. He turns toward concreteness and adequacy, facts, action, and power.

C. The fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes of philosophy are rejected because they come to stand in the way of success in negotiating the challenges and facts of the world.
1. Hume's famous problem of induction says that we have no rational or logical warrant for assuming that the future is obliged or necessitated to mimic the past.
2. Thus, the faith we have in the continuing operation of the laws of science cannot be rationally justified.

D. Though there is much to be said for the anti-realist philosophy of science, achievements such as visiting the moon and returning home safely have been predicated on the belief we have that the lawfulness of reality is neither chimerical nor episodic.

E. We must find a position between infantile credulity and paralyzing skepticism, and the instrument we are likely to use in locating that position is a pragmatic one, broadly conceived.

III. Among are our most compelling interests are some reasonable understanding of our nature, of the nature of the world in which we find ourselves, and of the very point of life itself.

A. It would matter to know if it were, in fact, the case that the world is constituted as it is so that we could forge decent and productive lives.

B. It would matter to know if it were, in fact, the case that the laws of physical nature are reliable because the reality was constituted in such a way as to render it knowable and supportive of our form of life.

C. Philosophy of science asserts the *inference to the best explanation* criterion: Consider an event, then ask which, of all imaginable explanations that might account for it, is the *best* explanation. Two questions arise:
1. What is the standard by which to grade explanations as good, better, and best?
2. What counts as an explanation?

D. One explanation is in the form of probabilities.
1. If there is an indefinite number of possible realities, including one law-governed as ours seems to be, the explanation may at some time be replaced by a less lawful one, the increase in entropy eliminating the structured predictability of a world of objects.
2. The explanation may have been preceded by many abortive attempts to constitute a knowable cosmos, until one pattern just popped up and proved to be relatively stable.

E. This, however, would not defeat the theory of a providential God; it would simply suggest some degree of trial and error as an aspect of the creation. But it would be a weak warrant, because the proposition itself matches up with nothing else in our encounters with highly rule-governed, predictable, and complex systems.

F. We would, then, have a more defensible warrant for believing that the design features of reality suggest a designer.

IV. Thus do we turn to Thomas Aquinas and his famous "five ways" to prove the existence of God, as developed in the *Summa Theologiae*.

A. The first and plainest is the method that proceeds from the point of view of motion. Thomas's first proof is based on the concept of a prime mover, now understood as the result of an inference to the best explanation for celestial dynamics.

B. The second proof is from the nature of the efficient cause. From the fact that we can now see directly the effects of causal chains originating in times remote from human experience, we are called upon to make plausible inferences as to how the first efficient cause got the game started, and this, says Thomas, is that "which all call God."

C. The third proof is taken from the natures of the merely possible and necessary. Given that "nothing can come from nothing" and that there are many things, there must have been something that was the source of the first thing.

D. The fourth proof arises from degrees—of goodness, truth, nobility, and the like—that are found in things. There exists therefore something that is the truest, best, and noblest—the greatest being.

E. Thomas gives as the fifth proof the natural order itself: "There is something intelligent by which all natural things are arranged in accordance with a plan—and this we call God."

V. Each of these and all of them together have invited powerful criticism over a course of centuries.

A. Some theologians paradoxically reject the argument on the grounds that if the existence of God can be proved, there is no need for faith!

B. Still others, taking a page from Hume, question the reality of causal powers and, in any case, relegate them to our modes of perception and cognition.

C. It may also be said that Thomas has not given sufficient attention to the possibility of the "infinite regress," meaning that there may be no "first cause" at all, only a limitless chain of effects back to and through still other effects.

1. Though this is a metaphysical possibility, it does not match any experience we have of causality.

2. Thus, we would have a weaker warrant for assuming an infinite regress than for supposing an initial causal agent.

D. Still another forceful argument is that the "intelligibility" requirement Thomas asserts is a mere stipulation.

1. One reply to the proposition that, absent an ordering intelligence, the cosmos would be unintelligible is that the cosmos *is* unintelligible!

2. But this calls us back to the Apollo program: How do we successfully shuttle about in an unintelligible cosmos or even in the little sphere of it that is close to home?

VI. There are other arguments against the existence of God apart from the alleged problems of the Thomistic "five ways." Two in particular arise from moral considerations—the "problem of evil" and the presumed threat posed by human freedom to the alleged omniscience of God.

A. How could a God, at once omnipotent and beneficent, create a world so rife with evil? How could a just God permit evil to go unpunished?

1. In *Providence and the Problem of Evil* (1998), Richard Swinburne reasons that the choices made possible by the very existence of evil are the basis on which God's final judgments are made.

2. One of the most authoritative replies to the problem-of-evil argument is that of Alvin Plantinga, in the form of the "free will" defense. As with the law—which does all that it must when it does all that it can—God, too, has awsome power but is constrained by logical and even conceptual strictures.

B. Such rebuttals are carefully crafted but, in the end, not entirely convincing. It certainly seems to be in the realm of possibility that an omnipotent and benficent loving God could create a reality in which there is no evil, no pain and suffering, no crime.

1. A painless world of ceaseless joy and virtue strikes me as a gift beyond the imaginable; a prize without equal.

2. I should think that, unless God is bound by John Rawls's "difference principle," this is a state of affairs that requires more to deserve it than the simple fact that one lacks it.

C. As for freedom of the will defeating God's claim to omniscience, I am again on shaky ground, not knowing much about omniscience and but a bit more about free will.

1. If God is omniscient, then God knows everything that will ever occur, and this includes everything we will do.

2. If I grasp the sense of omniscience as it is acribed to God, I would expect it to include everything that is actual and possible.

3. Among the items that are actual and possible are all the actions that will ever have been freely taken.

4. Thus, there is no incompatibility between our freedom and God's omniscience.

VII. In the previous lecture, I summarized G. E. Moore's conception of beauty as a state of affairs we would wish to see established even if we knew we would not have access to it; the notion being that, were the choice

between a world of beauty and one of ugliness, we would choose the former, despite the fact that it would never be part of our experience. One might ask, in this vein, what one would choose: a dead cosmos of meaningless statistical possibilities or one alive with promise and nurturing of hope. I would regard it as simply curmudgeonly to choose the former. I choose the latter.

Recommended Reading:

Plantinga, A. *God, Freedom and Evil.* New York: Eardmann, 1974.

Swinburne, R. *Providence and the Problem of Evil*. Oxford, 1998.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the status of faith if God's existence is provable?
2. How do the "five ways" stand in light of modern physics?
3. What limits are there on omnipotence?

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Essential Reading:

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Berkeley, George. *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Berkeley's systematic critique of materialistic theories and his alternative "immaterialist" thesis.

Brock, Dan. *Life and Death*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. A thoughtful review of the ethical aspects of those "life-and-death" issues arising from modern medicine.

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Brown, P. *The Body and Society*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. Peter Brown's study of the patristic and early medieval cultures of faith are illuminating at every level of detail. The special significance of man's corporeal nature is examined closely.

Budd, Malcolm. *Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Psychology*. London: Routledge, 1989. The Wittgensteinian "discursive turn" is featured, as the grammatical confusions in psychology are noted.

Burke, Edmund. *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958. Here is one of the earliest contributions to aesthetics and its psychological grounding, presented by a young Burke, already a master of English prose.

Careri, Giovanni Bernini. *Flights of Love: The Art of Devotion*. Linda Lappin, trans. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. Bernini's philosophy of aesthetics and defense of the Baroque.

Cassell, E. *The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. A balanced and thoughtful treatise in medical ethics.

Cassirer, Ernst. *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. An informed summary of major philosophical perspectives in the Renaissance.

Churchland, Patricia Smith. *Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of Mind-Brain.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986. Philosophy of mind can get no more "materialistic" than this.

Clark, Kenneth. *The Romantic Rebellion: Romantic versus Classic Art.* London: J. Murray, 1973. The claims of genius against those of science, the claims of the imagination against those of measurement.

Cohen, J.B. *Revolution in Science*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994. The author offers a sensible evaluation of the idea of scientific "revolutions" and their relation to the larger intellectual context.

Collingwood, R. G. *The Idea of History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. Essays on the nature of historical scholarship and explanation.

Condorcet. *Selected Writings*. K. Baker, ed. Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Publishing Co., 1976. Condorcet was the most scientifically acute of the "philosophes." The subtle and appealing character of his thought comes across vividly in this collection.

Cottingham, J., et al., eds. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. This is the most accessible collection of Descartes's major philosophical works.

Dane, N., and J. Ambrose, eds. *Greek Attitudes*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1974. The editors select wisely from the literary, political, philosophical and aesthetic offerings of the Classical age of Greece.

de Bruyne, Edgar. *The Esthetics of the Middle Ages*. trans. Eileen B. Hennesey. New York: F. Unger Publishing Co., 1969. A close and informing study of the conceptual and religious grounding of medieval art.

Dworkin, R. *Taking Rights Seriously*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977. An argument for the liberal state and a defense of "judge-made" law.

Epictetus. *The Discourses*. C. Hill, ed. London: Everyman, 1995. The classic Stoic position on the widest range of social, political, and individual issues.

Erasmus, Desiderius. *Ten Colloquies*. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1957. More an "op ed" set of essays on the state of the world at the close of the 15th century; a quintessential "humanistic" work.

Fairfield, Roy, ed. *The Federalist Papers*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1966. All 85, with their analysis of the essential nature and aims of politics and a realistic perspective on the odds for success; the most incisive set of political essays struck at a single time, ever.

Ferruolo, S. *The Origins of the University*. California: Stanford University Press, 1985. The modern university is indebted to the Scholastic age of scholarship and analysis, its commitment to a broadly based curriculum and its major modes of instruction and examination.

Fideler, D. ed. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*. York Beach, Maine: Phanes Press, 1987. Pythagoras and his disciples did not record their beliefs and discoveries, but here we have a set of maxims and fragments with which to construct a fuller picture of the teachings of the sect.

Findlay, J. *Hegel: A Reexamination*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1958. The ever elusive Hegel comes to life in this treatise, as attention is drawn to the background and to the influences of Hegelian thought.

Finnis, J. *Natural Law and Natural Rights.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. A modern and authoritative defense of natural law theory.

Flanagan, O. *Consciousness Reconsidered.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992. Useful as a critical review of current thinking on the nature of consciousness; a respect for the complexity of the issues associated with the phenomenon of consciousness.

Fodor, J. *The Modularity of Mind.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983. A standard defense of the view that mental phenomena as such are composites of functions performed in modular fashion.

Foster, J. *The Immaterial Self: A Defence of the Cartesian Dualist Conception of Mind.* London: Routledge, 1996. One of the most thoughtful of current attempts to defend dualism against the usual lines of criticism.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Penguin, 2003. Here is the essential work in "depth psychology," a treatise that Freud regarded as pointing to the "royal road" to the unconscious.

Galton, Francis. *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and Consequences*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978. Nativism, unadulterated!

Garland, Robert. *The Greek Way of Life: From Conception to Old Age*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990. A fine introduction to the social, political, and daily life that was "the Greek way."

George, Robert, ed. *Natural Law Theory: Contemporary Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. Arguments for and against versions of natural law theory and on philosophy of law in general.

Guthrie, Kenneth. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library: An Anthology of Ancient Writings*. Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press, 1987. The elusive thought of the Pythagoreans captured here in "snapshots."

Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers*. London: Penguin Books, 1987. Perhaps the most detailed and thoughtful set of disquisitions on the nature of politics to appear in one volume.

Hare, R. M. *Moral Thinking.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1981. A classic statement of the universalist and prescriptivist criteria of morals.

Hart, H. L. A. *The Concept of Law*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961. The most influential defense of legal positivism.

Haskins, C. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927. This is a "classic," drawing attention to the centuries preceding that famous Italian Renaissance, and alerting the reader to the truly original scholarship and science developed in this "Middle" Age.

Hempel, Carl *Aspects of Scientific Explanation.* New York: Free Press, 1965. Hempel's deductive-nomological model defended and defined; one influential approach to the entire nature of science written in the past century.

Herodotus. *The Persian Wars*. G. Rawlinson, trans. New York: Random House, 1942. HISTORY 101, as its inventor intended it.

Hippocrates. Works of various authors, all presumably in the "Hippocratic" tradition, revealing the essentials of Hippocratic medicine.

———. "On the Wounds of the Head," in *Hippocrates*, W. Jones, trans. New York: Putnam, 1923. The Hippocratic understanding of brain-based disorders is a remarkable achievement given its date and the method then available.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Here is the "mechanistic" and scientific approach to statecraft by one of the architects of modern thought on the nature of law and society.

Hodges, Andrew. *Alan Turing: The Enigma*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983. An interesting account of Turing's background, his approach to the problem of decidability, and his achievements in code-breaking.

Hollingdale, R. J. *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965. An accessible account of an elusive and, indeed, troubled mind, as revealed in selections from his major works.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951. The "Genesis" of Hellenism.

Honore, A. *Emperors and Lawyers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. An authoritative and non-technical introduction to Roman law and to the part taken in its development by a number of emperors.

Hume, David. "Of the Standard of Taste." In *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*. Eugene Miller, ed. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985. Eugene Miller has collected the most important of Hume's briefer works, including essays that Hume withdrew from publication.

Hume, Robert, trans. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971. Snippets that convey the elusive but elevating abstractions of Hindu thought.

Hussey, E. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. This is a fine collection of the sparse record that remains of this fertile philosophical tradition.

Irwin, T.H. *Plato's Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Isocrates. *Panegyricus*. George Norlen, trans. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 2000. In this work one hears the rhetoric of Isocrates as he attempts to persuade Hellenes to locate their true enemy (Persia) and to cease fighting with each other. In this same place, he identifies the "Hellene" as one committed to a conception of culture.

James, William. *Essays in Radical Empiricism and a Pluralistic Universe*. Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1977. Empiricism with the courage of its convictions, liberated from all forms of the "block universe."

Kant, I. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. In this work, Kant labors to make clearer what is rather ponderously developed in his *Critique of Practical Reason*. It is, of course, one of the classic works in moral philosophy.

———. *Critique of Pure Reason*. N.K. Smith, trans. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965. One of the more difficult treatises in all of philosophy; the most systematic of epistemologies and of attempts to determine the nature and limits of rational comprehension.

———. *The Moral Law*. New York: Hutchinson's University Library, 1948. An abbreviated version of the second critique and rather more accessible.

Kaufmann, W. *The Portable Nietzsche*. New York: Viking Press, 1961. Carefully chosen by a leading scholar, this handy volume samples the full range of Nietzsche's critical perspective on life and thought.

Keen, M. *Chivalry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984. This is the best study of an often misunderstood social institution; the one that conveyed to European civilization much that is "civilizing" in human conduct.

Kim, J. *Mind in a Physical World*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998. Another approach to the mind/body problem.

Larner, Christina. *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief*. New York: Blackwell, 1984. A most interesting analysis of the "witch" theory and the "science" surrounding it.

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *The Monadology and Other Philosophical Essays*. Robert Latta, trans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981. These short and numbered passages convey significant features of Leibniz's philosophy of mind.

Lerner, R., and Mahdi, M., eds. *Medieval Political Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963. The selections leave no doubt but that the medieval age was rich and subtle in its political theories and its recognition of the challenges to ordered liberty.

Levack, Brian. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Longman, 1995. Data, trials, theories and informing commentary on a woeful chapter in political history.

Lichtheim, G. *Marxism: An Historical and Critical Study*. New York: Praeger, 1961. This is a readable overview of Marxism and its philosophical underpinnings.

Long, A. A. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Skeptics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. A standard work, featuring informing essays on the major figures in these schools of philosophy.

Loux, Michael. *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2002. The book to read before reading Aristotle on the same subject.

Lloyd, G. ed. *Hippocratic Writings*. London: Penguin Books, 1978. Works of various authors, all presumably in the "Hippocratic" tradition, revealing the essentials of Hippocratic medicine.

Luce, A. A. *Berkeley's Immaterialism*. New York: Russell and Russell, 1968. Berkeley explained!

Marx, Karl. *Selected Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994. Useful selections for those attempting to extract a philosophical position from Marx's critiques of society.

McDonald, Forrest. *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985. Surely one of the best works on the American founding, its constitutional jurisprudence, and background philosophies on which major proposals were based.

Mill, John Stuart. *Autobiography*. London: Penguin Books, 1989. Very informative, showing the progress of Mill's thought to and then past Comte and Bentham.

———. *On Liberty*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996. The "classic" statement of political liberalism.

Moore, G. E. *Principia Ethica (1903)*. New York: Prometheus Books, 1988. A common sense and intuitionist theory of morals.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Portable Nietzsche*. Walter Kaufmann, ed. New York: Penguin Books, 1976. Choice nuggets from the deeply thinking critique of modernity.

Oates, W., ed. *The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers*. New York: Random House, 1940. Here is a good sample of the works and wisdom of philosophical schools arising after the period in which Plato and Aristotle were most influential.

O'Daly, Gerard. *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987. The book to read before reading Augustine's *Confessions*.

Paine, Thomas. *The Rights of Man* (downloadable). The reader today will probably be moved as irresistibly as were those reading the work in the 18th century.

Perry, Ralph Barton. *The Thought and Character of William James*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996. Still the standard biography.

Plantinga, A. *God, Freedom and Evil.* New York: Eardmann, 1974. One attempt to reconcile the traditional conception of God and the problem of evil.

Quinton, A. *Francis Bacon*. London: Hill and Wang, 1980. A most readable general account of Bacon's life and scientific project.

Robinson, D. *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd ed.). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995. Brief review of major intellectual and scientific developments associated with the emergence of psychology as an independent discipline.

———. *Aristotle's Psychology*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, chapter 1. This chapter outlines the "Socratic context" of Aristotle's philosophical development, pointing to differences between the two approaches in method and perspective.

Robinson, D. N. *Philosophy of Psychology*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Review of standard problems of explanation, models of mind, the mind/body problem.

———. *The Enlightened Machine*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980. A general review of the history and major concepts of the brain sciences, intended for the non-specialist.

———. *Toward a Science of Human Nature: Essays on the Psychologies of Mill, Hegel, Wundt, and James*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Summaries and appraisals of four who dominated 19th-century thought on the nature of mind and mental life.

———. *Wild Beasts and Idle Humours*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996. Historical review of the legal conception of mental competence from remote antiquity to modern times, with emphasis on the insanity defense.

Rorty, A., ed. *Essays in Aristotle's Ethics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980. Fine interpretive essays are offered, illuminating the often subtle aspects of Aristotle's ethical theory.

Rossiter, C. *The Federalist Papers*. Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1963.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract and Discourses*. London: Dent, 1993. The history of the law's conception of mind in health and disease.

Ruskin, J. *The Stones of Venice*. Vol. 1. London: Smith, Eldeer & Co., 1853. This work did much to restore interest in and admiration for the "Gothic"; a work by the leading aesthete of Victorian England and one of the greatest of prose writers.

Stace, Walter Terence. *The Philosophy of Hegel: A Systematic Exposition*. New York: Dover, 1955. This is not a Hegel for beginners, but it is a good introduction to Hegel's phenomenology.

Sulloway, F. *Freud: Biologist of the Mind*. New York: Basic Books, 1979. By far the best study of Freud as scientist, as aspiring scientific theorist.

Swinburne, R. *Providence and the Problem of Evil*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. How is the problem of evil to be understood? The author sees "evil" as permitted on the grounds that it improves all who must contend with it.

Turing, A. "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." In *Mind*, 1950. Vol. 59.

Vernant, Jean Pierre, ed. *The Greeks*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Scholars specializing in different aspects of ancient Greek thought offer rich interpretive essays on the major aspects of that culture.

Voltaire. *Philosophical Letters* (downloadable at www.classicsnetwork.com). Voltaire's comparisons of English and French culture, custom, and science were powerfully influential.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books, 2000. Major theories of "just war" are considered and appraised.

Walzer, Richard. *Greek into Arabic: Essays on Islamic Philosophy*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970. Islamic philosophy, replete with its Greek inspirations.

Westfall, Richard. *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. The authoritative biography of a universal genius.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997. For all "flies" seeking an exit from the bottle!

Xenophon. *Memorabilia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994. Socrates as known by a friend and neighbor.

Yates, Frances. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964. Renaissance science and its shifting movements away from and back toward mysticism.

Yolton, John. *Thinking Matter: Materialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983. The arguments of Locke, Priestley, Hartley et al. toward a materialist theory of mind.

Young, R. *Mind, Brain and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970. The author locates the brain sciences within the larger Darwinian context of the second half of the nineteenth century, but with close attention to anticipations.

Internet Resources:

www.Epistemelinks.com. Best source for basic materials in philosophy.

http://www.epistemelinks.com/index.aspx

http://plato.stanford.edu/contents

