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Power over People: Classical and Modern Political Theory

Scope: Any political theory can be analyzed and evaluated on the basis of two major criteria: the importance of the questions that it addresses and the coherence of its responses to those questions. Thus, the first two questions that we ask of any political theorist are these: Does the theory cover the essential and enduring questions of political theory? How systematic are the responses to those questions?

These lectures examine some of the fundamental questions that have shaped Western political thought since its inception in Athens in fifth century B.C., together with some of the most influential answers that political theorists have proposed. The issues addressed in these lectures—and in Western political theory generally—fall into three broad categories. The first involves the essential characteristics of human nature and the good society. Is human nature essentially spirit or matter? Is it directed by reason or dominated by passion? Is it fixed or malleable? Is it innately sinful, aggressive, and violent, or is it fundamentally benign, cooperative, and nonviolent? Will the good society be characterized by perfect harmony or by continued conflict? If conflict is inevitable in the good society, must it be controlled through the leader’s discretionary use of coercive power, or can it be contained constructively within political institutions? Are social unity and harmony achievable or even desirable? Do the progress and vigor of society depend, by contrast, upon some form of struggle?

The second set of fundamental questions involves the relationship between the individual and society. What is the right relationship of the individual to society? What is the relationship of individual freedom to social and political authority? What constitutes legitimate political authority? Does it come ultimately from God, the state, or the individual? Are human beings fundamentally equal or unequal?

The final set of questions involves theories of change. What are the fundamental dynamics of change? What role is played by discretionary leadership or moral values in effecting change? Are there inexorable laws of history that produce change? Is an unchanging, enduring, universal system of ethical values possible? Must such a system be grounded in a theory of absolute truth? If an enduring, universal system of values is possible, what precisely are those values, and what is their relevance for political and social action? Should transformative leadership be based on the hard facts of political reality and human weakness, or on the knowledge of absolute truth? Is the most fundamental change ideological, economic, or psychological in nature?

Should agents of change pursue reform through gradual, evolutionary means, or should they pursue the total transformation of society and human nature through revolution? Should radical change be pursued through violence or nonviolence? Should it rely mainly on spontaneity or on authoritarian organization?

Those questions orient our study of a wide range of theories of power and its use. We contrast Plato's idealism with Aristotle's realism, Marx's optimism with Freud's pessimism, and Hitler's exclusionism and exaltation of violence with Gandhi's inclusionism and insistence on nonviolence. For centuries such questions have eluded final solution, and we should not expect to answer them definitively here. The questions should prompt us, however, to think more deeply about ourselves, the standards that guide our behavior, and our obligations, if any, to society.

Objectives: Upon completing these lectures, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Identify the fundamental questions and concerns that shape classical and modern political theory.
2. Explain the essential differences between the "idealist" and "realist" traditions in political theory, and identify some of the most influential thinkers in each tradition.
3. Describe the influence of one's understanding of human nature upon one's vision of the good society, making specific reference to the theorists examined in this course.
4. Compare and contrast the views of those theorists regarding the purpose (if any) of the state, the relationship between politics and ethics, and the qualifications (if any) for exercising political power.
5. Compare and contrast the views of leading political theorists regarding the meaning of freedom, the sources of legitimate political authority, the legitimacy of individual resistance against constituted authority, and the obligations (if any) of individuals to the state or society.
6. Distinguish among the differing attitudes toward the use of violence that are held by the theorists examined in this course.
7. Compare and contrast the views of those theorists regarding the possibilities for fundamental transformation of human nature and society, as well as the means by which that transformation can be brought about.

Recommended Readings to Accompany the Lectures*

The Bhagavad-Gita. Translated by Barbara Miller. Bantam.

Sophocles. *Antigone*. Harper.

Plato. 1969. *The Last Days of Socrates*. Translated by Hugh Tredennick. New York: Penguin.

Plato. 1945. *The Republic*. Translated by F. M. Cornford. London: Oxford University Press.

Aristotle. 1958. *The Politics*. Translated by Ernest Barker. London: Oxford University Press.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. New York: Norton.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1987. *The Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man*. New York: Ungar.

Freud, Sigmund. 1961. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: Norton.

Thoreau, Henry David. 1960. *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience." New York: Signet.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Notes from the Underground* and the "The Grand Inquisitor," in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dutton.

Goldman, Emma. *Living My Life and My Disillusionment in Russia*.

Shulman, Alix. *Red Emma Speaks*.

Adolf Hitler. 1971. *Mein Kampf*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Sentry.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, *Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

* The books in this reading list appear in the order that they are discussed in the lectures.

Lecture Nine

Rousseau's Theory of Human Nature and Society

Scope: Having been braced by a dose of Machiavellian realism, we return now to idealism, represented in this lecture by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and in the next by Karl Marx. The Romantic idealism of Rousseau and Marx has much in common with Plato's idealism. As idealists, all three theorists tend to view human nature as benign and susceptible of improvement. They look askance at competition, wealth disparities, and other manifestations of disharmony and disunity.

The differences, however, are as striking as the similarities—between Rousseau and Marx, as well as between both of them and Plato. Rousseau and Marx view inequality as the product of corrupt human institutions (especially private property), while Plato sees human beings as innately unequal. Rousseau and Marx, for their part, have similar views of human nature, the origins of society, and man's ideal future state. Both urge a fundamental transformation of individuals and society, but they view in very different terms both the mechanism of that revolutionary change and its endpoint.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Compare and contrast the philosophical assumptions and conclusions of Plato and Rousseau, especially regarding human nature, the relationship between ethics and politics, and the ideal state.
2. Summarize Rousseau's critique of his own society and the causes to which he attributed his society's failings.
3. Compare and contrast Machiavelli's and Rousseau's vision of human nature.

Outline

- I. Rousseau and Plato share similar beliefs.
 - A. Both are idealists but also critical of their own societies. Both look to education as the means to reshape human nature and thereby construct better societies.
 - B. Both see a close relationship between ethics and politics.
 - C. Both see private property as a cause of materialism, avarice, and inequality.
- II. Rousseau differs from Plato in emphasizing human equality. Rousseau describes three ideal societies.

- A. Rousseau's vision of the past is set forth in his theory of the state of nature.
 1. The past is the world of natural man who has two instincts: self-preservation and repugnance at seeing living things suffer.
 2. Human nature is fundamentally benign.
 3. Human beings have an innate compassionate impulse that prevents them from harming others.
- B. Rousseau's vision of the present is characterized by corrupt contemporary society.
 1. As a consequence of urbanization and modern technology, human beings in contemporary society are dehumanized and alienated from each other. That dehumanization is illustrated by the failure of Kitty Genovese's neighbors to come to her rescue or even call the police when she was attacked.
 2. He attributes the alienation and separation among human beings to urbanization, commercialization, a faulty educational system, and the institution of private property. Corrupt social institutions encourage selfishness and suppress compassion.
 3. Private property brings inequality, which promotes rivalry and competition of interests.
- C. In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau sets forth his ideal vision of a future society characterized by justice, freedom, and equality.

III. Rousseau's prescription for social utopia is set forth in *The Social Contract*.

- A. The institution of private property legitimizes social inequality, which fetters the mind and alienates people from each other.
- B. Through education and a new manner of socialization, humans can overcome their fear of each other and develop a new sense of community.
- C. The new sense of community will confer genuine security.
 1. Equality brings safety and protection by fostering community spirit and identification with others.
 2. We must define ourselves not in terms of things but in terms of our relationships with other human beings.
 3. Genuine security requires individual and social transformation; human behavior must be governed by justice rather than instinct.
- D. The social contract can effect the needed changes through legislation to create a new sense of equality. In particular, the educational system must socialize people into a spirit of community.
- E. Genuine freedom is not license but the ability to act as one should—to liberate oneself from the illusion of separation and alienation and to attain a sense of oneness with others.
- F. The ideal society is to be governed by the general will.

1. The general will is not majority or unanimous will. Not all majority decisions are in accord with the general will.
2. The general will is the transcendent moral standard of values that identifies a society at its best. It is the shared civic spirit that unites a people and leads them to identify with each other.

Recommended Reading:

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1987. *The Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born in poverty (both economic and emotional) in Geneva in 1712. He wandered through Europe from 1728 to 1741, then lived in Paris until 1762. While in Paris, he published his *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts* (1750), *On the Origin of Inequality* (1775), *Emile* (1762, his key work on education), and *The Social Contract* (1762). Later, in Switzerland, he published his *Confessions* (1765) and *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1772). Rousseau can be seen as the archetypal “outsider” in the revolutionary mode of Plato.

The religious and scientific developments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries heavily influenced Rousseau’s thought. The Calvinist tradition in France helped to shape his insistence on the relationship between politics and morality (see Frederick Watkins’ Introduction in Rousseau’s *Basic Political Writings*). Although both Locke and Hobbes were immensely influenced by the scientific discoveries of figures such as Isaac Newton (1642–1727), who published his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in 1687, Rousseau was hostile to Enlightenment ideas of science and rationalism. He denounced science, technology, industrialism, and urbanization as being inhumane, alienating traits of an increasingly heartless world, and being incapable of realizing the values of community and compassion that he prized. Locke welcomed most of the intellectual changes occurring around him in Europe, among them the founding of the Royal Society of London (devoted to the sciences) in 1662 and the Academy of Sciences in France in 1666. Rousseau, by contrast, opposed the French Encyclopedists in Paris (1751–1768), especially rationalists like Diderot (1713–1784) and Voltaire (1694–1778), who published his *Philosophical Dictionary* in 1764.

Rousseau's Three Visions of the Individual in Society: Past, Present, and Future

(Page numbers refer to Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1987. *The Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.)

The State of Nature (pp. 35–36, 45–46, 53–55, 60–81, 150–51)

Rousseau conceived of “the constitution of natural man” as having had two attributes of human nature “prior to reason”: self-preservation and compassion (i.e., pity or sympathy, pp. 35–36). From the quality of compassion “alone flow all the social virtues” that we possess (p. 54). Rousseau contrasts the state of nature in the *Social Contract* (pp. 150–51) with the civil state, as indicated below. The civil state must transform, through education and leadership, the “constitution of natural man” into a citizen who enjoys “moral liberty” and “legitimate equality” (pp. 151, 153).

Rousseau's Modern State (pp. 35–36, 53–55, 68, 81, 141–56)

Rousseau offers this implicit indictment of reason and philosophy as exemplified in the rationalists of eighteenth-century Europe: they have used reason to stifle nature itself (p. 35). He criticizes “the philosopher” who, in contrast to “savage man,” ignores the plight of suffering humanity by refusing to listen to its appeals (pp. 54–55). That is the cold, heartless “reason” and “philosophy” of modernity. Our modern society and state lack compassion because nature’s original impulses of pity and sympathy have been suffocated by modern science and technology, by the cult of “rationalism,” and by the lust for private property (pp. 68, 81). Lacking commitment to community, modern society has degenerated into a state of “private interests,” “different interest,” and “private wills” (pp. 153–54). At best, it knows only the “will of all” (pp. 155–56). People in the modern state are easily led astray by “the seduction of private wills” (p. 162). Above all, the modern state is crippled by a sense of alienation, estrangement, and inability to experience empathy with others. As a result it fails to realize the general will.

The Civil State (pp. 147–56, 160–65, 203–4)

The civil state is achieved through the creation of the social contract (pp. 147–49), which leads to the implementation of the general will (pp. 153–56). The contrast between the state of nature and the civil state is most apparent in Rousseau’s chapter on the civil state (pp. 150–51). Note especially the sharply contrasting descriptive words assigned to each state: “justice” versus “instinct,” “duty” versus “impulse,” “law” versus “appetite,” and “reason” versus “inclinations.” In the civil state, people experience a “remarkable change,” acquiring a “moral quality” previously unknown. “Feelings are ennobled,” and the “soul is elevated.” The change is “from a stupid, limited animal” (the creature of the state of nature) to “an intelligent being.” Citizens lose their “natural” liberty but acquire a “moral” or “civil” liberty (p. 151). They thus

transcend the “natural” liberty, which is “to be driven by appetite,” and gain obedience to self-prescribed law. They lose “natural equality” but gain “a moral and legitimate equality” (p. 153). This state realizes the “general will” and “the common good” (p. 153) instead of the “will of all.” The legislator helps in this great task of “changing human nature” (p. 163), of achieving through “sublime reason” the ideal civil state. Rousseau’s theory of “real property” or public property (pp. 151–52) in the civil state is significant because, in contrast to the unjust accumulation of private property by the few in the modern state, distribution of property ensures equality in the civil state. Thus, the ideal state must achieve *both* liberty and equality (p. 170). Finally, the ideal civil state must remain “very small” (only 10,000 citizens), where each “can easily know all the others” because “the larger the state becomes, the less liberty there is” (pp. 174, 180).

Summary: Three Perspectives on Political Theory

Realists and the Argument for Security (e.g., Machiavelli)

The realists are not alone in wanting security. All of the six theorists that we have studied want a strong polity that can protect its citizens. Each regards civil or international warfare as a threat, and all affirm the need for political order. But the realists argue that security is the paramount and overriding goal of the state: it fulfills all expectations in itself. The pursuit of virtue is a bogus ideal for any state, a chimera or dangerous distraction that undermines rather than enhances the quest for security. Machiavelli warns his prince that he must pursue only those policies that can “save his state.” He furthermore says, “[I]f you look at matters carefully, you will see something resembling virtue, which, if you follow it, may be your ruin, while something else resembling vice will lead, if you follow it, to your security and well-being” (p. 45). That is the politics of *virtú* or *Realpolitik*, and it involves a determined, pragmatic use of power unencumbered by moral scruples. As Leo Strauss states in *History of Political Philosophy*, “Machiavelli consciously lowers the standards of social action” in order to satisfy, as far as possible, a realistic preeminent goal—our basic need for security.

Reformers and the Argument for Diversity (e.g., Aristotle)

All polities must allow for some degree of diversity. Aristotle knows that Plato’s ideal republic will have great diversity in occupation and education. But Aristotle wants diversity among the participants in the process of political decision making, among those who wield political power. Aristotle’s idea of diversity means a broadening of the citizen class, a *polis* of “free and equal citizens” who share office and shape policy, meaning that “some rule and others are ruled” in turn, with “different sorts of persons” assuming the responsibilities of governing. Power must be concentrated in the hands of a few but distributed because of the “natural equality of all the citizens” (pp. 41–42).

Plato would deplore this kind of polity as rule by amateurs, reminiscent of the rank unprofessionalism of democratic Athens. Aristotle responds that “it is true that unity is to some extent necessary, alike in a household and *polis*; but total unity is not.... It is as if you were turning harmony into mere unison, or to reduce a theme to a single beat” (p. 51). Locke’s defense of diversity is at one with his idea of liberty. He fears, as much as Aristotle, concentration of power in the hands of a few. “This freedom from absolute, arbitrary power is so necessary to and closely joined with a man’s preservation that he cannot part with it but by what forfeits his preservation and life together” (p. 17).

Idealists and the Argument for Community (e.g., Plato and Rousseau)

In issuing their calls for community, Plato and Rousseau show higher expectations than do either the realists or the reformers. They want to create a wholly

new kind of *polis*, what Plato calls the “republic” and Rousseau calls the “civil state.” Plato suggests his vision of that revolutionary polity in his metaphor of the “three waves.” The second wave envisages an ideal community that “most nearly resembles a single person. When one of us hurts his finger, the whole extent of those bodily connections which are gathered up in the soul and unified by its ruling element is made aware and it all shares as a whole in the pain of the suffering part; hence we say that the man has a pain in his finger.” Plato concludes that “the best organized community comes nearest to that condition” because the ideal polity will be attained when the community “will recognize as a part of itself the individual citizen to whom good or evil happens, and will share as a whole in his joy and sorrow” (pp. 163–64). Plato says that such an ideal is most achievable by the Guardians who, with their superior education, “feel together and aid at the same ends, because they are convinced that all their interests are identical” (p. 166). Although that spirit of unity is felt primarily among the Guardians, their example infuses the entire community: “So our laws will secure that these men [Guardians] will live in complete peace with one another; and if they never quarrel among themselves, there is no fear of the rest of the community being divided either against them or against itself” (p. 166).

Inspired by Plato’s *Republic*, Rousseau sets forth a similar view of the organic *polis*: “As soon as this multitude is thus united in one body, one cannot harm one of the members without attacking the whole body.... Thus duty and interest equally oblige the two parties to come to one another’s aid” (p. 150). Even more than Plato, Rousseau infuses his ideal of the perfect community with a romantic conception of how the personal relates to the political: “Every man is virtuous when his particular will is in all things conformable to the general will, and we voluntarily will what is willed by those whom we love.” His theory of leadership is similar to Plato’s, however, because both believe that the leader must seek to transform the corrupt state into an ideal community. Rousseau’s “legislator” should feel himself able “to change human nature; to transform each individual ... into part of a greater whole, from which this individual receives in a sense, his life and his being; to alter man’s constitution in order to strengthen it; to substitute a moral and social existence for the independent and physical existence which we have all received from nature” (p. 163). Thus the theories of both Plato and Rousseau foresee a total transformation of the community, so that it attains a higher consciousness and fuller realization of its human potential.

Lecture Ten

Marx's Critique of Capitalism and Solution of Communism

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Compare and contrast Rousseau's and Marx's vision of man's natural state, their diagnoses of the crisis of contemporary society, their respective visions of the ideal future society, and the means by which that society is to be achieved.
2. Describe Marx's tripartite theory of the self and his theory of work, and explain how his concept of "alienation" differs from Rousseau's.
3. Summarize Marx's critique of the capitalist system of production.

Outline

- I. Marx inherited and extended the revolutionary spirit of Rousseau.
 - A. Marx's life is summarized.
 1. He was born to a relatively affluent family.
 2. In his youth, he became involved in leftist politics and was exiled to Paris from Germany in 1843.
 3. In 1848, he was exiled to London, where he lived until his death in 1883.
 - B. Marx sought revolutionary change even more intently than Rousseau did. His project seems to have failed, but should we conclude that his theory is invalid?
- II. Like Plato, Marx proposes a tripartite theory of the self, corresponding to a three-stage vision of social evolution.
 - A. The natural self in natural society represents man's instinctual animal needs of food, sex, and work.
 - B. The second stage of human and social evolution is the alienated self in alienated society.
 1. Like Plato, Marx viewed his own society as profoundly corrupt, but he went beyond both Plato and Rousseau in arguing that the social institutions of modern society alienated man from other men and from himself.
 2. According to Marx, capitalism alienates men from themselves and from each other.
 3. Capitalism—and ultimately private property—perverts human values, as human beings come to value things over each other. It

- encourages avarice, competition, and inequality. The cash nexus becomes the criterion of all value.
4. Capitalism enforces patriarchy and exploits and subordinates women. It encourages domination and inequality, thereby subverting natural human relationships (e.g., of love).
- C. The third stage is the classless society of communism.
 1. Marx's historical determinism—his confidence that the contradictions of capitalism will inevitably lead to communism—represents a departure from Rousseau.
 2. Marx describes in *The Communist Manifesto* how the greed and avarice encouraged by capitalism will undermine and inevitably destroy the regime of private property.
 3. Communist society is characterized by equality and true justice.

III. Marx's philosophy of work is examined.

- A. Marx argues that capitalist society distorts men's innate need to work by alienating them from their labor.
 1. Under capitalism, man denies rather than fulfills himself through his labor. His work becomes an imposition rather than a voluntary labor.
 2. In contemporary society, many people are alienated from their labor, which they perform only under compulsion.
- B. Marx asserts that in communist society, individuals will be able to develop themselves freely.
 1. Under communism, the free development of each will conduce to the free development of all.
 2. Communism will bring genuine human fulfillment: the need for sex will be satisfied in love, and the need for work will be satisfied in meaningful labor.
 3. Marx's ideal society is a "species society" in which the citizens will define themselves and realize their "species," or fully human needs of security, love, and creative work.

IV. Is Marx still relevant?

- A. His program has never been implemented, certainly not in the Soviet Union. Marx never advocated totalitarian or despotic rule.
- B. Although his historical determinism has been discredited, his social criticism remains relevant.
 1. The income gap between rich and poor has expanded in the industrial world during the past 30 years.
 2. Democracies often fail to provide both liberty and equality.
 3. Marx's social critique will remain valid as long as the present trend toward inequality continues.

Recommended Reading:

Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man*. New York: Ungar.

**Marx's Theory of Human Nature and Society
(Self and System)**

Karl Marx (1818–1883) saw human nature and society as closely related. The individual expresses his needs in society. Any society will inevitably have a profound influence on the ability of individuals within it to fulfill those needs. All individuals and societies are parts of a vast process of historical change.

As we evolve, we experience three phases of growth, each with its own set of needs. The first phase is that of natural society and the natural self. This phase consists of primarily “animal” needs for subsistence (food, clothing, shelter); sex (procreation); and work (the need to engage in some form of mental and physical activity). Early forms of primitive societies also experience those fundamental needs. They are “natural” in the sense that we never lose them; they remain intrinsic to our nature but are not informed by our reason to a high degree. They are instinctive and spontaneous rather than planned and self-conscious. In this stage of development, the pursuit and fulfillment of the needs of hunger and sex are selfish, and work is performed in a routine manner without much sense of social awareness or self-realization. Yet those natural needs are essential for our growth. They are immature in the natural phase, but they carry the potential for the realization of our species being. In Marx’s writings, the idea of the early phase is set forth implicitly only in Fromm (pp. 99–102, 142–43, 150–51, 181–83).

The second phase of development is that of the alienated self and the alienated society, which is the contemporary system in which we in Western civilization find ourselves. Our animal needs of sustenance, sex, and work continue to be intrinsic to our nature, but they are usually expressed in a distorted form because of the exploitative system of capitalism. We experience our nature as alienated or split; we are divided against ourselves, between our essence (which will be realized fully when we reach the communist society) and our present existence as individuals engaged mainly in exploiting or trying to dominate one another. Our natural needs are often frustrated as we are distracted by illusory needs of money and property. (Fromm explains and contrasts the idea of “true needs” versus “illusory,” or “synthetic,” needs on pp. 62–63. He discusses the concept generally on pp. 14, 25–26, 56–67. Marx addresses it on pp. 140–44.) Those needs are called “illusory” because they are like addictions: we are not compelled to consume or accumulate the amount of money and property that capitalism encourages, but we have become addicted to an appetite for more cash and power. Our behavior has become compulsive and as far removed from our natural needs and state of good health as obesity or bulimia.

Just as the natural phase of self and society is analogous to childhood, the alienation phase can be compared to adolescence. In our growth to mature adulthood, life gets worse before it becomes better. Adolescence is certainly bad in terms of the sense of alienation, rebellion, and various addictions that it often

brings. Marx believes that we as a species are in a phase of adolescence, and we are far from realizing our maturity. At present, especially in Western cultures, we have become hooked on power games and ways to manipulate or exploit others. We confuse our insatiable desire to accumulate things with our real needs. We must note, however, that this stage of adolescence is as necessary to our development into a mature society as it is to the personal maturation of the individual teenager. However much Marx condemns capitalism, he still sees it as a necessary and desirable stage in our evolution to communism. Capitalism promotes rather than impedes our progressive evolution into the third and final state of the species being.

As the self and system move through history, the latter serves as the main dynamic of growth, especially in the form of the economic means of production. In the capitalist phase, the system is responsible for distorting the individual's needs and impelling his or her addictive, compulsive, and immature behavior. The capitalist system has perverted our relationships to others by absorbing them into a "cash nexus." Capitalism socializes us into creatures who want to possess and acquire rather than to share and cooperate. Our natural need for sex is converted into a lust to dominate. We view others as sex objects rather than as loved ones. The drive to procreate is natural; the system of prostitution is not. In the capitalist system, male and female alike are victims of prostitution because any relationship based on domination will deform both parties, keeping them alienated from one another and from achieving a healthy relationship based on mutual respect and human equality.

If that alienation is true in our love relationships, then it also applies to our attitudes toward work. In the capitalist system, our natural need to express ourselves in creative activity is transformed into alienated labor. Again, we prostitute ourselves to the system by selling our capacities to the cash nexus. The proletariat is alienated from its labor because the worker is subjected to inhuman exploitation by the employer's compulsive quest for increasing profit. Yet the worker is not the only victim. Marx asserts that "the possessing class and the proletariat class represent one and the same human self-alienation" (Robert Tucker, *Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 133). That condition is reflected in the ways that money controls the behavior of the capitalist system. We tend to be more competitive than cooperative, more acquisitive than compassionate, because all the signals of our society suggest that our personal merit must be measured by how high we can ascend the ladder of financial success. Our task is to build a new system that will nurture a new way of perceiving ourselves and our society. Such a goal is inevitable because our human destiny is to realize our full potential as mature beings in a free and equal society, rather than in an alienated system that is based on domination.

The third stage of development—that of species self and species society—is attained when alienation is overcome by a communist revolution and subsequent transformation of the economic system. The resultant development of species

consciousness enables us to realize our needs in a mature, self-actualized state of human awareness. Thus, the primitive natural needs of subsistence evolve into a secure sense of being able to provide for food and shelter. Marx implicitly contrasts the "cave dwelling" of the savage with the "cellar dwelling" of the proletariat. In the latter, the poor tenant is victimized in a capitalist system that is as insecure as it is unable to provide for the natural needs of all (pp. 142–43, 150–51). In a species society, all would find security within their homes because the system provides rationally for meeting the needs of all and preventing any part of the population from being thrown into homelessness. Attitudes toward sex and love are also transformed in a species society: the natural drive for sex becomes expressed not in prostitution (a word that symbolizes domination and exploitation in any unequal relationship) but in love, where lovers find their species needs realized in a mutually caring and equal relationship (p. 168). Finally, in a species society, we discover the meaning of creative work. In other words, we come to welcome work as an activity that brings us self-esteem rather than boredom, tedium, and alienation.

When Marx traces the evolution of the self and system from primitive societies to complete communism, he is concerned especially with the nature and quality of work, with the ways that people do or do not engage in meaningful, creative forms of activity. Work as a natural need is associated first with animals who "produce only under the compulsion of direct physical need," without much reason or consciousness of why they engage in labor (p. 102). The progression of consciousness brings the pain of alienation as unjust economic systems emerge. Alienated labor, in particular, "alienates from man his ... mental life and his *human* life" (p. 103). The problem is that while we must evolve as a species, the process of growth requires struggle. The major task is to advance from the state of alienated labor in which "work is *external* to the worker" and so is "*forced labor*" (p. 98)—"a labor of self-sacrifice, of mortification ... not his own work but work for someone else" (p. 99) to a species society of communism in which work will be self-fulfilling and satisfying precisely because it has overcome alienation and reflects the worker's own abilities and aspirations.

A certain vision of work thus lies at the center of Marx's ideal communist or species society. He says that it "is just in his work upon the objective world that man really proves himself as a *species-being*. This production is his active species life. By means of its nature, it appears as his work and his reality" (p. 102). Marx wants each of us to take part in creating a world in which we actually see our *species* selves reflected or represented. We can do this best through our work: "The object of labor is therefore the *objectification of man's species life* ... he sees his own reflection in a world which he has constructed" (p. 102).

The word "objectification" should be noted because it signifies a crucial Marxist concept. It means the presence of a person's activity in the objective world; we look at our environment and see ourselves reflected in it. In Marx's terms, the

Marx's Economic Determinism

“subject” (the individual) is represented in the “object” (the world of nature around us with which we constantly interact). The process of objectification must occur in any society, capitalist or communist, because the world cannot exist without human interaction. The question is “What kind of objectification it will be?” Will we see ourselves reflected or represented in our world as alienated (p. 95) or as species selves (pp. 133–34)? If our reflection is distorted, as it would be in a fun house of curved mirrors, then in this carnival of capitalism we view not our real essence or the representation of our true needs but the illusory needs created by a crazy system.

Marx's purpose, therefore, may be expressed in a single imperative: to create a species society that will allow us to objectify our essence. Marx expressed that aim directly (pp. 127–45, 165–68). He demands the abolition of private property as necessary for the creation of communism (pp. 127–32). Private property prevents the “appropriation of the human essence” because it fosters “exclusive enjoyment” in “*possession or having*” rather than the “all-inclusiveness of a species society.” That theme will reappear later in these lectures in the contrast between Gandhi's inclusiveness (which in many ways is similar to Marx's ideal state of communism) and Hitler's exclusiveness. In his *Communist Manifesto* (Part 2), Marx says that communism means that “the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.” In another writing, Marx describes further his vision of a communist or species society in these terms:

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banner: *From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!* (Robert Tucker, *Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 531).

(Page numbers from Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man*. New York: Ungar.)

Marx's economic determinism is usually associated with his later phase (i.e., the period in which he wrote *Das Kapital* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*). It is rooted if not elaborated, however, in his earlier works (e.g., *The German Ideology* [1845] and *The Communist Manifesto* [1848]). It may be defined as the theory that economic forces determine ideology and politics and serve as the primary dynamics of the dialectical movement in history. (The clearest and most succinct statement of the theory occurs on pp. 198, 211–12, 217–18.)

Marx's idea of this system may be described in these terms: any society is analyzed as having two main components—its ideological “superstructure” and its economic “structure.” As used by Marx (p. 217), the word “superstructure” encompasses his idea of the state (pp. 211, 217) and “ideological forms” or “ideological reflexes” (p. 198) existing in the realm of “consciousness” (pp. 198, 217). The superstructure may have two manifestations or two types of consciousness. The first of the manifestations is “false consciousness,” the ideological rationalization of economic interests by the dominant class. Marx summed up his conception in *The Communist Manifesto*: “Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property.” In that sense, “bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law” are ideological rationalizations of economic interests. Those ideas are “false” because they are not directed at a correct understanding of history, but only at masking their own dominance and exploitation (pp. 197–98, 212). The second form of consciousness, enjoyed by Marx himself, involves scientific, empirical, and logically and historically valid awareness of “reality” (p. 199). (Note Marx's repeated use of the terms “real” or “reality” on pp. 198–99, which suggests a basis for true consciousness.)

For both false and true consciousness, the ideological superstructure is derivative or dependent on “material production and material intercourse” (p. 198). The concept of “ideology” embraces a broad spectrum of intellectual experience: “political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic” (p. 218). “Morality, religion, metaphysics” (p. 198) are all included under the term “ideology.”

According to Marx, the ideological superstructure rests upon and is determined by the “economic structure” (p. 217) or material base. He also refers to that structure as the “economic foundation” (p. 218), the “real basis” or “real foundation” of society, the “mode of production” (p. 217), “the material life process,” and the “social existence” (pp. 217–18), as opposed to “consciousness” or “conditions of life.” Economic conditions or economic relations of society may take two forms. The first involves social activity or relations within and among classes (p. 218). The second involves economic or “material

productive forces” (p. 218), also called the “economical conditions of existence” (i.e., the prevailing system of industry or technology as found in a type of economy or mode of production such as capitalism. The modes are characterized by divisions of labor or by organization and production of raw materials such as oil. The modes express forces that operate “independent of their [human] will” [p. 217]). According to Marx, the second of the forms of economic relations determines the first. In the dialectical development of economic forces through history, the economic structure has determined the ideological superstructure.

Lecture Eleven

Freud’s Theory of Human Nature and Civilization

Scope: Sigmund Freud’s pessimistic vision of man, as described in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, contrasts vividly with the optimistic visions of both Rousseau and Marx. As we have seen, Rousseau believes that human nature is characterized by an innate propensity for compassion and identification with others; under the correct legal and educational system, that natural propensity can become regnant throughout society. Marx criticizes the dehumanizing impact of capitalism, but he anticipates that the communist revolution will usher in an age of harmony and personal fulfillment, free of the alienation that enslaves men in industrial capitalist society. Remove the perverse and alienating influence of private property, and humankind will achieve its natural condition of integrity, bliss, and true freedom.

Freud harbors no such optimistic view of human nature or of man’s ability to achieve happiness and contentment. He sees the human personality as irremediably split among three constituent parts—the id, ego, and superego—that incessantly fight each other for domination. The most powerful of these is the id, which manifests itself in part as the lust for aggression and domination over others. According to Freud, man’s inevitable lot is pain and suffering, arising both from his own psychic alienation and from his victimization by other human beings. His efforts to escape from suffering through intoxication, isolation, or sublimation are inevitably self-defeating.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Describe Freud’s theory of the tripartite self, and compare it with similar theories held by Marx, Rousseau, Plato, and the Hindus.
2. Compare Freud’s concept of “psychic” alienation with Marx’s class-based alienation and Rousseau’s interpersonal alienation.
3. Summarize Freud’s explanation of the causes of suffering and of how human beings attempt to cope with it.
4. Compare and contrast Freud’s and Marx’s theories of work.
5. Identify what Freud, Marx, and Rousseau each regard as man’s fundamental, or most basic, instinct. Analyze the social and political implications of their visions of human nature and personality.
6. Compare and contrast the visions of mankind’s future held by Marx and Freud, and relate the visions to each theorist’s respective view of human nature.

Outline

- I. Marx and Freud have many similarities, but their views of human nature and history are very different.
 - A. Both distance themselves from their Jewish roots, reject religion, and are passionate moral prophets.
 - B. They differ profoundly, however, on human nature.
 1. Marx believes that human nature is capable of infinite development, leading to the classless society and the end of alienation.
 2. Freud is deeply pessimistic about human nature; he sees pain, suffering, and unhappiness as man's inevitable lot.
- II. Like Marx (and Plato and the Hindus), Freud has a tripartite theory of personality.
 - A. The id is the center for sexual and aggressive instincts.
 1. The id seeks to gain pleasure and avoid pain; it knows no moral value judgments.
 2. Although it is the unconscious part of our psyche, the id inevitably dominates the other parts.
 3. The id produces frustration by constantly making demands that cannot be fulfilled.
 - B. The ego is the rational, cautious, and commonsense element of the psyche; it is concerned with the external world of objective reality.
 1. Ego represents the external world to the id.
 2. Ego tries to negotiate and conciliate among the external world, id, and superego, but ultimately it is dominated by id and superego. Pressured by all three, the ego generates anxiety.
 3. Therapy seeks to strengthen the ego against the pressures imposed by the id and superego.
 - C. The superego represents conscience and imposes standards of moral perfection that are impossible to attain.
 1. Like the id, the superego is totally irrational, but it is the id's main adversary.
 2. The superego is more powerful than the ego but less powerful than the id. Its main weapon is guilt (instilled by one's parents as the main shapers of the superego).
 3. The individual incurs pain and suffering by trying to fulfill the unreachable standard set by the superego.
- III. Freud examines the individual's social condition and the origins of human suffering in his classic work, *Civilization and Its Discontents*.
 - A. Suffering comes from any of three sources: our own bodies, the external world, and our relationships with other people. All three are inevitable, and the latter is the most painful.
 - B. Suffering results as the elements of the human personality struggle against each other.
 1. We are inevitably doomed to suffer because of our irremediable state of interior psychic alienation.
 2. Our psychic constitution makes us want desperately to hurt others, but we cannot admit this to ourselves or the superego will punish us.
 - C. Freud describes three ways in which humans cope with suffering.
 1. Intoxication.
 2. Isolation (although this solution is impractical for most people).
 3. Sublimation (i.e., the expression of a powerful aggressive impulse in socially acceptable fashion such as through sports or work).
- IV. Freud perceives society as the collective expression of individual aggression.
 - A. The mass id (the collective lust for aggression and domination) struggles with the mass superego (expressed in ethical systems and religion).
 - B. Civilization (embodied in the impossible standards set by the great religions) cannot hope to triumph over the force of mass id.
 - C. Men are innately aggressive: *homo homini lupus* ("man is a wolf to man"). The inclination to aggression disturbs our relations with society, and it explains the persistent phenomena of war and persecution of minorities.
 1. Freud rejects Marx's view that human nature is benign and that only private property causes pain. The blame lies not with the system but with human nature.
 2. Freud sees private property as just one means by which we register our aggression against others.
 3. With his dim view of humanity, Freud would not have been surprised by the Holocaust.

Recommended Reading:

Freud, Sigmund. 1961. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: Norton.

Freud's Theory

Freud, like Marx, has a theory of human nature that sets forth a conception of the tripartite self. Also like Marx, he begins with a concept of the natural part of the human self as a set of physical needs, including the need for sex. However, the differences between Marx and Freud far outweigh the similarities. Whereas Marx's concern is the cash nexus, Freud's is the "bash nexus"—the forces not of money but of aggression.

The excerpts from Freud's *New Introductory Lectures* outline his theory of the tripartite self. The first part is the id, defined as a bundle of instincts aimed at gaining pleasure and avoiding pain. Unlike Marx, Freud believes that this "natural self" is and always will be dominant primarily because it exists as the unconscious part of our personality, and we can never be aware of its enormously powerful role in shaping our everyday behavior. The id is the spoiled brat in each self, endlessly demanding, impulsive, irrational, asocial, selfish, and pleasure seeking. When other parts of the personality try to contain it, the id asserts itself in an uncontrollable, unruly, and infantile way, making demands that cannot possibly be fulfilled because the id refuses to make choices or to recognize limitations and contradictions. The id wants it all. In the id, the instincts of sex and aggression are fused, and those two instincts dominate the entire personality. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud emphasizes the instinct of aggression as more prominent in determining our behavior.

The second part of the personality is the ego, a term that is misleading because we tend to call a person who has an inflated view of himself or herself a "big ego." In Freud's theory, though, the ego is not the proud, inflated part of the self, but the cautious, rational voice of common sense that tries to restrain both the id and the superego. If the id is guided by the pleasure principle, then the ego follows the reality principle because it is "turned toward" or concerned with the external world of objective reality. The ego is the "wimp" part of us, reasonable and modest but weak, ineffective, and hopelessly incapable of containing the demands of the superego. It struggles desperately, as Freud says, to serve three masters (id, superego, and the real world) by mediating between the wild and wishful dream world of the id and the restraints imposed by the two others. The ego is the broker, the negotiator, the conciliator; when the id makes its incessant and insatiable demands for sexual gratification and total domination, the ego attempts to assert control. But in that task it is always embattled and besieged; it is inevitably at a terrible disadvantage because it lacks the id's superior power. The ego tries to call for help from the superego but is usually punished for asking.

The superego, the third part of the personality, is like the id in one key respect: it is totally irrational. But in all other respects it is unlike the id and represents the id's main adversary within us, the other source of the internal conflict in our incurably alienated split self. The superego is more powerful than the ego but

less so than the id. It is the preacher or stern parent of each self that deals primarily in guilt and setting impossible standards of moral perfection. We might recognize our parents in the idea of the superego because it is shaped by parental influence. Whereas the id is composed of inborn instinct, the superego is developed after birth by socialization from parents and society. The superego has two distinct parts: the conscience and the ego ideal (internalized standard of perfection). The former punishes us but the latter rewards us if we strive to meet its unreasonable and unreachable expectations. In those respects, the superego often opposes both the pleasure principle of the id and the reality principle of the ego with the morality principle, calling especially on religion to reinforce it.

Comparisons and Contrasts Between Marx And Freud

We are suffering from a common malady that we have termed “the alienated split self.” What is the split self? It is the personality in conflict: we are divided within ourselves between conflicting sets of motivations and drives, expectations and aspirations. What is the cause of the conflict? We lack consciousness of who we are, of why we are in such a painful state of alienation.

What are we alienated from? For Marx, we are alienated from our essence, which is our sense of species being. Freud believes that a profound alienation pervades our personality, but basically it is twofold: alienation of the id from the superego, as well as alienation of both from the ego, which represents reason and is in touch with external reality.

What remedy is there for such alienation? Marx offers the more optimistic prognosis for resolving alienation because his remedy is to know our species being, which will inevitably occur through historical development. The evolution of economic relations will produce the class consciousness and class revolution necessary to destroy the old order and usher in the new communist one. For Freud, the prognosis is, at best, guarded. The remedy is analysis, but analysis is open only to a few; the masses will probably continue on their destructive paths and perhaps destroy us all. Alienation, then, is inevitable among the majority. Conflict is destructive; we strive not to cure or to overcome but to contain and to cope. In that struggle, strengthening of the ego is our last best hope in a world fraught with aggression.

For Marx and Freud, we can confront the problem of alienation constructively by raising our consciousness. But there are severe limits on how much consciousness-raising can attain.

As an economic determinist, Marx places limits on what can be attained by raising consciousness. He says that social existence determines consciousness; in other words, economic conditions constitute the controlling independent variable in our progress. Consciousness-raising helps, but all the increased consciousness in the world will not work until basic changes occur in how we produce and control our material resources. For Marx, then, the problem has social or systemic roots and can be ultimately resolved only at that level. Robert Tucker observes in *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* that as Marx’s thought matured, “the inner conflict of alienated man with himself became, in Marx’s mind, a social conflict between ‘labor’ and ‘capital,’ and the alienated species-self became the class-divided society” (p. 175). Only class revolution at the right time could provide the remedy.

Freud is, by contrast, a psychological determinist who believes that the unconscious remains a key determinant of our behavior. We must strive to expand our personal consciousness through analysis. Yet, at best, our conscious

element will be but the tip of the psychic iceberg. Our ego is besieged, embattled, and weak compared to the id and the superego. We must try to strengthen it because it comprises our common sense, our rational faculty, and our contact with our environment. We strive to reinforce our ego so that we will not cave in and surrender to a runaway id, or be smothered by the guilt of a suppressive superego.

For Marx and Freud, there is a “deeper reality” that underlies our consciousness: for Marx it is the economic structure of society, and for Freud it is the psychic unconscious that controls our behavior. For each, that deeper reality may be known in different degrees and with different results, but it always represents an objective truth beneath the subjective consciousness. Where are we to turn, then, in a world of strangers, or worse, in a world where we are strangers to ourselves? Although Marx and Freud have different perspectives, they nevertheless endorse the ancient advice of the Delphic oracle, stressed by Socrates and repeated by all political philosophers, to “know thyself.” That axiom is not questioned. The only questions are how many of us will join in the quest for self-knowledge and what we will discover.

Lecture Twelve

Thoreau's Theory of Civil Disobedience

Scope: Henry David Thoreau marks an important departure not only from the classical tradition but also from contemporary liberalism with which he otherwise had much in common. Thoreau follows Machiavelli in rejecting the classical view—upheld by G. W. F. Hegel—that human beings are intrinsically social animals who find their natural fulfillment through the state. Thoreau echoes the Hindu tradition in emphatically rejecting the contention of Plato, Aristotle, and later Rousseau that an intrinsic connection exists between politics and ethics. Not only does Thoreau deny that the state has any moral authority, but also he accuses it of thwarting both the liberty and moral development of individual human beings by implicating them in its perfidies.

Thoreau's view of the individual's obligation to the state stands in direct contrast to Creon's: if a law violates one's own conscientious view of right and wrong, it must be disobeyed. Individual liberty trumps the claims of state authority in every case. Although Thoreau's doctrine of civil disobedience proved too much for the liberals of his day, who shrank from subjecting the authority of law to private judgment, it animated the later civil rights struggles led by Mahatma Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Describe Thoreau's theory of civil disobedience, and evaluate its originality.
2. Compare Thoreau's views on the supposed relationship between ethics (or morality) and politics (or law) with those held by Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Rousseau.
3. Explain Thoreau's concept of freedom, and compare it with freedom as understood by Plato and Aristotle.
4. Compare and contrast Thoreau's and Marx's criticisms of capitalism and the institution of private property.
5. Summarize Thoreau's critique of representative democracy.

Outline

- I. Thoreau holds special attraction and appeal to people throughout the world because of his personal journey and the devotion of his life to a cause, as described in *Walden*.

- A. As described in *Walden*, Thoreau's personal journey—beginning with his separation from his own society—was reminiscent of Socrates and Buddha.
- B. *Walden* constitutes Thoreau's declaration of separation from a culture he found profoundly dissatisfying. He sought to enter a state of universality—and thus of liberation—without leaving the United States.

II. Thoreau sets forth his political philosophy in his essay "On Civil Disobedience."

- A. Thoreau warns in very personal terms against the state's abuse of power over people. He emphatically rejects all political and economic institutions of the United States and regards himself as an absolute outsider.
 1. He refuses on principle to pay poll tax in protest of slavery and the U.S. war with Mexico. He refuses to cooperate with what he sees as a corrupt regime.
 2. His act of tax resistance marks the origins of civil disobedience.
- B. Thoreau rejects Hegel's sanctification of the state and of law.
 1. According to Thoreau, the state lacks any moral strength.
 2. While Hegel argues that individuals fulfill themselves through the state, Thoreau holds that the state destroys individual liberty.
- C. Thoreau also goes beyond the British liberal tradition.
 1. Thoreau joins British liberal theorists such as John Locke and John Stuart Mill in defending individual liberty and warning against the abuse of state power, but he goes beyond Locke and the British liberals in sanctioning civil disobedience to unjust laws.
 2. While Locke holds that the purpose of government is to defend private property, Thoreau constantly denounces the institution of private property.
 3. Thoreau challenged Ralph Waldo Emerson to practice civil disobedience by defying unjust laws.
 4. Thoreau holds that "that government is best that governs not at all." He is not an anarchist, however, since he does not insist on the immediate abolition of government.
 5. Thoreau criticizes majority rule and representative democracy. He denies the ability of law to make human beings more just.

III. Thoreau critiques capitalism.

- A. He attacks capitalism for its exaltation of money and its support for the institution of slavery.
- B. Unlike Marx, Thoreau indicts capitalism on moral grounds.

IV. Thoreau's political philosophy has lasting significance.

- A. Thoreau's theory of civil disobedience is unique in combining theory with practice.
- B. He issues a call for a revolution that is based on nonviolent noncooperation with an unjust state. Gandhi was profoundly influenced by Thoreau.

Recommended Reading:

Thoreau, Henry David. 1960. *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience." New York: Signet.

Thoreau: Civil Disobedience Against The State

Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) was born in Concord, Massachusetts, which was considered the center of the "American Renaissance" because of the presence there of some of the brightest lights of American literature and philosophy (e.g., Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne). By the time Thoreau had graduated from Harvard in 1837, he was profoundly influenced by Emerson's philosophy of Transcendentalism. That philosophy is similar to Hegel's idealism in that it holds that a divine essence inheres in all being; a transcendent spiritual reality exists and permeates all nature.

Thoreau's idea of transcendentalism differs from Hegel's idealism by denouncing rather than sanctifying the state. Hegel views the state as the agent of the divine on earth. Thoreau calls the state "half-witted," having physical but not moral strength (pp. 233–34). Thoreau sees God in nature and believes that He inhabits especially the individual conscience; the state seeks to suppress the spiritual work of a person and so must be seen as an alien and unwanted institution. For that reason, Thoreau declares in "Civil Disobedience," "I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the state, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually" (p. 236).

Therefore, on the issues of the respective roles of the state and the individual, Hegel and Thoreau are diametrically opposed. Hegel is the strong advocate of the state authority because it is legitimized by divine "reason in history." Thoreau is a staunch opponent of state authority and of the entire theory of nationalism because they undermine the moral development of the individual; the state strives to stifle individual expression. For Hegel, a person achieves freedom only within and through the state, while for Thoreau the state inevitably thwarts individual liberty.

Thoreau expresses his opposition to state authority in two ways: he opposes the institution of slavery by becoming an abolitionist, and he condemns the U.S. war with Mexico (1846–1848). Both slavery and war were seen as logical manifestations of the state's support of evil. In order to register his dissent from state authority, Thoreau refuses to pay his state poll (head) tax, a tax levied on every male (ages 20–70) in Massachusetts. Thoreau argues that he cannot support a government that is fighting a war with Mexico, that seeks to extend slavery, and that legitimizes slavery under its Constitution.

On July 23, 1846 (during the two years that he lived at Walden Pond), Thoreau was arrested for refusing to pay his poll tax. He was imprisoned for only one night in the Concord jail, but the experience inspired his essay on civil disobedience, first delivered as a lecture titled "The Relation of the Individual to the State" on January 26, 1848.

Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience pronounces a radical dissent from our political tradition. It marks a sharp departure from both the conservative and liberal ideologies of American nationalism. Just as Hegel is a solid "insider" for affirming the bases of Western civilization and especially its sanctification of the nation, Thoreau becomes a radical "outsider" for unequivocally rejecting his tradition. Among American political theorists before and after Thoreau, there is a striking consensus on three fundamental tenets of our political tradition—the ideas of nationalism, representative democracy, and capitalism. Liberals and conservatives alike endorse those three broad concepts. Thoreau emphatically rejects all three, and this rejection is clear throughout his essay on civil disobedience.

Thoreau's rejection of nationalism—of the state and government—is announced in the opening paragraph in which he departs from both liberal and conservative positions by stating "that government is best which governs not at all" (p. 222). Thoreau goes on to say that he is not an anarchist because he does not believe that people are as yet prepared for no government. Although he "declares war with the state," he is nevertheless prepared to "make what use and get what advantage of her I can" (p. 236). If Thoreau was not fully an anarchist, he certainly had strong anarchist leanings. Later, full-fledged anarchists like Emma Goldman would adopt Thoreau as one of them without hesitation primarily because he condemned any claim that the state may make to moral legitimacy. Thoreau conceded that the state might sometimes be expedient, but Hegel and American nationalists could never be satisfied with this conclusion. They say the state—in particular the American nation—is embarked on a unique mission that was (in Ronald Reagan's terms) secured because "the source of our strength in the quest for human freedom is not material but spiritual." Thoreau would dismiss that claim as bogus because the state is incapable of such divine inspiration or authorization. The nation is suspect; it makes war and supports slavery.

Thoreau's attack on representative democracy began with his remarkable critique of voting and elections: "All voting is sort of gaming.... Even *voting for the right* is *doing* nothing for it" (p. 226). Thoreau then expands that statement to a broader criticism of the system of the majority rule when he states that "there is but little virtue in the action of masses of men" (p. 226). Finally, the attack reaches its climax with Thoreau's indictment of the rule of law: "It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice" (p. 223). When the injustice of the law and the state becomes intolerable, "then, I say, break the law" (p. 229). That call to defiance of the law is quite different from the resistance that the American colonists had advocated in 1776 against Britain. They could rightly argue that Americans then had no representation because the British monarchy was based on undemocratic principles. Thoreau, however, is demanding dissent from law in a representative democracy because he believes that the principles of state authority, which is based on the rule of law and the will of the majority, are illegitimate. That

thinking renders his position different from American nationalism in particular and from Hegel's affirmation of the sanctity of the state in general. Thoreau affirms, in an unqualified sense, the right of individual conscience, which is opposed to the claims of any state, whether a monarchy or a representative democracy.

Finally, Thoreau's critique of capitalism marks the extreme point of his uniquely "outsider" position. As we have seen, Marx had presented a powerful attack on the institution of private property before Thoreau wrote *Walden*, but when he moved to Walden Pond in July 1845, Thoreau offered a personal statement against the accumulation of private property and for living a life of simplicity and renunciation of wealth. Emerson, in his fine house in Concord, had warned that "things are in the saddle and ride mankind," but it was Thoreau who lived the principle that "a man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can do without." Although Thoreau had not read Marx, he would have agreed with Marx's indictment of capitalism: "Its principal thesis is the renunciation of life and human needs" by teaching that life depends on "the more you *have*" (Fromm, p. 144) and that "my own power is as great as the power of money" (Fromm, p. 165).

Unlike Marx, however, Thoreau states his position in plain moral terms. He calls the "luxuries" and "so-called comforts of life ... positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind," and he subscribes to "voluntary poverty" (*Walden*, pp. 14, 218–20). Like Marx, Thoreau could condemn capitalism because it supported slavery, and businessmen because they were more interested in making money than in "humanity" (p. 226), but Thoreau couches his criticism in explicitly moral language that Marx avoided. Marx would have agreed with Thoreau that the "rich man is always sold to the institution which makes him rich," but Marx would not have added, "Absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue" (p. 231). Thoreau criticizes the man of commerce because "his moral ground is taken from under his feet" as he strives for endless profits (p. 232).

Marx did not speak of "virtue" and "moral ground" because he regarded himself as a social scientist describing actual events of history. He would have derided Thoreau as another wishful utopian thinker and not a genuine revolutionary. Marx thought in terms of historical inevitability and class struggle, not individual conscience, moral virtue, and voluntary poverty. Marx hated the capitalists' accumulation of things as much as Thoreau did, but Marx saw no merit whatsoever in being poor or leading a life of simplicity. The problem was not with wealth *per se* but with the exploitation of the many by the few, which Marx saw as inevitable under capitalism.

That problem marks a key difference between Marx and Thoreau: while both were "outsiders" who condemned the evils of capitalism, Marx blames the system whereas Thoreau holds the individual strictly responsible. Any person,

Thoreau believes, should be blamed if he or she does not perceive the outrageous injustices of the state and then act to resist them. Marx's mode of resistance is collective: a person must join the party and recognize his or her class identity. Thoreau's methods are characteristically individualistic, with no concept of class or call to join any movement. Marx's end, too, is collective: a communist society in which all would experience the common joys of living in a community. Thoreau would not be induced into a community; any kind of collectivism, whether Marx's communist society or Hegel's ideal state, would probably prompt another move to Walden Pond. Thoreau negates nationalism, representative democracy, and capitalism. He affirms individualism and the sanctity of the conscience rather than the state.

Thoreau also expounds a certain view of truth that contrasts with both Marx and Hegel. Thoreau, like Marx and Hegel, prizes truth. "Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth" (*Walden*, p. 219). But both Marx and Hegel believe that they possess the truth as surely as any theologian. They find their truth in history because both are determinists who believe in historical inevitability, that the end they envisage not only should transpire but also *must* and *will* occur because impersonal forces (divine and economic) dictate that kind of destiny. That view of "truth possessed" is far from what Thoreau presents. He has no idea of historical inevitability or impersonal forces operating independently of our will. When he speaks of truth it is usually in the context of personal discovery, and he views his own life as part of an ongoing quest for a better understanding of what is truth. He criticized those who have already discovered truth in a particular view of God or nation, and he says that "they who know no purer sources of truth, who have traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible and the Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage toward its fountain-head" (p. 239). Thoreau refutes here the notion that he possesses any claim to an absolute truth. He is in *pursuit* of truth, on a pilgrimage toward its sources, and different systems may be followed along his journey to the fountain-head. We call that view "truth pursued" rather than "truth possessed," and Thoreau's description of the idea of truth pursued anticipates Gandhi's elaboration of it at the end of this course.

Thoreau anticipates Gandhi most directly and significantly in his theory of revolution and civil disobedience. Gandhi says that he was profoundly influenced by Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience, and he later sought to apply Thoreau's individual example to action on a mass scale. The ideas in Thoreau's essay that especially inspired Gandhi begin with Thoreau's assertion that "All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to and to resist the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable." Thoreau then urges "honest men to rebel and revolutionize" (p. 225). The specific method of resistance that Thoreau encouraged—and that Gandhi adopted—was to offer civil disobedience, in this case voluntary

imprisonment by refusing to pay one's taxes. "If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact the definition of a peaceable revolution.... When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished" (p. 231). From Hegel's viewpoint, that doctrine was anathema; from Gandhi's perspective, it was a call to truth. When Thoreau proclaimed in 1848 a nonviolent method for "peaceable revolution," he expressed an idea that within 100 years would actually bring a revolution to 400 million Indians.

Lecture Thirteen

Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor

Scope: This lecture examines the chapter on the Grand Inquisitor from Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. The Grand Inquisitor's understanding of power over people is based, like Freud's, on individual and mass psychology rather than on economic forces or political institutions. His understanding of human nature, the values that motivate human beings, and the relationship between individual and society all clash sharply with Thoreau's views.

Rather like Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Thomas Hobbes, the Grand Inquisitor holds that human beings seek not individual freedom but security. While Thoreau views the claims of individual conscience as paramount, the Inquisitor holds that most people regard freedom of conscience as burdensome. Feeling threatened by freedom, they prefer to be told what to do and believe, and they find comfort and security by submerging themselves into a larger whole.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Explain the Grand Inquisitor's understanding of human nature and how it shapes his concepts of freedom and state power.
2. Compare and contrast the views of Thoreau and the Grand Inquisitor regarding the relationship between individuals and the society around them.
3. Summarize the Grand Inquisitor's interpretation of Satan's three temptations of Christ.
4. Summarize the Inquisitor's understanding of the "psychology of power" (i.e., the mechanisms by which large institutions, such as mass movements, the state, or the Catholic Church, wield coercive psychological power over their followers).
5. Compare and contrast Christ's understanding of human nature, freedom, and power with the Inquisitor's view.

Outline

- I. Fyodor Dostoevsky was not a political theorist, but he managed to express in his works extraordinary themes that continue to resonate in political and social theory and in contemporary philosophy.
 - A. In his chapter on the Grand Inquisitor from *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky presents a view of freedom that differs profoundly from Thoreau's perspective.

- B. Dostoevsky was born into a middle-class Moscow family, became attracted to socialism, narrowly escaped execution, and was sentenced to imprisonment in Siberia.
 - C. Dostoevsky's portrayal of the Grand Inquisitor as the epitome of wickedness reflects his enmity toward Roman Catholicism.

- II. The chapter begins with a fable of the second coming of Christ.
 - A. Christ returns during an awkward period for the Roman Catholic Church—the Spanish Inquisition during the sixteenth century—as the Grand Inquisitor is burning individuals at the stake.
 - B. As Christ walks through the city, He conveys His identity to people through His radiance, His presence, and above all His compassion.
 - C. People recognize Christ and ask Him for counsel and words of wisdom. The Grand Inquisitor commands his troops to seize Christ. The crowd falls under the Grand Inquisitor's sway and leads Christ away to prison.

- III. To justify his actions, the Grand Inquisitor delivers a monologue to the silent Christ in prison.
 - A. Contrary to Locke and Thoreau, the Inquisitor asserts that people desire not freedom of choice but security. They want to be told what to believe.
 1. Freedom of conscience is a burden from which men try to escape. They seek someone to worship and to whom they can turn over their freedom.
 2. People are terrified by the needs that are inherent in freedom—to make choices and to face a hostile world alone. Consequently, they seek security by submerging themselves in the crowd and by affiliating with someone having greater power.
 3. The theme of the "fear of freedom" has been used to justify totalitarian regimes during the twentieth century, especially the Nazi regime in Germany.
 - B. The rest of the monologue concerns the differing responses of Christ and the Grand Inquisitor to Satan's three temptations of Christ.
 1. The first temptation is economic: the provision of bread for all. The Grand Inquisitor believes that human beings by nature demand economic security, not liberty. People cannot rise above the cash nexus to desire higher goods such as truth or the knowledge of God. Christ, however, refuses to compromise men's freedom by bribing them with material goods.
 2. The second temptation is psychological: the use of miracle, mystery, and authority to dazzle people into submission. According to Dostoevsky, the Roman Church excels at such displays. The Grand Inquisitor holds that people demand such psychological security and reassurance. Christ, however, wants people to choose

Him freely, not because they are awed by demonstrations of his immortality.

3. The third temptation is political: possession of all kingdoms of the world. The Inquisitor asserts that human beings desire submission in a universal state that can provide universal peace and security. Christ, however, rejects temporal power.

C. Christ responds to the Inquisitor by wordlessly kissing him.

IV. The encounter between the Inquisitor and Christ illustrates two varieties of power—violent and nonviolent. It prefigures the contrast between Hitler and Gandhi. The Grand Inquisitor symbolizes the twentieth century’s widespread abuse of nationalism in pursuit of power.

Recommended Reading:

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Notes from the Underground* and the “The Grand Inquisitor,” in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dutton.

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881), an exact contemporary of Marx (1818–1883), was born in Moscow, the second of six children. His father was an army doctor of ample means who had a strong influence on his son, directing him away from his passion for literature and to a career in engineering. In 1837, Dostoevsky was enrolled in the Army Engineering College in St. Petersburg, where he spent five years. His father was murdered by his own peasants in 1838. By 1844, Dostoevsky, although an officer in the Army Engineering Corps, decided to resign his commission and return to literary work. Moreover, at precisely the same time (1842–1844) that Marx was being influenced by the French Utopian Socialists (Saint-Simon and Proudhon), Dostoevsky was also reading them and his thinking became mildly socialist. In Russia, this influence meant that Dostoevsky was critical of the government of Czar Nicholas I (who reigned 1825–1855).

Between 1844 and 1849, Dostoevsky published ten novels and short stories. His first novel, *Poor People* (1845), brought him instant fame. But his socialism soon got him into serious trouble with the government. In April 1849, he was arrested and imprisoned for eight months, was charged with “taking part in criminal plots, insolent attacks against the government,” and was sentenced to death. Dostoevsky told of his harrowing escape (Intro., p. viii), but the sentence was commuted to four years in Siberia. When he was released in March 1854, he had become a passionate adherent of the Czars, first Nicholas I and then Alexander II (who reigned 1855–1881). Until the end of his life, Dostoevsky remained committed to Russia—to the state religion of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church and to the ideal of Russian culture. He became a chauvinist and never returned to his early socialist views. Indeed, his Russian nationalism was an intense reaction against that early socialism.

The years between 1864 and 1880 were the period of Dostoevsky’s monumental works: *Notes from the Underground* (1864), *Crime and Punishment* (1866), and his last and probably greatest novel, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–1880). “The Grand Inquisitor” constitutes one brilliant chapter (Chap. V, Book V) of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

The setting of the Grand Inquisitor, which Ivan calls his “poem in prose,” is Seville, Spain, during “the worst time of the Spanish Inquisition” (p. 121), which was the sixteenth century. The Inquisition was founded in 1481 by Ferdinand and Isabella to hunt out non-Catholics—mainly Muslims and Jews—confiscate their property, and burn them at the stake. The first Grand Inquisitor was Isabella’s confessor, Tomás de Torquemada (1420–1498), who had about 2,000 people burned alive at public *autos da fé*, or “acts of faith.” The old cardinal in the poem, the Grand Inquisitor, is patterned on Torquemada.

As the story opens, Christ enters and is recognized by the people. But the Grand Inquisitor, whose power is challenged, orders his soldiers to seize Christ. The people submit because they are “cowed into submission and trembling obedience” (p. 123). The rest of the story consists mainly of the Grand Inquisitor’s justification of his blasphemy: he announces that he has accepted Satan rather than Christ because Satan, not Christ, has a correct understanding of human nature.

The first key theme of the story is that of freedom. The Grand Inquisitor counters Christ’s view of freedom with his own. Notice how this idea of freedom dominates the poem: in ten pages (pp. 124–33), the words “freedom” or “free” are repeated no less than 45 times. Christ’s view of freedom is spiritual liberation that comes from knowledge of God: the Truth shall make you free. The Grand Inquisitor’s understanding of freedom is quite different: “Man is tormented by no greater anxiety than to find someone to whom he can hand over quickly that gift of freedom with which that unhappy creature is born.... Did you forget that man prefers peace and even death to freedom of choice in the knowledge of good and evil? Nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom of conscience, but at the same time nothing is a greater torture” (p. 129). That view of freedom climaxes (pp. 133–34) with the Grand Inquisitor’s assertion that people want security, not free choice. People need to be saved from themselves. They are afraid, so they naturally look to authority “and huddle close to us in fear, as chicks to the hen. They will marvel at us and will be awe stricken before us, and will be proud at our being so powerful and clever” (p. 134).

In his book *Escape from Freedom*, Erich Fromm analyzes the views of freedom and authority expressed by the Grand Inquisitor and relates them to modern political movements, especially the phenomenon of Hitler’s Nazi Germany. Fromm says that when, in contemporary society, the individual experiences freedom in John Stuart Mill’s sense of the term, then he or she is afraid, “alone with his self and confronting an alienated, hostile world.” After quoting the above passage from Dostoevsky’s poem, Fromm observes that “the frightened individual seeks for somebody or something to tie his self to; he cannot bear to be his own individual self any longer, and he tries frantically to get rid of it and to feel security again” by eliminating free choice (*Escape from Freedom*, p. 173). Fromm then relates that attitude directly to Hitler’s understanding of how to mobilize the masses and quotes extensively from *Mein Kampf*, emphasizing Hitler’s insight that the Nazi movement provided security and safety for people who feared the terrible uncertainty in Germany after World War I. The conclusion is that whereas Mill believes that what distinguishes us is a desire for free choice, the Grand Inquisitor and Hitler contend that people are driven mainly by fear of choice and an awesome passion for security.

This view of freedom set forth by the Grand Inquisitor is supported by the second theme of the poem, his concept of human nature. The two themes are

closely related: the desire for security, not freedom, is part of human nature, and we want security primarily because we know ourselves to be “weak, sinful, worthless, and rebellious” (p. 127). The Grand Inquisitor consistently characterizes human nature as “weak and vile,” saying to Christ that “man is weaker and baser by nature than You believed him to be” (p. 131). We are weak and sinful so we fear freedom and seek to embrace authority. Indeed, human nature yearns for “miracle, mystery, and authority” (pp. 130, 132) to comfort it in moments of chronic doubt and anxiety.

These two dominant themes of freedom and human nature are brilliantly woven by Dostoevsky around the three pillars of the poem’s structure, the “three questions,” (p. 126) or the three temptations of Christ, expressed in the New Testament, Matthew 4:1–11 (and analyzed incisively by Ellis Sandoz in his study of the poem, titled *Political Apocalypse*, especially pp. 153–54, 162). To be brief, we will call these the three temptations of Plenty, Pride, and Power. The Grand Inquisitor, defying Christ in the name of Satan, rejects each of Christ’s responses when He is tempted by the Devil in the wilderness. In the first temptation, that of Plenty, Christ says that “man cannot live by bread alone.” The Grand Inquisitor screams back that people are far more concerned with fulfilling their material or economic wants than pursuing their spiritual concerns. “In the end, they will lay their freedom at our feet, and say to us, ‘Make us your slaves, but feed us’” (p. 127). The Grand Inquisitor’s point is that people consistently yield to the temptation of plenty because they want not “the bread of Heaven” but “earthly bread”—the money and property that will provide security. If the first question is “Will we sell our souls to mammon?” then the answer that comes from modern humanity, loud and clear, is “YES!” To expect pursuit of God, truth, and free choice is to contradict human nature.

The second temptation, that of Pride, is the most obscure and complex of the three. The Grand Inquisitor alludes to it (p. 130) with his reference to Christ’s refusal to jump from the high “pinnacle of the temple” and to demand that God rescue Him with His angels. Such an act by Christ would have amounted to the sin of pride because He would have indulged in a vain display of His superhuman nature by flaunting His immortality. In like manner, Christ refused to “descend from the Cross,” which He surely could have done with His divine powers. Christ resisted this temptation of pride, according to the Grand Inquisitor, because He wanted to enable each individual to choose to follow Him freely and not to be awed by demonstrations of His immortality. The difficulty of this argument is that Christ is identified in our minds with the performance of miracles (e.g., walking on water), and Dostoevsky’s interpretation is therefore obscure. However, Dostoevsky, who is presenting the Grand Inquisitor as a demonic figure with wrong ideas about humanity, makes the point effectively here that it is the Grand Inquisitor who commits the sin of pride. The Grand Inquisitor is guilty of intellectual arrogance or of playing God. Dostoevsky identifies that as the main sin of the Roman Catholic Church with its avowal of infallibility, but he also sees modern science as guilty of the sin of pride because

science, for all its claims to open-mindedness and experimentation, is inherently elitist in its arrogant intellectualism and its impersonal and heartless rationalism. It is insufferably sure of itself and implicitly asserts a superior claim to truth by seeing itself as modern, progressive, and enlightened. In that respect, both Roman Catholicism and modern science are authoritarian because, from their respective positions of elitist privilege, both view the ignorant masses with contempt: both lack humility and a sense of humanity. That idea is important to Dostoevsky's own philosophy because he sees the sin of pride as the fatal flaw of all Western civilization. The Western world perceives the rest of humankind (including Russia) from a position of technological superiority. The West has persuaded itself that it enjoys that superiority as a result of God's grace. It manages to justify the worst acts of exploitation and domination with the argument that they are somehow divinely destined. Marx perceives this flaw in Western civilization and thinks that it is rooted in capitalism, but Dostoevsky sees that it goes much deeper than that. It is a part of our culture. We will analyze it further when we study its manifestations in Nazism.

The third temptation, that of Power, is described (p. 132) when the Grand Inquisitor denounces Christ's refusal to "accept the sword of Caesar," that is, to take the power of the state and use it to establish "universal unity" (p. 133). Satan in the wilderness offered Christ in this third temptation all the land and political power that could be imagined, but Christ refused to take it and so failed to establish "the universal state and universal peace." The Grand Inquisitor deplores that refusal because human nature does not want freedom and democracy; it craves instead "someone to worship, someone to keep his conscience, and some means of uniting everyone in one indisputable, general, and unanimous anthill" (pp. 132–33).

In each of the three temptations, the message of the Grand Inquisitor is that Christ's refusal to yield was wrong because He misunderstood human nature and the meaning of freedom. Perhaps the most ironic feature of the poem is that although Dostoevsky seeks to condemn rather than commend the Grand Inquisitor's ideas, it seems that the most convincing statements come from the old cardinal, perhaps because the worst excesses of our age have tended to confirm his dark view of humanity. Maybe the exception to that judgment is the ending of the poem, when Christ, in a spirit of infinite compassion and forgiveness, closes his encounter with a kiss. This gesture of inclusiveness that seeks to embrace and transform the terrible exclusiveness of the Grand Inquisitor anticipates in some sense the encounter between Hitler and Gandhi in our time.

Lecture Fourteen

The Idea of Anarchism and the Example of Emma Goldman

Scope: In this lecture, Professor Dalton discusses anarchism and one of its premier practitioners, Emma Goldman. The theory of anarchism bears striking similarities to the theories of Thoreau and Rousseau, especially in its benign view of human nature, its stress upon compassion and community among human beings, and its extreme distrust of state power.

We examine first the origins and meaning of "anarchy," which has little to do with the popular image of anarchists as violence-prone sociopaths. As formulated by theorists such as William Godwin, anarchism discerns a natural and rational order that is within society and is based on voluntary cooperation among equal human beings rather than on hierarchy and coercive state power. Finally, we review Emma Goldman's understanding and application of the central principles of anarchism.

Although anarchism was a revolutionary doctrine, the revolution that it sought to achieve had less to do with Marx's proletarian revolution than with Thoreau's and Gandhi's revolutions of nonviolent noncooperation with evil. Anarchists sought to transform society by removing from it the deadening weight of the state, thereby liberating men's natural cooperative spirit. Unlike Machiavelli and Marx, they refused to evaluate the means of effecting that transformation on the basis of the good to be achieved. Subsequent revolutionaries, such as Adolf Hitler, would prove far less scrupulous.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Give an etymological definition of "anarchy," and explain the meaning of the concept.
2. Explain the theory of human nature that underlies modern anarchism, as described by William Godwin and George Woodcock.
3. Compare and contrast Thoreau's political and social outlook with the theory of anarchism.
4. Summarize the five principles of anarchism.
5. Describe the principles or mechanism by which social order will be produced under conditions of anarchism, according to anarchist theory.
6. Describe Emma Goldman's critique of Marxism, particularly its reliance on violent means to effect the proletarian revolution.

7. Summarize the anarchist concept of freedom, and identify its requisites.

Outline

- I. The ancient idea of anarchism, meaning literally “without rule,” expressed in modern times by a broad range of thinkers, from nonviolent Christian anarchists such as Leo Tolstoy to violent anarchist revolutionaries such as Michael Bakunin.
 - A. Ancient Greeks such as Creon and Thucydides view anarchy as the ultimate human evil.
 - B. However, Zeno, the founder of Stoicism in the third century B.C., advocates anarchism. He calls for a stateless society characterized by perfect equality and freedom, in which people could recover their natural goodness and develop a harmonious and cosmopolitan society.
 - C. Nineteenth-century industrialism encouraged the development of anarchist doctrine.
- II. The modern concept of anarchism.
 - A. William Godwin in *An Inquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) maintains that anarchism presumes that society is naturally rational, equal, and harmonious.
 - B. George Woodcock in *Anarchism* proposes that human nature will evolve to the point that government is no longer necessary. Woodcock defines anarchism as a system of thought seeking fundamental social changes and as the replacement of authoritarian rule by nongovernmental cooperation among free individuals.
- III. The life of Emma Goldman (1869–1940).
 - A. Goldman was born in Russia and emigrated to the United States in 1886.
 - B. In her autobiography, *Living My Life*, she describes how her father’s authoritarianism instilled in her the desire to rebel.
 - C. She campaigned in New York City for improved working conditions and was repeatedly jailed. She advocated free love, atheism, conscientious objection, and birth control.
- IV. The five leading principles of anarchism.
 - A. Human nature is both fundamentally benign and dynamic.
 1. One view (e.g., Machiavelli and Freud) holds that human nature is malign and that people are aggressive and untrustworthy. The state must exercise control over people.

2. Another view, typified by communism, holds that human nature is infinitely malleable according to the will of a powerful revolutionary leader or party.
 3. The Fascist view, typified by the Inquisitor and Hitler, sees human nature as infinitely gullible and credulous.
 4. Anarchists view human nature as benign but not as infinitely malleable or gullible. People will do the right thing if government does not get in the way.
- B. Anarchists stress the importance of cooperation rather than competition, arguing that the former ensures the survival and progress of the human species.
 1. Peter Kropotkin argues in *Mutual Aid* that all our actions must be guided by our sense of oneness with each other. The principle of mutual support and defense is deeply rooted in all living things.
 2. Competition is injurious to the species and should be avoided.
 3. Anarchists call for cooperative forms of organization based not on hierarchy or other forms of authority but on shared interests.
 - C. Anarchists view the state as a repressive and illegitimate institution that obstructs social progress.
 1. All coercive power is evil and destructive, whether wielded by an authoritarian or a democratic regime. According to Goldman, the tyranny of a majority is worse than the tyranny of a dictator.
 2. The Communists hold, by contrast, that the proletariat needs the state in order to consolidate its own domination and defeat the bourgeoisie.
 - D. Individual liberty cannot exist without social and economic equality.
 1. Freedom is incomplete without economic opportunity.
 2. Freedom is a positive, not a negative, concept. People must be given the economic opportunity they need in order to be free.
 - E. Anarchists reject the Marxist principle that any means are justified to attain a revolutionary end.
 1. Some anarchists endorse violent methods, but most insist on the relationship between means and ends.
 2. According to Emma Goldman, the means must be identical in spirit and tendency with the ends sought.

Recommended Reading:

Goldman, Emma. *Living My Life* and *My Disillusionment in Russia*.
Shulman, Alix. *Red Emma Speaks*.

Five Principles of Anarchism

1. **The future is ours to determine: determination denies choice.** Human nature is dynamic, with abundant capacities for a wide range of behavior—malevolent and benign, cowardly and heroic, brutal and compassionate, cooperative and competitive. We are not locked into behaving in any determined manner; we can shape the kind of behavior we wish through the exercise of *choice*.
2. **Community with diversity: cooperation is the way to attain it.** Cooperation rather than competition is the capacity that humans should develop and reinforce. Our natural need of sociability or mutual aid is most eloquently expressed by Peter Kropotkin, who argues in *Mutual Aid* that we must be guided in our acts by “our perception of oneness with each human being,” for “in the ethical progress of man, mutual support—not mutual struggle—has had the leading part” and will continue to foster such moral progress as we are able to attain. Social organization is necessary to further the spirit of cooperation yet guarantee diversity. Kropotkin and others like Emma Goldman and Enrico Malatesta emphasize that anarchism is not opposed to organization, only to hierarchical, authoritarian forms of it. For Goldman, organization must be “based primarily on freedom. It is a natural and voluntary grouping of energies to secure results beneficial to humanity.” Malatesta cites several forms of organization, such as “scientific or peace societies and congresses, international rescue efforts, and Red Cross associations.” These forms are based on satisfaction of human needs rather than accumulation of power. They allow for maximum diversity.
3. **The state is an obstacle: don’t vote because voting encourages the state.** R. P. Wolff argues in his *In Defense of Anarchism* that “the defining mark of the state is authority, the right to rule. The primary obligation of man is autonomy. An anarchist may grant the necessity of complying with the law under certain circumstances or for the time being. But he will never view the commands of the state as *legitimate*, as having a binding moral force.” That position is taken by Thoreau.
4. **Liberty with equality: homelessness is not inevitable.** Like most modern ideologies, anarchism is indebted to the values set forth by the French revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity. More than Marxism, anarchism stresses the value of individual liberty; more than liberalism, it emphasizes social equality. Because of that dual emphasis, anarchism has difficulties in reconciling both of those values with the third, fraternity, or the need for a caring, sharing sense of social community. But the problem of dealing satisfactorily with the three conflicting values or goals is not unique to anarchism: it is *the* major task of modern political theory. Gandhi attempts to reconcile the three values with his conceptions of *sarvadaya* and *swaraj*,

which suggest that a sense of both human equality and community can emerge only from an individual quest for spiritual liberation. The welfare of all depends on the moral development of each.

5. **Means-end relationship: what goes around comes around.** The major debate among anarchists is over the issue of violent or nonviolent methods of change. For Michael Bakunin, violence is essential, while for Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Gandhi, nonviolence represents the superior path of revolutionary change and the only means to a nonauthoritarian society. Nowhere in political theory—classical or modern—has this debate over violence or nonviolence, and especially the importance of using the right means, reached a richer expression than in anarchist thought. The issue of the means-end relationship in Marxism-Leninism is at odds with the theories of several anarchists, and that, from Emma Goldman’s viewpoint, is the main problem with Marxism.

Emma Goldman's Theory

Emma Goldman (1869–1940), anarchist extraordinary, was born in Russia and emigrated from there to the United States in 1886. She relates in her autobiography, *Living My Life*, how her authoritarian father instilled in her a desire to rebel. Her political career began in New York City (she lived in the Village at 210 East 13th Street), where she joined anarchists such as Johann Most and Alexander Berkman to promote causes such as better work conditions for women seamstresses. Goldman quickly became one of the most inspiring orators of her time and thus was regarded by the U.S. government as among America's most dangerous radicals. She was imprisoned in 1893 for a speech that attempted to incite the unemployed of New York City to riot, again in 1901 for being implicated in the assassination of President McKinley, and finally in 1917 for opposing American involvement in World War I. She delighted in heresy, preaching "free love to puritans, atheism to churchmen, revolution to reformers," and pacifism to soldiers. She once said, "The more opposition I encountered, the more I was in my element" (Alix Shulman's biographical introduction to *Red Emma Speaks*).

After releasing Goldman from prison in 1919, the U.S. government deemed her too dangerous for this country and deported her to the Soviet Union. Goldman anticipated that she would see in Russia, following Lenin's Bolshevik revolution in 1917, the enactment of many of her radical ideals. Instead she found the betrayal of revolution, as she comments in the "Afterword" to her book *My Disillusionment in Russia* (1924).

As her response to the Bolshevik revolution shows, Goldman was capable of changing her ideas drastically. That inclination is evident in her changing attitudes toward the use of violence for social and political revolution. Alix Shulman records the extent of her changing ideas on violence (Preface to Part 3 of *Red Emma Speaks*). At first, Goldman subscribed to the idea that the end justifies the means, a doctrine adopted by a wide range of political theorists from Machiavelli to Marx. Then, as a result of a series of failures by anarchists to use political violence successfully, she began to doubt its efficacy. By 1923, she could write that "the one thing I am convinced of as I have never been in my life is that the gun decides nothing at all. Even if it accomplishes what it set out to do—which it rarely does—it brings so many evils in its wake as to defeat its original aim." Still later, in 1928, Goldman seemed to acknowledge the choice that must be made by revolutionaries between violence and nonviolence when she wrote that either "we must become Bolsheviks, accept terror and all it implies, or become Tolstoyans. There is no other way." Yet, as Alix Shulman observes, she did not, in fact, make this choice. On the one hand, she asserted the necessary relationship between means and ends, but on the other hand, she refused to renounce all revolutionary violence (writing at one point, "Revolution is indeed a violent process").

Shulman concludes that "though Goldman grew skeptical about the value of individual acts of violence, in her remaining years, she never doubted that necessity of collective revolutionary violence against capitalism and state." Thus she enthusiastically supported the violent action of the Spanish anarchists in 1936. Although she wrote during the period of Gandhi's nonviolent movement in India, she rarely mentions Gandhi. She did not appreciate the position of the revolutionary force of nonviolence that Gandhi demonstrated. A glaring contradiction remains in Goldman's thought on the specific issue of violence as a valid means of revolutionary change. She says that the "first ethical precept [of anarchist revolution] is the identity of means used and the aims sought. The ultimate end of all revolutionary social change is to establish the sanctity of human life...." Yet she also says in the same passage that violence is inevitable and necessary. Given her adoption of the essential connection between means and ends, those propositions are not compatible.

Lecture Fifteen

Hitler's Use of Power

Scope: In this lecture, Professor Dalton examines Adolf Hitler's politics of exclusion. He offers three possible explanations of why Hitler succeeded in imposing his politics of exclusion. The first is psychological in nature and invokes Freudian analysis to argue that Hitler used his demagogic powers to liberate the collective unconscious of the German people and articulate their latent aggressiveness. The second emphasizes the economic devastation of Germany following World War I, and the third stresses distinctly political factors such as leadership, ideology, and mass party organization.

Together, these explanations help to account for Hitler's rise to power. Much like the Grand Inquisitor, Hitler perceived that the German people sought economic and psychological security, in exchange for which they would willingly surrender their freedom to him. He tried to provide that sense of security by uniting Germans against an internal enemy—the Jews, whom he stigmatized as responsible for Germany's woes.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Evaluate various explanations of the success of Hitler's political movement.
2. Describe the characteristics and underlying assumptions of Hitler's "politics of exclusion."
3. Describe the role of militarism and violence in Hitler's ideology.

Outline

- I. What accounts for the rapid and stunning success of Hitler's Nazi movement and his politics of exclusion?
 - A. Some analysts propose a psychological explanation.
 1. Following Strasser's critique, this explanation holds that Hitler liberated Germany's mass unconscious and gave voice to its innermost aspirations. He told the German people what they wanted to hear, and he proclaimed their most secret desires.
 2. In Freudian terms, the German people's mass superego was submerged in their mass id, which led them to give full vent to their unarticulated desire for aggression.
 - B. Other theorists offer an economic explanation.

1. Under the Versailles treaty, the victorious allies deprived Germany of its most productive territories, crippling its growth potential and making it impossible to pay war reparations. The consequence was huge inflation and massive unemployment.
 2. Together with psychological anxiety and a sense of deep humiliation, that economic deprivation led the German people to turn to Hitler for economic and psychological security.
- C. Professor Dalton proposes a third explanation that emphasizes political leadership, ideology, and organization.

II. Hitler's politics of exclusion was directed above all against the Jews.

- A. Hitler describes his conversion to anti-Semitism in *Mein Kampf*.
 1. Hitler came to see the Jews not only as non-German but also as less than human.
 2. He drew on a longstanding German tradition of anti-Semitism espoused by many respected German scholars.
- B. Hitler's politics of exclusion resembles in exaggerated form the dehumanization of untouchables in the Indian caste system. The excluded are typically stigmatized as unclean. Hitler perpetuated the stereotype of Jews as physically and morally unclean. The untouchables were viewed in similar terms.
- C. Hitler both dehumanized the Jews (and Communists) and portrayed them as superhuman, being everywhere and controlling everything.
- D. He portrayed the German people in feminine terms; they must be seduced by the Nazis before they are seduced by the Jews.
- E. Hitler asserted that he was doing God's work in exterminating the Jews. He invokes God and Christianity throughout *Mein Kampf*.

III. Hitler glorifies the state, militarism, and violence.

- A. He admits to being in love with militarism and heroic struggle.
- B. Hitler holds a very different view of violence from that of other theorists whom we have examined in these lectures.
 1. Plato and Aristotle see violence as the sign of a sick state.
 2. Machiavelli sees violence as a legitimate tool of state policy to be used when it is expedient to do so, but he does not endorse wanton or excessive use of violence.
 3. Marx sees violence as a legitimate instrument to use in attacking the bourgeois state, but he does not glorify violence.
 4. Hitler, however, glorifies violence and embraces it as a creed.

IV. Hitler offers gender analysis.

- A. Hitler views the mass psyche as feminine; it is moved less by reason than by desire for domination by a more powerful force. He analogizes

the German people to a woman who prefers to bow before a strong man rather than dominate a weakling.

- B. Hitler holds that the masses, like women, have powerful emotions but low rational capability. Nazi propaganda sought to exploit simple but powerful emotional chords. It emphasized frequent repetition of emotional slogans rather than rational arguments.

Recommended reading:

Hitler, Adolf. 1971. *Mein Kampf*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Sentry.

Analysis of Hitler's Ideology

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) was born in Austria. His father was a customs official. The development of his ideas, as we will analyze them in the context of *Mein Kampf* (“My Struggle,” written in prison in 1924), can be divided into three phases (page numbers refer to *Mein Kampf*).

The first phase encompasses Hitler's childhood (1889–1907), during which he formed his impressions of life from interaction with his father (who died in 1903) and in school (he attended high school but dropped out before graduation). Early in life he began to stress the importance of struggle (pp. 6, 11–12, and later developments on 135, 285, 295–96). He depicts struggle as a masculine force and relates it to themes of nationalism (pp. 4, 10, 13, 15–16, 124) and militarism (pp. 6, 161, 163–64). All of his later ideas are outgrowths of the central emphasis on struggle.

The second phase of Hitler's ideological evolution took place during his time in Vienna (1907–1913). In September 1907, Hitler at age 18 set out for Vienna to gain admission to the Academy of Fine Arts. He failed and was bitterly disappointed. His mother died the following December. He later tried again to enter the academy and failed. The next six years of his life were utterly crucial for his intellectual development. As one of his biographers, J. C. Fest, observes, Hitler spent his period in Vienna observing the dregs of humanity from the perspective of wretched men's hostels: “By interpreting men exclusively in the light of that twisted experience and seeing in their motives nothing but hate, ruthlessness, corruption, greed, lust for power, cruelty, or fear, he imagined, with provincial complacency, that he had come close to ultimate knowledge, whereas actually he was merely revealing his own desperate and depraved personality” (*Face to the Third Reich*, p. 10). In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler says that Vienna was the “hardest, though most thorough school of my life,” in which he obtained “the foundations for a philosophy in general and a political view in particular which later I only needed to supplement in detail, but which never left me” (p. 125). Three of the key components of his philosophy were anti-Marxism (pp. 37–48); antiparlamentarianism (pp. 76–108); and, above all, anti-Semitism, the attitude that remained at the core of his thought and personality (pp. 51–65, 300–29).

The third phase of Hitler's development corresponds with World War I, which had a tremendous impact on his personality and thought. Hitler wrote that when the war began in August 1914, “it was desired by the whole people,” and he felt an “ecstasy of overflowing enthusiasm” because it presented the “hardest of all struggles,” a “gigantic struggle” (p. 161). As an advocate of struggle and militarism, he welcomed the war, enlisted in the German army, and served with distinction as a corporal until he was gassed and hospitalized just before the war ended. Hitler's ideas about struggle, expressed in the context of his response to World War I (pp. 161–64), are related to his anti-Semitism (pp. 169–70) and to his ideas about force and violence (pp. 170–72). His concept of violence is

Lecture Sixteen

Gandhi's Use of Power

especially noteworthy in this chapter, for he argues that “any violence which does not spring from a firm, spiritual base, will be wavering and uncertain.” That is, violence must not be seen as “naked force” alone, but should be inspired by an ideological commitment. For this purpose the use of propaganda was essential, as Hitler indicates in the crucial chapter on “War Propaganda” (pp. 176–86). The connection of his views on propaganda to his ideas on the means-end relationship (pp. 177–79) and his concept of the masses (pp. 180–85) is important. His view of the masses as feminine is introduced on p. 42 and repeated on p. 183.

The text of *Mein Kampf* deserves close analysis because it presents with striking clarity and candor the essence of Hitler's thought. Some of the work's main ideas, emerging from Hitler's phases of development just discussed, are described below:

1. The idea of gender is connected to political struggle and leadership, a key statement of which occurs on p. 42: “Like a woman ... they have been abandoned.” That statement should be related to the passage on p. 183 noted above, and also to his views on anti-Semitism and on the Jews as the “seducer of our people” (pp. 61, 63, 325). The German people need a “strong man,” a “commander” to protect them from the “seducers.”
2. The theme of struggle relates to war, nationalism, God, and Fate (pp. 161–64) as noted above, but also later in *Mein Kampf* to themes of domination as a necessary mode of racial progress and purification. Thus throughout history, the “Aryan”—unlike the “modern pacifist”—subjugates “lower peoples” and bends them to his will. Through his struggle and domination, he ensures the upward movement of peoples, the avoidance of “blood mixture,” and the need to preserve “pure blood” (pp. 295–96).
3. A theory of movement politics, described especially in chapter twelve, connects Hitler's ideas of the masses (pp. 330–43) and his insistence on the movement as “anti-parliamentarianism” (p. 345) with a powerful centralized organization (pp. 346–47) and a dominant leadership (pp. 349–51). Hitler's emphasis on the need for the political movement to encourage “fanaticism and intolerance” (pp. 350–51) and to “intolerantly impose its will on all others” lies at the heart of his central concept of exclusiveness.
4. Hitler sees the Nazi state as the vital instrument for carrying on the struggle for racial purity. Like Hegel, he cites Providence as the designer of the state (p. 150), and he insists that the individual must “sacrifice himself for the totality” of the state (p. 152). Unlike Hegel, however, Hitler injects a strong element of racism into his idea of the state as a means to the end of preserving racial purity (pp. 393, 397–98, 402–03).

Scope: Hitler's glorification of violence as a creed of life clashes not only with the classical tradition's view of violence as the mark of a disordered state, but also with Machiavelli's and Marx's more restrained and pragmatic endorsement of the use of violence. It conflicts still more with Gandhi's absolute rejection of violent means to achieve political goals. Like the anarchists and unlike Machiavelli or Hitler, Gandhi denies that a good end can ever justify unjust means. In this lecture, we review Gandhi's formulation and exercise of the principle of nonviolent noncooperation, which owed much to Thoreau's earlier theory of civil disobedience. Perceiving that violence dehumanized the practitioner as well as the victim, Gandhi urged Indians to fight British imperialism through nonviolent civil disobedience.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Compare and contrast the skills, methods, and goals of Hitler and Gandhi as political leaders of mass movements.
2. Compare Hitler's understanding of violence and its use with those of Gandhi, Goldman, Marx, Machiavelli, Plato, and Aristotle.
3. Contrast Hitler's liberation of the mass unconscious of the German people with Gandhi's liberation of the mass unconscious of the Indian people.
4. Identify what Gandhi regarded as the primary tool of British imperialism in India, and describe the means he advocated to neutralize that tool.
5. Explain Gandhi's concept of freedom, or *swaraj*, and contrast it with the ideas of freedom held by the other theorists whom we have studied in this course.
6. Describe the revolution that Gandhi sought to produce among the Indian people; describe the means by which that revolution would come about; and compare Gandhi's revolution with those pursued by Hitler, Marx, Goldman, and Thoreau.
7. Explain fully Gandhi's reasons for insisting on *ahimsa*, or nonviolence.

Outline

- I. Gandhi's politics of inclusion and his conception of political power.
 - A. While in South Africa, Gandhi read and was influenced by Thoreau, and he led Indians in civil disobedience against the government's denial of civil rights to them.
 - B. In India, Gandhi took charge of the movement for independence from British rule in 1919.
 1. Before that time, the independence movement had been split between advocates of moderation and extremism.
 2. Gandhi's method of nonviolent noncooperation helped to energize the independence movement and win new supporters for it.
 3. Gandhi pointed to the Amritsar massacre as proof that British imperialism had dehumanized the British as well as the Indians.
 - C. Gandhi's form of mass action was rich and noble, and thus it clashes with the noxious Hitlerian kind of mass action.
 1. Nehru observes that the essence of Gandhi's teaching was liberation from fear.
 2. Gandhi appealed to positive elements in the mass unconscious, not to negative and aggressive elements, as Hitler did.
 3. Gandhi believed in nonviolence as a creed, while Hitler believed in violence as a creed.
- II. Concepts of inclusivity in Gandhi's thought.
 - A. The first concept of inclusivity was *swaraj*, meaning rule over oneself (self-discipline), which produces true liberation.
 1. *Swaraj* allows one to liberate oneself from illusion, ignorance, and fear.
 2. *Swaraj* includes the idea of self-mastery and the understanding of oneness with all other selves.
 3. The idea of journey is essential in achieving liberation; the individual achieves self-mastery by means of a personal journey.
 4. Political independence is not sufficient; Indians must liberate themselves from their own attitudes of exclusivity. Self-government depends ultimately on an interior revolution or reformation.
 - B. The second concept of inclusivity is *satya*, meaning the pursuit (rather than the possession) of truth.
 1. To find truth is to realize oneself and one's destiny to become perfect.
 2. The highest truth is that we are all part of one another.
 - C. The third concept of inclusivity is *ahimsa*, meaning the practice of nonviolence. *Ahimsa* is intertwined with *satya*.

1. Nonviolence is the means, and the highest truth is the end. Gandhi insists on the essential connection between means and ends.
 2. Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of humankind because it can elicit the best from people.
 3. Nobody has full possession of the truth; it is sought but never possessed.
- D. The fourth concept of inclusivity is *satyagraha*, which refers to the power generated by truth and nonviolence.
 1. *Satyagraha* liberates the active energies of love and compassion, which are stronger than hate.
 2. *Satyagraha* is a gentle force that is a complete substitute for violence.
 - E. The fifth concept of inclusivity is *sarvodaya*, meaning equality.
 1. An ideal civilization deliberately and voluntarily restricts wants.
 2. Gandhi believes that in perceiving the essential unity of humanity, we will desire to uplift others. The privileged classes would develop a sense of responsibility to use their wealth in a socially constructive manner, and the less privileged would resolve to overcome their own deprivation. Through nonviolent action, economic and social equality can be reconciled with individual freedom.
 3. Gandhi insists on equality among Indians as well as between the Indians and British.

Recommended Reading:

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. *Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Exclusiveness and Inclusiveness in the Ideas of Hitler and Gandhi

The idea of exclusiveness is defined as an attitude of mind that views the world in terms of stereotypical categories, dividing people by assigning them fixed identities according to their class or caste, sex, religion, nation, or ethnicity. That perspective attributes abstract characteristics to individuals, seeing them in impersonal terms and transforming them into objects.

One prominent example of this mentality is the way that untouchables are perceived today in India and have been perceived for perhaps 3,000 years. They are born into the untouchable status and cannot normally alter that identity. That status dictates every form of behavior in society according to the rules that are prescribed by tradition. Untouchables are excluded from many forms of social interaction. The traditionally privileged castes rigorously enforce this exclusiveness. Although the theory and practice of untouchability is unique to India, the mentality that underlies it can be found among practitioners of *apartheid* in South Africa; Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland; or anti-Semites, racists, and homophobes around the world. Indeed, this kind of thinking and behavior is so common that it is often regarded as inevitable. These lectures highlight the singular example of Hitler's thought and experience of anti-Semitism because the outcome to which it led (i.e., the Holocaust) was so extreme. The Holocaust clarifies the implications of exclusiveness by showing us, writ large, its ultimate logic when it becomes state doctrine.

The idea of inclusiveness should be defined first in terms of what it is not. It is not simply a political strategy for "including" large numbers of people. Hitler was extremely successful at including millions of Germans in his Nazi movement, but that success did not make him inclusive, at least as the word is intended here. The defining feature of inclusiveness is its attitude of not excluding any individual by virtue of his or her class or caste, sex, religion, nation, or ethnicity from forms of social interaction or political participation. The theory of inclusiveness envisages a society that strives not to divide and dominate, but that instead allows us to relate to one another on the basis of one category alone—our common humanity. Just as we examine Hitler's thought to clarify the theory of exclusiveness, so Gandhi's thought illustrates the idea of inclusiveness. In both theory and practice, Gandhi managed to give dramatic clarity to the meaning and implications of inclusive behavior. Thus, Hitler's anti-Semitic statements in *Mein Kampf* may be sharply contrasted with Gandhi's comment:

I have known no distinction between relatives and strangers, country men and foreigners, white and colored, Hindus and Indians of other faiths, whether Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians, or Jews. I may say that my heart has been incapable of making any such distinctions.... I

believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man falls, the whole world falls.

Gandhi concluded that "my nationalism and my religion are not exclusive but inclusive and they must be so consistently with the welfare of all life."

We can enhance the value of distinguishing inclusiveness and exclusiveness by using those concepts to summarize the main concerns of these lectures (i.e., to show how the idea of inclusiveness is part of a nexus of concepts that forms logical relationships among the major ideas of the lectures). The concept of inclusiveness is related to the ideas of "truth pursued": nonviolence, means as determining ends, freedom as residing in the capacity for individual choice and a person's quest for self-realization, the significance of moral values in shaping human behavior, and the desirability of limited or nonexistent political authority. Conversely, the concept of exclusiveness lies at the center of a conceptual cluster that affirms the ideas of "truth possessed": violence as necessary and desirable for conflict resolution, ends as justifying the means, "positive freedom," and the essential role of strong political authority in the form of a powerful state or party.

Stages in the Development of M. K. (Mahatma) Gandhi as a Leader

Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, Gujarat (on the west coast of India). He was assassinated on January 30, 1948, in Delhi. His life and thought may be examined in the context of four major phases of development:

- I. Primary identity: shaped by three factors.
 - A. Region of birth. Porbandar was a backwater in terms of British influence. In contrast to Bombay or Calcutta, it was very provincial.
 - B. Caste. The *vaishya* caste was third in the Hindu caste hierarchy, which meant that Gandhi was relatively lowborn. A subcaste to which Gandhi belonged was the *bania*, or small business caste. Gandhi means “grocer”; his caste was noted for its strong practical sense.
 - C. Family. Gandhi stressed the lasting effect on him of his family, which was not anglicized, but deeply religious (with both Hindu and Jain elements). His mother exerted decisive influence on him through her example of vows, fasting, and self-control. Gandhi’s basic attitudes toward the culture of India in terms of religion, sex, and identification with the oppressed (*Harijans*, or untouchables) were formed in 1887.
- II. Emulative identity: three periods in his personal attempt at imitating British imperialism.
 - A. 1881–1886. Gandhi’s secondary education occurred at Alfred High School in Rajkot, Gujarat, where classes were taught in English with an English master. His basic attitudes of admiration and anxiety toward British culture were formed there.
 - B. 1888–1891. Gandhi was in London to take a degree in law during this period. A classic expression of his emulative attitude can be seen in his *Autobiography*, in which he recalls this period in chapter XV (“Playing the English Gentleman”). He returned to India in 1891.
 - C. 1893–1906. In 1893, Gandhi left India for South Africa where he remained until 1914.
 1. He was involved in political leadership of the Indian minority in South Africa, which in 1893 had a population of 66,000 Indians (mostly indentured laborers), 570,000 Europeans (British and Dutch), and 2 million Africans.
 2. Gandhi’s emulative attitude developed into a liberal style of action patterned on Indian liberals and moderates. He formed the National Indian Congress on the model of the Indian National Congress; he protested grievances of Indians in court; and he used petitions and

the press, including his newspaper, *Indian Opinion*, established in 1903. These were all moderate, legal, constitutional means.

- III. Exclusive identity: marked by two key “moments.”
 - A. Gandhi’s break with emulation began with the Zulu “rebellion” in June 1906.
 1. He formed an ambulance corps of Indians to assist the British colonial government. The rebellion turned into a massacre of 3,500 Zulus.
 2. Gandhi’s subsequent reappraisal of his emulative identity began with a vow of *brahmacharya* (including sexual continence, which Gandhi saw as the path to self-discipline). In his study of Gandhi’s development, *Gandhi’s Truth*, Erik Erikson described the profound influence on Gandhi of the Zulu rebellion: “The experience of witnessing the outrages perpetrated on black bodies by white he-men aroused in Gandhi both a deeper identification with the maltreated, and a stronger aversion against all male sadism, including such sexual sadism as he had probably felt from childhood on to be a part of all exploitation of women by men” (p. 194).
 3. Gandhi then made the crucial connections among the three major forms of exploitation and domination of his era: imperialism, racism, and sexism.
 4. After government passage of the “Black Act” in August 1907, he called a meeting of 3,000 Indians on September 11 in Johannesburg. That became the moment when *satyagraha* (“truth-force,” seen always as an active force in contrast to passive resistance, which he rejected) was born. Mass arrests followed resistance to the Black Act, and *satyagraha* campaigns continued until 1914 when reforms were granted by the government of South Africa.
 - B. In 1909, Gandhi visited England for five months to lobby Parliament. His arrival on July 10 was preceded by the assassination of a British official by an Indian terrorist.
 1. Between August and October, Gandhi was in constant dialogue with both sides of the Indian issue—British liberals in Parliament and Indian terrorists in London.
 2. The result was his formation of a new exclusive ideology set forth on his return from sailing to South Africa, November 13–22. In those nine days, he drafted his first major treatise, *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Independence). He rejected Western civilization and affirmed Hindu tradition in exclusive terms by preaching the superiority of Indian culture.
- IV. Inclusive identity: embraced during most of Gandhi’s political career in India, from 1919 to 1948.

- A.** The years of 1915 to 1918 were transitional.
1. After returning to India in January 1915, Gandhi moved slowly in an unfamiliar context to experiment with nonviolent campaigns on a small scale. He was disoriented and confounded by the events of World War I and their effects on India. He mistakenly cooperated with the British government in India in its war effort in the hope that India would gain independence after the war.
 2. Economic distress after the war's end in 1918 contributed to his own and India's disillusionment (as Nehru describes below).
- B.** A series of events in early 1919 jolted Gandhi into a clear view of British rule in India.
1. The "Rowlatt Bills" were passed, providing the British government with powers of trial without jury or right of appeal, allowing preventive detention of anyone "threatening public safety" and "dangerous persons may be continuously detained," and allowing possession of any "seditious document" to be punishable by two years in prison, followed by another two years at the government's discretion.
 2. In March 1919, Gandhi called for the first national *satyagraha* to resist the Rowlatt Bills. The campaign included a 24-hour mass fast to prepare people for civil disobedience, suspension of all work for a general *hartal* (strike), and public meetings to urge withdrawal of the Rowlatt Bills.
 3. In April, civil agitation in the Punjab (northern India), especially in the city of Amritsar (population 160,000) led to the imposition of martial law. There, on April 13, a turning point in the British empire was reached with the "Amritsar Massacre." A British Indian army force of 50 riflemen under the command of General Reginald Dyer fired on an unarmed crowd of 10,000 Indians. The result was 400 dead and 1,500 wounded. The massacre was followed by Dyer's infamous "crawling order." Later, Dyer's actions received high praise in London.
 4. The massacre unpredictably transformed Gandhi's political attitudes toward the British government. In his leadership of the next major campaign of nonviolent noncooperation (1919–1922), Gandhi overcame his previous exclusiveness and adopted an inclusive style based on trust, tolerance, and active nonviolence.
 5. Gandhi's theory of inclusiveness is contained in his own words. But his theory was expressed most eloquently in his actions, especially his "salt march" of 1930 and his Calcutta fast of 1947.
 - a. The salt march is examined by Joan Bondurant in *Conquest of Violence* (pp. 88–102). She correctly states that "as for the elements of true *satyagraha* [nonviolence resistance], all are to be found in the salt *satyagraha*" (p. 100).
 - b. Judith Brown has analyzed the salt march or *satyagraha* at length in her book, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience*. Its inclusiveness is demonstrated in the way that Gandhi drew into the independence struggle groups of Indians not previously politicized, especially women, and so turned the movement into a broader-based effort than had existed before in India or perhaps in any colonized country.
6. Yet, inclusiveness meant for Gandhi not merely the strategy of broadening his potential base by expanding numbers. Inclusiveness was meant to extend to one's adversaries as well as allies. That inclusive philosophy was evident in Gandhi's request that the British cooperate in an effort to elevate humanity above imperialism, and in Gandhi's attitudes of trust and perception of truth.
 7. The example of the Calcutta fast illustrates Gandhi's inclusiveness toward Indian Muslims.
 - a. The religious conflict between Hindus and Muslims in India erupted at the time of independence (1947) into full-scale civil war. The worst fighting occurred in Calcutta, where the large Muslim minority was especially powerful and where it pitted itself against the Hindus. That action produced a savage outburst called the "Great Calcutta Killing," and its bloody aftermath lasted throughout 1946 and 1947.
 - b. In August 1947, Gandhi came to Calcutta and attempted to restore order by fasting "until peace comes to Calcutta." The fast was dramatically successful. The British historian E. W. R. Lumby called it "the greatest miracle of modern times."

Gandhi's Political Theory: Five Concepts

Gandhi's political theory may be analyzed in the context of five major ideas: *swaraj*, or liberation; *satya*, or truth; *ahimsa* or nonviolence; *satyagraha*, or power; and *sarvodya*, or equality. Gandhi wrote extensively on each of these concepts, and they have been examined systematically by Joan Bondurant in *Conquest of Violence* and Raghavan Iyer in *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*. The following selection from Gandhi's writings represents only a brief statement on each concept. Fuller explanations of these ideas may be found in the two best one-volume collections of Gandhi's writings, *All Men Are Brothers* and *Non-Violent Resistance*, both in paperback.

Swaraj

This term means literally "rule over oneself." Traditionally, it signified both rule over one's own country and also, in a spiritual rather than a political sense, rule over one's own soul, or self-discipline. Gandhi combines those two traditional meanings, arguing in *Hind Swaraj* (1909) that political independence for India must also involve "spiritual freedom" (i.e., each Indian should acquire the self-knowledge that would produce liberation from fear). Gandhi thus broadens both the traditional Indian concept of *swaraj* and the modern idea of freedom. He speaks of "outward freedom" and "inward freedom," or, political freedom and moral freedom respectively, Gandhi's understanding of moral freedom is the same as Plato's and Rousseau's.

However, Gandhi does not connect moral freedom with the state. He believes that "inward freedom," or moral freedom, is the result of an introspective search for self-knowledge. The most important kind of freedom that anyone could attain would be freedom from fear because only that freedom could remove the sense of insecurity that fuels both the desire to dominate and to be dominated. In discussing *swaraj*, Gandhi often refers to the domination or enslavement of women by men. Liberation from sexual oppression, he believed, would be much harder for India to attain than liberation from British imperialism.

By *swaraj*, therefore, Gandhi means the attainment of a sense of self that can come only through a quest of self-discovery, a journey perhaps through stages of emulation, exclusiveness, and inclusiveness of the sort that he experienced. Freedom in this respect is necessarily linked with a process of internal searching for what course of life is best. That process should last a lifetime. Gandhi believes that our purpose should be to gradually liberate ourselves from the attitudes of exclusivity to generate violence toward others. This is the connection between *swaraj* and inclusiveness: the liberated person learns to move freely among others different from himself or herself, free especially from the domination-submission syndrome that Gandhi sees at the core of exclusivity, free to experience a spirit of humanity. In this regard, there is no more important concept in Gandhi's theory than *swaraj*. The prerequisite for the political liberation of any society is the personal quest undertaken by the individual. If

that quest is ignored, unsuccessful, or averted, then the apparent political victory of independence, or democratic freedom, will remain superficial. The tyranny of a dictator or a majority comes easily to a state or government in which individuals neglect their primary responsibility—the search in a deeply personal sense for what course of life is best.

Satya and Ahimsa

These two concepts of truth and nonviolence are so closely related in Gandhi's theory that he calls them two sides of the same coin. The reason for the close connection is that Gandhi believes, following ancient Indian philosophy, the highest truth is knowledge of the unity of all being. Because we are all part of one another, to inflict harm means to violate oneself. We discover that truth through *swaraj*: we learn to perceive ourselves in all being and all being in ourselves. As discussed above, *swaraj* implies a gradual process of self-discovery or, as Thoreau says, a "pilgrimage" toward truth, never being fully in possession of it. Both Gandhi and Thoreau advocate "truth pursued" rather than "truth possessed." Gandhi says that his conception of truth "excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth, and therefore, not competent to punish." There is no idea more central to Gandhi's entire theory than the means-end relationship—that "*ahimsa* is the means; truth is the end" and that "we reap exactly as we sow."

Satyagraha

This term may be translated in various ways. Gandhi himself coined the word, so it has no precise derivation. In its most literal sense, it denotes "holding firmly to the truth," but because Gandhi emphasizes that power flows from adherence to the truth, *satyagraha* is "truth-force" or "love-force." Professor Dalton defines it simply as "power," to stress Gandhi's belief that one unleashes a definite force through the practice of nonviolent action. This form of power cannot merely neutralize violence but also transform a situation by liberating reserves of energy in ways that acts of love or compassion often do.

Gandhi assumes that the means of nonviolence are superior in both moral and practical terms to the means of violence because the force contained in emotions of love and compassion is often stronger and more effective than those emotions in hatred or the desire to inflict harm. Often the former are not fully realized because they are not felt in thought as well as in deed. Gandhi seeks to explain the full force of *satyagraha* when he writes:

The word *satyagraha* is often most loosely used and is made to cover veiled violence. But as the author of the word, I may be allowed to say that it excludes every form of violence, direct or indirect, veiled or unveiled, and whether in thought, word, or deed. It is a breach of *satyagraha* to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him or of him with the intention of doing harm. And often the evil thought or the evil word may, in terms of *satyagraha*, be more dangerous than actual violence used in the heat of the moment.

Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence.

Gandhi wants to distinguish *satyagraha* from other terms like “passive resistance,” “civil disobedience,” and “noncooperation.” The latter two terms are components of *satyagraha*, but passive resistance is not. Like violent action, passive resistance is diametrically opposed to *satyagraha* because it allows the resister to harbor feelings of hatred and anger toward the opponent. As such, Gandhi associates passive resistance with internal violence, or what he called *duragraha* (holding on to selfish, narrow interest rather than to truth and the common interest). *Duragraha* unleashes forces of prejudice and exclusiveness rather than attitudes of compassion and inclusiveness.

Sarvodaya

The literal meaning of this term is “welfare of all.” Gandhi wants to invest the idea of welfare with the idea of equality. He is concerned to establish equality between men and women, but social equality requires economic justice throughout society—that is, widespread distribution of wealth. It also demands abolition of caste privilege and especially of the traditional Hindu institution of untouchability. All of those practices of social injustice and discrimination are opposed by the idea of *sarvodaya*.

Gandhi believed that a social revolution requires fundamental economic change. But it is not clear whether he sees social equality as reconcilable and consistent with individual liberty. *Sarvodaya* follows *swaraj* as social justice flows from a higher personal moral consciousness. That is the crux of Gandhi’s response to the apparent contradiction within the idea of democracy represented by Locke and Rousseau (i.e., that the dilemma of democracy implies a tradeoff between equality and freedom).

Gandhi’s concept of *sarvodaya*, as related to the idea of *swaraj*, seeks to resolve that contradiction. He argues that equality can be attained only through the liberation of each individual in society. *Sarvodaya* refers to a society that enjoys both liberty and equality because of its inclusive spirit. The enemy of liberty is not equality but exclusiveness. Social and economic inequality signify not more freedom but a lower moral consciousness. The latter is associated with domination and submission. More than any of the other concepts, *sarvodaya* expresses Gandhi’s vision of inclusiveness in a collective sense, but it rests upon the premise that every individual should pursue a quest for self-knowledge and self-realization. Gandhi holds that the highest realization is that of the integral relationship between *swaraj* and *sarvodaya*.

Gandhi sees the connection between *swaraj* and *sarvodaya* as pertinent for both the domestic and the international realms of political and economic action. In India, the problem of economic inequality stems from class and caste privilege.

Yet, the problem cannot be examined in a vacuum, apart from the world context. The superpowers are guilty of domination through imperialism, of racist and economic exploitation, and of fueling the arms race. Gandhi sees all these evils as undermining the quest for *sarvodaya*. Social well-being depends on attaining an international as well as a national spirit of inclusiveness. Just as Martin Luther King Jr. insisted in the 1960s on the integral relationship in America between the struggle for civil rights and against the Vietnam War, so Gandhi much earlier saw a connection between international and domestic forms of exclusiveness. *Sarvodaya* suggests a vision of the welfare of all humanity—not just all Indians—because humanity demands a realization of our connectedness.

Recommended Political Theory Texts

Annas, Julia. *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*. Careful analysis of main ideas of *The Republic*.

Barker, Ernest. *Greek Political Theory: Plato and His Predecessors* and *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*. Classic studies, thoroughly reliable.

Bluhm, W. T. *Theories of the Political System*. 3rd ed. Noteworthy mainly for the manner in which it seeks to relate theories to present-day thinking, by discussion of contemporary social scientists. Especially chaps. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11 on Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Rousseau.

Ebenstein, William. *Great Political Thinkers. Plato to the Present*. 5th ed. This is a selection of writings from works including Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Machiavelli's *Prince*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Locke's *Second Treatise*, and Rousseau's *Social Contract*. Ebenstein's brief introductions are accurate and useful.

Embree, Ainslie, ed. *Sources of Indian Tradition*, Vol. 1. Excellent compilation of essential source materials on Hinduism.

Hacker, Andrew. *Political Theory* (Macmillan, 1961). Excellent analysis of Plato's *Republic*, pp. 21–68.

Kloski, George. *The Development of Plato's Political Theory*. Especially Parts I–III.

Macpherson, C. B. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, Hobbes to Locke*. This is the best of Macpherson's substantial writings on various aspects of political theory.

McDonald, L.C. *Western Political Theory*. Useful information on the lives and key ideas of all major theorists. Chaps. 2, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, and 15 for Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Rousseau.

Sabine, George H. *A History of Political Theory*. 3rd ed. The most consistently useful text listed, pitched at an introductory level, reliable analysis of all the theorists treated in this course.

Sibley, M. Q. *Political Ideas and Ideologies: A History of Political Thought*. Clear, concise explanation of major thinkers. Chapters on Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau. Also, brief background on political life of ancient Greece (chap. 2) and sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth centuries in Italy (chap. 16), England (chap. 19), and France (chap. 22).

Strauss, Leo and J. Cropsey, eds. *History of Political Philosophy*. The opening chapter by Leo Strauss on Plato's *Republic* is excellent.

Wolin, Sheldon S. *Politics and Vision*. A more advanced text than most of the others listed here. Excellent opening chapters on political philosophy and on Plato. Also good on Machiavelli.