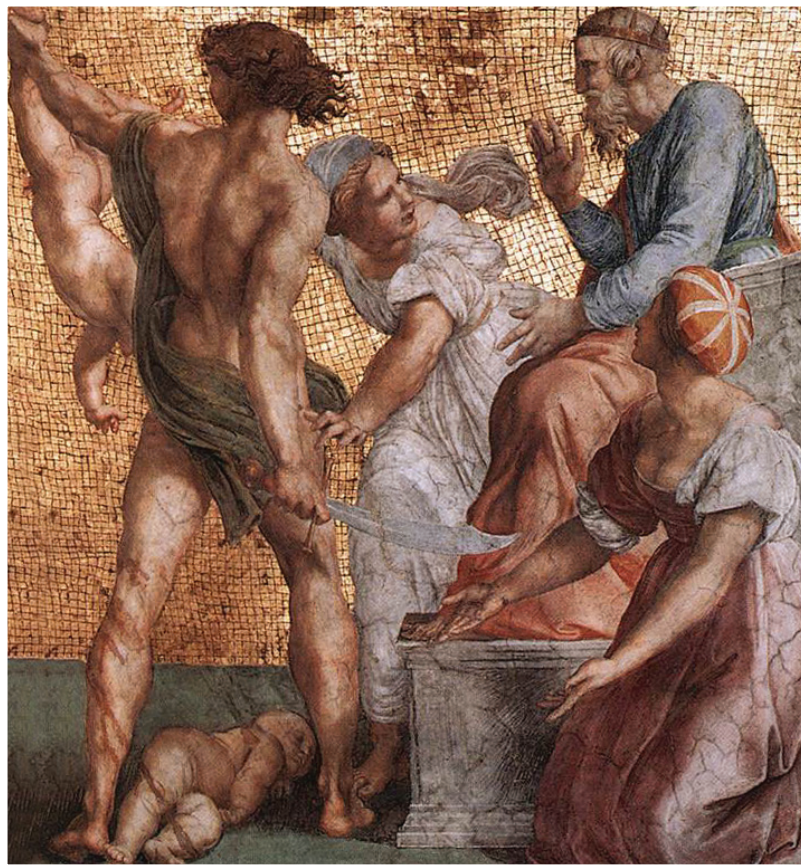




UNIVERSITY  
OF CENTRAL ASIA

# SEEKING SOCIAL JUSTICE



AGA KHAN HUMANITIES PROJECT





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OF CENTRAL ASIA

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**AGA KHAN HUMANITIES PROJECT**

**Bishkek - Dushanbe - Almaty**

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## PREFACE

Central Asia is undergoing profound cultural changes with new foundations for identity emerging as the recently independent states face broader economic and political challenges. Central Asians are reaching into their past for inspiration and seek assistance in drawing upon the rich traditions of their societies to anchor a new system of values. Responding to a widely felt need by educationalists for initiatives to foster to a deeper understanding of ethical issues and the moral choices facing society, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture established the Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP) in 1997. In 2007 AKHP became part of the University of Central Asia (UCA). UCA was founded as an international educational organization in 2000 by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, and His Highness the Aga Khan.

AKHP promotes pluralism in ideas, cultures, and peoples by initiating and supporting the creation and implementation of an interdisciplinary undergraduate humanities curriculum, pedagogical and professional development of faculty in Central Asian universities and community outreach projects. AKHP builds bridges across communities in the region and helps Central Asians explore and share their traditions and establish links with the outside world.

An appreciation and understanding of the breadth of their cultural heritage will enable the people of Central Asia to identify those aspects that can help them adjust to rapid change. Central Asia has interacted with many different cultures, including Buddhist, Chinese, Greek, Indian, Iranian, Islamic, Jewish, Mongol, Russian, Turkic and Zoroastrian. In addition, the impact of the more recent Soviet experience on shaping values and identities should not be underestimated. In all cases students are encouraged to develop the skills of critical thinking to help them understand the diversity within each culture and the similarities between different cultures.

Educators at partner universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan have been trained to teach AKHP courses, assess curriculum materials, co-ordinate student projects, and conduct further teacher training. Students explore a variety of media and genres through divergent classroom techniques, designed to promote active learning, encouraging students to come to their own critical and insightful understanding of key issues.

The curriculum material has been developed, tested and revised over a period of ten years. Such piloting took place within Central Asian classrooms at AKHP's partner universities, where intensive training in student-centred learning was provided. The material was subsequently reviewed by two external committees of international scholars. Based on this input, final editorial revisions were completed in 2008.

The final version of the eight courses that comprise the AKHP curriculum will move beyond the AKHP partner universities and are flexible enough to be utilised in a variety of settings including secondary schools where the pilot testing has already commenced. Each institution has its own needs and expectations, and instructors are encouraged to adapt the materials contained within these courses to their own particular classrooms and the needs of their own students. Such creative adaptation to specific needs forms the basis of a critical education, and is a key step in encouraging Central Asian teachers and students to respond to the needs of their own region.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, the quest for social justice, a uniquely human avocation, has gained an overriding urgency as if to say that humanity has finally acquired a conscience. And perhaps it has? And, perhaps the escalation in demands for justice is an abuse of a system. But can we now abandon the search for justice, even though we know that perfect justice is unavailable to us in this world? Or should we continue to seek justice against overwhelming odds at times but sometimes against one's own inertia? Isn't it a truism that more often than not, the perpetuation of injustice is due to inertia and not entirely due to malevolent intent?

Steadily moving towards universal justice, humanity as it expresses itself through diverse countries, constitutions, and cultures, continues to proclaim the validity of divergent notions of a just order. Within these differences lies the opportunity to exercise other values and virtues. For instance, the classics of all civilizations guide us towards the idea, language, and quest for the good in which the claims of justice are one among many other values. Some modern thinkers have complained about the loss of the language of good and its replacement by the language of freedom (Rev. George Grant). Readers might want to reflect on the hierarchy of values. Is social justice subordinate to the good? Or should social justice be the founding value for the good?

In contemporary times, the search for justice dominates the media, the economy, and political and social life. Most theories of justice embrace two types of justice: distributive and corrective (restorative and retributive). Although, both distributive justice and corrective justice garner equal measure of intellectual attention, it is corrective justice that dominates the media and seeks immediate remedy. How and why did we acquire this sense of justice? What makes us so aggrieved that we forget our daily cares and move to the streets to protest, demand, or even take violent action to achieve justice?

This book and course introduce diverse ideas on justice and the human attempts to improve systems of government. The readers are encouraged to examine their societies and communities and identify the concept of justice that guides them. By examining these conceptions and comparing them with the ideas presented in the texts and in discussions in media, at home, and in classrooms, the reader may have the opportunity to see patterns of justice and injustice that guide and order communal life.

The readers are also enjoined to seek an understanding of systemic and individual acts of injustice in terms of the source of such injustice, the nature of it, the consequence to the victim and the perpetrator, and the consequence to the society or state. A critical examination of social justice by each and every citizen remains the only real possibility for achieving it in any society. This course and book seeks to promote a fine sense of social justice and the need for responsible citizenry for a better world for all of us.



STATUE OF LADY JUSTICE AT A COURT BUILDING  
Olomouc, Czech Republic.

## CHAPTER ONE: CLASSICAL APPROACH

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### INTRODUCTION

From antiquity to contemporary times, seeking justice in cognition and/or praxis has been a time-honored enterprise of philosophers and theologians. However, the myriad definitions of justice generated by them have not quenched our thirst or search for it. The classical approach to the issue of justice offers a contextual argument for the definition and promotion of justice.

Starting with an examination of the good, virtue, prudence, or rectitude for their communities or nations, the classical thinkers defined justice for their times. The search for justice is undoubtedly a unique and society-defining activity. At the core of every society lies a concept of justice however imperfectly it may be implemented by that society. Some definitions of justice fall under the category of distributive justice and others under rectifying justice.

This chapter offers three thinkers from three different civilizations that explored this concept. These examinations of a founding value of different civilizations offer the basis of the intellectual history that is the heritage of all humanity. Readers are urged to examine the different definitions of justice they come across and to categorize them if possible. They may develop their own categories or adopt the one mentioned above.

Some definitions of justice include other virtues. Based on that fact, some thinkers have claimed that justice is not a stand-alone virtue and that it needs to be administered within the context of higher virtues. Do the thinkers in this chapter offer a theory of justice in isolation from other virtues or do they situate it in context with other virtues and values? Can justice be a stand-alone virtue? Can it be the sole criteria for establishing a community, society, or state?

What is the relationship between justice and other virtues or values, such as truth, compassion, and mercy? Do they reinforce or contradict one another? Is there a hierarchy of virtues or values or are all virtues and values equal?

How desirable is justice? Do we want justice all the time, some of the time, or not at all? One could argue that we do not want justice most of the time; we desire preferential treatment, or injustice. One could also argue that we only think of justice when injustice is done to us. Most of the time, we are not concerned about justice. How desirable do the three classical thinkers in this chapter find justice?

Are certain conditions necessary for justice to prevail? What are they? Is it possible for justice to prevail under any condition?





## AESOP: THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

7

### FROM AESOP'S FABLES

Once upon a time a Wolf was lapping at a spring on a hillside, when, looking up, what should he see but a Lamb just beginning to drink a little lower down. "There's my supper," thought he, "if only I can find some excuse to seize it." Then he called out to the Lamb, "How dare you muddle the water from which I am drinking?"

"Nay, master, nay," said Lambikin; "if the water be muddy up there, I cannot be the cause of it, for it runs down from you to me."

"Well, then," said the Wolf, "why did you call me bad names this time last year?"

"That cannot be," said the Lamb; "I am only six months old."

"I don't care," snarled the Wolf; "if it was not you it was your father;" and with that he rushed upon the poor little Lamb and

WARRA WARRA WARRA WARRA WARRA

ate her all up.

But before she died she gasped out "Any excuse will serve a tyrant."

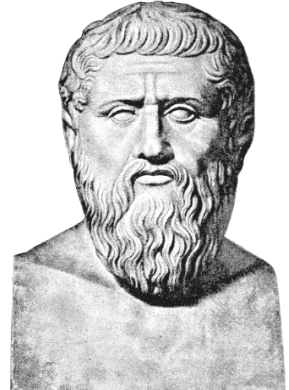
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## PLATO: APOLOGY

Plato (c. 428/327 BC- 348/347 BC) alongside two other Greeks, Socrates and Aristotle, laid the foundation of Western civilization. The main areas of his focus were Art, Education, Epistemology, Literature, Militarism, Politics, and Virtue (Ethics). Plato has been influential throughout human history, but among the many Western philosophers and theologians he influenced are Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, Anselm, Descartes, Hobbes, Leibniz, Mill, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, and Gadamer. His influence also extended to Islamic thinkers such as Al Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rashid. Many works are attributed to Plato, but the most popular ones are the *Apology*, *Crito*, *Gorgias*, *Laws*, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Protagoras*, *The Republic*, *Statesman*, and *Symposium*.



How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost made me forget who I was-so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth. But of the many falsehoods told by them, there was one which quite amazed me;-I mean when they said that you should be upon your guard and not allow yourselves to be deceived by the force of my **eloquence**. To say this, when they were certain to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and proved myself to be anything but a great speaker, did indeed appear to me most shameless-unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for is such is their meaning, I admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saying, they have **scarcely** spoken the truth at all; but from me you shall hear the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases. No, by heaven! but I shall use the words and arguments which occur to me at the moment; for I am confident in the justice of my cause (Or, I am certain that I am right in taking this course.): at my time of life I ought not to be appearing before you, O men of Athens, in the character of a juvenile orator-let no one expect it of me. And I must beg of you to grant me a favour: - If I defend myself in my accustomed manner, and you hear me using the words which I have been in the habit of using in the **agora**, at the tables of the money-changers, or anywhere else, I would ask you not to be surprised, and not to interrupt me on this account. For I am more than seventy years of age, and appearing now for the first time in a court of law, I am quite a stranger to the language of the place; and therefore I would have you regard me as if I were really a stranger, whom you would excuse if he spoke in his native tongue, and after the fashion of his country:-Am I making an unfair request of you? Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the truth of my words, and give heed to that: let the speaker speak truly and the judge decide justly.

And first, I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones. For of old I have had many accusers, who have

- eloquence** –  
the quality of persuasive
- scarcely** –  
almost not or almost none at all
- Agora** –  
the chief marketplace of  
Athens, center of the city's  
civic life

accused me falsely to you during many years; and I am more afraid of them than of **Anytus** and his associates, who are dangerous, too, in their own way. But far more dangerous are the others, who began when you were children, and took possession of your minds with their falsehoods, telling of one Socrates, a wise man, who speculated about the heaven above, and searched into the earth beneath, and made the worse appear the better cause. The disseminators of this tale are the **accusers** whom I **dread**; for their hearers are apt to fancy that such enquirers do not believe in the existence of the gods. And they are many, and their charges against me are of ancient date, and they were made by them in the days when you were more impressible than you are now-in childhood, or it may have been in youth-and the cause when heard went by default, for there was none to answer. And hardest of all, I do not know and cannot tell the names of my accusers; unless in the chance case of a Comic poet. All who from envy and malice have persuaded you-some of them having first convinced themselves-all this class of men are most difficult to deal with; for I cannot have them up here, and cross-examine them, and therefore I must simply fight with shadows in my own defence, and argue when there is no one who answers. I will ask you then to assume with me, as I was saying, that my opponents are of two kinds; one recent, the other ancient: and I hope that you will see the propriety of my answering the latter first, for these accusations you heard long before the others, and much oftener.

Well, then, I must make my defence, and endeavour to clear away in a short time, a slander which has lasted a long time. May I succeed, if to succeed be for my good and yours, or likely to avail me in my cause! The task is not an easy one; I quite understand the nature of it. And so leaving the event with God, in obedience to the law I will now make my defence.

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what is the accusation which has given rise to the slander of me, and in fact has encouraged **Meletus** to prove this charge against me. Well, what do the slanderers say? They shall be my prosecutors, and I will sum up their words in an **affidavit**: 'Socrates is an evil-doer, and a curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others.' Such is the nature of the accusation: it is just what you have yourselves seen in the comedy of **Aristophanes** (Aristoph., Clouds.), who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saying that he walks in air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little-not that I mean to speak disparagingly of any one who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could bring so grave a charge against me. But the simple truth is, O Athenians, that I have nothing to do with physical speculations. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbours whether any of you have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon such matters...You hear their answer. And from what they say of this part of the charge you will be able to judge of the truth of the rest.

As little foundation is there for the report that I am a teacher, and take money; this accusation has no more truth in it than the other. Although, if a man were really able to instruct mankind, to receive money for giving instruction would, in my opinion, be an honour to him. There is Gorgias of Leontium, and **Prodicus of Ceos**, and **Hippias of Elis**, who go the round of the cities, and are able to persuade the young men to leave their own citizens by whom they might be taught

**Anytus** –  
one of Socrates' prosecutors

**accuser** –  
someone who imputes guilt  
or blame

**dread** –  
to fear greatly

**Meletus** –  
main perpetrator against  
Socrates

**affidavit** –  
written statement that you  
swear is true, for use as proof  
in a court of law

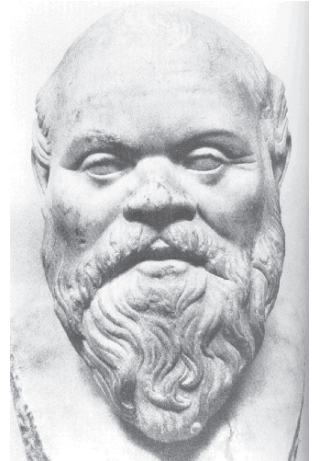
**Aristophanes** –  
Greek playwright, Athenian  
comic poet

**Prodicus of Ceos** –  
Greek humanist of the first  
period of the Sophistic  
movement

**Hippias of Elis** –  
Sophist philosopher who  
contributed significantly to  
mathematics

for nothing, and come to them whom they not only pay, but are thankful if they may be allowed to pay them. There is at this time a Parian philosopher residing in Athens, of whom I have heard; and I came to hear of him in this way:-I came across a man who has spent a world of money on the **Sophists**, **Callias**, the son of Hipponicus, and knowing that he had sons, I asked him: 'Callias,' I said, 'if your two sons were foals or calves, there would be no difficulty in finding some one to put over them; we should hire a trainer of horses, or a farmer probably, who would improve and perfect them in their own proper **virtue** and excellence; but as they are human beings, whom are you thinking of placing over them? Is there any one who understands human and political virtue? You must have thought about the matter, for you have sons; is there any one?' 'There is,' he said. 'Who is he?' said I; 'and of what country? and what does he charge?' 'Evenus the Parian,' he replied; 'he is the man, and his charge is five **minae**.' Happy is Evenus, I said to myself, if he really has this wisdom, and teaches at such a moderate charge. Had I the same, I should have been very proud and conceited; but the truth is that I have no knowledge of the kind.

I dare say, Athenians, that some one among you will reply, 'Yes, Socrates, but what is the origin of these accusations which are brought against you; there must have been something strange which you have been doing? All these **rumours** and this talk about you would never have arisen if you had been like other men: tell us, then, what is the cause of them, for we should be sorry to judge hastily of you.' Now I regard this as a fair challenge, and I will endeavour to explain to you the reason why I am called wise and have such an evil fame. Please to attend then. And although some of you may think that I am joking, I declare that I will tell you the entire truth. Men of Athens, this reputation of mine has come of a certain sort of wisdom which I possess. If you ask me what kind of wisdom, I reply, wisdom such as may perhaps be attained by man, for to that extent I am inclined to believe that I am wise; whereas the persons of whom I was speaking have a superhuman wisdom which I may fail to describe, because I have it not myself; and he who says that I have, speaks falsely, and is taking away my character. And here, O men of Athens, I must beg you not to interrupt me, even if I seem to say something **extravagant**. For the word which I will speak is not mine. I will refer you to a witness who is worthy of credit; that witness shall be the God of Delphi-he will tell you about my wisdom, if I have any, and of what sort it is. You must have known Chaerephon; he was early a friend of mine, and also a friend of yours, for he shared in the recent exile of the people, and returned with you. Well, Chaerephon, as you know, was very impetuous in all his doings, and he went to Delphi and boldly asked the **oracle** to tell him whether-as I was saying, I must beg you not to interrupt-he asked the oracle to tell him whether anyone was wiser than I was, and the Pythian prophetess answered, that there was no man wiser. Chaerephon is dead himself; but his brother, who is in court, will confirm the truth of what I am saying.



SOCRATES.

**Sophists –**

Teachers of philosophy in Ancient Greece

**Callias –**

was the head of a wealthy Athenian family

**virtue –**

moral excellence and righteousness

**minae –**

varying unit of weight or money used in ancient Greece and Asia

**rumours –**

information's or stories that is passed from one person to another, gossip

**extravagant –**

spending much more than is necessary or wise

**Oracle –**

person considered to be a source of wise counsel or prophetic opinions



Why do I mention this? Because I am going to explain to you why I have such an evil name. When I heard the answer, I said to myself, What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of his riddle? for I know that I have no wisdom, small or great. What then can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god, and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After long consideration, I thought of a method of trying the question. I reflected that if I could only find a man wiser than myself, then I might go to the god with a **refutation** in my hand. I should say to him, 'Here is a man who is wiser than I am; but you said that I was the wisest.' Accordingly I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom, and observed him-his name I need not mention; he was a politician whom I selected for examination-and the result was as follows: When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he was thought wise by many, and still wiser by himself; and thereupon I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is,- for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows; I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another who had still higher pretensions to wisdom, and my conclusion was exactly the same. Whereupon I made another enemy of him, and of many others besides him.

Then I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked, and I **lamented** and feared this: but necessity was laid upon me,-the word of God, I thought, ought to be considered first. And I said to myself, Go I must to all who appear to know, and find out the meaning of the oracle. And I swear to you, Athenians, by the dog I swear! -for I must tell you the truth-the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better. I will tell you the tale of my wanderings and of the '**Herculean**' labours, as I may call them, which I endured only to find at last the oracle irrefutable. After the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, **dithyrambic**, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be instantly detected; now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are. Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them-thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to confess the truth, but I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like **diviners** or **soothsayers** who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them. The poets appeared to me to be much in the same case; and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the **artisans**. I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and here I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets;-because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew

- refutation** –  
any evidence that helps  
to establish the falsity of  
something
- lamented** –  
to express grief for or about
- Herculean** –  
requiring the great strength of  
a Hercules
- dithyrambic** –  
wildly irregular in form
- diviners** –  
priest or member of the clergy
- soothsayers** –  
one who claims to be able to  
foretell events or predict the  
future
- artisans** –  
skilled manual worker

all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom; and therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and to the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This inquisition has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many **calumnies**. And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go about the world, obedient to the god, and search and make enquiry into the wisdom of any one, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and my occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

There is another thing:-young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and proceed to examine others; there are plenty of persons, as they quickly discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing; and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me: This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth!- and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practise or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretence of knowledge has been detected- which is the truth; and as they are numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are drawn up in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and **inveterate** calumnies. And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus and Anytus and **Lycon**, have set upon me; Meletus, who has a quarrel with me on behalf of the poets; Anytus, on behalf of the craftsmen and politicians; Lycon, on behalf of the rhetoricians: and as I said at the beginning, I cannot expect to get rid of such a mass of calumny all in a moment. And this, O men of Athens, is the truth and the whole truth; I have concealed nothing, I have dissembled nothing. And yet, I know that my plainness of speech makes them hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I am speaking the truth?-Hence has arisen the prejudice against me; and this is the reason of it, as you will find out either in this or in any future enquiry.

**calumnies –**

untrue and unfair statement about someone that is intended to give people a bad opinion of them

**inveterate –**

settled or confirmed in a habit

**Lycon –**

son of King Hippocoon of Sparta

I have said enough in my defence against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class. They are headed by Meletus, that good man and true lover of his country, as he calls himself. Against these, too, I must try to make a defence:-Let their affidavit be read: it contains something of this kind: It says that Socrates is a doer of evil, who corrupts the youth; and who does not believe in the gods of the state, but has other new divinities of his own. Such is the charge; and now let us examine the particular counts. He says that I am a doer of evil, and corrupt the youth; but I say, O men of Athens, that Meletus is a doer of evil, in that he pretends to be in earnest when he is only in jest, and is so eager to bring men to trial from a pretended zeal and interest about matters in which he really never had the smallest interest. And the truth of this I will endeavour to prove to you.

Come hither, Meletus, and let me ask a question of you. You think a great deal about the improvement of youth?

Yes, I do.

Tell the judges, then, who is their improver; for you must know, as you have taken the pains to discover their corrupter, and are citing and accusing me before them. Speak, then, and tell the judges who their improver is.-Observe, Meletus, that you are silent, and have nothing to say. But is not this rather disgraceful, and a very considerable proof of what I was saying, that you have no interest in the matter? Speak up, friend, and tell us who their improver is.

The laws.

But that, my good sir, is not my meaning. I want to know who the person is, who, in the first place, knows the laws.

The judges, Socrates, who are present in court.

What, do you mean to say, Meletus, that they are able to instruct and improve youth?

Certainly they are.

What, all of them, or some only and not others?

All of them.

By the goddess Here, that is good news! There are plenty of improvers, then. And what do you say of the audience,-do they improve them?

Yes, they do.

And the senators?

Yes, the senators improve them.

But perhaps the members of the assembly corrupt them?-or do they too improve them?

They improve them.

Then every Athenian improves and elevates them; all with the exception of myself; and I alone am their corrupter? Is that what you affirm?

That is what I stoutly affirm.

I am very unfortunate if you are right. But suppose I ask you a question: How about horses? Does one man do them harm and all the world good? Is not the exact opposite the truth? One man is able to do them good, or at least not many;-the trainer of horses, that is to say, does them good, and others who have to do with them rather injure them? Is not that true, Meletus, of horses, or of any other animals? Most assuredly it is; whether you and Anytus say yes or no. Happy indeed would be the condition of youth if they had one corrupter only, and all the rest of the world were their improvers. But you, Meletus, have sufficiently shown that you never had a thought about the young: your carelessness is seen in your not caring about the very things which you bring against me.



And now, Meletus, I will ask you another question-by **Zeus** I will: Which is better, to live among bad citizens, or among good ones? Answer, friend, I say; the question is one which may be easily answered. Do not the good do their neighbours good, and the bad do them evil?

Certainly.

And is there anyone who would rather be injured than benefited by those who live with him? Answer, my good friend, the law requires you to answer- does any one like to be injured?

Certainly not.

And when you accuse me of corrupting and deteriorating the youth, do you **allege** that I corrupt them intentionally or unintentionally?

Intentionally, I say.

But you have just admitted that the good do their neighbours good, and the evil do them evil. Now, is that a truth which your superior wisdom has recognized thus early in life, and am I, at my age, in such darkness and ignorance as not to know that if a man with whom I have to live is corrupted by me, I am very likely to be harmed by him; and yet I corrupt him, and intentionally, too-so you say, although neither I nor any other human being is ever likely to be convinced by you. But either I do not corrupt them, or I corrupt them unintentionally; and on either view of the case you lie. If my offence is unintentional, the law has no cognizance of unintentional offences: you ought to have taken me privately, and warned and **admonished** me; for if I had been better advised, I should have left off doing what I only did unintentionally-no doubt I should; but you would have nothing to say to me and refused to teach me. And now you bring me up in this court, which is a place not of instruction, but of punishment.

It will be very clear to you, Athenians, as I was saying, that Meletus has no care at all, great or small, about the matter. But still I should like to know, Meletus, in what I am affirmed to corrupt the young. I suppose you mean, as I infer from your **indictment**, that I teach them not to acknowledge the gods which the state acknowledges, but some other new **divinities** or spiritual agencies in their stead. These are the lessons by which I corrupt the youth, as you say.

Yes, that I say emphatically.

Then, by the gods, Meletus, of whom we are speaking, tell me and the court, in somewhat plainer terms, what you mean! for I do not as yet understand whether you affirm that I teach other men to acknowledge some gods, and therefore that I do believe in gods, and am not an entire atheist-this you do not lay to my charge,-but only you say that they are not the same gods which the city recognizes-the charge is that they are different gods. Or, do you mean that I am an atheist simply, and a teacher of atheism?

I mean the latter-that you are a complete atheist.

What an extraordinary statement! Why do you think so, Meletus? Do you mean that I do not believe in the godhead of the sun or moon, like other men?

**Zeus –**

the supreme deity of the ancient Greeks

**allege –**

declare before a court or elsewhere

**admonish –**

counsel (another) against something to be avoided

**indictment –**

a written statement charging a party with the commission of a crime or other offense

**divinities –**

godlike character

I assure you, judges, that he does not: for he says that the sun is stone, and the moon earth.

Friend Meletus, you think that you are accusing **Anaxagoras**: and you have but a bad opinion of the judges, if you fancy them illiterate to such a degree as not to know that these doctrines are found in the books of Anaxagoras the **Clazomenian**, which are full of them. And so, forsooth, the youth are said to be taught them by Socrates, when there are not unfrequently exhibitions of them at the theatre (Probably in allusion to Aristophanes who caricatured, and to **Euripides** who borrowed the notions of Anaxagoras, as well as to other dramatic poets.) (price of admission one **drachma** at the most); and they might pay their money, and laugh at Socrates if he pretends to father these extraordinary views. And so, Meletus, you really think that I do not believe in any god?

I swear by Zeus that you believe absolutely in none at all.

Nobody will believe you, Meletus, and I am pretty sure that you do not believe yourself. I cannot help thinking, men of Athens, that Meletus is reckless and impudent, and that he has written this indictment in a spirit of mere wantonness and youthful **bravado**. Has he not compounded a riddle, thinking to try me? He said to himself:-I shall see whether the wise Socrates will discover my facetious contradiction, or whether I shall be able to deceive him and the rest of them. For he certainly does appear to me to contradict himself in the indictment as much as if he said that Socrates is guilty of not believing in the gods, and yet of believing in them-but this is not like a person who is in earnest.

I should like you, O men of Athens, to join me in examining what I conceive to be his inconsistency; and do you, Meletus, answer. And I must remind the audience of my request that they would not make a disturbance if I speak in my **accustomed** manner:

Did ever man, Meletus, believe in the existence of human things, and not of human beings?...I wish, men of Athens, that he would answer, and not be always trying to get up an interruption. Did ever any man believe in horsemanship, and not in horses? or in flute-playing, and not in flute-players? No, my friend; I will answer to you and to the court, as you refuse to answer for yourself. There is no man who ever did. But now please to answer the next question: Can a man believe in spiritual and divine agencies, and not in spirits or **demigods**?

He cannot.

How lucky I am to have extracted that answer, by the assistance of the court! But then you swear in the indictment that I teach and believe in divine or spiritual agencies (new or old, no matter for that); at any rate, I believe in spiritual agencies,-so you say and swear in the affidavit; and yet if I believe in divine beings, how can I help believing in spirits or demigods;-must I not? To be sure I must; and therefore I may assume that your silence gives consent. Now what are spirits or demigods? Are they not either gods or the sons of gods?

Certainly they are.

But this is what I call the facetious riddle invented by you: the demigods or spirits are gods, and you say first that I do not believe in gods, and then again that I do believe in gods; that is, if I believe in demigods. For if the demigods are the illegitimate sons of gods, whether by the nymphs or by any other mothers, of whom they are said to be the sons-what human being will ever believe that there are no gods if they are the sons of gods? You might as well affirm the existence of mules, and deny that of horses and asses. Such nonsense, Meletus, could only

- Anaxagoras** –  
Greek philosopher of  
Clazomenae
- Clazomenian** –  
ancient city of West Asia  
Minor
- Euripides** –  
Greek dramatist
- drachma** –  
cupronickel coin and monetary  
unit of modern Greece
- bravado** –  
false show of bravery
- accustomed** –  
habituated
- demigods** –  
has some but not all of the  
powers of a god

have been intended by you to make trial of me. You have put this into the indictment because you had nothing real of which to accuse me. But no one who has a particle of understanding will ever be convinced by you that the same men can believe in divine and superhuman things, and yet not believe that there are gods and demigods and heroes.

I have said enough in answer to the charge of Meletus: any elaborate defence is unnecessary, but I know only too well how many are the enmities which I have incurred, and this is what will be my destruction if I am destroyed;-not Meletus, nor yet Anytus, but the envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them.

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong-acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, upon your view, the heroes who fell at **Troy** were not good for much, and the son of **Thetis** above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to **slay Hector**, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself-‘Fate,’ she said, in these or the like words, ‘waits for you next after Hector;’ he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonour, and not to avenge his friend. ‘Let me die forthwith,’ he replies, ‘and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a laughing-stock and a burden of the earth.’ Had Achilles any thought of death and danger? For wherever a man’s place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything but of disgrace. And this, O men of Athens, is a true saying.

Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I who, when I was ordered by the generals whom you chose to command me at **Potidaea** and **Amphipolis** and **Delium**, remained where they placed me, like any other man, facing death-if now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfil the philosopher’s mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death, fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For the fear of death is indeed the pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being a pretence of knowing the unknown; and no one knows whether death, which men in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is not this ignorance of a disgraceful sort, the ignorance which is the conceit that a man knows what he does not know? And in this respect only I believe myself to differ from men in general, and may

- Troy** –  
ancient ruined city in NW Asia  
Minor
- Thetis** –  
mother of Achilles
- slay** –  
to kill or murder
- Hector** –  
the greatest Trojan hero in the  
Trojan War Patroclus – friend  
of Achilles
- Potidaea** –  
ancient city, NE Greece
- Amphipolis** –  
a Macedonian city
- Delium** –  
ancient seaport in Greece

perhaps claim to be wiser than they are:-that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonourable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now, and are not convinced by Anytus, who said that since I had been prosecuted I must be put to death; (or if not that I ought never to have been prosecuted at all); and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words-if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again you shall die;-if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honour and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting any one whom I meet and saying to him after my manner: You, my friend,-a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens,-are you not ashamed of heaping up the greatest amount of money and honour and reputation, and caring so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? And if the person with whom I am arguing, says: Yes, but I do care; then I do not leave him or let him go at once; but I proceed to interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue in him, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less. And I shall repeat the same words to every one whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For know that this is the command of God; and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the state than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about **persuading** you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person. But if any one says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whichever you do, understand that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

Men of Athens, do not interrupt, but hear me; there was an understanding between us that you should hear me to the end: I have something more to say, at which you may be inclined to cry out; but I believe that to hear me will be good for you, and therefore I beg that you will not cry out. I would have you know, that if you kill such an one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Nothing will injure me, not Meletus nor yet Anytus-they cannot, for a bad man is not permitted to injure a better than himself. I do not deny that Anytus may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or **deprive** him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is inflicting a great injury upon him: but there I do not agree. For the evil of doing as he is doing-the evil of unjustly taking away the life of another-is greater far.

And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours, that you may not sin against the God by condemning me, who am his gift to you. For if you kill me you will not easily find a successor to me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of **gadfly**, given to the state by God; and the state is a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very

**persuading** –  
prevail on (a person) to do something

**deprive** –  
take away possessions from someone

**gadfly** –  
a persistent irritating critic

size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. You will not easily find another like me, and therefore I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel out of temper (like a person who is suddenly awakened from sleep), and you think that you might easily strike me dead as Anytus advises, and then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you sent you another gadfly. When I say that I am given to you by God, the proof of my mission is this:-if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns or patiently seen the neglect of them during all these years, and have been doing yours, coming to you individually like a father or elder brother, exhorting you to regard virtue; such conduct, I say, would be unlike human nature. If I had gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense in my doing so; but now, as you will perceive, not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of any one; of that they have no witness. And I have a sufficient witness to the truth of what I say-my poverty.

Some one may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the state. I will tell you why. You have heard me speak at sundry times and in divers places of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign, which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do. This is what **deters** me from being a politician. And rightly, as I think. For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And do not be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly striving against the many lawless and unrighteous deeds which are done in a state, will save his life; he who will fight for the right, if he would live even for a brief space, must have a private station and not a public one.

I can give you convincing evidence of what I say, not words only, but what you value far more-actions. Let me relate to you a passage of my own life which will prove to you that I should never have yielded to injustice from any fear of death, and that 'as I should have refused to yield' I must have died at once. I will tell you a tale of the courts, not very interesting perhaps, but nevertheless true. The only office of state which I ever held, O men of Athens, was that of senator: the tribe Antiochis, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of **Arginusae**; and you proposed to try them in a body, contrary to law, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the Prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against you; and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and you called and

**deter** –  
prevent or discourage from  
acting

**Battle of Arginusae** –  
was a naval battle in the  
Peloponnesian War, which  
took place in 406 BC

shouted, I made up my mind that I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the **oligarchy** of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the **rotunda**, and bade us bring **Leon** the Salaminian from **Salamis**, as they wanted to put him to death. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my great and only care was lest I should do an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And many will witness to my words.

Now do you really imagine that I could have survived all these years, if I had led a public life, supposing that like a good man I had always maintained the right and had made justice, as I ought, the first thing? No indeed, men of Athens, neither I nor any other man. But I have been always the same in all my actions, public as well as private, and never have I yielded any base compliance to those who are slanderously termed my disciples, or to any other. Not that I have any regular disciples. But if any one likes to come and hear me while I am pursuing my mission, whether he be young or old, he is not excluded. Nor do I converse only with those who pay; but any one, whether he be rich or poor, may ask and answer me and listen to my words; and whether he turns out to be a bad man or a good one, neither result can be justly imputed to me; for I never taught or professed to teach him anything. And if any one says that he has ever learned or heard anything from me in private which all the world has not heard, let me tell you that he is lying.

But I shall be asked, Why do people delight in continually conversing with you? I have told you already, Athenians, the whole truth about this matter: they like to hear the cross-examination of the pretenders to wisdom; there is amusement in it. Now this duty of cross-examining other men has been imposed upon me by God; and has been signified to me by oracles, visions, and in every way in which the will of divine power was ever intimated to any one. This is true, O Athenians, or, if not true, would be soon refuted. If I am or have been corrupting the youth, those of them who are now grown up and have become sensible that I gave them bad advice in the days of their youth should come forward as accusers, and take their revenge; or if they do not like to come themselves, some of their relatives, fathers, brothers, or other kinsmen, should say what evil their families have suffered at my hands. Now is their time. Many of them I see in the court. There is **Crito**, who is of the same age and of the same **deme** with myself, and there is Critobulus his son, whom I also see. Then again there is Lysanias of Sphettus, who is the father of Aeschines—he is present; and also there is Antiphon of Cephissus, who is the father of Epigenes; and there are the brothers of several who have associated with me. There is Nicostratus the son of Theosdotides, and the brother of Theodotus (now Theodotus himself is dead, and therefore he, at any rate, will not seek to stop him); and there is Paralus the son of Demodocus, who had a brother Theages; and Adeimantus the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is present; and Aeantodorus, who is the brother of Apollodorus, whom I also see. I might mention a great many others, some of whom Meletus should have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech; and let him still produce them, if he has forgotten—I will make way for him. And let him say, if he has any testimony of the sort which he

- oligarchy** –  
government by a few
- rotunda** –  
circular building, especially one  
with a dome
- Leon** –  
king of Sparta
- Salamis** –  
ancient city on Cyprus
- Crito** –  
wealthy friend of Socrates
- deme** –  
one of the administrative  
divisions of ancient Attica and  
of modern Greece

can produce. **Nay**, Athenians, the very opposite is the truth. For all these are ready to witness on behalf of the corrupter, of the injurer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me; not the corrupted youth only-there might have been a motive for that-but their uncorrupted elder relatives. Why should they too support me with their testimony? Why, indeed, except for the sake of truth and justice, and because they know that I am speaking the truth, and that Meletus is a liar.

Well, Athenians, this and the like of this is all the defence which I have to offer. Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar, or even a less serious occasion, prayed and entreated the judges with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a host of relations and friends; whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. The contrast may occur to his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at me on this account. Now if there be such a person among you,-mind, I do not say that there is,-to him I may fairly reply: My friend, I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not 'of wood or stone,' as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one almost a man, and two others who are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal. And why not? Not from any self-assertion or want of respect for you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But, having regard to public opinion, I feel that such conduct would be **discreditable** to myself, and to you, and to the whole state. One who has reached my years, and who has a name for wisdom, ought not to demean himself. Whether this opinion of me be deserved or not, at any rate the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men. And if those among you who are said to be superior in wisdom and courage, and any other virtue, demean themselves in this way, how shameful is their conduct! I have seen men of reputation, when they have been condemned, behaving in the strangest manner: they seemed to fancy that they were going to suffer something dreadful if they died, and that they could be immortal if you only allowed them to live; and I think that such are a dishonour to the state, and that any stranger coming in would have said of them that the most eminent men of Athens, to whom the Athenians themselves give honour and command, are no better than women. And I say that these things ought not to be done by those of us who have a reputation; and if they are done, you ought not to permit them; you ought rather to show that you are far more disposed to condemn the man who gets up a doleful scene and makes the city ridiculous, than him who holds his peace.

But, setting aside the question of public opinion, there seems to be something wrong in asking a favour of a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal, instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure; and we ought not to encourage you, nor should

nay –  
no

discreditable –  
harmful to one's reputation



you allow yourselves to be encouraged, in this habit of **perjury**-there can be no piety in that. Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonourable and impious and wrong, especially now, when I am being tried for impiety on the indictment of Meletus. For if, O men of Athens, by force of persuasion and entreaty I could overpower your oaths, then I should be teaching you to believe that there are no gods, and in defending should simply convict myself of the charge of not believing in them. But that is not so-far otherwise. For I do believe that there are gods, and in a sense higher than that in which any of my accusers believe in them. And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me. [...]

There are many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected it, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal; for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say, I think, that I have escaped Meletus. I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, any one may see that he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmae.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part, O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is my due? What return shall be made to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life; but has been careless of what the many care for - wealth, and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I could do the greatest good privately to every one of you, **thither** I went, and sought to persuade every man among you that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the state before he looks to the interests of the state; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such an one? Doubtless some good thing, O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, and who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no reward so fitting as maintenance in the Prytaneum, O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or **chariot** race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty fairly, I should say that maintenance in the **Prytaneum** is the just return.

Perhaps you think that I am braving you in what I am saying now, as in what I said before about the tears and prayers. But this is not so. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you-the time has been too short; if there were a law at Athens, as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe that I should have convinced you. But I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say **imprisonment**? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year-of the Eleven? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and cannot pay. And if

**perjury** –  
willful giving of false

**thither** –  
there

**chariot** –  
an ancient horse-drawn two-  
wheeled vehicle used in war

**Prytaneum** –  
public building in certain  
Greek cities

**imprisonment** –  
putting someone in prison or  
in jail

I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life, if I am so irrational as to expect that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you will have no more of them, others are likely to endure me. No indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, ever changing my place of exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that wherever I go, there, as here, the young men will **flock** to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their request; and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Some one will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that to do as you say would be a disobedience to the God, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that daily to discourse about virtue, and of those other things about which you hear me examining myself and others, is the greatest good of man, and that the unexamined life is not worth living, you are still less likely to believe me. Yet I say what is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Also, I have never been accustomed to think that I deserve to suffer any harm. Had I money I might have estimated the offence at what I was able to pay, and not have been much the worse. But I have none, and therefore I must ask you to proportion the fine to my means. Well, perhaps I could afford a **mina**, and therefore I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minae, and they will be the sureties. Let thirty minae be the penalty; for which sum they will be ample security to you. [...]

Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise, even although I am not wise, when they want to reproach you. If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. I am speaking now not to all of you, but only to those who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: you think that I was convicted because I had no words of the sort which would have procured my acquittal-I mean, if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone or unsaid. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words- certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to do, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I maintain, are unworthy of me. I thought at the time that I ought not to do anything common or mean when in danger: nor do I now repent of the style of my defence; I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought I or any man to use every way of escaping death. Often in battle there

**flock –**

band or company of persons

**mina (pl. minae) –**

varying unit of weight or money used in ancient Greece and Asia

can be no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death,-they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of **villainy** and wrong; and I must **abide** by my award-let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,-and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and in the hour of death men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my departure punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom **hitherto** I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more inconsiderate with you, and you will be more offended at them. If you think that by killing men you can prevent some one from censuring your evil lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honourable; the easiest and the noblest way is not to be disabling others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about the thing which has come to pass, while the **magistrates** are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then a little, for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges-for you I may truly call judges-I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the divine faculty of which the internal oracle is the source has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error in any matter; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when I was leaving my house in the morning, or when I was on my way to the court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching the matter in hand has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this silence? I will tell you. It is an **intimation** that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. For the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things-either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private

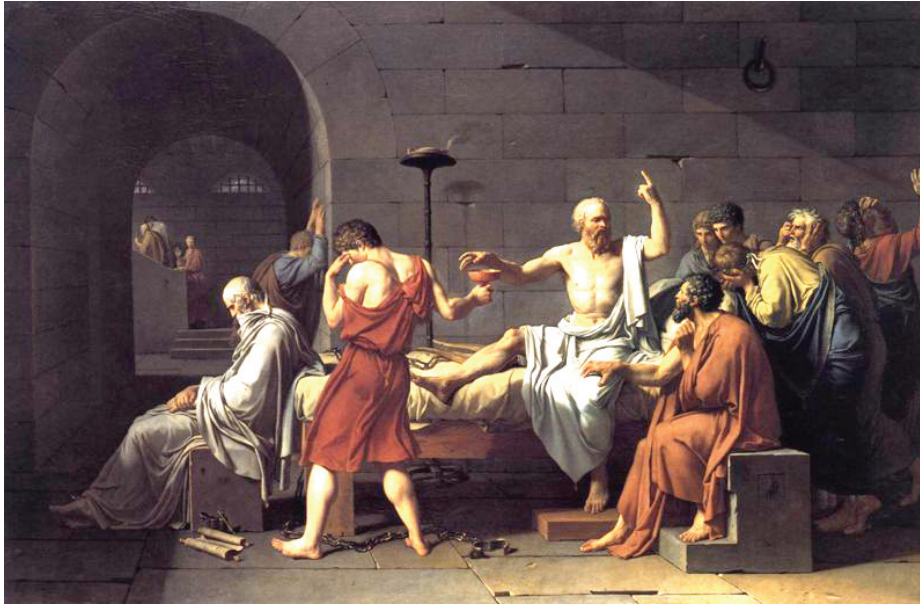
**villainy** –  
treacherous or vicious act

**abide** –  
tolerate

**hitherto** –  
until now

**magistrates** –  
judicial officer

**intimation** –  
slight suggestion or vague  
understanding



THE DEATH OF SOCRATES  
By David, Jacques-Louis. 1787.  
The Metropolitan Museum of  
Art, New York

man, but even the great king will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death be of such a nature, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead abide, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that **pilgrimage** will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I myself, too, shall have a wonderful interest in there meeting and conversing with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and any other ancient hero who has suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or **Odysseus** or **Sisyphus**, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! In another world they do not put a man to death for asking questions: assuredly not. For besides being happier than we are, they will be **immortal**, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released

**pilgrimage** –  
journey to a sacred place or  
shrine

**Odysseus** –  
son and successor of King  
Laertes of Ithaca

**Sisyphus** –  
son of Aeolus and ruler of  
Corinth

**immortal** –  
not subject to death

from trouble; wherefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my condemners, or with my accusers; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favour to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing, -then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, both I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways-I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows".

**SOURCE:** Plato. *The Apology*. The University of Adelaide. <<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/p/plato/p71ap/apology.html>>

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the Apology, Socrates states that he must first defend himself against his accusers. What were the accusations made against him?
2. What characteristic Socratic attitude of argument is illustrated by his expressed admiration for Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias, and Evenus's ability to educate?
3. What are the charges against Socrates brought by Meletus at this trial?
4. When required to propose an alternative penalty, what does Socrates suggest at first? Why does Socrates reject exile as a possible penalty? What penalty does Socrates finally propose?
5. What reason does Socrates give for his conviction? What prophecy does Socrates make with regard to the effect of his death on the Athenians? Why does Socrates assume that his condemnation is actually something good? What is Socrates's view of death?

### ADDITIONAL READING:

- Plato's Apology, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology\\_\(Plato\)](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology_(Plato))
- Plato, The Apology of Socrates, [www.wsu.edu/~dee/GREECE/APOLOGY.HTM](http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/GREECE/APOLOGY.HTM)
- Plato - Biography and Works, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato)
- Greek Philosophy, [www.wsu.edu/~dee/GREECE/PLATO.HTM](http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/GREECE/PLATO.HTM)
- From Plato to Post-modernism, [www.englishtips.org/index.php?newsid=1150792027](http://www.englishtips.org/index.php?newsid=1150792027)



## TEXT

### CONFUCIUS: THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

Confucius (551-479 BCE) was an ancient Chinese thinker and philosopher. His influence on North-East Asian life and philosophy has been all pervading. The main areas of his focus were moral philosophy, social philosophy, and ethics. He influenced almost all North Eastern thinkers. His main works are collected in the *Analects* (aphorisms) and the *Five Classics*.

What Heaven has conferred is called The Nature; an accordance with this nature is called The Path of duty; the regulation of this path is called Instruction.

The path may not be left for an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the path. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious, nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive.

There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone.

While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of **Equilibrium**. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of Harmony. This Equilibrium is the great root from which grow all the human actings in the world, and this Harmony is the universal path which they all should pursue.

Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.

**Chung-ni** said, "The superior man embodies the course of the Mean; the mean man acts contrary to the course of the Mean.

"The superior man's embodying the course of the Mean is because he is a superior man, and so always maintains the Mean. The mean man's acting contrary to the course of the Mean is because he is a mean man, and has no caution."

The Master said, "Perfect is the **virtue** which is according to the Mean! Rare have they long been among the people, who could practice it!"

The Master said, "I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not walked in: The knowing go beyond it, and the stupid do not come up to it. I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not understood: The men of talents and virtue go beyond it, and the worthless do not come up to it.

"There is nobody but eats and drinks. But they are few who can distinguish flavors."

The Master said, "Alas! How is the path of the Mean untrodden!"

The Master said, "There was **Shun**: He indeed was greatly wise! Shun loved to question others, and to study their words, though they might be shallow. He concealed what was bad in them and displayed what was good. He took hold of their two extremes, determined the Mean, and employed it in his government of the people. It was by this that he was Shun!"



**Equilibrium** –  
mental or emotional balance

**Chung-ni** –  
Confucius

**virtue** –  
moral excellence

**Shun** –  
legendary emperor (c. 23<sup>rd</sup>  
century BC)

The Master said, “Men all say, ‘We are wise’; but being driven forward and taken in a net, a trap, or a pitfall, they know not how to escape.

“Men all say, ‘We are wise’; but happening to choose the course of the Mean, they are not able to keep it for a round month.”

The Master said “This was the manner of **Hui**: he made choice of the Mean, and whenever he got hold of what was good, he clasped it firmly, as if wearing it on his breast, and did not lose it.”

The Master said, “The kingdom, its states, and its families, may be perfectly ruled; dignities and **emoluments** may be declined; naked weapons may be trampled under the feet; but the course of the Mean cannot be attained to.”

Tsze-lu asked about energy.

The Master said, “Do you mean the energy of the South, the energy of the North, or the energy which you should cultivate yourself?

“To show forbearance and gentleness in teaching others; and not to revenge unreasonable conduct: this is the energy of southern regions, and the good man makes it his study.

“To lie under arms; and meet death without regret: this is the energy of northern regions, and the forceful make it their study.

“Therefore, the superior man cultivates a friendly harmony, without being weak. How firm is he in his energy! He stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side. How firm is he in his energy! When good principles prevail in the government of his country, he does not change from what he was in retirement. How firm is he in his energy!

“When bad principles prevail in the country, he maintains his course to death without changing. How firm is he in his energy!”

The Master said, “To live in obscurity, and yet practice wonders, in order to be mentioned with honor in future ages: this is what I do not do.

“The good man tries to proceed according to the right path, but when he has gone halfway, he abandons it: I am not able so to stop.

“The superior man accords with the course of the Mean. Though he may be all unknown, unregarded by the world, he feels no regret. It is only the **sage** who is able for this.”

“The way which the superior man pursues reaches wide and far, and yet is secret.

“Common men and women, however ignorant, may intermeddle with the knowledge of it; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage does not know. Common men and women, however much below the ordinary standard of character, can carry it into practice; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage is not able to carry into practice. Great as heaven and earth are, men still find some things in them with which to be dissatisfied. Thus it is that, were the superior man to speak of his way in all its greatness, nothing in the world would be found able to embrace it, and were he to speak of it in its minuteness, nothing in the world would be found able to split it.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘The **hawk** flies up to heaven; the fishes leap in the deep.’ This expresses how this way is seen above and below.

“The way of the superior man may be found, in its simple elements, in the intercourse of common men and women; but in its utmost reaches, it shines brightly through Heaven and earth.”

The Master said, “The path is not far from man. When men try to pursue a course, which is far from the common indications of consciousness, this course cannot be considered The Path.

**Hui** –  
Chinese philosopher

**emolument** –  
compensation for services

**sage** –  
person famed for wisdom

**hawk** –  
any of numerous birds of prey  
of the family Accipitridae



“In the Book of Poetry, it is said, ‘In hewing an ax handle, the pattern is not far off. We grasp one ax handle to hew the other; and yet, if we look askance from the one to the other, we may consider them as apart. Therefore, the superior man governs men, according to their nature, with what is proper to them, and as soon as they change what is wrong, he stops.

“When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature, and exercises them on the principle of **reciprocity**, he is not far from the path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others.

“In the way of the superior man there are four things, to not one of which have I as yet attained. To serve my father, as I would require my son to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my prince as I would require my minister to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my elder brother as I would require my younger brother to serve me: to this I have not attained; to set the example in behaving to a friend, as I would require him to behave to me: to this I have not attained. Earnest in practicing the ordinary virtues, and careful in speaking about them, if, in his practice, he has anything defective, the superior man dares not but exert himself; and if, in his words, he has any excess, he dares not allow himself such license. Thus his words have respect to his actions, and his actions have respect to his words; is it not just an entire sincerity which marks the superior man?

“The superior man does what is proper to the station in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this.

“In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honor. In a poor and low position, he does what is proper to a poor and low position. Situated among **barbarous** tribes, he does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes. In a position of sorrow and difficulty, he does what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty. The superior man can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself.

“In a high situation, he does not treat with contempt his **inferiors**. In a low situation, he does not court the favor of his superiors. He **rectifies** himself, and seeks for nothing from others, so that he has no dissatisfactions. He does not murmur against Heaven, nor **grumble** against men.

“Thus it is that the superior man is quiet and calm, waiting for the appointments of Heaven, while the mean man walks in dangerous paths, looking for lucky occurrences.”

The Master said, “In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the center of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of his failure in himself.

“The way of the superior man may be compared to what takes place in traveling, when to go to a distance we must first traverse the space that is near, and in **ascending** a height, when we must begin from the lower ground.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘Happy union with wife and children is like the

- reciprocity** –  
relation of mutual dependence  
or action or influence
- barbarous** –  
uncivilized
- inferiors** –  
low or lower in order, degree,  
or rank
- rectify** –  
to set right; correct
- grumble** –  
to murmur or mutter in  
discontent; complain
- ascending** –  
moving upward

music of lutes and **harps**. When there is concord among brethren, the harmony is delightful and enduring. Thus may you regulate your family, and enjoy the pleasure of your wife and children.’ ”

The Master said, “In such a state of things, parents have entire complacency!”

The Master said, “How abundantly do spiritual beings display the powers that belong to them!

“We look for them, but do not see them; we listen to, but do not hear them; yet they enter into all things, and there is nothing without them.

“They cause all the people in the kingdom to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend at their sacrifices. Then, like overflowing water, they seem to be over the heads, and on the right and left of their worshippers.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘The approaches of the spirits, you cannot surmise; and can you treat them with indifference?’

“Such is the manifestness of what is minute! Such is the impossibility of repressing the outgoings of sincerity!”

The Master said, “How greatly filial was Shun! His virtue was that of a sage; his dignity was the throne; his riches were all within the four seas. He offered his sacrifices in his ancestral temple, and his descendants preserved the sacrifices to himself.

“Therefore having such great virtue, it could not but be that he should obtain the throne, that he should obtain those riches, that he should obtain his fame, that he should attain to his long life.

“Thus it is that Heaven, in the production of things, is sure to be bountiful to them, according to their qualities. Hence the tree that is flourishing, it nourishes, while that which is ready to fall, it overthrows.

“In the Book of Poetry, it is said, ‘The admirable, amiable prince displayed conspicuously his excelling virtue, adjusting his people, and adjusting his officers. Therefore, he received from Heaven his emoluments of dignity. It protected him, assisted him, decreed him the throne; sending from Heaven these favors, as it were repeatedly.’

“We may say therefore that he who is greatly virtuous will be sure to receive the appointment of Heaven.”

The Master said, “It is only King Wan of whom it can be said that he had no cause for grief! His father was King Chi, and his son was King Wu. His father laid the foundations of his dignity, and his son transmitted it.

“King Wu continued the enterprise of King T’ai, King Chi, and King Wan. He once **buckled** on his armor, and got possession of the kingdom. He did not lose the distinguished personal reputation which he had throughout the kingdom. His dignity was the royal throne. His riches were the possession of all within the four seas. He offered his sacrifices in his ancestral temple, and his descendants maintained the sacrifices to himself.

“It was in his old age that King Wu received the appointment to the throne, and the duke of Chau completed the virtuous course of Wan and Wu. He carried up the title of king to T’ai and Chi, and sacrificed to all the former dukes above them with the royal ceremonies. And this rule he extended to the princes of the kingdom, the great officers, the scholars, and the common people. If the father were a great officer and the son a scholar, then the burial was that due to a great officer, and the sacrifice that due to a scholar. If the father were a scholar and the son a great officer, then the burial was that due to a scholar, and the sacrifice that due to a great officer. The one year’s mourning was made to extend only to the

**harps** –  
musical instrument having an  
upright triangular frame

**buckle** –  
fasten with a clasp

great officers, but the three years' mourning extended to the Son of Heaven. In the mourning for a father or mother, he allowed no difference between the noble and the mean."

The Master said, "How far-extending was the filial piety of King Wu and the duke of Chau!

"Now filial piety is seen in the skillful carrying out of the wishes of our forefathers, and the skillful carrying forward of their undertakings.

"In spring and autumn, they repaired and beautified the temple halls of their fathers, set forth their ancestral vessels, displayed their various robes, and presented the offerings of the several seasons.

"By means of the ceremonies of the ancestral temple, they distinguished the royal kindred according to their order of descent. By ordering the parties present according to their rank, they distinguished the more noble and the less. By the arrangement of the services, they made a distinction of talents and worth. In the ceremony of general pledging, the inferiors presented the cup to their superiors, and thus something was given the lowest to do. At the concluding feast, places were given according to the hair, and thus was made the distinction of years.

"They occupied the places of their forefathers, practiced their ceremonies, and performed their music. They revered those whom they honored, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they served the dead as they would have served them alive; they served the departed as they would have served them had they been continued among them.

"By the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth they served God, and by the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors. He who understands the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, and the meaning of the several sacrifices to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into his palm!"

Then **Duke Ai** asked about government.

The Master said, "The government of Wan and Wu is displayed in the records—the tablets of wood and **bamboo**. Let there be the men and the government will flourish; but without the men, their government decays and ceases.

"With the right men the growth of government is rapid, just as vegetation is rapid in the earth; and, moreover, their government might be called an easily-growing rush.

"Therefore the administration of government lies in getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by his **treading** in the ways of duty. And the treading those ways of duty is to be cultivated by the cherishing of benevolence.

"Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives. Righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right, and the great exercise of it is in honoring the worthy. The decreasing measures of the love due to relatives, and the steps in the honor due to the worthy, are produced

**duke** –  
sovereign of a small state

**bamboo** –  
tropical grass having hollow,  
woody stems

**tread** –  
to step or walk

by the principle of propriety.

“When those in inferior situations do not possess the confidence of their superiors, they cannot retain the government of the people.

“Hence the sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his character, he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents, he may not neglect to acquire knowledge of men. In order to know men, he may not dispense with a knowledge of Heaven.

“The duties of universal obligation are five and the virtues wherewith they are practiced are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those belonging to the intercourse of friends. Those five are the duties of universal obligation. Knowledge, magnanimity, and energy, these three, are the virtues universally binding. And the means by which they carry the duties into practice is singleness.

“Some are born with the knowledge of those duties; some know them by study; and some acquire the knowledge after a painful feeling of their ignorance. But the knowledge being possessed, it comes to the same thing. Some practice them with a natural ease; some from a desire for their advantages; and some by **strenuous** effort. But the achievement being made, it comes to the same thing.”

The Master said, “To be fond of learning is to be near to knowledge. To practice with vigor is to be near to magnanimity. To possess the feeling of shame is to be near to energy.

“He who knows these three things knows how to cultivate his own character. Knowing how to cultivate his own character, he knows how to govern other men. Knowing how to govern other men, he knows how to govern the kingdom with all its states and families.

“All who have the government of the kingdom with its states and families have nine standard rules to follow; viz., the cultivation of their own characters; the honoring of men of virtue and talents; affection towards their relatives; respect towards the great ministers; kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers; dealing with the mass of the people as children; encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans; indulgent treatment of men from a distance; and the kindly **cherishing** of the princes of the states.

“By the ruler’s cultivation of his own character, the duties of universal obligation are set forth. By honoring men of virtue and talents, he is preserved from errors of judgment. By showing affection to his relatives, there is no grumbling nor resentment among his uncles and brethren. By respecting the great ministers, he is kept from errors in the practice of government. By kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers, they are led to make the most grateful return for his courtesies. By dealing with the mass of the people as his children, they are led to exhort one another to what is good.

“By encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans, his resources for expenditure are rendered **ample**. By indulgent treatment of men from a distance, they are brought to resort to him from all quarters. And by kindly cherishing the princes of the states, the whole kingdom is brought to revere him.

“Self-adjustment and purification, with careful regulation of his dress, and not making a movement contrary to the rules of propriety, this is the way for a ruler to cultivate his person. Discarding slanderers, and keeping himself from the **seductions** of beauty; making light of riches, and giving honor to virtue—this is the way for him to encourage men of worth and talents. Giving them places of honor and

**strenuous –**

vigorous, energetic, or  
zealously active

**cherishing –**

to treat with affection and  
tenderness

**ample –**

fully sufficient or more than  
adequate for the purpose or  
needs

**seductions –**

to lead astray, as from duty,  
rectitude, or the like

large **emolument**, and sharing with them in their likes and dislikes—this is the way for him to encourage his relatives to love him. Giving them numerous officers to discharge their orders and commissions: this is the way for him to encourage the great ministers. According to them a generous confidence, and making their emoluments large: this is the way to encourage the body of officers. Employing them only at the proper times, and making the imposts light: this is the way to encourage the people. By daily examinations and monthly trials, and by making their rations in accordance with their labors: this is the way to encourage the classes of artisans. To escort them on their departure and meet them on their coming; to commend the good among them, and show compassion to the incompetent: this is the way to treat indulgently men from a distance. To restore families whose line of succession has been broken, and to revive states that have been extinguished; to reduce to order states that are in confusion, and support those which are in peril; to have fixed times for their own reception at court, and the reception of their envoys; to send them away after liberal treatment, and welcome their coming with small contributions: this is the way to cherish the princes of the states.

“All who have the government of the kingdom with its states and families have the above nine standard rules. And the means by which they are carried into practice is singleness.

“In all things success depends on previous preparation, and without such previous preparation there is sure to be failure. If what is to be spoken be previously determined, there will be no **stumbling**. If affairs be previously determined, there will be no difficulty with them. If one’s actions have been previously determined, there will be no sorrow in connection with them. If principles of conduct have been previously determined, the practice of them will be inexhaustible.

“When those in inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people. There is a way to obtain the confidence of the sovereign; if one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign.

“There is a way to being trusted by one’s friends; if one is not obedient to his parents, he will not be true to friends. There is a way to being obedient to one’s parents; if one, on turning his thoughts in upon himself, finds a want of sincerity, he will not be obedient to his parents. There is a way to the attainment of sincerity in one’s self; if a man does not understand what is good, he will not attain sincerity in himself.

“Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains to sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast.

“To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the

**emolument** –  
payment in money or some  
other form

**stumbling** –  
to make a slip, mistake, or  
blunder

earnest practice of it.

“The superior man, while there is anything he has not studied, or while in what he has studied there is anything he cannot understand, will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not reflected on, or anything in what he has reflected on which he does not apprehend, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not discriminated or his discrimination is not clear, he will not intermit his labor. If there be anything which he has not practiced, or his practice fails in earnestness, he will not intermit his labor. If another man succeed by one effort, he will use a hundred efforts. If another man succeed by ten efforts, he will use a thousand.

“Let a man proceed in this way, and, though dull, he will surely become intelligent; though weak, he will surely become strong.

“When we have intelligence resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature; when we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction. But given the sincerity, there shall be the intelligence; given the intelligence, there shall be the sincerity.

“It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a **ternion**.

“Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots of goodness in himself. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity.

“This sincerity becomes apparent. From being apparent, it becomes manifest.

“From being manifest, it becomes brilliant. Brilliant, it affects others.

“Affecting others, they are changed by it. Changed by it, they are transformed. It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can transform.

“It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to **foreknow**.

“When a nation or family is about to flourish, there are sure to be happy **omens**; and when it is about to perish, there are sure to be unlucky omens. Such events are seen in the **milfoil** and tortoise, and affect the movements of the four limbs. When calamity or happiness is about to come, the good shall certainly be foreknown by him, and the evil also. Therefore the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a spirit.

“Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and its way is that by which man must direct himself.

“Sincerity is the end and beginning of things; without sincerity there would be nothing. On this account, the superior man regards the attainment of sincerity as the most excellent thing.

“The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes other men and things also. Completing himself shows his perfect virtue. Completing other men and things shows his knowledge. But these are virtues belonging to nature, and this is the way by which a union is effected of the external and internal. Therefore, whenever he—the entirely sincere man—employs

**ternion** –  
set of three things

**foreknow** –  
to know beforehand

**omen** –  
phenomenon supposed to  
portend good or evil

**milfoil** –  
composite plant, having  
fernlike leaves and flat-topped  
clusters of whitish flowers



them— that is, these virtues, their action will be right.

“Hence to entire sincerity there belongs **ceaselessness**.

“Not ceasing, it continues long. Continuing long, it evidences itself.

“Evidencing itself, it reaches far. Reaching far, it becomes large and substantial. Large and substantial, it becomes high and brilliant.

“Large and substantial; this is how it contains all things. High and brilliant; this is how it overspreads all things. Reaching far and continuing long; this is how it perfects all things.

“So large and substantial, the individual possessing it is the co-equal of Earth. So high and brilliant, it makes him the co-equal of Heaven. So far-reaching and long-continuing, it makes him infinite.

“Such being its nature, without any display, it becomes manifested; without any movement, it produces changes; and without any effort, it accomplishes its ends.

“The way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence. They are without any doubleness, and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable.

“The way of Heaven and Earth is large and substantial, high and brilliant, far-reaching and long-enduring.

“The Heaven now before us is only this bright shining spot; but when viewed in its inexhaustible extent, the sun, moon, stars, and **constellations** of the zodiac, are suspended in it, and all things are overspread by it. The earth before us is but a handful of soil; but when regarded in its breadth and thickness, it sustains mountains like the Hwa and the Yo, without feeling their weight, and contains the rivers and seas, without their leaking away. The mountain now before us appears only a stone; but when contemplated in all the vastness of its size, we see how the grass and trees are produced on it, and birds and beasts dwell on it, and precious things which men treasure up are found on it. The water now before us appears but a ladleful; yet extending our view to its **unfathomable** depths, the largest tortoises, iguanas, **iguanodons**, dragons, fishes, and turtles, are produced in it, articles of value and sources of wealth abound in it.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘The ordinances of Heaven, how profound are they and unceasing!’ The meaning is, that it is thus that Heaven is Heaven. And again, ‘How illustrious was it, the singleness of the virtue of King Wan!’ indicating that it was thus that King Wan was what he was. Singleness likewise is unceasing.

“How great is the path proper to the Sage!

“Like overflowing water, it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of heaven.

“All-complete is its greatness! It embraces the three hundred rules of ceremony, and the three thousand rules of demeanor.

“It waits for the proper man, and then it is trodden.

“Hence it is said, ‘Only by perfect virtue can the perfect path, in all its courses,

**ceaselessness** –  
without stop or pause

**constellations** –  
arbitrary formation of stars  
perceived as a figure or design

**unfathomable** –  
difficult or impossible to  
understand

**iguanodon** –  
any of various large dinosaurs  
of the genus *Iguanodon*, of the  
Jurassic Period and Cretaceous  
Period

be made a fact.'

"Therefore, the superior man honors his virtuous nature, and maintains constant inquiry and study, seeking to carry it out to its breadth and greatness, so as to omit none of the more exquisite and minute points which it embraces, and to raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, so as to pursue the course of the Mean. He cherishes his old knowledge, and is continually acquiring new. He exerts an honest, generous earnestness, in the esteem and practice of all propriety.

"Thus, when occupying a high situation he is not proud, and in a low situation he is not insubordinate. When the kingdom is well governed, he is sure by his words to rise; and when it is ill governed, he is sure by his silence to command forbearance to himself. Is not this what we find in the Book of Poetry—"Intelligent is he and prudent, and so preserves his person?"

The Master said, "Let a man who is ignorant be fond of using his own judgment; let a man without rank be fond of assuming a directing power to himself; let a man who is living in the present age go back to the ways of antiquity; on the persons of all who act thus calamities will be sure to come.

"To no one but the Son of Heaven does it belong to order ceremonies, to fix the measures, and to determine the written characters.

"Now over the kingdom, carriages have all wheels, of the same size; all writing is with the same characters; and for conduct there are the same rules.

"One may occupy the throne, but if he have not the proper virtue, he may not dare to make ceremonies or music. One may have the virtue, but if he do not occupy the throne, he may not presume to make ceremonies or music."

The Master said, "I may describe the ceremonies of the Hsia dynasty, but Chi cannot sufficiently attest my words. I have learned the ceremonies of the Yin dynasty, and in Sung they still continue. I have learned the ceremonies of Chau, which are now used, and I follow Chau.

"He who attains to the sovereignty of the kingdom, having those three important things, shall be able to effect that there shall be few errors under his government.

"However excellent may have been the regulations of those of former times, they cannot be attested. Not being attested, they cannot command credence, and not being credited, the people would not follow them.

"However excellent might be the regulations made by one in an inferior situation, he is not in a position to be honored. Unhonored, he cannot command credence, and not being credited, the people would not follow his rules.

"Therefore the institutions of the Ruler are rooted in his own character and conduct, and sufficient attestation of them is given by the masses of the people. He examines them by comparison with those of the three kings, and finds them without mistake. He sets them up before Heaven and Earth, and finds nothing in them contrary to their mode of operation.

"He presents himself with them before spiritual beings, and no doubts about them arise. He is prepared to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, and has no misgivings.

"His presenting himself with his institutions before spiritual beings, without any doubts arising about them, shows that he knows Heaven. His being prepared, without any misgivings, to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, shows that he knows men.

"Such being the case, the movements of such a ruler, illustrating his institutions, constitute an example to the world for ages. His acts are for ages a law to the kingdom. His words are for ages a lesson to the kingdom. Those who are far from him

look longingly for him; and those who are near him are never wearied with him.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘Not disliked there, not tired of here, from day to day and night tonight, will they perpetuate their praise.’ Never has there been a ruler, who did not realize this description, that obtained an early renown throughout the kingdom.

“Chung-ni handed down the doctrines of Yao and Shun, as if they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed the regulations of Wan and Wul taking them as his model. Above, he harmonized with the times of Heaven, and below, he was conformed to the water and land.

“He may be compared to Heaven and Earth in their supporting and containing, their overshadowing and curtailing, all things. He may be compared to the four seasons in their alternating progress, and to the sun and moon in their successive shining.

“All things are nourished together without their **injuring** one another. The courses of the seasons, and of the sun and moon, are pursued without any collision among them. The smaller energies are like river currents; the greater energies are seen in mighty transformations. It is this which makes heaven and earth so great.

“It is only he, possessed of all sagely qualities that can exist under heaven, who shows himself quick in apprehension, clear in **discernment**, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, fitted to exercise rule; magnanimous, generous, **benign**, and mild, fitted to exercise forbearance; impulsive, energetic, firm, and enduring, fitted to maintain a firm hold; self-adjusted, grave, never swerving from the Mean, and correct, fitted to command reverence; accomplished, distinctive, concentrative, and searching, fitted to exercise discrimination.

“All-embracing is he and vast, deep and active as a fountain, sending forth in their due season his virtues.

“All-embracing and vast, he is like Heaven. Deep and active as a fountain, he is like the abyss. He is seen, and the people all reverence him; he speaks, and the people all believe him; he acts, and the people all are pleased with him.

“Therefore his fame overspreads the Middle Kingdom, and extends to all barbarous tribes. Wherever ships and carriages reach; wherever the strength of man penetrates; wherever the heavens overshadow and the earth sustains; wherever the sun and moon shine; wherever frosts and dews fall: all who have blood and breath unfeignedly honor and love him. Hence it is said— ‘He is the equal of Heaven.’



LIN, MA. DEM WIND IN DEN KIEFERN LAUSCHEND. 1246. CHINA.

**injuring** –  
to do or cause harm of any kind

**discernment** –  
acuteness of judgment and understanding

**benign** –  
having a kindly disposition



CONFUCIUS STATUE ON  
CHONGMING ISLAND, SHANGHAI

“It is only the individual possessed of the most entire sincerity that can exist under Heaven, who can adjust the great invariable relations of mankind, establish the great fundamental virtues of humanity, and know the transforming and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth; shall this individual have any being or anything beyond himself on which he depends?

“Call him man in his ideal, how earnest is he! Call him an abyss, how deep is he! Call him Heaven, how vast is he!

“Who can know him, but he who is indeed quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, possessing all Heavenly virtue?

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘Over her embroidered robe she puts a plain single garment,’ intimating a dislike to the display of the elegance of the former. Just so, it is the way of the superior man to prefer the concealment of his virtue, while it daily becomes more illustrious, and it is the way of the mean man to seek notoriety, while he daily goes more and more to ruin. It is characteristic of the superior man, appearing insipid, yet never to produce **satiety**; while showing a simple negligence, yet to have his accomplishments recognized; while seemingly plain, yet to be discriminating. He knows how what is distant lies in what is near. He knows where the wind proceeds from. He knows how what is minute becomes manifested. Such a one, we may be sure, will enter into virtue.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, “Although the fish sink and lie at the bottom, it is still quite clearly seen.” Therefore the superior man examines his heart, that there may be nothing wrong there, and that he may have no cause for dissatisfaction with himself. That wherein the superior man cannot be equaled is simply this— his work which other men cannot see.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘Looked at in your apartment, be there free from shame as being exposed to the light of Heaven.’ Therefore, the superior man, even when he is not moving, has a feeling of reverence, and while he speaks not, he has the feeling of truthfulness.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘In silence is the offering presented, and the spirit approached to; there is not the slightest contention.’

“Therefore the superior man does not use rewards, and the people are stimulated to virtue. He does not show anger, and the people are awed more than by hatchets and battle-axes.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘What needs no display is virtue. All the princes imitate it.’ Therefore, the superior man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquility.

“It is said in the Book of Poetry, ‘I regard with pleasure your brilliant virtue, making no great display of itself in sounds and appearances.’ ”

The Master said, “Among the appliances to transform the people, sound and appearances are but trivial influences. It is said in another ode, ‘His Virtue is light as a hair.’ Still, a hair will admit of comparison as to its size. ‘The doings of the supreme Heaven have neither sound nor smell.’ That is perfect virtue.”

**satiety** –  
the state of being satisfied

**SOURCE:** Confucius. *The Doctrine of the Mean*. <<http://classics.mit.edu/Confucius/doctmean.html>>

**DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the correlation between the nature and status of human beings in the world? Can you identify differences between Nature, Path and Instruction according to the author? What is the real meaning of the Path? Why is it so important for Confucius to discuss the issue of Path? According to Confucius, who is the superior (perfect) man?
2. “There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself when he is alone.” Do you agree with this point? Have you experienced this in your life?
3. What is the difference between the universal path and individual one? What makes the superior man different from the mean man? How did you understand the meaning of the superior man? Is it really possible to be a superior man?
4. Do you think harmony is equal to justice? Do avoiding extremes and keeping harmony in the soul and society always equate to justice? Do you think there is an eternal harmony in the world? Can you identify differences between physical and spiritual harmonies?
5. What is central for Confucius in presenting the theory of social justice? Do you think that for Confucius justice exists in nature and human beings need only to implement it properly? Why does nature have such an important role in Confucian doctrine?

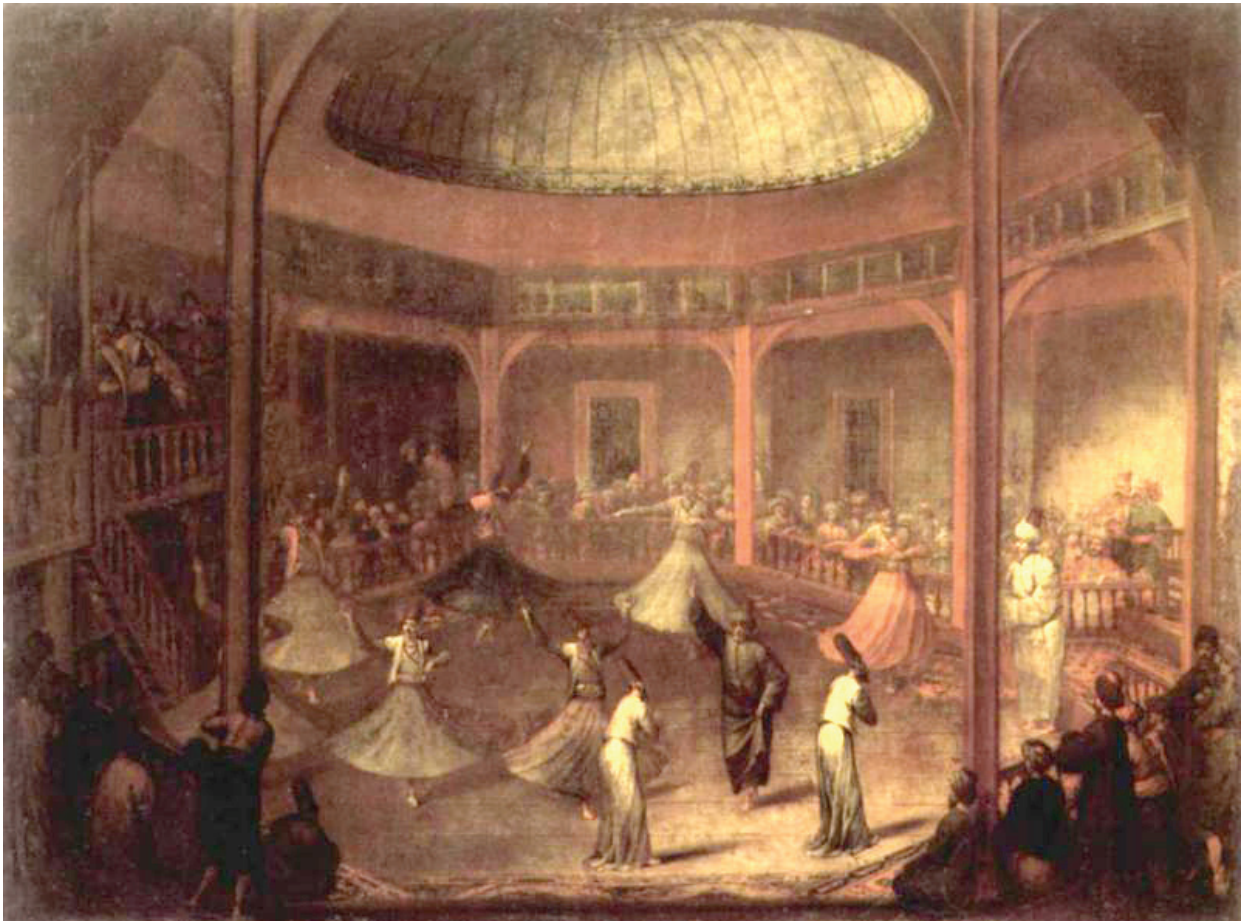
**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. Can you identify the differences between the theory of justice presented by Socrates and the doctrine of justice suggested by Confucius? Do the differences depend on their diverse approaches to nature or something else? What is common between the two thinkers and their civilizations?
2. Did you find anything helpful for you and contemporary society from any of the concepts of justice you have been introduced to? What are the limits and advantages of the classical notions of justice?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- Confucius, Chinese thinker and social philosopher, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius)
- Confucius, his philosophy and the tradition of Confucianism in China and East Asia, [www.confucius.org/](http://www.confucius.org/)
- Doctrine of the Mean by Confucius, [www.philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/reader/reader/c3878.html](http://www.philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/reader/reader/c3878.html)
- The Classical Library – Confucius, [www.classicallibrary.org/confucius/index.htm](http://www.classicallibrary.org/confucius/index.htm)
- Wisdom from the Doctrine of the Mean, [www.oaks.nvg.org/sa3ra6.html](http://www.oaks.nvg.org/sa3ra6.html)





MEVLEVI DERVISHES WHIRLING IN PERA

van Mour, Jean-Baptiste. 1<sup>st</sup> half of 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



## ALI IBN ABU TALIB: LETTER TO MAALIK THE GOVERNOR OF EGYPT

Ali ibn Abu Talib (599/600-661 CE), was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad. Sunni Muslims consider Ali as the fourth and final Rashidun (Rightly-Guided Caliph). Shi'a Muslims regard Ali as the first Imam and consider him and his descendants as the rightful successors to the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims greatly respect Ali for his knowledge, belief, honesty, unbending devotion to Islam, deep loyalty to Muhammad, equal treatment of all Muslims and generosity in forgiving his defeated enemies. Ali was an authority on the Qur'an, Islamic jurisprudence and religious thought.

The passages excerpted below illustrate the timeless applicability of Ali ibn Abu Talib's admonitions. The letter itself is contained in the *Nahj al-Balaghah*, which is a collection of the letters and speeches of Ali ibn Abu Talib.



### IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL.

These are the orders issued by the creature of Allah, Ali, the son Abu Talib to Maalik, the son of Ashtar when he appointed Maalik as the Governor of Egypt to collect Zakat there, to combat the enemies of Islam and Egypt, to work for the welfare of its people and to look after its prosperity.

I order you, Maalik, always to keep the fear of Allah in your mind, to give priority to His worship and to give preference to obeying His Commands over every other thing in life, to carefully and faithfully follow the commandments and interdictions as are given by the Holy Book and the traditions of the Holy Prophet(s) because the success of a man to attain happiness in this world and in the next depends upon these qualities, and a failure to achieve these attributes brings about total failure in both worlds.

... Let it be known to you, Maalik, that I am sending you as a governor to a country which has seen many regimes before this. Some of them were benign, sympathetic and good, while others were tyrannical, oppressive and cruel. People will judge your regime as critically as you have studied the activities of other regimes and they will criticize you in the same way as you have censured or approved other rulers.

You must know that a good and virtuous man is known and recognized by the good that is said about him and the praise which Allah has destined him to receive from others. Therefore, make your mind the source and fountain-head of good thoughts, good intentions and good deeds. This can only be attained by keeping a strict control on your desires and yearnings, however much they may try to incite and coerce you. Remember that the best way to do justice to your inner self and to keep it out of harm is to restrain it from vice and from things which the 'self' inordinately and irrationally desires.

Maalik! You must create in your mind kindness, compassion and love for your subjects. Do not behave towards them as if you are a voracious and ravenous beast and as if your success lies in devouring them.

Remember, Maalik, that amongst your subjects there are two kinds of people: those who have the same religion as you have; they are brothers to you, and those who have religions other than that of yours, they are human beings like you. Men of either category suffer from the same weaknesses and disabilities that human beings are inclined to, they commit sins, indulge in vices either intentionally or foolishly and unintentionally, without realizing the enormity of their deeds. Let your mercy and compassion come to their rescue and help in the same way and to the same extent that you expect Allah to show mercy and forgiveness to you.

Maalik! You must never forget that if you are a ruler over them then the caliph is the ruler over you and Allah is the Supreme Lord over the caliph. And the reality is that He has appointed you as the governor and tested you through the responsibility of this rulership over them.

Never think of raising yourself to such a false prestige that you can declare war against Allah because you cannot ward off His Wrath and you can never be free from the need of His Mercy and Compassion.

Do not feel ashamed to forgive and forget. Do not hurry over punishments and do not be pleased and do not be proud of your power to punish. Do not get angry and lose your temper quickly over the mistakes and failures of those over whom you rule. On the contrary, be patient and sympathetic with them. Anger and desire of vengeance are not going to be of much help to you in your administration.

... Take care never to think of bringing yourself on par with Allah, never to think of matching your power with Him and contesting His Glory and ever to pretend that you possess might and power like Him because the Mighty Lord will always humble pitiless tyrants and will degrade all pretenders of His Power and Might.

So far as your own affairs or those of your relatives and friends are concerned, take care that you do not violate the duties laid down upon you by Allah and do not usurp the rights of mankind, be impartial and do justice to them, because if you give up equity and justice then you will certainly be a tyrant and an oppressor. And whoever tyrannizes and oppresses the creatures of Allah, will earn the enmity of Allah along with the hatred of those whom he has oppressed; and whoever earns the Wrath of Allah loses all chances of salvation and he has no excuse to offer on the Day of Judgement.

Every tyrant and oppressor is an enemy of Allah unless he repents and gives up oppression. Remember, Maalik! that there is nothing in this world more effective to turn His Blessings into His Wrath quicker than to insist upon oppression over His creatures because the Merciful Allah will always hear the prayers of those who have been oppressed and He will give no chance to oppressors.

You must always appreciate and adopt a policy which is neither too severe nor too lenient, a policy which is based upon equity will be largely appreciated. Remember that the displeasure of common men, the have-nots and the depressed persons more overbalances than the approval of important persons, while the displeasure of a few big people will be excused by the Lord if the general public and the masses of your subjects are happy with you.

Remember, Maalik! that usually these big personages are mentally the scum of the human society, they are the people who will be the worst drag upon you during your moments of peace and happiness, and the least useful to you during your hours of need and adversity, they hate justice the most, they will keep on demanding more and more out of the State resources and will seldom be satisfied with what they receive and will never be obliged for the favour shown to them if their demands are justifiably

refused, they will never accept any reasonable excuse or any rational argument and when the time changes, you will never find them staunch, faithful and loyal.

While the common men, the poor and apparently the less important section of your subjects are the pillars of Islam, they are the real assemblage of Muslims and the power and defensive force against the enemies of Islam. Keep your mind on their affairs, be more friendly with them and secure their trust and goodwill.

But be careful in forming your contacts (whether with the most important persons or the commoners); keep such people away from you and think them to be the enemy of the State who are scandal-mongers and who try to find fault with others and carry on propaganda against them because everywhere people have weaknesses and failings and it is the duty of the government to overlook (minor) shortcomings. You must not try to go in search of those weaknesses which are hidden from you, leave them to Allah, and about those weaknesses which come to your notice, you must try to teach them how to overcome them. Try not to expose the weaknesses of the people and Allah will conceal your own weaknesses which you do not want anybody to know.

Do not give cause to the people to envy each other (man against man, tribe against tribe or one section of the society against the other). Try to alleviate and root out mutual distrust and enmity from amongst your subjects.

Be fair, impartial and just in your dealings with all, individually and collectively and be careful not to make your person, position and favours act as sources of malice. Do not let any such thing or such person come near to you who does not deserve your nearness and your favour. Never lower your dignity and prestige.

Remember that backbiters and scandal-mongers belong to a mean and cunning group, though they pretend to be sincere advisers. Do not make haste to believe the news they bring and do not heed to their advice.

Do not accept the advice of misers, they will try their best to keep you away from acts of kindness and from doing good to others. They will make you frightened of poverty.

... In their stead you can comfortably find persons who are equally wise and learned but who have not developed sinful and criminal mentalities, who have neither helped the tyrants in their tyrannies nor have they assisted them to carry on their sinful deeds. Such persons will prove the least troublesome to you. They will be the most helpful. They will sincerely sympathise with you. If you take them in your confidence they will sever their connections with your opponents. Keep such people with you as your companions in your informal company as well as in official gatherings in audience. From amongst such honest and humane companions and ministers some would receive your fullest confidence and trust. They are those who can always speak out the bitter truth to you and unreservedly and without fear of your status can refuse to assist you or associate with you in the deeds which Allah does not like His good creatures to commit.

Select honest, truthful and pious people as your companions. Train them not to flatter you and not to seek your favour by false praises because flattery and false praises create vanity and conceit and they make a man lose sight of his real self and ignore his duties.

You should not treat good and bad people alike because in this way you will be discouraging good persons and at the same time emboldening the wicked to carry on their wickedness. Everyone should receive the treatment which his deeds make him deserve.

Try carefully to realize that a ruler can create goodwill in the minds of his subjects and can make them faithful and sincere to him only when he is kind and considerate to them, when he reduces their troubles, when he does not oppress them and when he never asks for things which are beyond their power.

These are the principles which you should keep in mind and act upon. Let your attitude be such that they do not lose faith in you because a good faith on their part will reduce many troubles of administration and will relieve you of many worries and anxieties. And so far as your confidence and trust is concerned, let it rest with those people whom you have tested in difficulties and whom you have befriended, but you should always mistrust those people whom you have wronged or who have proved themselves undeserving, inefficient or unfaithful.

Do not give up those practices and do not break those rules which good Muslims have evolved or introduced before you, which have created unity and amity among the various sections of the society and which have benefited the masses.

Do not break them and do not introduce innovations because if you do away with those good rules and traditions, the reward of having introduced them will go to those who evolved them and the punishment of having despoiled them will be your lot.

You must know, Maalik, that the people over whom you rule are divided into classes and grades and the prosperity and welfare of each class of the society individually and collectively are so interdependent upon the well-being of the other classes that the whole set-up represents a closely woven net and reciprocal aspect. One class cannot exist peacefully, cannot live happily and cannot work without the support and good wishes of the other.

Amongst them there are the soldiers of the army of Allah who defend His cause, the next class is that of the secretaries of the State to whom duties of writing out and issuing special or general orders are assigned, the third group is of the judges and magistrates to administer justice, the fourth is of officers who maintain law and order and guard the peace and prosperity of the country. Then there are common men, the Muslims who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay tribute to the State (in lieu of taxes). Then comes the class of men who carry on various professions and trades and the last but not the least are the poor and the have-nots who are considered as the lowest class of the society. The Merciful Allah has fixed rights and duties of each one of them. They have been either mentioned in His Book or explained through the instructions of the Holy Prophet(s). A complete code of them is preserved with us.

...The army and the common men (common citizens who pay taxes or tributes) are two important classes, but in a Welfare State their well-being cannot be guaranteed without proper functioning and preservation of the other classes, the judges and magistrates, the secretaries of the State and the officers of various departments who collect various revenues, maintain law and order as well as preserve peace and amity among the diverse classes of the society. They also guard the rights and privileges of the citizens and look to the performances of various duties by individuals and classes. And the prosperity of this whole set-up depends upon the traders and industrialists. They act as a medium between the consumers and the suppliers. They collect the requirements of the society. They exert to provide goods. They open up shops, markets

and trading centres. Thus, providing the consumers with their necessities, they relieve the citizens of the need of running after their requisites of life.

Then comes the class of the poor and the disabled persons. It is absolutely necessary that they should be looked after, helped and well-provided for. The Merciful Allah has explained the ways and means of maintaining and providing for each of these classes. And everyone of this class has the right upon the ruler of the State that at least minimum necessities for its well-being and contented living are provided.

Remember, Maalik that Almighty Allah will not absolve any ruler from his obligations unless he sincerely tries his best to discharge his duties, invokes Allah to help him in their performance, remains steadfast and diligent on the path of truth and justice and bears all this whether the performance of these duties is congenial or hateful to him.

So far as the army is concerned, its chief and commander should be a person who is most sincere and faithful to Allah, to the Holy Prophet(s) and to your Imam who is most pious, who is famous for his forbearance, clemency and gentleness, who is neither short-tempered nor does he get angry quickly, who sympathetically treats sincere excuses and accepts apologies, who is kind and compassionate with the weak, but severe against the strong and the powerful, who has no vindictiveness which might lead to violence or any inferiority complex or weak-mindedness which makes them helpless and dejected. To find and select such persons you should have contacts with pious and noble families with high ideals and exalted traditions, families well-known for their bravery and courage and generosity and magnanimity. They are the people who may be considered as sources of magnificence and sublimity of character and fountain-heads of piety and good deeds.

When you have found and selected such persons then keep an eye over them and watch them as parents watch their children so that you may find out if there appears any change in their behaviour. Treat them kindly and sympathetically. Do not grudge highest considerations to them (if they rightly deserve) and do not refuse small mercies. This kind of treatment will create reciprocal tendencies in them and they will trust you and will be faithful to you. Under the impression that you have paid enough attention to their major necessities and wants, do not close your eyes to their minor requirements and needs because small favours often bear better fruits though careful attention to major necessities is very important. Among the military officers those should receive your highest respect and consideration who pay most attention to the needs of the soldiers under their command who come forward to help the soldiers with their personal means and property so that the soldiers may lead a happy and contented life and may have full confidence of the future for their families and children.

If the soldiers are thus satisfied and are free from anxieties and care then they will bravely and wholeheartedly face the conflicts. Your constant attention towards the officers and soldiers will make them love you more and more.

The thing which should most gladden the heart of a ruler is the fact that his State is being ruled on the principles of equity and justice and that his subjects love him.

And your subjects will only love you when they have no grievance against you. Their sincerity and loyalty will be proved if they gather around you to support your government, when they accept your authority without considering it an unbearable burden on their heads and when they do not secretly wish your rule to come to an end. So let them have as many justifiable hopes in you as they can and fulfil as many as you reasonably can. Speak well of those who deserve your praise. Appreciate the good deeds done by them and let these good actions be known publicly.

The correct and timely publicity of noble actions and golden deeds creates more zeal in the minds of the brave and emboldens the cowards and the weaklings. You must know and realize the good deeds done by every single individual so that the credit of noble deeds done by one may not be given to another. Do not underestimate and underpay the good work done. Similarly do not overpay a work simply because it has been done by a very important person and do not let his position and prestige be the cause of overvaluation of the merit of his work and at the same time do not undervalue a great deed if it is done by a very ordinary person or a commoner. Let equity, justice and fairplay be your motto.

When you are faced with problems which you cannot solve or with a difficult situation from which you cannot escape or when uncertain and doubtful circumstances confuse and perplex you, then turn to Allah and the Holy Prophet(s) because Allah has thus ordered those whom He wants to guide. The way to turn to Allah is to act diligently according to the clear and explicit orders given in His Holy Book and to turn to the Holy Prophet(s) means to follow those of his orders about which there is no doubt and ambiguity and which have been generally accepted to be correctly recorded.

So far as dispensing of justice is concerned, you have to be very careful in selecting officers for the same. You must select people of excellent character and high calibre and with meritorious records. They must possess the following qualifications: Abundance of litigations and complexity of cases should not make them lose their temper.

....

Then come the officers of your State. You must supervise their work. They must be appointed after a careful scrutiny of their capabilities and characters. These appointments must be made initially on probation without any kind of favouritism being shown or influence being accepted, otherwise tyranny, corruption and misrule will reign in your State. While selecting your officers take care to select experienced and honourable persons, members of respectable families who had served Islam during its early days because these are usually of noble character and good repute. They are not greedy and cannot be easily bribed. They mostly have before them the ultimate result of their thoughts and their deeds. Keep them also well-paid so that they may not be tempted to lower their standard of morality and may not misappropriate the cash of the State which they hold in their trust, and if after being paid handsomely they prove dishonest, then you will be right to punish them. Therefore keep a careful watch over their system of work and rule.

You may also appoint trustworthy and honest men to keep a watch over the activities of these officers. The knowledge that they are being watched secretly will keep them away from dishonesty, misrule, malpractice and tyrannizing the subjects. Protect your government from dishonest officers. If you find any of them dishonest and your confidential intelligence service submits acceptable proofs of his dishonesty, then you must punish him. This may be corporal punishment besides dismissal from service and taking back from him all which he has dishonestly collected. He must be



humiliated and must be made to realize the infamy of his wicked deeds. His humiliation and punishment must be given publicly so that it may serve as a lesson and a deterrent to others.

So far as collection of land revenues and taxes are concerned you must always keep in view the welfare of the tax-payers which is of primary importance, then the taxes themselves, because these taxes and the tax-payers are the original sources on which the welfare of your State and its subjects depend.

A State really lives upon the revenues collected from the tax-payers. Therefore, more importance should be attached to the fertility of land than to the collection of taxes, because actual taxable capacity of people rests upon the fertility of the land. The ruler, who does not pay attention to the prosperity of his subjects and fertility of the land but concentrates only on collection of revenues, lays waste the land and consequently ruins the State and brings destruction to the creatures of Allah. His rule cannot last for long.

If the tax-payers complain to you of the heavy incidence to taxation, of any accidental calamity, of the vagaries of the monsoons, of the recession of the means of irrigation, of floods or destruction of their crops on account of excessive rainfall and if their complaints are true, then reduce their taxes. This reduction should be such that it provides them opportunities to improve their conditions and eases them of their troubles.

Decrease in State-income due to such reasons should not depress you because the best investment for a ruler is to help his subjects in the time of their difficulties. They are the real wealth of a country and any investment in them, even in the form of reduction of taxes, will be returned to the State in the shape of the prosperity of its cities and improvement of the country at large. At the same time you will be in a position to command and secure their love, respect and praises along with the revenues. Will that not be a lasting happiness?

Not only this, but your benign rule and humane treatment will so affect them that they will come to your help at the time of your difficulties and you will be able to rely on their support. Your kindness, your clemency and your justice will be a kind of moral training to them, and the contented, happy and prosperous life, for which they will be grateful to you, will be the best support, strongest protection and the greatest treasury for you.

Later, if such circumstances arrive that you find yourself in need of their support, their help, their confidence, their wealth and their man-power, then they will have no grudge against you.

Remember, Maalik! If a country is prosperous and if its people are well-to-do then it will happily and willingly bear any burden.

The poverty of the people is the actual cause of the devastation and ruination of a country and the main cause of the poverty of the people is the desire of its ruler and officers to amass wealth and possessions, whether by fair or foul means. They are

afraid of losing their posts or positions and sway or rule and want to make the most during the shortest time at their disposal. They never learn any lesson from the history of nations and never pay any attention to the commands of Allah...

**SOURCE:** <http://www.al-islam.org/nahjul/letters/letter53.htm>; <http://razarumi.wordpress.com/about/the-lost-jewel-rediscovering-hazrat-alis-letter/>

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are the sources of legitimization of social justice according to Ali ibn Abu Talib?
- What is the relationship between equality and justice? How important is cultivating pluralism for maintaining justice? How are non-Muslims to be treated?
- What are the ideal forms of relationship between different classes in society, for example, the relationship between the army and common men? Why does Hazrat Ali think that a healthy society is an interdependent one?
- Why do corruption and poverty undermine national well-being? Present your arguments on this thesis from the text, using your knowledge, and your social and personal life experiences.
- How far can you accept the principles of good governance mentioned by Hazrat Ali? Do you agree with all of these ideas? If yes, why? If not, why not?

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- What are the similarities between the concept of good governance of Hazrat Ali, and Confucius's "Path" and Perfect man? What are the differences between Hazrat Ali and Confucius on social justice?
- What was the search for justice for Hazrat Ali? Is the concept of justice in Muslim culture different from that in Greece's classical period, or the same? What kind of change brought Islam to this concept? What kinds of virtues are included in Islamic concepts of justice?
- What does social justice mean to you and for your society?

### ADDITIONAL READING:

- Ali ibn Abu Talib, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali) - 295k
- Major figure in the history of Islam, [www.everything2.com/title/Ali%2520ibn%2520Abu%2520Talib](http://www.everything2.com/title/Ali%2520ibn%2520Abu%2520Talib) - 34k
- Fourth Caliph and Leader of the Shiite sect of Islam, [www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/bios/b1talib-ali-ibn-abu.htm](http://www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/bios/b1talib-ali-ibn-abu.htm) -22k
- Ali ibn Abu Talib chosen kalief of Islam June 17 in History, [www.brainyhistory.com/events/656/june\\_17\\_656\\_30491.html](http://www.brainyhistory.com/events/656/june_17_656_30491.html) -7k
- Ali ibn Abu Talib in the eyes of Western Scholars, [www.hasnain.wordpress.com/2008/01/03/ali-ibn-abu-talib-a-in-the-eyes-of-western-scholars/](http://www.hasnain.wordpress.com/2008/01/03/ali-ibn-abu-talib-a-in-the-eyes-of-western-scholars/) - 22k
- Ali - Successor of Muhammad, [www.historymedren.about.com/od/aentries/a/11\\_ali.htm](http://www.historymedren.about.com/od/aentries/a/11_ali.htm) -23k

## CHAPTER TWO: RELIGIOUS APPROACH

49

### INTRODUCTION

The texts in this chapter have been taken from some of the world's major religious books. What do religions have to say about justice? How are these interpreted? Do religions differ on the notion of justice? Do all religions establish justice for their communities of believers? What is the role of justice in religion? With what other concepts are they connected? Readers are urged to keep an open mind but a critical eye as well. Do the examples and illustrations in the texts match the moral code established by each religion to achieve justice? Or, is justice merely a by-product of higher ends in religion?

Often religions lay down moral codes or laws that guide human behavior. The observance of these codes depends on honesty and integrity. In other words, trust lies at the bottom of all adherences to moral codes. Failure of trust would become the greatest transgression of all. Religious duty sets the rules of good behavior but also the ground rules for restitution when the adherents break that trust. In other words, both distributive justice and rectifying justice are established by some religions.

In contrast, some other religions demand complete detachment from worldly connections. Even in doing charitable acts, detachment must be maintained. Charity without detachment reduces the act to an individual act that results in selfhood, egoism, and individuality. That is a fall from the grace of universal consciousness. To live the meditative life of universal consciousness is the highest perfection attainable in such religions. Only then liberation of all living things is attainable. This is the only path to non-violence according to such religions.

Yet other religions enjoin a different set of moral codes to attain the same end. Here detachment is not sought, but quite the contrary. Negative or violent emotion has to be converted to love: all human emotions, even hatred, are to be converted into love. Through the emotive act of love one enters the kingdom of heaven. Through reconciliation, turning hatred into love, and practicing daily acts of forgiveness (charity), one achieves perfection and enters the gates of heaven, into immortality through the Grace of God who is the most loving of all.

The religious practice of living a just or righteous life is not an easy task. It requires a fair amount of patience, prayer and knowledge (of truth). Kindness and forgiveness, and charity and acting equitably are forms of piety. Failures to adhere to these are acts of transgression against the divine law that assures justice and life in the hereafter.

Readers are urged to identify common themes that run through each of these texts, the differences, if any, and analyze the forms of justice and the manner to attain them as set forth by world religions.



THE BIBLE IN LATIN. HAND-WRITTEN IN BELGIUM IN 1407 FOR READING IN MONASTERY SERVICES. MALMESBURY ABBEY, WILTSHIRE, ENGLAND. PHOTO: ADRIAN PINGSTONE, FEBRUARY 2005.

## THE BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT): TORAH (LAW)

[20:22-23:33]

And the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make yourselves gods of gold. An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. And if you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of **hewn** stones; for if you wield your tool upon it you profane it. And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.’

“Now these are the **ordinances** which you shall set before them. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s and he shall go out alone. But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.

“When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt faithlessly with her. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

“Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him treacherously, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

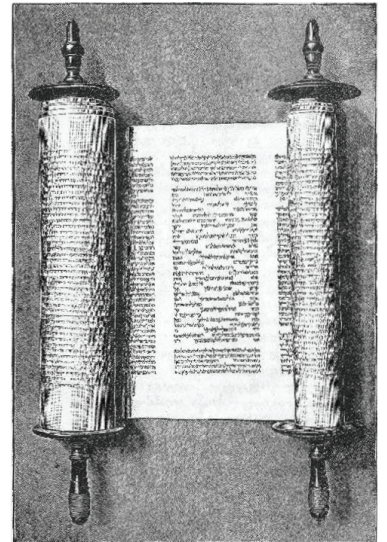
“Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

“Whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him shall be put to death.

“Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

“When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but keeps his bed, then if the man rises again and walks abroad with his staff, he that struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly **healed**.

“When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a **rod** and the slave dies under



AN ENGRAVING OF  
A SCROLL OF THE  
PENTATEUCH IN HEBREW  
CHARACTERS.  
British Library Add.

**hewn** –  
to cut something with a cutting  
tool

**ordinances** –  
rules

**healed** –  
to cure someone who is ill or  
make a wound heal

**rod** –  
a long thin pole used with a line  
and hook for catching fish



his hand, he shall be punished. But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be punished; for the slave is his money.

“When men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt her shall be fined, according as the woman’s husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, **stripe** for stripe.

“When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free for the eye’s sake. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free for the tooth’s sake.

“When an ox **gores** a man or woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be clear. But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. If a **ransom** is laid on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is laid upon him. If it gores a man’s son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to the same rule. If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty *shekels of silver*, and the ox shall be stoned.

“When a man leaves a **pit** open, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or an ass falls into it, the owner of the pit shall make it good; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

“When one man’s ox hurts another’s so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the price of it; and the dead beast also they shall divide. Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall pay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.

“If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. He shall make **restitution**; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or an ass or a sheep, he shall pay double.

“If a thief is found breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood-guilt for him; but if the sun has risen upon him, there shall be bloodguilt for him.

“When a man causes a field or vineyard to be **grazed** over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

“When fire breaks out and catches in **thorns** so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he that kindled the fire shall make full restitution.

“If a man delivers to his neighbor money or goods to keep, and it is stolen out of the man’s house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God, to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s goods.

“For every breach of trust, whether it is for ox, for ass, for sheep, for clothing, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case of both parties shall come before God; he whom God shall condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

“If a man delivers to his neighbor an ass or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep, and it dies or is hurt or is driven away, without anyone seeing it, an oath by the Lord shall be between them both to see whether he has not put his hand to his neighbor’s property; and the owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence; he shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

**stripe** –  
a stroke or blow, as with a whip

**gores** –  
pierce or stab with a horn or tusk

**ransom** –  
an amount of money paid to free someone who is held as a prisoner

**pit** –  
a natural or artificial hole or cavity in the ground

**restitution** –  
the act of giving back something that was lost or stolen to its owner, or paying for damage

**graze** –  
eating grass that is growing

**thorns** –  
any of various shrubs, trees, or woody plants bearing sharp, woody spines



“If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is hurt or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hire.

“If a man seduces a virgin who is not **betrothed**, and lies with her, he shall give the marriage present for her, and make her his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equivalent to the marriage present for virgins.

“You shall not permit a **sorceress** to live.

“Whoever lies with a beast shall be put to death.

“Whoever sacrifices to any god, save to the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.

“You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do **afflict** them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

“If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be to him as a creditor, and you shall not exact interest from him. If ever you take your neighbor’s garment in **pledge**, you shall restore it to him before the sun goes down; for that is his only covering, it is his mantle for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

“You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses.

“The first-born of your sons you shall give to me. You shall do likewise with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

“You shall be men consecrated to me; therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall cast it to the dogs.

“You shall not utter a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man, to be a **malicious** witness. You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; nor shall you bear witness in a suit, turning aside after a multitude, so as to **pervert** justice; nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his suit.

“If you meet your enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, you shall bring it back to him. If you see the ass of one who hates you lying under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it, you shall help him to lift it up.

“You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his suit. Keep far from a false charge, and do not slay the innocent and righteous, for I will not **acquit** the **wicked**. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the officials, and **subverts** the cause of those who are in the right.

“You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

“For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they

**betrothed –**

to have promised to marry someone

**sorceress –**

a woman who uses magic and receives help from evil spirits

**afflict –**

to make someone suffer or experience serious problems

**pledge –**

to make a formal, usually public, promise that you will do something

**malicious –**

showing a desire to harm or hurt someone

**pervert –**

to change something in an unnatural and often harmful way

**acquit –**

to give a decision in a court of law that someone is not guilty of crime

**wicked –**

person who behaves in a way that is morally wrong

**subverts –**

to destroy someone’s beliefs or loyalty

leave, the wild beasts may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

“Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien, may be refreshed. Take heed to all that I have said to you; make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let such be heard out of your mouth.

“Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. You shall keep the feast of **unleavened bread**; as I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. You shall keep the feast of harvest, of the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the feast of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God.

“You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

“The first of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

“You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.

“Behold, I send an angel before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

“But if you hearken attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

“When my angel goes before you, and brings you in to the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, you shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. You shall serve the Lord your God, and I will bless your bread and your water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of you. None shall cast her young or be barren in your land; I will fulfil the number of your days. I will send my terror before you, and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. And I will send **hornets** before you, which shall drive out Hivite, Canaanite, and Hittite from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land became desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you are increased and possess the land. And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a **snare** to you.”

**unleavened bread** –  
flat bread made without yeast

**hornets** –  
a large, black and yellow, bee-like insect that can sting

**snare** –  
something that is intended to trick someone and get them into a difficult situation

**SOURCE:** World Literature and Thought: Volume I The Ancient Worlds. Donald S. Gochberg, (General Editor). Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997, pp.538-541

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why does God say to Moses that “You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make yourselves gods of gold”? Is it fair to say that God does not want any rivals? Is God jealous and monopolistic, or concerned for truth and justice?
2. What kind of rules and norms does the Torah introduce? What is the use of the “Law” and its encouragement to be “faithful”?
3. Do you agree with these statements made in the Torah “Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death? Whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death. Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.” What do you think would be the outcome of these statements?
4. What is difference between the secular criminal code and the code stated in the Torah? How do you perceive the stoning of people for prostitution or thievery?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- Old Testament, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old\\_Testament](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Testament)
- Torah, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torah](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torah)
- [classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=deuteronomy%205&version=NIV](http://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=deuteronomy%205&version=NIV)
- Interpreting the Law by Robert I Bradshaw, [www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/article\\_law.html](http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_law.html)
- Do Christians have to obey the Old Testament Law? [www.gotquestions.org/Christian-law.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-law.html)
- Study Papers about Old Testament Laws, [www.wcg.org/lit/law/](http://www.wcg.org/lit/law/)



BLOCH, CARL HEINRICH. SERMON ON THE MOUNT. 1890.

## THE BIBLE (NEW TESTAMENT)

### MATTHEW'S GOSPEL: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

4:23-7:29

And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their **synagogues** and preaching the **gospel** of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, **epileptics**, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the **meek**, for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and **trodden** underfoot by men.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a **bushel**, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

“Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, **not an iota, not a dot**, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and **Pharisees**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

“You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever

**synagogue** –

building where Jewish people meet for religious worship

**gospel** –

good news

**epilepsy** –

medical condition in the brain that can suddenly make you become unconscious or unable to control your movements

**meek** –

showing patience and humility; gentle

**trodden** –

to put your foot on or in something while you are walking

**bushel** –

a container for measuring grain or vegetables equal to 8 gallons or 36.4 litres

**not an iota, not a dot** –

not even a small amount

**Pharisees** –

member of an ancient Jewish sect teaching strict observance of Jewish traditions; hypocritically self-righteous person

kills shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, **pluck** it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your **cloak** as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the **Gentiles** do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

“Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

“Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

**pluck** –  
to take hold of something and  
remove it from somewhere by  
pulling it

**cloak** –  
a warm piece of clothing like a  
coat without sleeves that hangs  
loosely from your shoulders

**Gentiles** –  
someone who is not Jewish



“And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:

Our Father who is in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.

For if you forgive men their **trespasses**, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**trespass –**  
sin; breaking the rules

**SOURCE:** World Literature and Thought: Volume I The Ancient Worlds. Donald S. Gochberg, (General Editor). Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997, pp.538-541

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How important is the feeling of hope in human life? What was so unique in the call of Jesus for justice, according to Matthew? What kind of emptiness did he find in the society he lived in? Why did he appeal to the very poor people? Was it an anti-elite movement?
2. How did you understand the way of purification of the soul and the moral development of human beings according to Matthew? What was his approach to the Ten Commandments and how did he justify their importance?
3. What suggestions for social justice do we find in these sacred texts? Why did Jesus choose spiritual and individual ways of fighting for social justice, rather than social (political) forms? Why, according to believers, do trust and internal knowledge make individuals stronger than knowledge based on the physical world?
4. Did you ever try to befriend one of your enemies? Do you agree with the statement: “if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well?” Why, or why not?

**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. How can you communicate religious and secular knowledge in society? Why is it so important to have different voices in society? Does such negotiating, without control, make modern society weaker or stronger?
2. Can you find similarities of thought with the teachings of Buddha and Confucius? If yes, what are they? What are the differences?
3. Do the other authors agree with turning the other cheek?
4. What common notions of justice do you find in the texts you have read until now? Do they all agree about what justice is?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- The Whole Bible: New Testament History, [www.maplenet.net/~trowbridge/NT\\_Hist.htm](http://www.maplenet.net/~trowbridge/NT_Hist.htm)
- Greek Bible, [www.greekbible.com/](http://www.greekbible.com/)
- The New American Bible, [www.nccbuscc.org/nab/bible/](http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab/bible/)
- New Testament, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Testament](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Testament)
- Holy Bible-New Testament, [www.ebooks.ebookmall.com/title/holy-bible---new-testament-king-james-version-ebooks.htm](http://www.ebooks.ebookmall.com/title/holy-bible---new-testament-king-james-version-ebooks.htm)
- [classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew%205&version=NIV](http://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew%205&version=NIV)

## THE QUR'AN

### The Opening

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[1.1] All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

[1.2] The Beneficent, the Merciful.

[1.3] Master of the Day of Judgment.

[1.4] Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.

[1.5] Keep us on the right path.

[1.6] The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors. Not (the path) of those upon whom Thy wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray.

### The Cow

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[2.1] Alif Lam Mim.

[2.2] This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil).

[2.3] Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what we have given them.

[2.4] And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you and they are sure of the hereafter.

[...]

[2.30] And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a **khalif**, they said: What! **wilt** Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Thy praise and **extol** Thy holiness? He said: Surely I know what you do not know.

[2.31] And He taught Adam all the names, then presented them to the angels; then He said: Tell me the names of those if you are right.

[2.32] They said: Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us; surely Thou art the Knowing, the Wise.

[2.33] He said: O Adam! inform them of their names. Then when he had informed them of their names, He said: Did I not say to you that I surely know what is **ghaib** in the heavens and the earth and (that) I know what you manifest and what you hide?

[2.34] And when we said to the angels: Make **obeisance** to Adam they did obeisance, but **Iblis** (did it not). He refused and he was proud, and he was one of the unbelievers.

[2.35] And we said: O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden and eat from it a **plenteous** (food) wherever you wish and do not approach this tree, for then you will be of the unjust.

[2.36] But the Shaitan made them both fall from it, and caused them to depart from that (state) in which they were; and we said: Get forth, some of you being the enemies of



A PAGE OF A 12<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY QUR'AN  
WRITTEN IN THE  
ANDALUSI SCRIPT

**khalif** –  
religious leader

**wilt** –  
will

**extol** –  
to praise something very highly

**ghaib** –  
hidden

**obeisance** –  
an act of showing respect and obedience, by bending your head or the upper part of your body

**Iblis** –  
Satan

**plenteous** –  
more than enough in quantity

others, and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time.

[2.37] Then Adam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

[2.38] We said: Go forth from this (state) all; so surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve

[...]

[2.40] O children of Israel! call to mind My favor which I bestowed on you and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me, I will fulfill (My) covenant with you; and of Me, Me alone, should you be afraid.

[2.41] And believe in what I have revealed, verifying that which is with you, and be not the first to deny it, neither take a mean price in exchange for My communications; and Me, Me alone should you fear.

[2.42] And do not mix up the truth with the falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know (it).

[2.43] And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and bow down with those who bow down.

[2.44] What! do you enjoin men to be good and neglect your own souls while you read the Book; have you then no sense?

[2.45] And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones,

[2.46] Who know that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return to Him.

[2.47] O children of Israel! call to mind My favor which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nations.

[...]

[2.84] And when we made a covenant with you: You shall not shed your blood and you shall not turn your people out of your cities; then you gave a promise while you witnessed.

[2.85] Yet you it is who slay your people and turn a party from among you out of their homes, backing each other up against them unlawfully and exceeding the limits; and if they should come to you, as captives you would ransom them-- while their very turning out was unlawful for you. Do you then believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in the other? What then is the reward of such among you as do this but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the day of resurrection they shall be sent back to the most grievous chastisement, and Allah is not at all heedless of what you do.

[...]

[2.172] O you who believe! eat of the good things that we have provided you with, and give thanks to Allah if Him it is that you serve.

[2.173] He has only forbidden you what dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allah has been invoked; but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin shall be upon him; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

[2.174] Surely those who conceal any part of the Book that Allah has revealed and take for it a small price, they eat nothing but fire into their bellies, and Allah will not speak to them on the day of resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful chastisement.

[2.175] These are they who buy error for the right direction and chastisement for forgiveness; how bold they are to encounter fire.

[2.176] This is because Allah has revealed the Book with the truth; and surely

those who go against the Book are in a great opposition.

[2.177] It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil).

[...]

[2.255] Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all **subsist**; **slumber** does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases, His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great.

[2.256] There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error; therefore, whoever disbelieves in the Shaitan and believes in Allah he indeed has laid hold on the firmest handle, which shall not break off, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing.

[2.257] Allah is the guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of the darkness into the light; and (as to) those who disbelieve, their guardians are Shaitans who take them out of the light into the darkness; they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide.

[...]

[2.262] (As for) those who spend their property in the way of Allah, then do not follow up what they have spent with reproach or injury, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

[2.263] Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury; and Allah is Self-sufficient, Forbearing.

[2.264] O you who believe! do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his property to be seen of men and does not believe in Allah and the last day; so his parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then a heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare; they shall not be able to gain anything of what they have earned; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.

[2.265] And the parable of those who spend their property to seek the pleasure of Allah and for the certainty of their souls is as the parable of a garden on an elevated ground, upon which heavy rain falls so it brings forth its fruit twofold but if heavy rain does not fall upon it, then light rain (is sufficient); and Allah sees what you do.

[2.266] Does one of you like that he should have a garden of palms and vines with

**subsist** –  
to stay alive on only small  
amounts of food or money  
**slumber** –  
to sleep

streams flowing beneath it; he has in it all kinds of fruits; and old age has overtaken him and he has weak offspring, when, (lo!) a whirlwind with fire in it smites it so it becomes blasted; thus Allah makes the communications clear to you, that you may reflect.

[2.267] O you who believe! spend (benevolently) of the good things that you earn and what we have brought forth for you out of the earth, and do not aim at what is bad that you may spend (in alms) of it, while you would not take it yourselves unless you have its price lowered, and know that Allah is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy.

[2.268] Shaitan threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance; and Allah is **Ample-giving**, Knowing.

[2.269] He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given great good and none but men of understanding mind.

[2.270] And whatever alms you give or (whatever) vow you vow, surely Allah knows it; and the unjust shall have no helpers.

[2.271] If you give alms openly, it is well, and if you hide it and give it to the poor, it is better for you; and this will do away with some of your evil deeds; and Allah is aware of what you do.

[2.272] To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent on you, but Allah guides aright whom He pleases; and whatever good thing you spend, it is to your own good; and you do not spend but to seek Allah's pleasure; and whatever good things you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.

[2.273] (Alms are) for the poor who are confined in the way of Allah-- they cannot go about in the land; the ignorant man thinks them to be rich on account of (their) abstaining (from begging); you can recognise them by their mark; they do not beg from men importunately; and whatever good thing you spend, surely Allah knows it.

[2.274] (As for) those who spend their property by night and by day, secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

[2.275] Those who swallow down usury cannot arise except as one whom Shaitan has prostrated by (his) touch does rise. That is because they say, trading is only like **usury**; and Allah has allowed trading and forbidden usury. To whomsoever then the admonition has come from his Lord, then he desists, he shall have what has already passed, and his affair is in the hands of Allah; and whoever returns (to it)-- these are the inmates of the fire; they shall abide in it.

[...]

### The Family of Imran

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[3.1] Alif Lam Mim.

[3.2] Allah, (there is) no god but He, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all things subsist

[3.3] He has revealed to you the Book with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the **Tavrat** and the Injeel aforetime, a guidance for the people, and He sent the **Furqan**.

[3.4] Surely they who disbelieve in the communications of Allah, they shall have a severe chastisement; and Allah is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.

[3.5] Allah-- surely nothing is hidden from Him in the earth or in the heaven.

[3.6] He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He likes; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise

**ample-giving** –  
giving more than enough

**usury** –  
the practice of lending money  
to people and making them pay  
interest

**Tavrat** –  
Torah (Old Testament Law)

**Furqan** –  
Qur'an



[3.7] He it is Who has revealed the Book to you; some of its verses are decisive, they are the basis of the Book, and others are allegorical; then as for those in whose hearts there is perversity they follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. but none knows its interpretation except Allah, and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge say: we believe in it, it is all from our Lord; and none do mind except those having understanding.

[3.8] Our Lord! make not our hearts to deviate after Thou hast guided us aright, and grant us from Thee mercy; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver.

### **The Women**

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[4.1] O people! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely Allah ever watches over you.

[4.2] And give to the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless (things) for (their) good (ones), and do not devour their property (as an addition) to your own property; this is surely a great crime.

[4.3] And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course.

[4.4] And give women their dowries as a free gift, but if they of themselves be pleased to give up to you a portion of it, then eat it with enjoyment and with wholesome result.

[...]

[4.7] Men shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and women shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, whether there is little or much of it; a stated portion.

[4.8] And when there are present at the division the relatives and the orphans and the needy, give them (something) out of it and speak to them kind words.

[4.9] And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would fear on their account, so let them be careful of (their duty to) Allah, and let them speak right words.

[4.10] (As for) those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, surely they only swallow fire into their bellies and they shall enter burning fire.

### **The Dinner Table**

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[5.8] O you who believe! Be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and

let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably; act equitably, that is nearer to piety, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is aware of what you do.

[5.9] Allah has promised to those who believe and do good deeds (that) they shall have forgiveness and a mighty reward.

[...]

[5.44] Surely we revealed the Taurat in which was guidance and light; with it the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allah) judged (matters) for those who were Jews, and the masters of Divine knowledge and the doctors, because they were required to guard (part) of the Book of Allah, and they were witnesses thereof; therefore fear not the people and fear Me, and do not take a small price for My communications; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers.

[5.45] And we prescribed to them in it that life is for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and (that there is) reprisal in wounds; but he who foregoes it, it shall be an expiation for him; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unjust.

[5.46] And we sent after them in their footsteps **Isa**, son of **Maryam**, verifying what was before him of the Taurat and we gave him the Injeel in which was guidance and light, and verifying what was before it of Taurat and a guidance and an admonition for those who guard (against evil).

[5.47] And the followers of the Injeel should have judged by what Allah revealed in it; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the transgressors.

[5.48] And we have revealed to you the Book with the truth, verifying what is before it of the Book and a guardian over it, therefore judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires (to turn away) from the truth that has come to you; for every one of you did we appoint a law and a way, and if Allah had pleased He would have made you (all) a single people, but that He might try you in what He gave you, therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds; to Allah is your return, of all (of you), so He will let you know that in which you differed;

[5.49] And that you should judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires, and be cautious of them, lest they seduce you from part of what Allah has revealed to you; but if they turn back, then know that Allah desires to afflict them on account of some of their faults; and most surely many of the people are transgressors.

[...]

**Isa –**

Jesus Christ

**Maryam –**

Mary, mother of Jesus

**SOURCE:** <http://www.hti.umich.edu/k/koran>

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. In the opening there is a statement about the Day of Judgment and the right path. What is the right path that Allah expects us to go on? How do we find it?
2. How do we define “justice,” and why should we seek it when Allah is Merciful and Compassionate?
3. Who is good enough for Allah, since all are sinful? According to the Qur’an, what kind of chances does Allah promise to find the right path?
4. The Qur’an says: “Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity”. Why does Allah encourage us to be kind and forgive if someone makes a mistake? Why then are corruption and injustice more common in the Muslim world than elsewhere?
5. Allah said: “Did I not say to you that I surely know what is ghaib in the heavens and the earth and (that) I know what you manifest and what you hide?” Why should one be punished, then, if Allah is all-knowing?

**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. Compare the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur’an. What do they all have in common and what are their differences?
2. In which holy texts is justice an important component? Which ones do not mention it at all? Can you give reasons for this difference?
3. Whose justice is perfect and why, according to these holy texts?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

1. Bruce M. Metzger and Ronald E. Murphy. The New Oxford Annotated Bible. (1994), New York. Oxford University Press
2. Коран Перевод И. Ю. Крачковского. (1990) Москва
3. The Written Law (The Torah). [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The\\_Written\\_Law.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The_Written_Law.html)
4. History of the Bible – Old Testament. <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ab85>
5. A brief summary of Buddhism. <http://www.religioustolerance.org/buddhism6.htm>
6. Comparison of Buddhism and Christianity. <http://www.religioustolerance.org/buddhism4.htm>
7. The Koran. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/k/koran/>



DELACROIX, EUGÈNE. 1833. LIBERTY LEADING THE PEOPLE.

## CHAPTER THREE: POLITICAL APPROACH

69

### INTRODUCTION

A never-ending absorption in defining, operationalizing, and implementing justice marks the political approach to the age-old quest for social justice. Numerous covenants, laws, and constitutions have been enacted to secure justice for all. Small to massive armies, bureaucracies, and legal entities have been enabled to achieve justice for citizens. And finally when all else fails, coups, revolutions and wars have been staged often and justified and rationalized as a final attempt to attain justice for an aggrieved party of people.

This chapter explores three unusual forms of action to attain justice: civil disobedience, non-violent protest, and free speech. Readers are urged to examine the links between justice and these three concepts. Are these links justifiable, far-fetched or irrelevant to our understanding of justice? Does non-compliance with the law mean a transgression of law or a righteous stand against bad laws?

The argument offered by Henry David Thoreau in this chapter is that “laws never made any man more just,” and what is worse, by respecting unjust laws, we are “daily made agents of injustice.” Since the righteous can not serve an unjust master, they need to disobey the law of the land. In other words, Thoreau argues in an unjust state a good citizen’s rightful place is in prison. Can there be an alternative to this notion of righteous political action to serve justice? Or is it an impractical morality that serves little purpose as some folks would have it?

Similarly, Gandhi believed that non-violent resistance was the only legitimate way to achieve justice. Both means and ends had to be righteous. Good ends could not and did not justify bad means. To achieve justice, just means alone need to be applied. One cannot achieve justice through unjust actions. All violent actions are unjust. Non-violence or passive resistance is not cowardice. It demands a lot of courage. If one cannot practice passive resistance courageously, and instead seeks to hide in cowardice, then Gandhi believed that it was better to resist a bad law violently. Cowardice was worse than violence for Gandhi. Why does Gandhi rank cowardice so low?

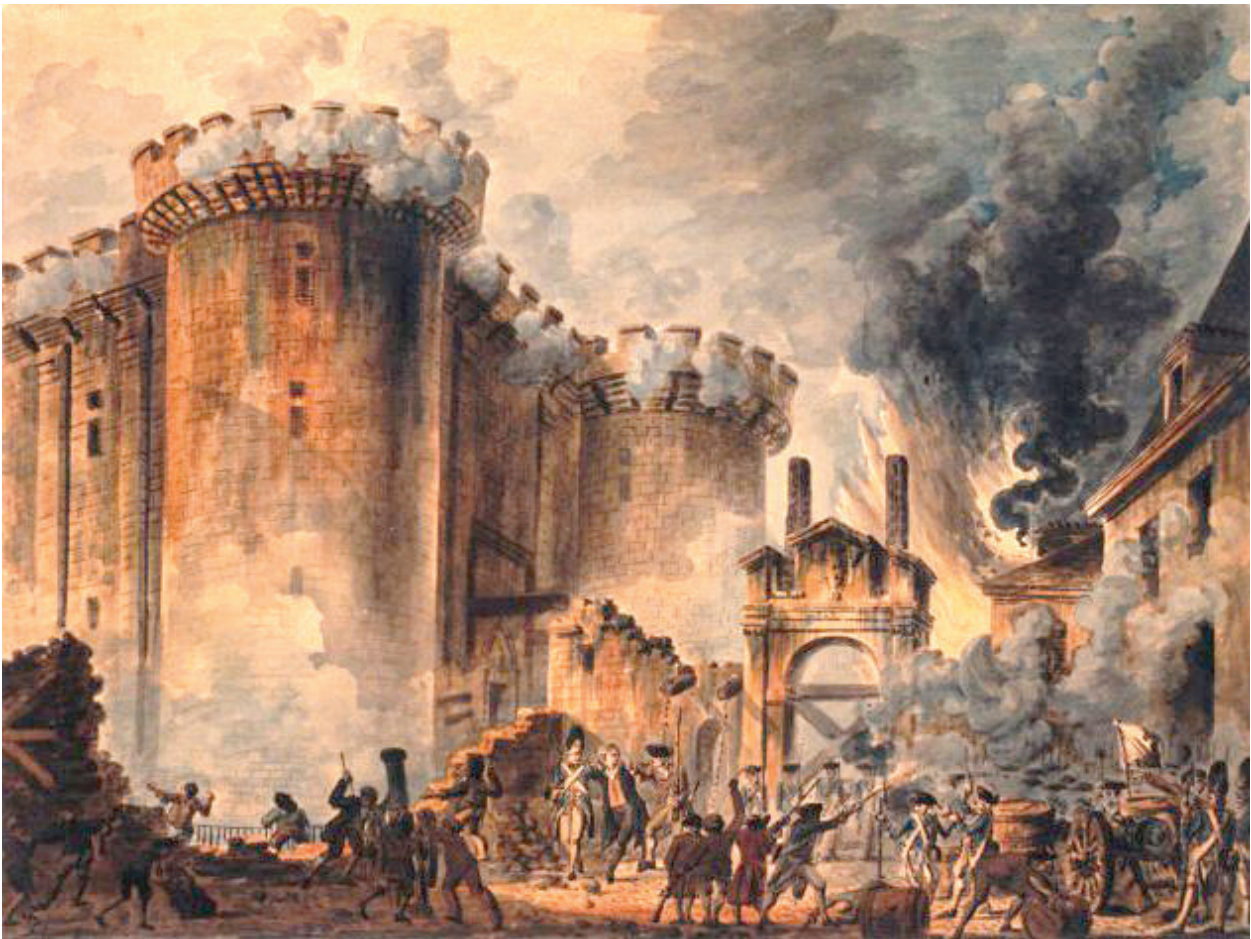
The exercise of free speech, too, can sometimes become a means of attaining justice, as demonstrated by Sojourner Truth. Can justice prevail where free speech is prohibited? Can a slave population seek and exercise justice as well as free citizens? If a state or society differentiates between its members on the basis of race or gender, can it be considered a just institution? Are equal rights, equal access, and equal opportunity necessary conditions for building a just society?

Martin Luther King, Jr. certainly thought so. Included in this chapter is the speech/text, ‘I Have a Dream’, in which King demands “racial justice,” “security of justice,”



and the “reality of justice.” He argues that for his country to be great, it will need to provide freedom and justice to all of its citizens.

In examining this chapter, the reader might want to consider in what ways citizens or members of a society can change or reform their society without harming it? Are such opportunities available to all? What are the conditions necessary or conducive to reforming or changing one’s society or state for the better?



HOUËL, JEAN-PIERRE. THE STORMING OF THE BASTILLE. 1789.



## HENRY DAVID THOREAU: CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Henry David Thoreau (July 12, 1817 - May 6, 1862) was an American writer, critic, and philosopher. He influenced a range of modern thinkers and political activists such as Leo Tolstoy, M. K. Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. His best known works are *Civil Disobedience* and *Walden*. Thoreau's books, articles, essays, journals, and poetry total over 20 volumes.



I heartily accept the **motto**, “That government is best which governs least”; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe: “That government is best which governs not at all”; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an **expedient**; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government – what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its **din**, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed upon, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the **alacrity** with which it got out of its way. It does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient, by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India-rubber, would never manage to **bounce** over obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

**motto –**

short statement giving a rule on how to behave, which expresses the aims or beliefs of a person

**expedient –**

clever and effective way of dealing with a problem, even though it may be morally wrong

**din –**

loud, unpleasant, confused noise

**alacrity –**

quickness and eagerness

**bounce –**

leap or jump

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rules in all cases can not be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which the majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? – in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience. Law never made men a **whit** more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for the law is that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a **palpitation** of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the **Navy Yard**, and behold a **marine**, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts – a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniment, though it may be,

“Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,  
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O’er the grave where our hero was buried.”

The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailers, **constables**, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others – as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders – serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God. A very few – as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and men – serve the state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be “clay,” and “stop a hole to keep the wind away,” but leave that office to his dust at least:

**whit –**

tiny or scarcely detectable  
amount

**palpitation –**

irregular or extremely fast  
beating of the heart

**Navy Yard –**

dockyard for the construction,  
repair, equipping, or docking of  
military vessels

**marine –**

soldier trained for land and sea  
combat

**constables –**

police officers of the lowest  
rank

“I am too high born to be propertied,  
To be a second at control,  
Or useful serving-man and instrument  
To any sovereign state throughout the world.”

He who gives himself entirely to his fellow men appears to them useless and selfish; but he who gives himself partially to them is pronounced a benefactor and **philanthropist**.

How does it become a man to behave toward the American government today? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as my government which is the slave’s government also.

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. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case, they think, in the Revolution of ‘75. If one were to tell me that this was a bad government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make **ado** about it, for I can do without them. All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counter-balance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is that fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

**Paley**, a common authority with many on moral questions, in his chapter on the “Duty of Submission to Civil Government,” resolves all civil obligation into expediency; and he proceeds to say that “so long as the interest of the whole society requires it, that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconvenience, it is the will of God. . . that the established government be obeyed – and no longer. This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other.” Of this, he says, every man shall judge for himself. But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply, in which a people, as well as an individual, must do justice, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This, according to Paley, would be inconvenient. But he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it. This people must **cease** to hold slaves, and to make war on Mexico, though it cost them their existence as a people.

**philanthropist** –

rich person who gives a lot of money to help poor people

**ado** –

difficulty, trouble

**William Paley (1743-1805)** –

English theologian

**cease** –

to stop doing something or stop happening

In their practice, nations agree with Paley; but does anyone think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

“A **drab** of stat, a cloth-o'-silver **slut**,

To have her train borne up, and her soul trail in the dirt.”

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, cost what it may. I quarrel not with far-off foes, but with those who, near at home, co-operate with, and do the bidding of, those far away, and without whom the latter would be harmless. We are accustomed to say, that the mass of men are unprepared; but improvement is slow, because the few are not as materially wise or better than the many. It is not so important that many should be good as you, as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who are in opinion opposed to slavery and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who, esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free trade, and quietly read the prices-current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. What is the price-current of an honest man and patriot today? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give up only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and Godspeed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it.

All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, **perchance**, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. There is but little virtue in the action of masses of men. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. They will then be the only slaves. Only his vote can **hasten** the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote.

I hear of a convention to be held at Baltimore, or elsewhere, for the selection of a candidate for the Presidency, made up chiefly of editors, and men who are politicians by profession; but I think, what is it to any independent, intelligent, and respectable man what decision they may come to? Shall we not have the advantage of this wisdom and honesty, nevertheless? Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there not many individuals in the country who do not attend conventions? But no: I find that the respectable man, so called, has immediately drifted from his position, and despairs of his country, when his country has more reasons to despair of him. He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the only available one, thus proving that

**drab –**

not bright in colour or not interesting

**slut –**

an offensive word for a woman who has had many sexual partners

**perchance –**

perhaps, by chance

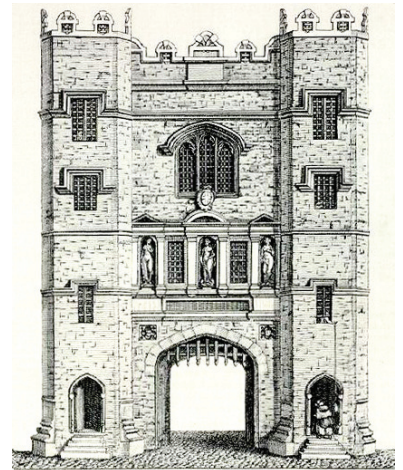
**hasten –**

to make something happen faster or sooner

he is himself available for any purposes of the **demagogue**. His vote is of no more worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling native, who may have been bought. O for a man who is a man, and, and my neighbor says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the population has been returned too large. How many men are there to a square thousand miles in the country? Hardly one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle here? The American has **dwindled** into an Odd Fellow – one who may be known by the development of his organ of gregariousness, and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self-reliance; whose first and chief concern, on coming into the world, is to see that the almshouses are in good repair; and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb, to collect a fund to the support of the widows and orphans that may be; who, in short, ventures to live only by the aid of the Mutual Insurance company, which has promised to bury him decently.

It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even to most enormous, wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support. If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations, I must first see, at least, that I do not pursue them sitting upon another man's shoulders. I must get off him first, that he may pursue his contemplations too. See what gross inconsistency is tolerated. I have heard some of my townsmen say, "I should like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrection of the slaves, or to march to Mexico – see if I would go"; and yet these very men have each, directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly, at least, by their money, furnished a substitute. The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in an unjust war by those who do not refuse to sustain the unjust government which makes the war; is applauded by those whose own act and authority he disregards and sets at naught; as if the state were penitent to that degree that it hired one to **scourge** it while it sinned, but not to that degree that it left off sinning for a moment. Thus, under the name of Order and Civil Government, we are all made at last to pay homage to and support our own meanness. After the first **blush** of sin comes its indifference; and from immoral it becomes, as it were, unmoral, and not quite unnecessary to that life which we have made.

The broadest and most prevalent error requires the most disinterested virtue to sustain it. The slight reproach to which the virtue of patriotism is commonly liable, the noble are most likely to **incur**. Those who, while they disapprove of the character and measures of a government, yield to it their allegiance and support are undoubtedly its most conscientious supporters, and so frequently the most serious obstacles to reform. Some are petitioning the State to dissolve the Union, to disregard the requisitions of the President. Why do they not dissolve it themselves – the union between themselves and the State – and refuse to pay their quota into its treasury? Do not they stand in the same relation to the State that the State does to the Union? And



OLD NEWGATE PRISON, WHICH WAS REPLACED IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

**demagogue –**

someone who gives political speeches that try to persuade people by using emotional language rather than reason

**dwindle –**

to gradually become less and less or smaller and smaller

**scourge –**

something that causes a lot of harm or suffering

**blush –**

to become red in the face, usually because you are embarrassed

**incur –**

to put yourself in an unpleasant situation by your own actions, so that you lose something, get punished, etc.



have not the same reasons prevented the State from resisting the Union which have prevented them from resisting the State?

How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy it? Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved? If you are cheated out of a single dollar by your neighbor, you do not rest satisfied with knowing you are cheated, or with saying that you are cheated, or even with petitioning him to pay you your due; but you take effectual steps at once to obtain the full amount, and see to it that you are never cheated again. Action from principle, the perception and the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divided States and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the individual, separating the **diabolical** in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to **amend** them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we **transgress** them at once? Men, generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to put out its faults, and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ and excommunicate **Copernicus** and **Luther**, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by its government; else, why has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and proportionate, penalty? If a man who has no property refuses but once to earn nine shillings for the State, he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know, and determined only by the discretion of those who put him there; but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the State, he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go: perchance it will wear smooth – certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a **pulley**, or a rope, or a **crank**, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, and then I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter-friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways the State has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do everything, it is not necessary that he should be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and **unconcilliatory**; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

**diabolical –**

evil or cruel

**amend –**

to make small changes or improvements to a law or document

**transgress –**

to do something that is against the rules of social behaviour or against a moral principle

**Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543) –**

astronomer whose heliocentric model of the universe, with the sun at the center was condemned as a dangerous heresy

**Martin Luther (1483-1546) –**

initiator of the protestant reformation whose 95 theses strongly disputed claims that freedom from God's punishment of sin could be purchased with money. He was subsequently excommunicated from the church and condemned as an outlaw

**pulley –**

a piece of equipment consisting of a wheel over which a rope or chain is pulled to lift heavy things

**crank –**

a piece of equipment with a handle that you can turn in order to move something

**unconcilliatory –**

not doing something that is intended to make someone stop arguing with you



I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts, and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.

I meet this American government, or its representative, the State government, directly, and face to face, once a year – no more – in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, ‘Recognize me’; and the simplest, the most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensable mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then. My civil neighbor, the tax-gatherer, is the very man I have to deal with – for it is, after all, with men and not with parchment that I quarrel – and he has voluntarily chosen to be an agent of the government. How shall he ever know well that he is and does as an officer of the government, or as a man, until he is obliged to consider whether he will treat me, his neighbor, for whom he has respect, as a neighbor and well-disposed man, or as a **maniac** and disturber of the peace, and see if he can get over this obstruction to his neighbor lines without a ruder and more impetuous thought or speech corresponding with his action. I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name – if ten honest men only – ay, if one HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts, ceasing to hold slaves, were actually to withdraw from this co-partnership, and be locked up in the county jail there for, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever. But we love better to talk about it: that we say is our mission. Reform keeps many scores of newspapers in its service, but not one man. If my esteemed neighbor, the State’s ambassador, who will devote his days to the settlement of the question of human rights in the Council Chamber, instead of being threatened with the prisons of Carolina, were to sit down the prisoner of Massachusetts, that State which is so anxious to **foist** the sin of slavery upon her sister – though at present she can discover only an act of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her – the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject of the following winter.

Under a government which imprisons unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place today, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less despondent spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them; on that separate but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not with

**maniac –**

someone who behaves in a stupid or dangerous way

**foist –**

to force someone to accept or have to deal with something that they do not want



her, but against her – the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a **strip** of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it **clogs** by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. 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, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, “But what shall I do?” my answer is, “If you really wish to do anything, resign your office.” When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned from office, then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood is shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man’s real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender, rather than the seizure of his goods – though both will serve the same purpose – because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property. To such the State renders comparatively small service, and a slight tax is wont to appear exorbitant, particularly if they are obliged to earn it by special labor with their hands. If there were one who lived wholly without the use of money, the State itself would hesitate to demand it of him. But the rich man – not to make any **invidious** comparison – is always sold to the institution which makes him rich. Absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue; for money comes between a man and his objects, and obtains them for him; it was certainly no great virtue to obtain it. It puts to rest many questions which he would otherwise be taxed to answer; while the only new question which it puts is the hard but superfluous one, how to spend it. Thus his moral ground is taken from under his feet. The opportunities of living are diminished in proportion as that are called the “means” are increased. The best thing a man can do for his culture when he is rich is to endeavor to carry out those schemes which he entertained when he was poor. Christ answered the **Herodians** according to their condition. “Show me the tribute-money,” said he – and one took a penny out of his pocket – if you use money which has the image of Caesar on it, and which he has made current and valuable, that is, if you are men of the State, and gladly enjoy the advantages of Caesar’s government, then pay him back some of his own when he demands it. “Render therefore to Caesar that which is Caesar’s and to God those things which are God’s” – leaving them no wiser than before as to which was which; for they did not wish to know.

When I converse with the freest of my neighbors, I perceive that, whatever they may say about the magnitude and seriousness of the question, and their regard for the public tranquility, the long and the short of the matter is, that they cannot spare the protection of the existing government, and they dread the consequences to their property and families of disobedience to it. For my own part, I should not like to think that I ever rely on the protection of the State. But, if I deny the

**strip** –  
a long narrow piece of paper,  
cloth, etc.

**clog** –  
to make an obstacle or  
hindrance

**invidious** –  
unpleasant, especially because  
it is likely to offend people or  
make you unpopular

**Herodians** –  
supporters of the Herodian  
Dynasty of Roman Iudaea  
Province

authority of the State when it presents its tax bill, it will soon take and waste all my property, and so **harass** me and my children without end. This is hard. This makes it impossible for a man to live honestly, and at the same time comfortably, in outward respects. It will not be worth the while to accumulate property; that would be sure to go again. You must hire or **squat** somewhere, and raise but a small crop, and eat that soon. You must live within yourself, and depend upon yourself always **tucked up** and ready for a start, and not have many affairs. A man may grow rich in Turkey even, if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government. **Confucius** said: "If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honors are subjects of shame." No: until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant Southern port, where my liberty is endangered, or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise, I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts, and her right to my property and life. It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey. I should feel as if I were worth less in that case.

Some years ago, the State met me in behalf of the Church, and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended, but never I myself. "Pay," it said, "or be locked up in the jail." I declined to pay. But, unfortunately, another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest, and not the priest the schoolmaster; for I was not the State's schoolmaster, but I supported myself by voluntary subscription. I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax bill, and have the State to back its demand, as well as the Church. However, at the request of the selectmen, I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing: "Know all men by these presents, that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as a member of any society which I have not joined." This I gave to the town clerk; and he has it. The State, having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church, has never made a like demand on me since; though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time. If I had known how to name them, I should then have signed off in detail from all the societies which I never signed on to; but I did not know where to find such a complete list.

I have paid no poll tax for six years. I was put into a jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated my as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was

**harass –**

to treat someone unfairly by threatening them or being continuously unpleasant to them

**squat –**

to live in a building or on a piece of land without permission and without paying rent

**tucked up –**

to be lying or sitting in bed

**Confucius (551-479 BCE) –**

famous Chinese thinker and social philosopher

a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and **mortar**. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are **underbred**. In every threat and in every compliment there was a **blunder**; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and they were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

Thus the state never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see who is the strongest. What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of men being forced to live this way or that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in **haste** to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do: I cannot help that. It must help itself; do as I do. It is not worth the while to **snivel** about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer. I perceive that, when an **acorn** and a **chestnut** fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other. If a plant cannot live according to nature, it dies; and so a man.

The night in prison was novel and interesting enough. The prisoners in their shirtsleeves were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said, "Come, boys, it is time to lock up"; and so they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments. My room-mate was introduced to me by the jailer as "a first-rate fellow and clever man." When the door was locked, he showed me where to hang my hat, and how he managed matters there. The rooms were whitewashed once a month; and this one, at least, was the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably **neatest** apartment in town. He naturally wanted to know where I came from, and what brought me there; and, when I had told him, I asked him in my turn how he came there, presuming him to be an honest man, of course; and as the world goes, I believe he was. "Why," said he, "they accuse me of burning a barn; but I never did it." As near as I could discover, he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there; and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man, had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on, and would have to wait as much longer; but he was quite domesticated and contented, since he got his board for nothing, and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window, and I the other; and I saw that if one stayed there long, his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there, and examined where former prisoners had broken out, and where

**mortar** –  
a mixture of lime, sand and water, used in building or joining bricks or stones together

**underbred** –  
of mixed blood

**blunder** –  
a careless or stupid mistake

**haste** –  
quickly or in a hurry

**snivel** –  
to behave or speak in a weak complaining way, especially when you are crying

**acorn** –  
the nut of the oak tree

**chestnut** –  
a smooth, edible, red-brown nut from a large tree

**neatest** –  
very tidy and pleasant

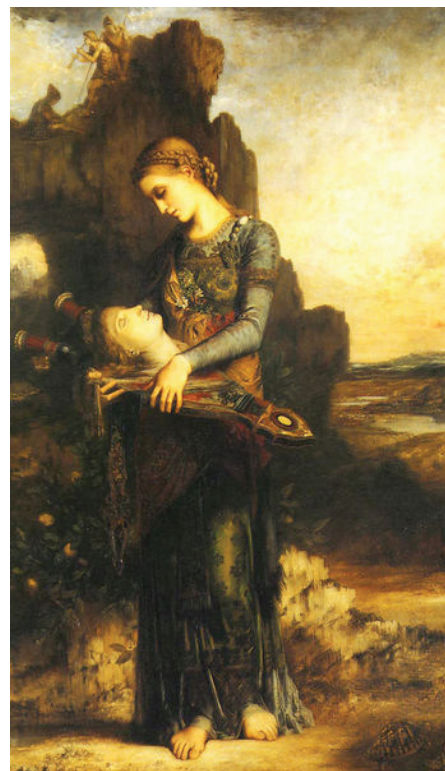
a grate had been sawed off, and heard the history of the various occupants of that room; for I found that even there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed, which are afterward printed in a circular form, but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape, who **avenged** themselves by singing them.

I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as I could, for fear I should never see him again; but at length he showed me which was my bed, and left me to blow out the lamp.

It was like traveling into a far country, such as I had never expected to behold, to lie there for one night. It seemed to me that I never had heard the town clock strike before, not the evening sounds of the village; for we slept with the windows open, which were inside the grating. It was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages, and our **Concord** was turned into a **Rhine** stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets. I was an involuntary spectator and auditor of whatever was done and said in the kitchen of the adjacent village inn – a wholly new and rare experience to me. It was a closer view of my native town. I was fairly inside of it. I never had seen its institutions before. This is one of its peculiar institutions; for it is a shire town. I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about.

In the morning, our breakfasts were put through the hole in the door, in small oblong-square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint of chocolate, with brown bread, and an iron spoon. When they called for the vessels again, I was green enough to return what bread I had left, but my comrade seized it, and said that I should lie that up for lunch or dinner. Soon after he was let out to work at haying in a neighboring field, whither he went every day, and would not be back till noon; so he bade me good day, saying that he doubted if he should see me again.

When I came out of prison – for some one interfered, and paid that tax – I did not perceive that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a gray-headed man; and yet a change had to my eyes come over the scene – the town, and State, and country, greater than any that mere time could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends; that their friendship was for summer weather only; that they did not greatly propose to do right; that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran no risks, not even to their property; that after all they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls. This may be to judge my neighbors harshly; for I believe that many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village.



**avenge –**

to do something to hurt or punish someone because they have harmed or offended you

**Concord –**

small river in the town of Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts

**Rhine –**

one of the longest and most important rivers in Europe



It was formerly the custom in our village, when a poor debtor came out of jail, for his acquaintances to salute him, looking through their fingers, which were crossed to represent the jail window, "How do ye do?" My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first looked at me, and then at one another, as if I had returned from a long journey. I was put into jail as I was going to the shoemaker's to get a shoe which was **mended**. When I was let out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my **errand**, and, having put on my mended shoe, joined a **huckleberry** party, who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct; and in half an hour – for the horse was soon tackled – was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then the State was nowhere to be seen.

This is the whole history of "My Prisons."

I have never declined paying the highway tax, because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject; and as for supporting schools, I am doing my part to educate my fellow countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand **aloof** from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man a musket to shoot one with – the dollar is innocent – but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make use and get what advantages of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me, from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to jail, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This then is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his actions be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

I think sometimes, why, this people mean well, they are only ignorant; they would do better if they knew how: why give your neighbors this pain to treat you as they are not inclined to? But I think again, this is no reason why I should do as they do, or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind. Again, I sometimes say to myself, When many millions of men, without heat, without ill will, without personal feelings of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only, without the possibility, such is their constitution, of retracting or altering their present demand, and without the possibility, on your side, of appeal to any other millions, why expose yourself to this overwhelming brute force? You do not resist cold and hunger, the winds and the waves, thus obstinately; you quietly submit to a thousand similar necessities. You do not put your head into the fire. But just in proportion as I regard this as not wholly a brute force, but partly a human force, and consider that I have relations to those millions as to so many millions of men, and not of mere brute or inanimate things, I see that appeal is possible, first and instantaneously, from them to the Maker of them, and, secondly, from them to themselves. But if I put my head deliberately into the fire, there is no appeal to fire or to the Maker for fire, and I have only myself to blame. If I could convince myself that I have any right to be satisfied with men as they are, and to treat them accordingly, and not according, in some respects, to my requisitions and expectations of what they and I ought to be, then, like a good Mussulman and **fatalist**, I

**mended** –  
a thing which was repaired

**errand** –  
a short journey in order to do  
something for someone

**huckleberry** –  
a small dark-blue North  
American fruit that grows on  
a bush

**aloof** –  
distant physically or  
emotionally; reserved and  
remote

**fatalist** –  
someone who believes that  
there is nothing he can do  
prevent things from happening



should endeavor to be satisfied with things as they are, and say it is the will of God. And, above all, there is this difference between resisting this and a purely brute or natural force, that I can resist this with some effect; but I cannot expect, like **Orpheus**, to change the nature of the rocks and trees and beasts.

I do not wish to quarrel with any man or nation. I do not wish to split hairs, to make fine distinctions, or set myself up as better than my neighbors. I seek rather, I may say, even an excuse for conforming to the laws of the land. I am but too ready to conform to them. Indeed, I have reason to suspect myself on this head; and each year, as the tax-gatherer comes round, I find myself disposed to review the acts and position of the general and State governments, and the spirit of the people to discover a pretext for conformity.

“We must affect our country as our parents,  
And if at any time we alienate  
Out love or industry from doing it honor,  
We must respect effects and teach the soul Matter of conscience and religion,  
And not desire of rule or benefit.”

I believe that the State will soon be able to take all my work of this sort out of my hands, and then I shall be no better a patriot than my fellow-countrymen. Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and this American government are, in many respects, very admirable, and rare things, to be thankful for, such as a great many have described them; seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all?

However, the government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I live under a government, even in this world. If a man is thought-free, fancy-free, imagination-free, that which is not never for a long time appearing to be to him, unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.

I know that most men think differently from myself; but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects content me as little as any. Statesmen and legislators, standing so completely within the institution, never distinctly and nakedly behold it. They speak of moving society, but have no resting-place without it. They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination, and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems, for which we sincerely thank them; but all their wit and usefulness lie within certain not very wide limits. They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expediency. Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it. His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government; but for thinkers, and those who legislate for all time, he never once glances at the subject. I know of those whose **serene** and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his

**Orpheus** –  
legendary Thracian poet and  
musician whose music had the  
power to move even inanimate  
objects

**serene** –  
very calm and relaxed

mind's range and hospitality. Yet, compared with the cheap professions of most reformers, and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general, his are almost the only sensible and valuable words, and we thank Heaven for him. Comparatively, he is always strong, original, and, above all, practical. Still, his quality is not wisdom, but prudence. The lawyer's truth is not Truth, but consistency or a consistent expediency. Truth is always in harmony with herself, and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing. He well deserves to be called, as he has been called, the Defender of the Constitution. There are really no blows to be given him but defensive ones. He is not a leader, but a follower. His leaders are the men of '87. "I have never made an effort," he says, "and never propose to make an effort; I have never countenanced an effort, and never mean to countenance an effort, to disturb the arrangement as originally made, by which various States came into the Union." Still thinking of the sanction which the Constitution gives to slavery, he says, "Because it was part of the original compact – let it stand." Notwithstanding his special acuteness and ability, he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations, and behold it as it lies absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect – what, for instance, it behooves a man to do here in America today with regard to slavery – but ventures, or is driven, to make some such desperate answer to the following, while professing to speak absolutely, and as a private man – from which what new and singular code of social duties might be inferred? "The manner," says he, "in which the governments of the States where slavery exists are to regulate it is for their own consideration, under the responsibility to their constituents, to the general laws of propriety, humanity, and justice, and to God. Associations formed elsewhere, springing from a feeling of humanity, or any other cause, have nothing whatever to do with it. They have never received any encouragement from me and they never will.

They who know of 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 humanity; 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 fountainhead.

No man with a genius for legislation has appeared in America. They are rare in the history of the world. There are orators, politicians, and eloquent men, by the thousand; but the speaker has not yet opened his mouth to speak who is capable of settling the much-vexed questions of the day. We love eloquence for its own sake, and not for any truth which it may utter, or any heroism it may inspire. Our legislators have not yet learned the comparative value of free trade and of freedom, of union, and of rectitude, to a nation. They have no genius or talent for comparatively humble questions of taxation and finance, commerce and manufactures and agriculture. If we were left solely to the wordy wit of legislators in Congress for our guidance, uncorrected by the seasonable experience and the effectual complaints of the people, America would not long retain her rank among the nations. For eighteen hundred years, though perchance I have no right to say it, the New Testament has been written; yet where is the legislator who has wisdom and practical talent enough to avail himself of the light which it sheds on the science of legislation.

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to – for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do so well – is still an impure one: to be strictly



AN AFRICAN AMERICAN DRINKS OUT OF A SEGREGATED WATER COOLER DESIGNATED FOR "COLORED" PATRONS IN 1939 AT A STREETCAR TERMINAL IN OKLAHOMA CITY

just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow men. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which I have also imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

**SOURCE:** Typed by: Sameer Parekh (zane@ddswl.MCS.COM) 1-12-91

<http://www.cs.indiana.edu/statecraft/civ.dis.html>

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Thoreau says that “Government is at best but an expedient.” Why is he so critical of government?
2. Why is it necessary to have union between people and the State?
3. Why is it essential for everyone to obey the constitution?
4. Why does the abuse of power by authorities bring chaos?
5. What will happen to a government where the constitution is held in low esteem?
6. Why does Thoreau think that “the people who believe they need a government are willing to accept an imperfect one”?

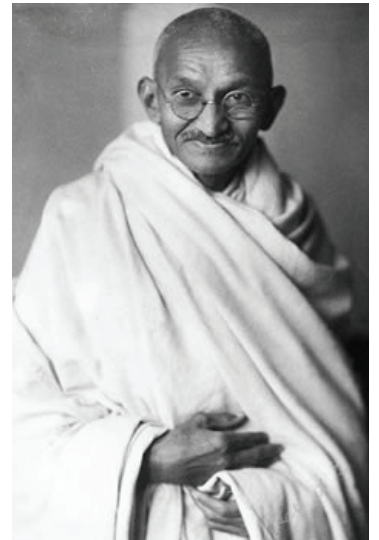
**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- Essay by Henry David Thoreau, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil\\_Disobedience\\_\(Thoreau\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Disobedience_(Thoreau))
- Henry David Thoreau, Resistance to Civil Government, [www.vcu.edu/engweb/transweb/civil/](http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transweb/civil/)
- Guide to Resource, [www.geocities.com/~freereligion/1thorea.html](http://www.geocities.com/~freereligion/1thorea.html)
- Biography and Works, Henry David Thoreau, [www.online-literature.com/thoreau/](http://www.online-literature.com/thoreau/)

## TEXT

### MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI: INDIAN HOME RULE

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) was a political and spiritual leader of India; hence the title **Mahatma** (Great Soul). Indians consider him the father of their nation. As a political leader, Gandhi led the movement for Indian Independence by non-violence means and achieved it in 1947. He was a lawyer by training and worked for equal rights in South Africa and India. His major publications include *The Gospel of Selfless Action, or, The Gita According to Gandhi* (1946), *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (1929) and *The Moral Basis for Vegetarianism*. Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948.



## CIVILIZATION

### Chapter VI

*READER:* . . . Now will you tell me something of what you have read and thought of this civilization?

*EDITOR:* Let us first consider what state of things is described by the word “civilization.” Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. We will take some examples. The people of Europe today live in better-built houses than they did a hundred years ago. This is considered an emblem of civilization, and this is also a matter to promote bodily happiness. Formerly, they wore skins, and used spears as their weapons. Now, they wear long trousers, and, for embellishing their bodies, they wear a variety of clothing and, instead of spears, they carry with them revolvers containing five or more chambers. If people of a certain country, who have hitherto not been in the habit of wearing much clothing, boots, etc., adopt European clothing, they are supposed to have become civilized out of savagery. Formerly, in Europe, people ploughed their lands mainly by manual labor. Now, one man can plough a vast tract by means of steam engines and can thus **amass** great wealth. This is called a sign of civilization. Formerly, only a few men wrote valuable books. Now, anybody writes and prints anything he likes and poisons people’s minds. Formerly, men traveled in wagons. Now, they fly through the air in planes at the rate of four hundred and more miles per day. This is considered the height of civilization. It has been stated that, as men progress, they shall be able to travel in airships and reach any part of the world in a few hours. Men will not need the use of their hands and feet. They will press a button, and they will have their clothing by their side. They will press another button, and they will have their newspaper. A third, and a motor-car will be in waiting for them. They will have a variety of delicately dished-up food. Everything will

**amass** –  
to gather for oneself, as profit

be done by machinery. Formerly, when people wanted to fight with one another, they measured between them their bodily strength; now it is possible to take away thousands of lives by one man working behind a gun from a hill. This is civilization. Formerly, men worked in the open air only as much as they liked. Now thousands of workmen meet together and for the sake of maintenance work in factories or mines. Their condition is worse than that of beasts. They are obliged to work, at the risk of their lives, at most dangerous occupations, for the sake of millionaires. Formerly, men were made slaves under physical compulsion. Now they are enslaved by the temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy. There are now diseases of which people never dreamt before, and an army of doctors is engaged in finding out their cures, and so hospitals have increased. This is a test of civilization. Formerly, special messengers were required and much expense was incurred in order to send letters; today, anyone can abuse his fellow by means of a letter for one penny. True, at the same cost, one can send one's thanks also. Formerly, people had two or three meals consisting of home-made bread and vegetables; now, they require something to eat every two hours so that they have hardly leisure for anything else. What more need I say? All this you can ascertain from several authoritative books. These are all true tests of civilization. And if anyone speaks to the contrary, know that he is ignorant. This civilization takes note neither of morality nor of religion. Its **votaries** calmly state that their business is not to teach religion. Some even consider it to be a superstitious growth. Others put on the cloak of religion, and **prate** about morality. Even a child can understand that in all I have described above there can be no inducement to morality. Civilization seeks to increase bodily comforts, and it fails miserably even in doing so.

This civilization is irreligion, and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half mad. They lack real physical strength or courage. They keep up their energy by intoxication. They can hardly be happy in solitude. Women, who should be the queens of households, wander in the streets or they slave away in factories. For the sake of a pittance, half a million women in England alone are laboring under trying circumstances in factories or similar institutions. This awful fact is one of the causes of the daily growing **suffragette** movement.

This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed. According to the teaching of Mahomed this would be considered a Satanic Civilization. Hinduism calls it the Black Age. I cannot give you an adequate conception of it. It is eating into the vitals of the English nation. It must be **shunned**. Parliaments are really emblems of slavery. If you will sufficiently think over this, you will entertain the same opinion and cease to blame the English. They rather deserve our sympathy. They are a **shrewd** nation and I therefore believe that they will cast off the evil. They are enterprising and industrious, and their mode of thought is not inherently immoral. Neither are they bad at heart. I therefore respect them. Civilization is not an incurable disease, but it should never be forgotten that the English people are at present **afflicted** by it.

- votaries** –  
person dedicated to the  
service of a god or cult
- prate** –  
to talk in a meaningless, boring  
way about something
- suffragette** –  
woman seeking suffrage by  
organized protest
- shunned** –  
to avoid deliberately; keep  
away from
- shrewd** –  
good at judging what people or  
situations are really like
- afflicted** –  
to inflict grievous physical or  
mental suffering on

## WHAT IS TRUE CIVILIZATION?

### CHAPTER XIII

**READER:** You have denounced railways, lawyers and doctors. I can see that you will discard all machinery. What, then, is civilization?

**EDITOR:** The answer to that question is not difficult. I believe that the civilization





AMRITSAR MASSACRE. 1919.

India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors. Rome went, Greece shared the same fate; the might of the Pharaohs was broken; Japan has become westernized; of China nothing can be said; but India is still, somehow or other, sound at the foundation. The people of Europe learn their lessons from the writings of the men of Greece or Rome, which exist no longer in their former glory. In trying to learn from them, the Europeans imagine that they will avoid the mistakes of Greece and Rome. Such is their pitiable condition. In the midst of all this India remains immovable and that is her glory. It is a charge against India that her people are so uncivilized, ignorant and **stolid**, that it is not possible to induce them to adopt any changes. It is a charge really against our merit. What we have tested and found true on the anvil of experience, we dare not change. Many thrust their advice upon India, and she remains steady. This is her beauty: it is the sheet-anchor of our hope.

Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization means “good conduct.”

If this definition be correct, then India, as so many writers have shown, has nothing to learn from anybody else, and this is as it should be. We notice that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions the more unbridled they become.

**stolid** –

having or revealing little emotion or sensibility; impassive

Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich, or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Observing all this, our ancestors **dissuaded** us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life-**corroding** competition. Each followed his own occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our **moral fibre**. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet. They further reasoned that large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them and that poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were, therefore, satisfied with small villages. They saw that kings and their swords were inferior to the sword of ethics, and they, therefore, held the sovereigns of the earth to be inferior to the **Rishis** and the **Fakirs**. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than to learn from others. This nation had courts, lawyers and doctors, but they were all within bounds. Everybody knew that these professions were not particularly superior; moreover, these vakils and vairs did not rob people; they were considered people's dependents, not their masters. Justice was tolerably fair. The ordinary rule was to avoid courts. There were no touts to lure people into them. This evil, too, was noticeable only in and around capitals. The common people lived independently and followed their agricultural occupation. They enjoyed true Home Rule. . . .

**dissuaded –**

deter; discourage

**corrode –**

slowly destroy by the effect of something else

**moral fibre –**

good character traits

**Rishis –**

divinely-inspired poet or sage in India, sometimes regarded as a saint

**Fakirs –**

initiate in a mendicant Sufi order. The word derives from the Arab word for poverty

**Niyoga –**

when the husband is dead, some relatives would designate someone to make the wife pregnant

**purging –**

to make free from; to get rid of

**votary –**

someone who regularly practices a particular religion

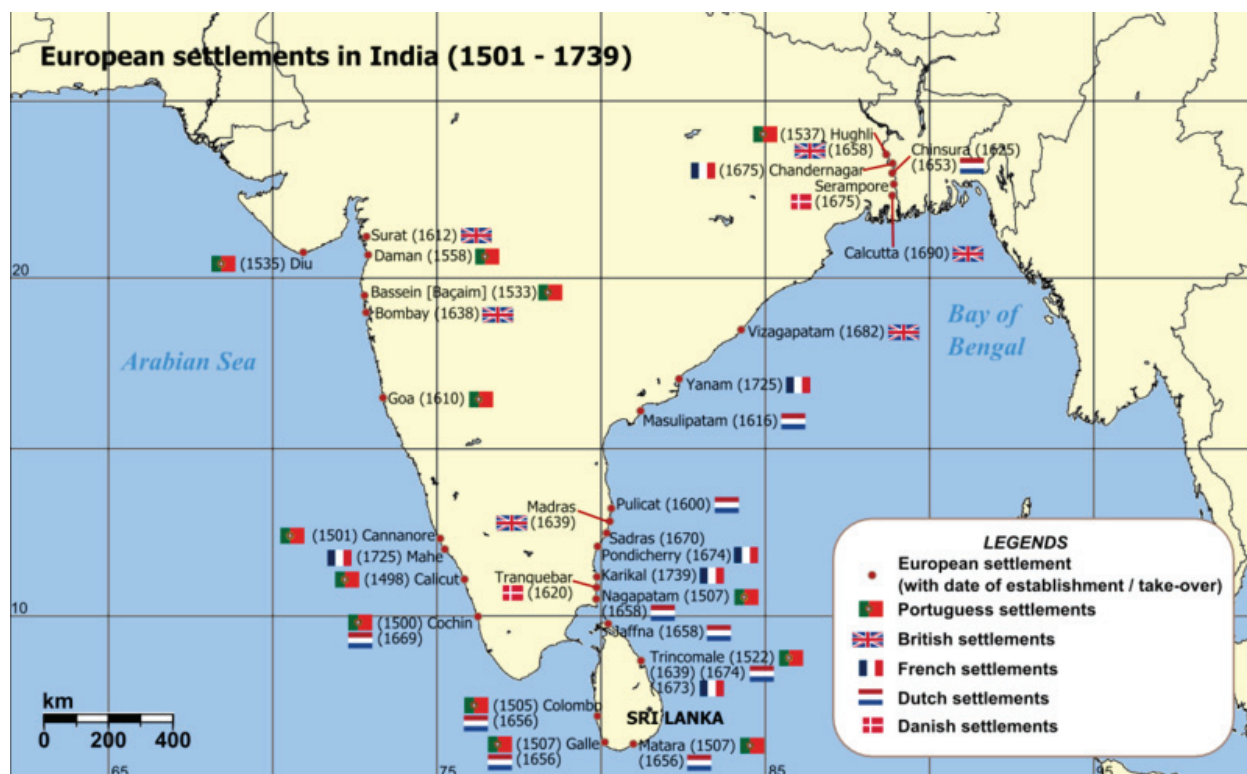
**cling –**

to remain emotionally attached; hold on

Now you see what I consider to be real civilization. Those who want to change conditions such as I have described are enemies of the country and are sinners.

*READER:* It would be all right if India were exactly as you have described it, but it is also India where there are hundreds of child widows, where two year old babies are married, where twelve year old girls are mothers and house wives, where women practice polyandry, where the practice of **Niyoga** occurs, where, in the name of religion, girls dedicate themselves to prostitution, and in the name of religion, sheep and goats are killed. Do you consider these also symbols of the civilization that you have described?

*EDITOR:* You make a mistake. The defects that you have shown are defects. Nobody mistakes them for ancient civilization. They remain in spite of it. Attempts have always been made and will be made to remove them. We may utilize the new spirit that is born in us for **purging** ourselves of these evils. But what I have described to you as emblems of modern civilization are accepted as such by its **votaries**. The Indian civilization, as described by me, has been so described by its votaries. In no part of the world, and under no civilization, have all men attained perfection. The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilization is to propagate immorality. The latter is godless, the former is based on a belief in God. So understanding and so believing, it behooves every lover of India to **cling** to the old Indian civilization even as a child clings to the mother's breast.



MAP OF INDIA WITH SRI LANKA, ILLUSTRATING LOCATIONS OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE SUBCONTINENT BETWEEN 1501 AND 1739

## PASSIVE RESISTANCE CHAPTER XVII

**READER:** Is there any historical evidence as to the success of what you have called soul-force or truth-force? No instance seems to have happened of any nation having risen through soul-force. I still think that the evil-doers will not cease doing evil without physical punishment.

**EDITOR:** The poet **Tulsidas** has said: "Of religion, pity, or love, is the root, as egoism of the body. Therefore, we should not abandon pity so long as we are alive." This appears to me to be a scientific truth. I believe in it as much as I believe in two and two being four. The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that force. But you ask for historical evidence. It is, therefore, necessary to know what history means. The Gujarati equivalent means; "It so happened." If that is the meaning of history, it is possible to give copious evidence. But, if it means the doings of kings and emperors, there can be no evidence of soul-force or passive resistance in such history. You cannot expect silver ore in a tin mine. History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world, and so there is a proverb among Englishmen that a nation which has no history, that is, no wars, is a happy nation. How kings

**Tulsidas** –  
(1543? - 1623) Indian sacred poet who wrote the Ramcharitmanas ("Sacred Lake of the Acts of Rama")

played, how they became enemies of one another, how they murdered one another, are found accurately recorded in history, and if this were all that had happened in the world, it would have been ended long ago. If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today. Those people who have been warred against have disappeared as, for instance, the natives of Australia of whom hardly a man was left alive by the **intruders**. Mark, please, that these natives did not require much foresight to know that the Australians will share the same fate as their victims. "Those that take the sword shall perish by the sword." With us the proverb is that professional swimmers will find a watery grave.

The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the ever-working of the force of love or of the soul. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying **dormant** in him; the two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason, take up arms or go to law – which is another form of the exhibition of brute force – their doings would be immediately noticed in the press, they would be the talk of their neighbors and would probably go down to history. And what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families and another for nations. History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history.

*READER:* According to what you say, it is plain that instances of this kind of passive resistance are not to be found in history. It is necessary to understand this passive resistance more fully. It will be better, therefore, if you enlarge upon it.

*EDITOR:* Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance, the Government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If by using violence I force the Government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed body-force. If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that a particular thing is wrong because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is therefore meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force.

*READER:* You would then disregard laws – this is rank disloyalty. We have always been considered a law-abiding nation. You seem to be going even beyond the extremists. They say that we must obey the laws that have been passed, but that if the laws be bad, we must drive out the law-givers even by force.

**intruders –**  
someone who illegally enters  
a building or area, usually in  
order to steal something

**dormant –**  
lying asleep; inactive



*EDITOR:* Whether I go beyond them or whether I do not is a matter of no consequence to either of us. We simply want to find out what is right and to act accordingly. The real meaning of the statement that we are a law-abiding nation is that we are passive resisters. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers but we suffer and do not submit to the laws. That we should obey laws whether good or bad is a new-fangled notion. There was no such thing in former days. The people disregarded those laws they did not like and suffered the penalties for their breach. It is contrary to our manhood if we obey laws repugnant to our conscience. Such teaching is opposed to religion and means slavery. If the Government were to ask us to go about without any clothing, should we do so? If I were a passive resister, I would say to them that I would have nothing to do with their law. But we have so forgotten ourselves and become so compliant that we do not mind any degrading law.

A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. Man-made laws are not necessarily binding on him. Even the Government does not expect any such thing from us. They do not say: "You must do such and such a thing," but they say: "If you do not do it, we will punish you." We are sunk so low that we fancy that it is our duty and our religion to do what the law lays down. If man will only realize that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.

It is a superstition and ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.

To use brute-force, to use gunpowder, is contrary to passive resistance, for it means that we want our opponent to do by force that which we desire but he does not. And if such a use of force is justifiable, surely he is entitled to do likewise by us. And so we should never come to an agreement. We may simply fancy, like the blind horse moving in a circle round a mill, that we are making progress. Those who believe that they are not bound to obey laws which are repugnant to their conscience have only the remedy of passive resistance open to them. Any other must lead to disaster.

*READER:* From what you say I deduce that passive resistance is a splendid weapon of the weak, but that when they are strong they may take up arms.

*EDITOR:* This is a gross ignorance. Passive resistance, that is, soul-force, is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. How, then, can it be considered only a weapon of the weak? Physical-force men are strangers to the courage that is requisite in a passive resister. Do you believe that a coward can ever disobey a law that he dislikes? Extremists are considered to be advocates of brute force. Why do they, then, talk about obeying laws? I do not blame them. They can say nothing else. When they succeed in

driving out the English and they themselves become governors, they will want you and me to obey their laws. And that is a fitting thing for their constitution. But a passive resister will say he will not obey a law that is against his conscience, even though he may be blown to pieces at the mouth of cannon.

What do you think? Wherein is courage required – in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon, or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and be blown to pieces? Who is the true warrior – he who keeps death always as a bosom-friend, or he who controls the death of others? Believe me that a man **devoid** of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.

This, however, I will admit: that even a man weak in body is capable of offering this resistance. One man can offer it just as well as millions. Both men and women can indulge in it. It does not require the training of an army; it needs no **jiu-jitsu**. Control over the mind is alone necessary, and when that is attained, man is free like the king of the forest and his very glance **withers** the enemy.

Passive resistance is an all-sided sword, it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood it produces far-reaching results. It never **rusts** and cannot be stolen. Competition between passive resisters does not exhaust. The sword of passive resistance does not require a **scabbard**. It is strange indeed that you should consider such a weapon to be a weapon merely of the weak. . . .

READER: From what you say, then, it would appear that it is not a small thing to become a passive resister, and, if that is so, I should like you to explain how a man may become one.

EDITOR: To become a passive resister is easy enough but it is also equally difficult. I have known a **lad** of fourteen years become a passive resister; I have known also sick people do likewise; and I have also known physically strong and otherwise happy people unable to take up passive resistance. After a great deal of experience it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness.

Chastity is one of the greatest disciplines without which the mind cannot attain requisite firmness. A man who is unchaste loses **stamina**, becomes emasculated and cowardly. He whose mind is given over to animal passions is not capable of any great effort. . . .

Just as there is necessity for chastity, so is there for poverty. Pecuniary ambition and passive resistance cannot go well together. Those who have money are not expected to throw it away, but they are expected to be indifferent about it. They must be prepared to lose every penny rather than give up passive resistance.

Passive resistance has been described in the course of our discussion as truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and that at any cost. In this connection, academic questions such as whether a man may not lie in order to save a life, etc., arise, but these questions occur only to those who wish to justify lying. Those who want to follow truth every time are not placed in such a **quandary**; and if they are, they are still saved from a false position.

Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honor, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death.

These observances are not to be abandoned in the belief that they are difficult. Nature has implanted in the human breast the ability to cope with any difficulty or suffering that may come to man unprovoked. These qualities are worth having, even for those who do not wish to serve the country. Let there be no mistake, as those

- devoid** –  
to be completely lacking in something
- jiu-jitsu** –  
type of fighting from Japan
- withers** –  
to cause to shrivel or fade
- rust** –  
to deteriorate through lack of use
- scabbard** –  
metal or leather cover for the blade of a knife or sword
- lad** –  
boy or young man
- stamina** –  
physical or mental strength that lets you continue doing something for a long time without getting tired
- quandary** –  
to be unable to decide what to do about a difficult problem or situation



who want to train themselves in the use of arms are also obliged to have these qualities more or less. Everybody does not become a warrior for the wish. A would-be warrior will have to observe chastity and to be satisfied with poverty as his lot. A warrior without fearlessness cannot be conceived of. It may be thought that he would not need to be exactly truthful, but that quality follows real fearlessness. When a man abandons truth, he does so owing to fear in some shape or form. The above four attributes, then, need not frighten anyone. It may be as well here to note that a physical-force man has to have many other useless qualities which a passive resister never needs. And you will find that whatever extra effort a swordsman needs is due to lack of fearlessness. If he is an embodiment of the latter, the sword will drop from his hand that very moment. He does not need its support. One who is free from hatred requires no sword. A man with a stick suddenly came face to face with a lion and instinctively raised his weapon in self-defense. The man saw that he had only **prated** about fearlessness when there was none in him. That moment he dropped the stick and found himself free from all fear.



THE SEPOY MUTANY OF 1857

## CONCLUSION CHAPTER XX

*READER:* From your views I gather that you would form a third party. You are neither an extremist nor a moderate.

*EDITOR:* That is a mistake. I do not think of a third party at all. We do not all think alike. We cannot say that all the moderates hold identical views. And how can those who want only to serve have a party? I would serve both the moderates and the extremists.

Where I differ from them, I would respectfully place my position before them and continue my service.

*READER:* What, then, would you say to both the parties?

*EDITOR:* I would say to the extremists: "I know that you want Home Rule for India; it is not to be had for your asking. Everyone will have to take it for himself. What others get for me is not Home Rule but foreign rule; therefore, it would not be proper for you to say that you have obtained Home Rule if you have merely expelled the English. I have already described the true nature of Home Rule. This you would never obtain by force of arms. Brute-force is not natural to Indian soil. You will have, therefore, to rely wholly on soul-force. You must not consider that violence is necessary at any

**prated –**  
to talk in a meaningless,  
boring way about something

stage for reaching our goal.”

I would say to the moderates: “Mere petitioning is **derogatory**; we thereby confess inferiority. To say that British rule is indispensable, is almost a denial of the Godhead. We cannot say that anybody or anything is indispensable except God. Moreover, common sense should tell us that to state that, for the time being, the presence of the English in India is a necessity, is to make them conceited.

“If the English **vacated** India, bag and baggage, it must not be supposed that she would be widowed. It is possible that those who are forced to observe peace under their pressure would fight after their withdrawal. There can be no advantage in suppressing an eruption; it must have its vent. If, therefore, before we can remain at peace, we must fight amongst ourselves, it is better that we do so. There is no occasion for a third party to protect the weak. It is this so-called protection which has unnerved us. Such protection can only make the weak weaker. Unless we realize this, we cannot have Home Rule. I would paraphrase the thought of an English divine and say that anarchy under Home Rule were better than orderly foreign rule. Only, the meaning that the learned divine attached to Home Rule is different from Indian Home Rule according to my conception. We have to learn, and to teach others, that we do not want the tyranny of either English rule or Indian rule.”

If this idea were carried out, both the extremists and the moderates could join hands. There is no occasion to fear or distrust one another.

*READER:* What then, would you say to the English?

*EDITOR:* To them I would respectfully say: “I admit you are my rulers. It is not necessary to debate the question whether you hold India by the sword or by my consent. I have no objection to your remaining in my country, but although you are the rulers, you will have to remain as servants of the people. It is not we who have to do as you wish, but it is you who have to do as we wish. You may keep the riches that you have **drained** away from this land, but you may not drain riches henceforth. Your function will be, if you so wish, to police India; you must abandon the idea of deriving any commercial benefit from us. We hold the civilization that you support to be the reverse of civilization. We consider our civilization to be far superior to yours. If you realize this truth, it will be to your advantage and, if you do not, according to your own proverb, you should only live in our country in the same manner as we do. You must not do anything that is contrary to our religions. It is your duty as rulers that for the sake of the Hindus you should **eschew** beef, and for the sake of Mahomedans you should avoid bacon and ham. We have hitherto said nothing because we have been cowed down, but you need not consider that you have not hurt our feelings by your conduct. We are not expressing our sentiments either through base selfishness or fear, but because it is our duty now to speak out boldly. We consider your schools and law courts to be useless. We want our own ancient schools and courts to be restored. The common language of India is not English but Hindi. You should, therefore, learn it. We can hold communication with you only in our national language.

“We cannot tolerate the idea of your spending money on railways and the military. We see no occasion for either. You may fear Russia; we do not. When she comes we shall look after her. If you are with us, we may then receive her jointly. We do not need any European cloth. We shall manage with articles produced and manufactured at home. You may not keep one eye on Manchester and the other on India. We can work together only if our interests are identical.

“This has not been said to you in arrogance. You have great military resources. Your naval power is matchless. If we wanted to fight with you on your own ground,

**derogatory** –  
insulting and disapproving

**vacated** –  
to leave a job or position so  
that it is available for someone  
else to do

**drained** –  
to gradually deplete; dwindle

**eschew** –  
to deliberately avoid doing or  
using something, usually for  
moral, religious, or practical  
reasons

we should be unable to do so, but if the above submissions be not acceptable to you, we cease to play the part of the ruled. You may, if you like, cut us to pieces. You may shatter us at the cannon's mouth. If you act contrary to our will, we shall not help you; and without our help, we know that you cannot move one step forward.

"It is likely that you will laugh at all this in the intoxication of your power. We may not be able to disillusion you at once; but if there be any manliness in us, you will see shortly that your intoxication is suicidal and that your laugh at our expense is an **aberration** of intellect. We believe that at heart you belong to a religious nation. We are living in a land which is the source of religions. How we came together need not be considered, but we can make mutual good use of our relations.

"You, English, who have come to India are not good **specimens** of the English nation, nor can we, almost half-Anglicized Indians, be considered good specimens of the real Indian nation. If the English nation were to know all you have done, it would oppose many of your actions. The mass of the Indians have had few dealings with you. If you will abandon your so-called civilization and search into your own scriptures, you will find that our demands are just. Only on condition of our demands being fully satisfied may you remain in India; and if you remain under those conditions, we shall learn several things from you and you will learn many from us. So doing we shall benefit each other and the world. But that will happen only when the root of our relationship is sunk in a religious soil."

*READER:* What will you say to . . . those of us who are affected by European civilization, and who are eager to have Home Rule [?]

*EDITOR:* To these I would say, "It is only those Indians who are **imbued** with real love who will be able to speak to the English in the above strain without being frightened, and only those can be said to be so imbued who conscientiously believe that Indian civilization is the best and that the European is a nine days' wonder. Such **ephemeral** civilizations have often come and gone and will continue to do so. Those only can be considered to be so imbued who, having experienced the force of the soul within themselves, will not cower before brute-force, and will not, on any account, desire to use brute-force. Those only can be considered to have been so imbued who are intensely dissatisfied with the present pitiable condition, having already drunk the cup of poison.

"If there be only one such Indian, he will speak as above to the English and the English will have to listen to him.

"These are not demands, but they show our mental state. We shall get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort. . . ."

*READER:* This is a large order. When will all carry it out?

*EDITOR:* You make a mistake. You and I have nothing to do with the others. Let each do his duty. If I do my duty, that is, serve myself, I shall be able to serve others. Before I leave you, I will take the liberty of repeating:

I. Real home-rule is self-rule or self-control.

- aberration** –  
temporary change from  
the typical or usual way of  
behaving
- specimen** –  
individual, item, or part  
representative of a class,  
genus, or whole
- imbue** –  
to make someone feel an  
emotion very strongly
- ephemeral** –  
popular or important for a  
only a short time

**Swadeshi –**

support of local relationships,  
of commerce and the land we  
depend on by how we create  
and consume

**Swaraj –**

self-governance

2. The way to it is passive resistance; that is soul-force or love-force.
3. In order to exert this force, **Swadeshi** in every sense is necessary.
4. What we want to do should be done, not because we object to the English or because we want to retaliate but because it is our duty to do so. Thus, supposing that the English remove the salt-tax, restore our money, give the highest posts to Indians, withdraw the English troops, we shall certainly not use their machine-made goods, nor use the English language, nor many of their industries. It is worth noting that these things are, in their nature, harmful; hence we do not want them. I bear no enmity towards the English but I do towards their civilization.

In my opinion, we have used the term “**Swaraj**” without understanding its real significance. I have endeavored to explain it as I understand it, and my conscience testifies that my life henceforth is dedicated to its attainment.

**SOURCE:** *The Gandhi Reader. A Sourcebook of His Life and Writings.* Homer A. Jack (ed.) New York: Grove Press, 1956, pp.105-121

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does Gandhi try to explain the term “civilization” at the beginning of the text? Why is it necessary for him to understand the meaning of civilization? Why does he claim that the West is an injured model of civilization?
2. Do you agree with Gandhi’s statement that practicing religion and belief is a strong milestone for civilizations?
3. Gandhi’s idea of civilization is “good conduct.” Is it the same for you? Why, or why not?
4. What is happiness for Gandhi? How does he approach the meaning of happiness?
5. What do you think about “passive resistance” as described by Gandhi?
6. What is “home rule?” How do you interpret “home-rule as self-rule or self-control?” Is it possible to create a strong government through self-control?

### ADDITIONAL READING:

- Hind Swaraj Mohandas K. Gandhi, [www.forget-me.net/en/Gandhi/hind-swaraj.pdf](http://www.forget-me.net/en/Gandhi/hind-swaraj.pdf)
- Gandhi, History and Politics, [www.amazon.com/Hind-Swaraj-Indian-Home-Rule/dp/8172290713](http://www.amazon.com/Hind-Swaraj-Indian-Home-Rule/dp/8172290713)
- Gandhi: Indian Home Rule, [www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_2/gandhi.html](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/gandhi.html)

## TEXT

### SOJOURNER TRUTH: AIN'T I A WOMAN?

Sojourner Truth (c. 1797-1883), born Isabella Baumfree, was an American abolitionist and slave. She rose to immediate prominence when she delivered a speech, now well known, “Ain’t I a Woman”, at the Ohio Women’s Rights Convention in 1851. She wrote her autobiography “The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave” and published it privately in 1850.

*Truth gave her well-known speech entitled “Ain’t I a Woman?” in 1851 at the Ohio Women’s Rights Convention.*

*The speech has been revised from the 19<sup>th</sup> century dialect style. It is often recorded in and several different versions exist.*

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that ‘twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what’s all this here talking about?

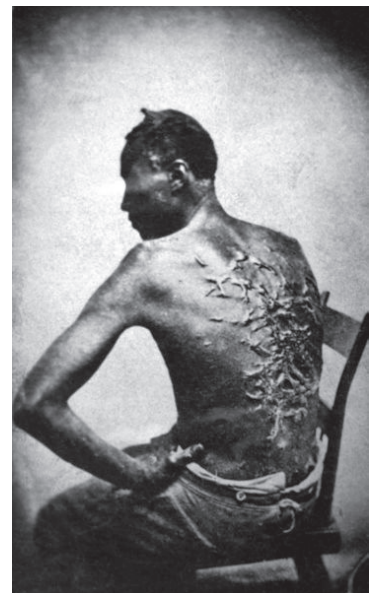
That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain’t I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain’t I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what’s this they call it? [member of audience whispers, “intellect”] That’s it, honey. What’s that got to do with women’s rights or negroes’ rights? If my cup won’t hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn’t you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can’t have as much rights as men, ‘cause Christ wasn’t a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it. The men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain’t got nothing more to say.



WHIPPED SLAVE  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana,  
April 2, 1863.



**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was concerned when the Negroes and women start talking about rights in America? Why did the author think that these people would be concerned?
2. What does the title of this speech “Ain’t I a Woman” mean? Why does she have to assert her gender?
3. What is the relationship between intellect and human rights? Do people need intellect, knowledge and education to seek their rights and social justice?
4. How is religion used to justify not giving women basic rights? How does the author use religion to disprove that theory?
5. How strong do you think the author is? Why, or why not?

**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. When did women in America achieve equality? When were Negroes granted equality?
2. Are there any groups left in the world that do not have equal rights? Can you name these groups of people? In which countries do they live?
3. What impact do free speech and non-violent protest have on people? Does it take longer to meet your goals if you don’t use violence?
4. Should you refuse to cooperate in your own degradation? Why, or why not?
5. Do you find instances in your own country where women are not heard, not allowed to speak, or not allowed to make decisions for themselves?

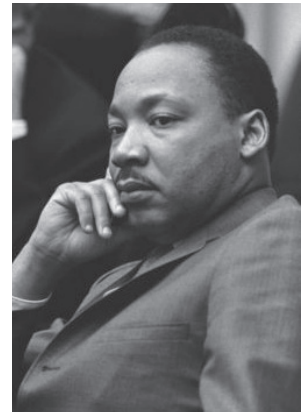
**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- Women in Christian Tradition, Sojourner Truth,  
[www.amhistory.about.com/library/blsojourner\\_truth\\_womanspeech.htm](http://www.amhistory.about.com/library/blsojourner_truth_womanspeech.htm)
- Sojourner Truth, Ain’t I a Woman? [www.kyphilom.com/www/truth.html](http://www.kyphilom.com/www/truth.html)
- Sojourner Truth, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sojourner\\_Truth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sojourner_Truth)
- Sojourner Truth’s biography, [www.lkwdpl.org/wihohio/trut-soj.htm](http://www.lkwdpl.org/wihohio/trut-soj.htm)



## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.: I HAVE A DREAM

**Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929 -1968) was the most famous leader of the Civil Rights movement in the USA. He was an African-American Baptist minister. In 1964 he received the Nobel Prize for Peace. Among his many publications are *Stride toward Freedom*; the *Montgomery Story* (1958), *The Measure of a Man* (1959), *Strength to Love* (1963), *Why We Can't Wait* (1964), *Where do we go from here: Chaos or Community?* (1967), and *The Trumpet of Conscience* (1968). His greatest speech, however, remains, *I have a Dream*.**



Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the **Emancipation Proclamation**. This momentous decree came as a great beacon of hope to millions of slaves, who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. But one hundred years later, the colored America is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the colored American is still sadly crippled by the **manacle of segregation** and the chains of discrimination.

One hundred years later, the colored American lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the colored American is still **languishing** in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we have come to our Nation's Capital to cash a check. When the architects of our great republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir.

This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given its colored people a bad check, a check that has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great **vaults** of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and security of justice.

**Emancipation Proclamation** – an announcement made by US President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, which ordered the end of slavery

**manacle** – iron ring on a chain that is put around the wrist or ankle of a prisoner

**segregation** – when people of different races, sexes, or religions are kept apart so that they live, work, or study separately

**languishing** – being forced to remain in a place where they are unhappy

**vaults** – room with thick walls and a strong door where money, jewels, etc. are kept to prevent them from being stolen or damaged

We have also come to his hallowed spot to remind America of the **fierce** urgency of Now. This is not time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism.

Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy.

Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice.

Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

Now is the time to make justice a reality to all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of its colored citizens. This **sweltering** summer of the colored people's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an **invigorating** autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end but a beginning. Those who hope that the colored Americans needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual.

There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the colored citizen is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities.

We cannot be satisfied as long as the colored person's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one.

We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "for white only."

We cannot be satisfied as long as a colored person in Mississippi cannot vote and a colored person in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote.

No, no we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of your trials and tribulations. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by storms of persecutions and **staggered** by the winds of police brutality.

You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is **redemptive**.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the **slums** and **ghettos** of our modern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you, my friends, we have the difficulties of today and tomorrow.

I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.

I have a dream that one day out in the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character.

I have a dream today.

**fierce** –  
done with a lot of energy and strong feelings, and sometimes violent

**sweltering** –  
extremely hot and uncomfortable

**invigorating** –  
making you feel healthy and giving you a lot of energy

**staggered** –  
extremely surprised

**redemptive** –  
able to free from the power of evil, believed by Christians to be made possible only by Jesus Christ

**slums** –  
a house or an area of a city that is in very bad condition, where very poor people live

**ghettos** –  
a part of a city where people of a particular race or class, especially people who are poor, live separately from the rest of the people in the city

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its **vicious** racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; that one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be **engulfed**, every hill shall be exalted and every mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to **hew** out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.

With this faith we will be able to transform the **jangling** discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to climb up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my father's died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.

Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.

Let freedom ring from the **curvaceous** slopes of California.

But not only that, let freedom, ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi and every mountainside.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered this speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize the following year, 1964. He was killed by an assassin, assumed to be James Earl Ray, on April 4, 1968.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/contact/email.fff> Prepared by Gerald Murphy (The Cleveland Free-Net - aa300) Distributed by the Cybercasting Services Division of the National Public Telecomputing Network (NPTN).

**vicious –**

violent and cruel in a way that hurts someone physically

**engulf –**

flow over or cover completely

**hew –**

to cut something with a cutting tool

**jangling –**

make a sound by metal objects hitting each other randomly

**curvaceous –**

having an attractively curved body shape

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the reasons for inequality between people? How can we explain the point raised by Luther: “But one hundred years later, the colored America is still not free.”
2. Why is skin colour so important? What were the reasons for segregation?
3. What should people do in order to enforce the Constitution and make the Declaration work properly? Do you feel the importance of political culture in your own society? Is there any kind of segregation against the various minorities living in our countries?
4. Was the Civil Rights Movement a call for religious justice or social justice based on democratic values? When do political and religious values go together, or don't they?
5. How do you define the notion of patriotism – is it based on solidarity within your own community, or with all communities in your country? Do these needs sometimes contradict each other?
6. Why is the “I have a Dream” speech so powerful? How did it make a difference for the lives of Americans afterwards. What we can learn from this speech for our local context? What is the role of individuals in implementing justice, peace, freedom and other values? Do we have such kinds of voices in our history?
7. What similar and different approaches to justice were presented in this chapter? What makes the call for justice in modern times different from the one of antiquity?

## ADDITIONAL READING:

- American Rhetoric: Martin Luther King, [www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm)
- The I have a Dream Speech, [www.usconstitution.net/dream.html](http://www.usconstitution.net/dream.html)
- Martin Luther King, I have a Dream, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\\_Have\\_a\\_Dream](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Have_a_Dream)
- USA. Martin Luther King: I have a Dream [www.odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1951-1975/mlk/dream.htm](http://www.odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1951-1975/mlk/dream.htm)
- Martin Luther King, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin\\_Luther\\_King](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King)
- Biography and Works, [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html)
- Research and Education, [www.stanford.edu/group/King/](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/)

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers both fiction and non-fiction literary works that will help in our understanding of the quest for social justice. Is social justice attainable at all? If it is, to what degree is it attainable? Can humanity or has humanity ever attained justice, freedom or happiness? The texts also narrate the obstacles and trials in the path of social justice, and the development of rebellion, revolution, and terror.

The second text is drawn from a work of fiction. It raises serious doubts about leadership, independent action, or even the possibility of free will. The readers need to look closely at two concepts: “chance and genius.” Is anything truly accidental in the world? As the text claims, is chance just an excuse for our inability to perceive the causal connection between events? Similarly, genius might be just another name for our inability to identify the force that engenders an outcome that seems beyond our capabilities. Does our inability to predict events and results force us to pay homage to chance and genius? What then can we say of leadership and statesmanship? Are they, too, “superfluous” as the text would have it?

The final text in this chapter is an open letter to the President of France that was published in a leading newspaper identifying the rampant growth of anti-Semitism in public life and government circles in France. The reader needs to critically examine the idea of nationalism and patriotism. Do these two concepts always tend to victimize the minorities in a country? Do they always attribute traitorous intentions to minorities? In what manner can societies overcome this evil? Have societies managed to overcome the tendency to consider minorities as unpatriotic, alien troublemakers, and undesirables? What can states do to protect the minorities in their countries? How can states make the majority community accept minorities on an equal footing? What attitudes, dogmas, and practices would need to be discarded by the majority communities to accept, respect, and include the minorities as equal citizens in their countries?







## THE FIRMAN OF ZEHIREDDIN MUHAMMED BABUR (BABUR'S DECREE)

**Zahir uk-din Muhammad Babur was a 16<sup>th</sup> century Persian Muslim conqueror from Andijan (modern Uzbekistan) who laid the basis for India's Mughal Dynasty. This text is on the importance of practicing justice for kings, imperators, officers, soldiers and ordinary people, and how they can follow religious rules and orders of governors, and make laws promoting good governance and social prosperity. According to the author only obedience to the law can help both society and individuals avoid chaos, unhappiness, injustice. All people, regardless of ethnicity, religion, and social or political status should obey the law.**

Let us return praise to the Forgiver, for that He holds as His friends the repentant, and such as have cleansed themselves from their sins; and let us return thanksgiving to Him who shows the right road to sinners, and bestows favours on such as ask His blessing; and let us give praises to the best of created Beings, Muhammed, and to his family who are pure, and his friends who are pure; and blessed be the mirror-like minds of men of understanding, which are the place in which the affairs of the world are seen in their true light, and which are the treasury of the pearls that adorn the forms of truth and right, and will be the receivers of the figures of the brilliant jewels of this truth—that the human constitution, from the mode of its creation, is prone to desire the gratification of earthly passions, though the renunciation of such desires is inseparably connected with the favour of God and celestial aid. Human passions are not far removed from evil desires; and I feel that my mind is not pure, since it certainly draws me towards evil. And this abstinence from wickedness is a boon not to be gained, but by the mercy of the most merciful King.— Yet such is the graciousness of God, that He gives it to every one that asks it; And God is the author of mighty kindness. The purpose of writing these lines, and of enouncing these truths is, that from the frailty of human nature, in compliance with the usage of kings, the seductions of royalty, and the custom of men of rank, both kings and soldiers, during the times of early youth, many forbidden acts and unlawful deeds have been obstinately committed; and after a few days, repentance and sorrow having ensued, these forbidden acts have in succession been renounced, and the door of relapse shut on such criminal transgressions by unfeigned repentance. But the renunciation of wine, which is the most indispensable of all renunciations, and the most important of all these resolutions of amendment, remained hid behind a veil, since every act has its due season, and did not show itself until, in this blessed and auspicious hour, when, exerting all our energies, and binding on the badge of a holy war, we sat down, along with the armies whose sign is the Faith, over against the pagans in warfare; having heard from secret inspiration, and from the warnings of a voice that cannot err, the blessed tidings of A. L. M. or of, O ye that have received the faith, and whose hearts bend down at the mention of God, for the purpose of plucking up the roots of sin, we knocked with all our might at the door of

penitence; and the pointer of the way assisting, in conformity to the saying, He who knocks at the door, and persists in knocking, shall be admitted, opened the door of His mercy: and we have directed this holy warfare to commence with the Grand Warfare, the War against our Evil Passions. In short after saying with the tongue of truth and sincerity, O, my Creator! we have subjected our passions; fix us on thy side, for I have written on the tablets of my heart, that now, for the first time, I have indeed become a Musulman, I have blazoned abroad the desire to renounce wine, which was formerly hid in the treasury of my heart. And the servants, victory-adorned, in obedience to the commands which terminate in blessing, have, for the glory of religion, dashed upon the ground of contempt and ruin, and broken in pieces, the goblets, and cups, and all the utensils and vessels of silver and of gold, which, resembling in their number and splendour the stars of the lofty sky, were the ornaments of the Assembly of Wickedness, and were like unto those idols which, God willing, we shall quickly be aided in breaking to pieces; and every fragment was thrown to a needy or helpless one. And by the blessing of this repentance which draws near unto remission of sins, many of those near the presence, as the custom is that courtiers follow the usage and fashion of the prince, in that same meeting were exalted by the glory of repentance, and entirely renounced the use of strong drinks; and still, crowds of those who are subjected to us, hourly find their blessing and exaltation in this self-denial. And hopes are entertained, according to the saying, He who shows the road to goodness is as the doer of good, that the blessing of these acts will terminate in the good fortune and greatness of the Nawab whose undertakings are successful, the emperor: And that from the happy influence of these good deeds victory and success may day by day increase; and after the conclusion of this enterprise, and the fulfilment of this wish, that the firman which the world obeys may receive such perfect execution, that, in the regions protected by our sway, God keeping watch to protect them from all evil and all enmity, there may not be a creature who shall indulge in the use of intoxicating liquor, or employ himself in procuring, or in making spirits, or in selling them; or who shall purchase them, or keep them, or carry them out or bring them in. Abstain from intoxication: perhaps you may be justified; and there is a blessing on this self-conquest. And as an offering made on occasion of this sincere repentance, the sea of royal bounty has risen, and displayed the waves of liberality, which is the source of the populousness of the world, and of the glory of the sons of men. And a firman has been issued, renouncing, as far as concerns the Musulmans, the **tamgha** of all our dominions, the amount of which exceeds all limits and calculation; for although, in the time of former sultans, the usage was to levy it, yet the practice was opposite to the constitutions of the laws delivered by the holy prophets; and orders have been given, that in no city, or town, or road, or street, or passage, or port, should the tamgha be received or levied; and that there shall be no delay or deviation in the execution of these commands. And if anyone alters these commands after having heard them, then, of a truth, the crime of such act shall fall on that person who shall change these commands; the duty of the soldiers who are shielded under the royal favour, whether Turks or Tajiks, or Arabs or Ajems, or Hindus or Persians, of subjects civil or military, and of all the followers of every religion, and of all the tribes of the sons of men, is, that being strengthened and filled with hope by this sustaining generosity, they may employ themselves in the praises of the mightiness of Him who exists for ever; and may never deviate from the injunctions of the mandate whose termination is in good; but adhering to their duty, according to the firman that has been published, fulfil its intention. And as soon as it reaches the seal, that the great, the exalted, the lofty, obey it. Written by the High

Command. May the great God exalt this Firman and the Almighty always protect its inviolability. Dated the 24th of the first Jumada, in the year 933. (Feb. 26, 1527)

(Alarm in Babur's army)

At this time, as I have already observed, in consequence of preceding events, a general consternation and alarm prevailed among great and small. There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a courageous opinion. The Wazirs, whose duty it was to give good counsel, and the Amirs, who enjoyed the wealth of kingdoms, neither spoke bravely, nor was their counsel or deportment such as became men of firmness. During the whole course of this expedition Khalifeh conducted himself admirably, and was unremitting and indefatigable in his endeavours to put everything in the best order. At length, observing the universal discouragement of my troops, and their total want of spirit, I formed my plan.

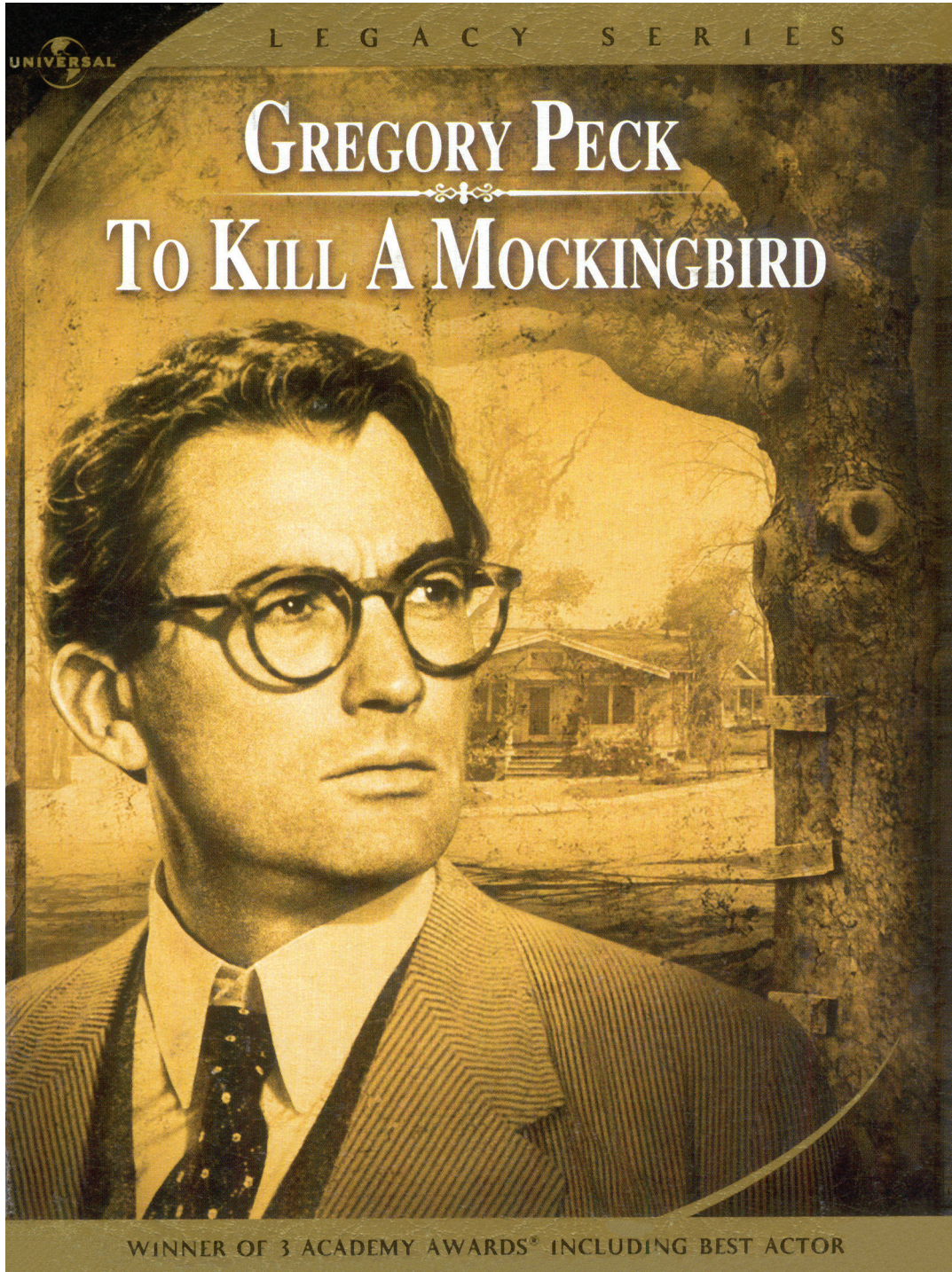
(His speech to his officers) I called an assembly of all the Amirs and officers, and addressed them,—‘Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into the world is subject to dissolution. When we are passed away and gone, God only survives, unchangeable. Whoever comes to the feast of life must, before it is over, drink from the cup of death. He who arrives at the inn of mortality must one day inevitably take his departure from that house of sorrow—the world. How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy!

**SOURCE:** <http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=pf%3Ffile%3D03501051%26ct%3D70%2>

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the author's character?
2. What did the author mention about forbidden acts and human nature in this text? What is the author's opinion on renunciation of wine and holy war?
3. What is justice and the true way according to Zehireddin Muhammad Babur? Do you agree with the author's explanation and his understanding of justice? If yes, why? If no, please bring arguments to support your ideas.
4. What did the author say to his officers?
5. Is the author's opinion close to religious doctrine? Present your arguments. Did the author mention any new rules in his firman which are not from religion?
6. Compare Babur's firman with the rules of contemporary society. Are there any contradictions between them? Which points from Babur's firman are important for modern life? Provide examples from your own life to support your ideas.







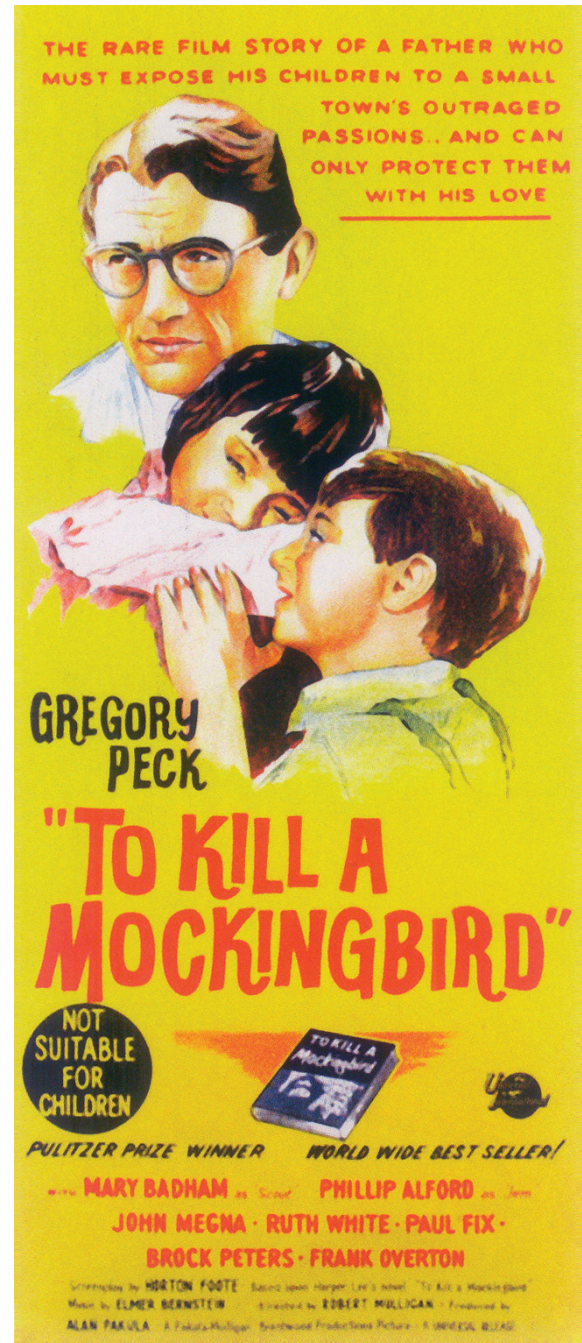
## TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Harper Lee was born in 1926 and grew up in the Southern town of Monroeville, Alabama. She attended Huntingdon College in Montgomery (1944-45) and then studied law at the University of Alabama (1945-49).

**To Kill a Mockingbird** is a novel by Harper Lee published in 1960. It was instantly successful, winning the Pulitzer Prize, and has become a classic of modern American literature. The content and characters are loosely based on the author's observations of her family and neighbors, as well as on an event that took place near her hometown in 1936, when she was 10 years old. The novel deals with race in America, and its protagonist, Atticus Finch, the most enduring fictional image of racial heroism.

The film (1962) is based on the novel. The main heroes in the film are: Atticus Finch (Gregory Peck), Scout (Mary Badham), and Jem (Phillip Alford). In 1995, the film was listed in the National Film Registry and ranks 25<sup>th</sup> on the American Film Institute's 10th anniversary list of the best American movies of all time. In one interview Gregory Peck called *To Kill a Mockingbird* his favorite film and "a blessing and gift from Harper Lee"

The film portrays mid-1930s American society where people were judged by their race, and justice did not always prevail. The film serves as an example of a literary approach to the themes of social justice through the issues of class, courage, tolerance, and compassion.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

*“Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when anything involving a Negro comes up, is something I don’t pretend to understand.”*

*-Atticus Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird*

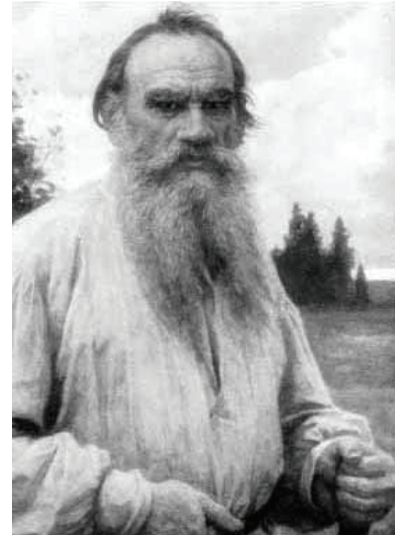
1. Why do you think the film is called “To Kill a Mockingbird”?
2. What kinds of crime and justice did you observe in the film?
3. Why does Atticus Finch risk his reputation, his friendship and his career to take Tom Robinson’s case?
4. Atticus tells his daughter that one needs to get into somebody else’s skin and move around in it in order to understand him/her. How does that relate to the idea of justice?
5. Have the filmmakers contextualized justice in the film? How is injustice related to racism and discrimination in this society?
6. How does Atticus explain the meaning of ‘compromise’ to Scout? Do you think justice could be attained by this sort of compromise? Why? Why not?
7. Who do you think symbolizes a mockingbird in the film?
8. Can the murder of Ewell by Boo be considered a restorative justice? Why? Why not?
9. Do you think Atticus and the sheriff were right or wrong not to report Boo murdering Ewells? Think about the reasons behind their decision. What motivated them to do so?
10. What kind of conclusion can you draw from the film? Do you think it is possible to attain absolute social justice?



## TEXT

### LEO TOLSTOY: WAR AND PEACE

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), born an aristocrat, was a Russian writer, philosopher, and ethicist. He is universally acknowledged to be one of the best writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His works include: *A Confession*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, *War and Peace*, *Kholstomer*, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, and *How Much Land Does a Man Need*, among others. Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., are two prominent activists among the many political leaders Tolstoy inspired.



If we assume, as the historians do, that great men lead humanity towards the attainment of certain ends – such as the majesty of Russia or of France, the balance of power in Europe, the propagation of the ideas of the Revolution, progress in general, or anything else you like – it becomes impossible to explain the phenomena of history without **intruding** the concepts of chance and genius.

If the object of the European wars of the beginning of this century had been the **aggrandizement** of Russia, that object might have been attained without any of the preceding wars and without the invasion. If the object was the aggrandizement of France, that might have been attained without either the Revolution or the Empire. If the object was the propagation of ideas, the printing-press could have accomplished that much more effectually than soldiers. If the object was the progress of civilization, one may very readily suppose that there are other more expedient means of diffusing civilization than by slaughtering people and destroying their wealth.

Why then did things happen thus and not otherwise?

Because they did so happen. “Chance created the situation; genius made use of it,” says history.

But what is chance? What is genius?

The words chance and genius do not denote anything that actually exists, and therefore they cannot be defined. These two words merely indicate a certain degree of comprehension of phenomena. I do not know why a certain event occurs; I suppose that I cannot know: therefore I do not try to know, and I talk about chance. I see a force producing effects beyond the scope of ordinary human agencies; I do not understand why this occurs, and I cry genius.

To a flock of sheep, the one the shepherd drives into a separate enclosure every night to feed, and that becomes twice as fat as the others, must seem to be a genius. And the circumstance that every evening this particular sheep, instead of coming into the common fold, chances into a special pen with extra oats, and that this sheep, this particular one, fattens up and is killed for **mutton**, doubtless impresses the rest of the flock as a remarkable conjunction of genius with a whole series of fortuitous chances.

**intrude –**

to go into a place or situation in which you are not wanted or not expected to be

**aggrandizement –**

increase in power, importance or wealth

**mutton –**

the meat from an adult sheep eaten as food

But the sheep need only rid themselves of the idea that all that is done to them is done solely for the furtherance of their sheepish ends; they have only to concede that what happens to them may also have purposes beyond their ken, and they will immediately perceive a unity and coherence in what happens with their brother that is being fattened. Although it may not be given to them to know to what end he was being fattened, they will at least know that all that happened to him did not occur accidentally, and will no longer need to resort to conceptions of chance or genius.

It is only by renouncing our claim to discern a purpose immediately intelligible to us, and admitting the ultimate purpose to be beyond our ken, that we shall see a logical connexion in the lives of historical personages, and perceive the why and wherefore of what they do which so transcends the ordinary powers of humanity. We shall then find that the words *chance* and *genius* have become superfluous.

We have only to admit that we do not know the purpose of the **convulsions** among the European nations, and that we know only the hard facts – the butchery, first in France, then in Italy, in Africa, in Prussia, in Austria, in Spain and in Russia – and that the movements from west to east and from east to west constitute the essence and end of those events, and we shall not only find it no longer necessary to see some exceptional ability – genius – in Napoleon and Alexander: we shall be unable to regard them as being anything but men like other men. And far from having to turn to chance to explain the little incidents which made those men what they were, it will be clear to us that all those little incidents were inevitable.

If we give up all claim to a knowledge of the ultimate purpose we shall realize that, just as it is impossible to imagine for any given plant other more appropriate blossom or seed than those it produces, so it is impossible to imagine any two persons, with all their **antecedents**, more completely adapted, down to the smallest detail, to the mission which Napoleon and Alexander were called upon to fulfill.

### 3

The fundamental and essential point of European events at the beginning of the present century is the militant mass movement of the European peoples from west to east and then from east to west. The first impulse to this flux was given by the movement from west to east. For the peoples of the west to be able to achieve their militant advance as far as Moscow they had to (1) form themselves into a military group of sufficient magnitude to sustain a collision with the military group of the east; (2) renounce all established traditions and customs; and (3) have at their head, during their military movement, a man able to justify to himself and to them the guile, robbery and murder which must be the concomitants of their progress.

So, beginning with the French Revolution, the old group which is not large enough is destroyed; old habits and traditions are abolished; and step by step a group of new dimensions is elaborated, new customs and traditions are developed, and a man is prepared who is to stand at the head of the coming movement and bear the whole responsibility for what has to be done.

A man of no convictions, no habits, no traditions, no name, not even a Frenchman, emerges – by what seems the strangest freak of chance – from among all the seething parties of France, and, without attaching himself to any one of them, is borne forward to a prominent position.

The incompetence of his colleagues, the weakness and inanity of his rivals, the frankness of his falsehoods and his brilliant and self-confident mediocrity raise him to the head of the army. The brilliant quality of the soldiers of the army sent to Italy, his

#### **convulsion –**

sudden uncontrollable  
movement of the muscles in  
your body, caused by illness  
or drugs

#### **antecedent –**

previous



NORTHERN, ADOLF.  
NAPOLEON'S RETREAT  
FROM MOSCOW.

opponents' reluctance to fight and his own childish insolence and conceit secure him military glory. Innumerable so-called chance circumstances attend him everywhere. The disfavour into which he falls with the French Directorate turns to his advantage. His attempts to avoid his predestined path are unsuccessful: Russia refused to receive him into her service and the appointment he seeks in Turkey comes to nothing. During the wars in Italy he more than once finds himself on the brink of disaster and each time is saved in some unexpected manner. Owing to various diplomatic considerations the Russian armies – the very armies which have the power to extinguish his glory – do not appear upon the European scene while he is there.

On his return from Italy he finds the government in Paris in the process of dissolution in which all those who are in that government are doomed to erasure and extinction. And by chance an escape from this dangerous situation offers itself to him in the nonsensical, gratuitous expedition to Africa. Again so-called chance accompanies him. Malta the impregnable surrenders without a shot; his most reckless schemes are crowned with success. The enemy's fleet, which later on does not let a single row-boat through, now suffers a whole army to **elude** it. In Africa a whole series of outrages is perpetrated against the practically defenseless inhabitants. And the men committing these atrocities, and their leader most of all, persuade themselves that this is admirable, this is glory, this is like **Caesar** and **Alexander the Great**, and is fine.

This ideal of glory and greatness – which consists not merely in the assurance that nothing one does is to be considered wrong but in glorying in one's every crime and ascribing to it an incomprehensible, supernatural significance – this

**elude** –

to not be caught by someone

**Gaius Julius Caesar (100 BC - 44 BC) –**

Roman military and political leader who played a critical role in the transformation of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.

**Alexander the Great –**

also known as Alexander III, king of Macedon (336-323 BC), one of the most successful military commanders of all time, presumed undefeated in battle

ideal, destined to guide this man and his associates, is provided with fertile ground for its development in Africa. Whatever he does succeeds. The plague does not touch him. Responsibility for the cruel massacring of prisoners is not laid at his door. His childishly incautious, unreasoning and ignoble departure from Africa, leaving his comrades in distress, is accounted to his credit, and again the enemy's fleet twice lets him slip past. Completely intoxicated by the success of his crimes and ready for his new role, though without any plan, he arrives in Paris just when the disintegration of the Republican government, which a year before might have made an end of him, has reached its utmost limit and his presence there now, as a newcomer free from party entanglements, can only lift him to the heights.

He has no plan of any kind; he is afraid of everything; but the parties hold out their hands to him and insist on his participation.

He alone – with the ideal of glory and grandeur built up in Italy and Egypt, his insane self-adulation, his insolence in crime and frankness in lying – he alone can justify what has to be done.

He is needed for the place that awaits him and so, almost apart from his own volition and in spite of his indecision, his lack of a plan and all the blunders he makes, he is drawn into a conspiracy that aims at seizing power, and the conspiracy is crowned with success.

He is dragged into a meeting of the legislature. In alarm he tries to flee, believing himself in danger; pretends to be falling into a faint; says the most senseless things which should have meant his ruin. But the once proud and discerning rulers of France, feeling their part is over, are even more panic-stricken than he, and fail to pronounce the word they should have spoken to preserve their power and crush him.

Chance, millions of chances, invest him with authority, and all men everywhere, as if by agreement together, cooperate to confirm that power. Chance forms the characters of the rulers of France who cringe before him; chance forms the character of Paul I of Russia who recognizes his power; chance contrives a plot against him which not only fails to injure him but strengthens his position. Chance throws the **duc d'Enghien** into his hands and unexpectedly impels him to assassinate him – thereby convincing the mob by the most potent of all arguments that he has right on his side since he has might. Chance sees to it that though he strains every nerve to prepare an expedition against England (which would undoubtedly have been his downfall) he never carries this enterprise into execution but abruptly falls upon Mack and the Austrians, who surrender without a battle. Chance and genius give him the victory at Austerlitz; and by chance it comes to pass that all men, not only the French but all Europe – except England, who takes no part in the events about to happen – forget their former horror and detestation of his crimes and now recognize his consequent authority, the title he has bestowed upon himself and his ideal of grandeur and glory, which seems to one and all something excellent and reasonable.

As though measuring and making ready for the movement to come, the forces of the West several times – in 1805, 1806, 1807, 1809 – sally eastwards, gaining strength and growing. In 1811 the body of men that had formed in France unites into one enormous body with the peoples of Central Europe. Every increase in the size of this group adds further justification for Napoleon's power. During the ten-year preparatory period before the great push this man forms relations with all the crowned heads of Europe. The discredited rulers of the world have no ra-

#### Duke d'Enghien –

Louis-Antoine-Henri de Bourbon-Condé, duc d'Enghien (2 August 1772-21 March 1804). More famous for his death than for his life, he was executed on trumped-up charges during the French Consulate.

tional ideal to oppose to the meaningless Napoleonic mystique of glory and grandeur. One after another they rush to display to him their insignificance. The King of Prussia sends his wife to curry favour with the great man; the Emperor of Austria is gratified that this man should take the daughter of the Kaisers to his bed; the Pope, guardian of all that the nations hold sacred, utilizes religion to raise the great man higher. It is less that Napoleon prepares himself for the performance of his role than that all about him lead him on to acceptance of entire responsibility for what is happening and has to happen. There is no act, no crime, no petty deceit he might commit, which would not immediately be proclaimed by those about him as a great deed. The most suitable

fete the Teutons can think of to observe in his honour is a celebration of **Jena** and **Auerstadt**. Not only is he great but so are his forefathers, his brothers, his stepsons and his brothers-in-law. Everything is done to deprive him of the last vestige of his reason and to prepare him for his terrible part. And when he is ready so too are the forces.

The invasion streams eastwards and reaches its final goal – Moscow. The capital is taken: the Russian army suffers heavier losses than the enemy ever suffered in previous wars from Austerlitz to Wagram. But all at once, instead of the chance happenings and the genius which hitherto had so consistently led him by an uninterrupted series of successes to the predestined goal, an innumerable sequence of reverse chances occur – from the cold in his head at Borodino to the frosts and the spark which set Moscow on fire – and, instead of genius, folly and baseness without parallel appear.

The invaders run, turn back, run again, and all the chances are now not for Napoleon but always against him.

A counter-movement follows, from east to west, bearing a remarkable resemblance to the preceding movement from west to east. There are similar tentative drives westward as had in 1805, 1807 and 1809 preceded the great eastward movement; there is the same coalescence into a group of colossal proportions; the same adhesion of the peoples of Central Europe to the movement; the same hesitation midway and the same increased velocity as the goal is approached.

Paris, the ultimate goal, is reached. The Napoleonic government and army are overthrown. Napoleon himself is no longer of any account; all his actions are manifestly pitiful and mean; but again inexplicable chance steps in: the allies detest Napoleon whom they regard as the cause of their troubles. Stripped of his power and authority, his crimes and his treacheries exposed, he should have appeared to



KUTUZOV AT THE BATTLE OF BORODINO.

**Jena and Auerstedt –**  
twin battles fought on October 14, 1806 on the plateau west of the river Saale in today's Germany between the forces of Napoleon I of France and Frederick William III of Prussia



them what he had appeared ten years previously and was to appear a year later – a bandit and an outlaw. But by some strange freak of chance no one perceives this. His role is not yet played to a finish. The man who ten years before and a year later was looked on as a miscreant outside the law is sent to an island a couple of days' journey from France, which is given to him as his domain, with guards and millions of money, as though to pay him for some service rendered.

#### 4

The flood of nations begins to subside into its normal channels. The waves of the great movement abate, leaving a calm surface ruffled by eddies where the diplomatists busy themselves (in the belief that the calm is the result of their work).

But suddenly the smooth sea is convulsed again. The diplomats imagine that their dissensions are the cause of this new upheaval of the elements; they anticipate war between their sovereigns; the post-don seems to them insoluble. But the wave they feel to be gathering does not come from the quarter expected. It is the same wave as before, and its source the same point as before – Paris. The last backwash of the movement from the west occurs – a backwash which serves to solve the apparently insuperable diplomatic difficulties and put an end to the militant flux of the period.

The man who has devastated France returns to France alone, without any conspiracy and without soldiers. Any gendarme might apprehend him; but by a strange chance not only does no one touch him – they all rapturously acclaim the man they had cursed the day before and will be cursing again within a month.

This man is still needed to justify the final collective act.

The act is performed. The last part is played. The actor is bidden to disrobe and wash off his powder and paint: he will not be wanted any more.

And several years pass during which, in solitude on his island, this man plays his pitiful farce to himself, pettily intriguing and lying to justify his conduct when justification is no longer needed, and revealing to the world at large what it was that people had mistaken for strength so long as an unseen hand directed his actions.

The stage manager, having brought the drama to a close and stripped the puppet of his motley, shows him to us.

'Look – this is what you believed in! Here he stands! Do you see now that it was not he but I who moved you?'

But, dazed by the violence of the movement, it was long before people understood this.

A still more striking example of logical sequence and inevitability is to be seen in the life of Alexander I, the figure who stood at the head of the counter-movement from east to west.

What qualities should the man possess if he were to overshadow everyone else and head the counter-movement westwards

He must have a sense of justice and a sympathy with European affairs, but a detached sympathy not obscured by petty interests; a moral superiority over his peers – the other sovereigns of the day; a gentle and attractive personality; and a personal grievance against Napoleon. And all this is found in Alexander I; all this has been prepared by countless so-called chance circumstances in his life: his upbringing and early liberalism, the advisers who surrounded him; by Austerlitz and Tilsit and Erfurt.

So long as the war is a national one he remains inactive because he is not needed. But as soon as the necessity for a general European war becomes apparent, at the given moment he is in his place and, uniting the nations of Europe, leads them to the goal.

The goal is reached. After the final war of 1815 Alexander finds himself at the summit of human power. How does he use it?

Alexander I, the peacemaker of Europe, the man who from his youth up had striven only for the welfare of his peoples, the first champion of liberal reforms in his country, now when it seems that he possesses the utmost power and therefore the possibility of achieving the welfare of his peoples (while Napoleon in exile is drawing up childish and mendacious plans of how he would have made mankind happy had he retained power) – Alexander I, having fulfilled his mission and feeling the hand of God upon him, suddenly recognizes the nothingness of the supposed power that is his, turns away from it and hands it over to contemptible men whom he despises, saying only:

“Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy Name!” I too am a man like the rest of you. Let me live like a man, and think of my soul and of God.’

Just as the sun and every particle of the ether is a sphere complete in itself and at the same time only a part of a whole too immense for the comprehension of man, so every individual bears within himself his own aims and yet bears them so as to serve a general purpose unfathomable by man.

A bee poised on a flower has stung a child. And so the child is afraid of bees and declares that bees are there to sting people. A poet delights in the bee sipping honey from the calyx of a flower and says the bee exists to suck the nectar of flowers. A bee-keeper, seeing the bee collect pollen and carry it to the hive, says that the object of bees is to gather honey. Another bee-keeper, who has studied the life of the swarm more closely, declares that the bee gathers pollen-dust to feed the young bees and rear a queen, and that it exists for the propagation of its species. The botanist, observing that a bee flying with pollen from one dioecious plant to the pistil of another fertilizes the latter, sees in this the purpose of the bee’s existence. Another, remarking the hybridization of plants and seeing that the bee assists in this work, may say that herein lies the purpose of the bee. But the ultimate purpose of the bee is not exhausted by the first or the second or the third of the processes the human mind can discern. The higher the human intellect soars in the discovery of possible purposes, the more obvious it becomes that the ultimate purpose is beyond our comprehension.

Man cannot achieve more than a certain insight into the correlation between the life of the bee and other manifestations of life. And the same is true with regard to the final purpose of historical characters and nations.

**SOURCE:** L.N. Tolstoy. *War and Peace*, Translated and with an introduction by Rosemary Edmonds, Penguin Group, Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England. First published 1869, reissued in one volume 1982 pp. 1342-1350;

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What is history according to Tolstoy? Does history lead great men or humanity to justice, progress, prosperity, freedom or happiness?
2. What is the role of strong men, such as Napoleon and Alexander in civilizations?
3. Why does Tolstoy discount chance and genius? How does he justify it?
4. What is the object of war in human history? Why does it happen from time to time?
5. Do people have free will or is everything predetermined?
6. What is the ultimate purpose of history, or is there none?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- War and Peace, [www.planetpdf.com/planetpdf/pdfs/free\\_ebooks/War\\_and\\_Peace\\_NT.pdf](http://www.planetpdf.com/planetpdf/pdfs/free_ebooks/War_and_Peace_NT.pdf)
- Leo Tolstoy's biography, [www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/](http://www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/)
- War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy, [www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/war\\_and\\_peace/](http://www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/war_and_peace/)
- Leo Tolstoy, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo\\_Tolstoy](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Tolstoy)
- Literary Works of Leo Tolstoy, [www.classicreader.com/author.php/aut.36/](http://www.classicreader.com/author.php/aut.36/)

## ÉMILE ZOLA: J'ACCUSE

Émile Zola (1840-1902) was an influential French literary figure. His preferred genre was fiction, but his fiction is a record of the new age, the age of “liberty and truth.” Among his many works are *The Masterpiece* (1886) and 20 volumes of novels published collectively as *Les Rougon-Macquart*. But he became famous for his accusation of the French government for its anti-Semitism, which was published on the front page of a newspaper with the title *J'accuse*. He was first convicted of libel, later pardoned, and finally exonerated posthumously.

### MR. PRESIDENT

Would you allow me, grateful as I am for the kind reception you once extended to me, to show my concern about maintaining your well-deserved prestige and to point out that your star which, until now, has shone so brightly, risks being dimmed by the most shameful and **indelible** of stains.

**Unscathed** by the vilest slander, you have won over the hearts of all. You are **radiant** in the patriotic glory of our country's alliance with Russia; you are about to preside over the solemn triumph of our World Fair, the jewel that crowns this great century of Labor, Truth, and Liberty.

But what **filth** this wretched Dreyfus affair has cast on your name, or, might I say, your reign. A court martial, under orders, has just dared to acquit that character, **Esterhazy**, the supreme insult to all truth and all justice. And now the image of France is **sullied** by this filth, and History shall record that it was under your presidency that this crime against society was committed.

As they have dared, so shall I dare. Dare to tell the truth, as I have pledged to tell it, in full, since the normal channels of justice have failed to do so. My duty is to speak out, not to become an accomplice in this travesty. My nights would otherwise be haunted by the specter of an innocent man, far away, suffering the most horrible of tortures for a crime he did not commit.

And it is to you, Mr. President that I shall proclaim this truth, with all the **revulsion** that an honest man can summon. Knowing your integrity, I am convinced that you do not know the truth. But to whom if not to you, the first magistrate of the country, shall I reveal the **vile** baseness of those who truly are guilty?

The truth, first of all, about the trial and conviction of Dreyfus.

At the root of it all is one evil man, Lt. Colonel du Paty de Clam, who was at the time a mere Major. He is the entire Dreyfus case, and it can only be understood through an honest and thorough examination that reveals his actions and responsibilities. He appears to be the shadiest and most complex of creatures, spinning outlandish intrigues, stooping to the deceptions of dime novels, complete with stolen documents, anonymous letters, meetings in deserted spots, mysterious women,



**indelible** –  
impossible to remove or forget

**unscathed** –  
not injured or harmed by something

**radiant** –  
full of happiness and love, in a way that shows in your face and makes you look attractive

**filth** –  
very offensive language, stories, or pictures about

**Count Esterhazy (Walsin-Esterhazy)** –

an officer of the General staff who was involved in the Dreyfus Case

**sullied** –  
to spoil or reduce the value of something that was perfect

**revulsion** –  
a strong feeling of shock and very strong dislike

**vile** –  
extremely unpleasant or bad

**bordereau –**

memorandum listing a series of attached documents that a mysterious traitor [Esterhazy] was peddling to Maximilian Von Schwartzkoppen, the German military attaché.

**Major Ferdinand Forzinetti (1839-1909) –**

director of the military prison of Le Cherche-Midi to which Dreyfus was consigned in the Fall of 1894, awaiting his December trial

**jolted –**

to move suddenly and roughly, or to make someone or something move in this way

**du Paty de Clam –**

the chief of French defense security intelligence in the 1890s

**a priori –**

using previous experiences or facts to decide what the likely result or effect of something will be

**sniffed –**

to perceive or detect as if by sniffing

**whiff –**

a slight sign that something dangerous, exciting, etc. might happen

**Mercier, Auguste (1833-1921) –**

general and Minister of War in France in 1893-1895

**bigotry –**

obtuse or narrow-minded intolerance, especially of other races or religions

**shrouded –**

to cover or hide something

**blighted –**

to spoil or damage something, especially by preventing people from doing what they want to do

**travesty –**

a grotesque imitation or mockery

scurrying around at night, peddling damning evidence. He was the one who came up with the scheme of dictating the text of the **bordereau** to Dreyfus; he was the one who had the idea of observing him in a mirror-lined room. And he was the one that **Major Forzinetti** caught carrying a shuttered lantern that he planned to throw open on the accused man while he slept, hoping that, **jolted** awake by the sudden flash of light, Dreyfus would blurt out his guilt.

I need say no more: let us seek and we shall find. I am stating simply that **Major du Paty de Clam**, as the officer of justice charged with the preliminary investigation of the Dreyfus case, is the first and the most grievous offender in the ghastly miscarriage of justice that has been committed.

The *bordereau* had already been for some time in the hands of Colonel Sandherr, Head of the Intelligence Office, who has since died of a paralytic stroke. Information was leaked, papers were disappearing, then as they continue to do to this day; and, as the search for the author of the *bordereau* progressed, little by little, an **a priori** assumption developed that it could only have come from an officer of the General Staff, and furthermore, an artillery officer. This interpretation, wrong on both counts, shows how superficially the *bordereau* was analyzed, for a logical examination shows that it could only have come from an infantry officer.

So an internal search was conducted. Handwriting samples were compared, as if this were some family affair, a traitor to be **sniffed** out and expelled from within the War Office. And, although I have no desire to dwell on a story that is only partly known, Major du Paty de Clam entered on the scene at the first **whiff** of suspicion of Dreyfus. From that moment on, he was the one who “invented” Dreyfus the traitor, the one who orchestrated the whole affair and made it his own. He boasted that he would confound him and make him confess all. Oh, yes, there was of course the Minister of War, General **Mercier**, a man of apparently mediocre intellect; and there were also the Chief of Staff, General de Boisdeffre, who appears to have yielded to his own religious **bigotry**, and the Deputy Chief of Staff, General Gonse, whose conscience allowed for many accommodations. But, at bottom, it all started with Major du Paty de Clam, who led them on, hypnotized them, for, as an adept of spiritualism and the occult, he could converse with spirits. No one would ever believe the experiments to which he subjected the unfortunate Dreyfus, the traps he set for him, the wild investigations, the monstrous fantasies, and the whole demented torture.

Ah, that first trial! What a nightmare it is for all who know it in its true details. Major du Paty de Clam had Dreyfus arrested and placed in solitary confinement. He ran to Mme Dreyfus, terrorized her, telling her that if she talked her husband would be ruined. Meanwhile, the unfortunate Dreyfus was tearing at his flesh and proclaiming his innocence. And this is how the case proceeded, like some fifteenth century chronicle, **shrouded** in mystery, swamped in all manner of nasty twists and turns, all stemming from one trumped-up charge, that idiot *bordereau*. This was not only a bit of cheap trickery but also the most outrageous fraud imaginable, for almost all of these notorious secrets turned out in fact to be worthless. I dwell on this, because this is the germ of it all, whence the true crime would emerge, that horrifying miscarriage of justice that has **blighted** France. I would like to point out how this **travesty** was made possible, how it sprang out of the machinations of Major du Paty de Clam, how Generals Mercier, de Boisdeffre and Gonse became so ensnared in this falsehood that they would later feel compelled to impose it as holy and indisputable truth. Having set it all in motion merely by carelessness and lack of



intelligence, they seem at worst to have given in to the religious bias of their milieu and the prejudices of their class. In the end, they allowed stupidity to prevail.

But now we see Dreyfus appearing before the court martial. Behind the closed doors, the utmost secrecy is demanded. Had a traitor opened the border to the enemy and driven the German Emperor straight to Notre-Dame the measures of secrecy and silence could not have been more stringent. The public was astounded; rumors flew of the most horrible acts, the most monstrous deceptions, lies that were an affront to our history. The public, naturally, was taken in. No punishment could be too harsh. The people clamored for the traitor to be publicly stripped of his rank and demanded to see him writhing with remorse on his rock of infamy. Could these things be true, these unspeakable acts, these deeds so dangerous that they must be carefully hidden behind closed doors to keep Europe from going up in flames? No! They were nothing but the demented fabrications of Major du Paty de Clam, a cover-up of the most preposterous fantasies imaginable. To be convinced of this one need only read carefully the accusation as it was presented before the court martial.

How **flimsy** it is! The fact that someone could have been convicted on this charge is the ultimate iniquity. I defy decent men to read it without a stir of indignation in their hearts and a cry of revulsion, at the thought of the undeserved punishment being meted out there on Devil's Island. He knew several languages. A crime! He carried no compromising papers. A crime! He would occasionally visit his birthplace. A crime! He was hard-working, and strove to be well informed. A crime! He did not become confused. A crime! He became confused. A crime! And how childish the language is, how groundless the accusation! We also heard talk of fourteen charges but we found only one, the one about the *bordereau*, and we learn that even there the handwriting experts could not agree. One of them, Mr. Gobert, faced military pressure when he dared to come to a conclusion other than the desired one. We were told also that twenty-three officers had testified against Dreyfus. We still do not know what questions they were asked, but it is certain that not all of them implicated him. It should be noted, furthermore, that all of them came from the War Office. The whole case had been handled as an internal affair, among insiders. And we must not forget this: members of the General Staff had sought this trial to begin with and had passed judgment. And now they were passing judgment once again.

So all that remained of the case was the *bordereau*, on which the experts had not been able to agree. It is said that within the council chamber the judges were naturally leaning toward **acquittal**. It becomes clear why, at that point, as justification for the verdict, it became vitally important to turn up some damning evidence, a secret document that, like God, could not be shown, but which explained everything, and was invisible, unknowable, and incontrovertible. "I deny the existence of that document. With all my strength, I deny it! Some trivial note, maybe, about some easy women, wherein a certain D... was becoming too insistent, no doubt some demanding husband who felt he wasn't getting a good enough price for the use of his wife. But a document concerning national defense that could not be produced without sparking an immediate declaration of war

**flimsy** –

not strong or well-made, and will break easily

**acquittal** –

an official statement in a court of law that someone is not guilty

tomorrow? No! No! It is a lie, all the more **odious** and cynical in that its perpetrators are getting off free without even admitting it. They stirred up all of France, they hid behind the understandable commotion they had set off, they sealed their lips while troubling our hearts and perverting our spirit. I know of no greater crime against the state.

These, Mr. President, are the facts that explain how this miscarriage of justice came about. The evidence of Dreyfus's character, his affluence, the lack of motive and his continued affirmation of innocence combine to show that he is the victim of the **lurid** imagination of Major du Paty de Clam, the religious circles surrounding him, and the "dirty Jew" obsession that is the scourge of our time. And now we come to the Esterhazy case. Three years have passed, many consciences remain profoundly troubled, become anxious, investigate, and wind up convinced that Dreyfus is innocent.

I shall not chronicle these doubts and the subsequent conclusion reached by Mr. Scheurer-Kestner. But, while he was conducting his own investigation, major events were occurring at headquarters. Colonel Sandherr had died and Lt. Colonel Picquart had succeeded him as Head of the Intelligence Office. It was in this capacity, in the exercise of his office, that Lt. Colonel Picquart came into possession of a telegram addressed to Major Esterhazy by an agent of a foreign power.

His express duty was to open an inquiry. What is certain is that he never once acted against the will of his superiors. He thus submitted his suspicions to his hierarchical senior officers, first General Gonse, then General de Boisdeffre, and finally General Billot, who had succeeded General Mercier as Minister of War. That famous much discussed Picquart file was none other than the Billot file, by which I mean the file created by a subordinate for his minister, which can still probably be found at the War Office. The investigation lasted from May to September 1896, and what must be said loud and clear is that General Gonse was at that time convinced that Esterhazy was guilty and that Generals de Boisdeffre and Billot had no doubt that the handwriting on the famous *bordereau* was Esterhazy's. This was the definitive conclusion of Lt. Colonel Picquart's investigation. But feelings were running high, for the conviction of Esterhazy would inevitably lead to a retrial of Dreyfus, an eventuality that the General Staff wanted at all cost to avoid.

This must have led to a brief moment of psychological anguish. Note that, so far, General Billot was in no way compromised. Newly appointed to his position, he had the authority to bring out the truth. He did not dare, no doubt in terror of public opinion, certainly for fear of implicating the whole General Staff, General de Boisdeffre, and General Gonse, not to mention the subordinates. So he hesitated for a brief moment of struggle between his conscience and what he believed to be the interest of the military. Once that moment passed, it was already too late. He had committed himself and he was compromised. From that point on, his responsibility only grew, he took on the crimes of others, he became as guilty as they, if not more so, for he was in a position to bring about justice and did nothing. Can you understand this: for the last year General Billot, Generals Gonse and de Boisdeffre have known that Dreyfus is innocent, and they have kept this terrible knowledge to themselves? And these people sleep at night, and have wives and children they love!

Lt. Colonel Picquart had carried out his duty as an honest man. He kept insisting to his superiors in the name of justice. He even begged them, telling them how impolitic it was to temporize in the face of the terrible storm that was **brewing** and that would break when the truth became known. This was the language that Mr. Scheurer-Kestner later used with General Billot as well, appealing to his patriotism to take charge of the case so that it would not degenerate into a public disaster. But no! The crime had been committed and the General Staff could no longer admit to it.

**odious** –  
extremely unpleasant

**lurid** –  
too brightly coloured

**brewing** –  
something that will happen  
soon

And so Lt. Colonel Picquart was sent away on official duty. He got sent further and further away until he landed in Tunisia, where they tried eventually to reward his courage with an assignment that would certainly have gotten him massacred, in the very same area where the Marquis de Mores had been killed. He was not in disgrace, indeed: General Gonse even maintained a friendly correspondence with him. It is just that there are certain secrets that are better left alone.

Meanwhile, in Paris, truth was marching on, inevitably, and we know how the long-awaited storm broke. **Mr. Mathieu Dreyfus** denounced Major Esterhazy as the real author of the bordereau just as Mr. Scheurer-Kestner was handing over to the Minister of Justice a request for the revision of the trial. This is where Major Esterhazy comes in. Witnesses say that he was at first in a panic, on the verge of suicide or running away. Then all of a sudden, emboldened, he amazed Paris by the violence of his attitude. Rescue had come, in the form of an anonymous letter warning of enemy actions, and a mysterious woman had even gone to the trouble one night of slipping him a paper, stolen from headquarters, that would save him. Here I cannot help seeing the handiwork of Lt. Colonel du Paty de Clam, with the trademark fruits of his fertile imagination. His achievement, Dreyfus's conviction, was in danger, and he surely was determined to protect it. A retrial would mean that this whole extraordinary saga, so extravagant, so tragic, with its **denouement** on Devil's Island, would fall apart! This he could not allow to happen. From then on, it became a duel between Lt. Colonel Picquart and Lt. Colonel du Paty de Clam, one with his face visible, the other masked. The next step would take them both to civil court. It came down, once again, to the General Staff protecting itself, not wanting to admit its crime, an abomination that has been growing by the minute.

In disbelief, people wondered who Commander Esterhazy's protectors were. First of all, behind the scenes, Lt. Colonel du Paty de Clam was the one who had **concocted** the whole story, who kept it going, tipping his hand with his outrageous methods. Next General de Boisdeffre, then General Gonse, and finally, General Billot himself were all pulled into the effort to get the Major acquitted, for acknowledging Dreyfus's innocence would make the War Office collapse under the weight of public contempt. And the astounding outcome of this appalling situation was that the one decent man involved, Lt. Colonel Picquart who, alone, had done his duty, was to become the victim, the one who got ridiculed and punished. O justice, what horrible despair grips our hearts? It was even claimed that he himself was the **forgery**, that he had fabricated the letter-telegram in order to destroy Esterhazy. But, good God, why? To what end? Find me a motive. Was he, too, being paid off by the Jews? The best part of it is that Picquart was himself an anti-Semite. Yes! We have before us the ignoble spectacle of men who are **sunken** in debts and crimes being hailed as innocent, whereas the honor of a man whose life is spotless is being vilely attacked: a society that sinks to that level has fallen into decay.

The Esterhazy affair, thus, Mr. President, comes down to this: a guilty man is being passed off as innocent. For almost two months we have been following this nasty business hour by hour. I am being brief, for this is but the abridged version of a story whose **sordid** pages will some day be written out in full. And so we have seen General de Pellieux, and

**Mathieu Dreyfus –**

full brother of Alfred Dreyfus

**denouement –**

the exciting last part of a story or play

**concocted –**

to invent a clever story, excuse or plan

**forgery –**

someone who illegally copies documents, money, paintings, etc.

**sunken –**

having fallen to the bottom of the sea, a lake, or a river

**sordid –**

very dirty and unpleasant

then Major Ravary conduct an outrageous inquiry from which criminals emerge glorified and honest people sullied. And then a court martial was convened. How could anyone expect a court martial to undo what another court martial had done?

I am not even talking about the way the judges were hand-picked. Doesn't the overriding idea of discipline, which is the lifeblood of these soldiers, itself, undercut their capacity for fairness? Discipline means obedience. When the Minister of War, the commander in chief, proclaims, in public and to the acclamation of the nation's representatives, the absolute authority of a previous verdict, how can you expect a court martial to rule against him? It is a hierarchical impossibility. General Billot directed the judges in his preliminary remarks, and they proceeded to judgment as they would to battle, unquestioningly. The preconceived opinion they brought to the bench was obviously the following: "Dreyfus was found guilty for the crime of **treason** by a court martial; he therefore is guilty and we, a court martial, cannot declare him innocent. On the other hand, we know that acknowledging Esterhazy's guilt would be tantamount to proclaiming Dreyfus innocent." There was no way for them to escape this rationale.

So they rendered an **iniquitous** verdict that will forever weigh upon our courts martial and will henceforth cast a shadow of suspicion on all their decrees. The first court martial was perhaps unintelligent; the second one is inescapably criminal. Their excuse, I repeat, is that the supreme chief had spoken, declaring the previous judgment incontrovertible, holy and above mere mortals. How, then, could subordinates contradict it? We are told of the honor of the army; we are supposed to love and respect it. Ah, yes, of course, an army that would rise to the first threat that would defend French soil, that army is the nation itself, and for that army we have nothing but devotion and respect. But this is not about that army, whose dignity we are seeking, in our cry for justice. What is at stake is the sword, the master that will one day, perhaps, be forced upon us. Bow and scrape before that sword, that god? No!

As I have shown, the Dreyfus case was a matter internal to the War Office: an officer of the General Staff, denounced by his co-officers of the General Staff, sentenced under pressure by the Chiefs of Staff. Once again, he could not be found innocent without the entire General Staff being guilty. And so, by all means imaginable, by press campaigns, by official communications, by influence, the War Office covered up for Esterhazy only to condemn Dreyfus once again. Ah, what a good sweeping out the government of this Republic should give to that **Jesuit**-lair, as General Billot himself calls it. Where is that truly strong, judiciously patriotic administration that will dare to clean house and start afresh? How many people I know who faced with the possibility of war, tremble in anguish knowing to what hands we are entrusting our nation's defense! And what a nest of vile intrigues, gossip, and destruction that sacred sanctuary that decides the nation's fate has become! We are horrified by the terrible light the Dreyfus affair has cast upon it all, this human sacrifice of an unfortunate man, a "dirty Jew." Ah, what a **cesspool** of folly and foolishness, what preposterous fantasies, what corrupt police tactics, what inquisitorial, tyrannical practices! What petty whims of a few higher-ups trampling the nation under their boots, ramming back down their throats the people's cries for truth and justice, with the travesty of state security as a pretext.

Indeed, it is a crime to have relied on the most squalid elements of the press, and to have entrusted Esterhazy's defense to the **vermin** of Paris, who are now gloating over the defeat of justice and plain truth. It is a crime that those people who wish to see a generous France take her place as leader of all the free and just nations are being accused of fomenting **turmoil** in the country, denounced by the very plotters who are conniving so shamelessly to foist this miscarriage of justice on the entire world. It is a crime to

**treason –**

the crime of being disloyal to your country or its government

**iniquitous –**

very unfair and morally wrong

**Jesuit –**

a man who is a member of the Roman Catholic 'Society of Jesus'

**cesspool –**

a place or situation in which people behave in a bad or immoral way

**vermin –**

unpleasant people who cause problems for society

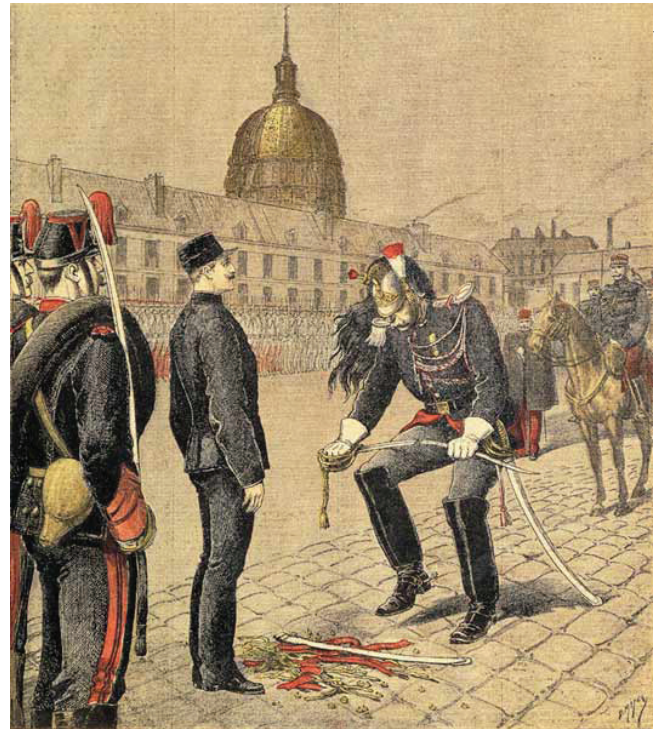
**turmoil –**

a state of confusion, excitement, or anxiety

lie to the public, to twist public opinion to insane lengths in the service of the **vilest** death-dealing machinations. It is a crime to poison the minds of the **meek** and the humble, to stoke the passions of reactionism and intolerance, by appealing to that odious anti-Semitism that, unchecked, will destroy the freedom-loving France of the Rights of Man. It is a crime to exploit patriotism in the service of hatred, and it is, finally, a crime to **ensconce** the sword as the modern god, whereas all science is toiling to achieve the coming era of truth and justice.

Truth and justice, so ardently longed for! How terrible it is to see them trampled, unrecognized and ignored! I can feel Mr. Scheurer-Kestner's soul withering and I believe that one day he will even feel sorry for having failed, when questioned by the Senate, to spill all and lay out the whole mess. A man of honor, as he had been all his life, he believed that the truth would speak for itself, especially since it appeared to him plain as day. Why stir up trouble, especially since the sun would soon shine? It is for this serene trust that he is now being so cruelly punished. The same goes for Lt. Colonel Picquart, who, guided by the highest sentiment of dignity, did not wish to publish General Gonse's correspondence. These scruples are all the more honorable since he remained mindful of discipline, while his superiors were dragging his name through the mud and casting suspicion on him, in the most astounding and outrageous ways. There are two victims, two decent men, two simple hearts, who left their fates to God, while the devil was taking charge. Regarding Lt. Col. Picquart, even this despicable deed was perpetrated: a French tribunal allowed the statement of the case to become a public indictment of one of the witnesses (Picquart), accusing him of all sorts of wrongdoing. It then chose to prosecute the case behind closed doors as soon as that witness was brought in to defend himself. I say this is yet another crime, and this crime will stir consciences everywhere. These military tribunals have, decidedly, a most singular idea of justice.

This is the plain truth, Mr. President, and it is terrifying. It will leave an **indelible** stain on your presidency. I realize that you have no power over this case, that you are limited by the Constitution and your **entourage**. You have, nonetheless, your duty as a man, which you will recognize and fulfill. As for myself, I have not despaired in the least, of the triumph of right. I repeat with the most **vehement** conviction: truth is on the march, and nothing will stop it. Today is only the beginning, for it is only today that the positions have become clear: on one side, those who are guilty, who do not want the light to shine forth, on the other, those who seek justice and who will give their lives to attain it. I said it before and I repeat it now: when truth is buried underground, it grows and it builds up so much force that the day it explodes it blasts everything with it. We shall see whether we have been setting ourselves up for the most resounding of disasters, yet to come.



MEYER, M. DÉGRADATION D'ALFRED DREYFUS, 13 JANVIER 1895.

- vilest** – extremely unpleasant or bad
- meek** – showing patience and humility; gentle
- ensconce** – to settle yourself in a place where you feel comfortable and safe
- indelible** – impossible to remove or forget
- entourage** – group of people who travel with an important person
- vehement** – showing very strong feelings or opinions



But this letter is long, Mr. President, and it is time for me to conclude it.

I accuse Lt. Col. du Paty de Clam of being the diabolical creator of this miscarriage of justice— unknowingly, I am willing to believe— and of defending this sorry deed, over the last three years, by all manner of **bizarre** and evil machinations.

I accuse General Mercier of complicity, at least by mental weakness, in one of the greatest iniquities of the century.

I accuse General Billot of having held in his hands absolute proof of Dreyfus's innocence and concealing it, thereby making himself guilty of crimes against mankind and justice, as a political expedient and a way for the compromised General Staff to save face.

I accuse General de Boisdeffre and General Gonse of complicity in the same crime, the former, no doubt, out of religious prejudice, the latter perhaps out of that **esprit de corps** that has transformed the War Office into an unassailable holy ark.

I accuse General de Pellieux and Major Ravary of conducting a fraudulent inquiry, by which I mean a monstrously biased one, as attested by the latter in a report that is an imperishable monument to naive insolence.

I accuse the three handwriting experts, Messrs. Belhomme, Varinard and Couard, of having submitted reports that were deceitful and **fraudulent**, unless a medical examination finds them to be suffering from a disease that impairs their eyesight and judgment.

I accuse the offices of the War Office of having used the press, particularly *L'Eclair* and *L'Echo de Paris*, to conduct an abominable campaign to mislead public opinion and cover up their own wrongdoing.

Finally, I accuse the first court martial of violating the law by convicting the accused on the basis of evidence that was kept secret, and I accuse the second court martial of covering up this illegality, on orders, by committing the judicial crime of acquitting a guilty man with full knowledge of his guilt.

In making these accusations I am aware that I am making myself liable to articles 30 and 31 of the July 29 1881 law on the press making libel a punishable offense. I expose myself to that risk voluntarily.

As for the people I am accusing, I do not know them, I have never seen them, and I bear them neither ill will nor hatred. To me they are mere entities, agents of harm to society. The action I am taking is no more than a radical measure to hasten the explosion of truth and justice.

I have but one passion, the search for light, in the name of humanity which has suffered so much and is entitled to happiness. My fiery protest is simply the cry of my very soul.

Let them dare, then, to bring me before a court of law and investigate in the full light of day!

I am waiting.

With my deepest respect, Mr. President

**SOURCE:** <http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/guieu/laccuse.htm>

**bizarre –**  
very unusual or strange

**esprit de corps –**  
devotion to and pride in one's group

**fraudulent –**  
intended to deceive people in an illegal way, in order to gain money, power, etc.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Was Zola confident about a fair outcome in the Dreyfus case when he embarked on this polemic?
2. Why did Zola express surprise that powerful people, normal people with wife and children, hid the truth and committed evil?
3. Does discipline mean obedience? Why, or why not?

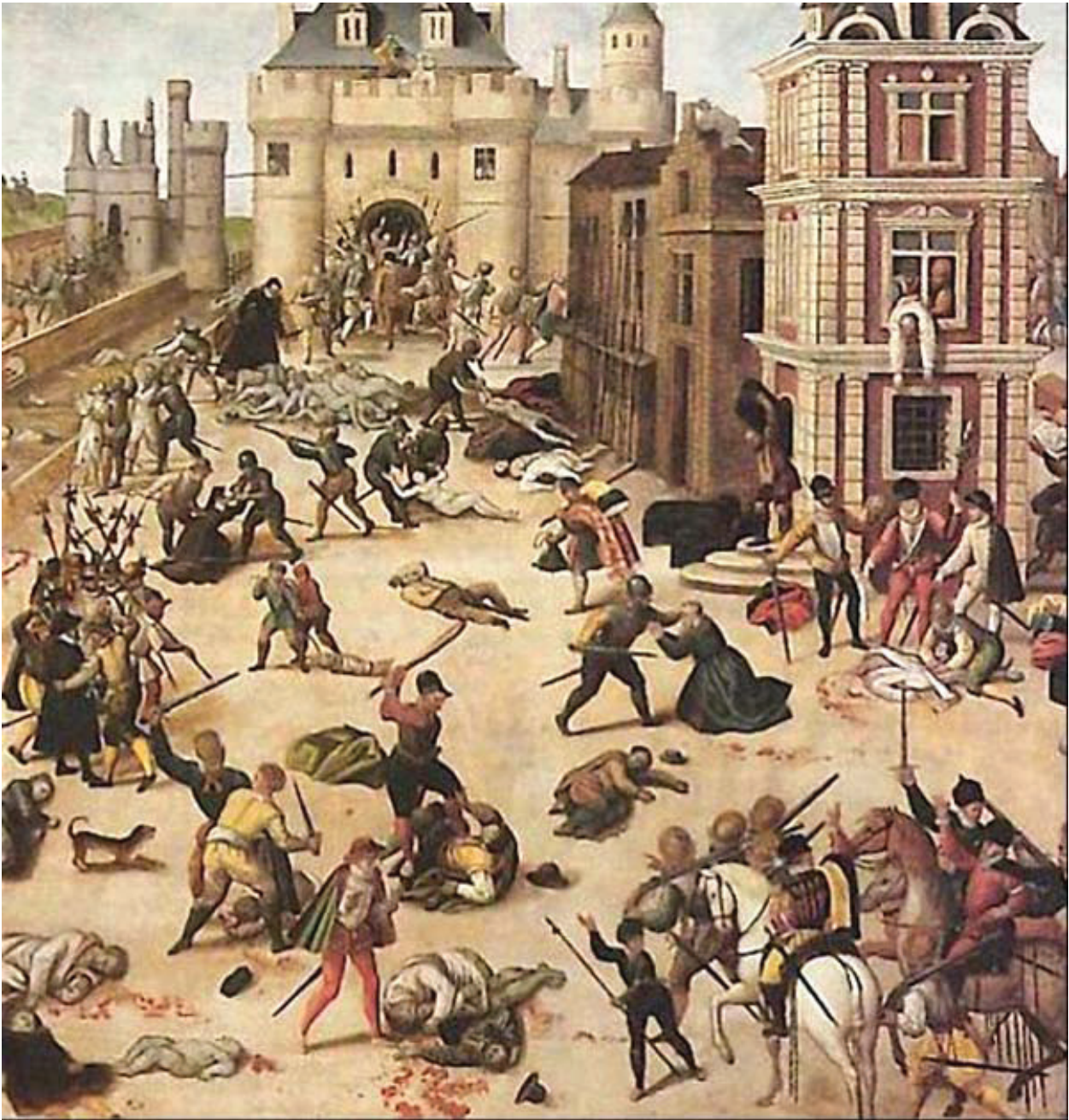
4. What does Zola mean when he states that “when truth is buried underground, it grows and it builds up so much force that the day it explodes it blasts everything with it?” Do you agree with this idea? Why or why not?
5. Do you agree that it is “a crime to exploit patriotism in the service of hatred...?”

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. In your opinion, do Harper Lee, Tolstoy and Zola agree on the value they put on justice? Why, or why not?
2. Does the literary approach make your understanding of the concept of justice easier or more difficult? How does it make it easier or how does it make it more difficult?
3. Do you see contradictions in the ideas offered by Harper Lee, Tolstoy and Zola? What are they?
4. Do all of them or any of them trust in the goodwill of their leaders? What does that say about leadership in general?
5. What is the relationship between leaders and followers according to the three thinkers? Who do you agree with?
6. What is anti-Semitism and why was it so prevalent in Europe at that time?
7. Do you witness anti-Semitism today? How do you feel about it?

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10. Émile Zola. <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/ezola.htm>



DUBOIS, FRANÇOIS. AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY MASSACRE.  
MUSÉE CANTONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS, LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

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### INTRODUCTION

From a sociological perspective the inquiry into justice tends to be into distributive justice. Who holds power and/or wealth, or to what degree do class differences exist, and how does that translate into better access or status in a society? In this chapter, texts address the motivating force for the accumulation of wealth, the values of a society that encourage the development of freedom and economic growth, and the struggle to achieve social equality.

In the first text, we find the basis for the development of the protestant ethic which is considered essential for the growth of capitalism, democracy, and rationalization of human and institutional conduct. With the protestant movement turning inward towards introspection and critical examination of one's own conduct, the desacralization of ritual and "religious rationalization of the world", the grounds for capitalism and democracy were well laid. At the root of capitalism, surprisingly, lies asceticism – this in a secular order can be seen as pleasure deferred indefinitely. Labor and the production of wealth, thus, translate into a visible evidence of rectitude of the upright individual and of God's grace, thereof. The just world is one in which labor is valued above all else, and the accumulation of wealth as godly. Indeed, "a bourgeois economic ethic" was established. Consequently, the unequal distribution of wealth was directed by providence. Thus, the search for social justice could be held at bay in the early years of the development of capitalism.

The second text argues against the notion that Confucianism was incompatible with democracy. This text does not argue that Confucianism promotes individual freedom and equality but rather that it promotes the family as the basic unit of a society in the Asian consciousness. It is the relative independence of family and its labor that promotes development, both economic and educational. This text makes the argument that education rather than individualism dictates greater participation in government (democracy).

The last text addresses the problem of social equality and the sociology of revolution. The main reasons for revolution are noted as hunger and the digestive instinct, suppression of the impulse of ownership, suppression of the instinct of self-preservation, suppression of the sexual instinct, suppression of the impulses of freedom, suppression of self-expression, and repressed instincts. Thus the search for social justice may turn violent under certain conditions. The reader might want to examine each of the above reasons in light of recent revolutions. Additionally, the reader might want to consider if justice is attainable without revolution and violence.





## MAX WEBER: THE PROTESTANT ETHIC AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

Max Weber (1864-1920), a German political economist, was the founder of the discipline of Sociology and Public Administration. His works include *Ancient Judaism*, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, *The Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*, *Economy and Society*, and *The Sociology of Politics and Government*. His most popular ideas that continue to influence social science today are the concepts of the protestant ethic and the Ideal Type, and the theories of politics as vocation and of bureaucracy.



### CHAPTER IV

#### THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS OF THE BAPTIST SECTS

The Pietism of the Continent of Europe and the **Methodism** of the **Anglo-Saxon** peoples are, considered both in their content of ideas and their historical significance, secondary movements. On the other hand, we find a second independent source of **Protestant** asceticism besides **Calvinism** in the **Baptist** movement and the sects which, in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, came directly from it or adopted its forms of religious thought, the Baptists, **Mennonites**, and, above all, the **Quakers**. With them we approach religious groups whose ethics rest upon a basis differing in principle from the Calvinistic doctrine. The following sketch, which only emphasizes what is important for us, can give no true impression of the diversity of this movement. Again we lay the principal emphasis on the development in the older capitalistic countries.

The feature of all these communities, which is both historically and in principle most important, but whose influence on the development of culture can only be made quite clear in a somewhat different connection, is something with which we are already familiar, the believer's Church. This means that the religious community, the visible Church in the language of the Reformation Churches, was no longer looked upon as a sort of trust foundation for supernatural ends, an institution, necessarily including both the just and the unjust, whether for increasing the glory of God (Calvinistic) or as a medium for bringing the means of salvation to men (Catholic and Lutheran), but solely as a community of personal believers of the reborn, and only these. In other words, not as a Church but as a Sect. This is all that the principle, in itself purely external, that only adults who have personally gained their own faith should be baptized, is meant to symbolize. The justification through this faith was for the Baptists, as they have insistently repeated in all religious discussions, radically different from the idea of work in the world in the service of Christ, such as dominated the orthodox dogma of the older Protestantism. It consisted rather in taking spiritual possession of His gift of salvation.

#### Methodism –

a group of historically related denominations of Protestant Christianity

#### Anglo-Saxons –

culturally and linguistically similar peoples living in the south and east of the island of Great Britain

#### Protestantism –

one of three main groups of Christianity

#### Calvinism –

a system of Christian theology developed by Swiss reformer John Calvin emphasizing predestination, the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Scriptures and the irresistibility of grace

#### Baptist –

reformed Christian tradition believing in individual freedom, the separation of church and state, and in baptism of voluntary, conscious believers

#### Mennonites –

group of Christian Anabaptist denominations named after and influenced by the teachings and tradition of Menno Simons (1496-1561)

#### Quakers –

commonly known as Religious Society of Friends began in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century

But this occurred through individual revelation, by the working of the Divine Spirit in the individual, and only in that way. It was offered to everyone, and it sufficed to wait for the Spirit, and not to resist its coming by a sinful attachment to the world. The significance of faith in the sense of knowledge of the doctrines of the Church, but also in that of a repentant search for divine grace, was consequently quite minimized, and there took place, naturally with great modifications, a renaissance of Early Christian pneumatic doctrines. For instance, the sect to which **Menno Simons** in his *Fondamentboek* gave the first reasonably consistent doctrine, wished, like the other Baptist sects, to be the true blameless Church of Christ; like the apostolic community, consisting entirely of those personally awakened and called by God. Those who have been born again, and they alone, are brethren of Christ, because they, like Him, have been created in spirit directly by God. A strict avoidance of the world, in the sense of all not strictly necessary intercourse with worldly people, together with the strictest bibliocracy in the sense of taking the life of the first generations of Christians as a model, were the results for the first Baptist communities, and this principle of avoidance of the world never quite disappeared so long as the old spirit remained alive.”

As a permanent possession, the Baptist sects retained from these dominating motives of their early period a principle with which, on a somewhat different foundation, we have already become acquainted in Calvinism, and the fundamental importance of which will again and again come out. They absolutely repudiated all idolatry of the flesh, as a detraction from the reverence due to God alone. The Biblical way of life was conceived by the first Swiss and South German Baptists with a radicalism similar to that of the young St. Francis, as a sharp break with all the enjoyment of life, a life modelled directly on that of the Apostles. And, in truth, the life of many of the earlier Baptists is reminiscent of that of St. Giles. But this strict observation of Biblical precepts was not on very secure foundations in its connection with the pneumatic character of the faith. What God had revealed to the prophets and apostles was not all that He could and would reveal. On the contrary, the continued life of the Word, not as a written document, but as the force of the Holy Spirit working in daily life, which speaks directly to any individual who is willing to hear, was the sole characteristic of the true Church. That, as Schwenkfeld taught as against **Luther** and later **Fox** against the **Presbyterians**, was the testimony of the early Christian communities. From this idea of the continuance of revelation developed the well-known doctrine, later consistently worked out by the Quakers, of the (in the last analysis decisive) significance of the inner testimony of the Spirit in reason and conscience. This did away, not with the authority, but with the sole authority, of the Bible, and started a development which in the end radically eliminated all that remained of the doctrine of salvation through the Church for the Quakers even with Baptism and the Communion. The Baptist denominations along with the predestinationists, especially the strict Calvinists, carried out the most radical devaluation of all sacraments as means to salvation, and thus accomplished the religious rationalization of the world in its most extreme form.

Only the inner light of continual revelation could enable one truly to understand even the Biblical revelations of God. On the other hand, at least according to the Quaker doctrine which here drew the logical conclusion, its effects could be extended to people who had never known revelation in its Biblical form. The proposition **extra ecclesiam nulla salus** held only for this invisible Church of those illuminated by the Spirit. Without the inner light, the natural man, even the man guided by natural reason, remained purely a creature of the flesh, whose godlessness was condemned by the Baptists, including the Quakers, almost even more harshly than by the Calvinists. On

**Menno Simons –**  
(1496-1561) Anabaptist  
religious leader from Friesland  
(today a province of The  
Netherlands)

**Martin Luther –**  
German theologian and  
Augustinian monk who  
inspired and began the  
Protestant Reformation

**George Fox (1624-1691) –**  
English Dissenter; often  
considered the founder of the  
Quakers

**Presbyterianism –**  
a form of Protestant  
Christianity, primarily within  
the Reformed branch of  
Western Christianity

**extra ecclesiam nulla salus –**  
Latin: “outside the church  
there is no salvation”

the other hand, the new birth caused by the Spirit, if we wait for it and open our hearts to it, may, since it is divinely caused, lead to a state of such complete conquest of the power of sin that relapses, to say nothing of the loss of the state of grace, become practically impossible. However, as in Methodism at a later time, the attainment of that state was not thought of as the rule, but rather the degree of perfection of the individual was subject to development.

But all Baptist communities desired to be pure Churches in the sense of the blameless conduct of their members. A sincere repudiation of the world and its interests, and unconditional submission to God as speaking through the conscience, were the only unchallengeable signs of true rebirth, and a corresponding type of conduct was thus indispensable to salvation. And hence the gift of God's grace could not be earned, but only one who followed the dictates of his conscience could be justified in considering himself reborn. Good works in this sense were a **causa sine qua non**. As we see, this last reasoning of Barclay, to whose exposition we have adhered, was again the equivalent in practice of the Calvinistic doctrine, and was certainly developed under the influence of the Calvinistic asceticism, which surrounded the Baptist sects in England and the Netherlands. George Fox devoted the whole of his early missionary activity to the preaching of its earnest and sincere adoption.

But, since predestination was rejected, the peculiarly rational character of Baptist morality rested psychologically above all on the idea of expectant waiting for the Spirit to descend, which even today is characteristic of the Quaker meeting, and is well analysed by Barclay. The purpose of this silent waiting is to overcome everything impulsive and irrational, the passions and subjective interests of the natural man. He must be stilled in order to create that deep repose of the soul in which alone the word of God can be heard. Of course, this waiting might result in hysterical conditions, prophecy, and, as long as eschatological hopes survived, under certain circumstances even in an outbreak of chiliastic enthusiasm, as is possible in all similar types of religion. That actually happened in the movement which went to pieces in **Munster**.

But in so far as Baptism affected the normal workaday world, the idea that God only speaks when the flesh is silent evidently meant an incentive to the deliberate weighing of courses of action and their careful justification in terms of the individual conscience. The later Baptist communities, most particularly the Quakers, adopted this quiet, moderate, eminently conscientious character of conduct. The radical elimination of magic from the world allowed no other psychological course than the practice of worldly asceticism. Since these communities would have nothing to do with the political powers and their doings, the external result also was the penetration of life in the calling with these ascetic virtues. The leaders of the earliest Baptist movement were ruthlessly radical in their rejection of worldliness. But naturally, even in the first generation, the strictly apostolic way of life was not maintained as absolutely essential to the proof of rebirth for everyone. Well-to-do bourgeois there were, even in this generation and even before Menno, who definitely defended the practical worldly vir-

**causa sine qua non** –  
Latin: "cause without which  
not"

**Munster** –  
the southernmost of the four  
provinces of Ireland

tues and the system of private property; the strict morality of the Baptists had turned in practice into the path prepared by the Calvinistic ethic. This was simply because the road to the otherworldly monastic form of asceticism had been closed as unbiblical and savouring of salvation by works since Luther, whom the Baptists also followed in this respect. Nevertheless, apart from the half-communistic communities of the early period, one Baptist sect, the so-called Dunckards (Tunker, dompelaers), has to this day maintained its condemnation of education and of every form of possession beyond that indispensable to life. And even Barclay looks upon the obligation to one's calling not in Calvinistic or even Lutheran terms, but rather Thomistically, as *naturali ratione*, the necessary consequence of the believers having to live in the world.

This attitude meant a weakening of the Calvinistic conception of the calling similar to those of Spener and the German Pietists. But, on the other hand, the intensity of interest in economic occupations was considerably increased by various factors at work in the Baptist sects; in the first place, by the refusal to accept office in the service of the State, which originated as a religious duty following from the repudiation of everything worldly. After its abandonment in principle it still remained, at least for the Mennonites and Quakers, effective in practice, because the strict refusal to bear arms or to take oaths formed a sufficient disqualification for office. Hand in hand with it in all Baptists' denominations went an invincible antagonism to any sort of aristocratic way of life. Partly, as with the Calvinists, it was a consequence of the prohibition of all idolatry of the flesh, partly a result of the aforementioned unpolitical or even antipolitical principles. The whole shrewd and conscientious rationality of Baptist conduct was thus forced into nonpolitical callings.

At the same time, the immense importance which was attributed by the Baptist doctrine of salvation to the role of the conscience as the revelation of God to the individual gave their conduct in worldly callings a character which was of the greatest significance for the development of the spirit of capitalism. We shall have to postpone its consideration until later, and it can then be studied only in so far as this is possible without entering into the whole political and social ethics of Protestant asceticism. But, to anticipate this much, we have already called attention to that most important principle of the capitalistic ethic which is generally formulated "honesty is the best policy". Its classical document is the tract of Franklin quoted above. And even in the judgment of the seventeenth century the specific form of the worldly asceticism of the Baptists, especially the Quakers, lay in the practical adoption of this maxim. On the other hand, we shall expect to find that the influence of Calvinism was exerted more in the direction of the liberation of energy for private acquisition. For, in spite of all the formal legalism of the elect, Goethe's remark in fact applied often enough to the Calvinist: "The man of action is always ruthless; no one has a conscience but an observer."

A further important element which promoted the intensity of the worldly asceticism of the Baptist denominations can, in its full significance, also be considered only in another connection. Nevertheless, we may anticipate a few remarks on it to justify the order of presentation we have chosen. We have quite deliberately not taken as a starting point the objective social institutions of the older Protestant Churches, and their ethical influences, especially not the very important Church discipline. We have preferred rather to take the results which subjective adoption of an ascetic faith might have had in the conduct of the individual. This was not only because this side of the thing has previously received far less attention than the other, but also because the effect of Church discipline was by no means always a similar one. On the contrary, the ecclesiastical supervision of the life of the individual, which, as it was practiced in the

Calvinistic State Churches, almost amounted to an inquisition, might even retard that liberation of individual powers which was conditioned by the rational ascetic pursuit of salvation, and in some cases actually did so.

The mercantilistic regulations of the State might develop industries, but not, or certainly not alone, the spirit of capitalism; where they assumed a despotic, authoritarian character, they to a large extent directly hindered it. Thus a similar effect might well have resulted from ecclesiastical regimentation when it became excessively despotic. It enforced a particular type of external conformity, but in some cases weakened the subjective motives of rational conduct. Any discussion of this point must take account of the great difference between the results of the authoritarian moral discipline of the Established Churches and the corresponding discipline in the sects which rested on voluntary submission. That the Baptist movement everywhere and in principle founded sects and not Churches was certainly as favourable to the intensity of their asceticism as was the case, to differing degrees, with those Calvinistic, Methodist, and Pietist communities which were driven by their situations into the formation of voluntary groups.

It is our next task to follow out the results of the **Puritan** idea of the calling in the business world, now that the above sketch has attempted to show its religious foundations. With all the differences of detail and emphasis which these different ascetic movements show in the aspects with which we have been concerned, much the same characteristics are present and important in all of them. But for our purposes the decisive point was, to recapitulate, the conception of the state of religious grace, common to all the denominations, as a status which marks off its possessor from the degradation of the flesh, from the world.

On the other hand, though the means by which it was attained differed for different doctrines, it could not be guaranteed by any magical sacraments, by relief in the confession, nor by individual good works. That was only possible by proof in a specific type of conduct unmistakably different from the way of life of the natural man. From that followed for the individual an incentive methodically to supervise his own state of grace in his own conduct, and thus to penetrate it with asceticism. But, as we have seen, this ascetic conduct meant a rational planning of the whole of one's life in accordance with God's will. And this asceticism was no longer an **opus supererogationis**, but something which could be required of everyone who would be certain of salvation. The religious life of the saints, as distinguished from the natural life, was the most important point – no longer lived outside the world in monastic communities, but within the world and its institutions. This rationalization of conduct within this world, but for the sake of the world beyond, was the consequence of the concept of calling of ascetic Protestantism.

Christian asceticism, at first fleeing from the world into solitude, had already ruled the world which it had renounced from the monastery and through the Church. But it had, on the whole, left the naturally spontaneous character of daily life in the world

**Puritan –**

16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century England, person seeking “purity” of worship and doctrine, especially the parties that rejected the Laudian reform of the Church of England

**opus supererogationis –**

an effort above and beyond the call of duty; supererogation



untouched. Now it strode into the market-place of life slammed the door of the monastery behind it, and undertook to penetrate just that daily routine of life with its methodicalness, to fashion it into a life in the world, but neither of nor for this world. With what result, we shall try to make clear in the following discussion.

## CHAPTER V

### ASCETICISM AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

In order to understand the connection between the fundamental religious ideas of ascetic Protestantism and its maxims for everyday economic conduct, it is necessary to examine with especial care such writings as have evidently been derived from ministerial practice. For in a time in which the beyond meant everything, when the social position of the Christian depended upon his admission to the communion, the clergyman, through his ministry, Church discipline, and preaching, exercised an influence (as a glance at collections of *consilia*, *casus conscientia*, etc., shows) which we modern men are entirely unable to picture. In such a time the religious forces which express themselves through such channels are the decisive influences in the formation of national character.

For the purposes of this chapter, though by no means for all purposes, we can treat ascetic Protestantism as a single whole. But since that side of English Puritanism which was derived from Calvinism gives the most consistent religious basis for the idea of the calling, we shall, following our previous method, place one of its representatives at the centre of the discussion. Richard Baxter stands out above many other writers on Puritan ethics, both because of his eminently practical and realistic attitude, and, at the same time, because of the universal recognition accorded to his works, which have gone through many new editions and translations. He was a Presbyterian and an apologist of the Westminster Synod, but at the same time, like so many of the best spirits of his time, gradually grew away from the dogmas of pure Calvinism. At heart he opposed Cromwell's usurpation as he would any revolution. He was unfavourable to the sects and the fanatical enthusiasm of the saints, but was very broad-minded about external peculiarities and objective towards his opponents. He sought his field of labour most especially in the practical promotion of the moral life through the Church. In the pursuit of this end, as one of the most successful ministers known to history, he placed his services at the disposal of the Parliamentary Government, of Cromwell, and of the Restoration, until he retired from office under the last, before **St. Bartholomew's** day. His *Christian Directory* is the most complete compendium of Puritan ethics, and is adjusted to the practical experiences of his own ministerial activity. In comparison we shall mention Spener's *Theologische Bedenken*, as representative of German Pietism, Barclay's *Apology* for the Quakers and some other representatives of ascetic ethics, which, however, in the interest of space, will be limited as far as possible.

Now, in glancing at Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, or his *Christian Directory*, or similar works of others, one is struck at first glance by the emphasis placed, in the discussion of wealth and its acquisition, on the ebionitic elements of the New testament. Wealth as such is a great danger; its temptations never end and its pursuit is not only senseless as compared with the dominating importance of the Kingdom of God, but it is morally suspect. Here asceticism seems to have turned much more sharply against the acquisition of earthly goods than it did in Calvin, who saw no

**St. Bartholomew's Day** –  
a wave of Catholic mob  
violence against the Huguenots  
(French Calvinist Protestants),  
traditionally believed to have  
been instigated by Catherine  
de Medici, the mother of  
Charles IX

hindrance to the effectiveness of the clergy in their wealth, but rather a thoroughly desirable enhancement of their prestige. Hence he permitted them to employ their means profitably. Examples of the condemnation of the pursuit of money and goods may be gathered without end from Puritan writings, and may be contrasted with the late mediaeval ethical literature, which was much more open-minded on this point. Moreover, these doubts were meant with perfect seriousness; only it is necessary to examine them somewhat more closely in order to understand their true ethical significance and implications. The real moral objection is to relaxation in the security of possession, the enjoyment of wealth with the consequence of idleness and the temptations of the flesh, above all of distraction from the pursuit of a righteous life. In fact, it is only because possession involves this danger of relaxation that it is objectionable at all. For the saints' everlasting rest is in the next world; on earth man must, to be certain of his state of grace, "do the works of him who sent him, as long as it is yet day". Not leisure and enjoyment, but only activity serves to increase the glory of God, according to the definite manifestations of His will.

Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins. The span of human life is infinitely short and precious to make sure of one's own election. Loss of time through sociability, idle talk, luxury, even more sleep than is necessary for health, six to at most eight hours, is worthy of absolute moral condemnation. It does not yet hold, with Franklin, that time is money, but the proposition is true in a certain spiritual sense. It is infinitely valuable because every hour lost is lost to labour for the glory of God. Thus inactive contemplation is also valueless, or even directly reprehensible if it is at the expense of one's daily work. For it is less pleasing to God than the active performance of His will in a calling. Besides, Sunday is provided for that, and, according to Baxter, it is always those who are not diligent in their callings who have no time for God when the occasion demands it.

Accordingly, Baxter's principal work is dominated by the continually repeated, often almost passionate preaching of hard, continuous bodily or mental labour. It is due to a combination of two different motives. Labour is, on the one hand, an approved ascetic technique, as it always has been in the Western Church, in sharp contrast not only to the Orient but to almost all monastic rules the world over. It is in particular the specific defence against all those temptations which Puritanism united under the name of the unclean life, whose role for it was by no means small. The sexual asceticism of Puritanism differs only in degree, not in fundamental principle, from that of monasticism; and on account of the Puritan conception of marriage, its practical influence is more far-reaching than that of the latter. For sexual intercourse is permitted, even within marriage, only as the means willed by God for the increase of His glory according to the commandment, "Be fruitful and Multiply." Along with a moderate vegetable diet and cold baths, the same prescription is given for all sexual temptations as is used against religious doubts and a sense of moral unworthiness: "Work hard in your calling." But the most important thing was that even beyond that labour came

to be considered in itself the end of life, ordained as such by God. St. Paul's "He who will not work shall not eat" holds unconditionally for everyone. Unwillingness to work is symptomatic of the lack of grace.

Here the difference from the medieval view-point becomes quite evident. Thomas Aquinas also gave an interpretation of that statement of St. Paul. But for him labour is only necessary *naturali ratione* for the maintenance of individual and community. Where this end is achieved, the precept ceases to have any meaning. Moreover, it holds only for the race, not for every individual. It does not apply to anyone who can live without labour on his possessions, and of course contemplation, as a spiritual form of action in the Kingdom of God, takes precedence over the commandment in its literal sense. Moreover, for the popular theology of the time, the highest form of monastic productivity lay in the increase of the *Thesaurus ecclesie* through prayer and chant.

Not only do these exceptions to the duty to labour naturally no longer hold for Baxter, but he holds most emphatically that wealth does not exempt anyone from the unconditional command. Even the wealthy shall not eat without working, for even though they do not need to labour to support their own needs, there is God's commandment which they, like the poor, must obey. For everyone without exception God's Providence has prepared a calling, which he should profess and in which he should labour. And this calling is not, as it was for the Lutheran, a fate to which he must submit and which he must make the best of, but God's commandment to the individual to work for the divine glory. This seemingly subtle difference had far-reaching psychological consequences, and became connected with a further development of the providential interpretation of the economic order which had begun in scholasticism.

The phenomenon of the division of labour and occupations in society had, among others, been interpreted by **Thomas Aquinas**, to whom we may most conveniently refer, as a direct consequence of the divine scheme of things. But the places assigned to each man in this cosmos follow *ex causis naturalibus* and are fortuitous (contingent in the Scholastic terminology). The differentiation of men into the classes and occupations established through historical development became for Luther, as we have seen, a direct result of the divine will. The perseverance of the individual in the place and within the limits which God had assigned to him was a religious duty. This was the more certainly the consequence since the relations of Lutheranism to the world were in general uncertain from the beginning and remained so. Ethical principles for the reform of the world could not be found in Luther's realm of ideas; in fact it never quite freed itself from Pauline indifference. Hence the world had to be accepted as it was, and this alone could be made a religious duty. But in the Puritan view, the providential character of the play of private economic interests takes on a somewhat different emphasis. True to the Puritan tendency to pragmatic interpretations, the providential purpose of the division of labour is to be known by its fruits. On this point Baxter expresses himself in terms which more than once directly recall **Adam Smith's** well-known apotheosis of the division of labour. The specialization of occupations leads, since it makes the development of skill possible, to a quantitative and qualitative improvement in production, and thus serves the common good, which is identical with the good of the greatest possible number. So far, the motivation is purely utilitarian, and is closely related to the customary view-point of much of the secular literature of the time.

**St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) –**

Dominican priest considered by many Catholics to be the Church's greatest theologian and philosopher

**Adam Smith (1723-1790) –**

Scottish political economist and moral philosopher

But the characteristic Puritan element appears when Baxter sets at the head of his discussion the statement that "outside of a well-marked calling the accomplish-

ments of a man are only casual and irregular, and he spends more time in idleness than at work”, and when he concludes it as follows: “and he (the specialized worker) will carry out his work in order while another remains in constant confusion, and his business knows neither time nor place . . . therefore is a certain calling the best for everyone”. Irregular work, which the ordinary labourer is often forced to accept, is often unavoidable, but always an unwelcome state of transition. A man without a calling thus lacks the systematic, methodical character which is, as we have seen, demanded by worldly asceticism.

The Quaker ethic also holds that a man’s life in his calling is an exercise in ascetic virtue, a proof of his state of grace through his conscientiousness, which is expressed in the care and method with which he pursues his calling. What God demands is not labour in itself, but rational labour in a calling. In the Puritan concept of the calling the emphasis is always placed on this methodical character of worldly asceticism, not, as with Luther, on the acceptance of the lot which God has irretrievably assigned to man.

Hence the question whether anyone may combine several callings is answered in the affirmative, if it is useful for the common good or one’s own, and not injurious to anyone, and if it does not lead to unfaithfulness in one of the callings. Even a change of calling is by no means regarded as objectionable, if it is not thoughtless and is made for the purpose of pursuing a calling more pleasing to God, which means, on general principles, one more useful. It is true that the usefulness of a calling, and thus its favour in the sight of God, is measured primarily in moral terms, and thus in terms of the importance of the goods produced in it for the community. But a further, and, above all, in practice the most important, criterion is found in private profitableness. For if that God, whose hand the Puritan sees in all the occurrences of life, shows one of His elect a chance of profit, he must do it with a purpose. Hence the faithful Christian must follow the call by taking advantage of the opportunity. “If God shows you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and you refuse to be God’s steward, and to accept His gifts and use them for Him, when He requireth it: you may labour to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin.”

Wealth is thus bad ethically only in so far as it is a temptation to idleness and sinful enjoyment of life, and its acquisition is bad only when it is with the purpose of later living merrily and without care. But as a performance of duty in a calling it is not only morally permissible, but actually enjoined. The parable of the servant who was rejected because he did not increase the talent which was entrusted to him seemed to say so directly. To wish to be poor was, it was often argued, the same as wishing to be unhealthy; it is objectionable as a glorification of works and derogatory to the glory of God. Especially begging, on the part of one able to work, is not only the sin of slothfulness, but a violation of the duty of brotherly love according to the Apostle’s own word. The emphasis on the ascetic importance of a fixed calling provided an

ethical justification of the modern specialized division of labour. In a similar way the providential interpretation of profit-making justified the activities of the business man. The superior indulgence of the **seigneur** and the **parvenu** ostentation of the **nouveau riche** are equally detestable to asceticism.

But, on the other hand, it has the highest ethical appreciation of the sober, middle-class, self-made Man. "God blesseth His trade" is a stock remark about those good men who had successfully followed the divine hints. The whole power of the God of the Old Testament, who rewards His people for their obedience in this life, necessarily exercised a similar influence on the Puritan who, following Baxter's advice, compared his own state of grace with that of the heroes of the Bible, and in the process interpreted the statements of the Scriptures as the articles of a book of statutes.

Of course, the words of the Old Testament were not entirely without ambiguity. We have seen that Luther first used the concept of the calling in the secular sense in translating a passage from Jesus Sirach. But the book of Jesus Sirach belongs, with the whole atmosphere expressed in it, to those parts of the broadened Old Testament with distinctly traditionalistic tendency, in spite of Hellenistic influences. It is characteristic that down to the present day this book seems to enjoy a special favour among Lutheran German peasants just as the Lutheran influence in large sections of German Pietism has been expressed by a preference for Jesus Sirach.

The Puritans repudiated the **Apocrypha** as not inspired, consistently with their sharp distinction between things divine and things of the flesh. But among the canonical books that of Job had all the more influence. On the one hand it contained a grand conception of the absolute sovereign majesty of God beyond all human comprehension, which was closely related to that of Calvinism. With that, on the other hand, it combined the certainty which, though incidental for Calvin, came to be of great importance for Puritanism, that God would bless His own in this life in the book of Job only and also in the material sense. The Oriental quietism, which appears in several of the finest verses of the Psalms and in the Proverbs, was interpreted away, just as Baxter did with the traditionalistic tinge of the passage in the **1st Epistle to the Corinthians**, so important for the idea of the calling.

But all the more emphasis was placed on those parts of the Old Testament which praise formal legality as a sign of conduct pleasing to God. They held the theory that the Mosaic Law had only lost its validity through Christ in so far as it contained ceremonial or purely historical precepts applying only to the Jewish people, but that otherwise it had always been valid as an expression of the natural law, and must hence be retained. This made it possible, on the one hand, to eliminate elements which could not be reconciled with modern life. But still, through its numerous related features, Old Testament morality was able to give a powerful impetus to that spirit of self-righteous and sober legality which was so characteristic of the worldly asceticism of this form of Protestantism."

Thus when authors, as was the case with several contemporaries as well as later writers, characterize the basic ethical tendency of Puritanism, especially in England, as English Hebrews they are, correctly understood, not wrong. It is necessary, however, not to think of Palestinian Judaism at the time of the writing of the Scriptures, but of Judaism as it became under the influence of many centuries of formalistic, legalistic, and **Talmudic** education. Even then one must be very careful in drawing parallels. The general tendency of the older Judaism toward a naive acceptance of life as such was far removed from the special characteristics of Puritanism. It was, however, just as far – and this ought not to be overlooked – from the economic eth-

**seigneur (French: "lord")** –  
a man of rank, especially a  
feudal lord

**parvenus** –  
people that are relative  
newcomers to a  
socioeconomic class

**nouveau riche** –  
French word for "newly rich"

**Apocrypha** –  
texts of uncertain authenticity  
or writings where the  
authorship is questioned,  
but accepted by the Catholic  
Church as sacred

**1<sup>st</sup> Epistle to the Corinthians** –  
book of the Bible in the New  
Testament, a letter from Paul  
of Tarsus and Sosthenes to the  
Christians of Corinth, Greece.

**Talmud** –  
record of rabbinic discussions  
pertaining to Jewish law,  
ethics, customs and history



ics of mediaeval and modern Judaism, in the traits which determined the positions of both in the development of the capitalistic ethos. The Jews stood on the side of the politically and speculatively oriented adventurous capitalism; their ethos was, in a word, that of pariah-capitalism. But Puritanism carried the ethos of the rational organization of capital and labour. It took over from the Jewish ethic only what was adapted to this purpose.

To analyse the effects on the character of peoples of the penetration of life with Old Testament norms — a tempting task which, however, has not yet satisfactorily been done even for Judaism — would be impossible within the limits of this sketch. In addition to the relationships already pointed out, it is important for the general inner attitude of the Puritans, above all, that the belief that they were God's chosen people saw in them a great renaissance. Even the kindly Baxter thanked God that he was born in England, and thus in the true Church, and nowhere else. This thankfulness for one's own perfection by the grace of God penetrated the attitude toward life of the Puritan middle class, and played its part in developing that formalistic, hard, correct character which was peculiar to the men of that heroic age of capitalism.

Let us now try to clarify the points in which the Puritan idea of the calling and the premium it placed upon ascetic conduct was bound directly to influence the development of a capitalistic way of life. As we have seen, this asceticism turned with all its force against one thing: the spontaneous enjoyment of life and all it had to offer. This is perhaps most characteristically brought out in the struggle over the Book of Sports which James I and Charles I made into law expressly as a means of counteracting Puritanism, and which the latter ordered to be read from all the pulpits. The fanatical opposition of the Puritans to the ordinances of the King, permitting certain popular amusements on Sunday outside of Church hours by law, was not only explained by the disturbance of the **Sabbath** rest, but also by resentment against the intentional diversion from the ordered life of the saint, which it caused. And, on his side, the King's threats of severe punishment for every attack on the legality of those sports were motivated by his purpose of breaking the anti-authoritarian ascetic tendency of Puritanism, which was so dangerous to the State. The feudal and monarchical forces protected the pleasure seekers against the rising middleclass morality and the anti-authoritarian ascetic conventiclers, just as today capitalistic society tends to protect those willing to work against the class morality of the proletariat and the anti-authoritarian trade union.

As against this the Puritans upheld their decisive characteristic, the principle of ascetic conduct. For otherwise the Puritan aversion to sport, even for the Quakers, was by no means simply one of principle. Sport was accepted if it served a rational purpose, that of recreation necessary for physical efficiency. But as a means for the spontaneous expression of undisciplined impulses, it was under suspicion; and in so far as it became purely a means of enjoyment, or awakened pride, raw instincts or the irrational gambling instinct, it was of course strictly condemned. Impulsive enjoy-

**Sabbath —**

weekly religious day of rest as ordained by God when creating the world

ment of life, which leads away both from work in a calling and from religion, was as such the enemy of rational asceticism, whether in the form of seigneurial sports, or the enjoyment of the dance-hall or the public-house of the common man.

Its attitude was thus suspicious and often hostile to the aspects of culture without any immediate religious value. It is not, however, true that the ideals of Puritanism implied a solemn, narrow-minded contempt of culture. Quite the contrary is the case at least for science, with the exception of the hatred of Scholasticism. Moreover, the great men of the Puritan movement were thoroughly steeped in the culture of the Renaissance. The sermons of the Presbyterian divines abound with classical allusions and even the Radicals, although they objected to it, were not ashamed to display that kind of learning in theological polemics. Perhaps no country was ever so full of graduates as New England in the first generation of its existence. The satire of their opponents, such as, for instance, Butler's **Hudibras**, also attacks primarily the pedantry and highly-trained dialectics of the Puritans. This is partially due to the religious valuation of knowledge which followed from their attitude to the Catholic fides implicit.

But the situation is quite different when one looks at non-scientific literature and especially the fine arts. Here asceticism descended like a frost on the life of "Merrie old England." And not only worldly merriment felt its effect. The Puritan's ferocious hatred of everything which smacked of superstition, of all survivals of magical or sacramental salvation, applied to the Christmas festivities and the May Pole and all spontaneous religious art. That there was room in Holland for a great, often uncouthly realistic art proves only how far from completely the authoritarian moral discipline of that country was able to counteract the influence of the court and the regents (a class of rentiers), and also the joy in life of the parvenu bourgeoisie, after the short supremacy of the Calvinistic theocracy had been transformed into a moderate national Church, and with it Calvinism had perceptibly lost in its power of ascetic influence.

The theatre was obnoxious to the Puritans, and with the strict exclusion of the erotic and of nudity from the realm of toleration, a radical view of either literature or art could not exist. The conceptions of idle talk, of superfluities, and of vain ostentation, all designations of an irrational attitude without objective purpose, thus not ascetic, and especially not serving the glory of God, but of man, were always at hand to serve in deciding in favour of sober utility as against any artistic tendencies. This was especially true in the case of decoration of the person, for instance, clothing. That powerful tendency toward uniformity of life, which today so immensely aids the capitalistic interest in the standardization of production, had its ideal foundations in the repudiation of all idolatry of the flesh.

Of course we must not forget that Puritanism included a world of contradictions, and that the instinctive sense of eternal greatness in art was certainly stronger among its leaders than in the atmosphere of the Cavaliers. Moreover, a unique genius like **Rembrandt**, however little his conduct may have been acceptable to God in the eyes of the Puritans, was very strongly influenced in the character of his work by his religious environment. But that does not alter the picture as a whole. In so far as the development of the Puritan tradition could, and in part did, lead to a powerful spiritualization of personality, it was a decided benefit to literature. But for the most part that benefit only accrued to later generations.

Although we cannot here enter upon a discussion of the influence of Puritanism in all these directions, we should call attention to the fact that the toleration of pleasure in cultural goods, which contributed to purely aesthetic or athletic enjoyment, certainly

**Hudibras –**

mock heroic poem from the 17<sup>th</sup> century written by Samuel Butler

**Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669) –**

generally considered one of the greatest painters and printmakers in European art history and the most important in Dutch history

always ran up against one characteristic limitation: they must not cost anything. Man is only a trustee of the goods which “have come to him through God’s grace”. He must, like the servant in the parable, give an account of every penny entrusted to him, and it is at least hazardous to spend any of it for a purpose which does not serve the glory of God but only one’s own enjoyment. What person, who keeps his eyes open, has not met representatives of this view-point even in the present?

I

The idea of a man’s duty to his possessions, to which he subordinates himself as an obedient steward, or even as an acquisitive machine, bears with chilling weight on his life. The greater the possessions the heavier, if the ascetic attitude toward life stands the test, the feeling of responsibility for them, for holding them undiminished for the glory of God and increasing them by restless effort. The origin of this type of life also extends in certain roots, like so many aspects of the spirit of capitalism, back into the Middle Ages. But it was in the ethic of ascetic Protestantism that it first found a consistent ethical foundation. Its significance for the development of capitalism is obvious. This worldly Protestant asceticism, as we may recapitulate up to this point, acted powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of possessions; it restricted consumption, especially of luxuries. On the other hand, it had the psychological effect of freeing the acquisition of goods from the inhibitions of traditionalistic ethics. It broke the bonds of the impulse of acquisition in that it not only legalized it, but (in the sense discussed) looked upon it as directly willed by God. The campaign against the temptations of the flesh, and the dependence on external things, was, as besides the Puritans the great Quaker apologist Barclay expressly says, not a struggle against the rational acquisition, but against the irrational use of wealth.

But this irrational use was exemplified in the outward forms of luxury which their code condemned as idolatry of the flesh, however natural they had appeared to the feudal mind. On the other hand, they approved the rational and utilitarian uses of wealth which were willed by God for the needs of the individual and the community. They did not wish to impose mortification on the man of wealth, but the use of his means for necessary and practical things. The idea of comfort characteristically limits the extent of ethically-permissible expenditures. It is naturally no accident that the development of a manner of living consistent with that idea may be observed earliest and most clearly among the most consistent representatives of this whole attitude toward life. Over against the glitter and ostentation of feudal magnificence which, resting on an unsound economic basis, prefers a sordid elegance to a sober simplicity, they set the clean and solid comfort of the middle-class home as an ideal.

On the side of the production of private wealth, asceticism condemned both dishonesty and impulsive avarice. What was condemned as covetousness, **Mammonism**,

**mammon** –  
used in the New Testament  
to describe material wealth  
or greed

etc., was the pursuit of riches for their own sake. For wealth in itself was a temptation. But here asceticism was the power “which ever seeks the good but ever creates evil” what was evil in its sense was possession and its temptations. For, in conformity with the Old Testament and in analogy to the ethical valuation of good works, asceticism looked upon the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself as highly reprehensible; but the attainment of it as a fruit of labour in a calling was a sign of God's blessing. And even more important: the religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling, the highest means to asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion of that attitude toward life which we have here called the spirit of capitalism.

When the limitation of consumption is combined with this release of acquisitive activity, the inevitable practical result is obvious: accumulation of capital through ascetic compulsion to save. The restraints which were imposed upon the consumption of wealth naturally served to increase it by making possible the productive investment of capital. How strong this influence was is not, unfortunately, susceptible to exact statistical demonstration. In New England the connection is so evident that it did not escape the eye of so discerning a historian as Doyle. But also in Holland, which was really only dominated by strict Calvinism for seven years, the greater simplicity of life in the more seriously religious circles, in combination with great wealth, led to an excessive propensity to accumulation.

That, furthermore, the tendency which has existed everywhere and at all times, being quite strong in Germany today, for middle-class fortunes to be absorbed into the nobility, was necessarily checked by the Puritan antipathy to the feudal way of life, is evident. English mercantilist writers of the seventeenth century attributed the superiority of Dutch capital to English to the circumstance that newly-acquired wealth there did not regularly seek investment in land. Also, since it is not simply a question of the purchase of land, it did not there seek to transfer itself to feudal habits of life, and thereby to remove itself from the possibility of capitalistic investment. The high esteem for agriculture as a peculiarly important branch of activity, also especially consistent with piety, which the Puritans shared, applied (for instance in Baxter) not to the landlord, but to the yeoman and farmer, in the eighteenth century not to the squire, but the rational cultivator. Through the whole of English society in the time since the seventeenth century goes the conflict between the squirearchy, the representatives of “merrie old England”, and the Puritan circles of widely-varying social influence. Both elements, that of an unspoiled naive joy of life, and of a strictly-regulated, reserved self-control, and conventional ethical conduct are even today combined to form the English national character. Similarly, the early history of the North American Colonies is dominated by the sharp contrast of the adventurers, who wanted to set up plantations with the labour of indentured servants, and live as feudal lords, and the specifically middle-class outlook of the Puritans.

As far as the influence of the Puritan outlook extended, under all circumstances, and this is, of course, much more important than the mere encouragement of capital accumulation, it favoured the development of a rational bourgeois economic life; it was the most important, and above all the only consistent influence in the development of that life. It stood at the cradle of the modern economic man.

To be sure, these Puritanical ideals tended to give way under excessive pressure from the temptations of wealth, as the Puritans themselves knew very well. With great regularity we find the most genuine adherents of Puritanism among the

classes which were rising from a lowly status, the small bourgeois and farmers, while the **beati possidentes**, even among Quakers, are often found tending to repudiate the old ideals. It was the same fate which again and again befell the predecessor of this worldly asceticism, the monastic asceticism of the Middle Ages. In the latter case, when rational economic activity had worked out its full effects by strict regulation of conduct and limitation of consumption, the wealth accumulated either succumbed directly to the nobility, as in the time before the Reformation, or monastic discipline threatened to break down, and one of the numerous reformations became necessary.

In fact the whole history of monasticism is in a certain sense the history of a continual struggle with the problem of the secularizing influence of wealth. The same is true on a grand scale of the worldly asceticism of Puritanism. The great revival of Methodism, which preceded the expansion of English industry toward the end of the eighteenth century, may well be compared with such a monastic reform. We may hence quote here a passage from **John Wesley** himself which might well serve as a motto for everything which has been said above. For it shows that the leaders of these ascetic movements understood the seemingly paradoxical relationships which we have here analysed perfectly well, and in the same sense that we have given them. He wrote: "I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this continual decay of pure religion? We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich."

There follows the advice that those who gain all they can and save all they can should also give all they can, so that they will grow in grace and lay up a treasure in heaven. It is clear that Wesley here expresses, even in detail, just what we have been trying to point out. As Wesley here says, the full economic effect of those great religious movements, whose significance for economic development lay above all in their ascetic educative influence, generally came only after the peak of the purely religious enthusiasm was past. Then the intensity of the search for the Kingdom of God commenced gradually to pass over into sober economic virtue; the religious roots died out slowly, giving way to utilitarian worldliness. Then, as **Dowden** puts

**beati possidentes** –

blessed [are] those who possess

**John Wesley (1703-1791)** –

18<sup>th</sup> century Anglican clergyman and Christian theologian who was an early leader in the Methodist movement

**John Dowden (1840-1910)** –

Irish cleric and ecclesiastical historian



it, as in **Robinson Crusoe**, the isolated economic man who carries on missionary activities on the side takes the place of the lonely spiritual search for the Kingdom of Heaven of Bunyan's pilgrim, hurrying through the market-place of Vanity. When later the principle "to make the most of both worlds" became dominant in the end, as Dowden has remarked, a good conscience simply became one of the means of enjoying a comfortable bourgeois life, as is well expressed in the German proverb about the soft pillow. What the great religious epoch of the seventeenth century bequeathed to its utilitarian successor was, however, above all an amazingly good, we may even say a pharisaically good, conscience in the acquisition of money, so long as it took place legally. Every trace of the *deplacere vix potest* has disappeared."

A specifically bourgeois economic ethic had grown up. With the consciousness of standing in the fullness of God's grace and being visibly blessed by Him, the bourgeois business man, as long as he remained within the bounds of formal correctness, as long as his moral conduct was spotless and the use to which he put his wealth was not objectionable, could follow his pecuniary interests as he would and feel that he was fulfilling a duty in doing so. The power of religious asceticism provided him in addition with sober, conscientious, and unusually industrious workmen, who clung to their work as to a life-purpose willed by God.

Finally, it gave him the comforting assurance that the unequal distribution of the goods of this world was a special dispensation of Divine Providence, which in these differences, as in particular grace, pursued secret ends unknown to men. Calvin himself had made the much-quoted statement that only when the people, i.e. the mass of labourers and craftsmen, were poor did they remain obedient to God. In the Netherlands (Pieter de la Court and others), that had been secularized to the effect that the mass of men only labour when necessity forces them to do so. This formulation of a leading idea of capitalistic economy later entered into the current theories of the productivity of low wages. Here also, with the dying out of the religious root, the utilitarian interpretation crept in unnoticed, in the line of development which we have again and again observed. Mediaeval ethics not only tolerated begging but actually glorified it in the mendicant orders. Even secular beggars, since they gave the person of means opportunity for good works through giving alms, were sometimes considered an estate and treated as such. Even the Anglican social ethic of the Stuarts was very close to this attitude. It remained for Puritan Asceticism to take part in the severe English Poor Relief Legislation which fundamentally changed the situation. And it could do that because the Protestant sects and the strict Puritan communities actually did not know any begging in their own midst.

On the other hand, seen from the side of the workers, the Zinzendorf branch of Pietism, for instance, glorified the loyal worker who did not seek acquisition, but lived according to the apostolic model, and was thus endowed with the charisma of the disciples. Similar ideas had originally been prevalent among the Baptists.

Now naturally the whole ascetic literature of almost all denominations is saturated with the idea that faithful labour, even at low wages, on the part of those whom life offers no other opportunities, is highly pleasing to God. In this respect Protestant Asceticism added in itself nothing new. But it not only deepened this idea most powerfully, it also created the force which was alone decisive for its effectiveness: the psychological sanction of it through the conception of this labour as a calling, as the best, often in the last analysis the only means of attaining certainty of grace. And on the other hand it legalized the exploitation of this specific willingness to work, in that it also interpreted the employer's business activity as a calling. It is

**Robinson Crusoe** –  
novel by Daniel Defoe,  
first published in 1719 and  
sometimes regarded as the  
first novel in English about a  
man shipwrecked on a desert  
island

obvious how powerfully the exclusive search for the Kingdom of God only through the fulfillment of duty in the calling, and the strict asceticism which Church discipline naturally imposed, especially on the propertyless classes, was bound to affect the productivity of labour in the capitalistic sense of the word. The treatment of labour as a calling became as characteristic of the modern worker as the corresponding attitude toward acquisition of the business man. It was a perception of this situation, new at his time, which caused so able an observer as Sir William Petty to attribute the economic power of Holland in the seventeenth century to the fact that the very numerous dissenters in that country (Calvinists and Baptists) “are for the most part thinking, sober men, and such as believe that Labour and Industry is their duty towards God”.

Calvinism opposed organic social organization in the fiscal-monopolistic form which it assumed in Anglicanism under the Stuarts, especially in the conceptions of Laud, this alliance of Church and State with the monopolists on the basis of a Christian, social ethical foundation. Its leaders were universally among the most passionate opponents of this type of politically-privileged commercial putting-out, and colonial capitalism. Over against it they placed the individualistic motives of rational legal acquisition by virtue of one's own ability and initiative. And, while the politically-privileged monopoly industries in England all disappeared in short order, this attitude played a large and decisive part in the development of the industries which grew up in spite of and against the authority of the State. The Puritans (Prynne, Parker) repudiated all connection with the large-scale capitalistic courtiers and projectors as an ethically suspicious class. On the other hand, they took pride in their own superior middle-class business morality, which formed the true reason for the persecutions to which they were subjected on the part of those circles. Defoe proposed to win the battle against dissent by boycotting bank credit and withdrawing deposits. The difference of the two types of capitalistic attitude went to a very large extent hand in hand with religious differences. The opponents of the Nonconformists, even in the eighteenth century, again and again ridiculed them for personifying the spirit of shopkeepers, and for having ruined the ideals of old England. Here also lay the difference of the Puritan economic ethic from the Jewish; and contemporaries (Prynne) knew well that the former and not the latter was the bourgeois capitalistic ethic.

One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture — rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling — was born; that is what this discussion has sought to demonstrate from the spirit of Christian asceticism. One has only to reread the passage from Franklin, quoted at the beginning of this essay, in order to see that the essential elements of the attitude which was there called the spirit of capitalism are the same as what we have just shown to be the content of the Puritan worldly asceticism, only without the religious basis, which by Franklin's time had died away. The idea that modern labour

has an ascetic character is of course not new. Limitation to specialized work, with a renunciation of the Faustian universality of man which it involves, is a condition of any valuable work in the modern world; hence deeds and renunciation inevitably condition each other today. This fundamentally ascetic trait of middle-class life, if it attempts to be a way of life at all, and not simply the absence of any, was what Goethe wanted to teach, at the height of his wisdom, in the *Wanderjahren*, and in the end which he gave to the life of his Faust. For him the realization meant a renunciation, a departure from an age of full and beautiful humanity, which can no more be repeated in the course of our cultural development than can the flower of the Athenian culture of antiquity.

The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which today determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. Perhaps it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt. In Baxter's view the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the "saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment". But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage.

Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. Today the spirit of religious asceticism whether finally, who knows? has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer. The rosy blush of its laughing heir, the Enlightenment, seems also to be irretrievably fading, and the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs. Where the fulfillment of the calling cannot directly be related to the highest spiritual and cultural values, or when, on the other hand, it need not be felt simply as economic compulsion, the individual generally abandons the attempt to justify it at all. In the field of its highest development, in the United States, the pursuit of wealth, stripped of its religious and ethical meaning, tends to become associated with purely mundane passions, which often actually give it the character of sport.

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development, entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the fast stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."

But this brings us to the world of judgments of value and of faith, with which this purely historical discussion need not be burdened. The next task would be rather to show the significance of ascetic rationalism which has only been touched in the foregoing sketch for the content of practical social ethics, thus for the types of organization and the functions of social groups from the conventicle to the State. Then its relations to humanistic rationalism, its ideals of life and cultural influence, further to the development of philosophical and scientific empiricism, to technical development and to spiritual ideals would have to be analysed. Then its historical

development from the mediaeval beginnings of worldly asceticism to its dissolution into pure utilitarianism would have to be traced out through all the areas of ascetic religion. Only then could the quantitative cultural significance of ascetic Protestantism in its relation to the other plastic elements of modern culture be estimated.

Here we have only attempted to trace the fact and the direction of its influence to their motives in one, though a very important point. But it would also further be necessary to investigate how Protestant Asceticism was in turn influenced in its development and its character by the totality of social conditions, especially economic. The modern man is in general, even with the best will, unable to give religious ideas the significance for culture and national character which they deserve. But it is, of course, not my aim to substitute for a one-sided materialistic an equally one sided spiritualistic causal interpretation of culture and of history. Each is equally possible, but each, if it does not serve as the preparation, but as the conclusion of an investigation, accomplishes equally little in the interest of historical truth.

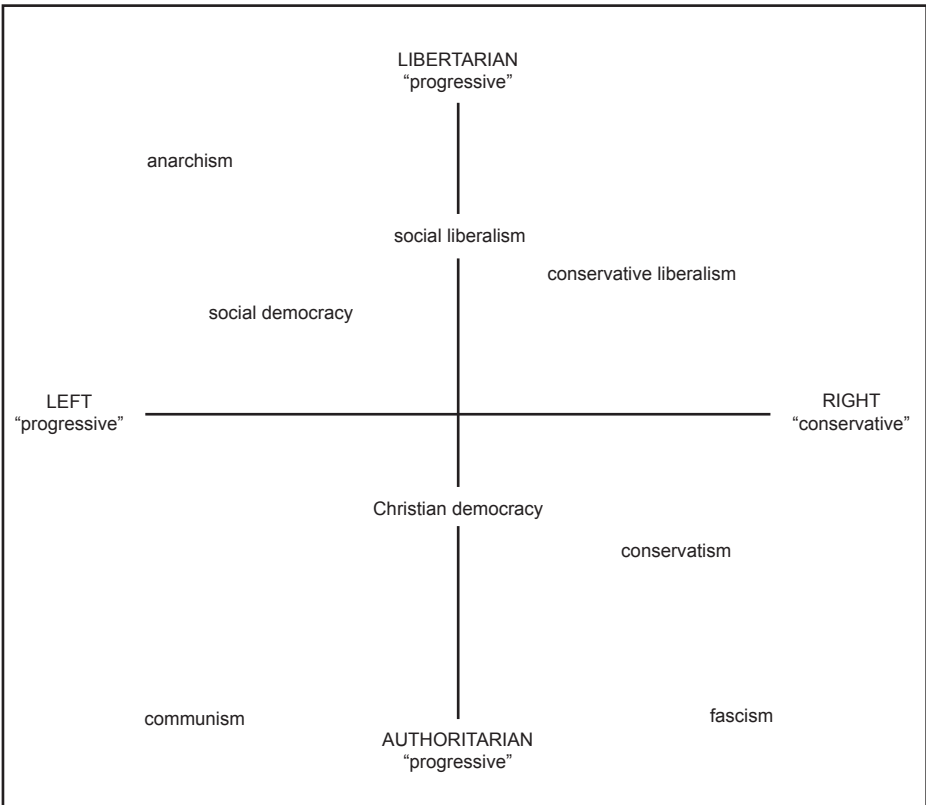
**SOURCE:** Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WEBER/header.html>

### DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS QUESTIONS:

1. Does Weber think that the visible Church is no longer looked upon as a sort of trust-foundation for supernatural ends? Is it possible to say that the significance of faith in the sense of knowledge of the doctrines of the Church is diminished?
2. How do you understand the notion of salvation and grace according to Christianity? Do you agree with “Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus” – “Outside the Church there is no salvation?”
3. Why is it so important for Max Weber to find the connection between the fundamental religious ideas of ascetic Protestantism and its maxims for everyday economic life? Do you agree with this theory of power and the role trust plays in everyday life?
4. How did Protestantism change the religious attitude towards the wealthy? How did they justify it spiritually? According to Weber, how did Christianity’s approach to business transform society in Europe and America?
5. Can you describe the life of Martin Luther as a religious leader? What are the differences between the ethics of Catholicism and the teaching of Luther?
6. What are the similarities and differences between the texts presented in the previous chapter: Camus, Tolstoy and Zola?
7. What similarities are there with Sufi teaching, especially that of the Nakshbandi, towards the wealthy, the business community, and work?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Protestant\\_Ethic\\_and\\_the\\_Spirit\\_of\\_Capitalism](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Protestant_Ethic_and_the_Spirit_of_Capitalism)
- Max Weber, Biography and Works, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max\\_Weber](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Weber)
- The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism by Max Weber, [www.faculty.rsu.edu/~felwell/TheoryWeb/readings/WeberProtestform.html](http://www.faculty.rsu.edu/~felwell/TheoryWeb/readings/WeberProtestform.html)
- Sociology and Religion, Max Weber, [www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/](http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/)



ONE POSSIBLE PROJECTION OF A POLITICAL SPECTRUM. MIGUEL DUARTE, 2006.



## FRANCIS FUKUYAMA: CONFUCIANISM AND DEMOCRACY

Francis Fukuyama (1952- ) is an American political economist and thinker. His best-known works are *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (1995), *Our Posthuman Future: Consequence of the Biotechnology Revolution* (2002), *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power and the Neoconservative Legacy* (2006).



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The **caning** for vandalism last year of American high-school student Michael Fay by the Singaporean authorities underscored the challenge now being put forth by Asian societies to the United States and other Western democracies. The issue was not simply whether Singapore, as a sovereign state, had the right to subject an American **expatriate** to its laws and legal procedures, but a much more fundamental one. In effect, the Singaporeans used the case of Michael Fay to argue in favor of their brand of authoritarianism, charging that American democracy, with its rampant social problems and general disorder, could not be regarded as a model for an Asian society. This claim forms part of a larger argument that Singaporeans, beginning with former prime minister **Lee Kuan Yew**, have been making for some time now to the effect that Western-style democracy is incompatible with **Confucianism**, and that the latter constitutes a much more coherent ideological basis for a well-ordered Asian society than Western notions of individual liberty. While Singaporeans have been the most outspoken proponents of this view, many people in other Asian societies, from Thailand to Japan, have come to share their beliefs. The standing of the United States in Asia has already been affected: on the issue of using trade policy to pressure China into bettering its human rights record, Washington had few allies in the region, and it was forced to back down on its threat of withdrawing China's most-favored-nation (MFN) status.

Are Confucianism and Western-style democracy fundamentally incompatible? Will Asia formulate a new kind of political-economic order that is different in principle from Western capitalist democracy? The fact is that there are fewer points of incompatibility between Confucianism and democracy than many people in both Asia and the West believe. The essence of postwar "modernization theory" is correct: Economic development tends to be followed by political liberalization. If the rapid economic development that Asia has experienced in recent years is sustained, the region's democratization will continue as well. In the end, however, the contours of Asian democracy may be very different from those of contemporary American democracy, which has experienced serious problems of its own in reconciling individual rights with the interests of the larger community.

**caning –**

to punish someone, especially a child, by hitting them with a stick

**expatriate –**

someone who lives in a foreign country

**Lee Kuan Yew –**

was the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore from 1959 to 1990.

**Confucianism –**

(literally "The School of the Scholars"; or "The Teachings of Confucius") is a Chinese ethical and philosophical system originally developed from the teachings of the early Chinese sage Confucius

## MODERNIZATION THEORY CONFIRMED

Although it is no longer considered “politically correct” to advocate modernization theory, it has actually stood the test of time relatively well. In a **seminal** article published in 1959, Seymour Martin Lipset noted the empirical correlation between a high level of economic development and stable democracy. Although the thesis that economic development gives rise to political liberalization has been debated endlessly since then, it was strengthened considerably with the democratic transitions that began in the mid-1970s, and it is more valid today than it was when it was first enunciated.

The correlation between development and democracy is nowhere better illustrated than in Asia. The states of the region have established stable democratic institutions roughly in the same order in which they began to develop economically, beginning with Japan and extending now to South Korea (which held its first completely free elections in 1992) and Taiwan (which is scheduled to hold free legislative elections at the end of this year). There have been a number of failed prodemocracy movements in China, Thailand, and Burma, but even these cases reveal a link between development and democracy. In the Chinese and Thai cases, in particular, the leaders of the prodemocracy movements tended to be relatively well educated, “middle-class,” and cosmopolitan citizens—the type of individual that began to emerge during earlier periods of rapid economic growth. . The only anomaly in this picture is the Philippines, which, despite having the lowest per-capita income of all the noncommunist states in Southeast Asia, has been a democracy since the election of Corazon Aquino in 1986. Clearly, though, democracy would never have come to the Philippines had it not been for the direct influence of the United States; moreover, democratic practice is not well institutionalized there, and the country retains a semifeudal authority structure in the countryside and features one of Asia’s few remaining communist insurgencies. It would not be surprising, in fact, if Philippine democracy were suddenly to collapse, a scenario that is difficult to imagine in South Korea or Japan.

Although modernization theory proposed a correlation between development and democracy, it was **hazy** on what the causal connections between the two phenomena were. Some proponents, such as Talcott Parsons, argued that democracy was more “functional” than authoritarianism in a modern industrialized society. I have argued elsewhere that the linkage between the two cannot be understood in economic terms. That is, the fundamental impulse toward liberal democracy springs from a noneconomic desire for “recognition.” The relationship between economic modernization and democracy is therefore indirect: Economic modernization raises living and educational standards and liberates people from a certain kind of fear brought on by life close to the subsistence level. This permits people to pursue a broader range of goals, including those that remained latent in earlier stages of economic development. Among those latent urges is the desire to be recognized as an adult with a certain basic human dignity—a recognition that is achieved through participation in the political system. Poor peasants in the Philippines or El Salvador can be recruited by landlords to take up arms and form **death squads**, because they can be manipulated relatively easily on the basis of their immediate needs and are accustomed to obeying traditional sources of authority. It is much more difficult to persuade educated, middle-class professionals to obey the authority of a leader simply because he is wearing a uniform

The case of Japan seems to provide further confirmation of the proposed link between development and democracy. Japan, of course, has been a formal democracy since

### seminal –

a seminal article, book, etc. which is important, and influences the way things develop in the future

### hazy –

an idea, memory, etc. that is not clear or exact

### death squads –

a group of people who have been ordered to kill someone’s political opponents

General MacArthur imposed a democratic constitution on the country during the U.S. occupation. Nevertheless, many observers both within and outside of Japan have noted that Western-style democracy, with its emphasis on public contestation and individualism, did not seem to sit well with traditional Japanese culture. Some commentators even went so far as to argue that, despite its democratic legal structure, Japan was not a democracy in the Western sense at all, but rather a mildly authoritarian country run by an alliance of bureaucrats, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) officials, and business leaders.

The political upheaval that has occurred in Japan since the fall of the LDP government in July 1993, however, would seem to bear out some of the premises of modernization theory. The Japanese people deferred to the authority of the bureaucracy-LDP-business triangle for much of the postwar period because that alliance delivered a high rate- of economic growth to a nation that had been devastated by the Pacific war. Like many an authoritarian leadership, however, it ultimately failed to hold up its end of the **bargain**: it presided over the creation and subsequent puncturing of a “bubble economy” in the 1980s, and suffered from creeping and pervasive corruption. There is no guarantee that such a system will be self-correcting in the absence of popular “feedback loops”; moreover, as the Japanese population grew wealthier and more able to take its prosperity for granted, its willingness to defer to the to the political leadership and overlook abuses diminished. Although it is very difficult to predict the out come of Japan’s current political struggle, it seems unlikely that the old ruling triangle will carry its power and authority intact into the next generation.

Modernization theory came under heavy attack in the 1960s and 1970s from two principal sources. First, Marxist critics argued that capitalist democracy was not the proper goal of political and economic development, and that modernization theorists were apologists for an unjust global economic order. Another group of critics, who might be labeled “cultural relativists,” argued that modernization theory was Eurocentric and did not take account of the diversity of ends dictated by the world’s different cultures. While the Marxist critique is less prominent today owing to the collapse of communism, the relativist critique remains very powerful, and has intimidated many people out of arguing for the existence of a universally valid development path whose ultimate outcome is free-market democracy.

Some of the criticisms to which modernization theory was subjected did have a certain amount of validity. Clearly, for the theory to retain its strength, it would have to be modified somewhat in light of subsequent experience. The developmental history of England or the United States cannot be held up as a standard against which subsequent experiences must be measured. It is evident that there is not a single path to modernity: the “late” modernizers have taken a very different route to development (with the state playing a more powerful role) than earlier ones. Indeed, it is difficult to come up with a universally valid rule for the sequencing of political and economic liberalization. Although many states, particularly in Asia,

**bargain –**  
something you buy cheaply or  
for less than its usual price

have succeeded in following the “authoritarian” transition to democracy, it would have been absurd to propose that the former communist regimes in Eastern Europe delay democratization until their economies were liberalized. Moreover, there is considerable variation in the way that both capitalism and democracy are implemented: Japanese corporations and labor markets are structured very differently from those, in the United States, and there is no reason to think that Japanese and American practices will converge any time soon. Finally, the time frame required for economic development to produce conditions favorable to stable democracy is longer than anyone anticipated 40 years ago: sustained economic growth is difficult to achieve, and democratic institutions are even harder to create.

Nonetheless, a significant connection between development and democracy has been borne out over the past 50 years. Few of the original formulators of modernization theory are still around to defend it and willing to do so. But they gave up too easily. If we define democracy and capitalism sufficiently broadly, and are not dogmatic about the means by which either one can be achieved, then the experience of the Asian nations can be seen as proof of the underlying hypothesis.

#### Asia's Confucian Traditions

Despite the positive relationship that has obtained between development and democracy in the past, many observers today would argue that Asia will not continue to democratize in the future, or that the form democracy takes there will be so specifically rooted in Asian traditions as to be unrecognizable to Westerners.

The most prominent proponent of an Asian alternative to democracy has been former Singaporean prime minister Lee Kuan Yew. Singapore under Lee developed a model of what might be called a “soft” or **paternalistic** form of authoritarianism, which combined capitalism with an authoritarian political system that suppressed freedom of speech and political dissent while intervening, often intrusively, in its citizens' personal lives. Lee has argued that this model is more appropriate to East Asia's Confucian cultural traditions than is the Western democratic model. In fact, he has said that Western-style democracy would have deleterious effects in a society like that of Singapore, encouraging permissiveness, social instability, and economically irrational decision making.

Many Western authorities on democracy would agree with this assessment of the relationship between Confucianism and democracy. Samuel P. Huntington, for example, has written that “Confucian democracy” is a contradiction in terms:

Almost no scholarly disagreement exists regarding the proposition that traditional Confucianism was either undemocratic or antidemocratic. . . . Classic Chinese Confucianism and its derivatives in Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan, and (in **diluted** fashion) Japan emphasized the group over the individual, authority over liberty, and responsibilities over rights. Confucian societies lacked a tradition of rights against the state; to the extent that individual rights did exist, they were created by the state. Harmony and cooperation were preferred over disagreement and competition. The maintenance of order and respect for hierarchy were central values. The conflict of ideas, groups, and parties was viewed as dangerous and illegitimate. Most important, Confucianism merged society and the state and provided no legitimacy for autonomous social institutions at the national level.

According to Huntington, the only Asian countries to experience democracy prior to 1990 were Japan and the Philippines, and democratic transitions there were possible only because both countries were influenced directly by the United States and were less Confucian than other Asian societies.

In my view, the arguments of both Huntington and Lee greatly overstate the

#### paternalistic –

when people in charge of an organization or society protect the members and give them what they need but do not allow them any freedom or responsibility

#### diluted –

a dilute liquid has been made weaker by the addition of water or another liquid

obstacles that Confucianism poses to the spread of a political system that is recognizably democratic in a Western sense. The most striking area of apparent incompatibility between democracy and Confucianism is the latter's lack of support for individualism or a transcendent law that would stand above existing social relationships and provide the ground for individual conscience as the ultimate source of authority. Despite this important difference, it is not clear that a Confucian society is incapable of creating workable democratic institutions that meet democracy's essential requirements.

Let us begin with the ways in which Confucianism is obviously compatible with democracy. First, the traditional Confucian examination system was a meritocratic institution with potentially **egalitarian** implications. In traditional China, the examination system was not-for various reasons-truly open to all who were qualified (neither, of course, are Harvard and Yale). In their modern form, however, the examination systems implemented in many Confucian societies as gateways into higher-educational systems and bureaucracies are significant paths to upward mobility that reinforce the relatively egalitarian income distributions that prevail throughout much of Asia. The second main area of compatibility is the Confucian emphasis on education itself. Although an educated populace is seldom noted as a formal requirement of democracy, in practice a society's general level of education has been an important underpinning of democratic institutions. Without a high level of literacy, people cannot know about and therefore participate in democratic debate; moreover, as indicated above, education tends to make people wealthier and more concerned with noneconomic issues such as recognition and political participation. Finally, like most Asian ethical systems, Confucianism is relatively tolerant. In the past, Confucianism has coexisted with other religions, notably Buddhism and Christianity; while Confucianism's record of tolerance is not perfect (witness the periodic persecutions of Buddhists in China), it is arguably better than that of either Islam or Christianity.

The compatibility of Confucianism with modern democracy goes even deeper than this, however, and in ways that are less often recognized. Huntington describes Confucianism as if it were comparable to Islam, being essentially a doctrine that unified the political and social spheres and legitimated the state's authority in all areas of life. Yet to say that Confucianism merely strengthens the group against the individual and the state against all subordinate organizations or institutions vastly oversimplifies the doctrine's real impact. The scholar of Confucianism **Tu Wei-ming** distinguishes between what he calls "political Confucianism," which legitimates a hierarchical political system culminating in the emperor, and what he calls the "Confucian personal ethic," which regulates day-to-day life. In China, political Confucianism was very much tied to the imperial system and its supporting bureaucracy of gentlemen-scholars. This system was abolished with the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Despite efforts by the Communists in **Beijing** and

**egalitarian** –

based on the belief that everyone is equal and should have equal rights

**Tu Wei-ming** –

is an ethicist and a New Confucian

**Beijing** –

a metropolis in northern China



other Sinitic governments overseas (such as that of Singapore) to appropriate the legitimacy of the imperial system, the continuity of political Confucianism has been **disrupted** in a fundamental sense. Tu argues that in fact the more important legacy of traditional Confucianism is not its political teaching, but rather the personal ethic that regulates attitudes toward family, work, education, and other elements of daily life that are valued in Chinese society. It is these attitudes, rather than inherited ideas about political authority, that account for the economic success of the overseas Chinese.

One could go even further and argue that the essence of traditional Chinese Confucianism was never political Confucianism at all, but rather an intense **familism** that took **precedence** over all other social relations, including relations with political authorities. That is, Confucianism builds a well-ordered society from the ground up rather than the top down, stressing the moral obligations of family life as the basic building block of society. Beyond the traditional Chinese family, or *jia*, are lineages and larger kinship groups; the state and other political authorities are seen as a kind of family of families that unites all Chinese into a single social entity. But the bonds within the immediate family take precedence over higher sorts of ties, including obligations to the emperor. In classical Chinese Confucianism, one's obligation to one's father is greater than to the police; in a famous story related about Confucius, "The king boasted to Confucius that virtue in his land was such that if a father stole, his son would report the crime and the criminal to the state. Confucius replied that in his state virtue was far greater, for a son would never think of treating his father so." (The Chinese Communists tried to change this state of affairs, but that is a different story.) Of course, in a perfectly ordered Confucian society, such conflicts between rival obligations should not occur. But occur they do, and while in classical Chinese dramas these conflicting obligations were often portrayed as a source of anguish, the superior authority of the family was made quite clear in the end.

In this respect, Chinese Confucianism is very different from the version that evolved in Japan when neo-Confucianism was imported into the country after the end of the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.). The Japanese modified Chinese Confucianism in certain strategic ways to make it compatible with their own imperial system. In China, even the emperor's authority was not absolute; it could be undermined altogether if his own immorality caused him to lose the "mandate of heaven." The succession of Chinese dynasties over the centuries is testimony to the impermanence of Chinese political authority. Japan, by contrast, has been characterized by a single, unbroken dynastic tradition since the mythical founding of the country, and no political equivalent of the loss of the "mandate of heaven" ever emerged by which a Japanese emperor could lose his throne. The Japanese were careful not to allow the political dictates of Confucianism to impinge on the prerogatives of the emperor and the ruling political class. Hence in Japan obligations to the emperor were superior to obligations to one's father, and a son facing the dilemma of reporting on his father would be required to favor the state over the family. In Chinese Confucianism, the family (or lineage) is a **bulwark** against the power of the state; in Japan, the family is a much weaker rival to political authority. Hence Huntington's characterization of Confucianism as inevitably supporting state power over subordinate social groups applies much more readily to Japanese than to Chinese Confucianism. Yet it is Japan, rather than China, that has been democratic for the past 45 years.

**disrupted –**

to prevent something from continuing in its usual way by causing problems

**familism –**

connected with a family or typical of a family

**precedence –**

when someone or something is considered to be more important than someone or something else, and therefore comes first or must be dealt with first

**bulwark –**

something that protects you from an unpleasant

### Granite and Sand

This contrast between Chinese and Japanese Confucianism has given rise to several important differences between the two countries' political cultures—differences that should have implications for the prospects of Western-style democracy. Given the strength of **intrafamilial** bonds within a traditional Chinese society, ties between people unrelated to each other are relatively weak. In other words, in a Chinese society there is a relatively high degree of distrust between people who are not related. The Chinese may be characterized as family-oriented, but they are not group-oriented, as the Japanese are frequently said to be. The competition between families frequently makes Chinese society appear more individualistic to Western observers than Japanese society, and is the basis for the famous remark that while the Japanese are like a block of granite, the Chinese are like a tray of sand, with each grain representing a single family.

Because of the primacy of the family in China, political authority there has always been weaker than in Japan, and political instability much closer to the surface. Chinese families have traditionally been suspicious of government authority, and many Chinese family businesses—both in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and among the overseas (or Nanyang) Chinese—go through elaborate machinations to hide their affairs from the tax collector and other officials. Nationalism and national identity have traditionally been much weaker in China than in Japan: there is little sense in China of the “us-against-them” mentality that has at times characterized Japanese nationalism. In business relationships and even political affiliations, loyalties to family, lineage, and region frequently take precedence over the mere fact of being Chinese. It has often been remarked that the level of citizenship is lower in China than it is in many other societies: provided the state leaves them alone, most Chinese do not feel any particular obligations to the larger society in which they live. And there is certainly no generalized moral obligation to do right by strangers simply because they are human beings, as there is in Christian culture. Because they lack the intense feeling of natural unity that the Japanese have, the Chinese find political instability, in a sense, more psychologically threatening.

Paradoxically, the weaker Chinese deference to authority creates a greater need for an authoritarian political system in Chinese societies. Precisely because state authority is less respected in China, the danger of social chaos emerging in the absence of an overt, repressive state structure is greater there than in Japan. The fear of China's fragmenting and becoming dangerously unstable was clearly one of the factors motivating the Chinese Communist leadership in its crackdown on the prodemocracy movement at Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Fear of disintegration is what continues to make China's rulers reluctant to liberalize the political system significantly. One is led to suspect that the emphasis on political authoritarianism in Singapore and other Southeast Asian states is less a reflection of those societies' self-discipline—as they would have outsiders

**intrafamilial** –  
connected with a family or  
typical of a family

believe-than of their rather low level of spontaneous citizenship and corresponding fear of coming apart in the absence of coercive political authority. In Japan, by contrast, it is not necessary for the state to legislate against failing to flush public toilets or writing on walls, because the society itself has absorbed and internalized such rules.

The relationship between Confucianism and democracy, then, is far more complex than many commentators have indicated. Chinese Confucianism, in particular, does not legitimate deference to the authority of an all-powerful state that leaves no scope for the development of an independent civil society. If civil society is weak in China, that weakness is due not to a statist ideology, but rather to the strong familism that is basic to Chinese culture, and the consequent reluctance of the Chinese to trust people outside of their kinship groups. The problem that will confront the institutionalization of democracy in China in the future will not be a culturally ingrained deference to state authority, but a sense of citizenship too feeble to generate spontaneous coherence or call forth sacrifices for the sake of national unity. As in other familistic societies in Southern Europe or Latin America, there will be a need to bring the “morality of the street” more in line with the morality of the family.

The statist, group-oriented attitudes toward authority that Huntington believes to be characteristic of Confucianism **per se** are more properly characteristic of Japan and Japanese Confucianism, and were indeed manifest in Japan in an extreme form during the 1930s. As a result of the disastrous experience of the Second World War, nationalism and statism have been delegitimized, and replaced by a workable democracy. Traditionally **deferential** attitudes toward political authority continued to be evident, however, in the long-unchallenged rule of the bureaucracy-LDP-business triangle in the postwar period. As noted earlier, however, it is not clear that these attitudes will continue to pose an insurmountable barrier to a more participatory, Western form of democracy featuring multiparty contestation for power.

The ways in which Confucian culture-both Chinese and Japanese-differs significantly from the Christian and democratic culture of the West have to do with the status of the individual. Although Chinese familism may appear individualistic in some respects, it is not the same as the individualism that **undergirds** the Western ideal. That is, individuals in China do not have a source of legitimate authority on the basis of which they can revolt against their families and the web of social ties into which they are born. Christianity provides the concept of a transcendent God whose Word is the highest source of right. God’s laws take precedence over all other obligations-remember that God required Abraham to be willing to sacrifice his son-and this transcendent source of morality is what enables an individual in the West to repudiate all forms of social obligation, from the family all the way up to the state. In modern liberalism, the Christian concept of a universal God is replaced with the concept of an underlying human nature that becomes the universal basis of right. Liberal rights apply to all human beings as such, just as God’s law did in Christianity, transcending any particular set of real-world social obligations. While not all of today’s American human rights advocates working for organizations like Asia Watch or Amnesty International would describe themselves as believing Christians, they all share their Christian culture’s emphasis on universal rights and, consequently, individual conscience as the ultimate source of authority. This, it is safe to say, does not have a counterpart in any Confucian society. It is this difference that is at the root of contemporary disagreements between Americans and Asians over human rights policy.

In evaluating the claim of a fundamental incompatibility between Confucianism and liberal democracy, we should remember that many experts once thought that Confucianism presented insuperable obstacles to capitalist economic modernization

**per se –**

used to say that something is being considered alone, not with other connected things

**deferential –**

polite behaviour that shows that you respect someone and are therefore willing to accept their opinions or judgment

**undergirds –**

if you gird for something, or gird yourself for something, especially something difficult, you prepare for it

as well. While Huntington argues-correctly-that modern liberal democracy grew out of Christian culture, it is clear that democracy emerged only after a long succession of incarnations of Christianity that were inimical to liberal tolerance and democratic contestation. All in all, the obstacles posed by Confucian culture do not seem any greater than those posed by other cultures; indeed, when compared to those of Hinduism or Islam, they appear to be much smaller.

### An Attitudinal Shift

The upshot of all this is that Confucianism by no means mandates an authoritarian political system. In Singapore, the current political authorities are appealing to Confucian traditions somewhat dishonestly to justify an intrusive and unnecessarily paternalistic political system. Other Confucian societies like Japan and South Korea have been able to accommodate a greater degree of political participation and individual liberty than Singapore without compromising their own fundamental cultural values, and Taiwan is moving rapidly in the same direction. I see no reason why Singapore should not be able to follow this path. If economic modernization does lead to demands for greater recognition, it will be the next generation of Singaporeans who will be voicing the strongest demands for greater political participation and individual freedom-not because these are Western values, but because they meet the needs of a middle-class, well-educated populace.

On the other hand, virtually no one in Asia today believes it likely that Asian societies will ultimately converge with the particular model of liberal democracy represented by the contemporary United States, or, indeed, that such a state of affairs is remotely desirable. This represents quite a change from the early postwar period, when many people-and not just in Asia-believed that the United States was the exemplar of a modern democracy, to be revered and emulated. This attitudinal shift can be traced to two subsequent developments. The first was East Asia's spectacular economic growth, which many people attributed to the region's Confucian traditions. The second was a perceived decline in the American standard of living, measured not in terms of per-capita GDP, but rather in terms of growing crime, the breakdown of the family, a loss of civility, racial tensions, and illegal immigration-problems that showed no sign of **abating**. In the view of many Asians, individualism was far too rampant in American society and was leading to social chaos, with potentially devastating economic and political consequences. Thus some began to argue that a "soft" authoritarian system-rooted in Confucian principles and characterized by less individual liberty and more social discipline-not only would result in faster economic growth, but would create a much more satisfying society in terms of overall quality of life.

There is both an element of truth and a great deal of exaggeration in this Asian analysis of what currently **ails** the United States. It is true that the individualism deeply **ingrained** in the theoretical principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and legal system has no counterpart in Asian culture. It is thus no accident that American political discourse is framed largely in terms of conflicting individual rights. Yet as **Mary Ann Glendon** has

**abate –**

to become less strong

**ails –**

the thing or things that are causing difficulties for something

**ingrained –**

ingrained attitudes or behaviour are firmly established and therefore difficult to change

**Mary Ann Glendon –**

Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard University Law School

pointed out, this “rights talk” is a dialect unique to the United States, with its Lockean and Jeffersonian traditions; in most modern European countries, individual rights are carefully balanced in constitutional law against responsibilities to the community. Moreover, even in the American tradition, the inherent individualism of the constitutional-legal system has always been counterbalanced in practice by strongly communitarian social habits. This high degree of communal participation derived originally from religion (that is, the sectarian form of Protestantism dominant in the United States) and later from the communal habits of America’s ethnic groups as well. **Alexis de Tocqueville** noted in the 1830s that Americans were very good at associating with one another and subordinating their individualism to voluntary groups of one type or another.

It is only in the past couple of generations that the balance between individualism and communalism in the United States has been tipped decisively in favor of the former. For a variety of historical reasons, communal institutions have grown weaker-or have been deliberately undermined by the state-while the number and scope of basic individual rights to which Americans feel they are entitled have steadily increased. The causes of the problem-and possible solutions to it-are well beyond the scope of the present essay, but the result has been a diminution of the appeal to Asians of the American model of democracy. Nor are Asians alone in this view; judging from the positive reaction that many Americans exhibited to the caning of Michael Fay in Singapore, this model has become much less appealing to Americans themselves.

### Finding a Balance

To many Asians, the social problems currently plaguing the United States are problems of liberal democracy per se. To the extent that this perception continues, the future of democracy in Asia will depend less on the theoretical compatibility or incompatibility of Confucianism with democratic principles than on whether people in Asia feel that they want their society to resemble that of the United States.

Asia is therefore at a very interesting crossroads. It is quite possible that the modernization hypothesis will continue to be borne out in the future, and that rising **per-capita** incomes and educational levels in the region will be accompanied by an increasing democratization of political systems. As noted above, this is because there is a universal tendency of human beings to seek recognition of their dignity through a political system that allows them to participate as adult human beings. On the other hand, people’s choices are strongly influenced by the alternatives that they see directly at hand, and if East Asia continues to prosper and the United States makes little or no progress in solving its economic and social problems, the Western democratic model will become less and less attractive. Japan’s experience will be critical. If Japan emerges from the current recession with its people believing that the country’s economic problems were the result of the accumulated inefficiencies of the period of LDP domination, then there will be a sustained **impetus** for reform of the political system and enhanced prospects for a more genuinely democratic Japan. Yet there is a real possibility that the reform effort itself will become the **scapegoat** for Japan’s economic woes, in which case a sentiment favoring restoration of a more authoritarian kind of political system may take root.

I do not have any particular prediction to make, concerning either Japan or Asia as a whole. What I hope to have shown, however, is that there is no fundamental cultural obstacle to the democratization of contemporary Confucian societies, and there is some reason to believe that these societies will move in the direction of greater political liberalization as

**Alexis-Charles-Henri Clérel de Tocqueville (1805-1859) –**

a French political thinker and historian best known for his *Democracy in America*

**per capita incomes –**

used to describe the average amount of something in a particular place, calculated according to the number of people who live there

**impetus –**

an influence that makes something happen or makes it happen more quickly

**scapegoat –**

someone who is blamed for something bad that happens, even if it is not their fault



they grow wealthier. We should regard assertions that authoritarian political systems are necessarily more Confucian than democratic systems with a certain amount of skepticism. In fact, Confucian values might work quite **weir** in a liberal society (as they clearly do for many Asian immigrants to the United States), where they can serve as a counterbalance to the larger society's atomizing tendencies. On the other hand, the particular form that Asian democracy will ultimately take is unlikely to be identical to the model represented by the United States. If Asia's Confucian traditions allow it to find an appropriate and stable balance between the need for liberty and the need for community, "in the end it will be a politically happy place indeed.

**weir** –  
a low fence or wall that is built  
across a river or stream to  
control the flow of water

**SOURCE:** Fukuyama Francis. *Confucianism and Democracy*. Journal of Democracy. Volume 6, Number 2 April 1995, pp.20-33

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it necessary to look for compatibility or incompatibility of civilizations? What does it mean to say cultures are comparable to each other?
2. Is it important to balance the Asian traditional values with Western-style democracy? Is it true that democracy could be different in different places due to cultural perceptions?
3. Does Western democracy serve as a model for developing Asian democracy? What does it mean to live by democracy?
4. Westerners say that economic development and political liberalization are significant for stable democracy. Are these values applicable for all developed and developing countries?
5. Do you agree with Fukuyama that the "fundamental impulse toward liberal democracy springs from a non-economic desire"?
6. How would you experience the importance of democracy for Asian societies?
7. Why, according to Fukuyama, will "Asia not continue to democratize in the future"?
8. An Asian alternative to democracy has been put forward by former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Discuss the existence of this alternative. Is it possible to create a democracy based on the traditionally severe Asian law?

### ADDITIONAL READING:

- Confucianism and Democracy,  
[www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v006/6.2fukuyama.html](http://www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v006/6.2fukuyama.html)
- Francis Fukuyama, the Primacy of Culture,  
[www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v006/6.1fukuyama.html](http://www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v006/6.1fukuyama.html)
- Confucianism and Democracy by Francis Fukuyama,  
[www.asianbarometer.org/newenglish/publications/workingpapers/no.1.pdf](http://www.asianbarometer.org/newenglish/publications/workingpapers/no.1.pdf)



PEROV, VASILY. PUGACHEV'S JUDGEMENT. 1879.  
THE RUSSIAN MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG.

## PITIRIM SOROKIN: THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL EQUALITY

Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968), a Russian-American Sociologist, founded the department of Sociology at Harvard University. His works include four volumes of *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (1937-41), *The Crisis of our Age*, and *Power and Morality: Who shall Guard the Guardians* (1959).

### THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL EQUALITY AND SOCIALISM

#### §1.

Rubbed off coins are circulated not only in the money-market, but also in the exchange of cultural wealth. And there are quite a lot of them. Everyone makes of them, everyone uses them, but alas – few know them, and sometimes, perhaps, no one. The notion of social equality also belongs to such “rubbed off coins.” It is constantly rated on the spiritual exchange, but did many try to realize its substance? Even those who tried – could they clearly decide what in essence should be thought under this slogan of our epoch? Did they give us an exact formula of this basis of democracy and socialism?

Notwithstanding the venerable age of this slogan – which became legalized long before the triad of the revolution of 1789: “liberty, equality, fraternity,” and “The declaration of human and citizen rights” – its genuine face, unfortunately, still has not been revealed.

The objective of this essay is to briefly touch upon certain aspects of this issue, to raise not resolve it. The issue is raised by the time and therefore sooner or later it should be raised.

#### §2.

Without going into details, social equality could be thought of in two ways: in the sense of absolute equality of an individual with another in all respects, including in the sense of rights and obligations, in mental, moral, economic and other senses. In short, equality in this understanding means that one individual is completely identical with another one! Every individual should be same as all others, no more, no less. Everyone should be equally smart, equally moral, possess equal share of economic benefits (wealth), equally work, be happy to the same extent, enjoy equal amount of respect, appreciation, love, talent, etc.

In consistent application of this type of equality, any type of inequality in any aspect should not be tolerated. Ideally all people should have a haircut with one haircutter and adequate aspiration to make them totally similar with each other, in a sense, stereotypic editions of one and the same copy. The society built along such a plan would look like a society which is described in one of **Jerome's** stories: all individuals were as like as two peas in a pod in terms of their clothes, height, shape of nose or labial form. Obviously it is clear that such equality is simple **utopia**. It is impossible, unfeasible, and hardly desirable in the opinion of the majority of people. There is no need of any evidence to prove

**Jerome k. Jerome (1859-1927)** –  
English humorist and playwright

**Utopia** –  
imaginary place considered to  
be perfect or ideal

it that is unfeasible. It is also clear that it is undesirable; it is clear because it leads to a moral: “it is a shame to be good,” a moral hardly acceptable by anyone. In fact, once everyone should be equal to one another, then one should not be smart since there are fools, one should not be honest since there criminals, one should not be healthy since there syphilitics and hungry people, one should not be good-looking since there are ugly people, etc. “Equality, then equality in everything!”, “Justice, then justice till the end!” Under such understanding of equality there would not be Socrates, Christ, Newton, Kant, Leonardo, Michelangelo or any other mighty figure. Only **mediocre** and ignorant people would reign. In other words, the moral of this equality is awarding prizes to ignorance, disease, criminality, etc. and leads to complete stagnation of culture and its gains.

The above-mentioned is enough in order to discard this understanding of social equality. It is utopia, unfeasible, backward and socially harmful.

### §3.

Then there is only one possibility: equality should be understood not in the sense of identity but in the sense of proportionality of social benefits based on merits of this or that individual. According to this formula of proportionality, an ordinary painter and Rembrandt, ordinary scholar and genius, unskilled worker and Edison, etc. cannot and should not have equal rights for social benefits (wealth, love, fame, respect, etc.). “To each according to his desert,” “to each according to the best of his revealed strength and abilities,” “to each according to his talent” – these are short formulas proposed by this concept of equality. That is in general the second understanding of equality which falls into a number of sub-units as we will see below. There is no third type besides these two. Either one or the other. The first turned out to be hopelessly useless, so it remains to turn to the second one.

### §4.

Many authors consider equality in this second sense as something more or less new. However, taken in its general appearance the principle of proportionality of merits and benefits (rights and privileges), which says: “to each according to his desert”, is as old as mankind.

In a sense I. Ten is right in saying: “One cannot say that so a person would start giving a lot of benefits without enough incentives and could be thankful for nothing, so to speak, by mistake.” If one only **unfolds** the history of privileges and inequality, then already from the first pages we will find this proportionality of merits and privileges or benefits. The most privileged people in a primitive society are middle age men, and among them **sorcerers** and chieftains. Why? Because they are bearers of power, guards and defenders of a group and the most experienced individuals. According to the beliefs of these groups, sorcerers and chieftains are persons with unusual abilities and who provide huge services. Hence they are the very individuals who enjoy full rights more than others. Let these merits, from our point of view, be only imaginary merits, virtually useless, and they were quite often, but from the point of view of the society of those times, by virtue of its backwardness and little knowledge, they seemed valuable and useful. Take the **caste** society and you will observe the same. If the caste of priests, particularly the **Brahmins**, enjoyed full rights more than others, then the caste of **Sudrs** or **Vaisiys** is deprived of rights, not without reason. According to the views in those times (in fact, certainly, fallacious), the Brahmins provided unusual services – they could control the forces of nature, cause rain, treat diseases, point the way to the sky, deter enemies, in short, perform the greatest feats, hence they received exclusive rights and benefits. And what could miserable Sudrs or Vaisiys do? According to the views of those times, very

- mediocre –**  
only ordinary or moderate quality
- unfolds –**  
open and spread out
- sorcery –**  
use of supernatural power over others through the assistance of spirits
- caste –**  
social class separated from others by distinctions of hereditary rank, profession, or wealth
- Brahmins –**  
member of the highest of traditional Indian society responsible for officiating at religious rites and studying and teaching the Vedas
- Sudrs –**  
section division in historic Indian society
- Vaisiys –**  
a member of the varna system of traditional Indian society

little and therefore they enjoyed few benefits (notwithstanding the actual utility of their work). Take the history of classes: nobility and bourgeoisie or the history of the Catholic church or ordinary people who enjoy “popularity” in one or another society, and here you will see that in each society the volume of rights and privileges of one or another class in general is proportional to their merits *according to the opinion of that society*...

### §5.

However does it follow from the above-mentioned that all talks about equality as a sign of our culture and its future, about its growth, its continuity with socialism constitute nothing but misunderstanding? Does it mean that the growth of inequality is a myth; that everything remains and should remain as before? Or as **Ecclesiastes** says, “it was so, it will always be so, and there is nothing new under the sun”?

No, it does not mean that. The above-mentioned just means that in such important issues one cannot be limited to a general formula like “to each according to his desert” but must go further and work out in detail and more precisely unveil these general phrases. Otherwise misunderstandings are inevitable. Yes, undoubtedly, the principle of “to each according to his desert” is not new, it is true that it is as old as mankind; that it always worked and probably will work in the future. The essence and novelty of modern equality does not lie in its general formula. In order to reveal the nature of the latter one has to go further and raise a number of further questions. Only then is it possible to “catch” “**the sanctum sanctorum**” of modern equality. Otherwise it will slip away through a wide network of this general formula, and we “will be no better off than before”. Let us try (of course, briefly) to take those further steps.

Undoubtedly, the formula “to each according to his desert” is old, but the substance put into this formula is new or, specifically, the criterion, the bushel with the help of which these merits are measured and this proportionality of merits of the group or individual and corresponding share of social benefits (rights and privileges) due to them for these merits or widely speaking for those public functions which they perform is determined, is new.

[...]

Turning to our image it could be said that modern public differentiation resembles a state apartment building with state apartments. But the difference from the previous scene is that these apartments communicate with each other and there are not, in essence, any religious or legal barriers. Today one person occupies a luxurious apartment; tomorrow an “inhabitant of a basement” could occupy it if he fulfils a number of conditions and made a number of “feats.” Those born in magnificent apartments now could move to basements, and vice versa – from basements end up in palaces and castles. Everything, in principle, depends on individuality and personal qualities.

And naturally following from this will be:

- 1) *disappearance of heredity of privileges or lack of rights* (falling of castes, classes and legal statuses in general).
- 2) *falling of the religious and legal basis of social differentiation.*

**Ecclesiastes** –  
book of wisdom in the Bible  
**Sanctum sanctorum** –  
the holy of holies



By virtue of the former, a Privy Councilor's son may (in principle) become a person without a rank, and vice versa – a son of a laundress may become a minister or Privy Councilor. By virtue of the latter, the distinction between groups (estates or classes) at present is only *factual*, not legal. Transition from one to another is not prohibited and is possible. Public and state offices are not hereditary and there is no monopoly of a peculiar estate over them. Access to these offices is in principle open to everyone.

All of this means that a person has become free from the guardianship of a group, clan, tribe, caste, class and gradually thrown off all of these swaddling pads. Now it is an end in itself, it acts as such and valued as such.

Such is the first main difference of the old order from the new one. From unequal and non-individual the basis for appreciation of merits has become uniform and individual.

The slogan "To each according to his desert" is still the same, but its content has changed and in modern sense it calls for redistribution of social benefits quite differently than before.

## §6.

Above I have just given an outline of the difference between the modern "evaluative device" and the old one, so to speak, the very measuring rod of redistributing benefits and establishing proportionality of merits and awards. Now let us raise a different question. Let us ask ourselves, has it changed for what "awards" were given and are being given now? Have not many deeds and qualities lost their value in the course of history, which were considered in the past as "feats" and highly awarded, and vice versa? Are not many things are highly valued, which in the past were "not cared a straw"?

[...]

A short answer to this question is that in antiquity neither a person nor even a group could on its own be the highest values, "a value on its own" or "an end in itself." Such was a "deity" or "divine force", no matter how it was called (totem, mana, later deity, God, etc.).

Both an individual and a group (caste, class, etc.) were as much higher as they were closer to being a deity; the more they were co-participant with the divine force as they participated in it. The slogan "*To each according to his desert*" in these epochs was interpreted as "*to each according to the degree of divine grace rested upon him*". This is the first historical form of this slogan. [...]

Moving from it to our times one cannot but note a huge change, which was clearly demonstrated in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in the works of thinkers of those times and which have led to the following formula: "*A person is the highest value.*" "*The person is an end in itself and cannot be a means for anything or anyone.*" This is the main criterion of value of our times, heard here, there and everywhere. All modern systems of morals and law stand under its sign. Such is the second typical shift made within the same formula "*to each according to his desert,*" which means that views on value and merits have radically changed. From religious the main value has become human, secular. Religious activities and the functions of a shaman and priest by virtue of their religiosity were holy, great and valuable for the society of those times, which believed in their power and valued everything from the point of view of divine value, whereas for the modern society these activities are useless and a silly waste of effort and do not deserve any privileges or rights...

Instead of holiness and the caste of priests, initially along with them, and later independently, come warriors, a class of servants, feudal nobility and gentry, and defenders of territorial integrity and the security of a state. The social course of their public role quickly grows and therefore their privileges increase. The slogan "*to each according to*

*his desert*” acquires a form: “*to each according to the degree of his participation in defending the state from the enemy, according to his military service and participation in its government.*”

A nobleman, “high class”, “white bone”, will come and gradually climb up to the top of the public ladder and takes full control of power and rights.

But time goes on. Cities grow. The role of capital grows as well. Feudal militia is changed by a mercenary army or people’s army on the basis of conscription, revenues for government increase, in short, money becomes a great power, capable of defining the military might of a state....

The slogan “*to each according to his desert*” acquires the new form “*to each according to his capital.*” Such is the typical substance that history filled this “eternal” formula with. At present we are exactly in the middle of that process when capital reached its highest estimation and there are signs of replacement of this value by a new, other, future one.

#### §8.

...The growth of the rights of the working classes (during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) was manifested: 1) through declaration of equality of all citizens before the law, contrary to the legal inequality of the old law; 2) through extermination of classes and class privileges and declaration of the principle, according to which all representatives of working classes have a right, equal to privileged classes, for occupying any public office, which was impossible before; 3) in political equality, in equalization of working classes with privileged classes in terms of using public human and citizen rights (right to vote, freedom of speech, press, unions, beliefs; personal immunity, etc.) and in their volume; 4) in a number of facts directed at even distribution of the main intellectual wealth – knowledge among all classes (hence: general free education, free courses, lectures, libraries, which were impossible in the past), the trend for intellectual equality; 5) in aspiration for equality of economic benefits, manifested in gradually rising pay, in creation of unions of workers to struggle to get pay rises, in state insurance against unemployment, old age, illness. Collectivization of the means and tools of production, which was quite logically and correctly proclaimed by socialists, is the natural completion of this process.

There is no need to point out other facts, the above-mentioned is enough in order to take for granted the thesis, according to which the growth of the value of labor as the main merit in the public’s opinion indeed entailed and inevitably should have entailed the growth of rights and share of social benefits for those who are representatives of labor in society.

#### §9.

However it would be a mistake to think that this process of equalization of the rights of the working masses with non-labor, on the one hand, and the process of establishing proportionality of labor and ensuing rights for social benefits, on the other, is completed. No! It is only beginning. The above-mentioned facts of the

growth of rights of labor in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are only the beginning of the process. It is true that citizens are declared equal before the law, equal in their public rights, etc. But doesn't this equality still remain an almost exclusively verbal equality? Is the quantity of worldly benefits, falling to the share of a capitalist and worker, aristocrat and peasant, equal? Don't we see on the one hand luxurious mansions and basements of poverty on the other? Satiety and idleness of some, hunger and work to the point of exhaustion of others? Isn't life for some a continuous feast, and for others a Calvary, torture, continuous work and poverty?

In short, equality of economic benefits is far from being achieved. As a general rule, the working masses remain deprived in our time, and the lion's share of benefits go to the classes of "celebrating" who work little.

And it relates not only to economic benefits. We could observe the same regarding benefits of honor, respect, public homage and benefits of knowledge. All of these values, to the present day go to bearers of labor in small doses. The top of the public ladder is occupied by the privileged classes as before.

The process of equalization is going on, but it is far from being over.

## §10.

Now let us ask ourselves: "*How should social equality in its ideal completion be thought of?*" Does it mean only establishment of familiar proportionality between merits of an individual or a group and social values (benefits) for those merits? Or could it be thought of as equality of benefits of one individual with benefits of all others?

Earlier we rejected the so-called absolute equality. We are rejecting it now again. However, it does not mean that the principle of "proportionality of equality", given proper development, cannot lead and does not lead to absolute equality.

Let us explain this. From a historical observation of the formula "to each according to his desert" we saw that 1) the measuring rod itself, which is used to measure those merits, became equal, having turned from unequal, group into individual, personal; 2) we saw how the substance of social merit has changed, having gone through the following stages: public merit is closest to deity, it is military service and government, it is possession of capital and execution of commercial and industrial functions, finally, it is a socially-useful labor. Each replacement of one form by another has led to expansion of the number of people authorized to receive legal and social benefits. The formula "to each according to his labor" means in essence extension of the completeness of rights and benefits almost to the entire nation, to the majority of mankind. Moreover, since occupation in one or another socially-useful work is available almost to everyone, it is not forbidden to anyone, on the contrary, it is recommended, and nowadays a "labor duty" is being forcibly introduced; since further laziness, rambling and parasitism is being more and more harshly reproached by the public consciousness than it could and should be expected that the percentage of working will be more and more increasing with the course of history, and the percentage of lazybones will decrease. Its limit could and should be a society where everyone (excluding, of course, those absolutely incapable, like babies, the disabled, etc.) will be working and where there will not be "idlers."

If this is so and if the theorem of proportionality of merits and privileges is correct, then hence comes the following conclusion: in the society of the future completeness of rights and social benefits will belong to everyone, that is, everyone will have a right and possibility to receive a full share of economic, spiritual and any other benefits. If such a proposition whereby everyone will be working does not come true then there could not be the above-mentioned consequence.

Such is the first conclusion. But it does not predetermine yet that the share of these benefits will be equal for everyone. They will say: the work of all will be by no means equal. Some will be working on creating a new machine, others hitting cobbles, some will create a beautiful work of art, others will be doing purely mechanical work. Is it possible that all of these types of work will be evaluated equally?

Further, at the same time a more skilled worker will be working more productively than another less skilled worker. How could they be equalized and how could one measure their efficiency?

Hardly anyone is able to categorically answer these questions. Perhaps, the society of the future, based on the condition that simplest forms of labor are nonetheless as necessary and useful as the most complicated (invention, etc.), will find it quite just to equalize their value and accordingly the share of social benefits....

However, it is possible that there is another valuation. A number of works of labor which require a special talent and natural gifts (for instance, a work of art, science, etc.), could be valued higher than ordinary products of labor, and therefore authors of such works will receive a higher share of social benefits (economic benefits, fame, respect, admiration, etc.) than the share of ordinary workers. Such a state of affairs will be more likely in the nearest future. Only at the end of this path could it turn into the previous scene with equal assessment of all forms of socially-useful labor....

## § 11.

The possibility of equal distribution of economic benefits (economic equality) is allowed and is not disputed in principle. It is the cornerstone of socialism. And socialism itself is thought of as a system of collectivization of the means and tools of production. Friedrich Engels points out in his "Anti Daring" that the substance of proletariat equality is exclusively social equality, understood in the sense of abolishing classes. "Any demand for equality overstepping these limits is inevitably nonsense," says he. This way the system of Marxism considerably limits and narrows the character of equal distribution of social benefits, and thereby the notion of equality. From its point of view, only more or less equal rights for economic benefits are possible, but there cannot be talk about more or less equal distribution of other kinds of benefits: the right to knowledge (intellectual equality), the right to honor, respect and recognition, the right to the maxim of morality (moral equality), etc. From the point of the tenet of Marxism, such equality is unthinkable and absurd.

But is it so? Is it true that socialism may talk only about equal distribution of vital economic benefits and may not demand other types of equality: moral, intellectual, etc.?

Is the demand for intellectual equality in essence absurd?

I would answer these questions as categorically as Engels. On the contrary, I would be inclined to think that socialism should demand all these forms of equality, and would not consider such a demand as absolutely utopian.

Socialism, the main element of which is the principle of equality, should not and may not be limited by a demand of only economic equality (equal distribution of economic, material benefits) because then it would mean a halved doctrine, not demanding equal distribution of the most valuable types of social benefits. Do benefits of knowledge or benefits of public recognition or benefits of property cost less than economic benefits and material well-being? Aren't the former types of social benefits no more than or at least not as valuable as the benefit of material well-being, comfort, satisfaction and other material benefits?

Moreover, is the material equality thinkable and possible without equal distribution of knowledge, moral and legal benefits? Is the equality of individuals possible, their mutual freedom and well-being in a society where there are smart and silly, educated and ignorant, morally sound people and criminals? Are there any guarantees in such a mentally and morally differentiated society that clever men under new forms will not again cheat ignoramuses? Won't in such a society "honest" again send to prison criminals, and criminals kill the former? In other words, is genuine freedom possible in such a society? Won't new exploiters and exploitable, predators and preys, jails and crimes, in short, all evils of the modern society again emerge?

Such a possibility could be hardly rejected. Therefore, since socialism declares war on all of these scourges of mankind, it should inevitably lay down a demand for not only economic equality, but also intellectual and moral-legal.

The history of the 19-20<sup>th</sup> centuries shows that mankind values the benefits of the latter kind not less, if not more than purely economic benefits. Were it otherwise then we would not witness the stubborn struggle of the working masses, which abound in the history of the 19-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, for legal and intellectual benefits (equality before the law, equality for occupation of public offices, the right to equal political benefits – right to vote, freedom of speech, press, unions, liberty of conscience, etc., the struggle for universal and free education, the struggle for equal respect of a good name for every person, etc.), which were valued not only as a means for attaining other benefits, but also as values in themselves. Is it conceivable that mankind in the future will no longer value these benefits and give up the struggle for complete **allotment** with them of each person? No, inconceivable. Socialism **willy-nilly** should secure these forms of social equality. Otherwise it will be a bastardly, backward ideal, not supreme embodiment of the highest concepts and tomorrow's expectations.

It means that Engels understood the substance of socialism narrowly and partially.

But they will tell me in response: "Let us assume that you are right. We will agree that socialism should demand equal distribution of not only property but also intellectual and legal benefits. But one cannot demand impossible things! And this demand is obviously absurd and utopian; it returns us to 'absolute equality', which you have considered earlier and have personally recognized as absurd." I am responding to this. First of all, such demands for equal distribution of intellectual and moral benefits are not at all equal to the demand for "absolute equality." There would be the latter if I would have said that since X knows Sanskrit then everyone else should know it, since Y knows the theory of differentials then all co-humans should know too. *Intellectual equality is thought of as possession of more or less similarly developed logical and intellectual device, not possession of similar knowledge.* Knowledge could be different....

**allotment** –  
share set aside for a specific  
purpose; distribution

**willy-nilly** –  
without order or plan;  
haphazard





CHARTIST'S RIOT. ENGRAVING  
FROM THE 1886 BOOK  
"TRUE STORIES OF THE REIGN OF  
QUEEN VICTORIA"  
BY CORNELIUS BROWN

## SOCIOLOGY OF REVOLUTION

...Since we cannot forestall revolution then we should at least know what it is. After all, as a matter of fact, we live inside it and like naturalists we can perfectly study, analyze and observe a revolution.

The author happened to live in the circle of Russian Revolution for five years in a row. Day after day he observed all of the developments. This book is the result of those observations. The reader will not find in it an ideographical description of the Russian Revolution. Rather it is a sociological essay, which analyzes the phenomenon of revolution and its features, one way or another peculiar to all significant and great revolutions. The task of a historian is to describe a portrait, give a strict description of a specific historic event in all its peculiarity and uniqueness. The task of a sociologist is completely different: in totality of social phenomena he is interested only in those features which are similar in all phenomena of the same kind, whenever and wherever they take place....

## REASONS FOR REVOLUTIONS

*Main reasons for revolutions.*

Analyzing preconditions of revolutions it would be more correct to start with the reasons which cause revolutionary deviations in behaviors of people. If the behavior of the members of some society demonstrates such deviations then the entire society should be subject to similar changes, since it represents a sum of individuals interacting with each other.

What are the reasons which lead to quick and general deviations in the behavior of people?

The question about reasons raised in more general forms is always amorphous and

has certain metaphysical **tinge**. Therefore apparently I should somehow additionally qualify my question. Under reasons in this case I mean a set of conditions, connection of events framed into a causal chain, the beginning of which is lost in the eternity of the past and the end in the infinity of the future. In this sense there could be a preliminary answer to this question. The immediate precondition of any revolution has always been the *growth in the number of suppressed basic instincts in the majority of the population* as well as the impossibility of even their minimal satisfaction.

This is in general the cumulative assertion about the causality of revolutions which is certainly manifested in a multitude of specific realities of different times and places. If the digestive reflex of a large part of the population is “suppressed” by hunger then present is one of the reasons of uprisings and revolutions; if the instinct of self-preservation is “suppressed” by despotic executions, mass killings, and bloody atrocities then present is another reason for revolutions. If the reflex of collective self-preservation is “suppressed” (for instance, of a family, religious sect, political party), their shrines are desecrated, there is **mocking** of their members in the form of arrests, etc. then we have the third reason for revolutions. If the need for housing, clothing, etc. is not satisfied at least to a minimal extent then there is another reason for revolutions. If the sexual reflex in all its manifestations (in the form of jealousy or desire to have the subject of love) of the majority of population is “suppressed” and absent are conditions for its satisfaction, there is widespread abduction, violence towards wives and daughters, forced marriage or divorces, etc. – present is the fifth reason for revolutions. If the property-owning reflex of the masses is “suppressed”, there is a predominance of poverty and destitution; especially if it is happening against the background of the welfare of others then we already have the sixth reason for revolutions. If the instinct of self-expression (according to E. Ross) or individuality (according to N. Mikhailovsky) is “suppressed”, and people face, on the one hand, insults, disregard, and permanent and unjust neglect of their merits and achievements, and on the other hand, exaggeration of the merits of people who do not deserve that, then we have one more reason for revolutions.

If there is suppression of the impulse of the majority of people for fight and competitiveness, creative work, gaining various experiences, a need in freedom (freedom of speech and activities or other nonspecific manifestations of their inherent bent) engendered by excessively peaceful life, monotonous habitat and work, which gives nothing to the brain or heart, and constant limitations in the freedom of contacts, speech and activities, then we have auxiliary conditions – components of a revolutionary explosion. And this is only an incomplete list of reasons. We have highlighted the most significant impulses, which are subject to “repressions” and which lead to revolutionary cataclysms, and also only the main “repressed” groups who overthrow old regimes and raise the sign of revolution.

The force of “suppression” of the most significant instincts, and their aggregate number influences the character of the generated explosion. In all historically-significant revolutions “repressions” have their effect especially in their second stage. It is also necessary that “repressions” are spread as widely as possible, and if not among the overwhelming majority of people then at least among a sufficiently weighty group of the population. Everywhere there is suppression of minorities; it leads to individual violations of the order, usually called crime. But when repressions become universal then it leads already to “conventionalism” of violations and overthrow of a regime. This act is in fact identical with those which are committed by individuals, i.e. crimes but having become universal it is **grandiloquently** called “revolution.”

The growth of repressions just like anything else in this world is an especially relative thing. Poverty or welfare of one person is measured not by what he possesses

**tinge** –  
contain a slight amount of  
something

**mock** –  
treat with ridicule or  
contempt; deride

**grandiloquent** –  
in order to attract admiration  
and attention, especially in  
order to make someone or  
something seem important

at the moment but by what he had before and in comparison with other members of the community. A semi-millionaire today, who was a multi-millionaire yesterday, feels himself poor compared with his former fortune and other millionaires. A worker making 100 dollars a month is poor in America but rich in Russia. The same could be said about the growth and decline of "repressions." They increase not only with the growth of difficulties on the way of satisfaction of instincts but even then they increase different rates among different individuals and groups. At the sight of a perfectly-laid dinner table a person, who is physiologically quite full, will feel hunger and depression. Having seen luxurious clothes and fashionable apartments, a person feels himself poorly dressed and homeless although from a rational point of view he is dressed quite decently and has decent living conditions. This is again an example of suppression of certain instincts. A person whose volume of rights is wide enough feels himself aggrieved in the face of more significant privileges of others.

These examples could serve as an illustration to my thesis and explain why in such a significant number of cases "suppression" of instincts of certain groups in pre-revolution periods increases not so much absolutely as relatively, first and foremost due to the growth of legal ownership, social differentiation and inequality. This relativity of "repressions" should always be remembered.

This is the essence of the primary and general reason for revolutions. But is this kind of explanation enough or not? After all, to have a revolutionary explosion social groups which stand guard over the existing order should not possess enough arsenal of means for suppression of destructive impulses from below. Revolution is not at all so inevitable when groups of defense are able to place a counterforce of repression, and thereby create a balance of pressure, against the growing revolutionary forces of the "repressed." It is possible that at most there will be a series of spontaneous actions. Revolution becomes a matter of time when the forces of order are no longer able to put into practice suppression.

Thus, it should be again emphasized that 1) increasing suppression of basic instincts; 2) their general character; 3) weakness of the groups of order in adequate description are the three main components of any revolutionary explosion.

*Why does suppression of impulses always lead to revolution? Why does the growth of repressions of basic instincts in the masses lead to general revolutionary deviations in people's behavior? Because suppression of basic impulses inevitably forces people to seek for ways out of it, just like any other living organism seeks rescue from unusual environments. Old forms of behavior are intolerable; therefore new forms should be sought. At the beginning a repressed reflex tries to find a way out in suppressing in its turn other instincts which prevent its satisfaction. For instance, a repressed digestive instinct puts pressure on those obstacles, which keep a person from stealing, lying, eating forbidden food, etc. And those who have never stolen before become a thief and gangster; those who were ashamed to beg become beggars; believers stop fasting; those who have always obeyed the law start violating it; having overcome a feeling of shame, an aristocrat is heading to a market in*

order to sell a pair of pants; those who were shy to eat in the street, now easily do it; those who **despised** people in the past, now simply flatter them just to get a piece of bread, etc. Disappearance of the majority of habits which prevent satisfaction of repressed inherent instincts means setting them free from many obstacles and contributes to their liberation. At the same time this means weakening conditioned reflexes which previously kept a person from committing certain acts of violence like theft, murder, sacrilege, etc.

From now on human behavior develops along biological laws. Repressed instincts, which have destroyed conventional filters of behavior start putting pressure on all other instincts. The balance between them disappears, whereas instincts, which are under pressure, shift. This leads to a new series of shifts in conditioned reflexes and causes even bigger “biologization” of human behavior, further disinhibition in committing antisocial acts. If the government and groups which stand guard over order are not able to prevent disintegration, then immediately begins a “revolution” in people’s behavior: conventional “clothes” of civilized behavior are instantly torn off, and a “rogue” is set free to succeed the socium (society). But as soon as the type of behavior of the masses changes then with that inevitably changes the entire social order.

Having analyzed one after another the action of repressed basic instincts, it was curious to consider this issue.

1. Studies show that hunger and the digestive instinct play a great role in human history. Periods of revolutions and uprisings in Athens and Sparta, in Rome towards the end of the Republic, in the Byzantine Empire, the history of England (1257-1258, beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century, before the uprising of 1381, on the eve and during the first period of the English Bourgeois Revolution in the middle of 17<sup>th</sup> century, end of the 18<sup>th</sup> -beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, just prior to the **Chartist** Movement, and finally, in 1919-1921) were periods of not only impoverishment but also extreme hunger and suppression of the digestive reflex. The same could be said about the time preceding the French **Jacquerie** of 1358, revolutions of the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, preceding the French revolutions.

Also known is the causal relationship between mass movements in Russia (I mean the uprisings and revolutions of 1024, 1070, 1230-1231, 1279, 1291, 1600-1603, 1648-1650, uprising of **Pugachev**, popular movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and finally, revolutions of 1905-1906, 1917) and hunger and impoverishment, which also illustrates suppression of the digestive instinct on the eve of revolutions. In any case, to provoke a revolutionary situation, suppression of hunger should not go to the extreme exhaustion of people, otherwise the masses simply will not be physically capable of revolutionary activity. On the other hand, economic progress accompanied with unequal distribution of products makes the population quite strong and highly dangerous in terms of potential destruction of social barriers and obstacles on the way to a revolution.

What is true for the connection between suppression of digestive instincts and revolutionary explosions in the past could, with appropriate modifications, be attributed to all other basic human reflexes. There can be no doubt about the causal relationships between their “repression” and the growth of revolutionary splashes. Let us turn to some examples.

2. Suppression of the impulse of ownership as a result of economic differentiation always leads to revolutionary explosions. This situation is proved by numerous facts. Why are the proletariat as well as workers of manual and mental work the

**despise –**

to feel a strong dislike for someone or something because you think they are bad or worthless

**Chartism –**

movement for social and political reform in the United Kingdom during the mid–19<sup>th</sup> century

**Jacquerie –**

popular revolt in late medieval Europe that took place in northern France in 1358, during the Hundred Years’ War

**Yemelyan Ivanovich Pugachev (1740-1775) –**

pretender to the Russian throne who led a great Cossack insurrection during the reign of Catherine II

most revolutionary classes of society? That is because its ownership instinct is suppressed more than that of any other class: it virtually does not own anything, if it owns anything at all; houses where workers live do not belong to them; tools of work do not belong to workers; a worker's present, not to mention his future, is not socially guaranteed; in short, a worker is as poor as a church rat. At the same time the proletariat is surrounded by excessive fortunes. Against the background of this contrast its ownership instinct is subject to significant irritation similar to the instinct of motherhood among childless women. Hence its revolutionary character, and the incessant growl on "the bed of nails" on which history perched him. Its ideals of socialism, dictatorship, dispossession of the wealthy, economic equality, communization are direct manifestation of this repression. But as soon as the ownership is satisfied ideals of socialism and communism are dissolved and proletarians become ardent champions of the holy property right.

Of what are revolutionary armies made up? Of pauperized groups, people who "have nothing to lose but could acquire everything," in short, from people with a repressed ownership reflex. "Hungry people and slaves" are those to whom revolution appeals in the first place, and finds among them ardent followers. This was the case in Greek and Roman antiquity, in Ancient Egypt and Persia, in medieval and modern revolutions. Their revolutionary legions have always been made up of poor people. The latter were the main tool of achieving revolutionary goals. Isn't it enough to prove the above-mentioned thesis on the connection between the ownership instinct and revolutionary character?

Isn't this regularity proved by the course of the recent history of European states? Wasn't the social order shaken by hunger, poverty and unemployment? Isn't the success of the communist ideology connected with social shocks and strikes? Don't we feel the effect of this connection in modern Germany, the most non-revolutionary out of all states in the world, which was on the verge of the revolutionary **abyss** a couple of years ago? This reasoning is sufficient to clearly depict social action of this kind.

3. Let us now turn to suppression of the instinct of self-preservation, which serves the goals of survival of an individual as well as suppression of the instinct of collective self-preservation, which serves the goals of survival of a social group: family, nation, tribe, state, church, i.e. any cumulative entity co-organized around commonality of interests. "Kernels" of both instincts are inherited and quite powerful. Their suppression, especially if it happens simultaneously, very often leads to revolutions. We could turn to the experience of unsuccessful wars as a striking case in point of such suppression.

A war is a tool of death. It severely suppresses the instinct of self-preservation for it makes a person act against his will and subdues his ineradicably protesting stimulus

**abyss** –  
very deep hole which seems to  
have no bottom



for life. At the same time it suppresses the instinct of collective self-preservation, forcing people to destroy and insult each other, subjecting entire social groups to dangers and hardships.

Should we be wondering after this that terrible wars often lead to social explosions? The repressed impulse of self-preservation leads to dysfunction of conditioned instincts, disrupts obedience, discipline, order and other civilized forms of behavior and converts people into raging hordes of madmen. Precisely this had happened to the Russian Army in 1917, and later with German soldiers in 1918. People who became slaves of their instincts of self-preservation abandon everything and fiercely jump on the government, overturn the existing social order, raise the banner of revolution.

This explains why many revolutions happen immediately after or during unsuccessful wars. Let us recall that revolutions of our times – Russian, Hungarian, German, Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian – were made under these circumstances. This is applicable to the Russian Revolution of 1905 as well. The Turkish Revolution wiped off the regime of Abdul-hamid after the unsuccessful war. And the Commune of Paris of 1870-1871 – wasn't it the result of a defeat in the war against the Germans? The French Jacquerie of 1358 and revolutionary movements of the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century took place as a result of failures in the **Hundred Years' War** and capture of King Joann II after the battle of Poitiers in 1356. It equally relates to the English uprising of Watt Tyler in 1381: unrest began after the English army was defeated near La Rochelle and the uprising flamed up after unsuccessful military actions against the Covenanters. Let us recall revolutionary movements in Germany and Italy at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, which broke out after a series of defeats of these countries by the Napoleonic army.

Even this incomplete list of revolutions, which broke out under direct influence of military failures, is enough to be convinced of the truth of the above-mentioned statement.

Certainly, wars lead to revolutions not only because of “repressions” of the above-mentioned instinct but also as a result of suppression of other human instincts (growth of poverty, hunger and disorganization of structures caused by wars, etc.). However, the revolutionary effect of a war is primarily realized through suppression of the above-mentioned instinct. People interested in wars do not necessarily crave for revolutions. But those who sow the wind reap the whirlwind.

The above-mentioned could be applied to dictatorships as well – regimes with endless arrests, persecutions and punishment. They also represent a complex of acts which suppress the instincts of self-preservation and self-expression of a person. Constant risk and lack of guarantee in conditions of despotic regimes lead to familiar kinds of repressions: fear, dissatisfaction, indignation, and finally, attempts to overthrow the “repressing” regime.

Indirectly such regimes also repress the instinct of group self-preservation, since every successive arrest or murder of a person is at the same time an attempt at the entire group – family, friends, immediate circle. Often such regimes suppress this instinct by subjecting to persecution symbols and values of groups (especially in persecution of religious, political, ethnic and other similar groups). As a result, there is a rapid growth of potentiality for revolutionary explosion due to a quan-

**Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) –**

war between two royal houses  
for the French throne



titative growth of “repressed” individuals. Perhaps from this it becomes clear why such societies are constantly “pregnant” with revolutionary character, there are mines planted in their social foundation, which are ready to explode if there is a slight indulgence of control at the top. All of this clarifies the revolutionizing effect of wars and despotic regimes.

4. It is not difficult to imagine that suppression of other instincts, like sexual, may play a similar role. According to legend, the Roman Revolution that ended the monarchy was caused by sexual persecution of female Romans on the part of the last Roman Caesar, which seems to be quite realistic.

Suppression of the sexual instinct may be brought about in various ways and circumstances: in one case due to the simple impossibility of satisfying it, in another due to the increasing licentiousness of privileged classes, suppression of the instinct of “jealousy” and temptations, which demoralize the wives and daughters of citizens. Often the role of such “repressions” is ignored as at first glance its role may seem undistinguished, although no one will doubt the seriousness of this instinct. In order to be convinced of the opposite, it is enough to look closely at numerous revolutionary speeches and proclamations, whereby indignation of the masses was artificially kindled due to hypertrophied accentuation of repressions of this group of instincts. At the same time, those speeches unconsciously reflect the revolutionary character of this factor.

“Workers, if you do not want your daughters to become an object of pleasure of the rich... arise!” The appeal of the Commune of Paris may serve as one of the prominent examples of proclamations of this type. Who will maintain that the motive stated in this case was not among the basic reasons for other revolutions? Any person who has a little bit of knowledge of history knows that among revolutionary challenges to rulers there have always been accusations of immorality, licentiousness, and seducing women and girls of humble origin. In general the entourage of daily life of the majority of overthrown governments unambiguously testifies to the sexual “life” of the rulers, who repress the sexual instinct of the masses. The immoral type of behavior of the **Curia** and the Roman Catholic leadership was one of the causes why people started calling the church a Babylonian whore, why it lost its former prestige and influence over the masses. Hatred towards the episcopate among Czechs on the eve of the Hussite wars as well as among the populations of other European countries on the eve of the Reformation was generated by the episcopate through its immoral behavior by demoralizing its parish. Most of them were accused of licentiousness, cohabitation (often in maintaining entire harems), sexual intercourse with mothers and sisters, turning convents into brothels, etc.

All of this led on the one hand to suppression of jealousy and other sexual reflexes of the masses, and on the other to the collapse of the moral prestige of the episcopate. Finally, one fine day a halo of power disappeared, and there are

**Curia Hostilia** –  
in Rome, the building where  
the Senate usually met

well-founded doubts as to its preservation.

Let us turn to Russia on the eve of the Revolution of 1917. What was the fatal factor which once and for all ruined tsarism? The phenomenon of Rasputin. Accusation of the empress and her court of sexual **debauchery** (now it is not clear to what extent it was just), Rasputin's phenomenon was one of the factors of the Russian Revolution. We observe the same on the eve of the Great French Revolution; I mean the similar accusation of Maria Antoinette and her entourage. As a matter of fact, in our routine life a person's prestige and reputation could be immediately cracked under the effect of accusation of immorality or as a result of a scandal because of this.

Let us imagine for a moment that a government of some modern civilized power declares its carnal claims towards all women of the state and tries to put this claim into practice. Should it be said that the result of such events could only be a revolution. Only a mention of such an experimentum crucis is enough to realize the scope of the social meaning of this group of instincts.

5. The same effect could be easily observed if we turn now to suppression of the impulses of freedom. Any strict limitations in migrations, communications and actions of people lead to suppression of this impulse. Only once repressions exceed all bounds (just like in the case with incredible hunger) and completely "dissolve" this instinct (in Pavlov's experiments a dog with an eradicated freedom instinct was **doomed** to lengthy, hungry death), i.e. when people turn into "biologized slaves", this suppression may not provoke a revolutionary counter reaction.

Right up to this limit the growth of repression should be accompanied by the growth of will for resistance and stimulate overturn of the existing regime. That is why regimes of "suppression" and "despotism" inevitably lead to social explosion unless there is counteraction on the part of the forces of control, which could temporarily postpone the time of explosion by annihilating the instinct of freedom. The connection between the growth of repression of the reflex of freedom and chaotic explosions is peculiar to the entire centuries-old human history, and apparently there is no need for specific examples.

The same could be said about suppression of other inherent or acquired instincts. Although each of them on its own is just an element in the system of essential components of the necessary existence of an individual (let us recall a saying: *primum vivere deinde philosophare*), still their role is not so vitally important.

6. Let us further consider a group of instincts of self-expression of inherited abilities. The difference in inherited abilities is an established fact: but it underlies the professional choice of people. Let us suppose that a mechanism of social selection and distribution ceased to duly function and individuals start occupying those positions which all the more do not correspond to their talents: a born ruler or "**Cicero**" becomes an ordinary worker who has not distinguished himself at all, while a born organizer becomes a tailor or something like that. What will happen to such a society then?

Suppression of the instinct of self-expression of all these people will develop extremely acutely. None of them will be satisfied with the public position they occupy, and everyone will be cursing the ties which bind them, dreaming of nothing but destroying them. At the same time each of them will prefer to invest a minimum amount of effort in the profession that does not interest them. As a result a group of people with

**debauched –**

weakened or destroyed by bad sexual behaviour, drinking too much alcohol, taking drugs

**doom –**

death, destruction or any very bad situation that cannot be avoided

**Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) –**

orator, statesman, political theorist, lawyer and philosopher of Ancient Rome

repressed instincts, thinking of an emancipating revolution will rebel. A “born” ruler who ended up as an ordinary worker will become a leader of a secret organization; “Cicero” will become a propagandist; an organizer will set up an illegal party; a “poet” will glorify a revolution, and all of the remaining individuals – “inversioners” – will make up revolutionary armies and this way a revolutionary situation will be created.

We have just slightly fantasized about the possible inadequate repressive distribution of individuals in a society but our hyperbole has not taken us far from the reality. It is not difficult to see something similar in any society in a pre-revolutionary period when the correspondence of social positions with abilities of people, especially with inherent talents, was merely ignored. That is why very often during such periods there are groups of people with a suppressed instinct of self-expression which on top of everything is suppressed by the artificially-created fame and privileges of good-for-nothing individuals, so-called “born slaves” who managed to climb to the top of the social ladder. Hence revolutionary moods of many repressed individuals – writers, thinkers, journalists, poets, public figures, scholars, entrepreneurs and bourgeoisie as well as the multitude of other people who are at the bottom of the social ladder and crave promotion – are therefore ready to welcome anyone who will liberate them from the “clutches” of the repressing regime.

7. The same could be said about repression of other instincts that leads to more or less similar consequences. It is amazing that the revolutionizing impact of repressed instincts usually goes unnoticed.

However, a visible reason for revolutionary events is usually quite different. For instance, the introduction of a new navigation law, the founding of a prayer book, convocation of State Generals, the struggle to create a responsible Cabinet or a quarrel on a series of religious dogmas, and other things like these. To assume that such clear reasons are able on their own to provoke revolutionary movements, if there is no prior repression of fundamental human instincts, is at least naïve. All of this is no more than a spark in the powder-keg. Its function is to be a reason or kind of safety **valve**, through which all discontent splashes out. Its inner potential is not that large and cannot cause a revolutionary hurricane. However when repression of instincts is accumulated, then any event of even very little significance directly or indirectly provokes a revolutionary effect of repressions and leads to explosion.

In other words, the staging of a grandiose drama, comedy, or tragedy of revolution on the stage of history has been predetermined, above all, by repressed innate reflexes. Whether a performed play would be called a “revolution” or not depends solely on them. If “yes”, then the play will be successful and the actors won’t have any shortcomings. The meaning of unconditioned impulses is more substantial than the totality of conditioned reflexes. The last can change *mise en scene*, hair style, and

valve –  
device which opens and closes  
to control the flow of liquids  
or gases

costumes of the heroes and events. “Ideological” factors determine rather concrete forms, monologues, dialogues, and casual cues of participants of a revolution. They also determine what will be written on banners: “Sacred land”, “True faith”, “Constitution”, “Lawful state”, “Democracy”, “Republic”, “Socialism” or something else. The choice of popular heroes of revolutionary movements is also made by them, be it Christ, Gus, Russo, Luther, Marx, Tolstoy, or Libkneht; choice of discursive ideas – the Bible, Gospel interpretation, nationalistic ideas, the theory of surplus value and capitalist exploitation; choice of emblem – “Ohrygian cap”, “green cheese”, “black shirt”, “pentagonal star”, etc.; choice of venue – catacombs, church, city hall, modern parliament; means of disseminating revolutionary ideas – parchment, manuscript, printing machine; and finally, tools for revolutionary justice – axe, sword, howitzer, dynamite, tanks, or dreadnoughts. In other words their role is mainly to define the concrete forms of the revolutionary character. However, it would be unfair to conclude that having once appeared on the revolutionary stage, “ideological factors” are unable to turn into an effective driving force of revolutions.

**SOURCE:** Pitirim Sorokin. Problema Sotsialnogo Ravenstva; Sociologia Revolutsii (The Problem of Social Equality; Sociology of Revolution) // Chelovek, Tsivilizatsia, Obshestvo. Moskva, Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury. 1992, pp. 252-281. AKHP Translation.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Is social equality something really solvable or is it a utopian ideal? How is this regarded by the author from the socialist point of view? Does the author manage to convince that achieving social equality is real and not utopian? Please comment on the following statements: “To each according to his desert”, “to each according to the best of his revealed strength and abilities,” “to each according to his talent”.
2. Is socialism able to solve the problem of social equality given its principle of common property and denial of private property? Can you give an example from the lives of people who lived under socialism and may have benefitted from social equality? What do you know of the baneful influence of egalitarian principles experienced in socialist countries?
3. Do you agree with the principles suggested by the author that supposedly would realize social equality? What is specific and peculiar about economic, legal, and intellectual equality according to the author? To what extent is intellectual equality possible between people?
4. Does the idea of equality have a negative connotation? If yes, how is it expressed? What is the relationship between the idea of equality and social determinism? To what extent can the idea of equality be destructive in applying it within society, in upbringing, and in other spheres?
5. What do you think a revolution is? Why do revolutions take place and what are the reasons behind them? Are there any other reasons for revolutions unnoticed or not mentioned by the author?
6. Do you agree with the author’s point of view that the reasons underlying all revolutions are suppression of basic human instincts: hunger, property, sexual appetite, etc.? Why does suppression of impulses always lead to revolution?
7. How does restriction of freedom and the need for self-expression and self-re-

alization provoke revolution? How are these freedom impulses and self-expressions realized in your society?

8. Is revolution related to disruption of social justice and/or equality? Can revolutions provide social equality?
9. Is equality possible at all? Is life without revolutions and violence at all possible?

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What is the difference between the social justice of socialism and that of Plato (Socrates' Apology), Confucius and the Abrahamic religions (Torah, Bible and Qur'an)? How can one define whether the author used a positivist or behaviorist approach in the above texts.
2. Henry David Thoreau dreams of an even more perfect state than a democratic one, where respect for the individual would be given the first and highest place. Do you think socialist states had or have such a potential?
3. According to Nizam-ul-Mulk all economic, social-political, and intellectual problems are solvable if the governor has enough virtue; he finds the governor's ethics and scholarship to be of great importance. Why have socialist systems, even if begun with good intentions, borrowed elements of Eastern despotism and totalitarian government to achieve their goals? Why is individual significance considered less important than social significance, regardless of the theorists' longing for it? What characterizes the cultivation of a governor's "cult of personality"? Could it promote social justice?
4. To what extent are revolutions objective, historically natural and independent of the will of the people? Are revolutions able to solve the problems of social justice? Does the end always justify the means?

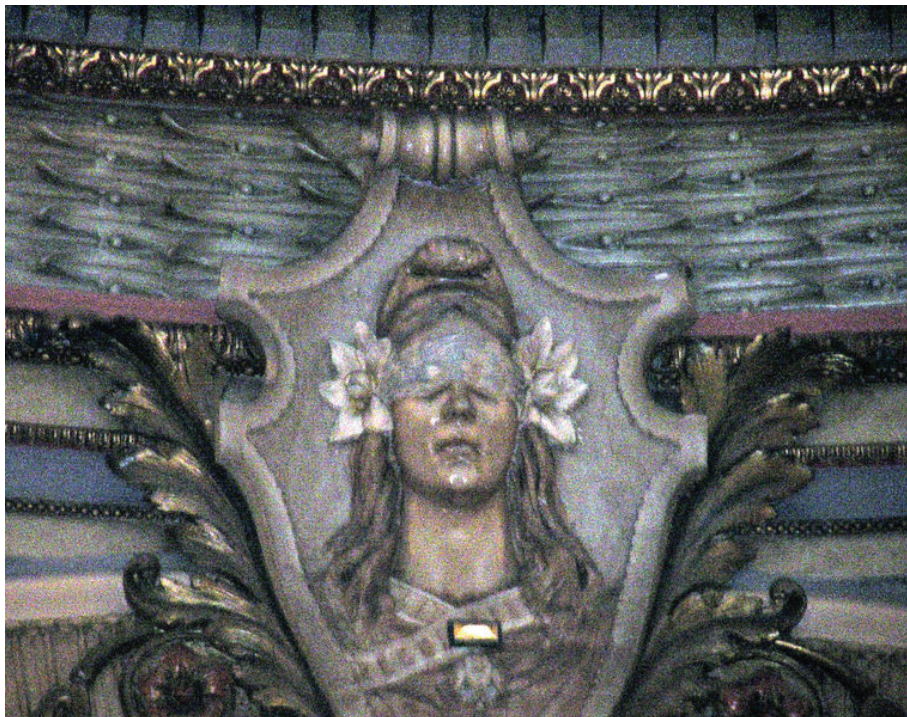
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BLIND JUSTICE - TAKEN AT THE STATE CAPITOL IN MISSISSIPPI  
Photographer: Shawn Lea

## ABDOLKARIM SOROUSH: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ETHICS

Born in Tehran in 1945, Abdolkarim Soroush is considered a pre-eminent Iranian Islamic scholar. In the 1990s, he achieved international recognition for his liberal and plural interpretation of Islam. His areas of scholarly interest include the philosophies of science and religion, and Persian Sufi poetry. Among his many works are the following: *Sagaciousness, Intellectualism and Piety*, 1991; *Lectures in the Philosophy of Social Sciences: Hermeneutics in Social Sciences*, 1995; *The World We Live*; *The Tale of Love and Servitude*; *Tolerance and Governance*, 1997; *Straight Paths, Essay on Religious Pluralism*, 1998; and *Expansion of Prophetic Experience*, 1999.



(i) Values are of two kinds: those for the sake of which we live (the guiding values) and those that exist for the sake of living (the serving values.) Such guiding values as goodness, justice, generosity, and courage transcend social life, nationality, and history; they are eternal. By contrast, the serving values are life's auxiliaries: woven into the fabric of social life and evolving with its evolution, their function is to make life easier, more desirable and pleasant. All of the rules of etiquette, pleasantries, and moral regulations belong to this category. Examples abound: sociality, affability, frugality, fairness, visiting relatives, keeping secrets, respecting the law, and so on.

(2) "Development" in the sense of the cultural, industrial, scientific, and economic growth of society flexes and bends the serving values to make them follow the logic of socioeconomic development. These crucial changes occur in two areas: first, in the primary serving values (those that predate socioeconomic development); second, in the secondary serving values (those that issue from socioeconomic development).

Old habits and traditional conduct must first change before social and economic development becomes possible. Once established, a developed social system finds further opportunities to create new values. The complete supplantation of an old social system by a new one is a gradual process. It is not easy to pinpoint the order of the changing elements of the whole system. But a change in values precedes social transformations or it is at least coterminous with it. Even when the two occur simultaneously, we are justified in ascribing causal significance to the values.

(3) Three important questions are posed in the literature that deals with the values that predate social development: What are they? How can we discover them? Can they be taught to, inculcated in, or imposed on a given society? Questions about the values engendered by development are the following: What are these values? Can we separate good values from bad ones, setting a course for a "virtuous" development that would avoid the corruptions that have accompanied

the progress of the West? If not, then we must resign ourselves to the fact that such separation is not possible and that Western socioeconomic development is a package deal: "Providence brought these contraries nigh / The neck comes with the butcher's choice meat of the thigh."

There are those who consider the values of secularism and liberalism as the unavoidable prerequisites of development and count among its attendant values things like pornography, neo- and old-fashioned colonialism, biological and chemical weapons, and the destruction of the environment. This identification of development with repugnant prerequisites and consequences cannot help sending another chill up the spine of those weary believers who stand on the brink of the modern world, trembling before this mysterious enterprise of progress. On the opposite pole there are those who see nothing but good preceding or succeeding development: a love of knowledge as the preceding value and democracy as the succeeding value. The discussion of the relationship between development and values originates in these controversies. To prove their arguments, these adversaries turn to the marvelous and turbulent history of the West, wherein the idea of development was first conceived. They both postulate that there is only one (Western) way toward development and that surrendering to development is the only way to survive in the contemporary world. For one side, survival on the Western path is a boon; for the other, it is a march to moral disaster.

(4) Historians and sociologists agree that the values that preceded, caused, and sustained the development of the West were not the result of a conscious world-historical project of their authors. Bacon, Luther, and Machiavelli did not set out to create the contemporary civilization of the West, nor were they aware of their crucial role as the architects of a monumental change in the history of the world. Yet, the empirical science of Bacon, the secular religion of Luther, and the amoral politics of Machiavelli combined with other relevant ideas and events to create the edifice of the modern world.

The dilemma of developing nations is that they want to engineer this change consciously. Thus they missed important historical opportunities because they provoked forms of resistance that did not inhibit the West. The result is the creation of half-industrial/half-traditional hybrid systems that are incapable of managing their own affairs in the cultural, political, and world-historical arenas. For this reason it is better to keep the issue of development as a preoccupation of the elites rather than allowing it to turn into a chain fettering the movements of the masses.

(5) Probably the most important transformation in the area of ethics and values prior to the Western development, the one that unleashed the modernist and bourgeois juggernauts, was the secularization of ethics. This process had two distinct characteristics that arose simultaneously with modernism and grew along with it: the first was to steer ethics from the empyrean of spiritual perfection and the afterlife toward the terra firma of happiness and felicity in this world. The other was harnessing traditional "sins" such as cupidity, ambition, and materialism as fuel for engines of progress. Bentham, the father of utilitarianism and one of the forerunners of this transformation, made morality into an inner-worldly calculus; Mandeville turned the ethics of everyday life on its head; likewise, Machiavelli reversed the foundations of political ethics. [...]

(7) It is believed that Bentham, Hume, Adam Smith, and other architects of the modern era were all influenced by Dr. Bernard Mandeville, a Dutch physician. Although not widely known, he was one of the founders of the modern world.

His book, *The Fable of the Bees*, first published in 1705 and republished in two volumes in 1728, caused a violent tempest. The gist of his thesis is that a society consists of two groups, not unlike a beehive. On one side stand the hardworking, righteous, noble, and productive members. On the other side lay the pompous, idle, and slothful nobility, the class of gluttony and deception. In his story, one day the idle nobility decides to become truly noble by emulating the good workers, and this causes the downfall of that society. No longer did art find enthusiasts or artists patrons. Mandeville concludes that there is an affinity between “private vices and public goods.” The subtitle of his book reads: *An Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*. The contemporary economist R Hayek says that Mandeville unwittingly discovered the spontaneous nature of social and economic law. These systems do not need designers and planners. Mandeville was an undeniably prescient observer of profound social transformations who encouraged traits that had always been censured by the ethical philosophers: selfishness, profiteering, ostentation, and boasting. According to Mandeville, these private vices contribute to the social equilibrium. [...]

(10) The modern world is the ethical inverse of the old world. The ancient apocalyptic prophecies came true: reason is enslaved to desire, the external governs the internal and vices have supplanted virtues. It required a great deal of courage to declare that the life blood of modern life is the traditional vices not virtues. The scale of vice and virtue is now held upside down as former vices are valued as necessary fuel for the furnace of the world. This appreciation is in direct contradiction to Rumi’s view that the wealthy are the carriers of the dung that is to be burned at the bath house of the world.

The secularization of ethics, the rationalization of happiness, the centrality of humanity, and the transposition of vices and virtues constitute the serving values that preceded the birth of socioeconomic development and continue to propel it. Some have chosen such daunting terms as “egoism” (or ego-worship) and “individualism” to describe these transformations. But despite their somber tones, these terms fail to express the central ideas of the modern era. It is better to characterize what occurred as a lowering and rearranging of the system of values.

(11) Let us once more evoke Rumi in describing the values that precede social and economic development:

First, man hungers for bread.

As Food is life’s main thread.

When at long last he reaches satiety,

He seeks fame, the praise of poets and notoriety.

So his nobility would be lauded.

And from podiums his virtues applauded.

Development brings in its wake leisure and occasionally pride, obliviousness, and disdain for traditional values. But some have neglected the fact that it also

provides the opportunity for cultivating the higher and more spiritual needs. The distress of acquiring one's daily bread, shelter, and clothing would hardly allow for engagement in arts and the pursuit of worldly knowledge and mystical gnosis. But once mankind is liberated from the arduous and worrisome tasks of the mundane world, it can take wing and fly in the sphere of the higher concerns. Once the needs of the body are met, the hunger of the soul may be more apparent.

Socioeconomic development fulfills the primary needs, not the higher values. Such values as justice, freedom, wisdom, and so on are invariant, but humans, still in the clutches of physical want, have no chance to aspire to them. The God of those struggling for subsistence is the God of the oppressed, not that of the mystics. He is a God that vanquishes the oppressors, facilitates survival, pays off debts, and grants wishes. As soon as the veil of these primary needs is removed, the sun of divine beauty will reflect in the mirror of the higher and more refined spiritual yearnings. Only then is the religion of pure contemplation realized. God will finally shed the garbs of the savior and the benefactor to assume that of the beloved.

The profound scientific, humanist, and philosophical critiques of development that are current in the West are all the by-products of material development. Technology and development have run their course, revealing their own nature and assuming higher forms. This has allowed human beings to also experience and advance beyond technological and socioeconomic limitations where they can behold higher horizons and learn new lessons. The advent of postmodernism is a case in point.

(12) There is a plethora of values, emphases, and beliefs associated with development in the modern world: tolerance, freedom of speech, fine arts, enhanced order and stability in life, the meaning of life, the essential unity of religions, defiance of technological dominance, preservation of the ecosystem, popularity of science and research, women's rights, amusing and edifying leisure activities, heightened participation in political life, and so on.

The most salient among these values, however, is democracy with its multifarious definitions and foundations. However, the primary condition for the realization of democracy is the liberation of human beings from the elementary needs and necessities of life. It is true that human beings have always opposed inequality and demanded justice (democracy being a modern manifestation of this perennial human quest), but justice can prevail only where its seekers are not weighed down by poverty and insecurity. It is available to those who have already escaped other forms of slavery. Democracy is desirable for all, but in practice it is not available to all. It requires a certain level of normative, political, and governmental development that is contingent upon economic development.

Only those who have forged new human relationships among themselves will take democracy seriously and demand it earnestly. The greatest dictatorship is that of poverty and ignorance. It is in their shadows that tyrannical rule rises and prospers, extinguishing the torch of liberty and justice in hearts. Thus certain levels of prosperity and security are not only the preambles of development, they are necessary for its continued existence. Only then would they reveal their subtle and spiritual charms, winning admirers and lovers everywhere.

Freedom of speech is desirable for those who have something to say, those who have the time, leisure, and security to think, learn, read, and inquire. All of this becomes possible when people's energies are not drained in dealing with the



elementary needs and where the seeds of ideas are allowed to germinate in the fertile communal soil.

In a developed society, where decisive operations are more cerebral than manual, and where innovation turns into a requirement of progress, the institutions that cultivate innovative minds gain more power and become harder to dominate. Ruling over minds is not as easy as enslaving bodies.

Subtle and spiritual values (such as the love of liberty and of knowledge) are more prevalent in developed societies because human beings are less enslaved by elementary needs. Still, ideology, the instrument of intellectual enslavement that imposes subjective schemes on objective realities, has not lost its holds on such societies. Therefore it is necessary to bolster the role and the service of the free media. Democratization of the spread of knowledge and the establishment of popular control over the flow of information (in addition to that of wealth and power) is among the most significant promoters and properties of democracy in developed societies.

(13) There is no doubt that the mores of development and prosperity, although not antagonistic to the ideals of ethics, are different from the mores of asceticism and mysticism, which prescribe austerity and world abnegation. What is virtue if not the proper etiquette for a given situation? The ethicists have stated, for example, that the proper appreciation of wealth is gratitude, just as the proper etiquette of poverty is patience. It is, therefore, imprudent to hold poverty as superior to wealth.

Choosing poverty and deprivation instead of wealth and conviviality is a well-meaning and well-worn Sufi [ascetic] prescription for redemption. Two great thinkers from the Shi'ite and Sunni schools of thought; Al-Ghazzali and Feiz Kashani, have, after extensive inquiry, reached the same verdict concerning this issue: "It should be generally admitted that poverty is better and safer than affluence because the poor have less of an interest in the worldly affairs and to that extent, they will be more inclined to prayer and pious reflection."

These great thinkers confess that the poor and the rich are both infatuated and captivated by the world, albeit in different ways. To paraphrase Rumi, "Poverty is a better guard for the righteous."

This is the morality that mocks worldliness. Sa'di tells us of a merchant who "one night in the island of Kish was boasting of his trade plans to take Persian sulphur to China, Chinese ceramics to Rome, Roman silk to India, Indian steel to Syria, Syrian mirrors to Yemen, Yemenite swords to Persia, and . . ." Sa'di interrupted him with this taunt: "The narrow eyes of the man of the world are plugged with either frugality or the grave's mold".

All of these attitudes are based on the erroneous assumption that poverty is preferable to wealth and that the rich are farther removed from salvation and more susceptible to a host of afflictions, from greed and penury to neglect and

pride. It has been a rare voice like that of Hafez who courageously challenged the popular morality of asceticism.

All this rhetoric is meant as a response to Al-Ghazzali's preference for the "patient poor over the grateful rich" and his belief that "at worship . . . the rich will never attain the elation of the poor".

(14) Science, the actually existing nature-searching and nature-challenging science, is nowadays the axis, the focus, and engine of development. Societies, to the extent that they possess it, are possessors of progress and modernity. The weaknesses and strengths of science mirror those of development. In other words, science and development share the same trajectory and destiny. A different kind of science, if possible, will yield a different world, history, and social development. The discoveries of science and achievements of civilization make a return to the past impossible.

This view has, and has always had, certain opponents. The most important and recent of these are represented in schools of thought that perceive an indissoluble nexus between knowledge and power (Foucault) or find an undeniable connection between science and human biases and interests (Habermas). There are others who, while accepting the validity of science, find it influenced by social determinations and forces (the Edinburgh school, Barnes and Bloor.) Others define science as an unconscious ideology of a community of practitioners (Kuhn.) Finally, there are those (Feyerabend) who equate science with some kind of magic and superstition. Thus they all challenge the objectivity and realism of science and seek to reduce it to something of a social custom or norm, comparable to individual and collective tastes. It was a combination of such ideas that led to the onslaught of postmodernism against reason and science. Although these ideas are beginning to show signs of decline, they are still attractive to some intellectual thrill-seekers.

Second, dethroning science is one thing, invalidating it quite another. Postmodernism, which has issued the verdict of the relativity of truth (which is tantamount to denying it) is now, according to its own verdict, either devoid of the truth or else invites the charge of self-contradiction. In either case, it lacks the decisiveness and the power to function as a weapon against science. It is true that science is no longer considered as the only possible form of knowledge and the sole valid method for the discovery of the truth. But this refutes only a positivistic notion of science. Refutation of positivism is not the same thing as the refutation of science.

Positivism was rooted in two tenets: the denial of the historicity of science and reason and the belief in the possibility of unmediated, that is, non-theory-laden and naked observation. Accordingly, the entire effort of the antipositivist schools of thought was to demonstrate that observation prior to and unaffected by theory would be a chimera. The meaning and mystery of the objectivity of science, for the positivists, was nothing but the liberation from presuppositions. Similarly, the refutation of objectivity for the later thinkers was nothing but a refutation of the positivist presuppositions. If induction is so denigrated nowadays, it is not only due to its logical sterility, nor is it a result of the principle of philosophical indeterminacy. Rather, it is due to the discovery of a crowded empirical world that has lured the nature of things from their recondite lairs and released them into a blinding and bewildering storm of forces and fields. The resultant dizzying confluence of phenomena renders the task of scientific induction terrifyingly complex.

In any case, postmodernism, which could do no more than debunk positivistic reason, has reached a point where it has to decide whether to espouse relativism

or appeal to some other method of immediate realization of the truth. Positivism should be defeated, but not at the expense of overthrowing science and reason.

If we accept that science has been successful in the task of manipulation of nature, then how could we possibly interpret this success in rational terms except by admitting that it reflects reality? Is not every step of success with nature indicative of a step in the establishment of the realism of science?

One should not exaggerate criticism of science. The antipositivist attacks on science should not be interpreted as attacks on the rational value and worth of science per se. Nor should humanity neglect such an extraordinarily effective tool in understanding its history. Most importantly, one should beware of a misinterpretation of the fateful convergence of science and development and of thus impugning development by attacking science. Truth-seeking entails science-seeking. Science is at once the repository and the guide to the secrets of nature. Human beings are deliberative actors. They act within the radius of their knowledge.

Rejection of science betrays new narrow-mindedness reminiscent of the dark ages. We should make room for science because the values that encourage science are the same values that encourage development.

(15) Now it becomes clear that the principles of development are composed of two sets of principles: the ethics of science and the ethics of prosperity. The mores of modern times have, for the first time, underlined, endorsed, and articulated these virtues. Thus yesterday's grotesque secret has become today's preening beauty.

On the path of development we should draw on our traditions. However, traditions may prove to be both fetters and fulcrums. They should be, at once, sought as shelters and avoided as prisons. The mores of science and prosperity are two groups of useful traditions that we need now more than ever before.

**SOURCE:** Reason, Freedom & Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush. Mahmoud Sadri, Ahmad Sadri (Trans. Ed.). Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 39-53

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How real are the differences between guiding values and serving values? Support your argument with evidence from your own life experiences.
2. What do you think of the example that a white lie is preferable to revealing a damaging truth?
3. Expand on the three important questions that deals with the values that predate social development.

4. How do historians and sociologists understand the values that preceded and sustained the development of the West? How you understand private vice and public good, as presented by Mandeville?
5. Do you think that ethical values can be changed? What is the role of ethical values in Muslim and other Eastern civilizations?
6. How is it possible to connect values with ideas of development in Muslim countries, including Central Asia? What is the role of the sciences in this process? What other factors do we need for socio-economic progress?

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What are the similarities between Soroush's ideas on the correlation of values, development and the role of religious ethics in the economy, and the ideas of Max Weber and Fukuyama? Compare the concepts of democracy in Islam and in Asian societies.
2. Do you think that the concept of development and democracy in developing countries should be the same as in western countries (consider Fukuyama's position)? Is it possible to have an Asian alternative to democracy?
3. Why do you think that justice is important for human beings and society? What do you think about social justice in Islamic sources and Muslim societies? How do you accept, or appreciate, the concept of justice in Europe and the West presented by Sorokin? Write an essay on social justice and social equality using the texts and your own experience.

### FURTHER READINGS:

- Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: <http://www.questia.com/library/book/reason-freedom-and-democracy-in-islam-essential-writings-of-abdolkarim-soroush-by-ahmad-sadri-mahmoud-sadri.jsp>
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### INTRODUCTION

More than any other group of people, poets have extolled the virtues of justice, have sung paeans to it, and have even generated a metaphor for it: poetic justice. From Homer to Robert Frost, the poets' liberal use of this metaphor to narrate the ironies of life acts as a wish fulfillment that all of us seek. In this chapter, the unique poems offered bring us different perspectives on social justice.

The first poem addresses the issue of the insurmountable differences between the natures of the peoples of East and West. The reader may want to reflect on how the poet makes the differences between the East and West disappear in a confrontation between strangers reduced to the simplest equation of an individual meeting another individual. This common ground is reached by an Afghan "raider" (thief) and a British soldier through recognition and respect for each other's valor and integrity. Justice seems trivial in comparison to courage and appreciation of the other. For decades the first stanza of this poem captured the imagination of all those who longed for a common ground between the self and the other. But the poem is also about the waltz of death and reason. These twin conditions, too, bring humanity to common ground with all urgency.

Going further, the second poem looks beyond narrow nationalist agendas to broader humanistic goals: freedom from fear, free knowledge, breadth of thought, depth of truth, striving towards perfection, reason over dead habit, and thought wed to action. This prayer-poem offers a glimpse into the injustices perpetuated by uncritical nationalism and seeks to rise above it. Can the mind be truly free from fear, or the world free of its narrow domestic walls? Is humanity really desirous of such a free world? Why then does it put up all sorts of barriers, particularly against the needy? Rules abound to regulate the needy away from their desired necessities: be it the laws of private property, inheritance, ordinances regarding the usage of public property, regulation of market and competition, or laws of immigration. Why then does this poem tug at our heartstrings?

The third poem draws us to examine the territory of justice which lies somewhere between bleak existence and miraculous hope. Yet the poem doesn't celebrate the miraculous but honors the miserable peasants. Their vitality in the midst of their poverty draws our attention. Their misery, their unfettered expression, and their trivial pursuit at the cost of meeting their daily cares seem both virtuous and endearing.

The protagonists in each of these poems come from starkly different classes and sectors of society: the soldier and thief, the intellectual citizen, and the hopelessly hopeful peasants. Yet, we recognize ourselves in each of these characters. Or, do we?



**RASUL GAMZATOV**



## RASUL GAMZATOV: TARRY

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Rasul Gamzatov (1923-2003) was a well-known poet from Daghestan, Russia, who wrote in his native language, Avar. Winner of the Lenin Prize for his poetry collection *Lofty Stars* (1962) and honoured with the title of People's Poet of Daghestan, Rasul Gamzatov served as the chairman of the Writers' Union of Daghestan from 1950-2003. His publications include *Love Inspired* and *Fiery Wrath* (1943), *Year of My Birth* (1950), and *Wheel of Life* (1987). He was a prolific writer-poet.

Waking early in the morning,  
To this rule, I beg you, keep:  
Ask yourself, your dreams recalling –  
Did you laugh or cry in sleep?

From your window scan the heavens –  
Are they dim or blue and bright?  
Does thick snow hide hill and heather  
Or does sparkling rain delight?

If no avalanche has carried  
Cottages on hell-bent course,  
If there's no alarum, tarry,  
Do not leap astride your horse!

Leaving home, you should not alter  
Rules established long ago:  
With your horse upon a halter,  
On foot to the boundary go.

Loath we are to use the bridle  
When we take to horse and road.  
On we race like royal heralds,  
With red spurs the horse we goad.

From our brow the sweat comes pouring,  
On our shirts wet patches show.  
On we race, cool streams ignoring,  
Passing fields where flowers grow.

How to treat great words is something  
We have mastered not at all.  
Words to whisper on a mountain  
In the open plain we bawl.

As we ride up to a village  
We should ask, ere we proceed:  
"Are you feasting? Or in mourning?"  
And not gallop in at speed!

In this century not in duels  
Men, unjustly slandered, fell;  
With, alas, belated sorrow  
Their true deeds at last we tell.

So pronounce no hasty sentence  
And no hasty prize bestow,  
Lest repentance overwhelm you,  
When you glance back at the road.

Boldness must its own self master.  
Men, by fickle impulse led,  
Walk back horseless from the battle  
Or ride home without their heads.

I'm not saying: "Be complacent!"  
For the breath of storms I greet.  
Life is life, not weekend races  
Where for gold cups we compete.

Poet, learn a sterner lesson –  
Take no town without a fight!  
Know: the verse that cost no effort  
You shall surely burn one night.

Be your spirit gay or solemn,  
Let true speech be your firm creed,  
On your journey pause to ponder,  
First look round, and then proceed!

Source: Rasul Gamzatov, *Selected Poems*, Raduga Publishers Moscow, English translation, (translated by Peter Tempest), 1974.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does the author call a reader to? Does he call people to be complacent? How does he suggest excluding race from life?
2. Why is self-analysis important for human beings and the author? In what way should each person behave to maintain a clear conscience? What is the role of conscience in the human individual and in society?
3. Why should we be questing ourselves?
4. Why is it difficult to make social decisions?
5. Why shouldn't we hurry, but tarry while making judgments?
6. How important are reason and reasoning in providing justice for people?
7. To what extent can a poet and poetry promote social justice? How can they motivate people to avoid sinful actions, (to be afraid of being ashamed or defamed) and to use public opinion as an instrument of social control?
8. What kinds of instruments do poets use to positively or negatively influence public consciousness? What role do words and symbols play in human history?
9. How does poetry differ from prose in its impact? How can we distinguish these forms of writing from religious, political and scientific mechanisms of influence on human behavior?
10. Can poetry (poets) transform injustice into justice?

## RUDYARD KIPLING: THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

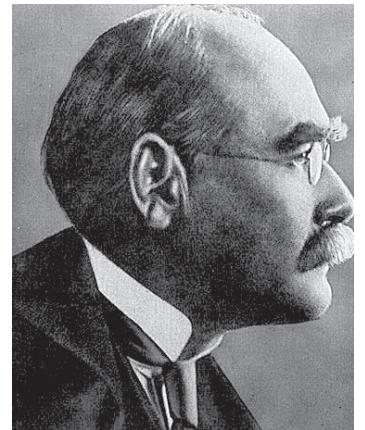
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Author and poet Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was born in India. His best-known children's books include *The Jungle Book* (1894), and *The Second Jungle Book* (1895). His novel *Kim* (1901) and his poems *Mandalay* (1890) and *Gunga Din* (1890) give us a unique glimpse into British imperialism. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907.

**Verses 1889-1896**

**by Rudyard Kipling**

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;  
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!



Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border-side,  
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:  
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,  
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.  
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:  
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"  
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar:  
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.  
At dusk he harries the Abazai – at dawn he is into Bonair,  
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,  
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,  
By the favour of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.  
But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,  
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.  
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,  
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."  
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,  
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the head of the gallows-tree.  
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat –  
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.  
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,  
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,  
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,  
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.  
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.

“Ye shoot like a soldier,” Kamal said. “Show now if ye can ride.”  
 It’s up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dustdevils go,  
 The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a barren doe.  
 The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,  
 But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden plays with a glove.  
 There was rock to the left and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,  
 And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho’ never a man was seen.  
 They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,  
 The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.  
 The dun he fell at a water-course – in a woeful heap fell he,  
 And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled the rider free.  
 He has knocked the pistol out of his hand – small room was there to strive,  
 “’Twas only by favour of mine,” quoth he, “ye rode so long alive:  
 There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,  
 But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.  
 If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,  
 The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row:  
 If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,  
 The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly.”  
 Lightly answered the Colonel’s son: “Do good to bird and beast,  
 But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast.  
 If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,  
 Belike the price of a jackal’s meal were more than a thief could pay.  
 They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain,  
 The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the cattle are slain.  
 But if thou thinkest the price be fair, – thy brethren wait to sup,  
 The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, – howl, dog, and call them up!  
 And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear and stack,  
 Give me my father’s mare again, and I’ll fight my own way back!”  
 Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon his feet.  
 “No talk shall be of dogs,” said he, “when wolf and gray wolf meet.  
 May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath;  
 What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the dawn with Death?”  
 Lightly answered the Colonel’s son: “I hold by the blood of my clan:  
 Take up the mare for my father’s gift – by God, she has carried a man!”  
 The red mare ran to the Colonel’s son, and nuzzled against his breast;  
 “We be two strong men,” said Kamal then, “but she loveth the younger best.  
 So she shall go with a lifter’s dower, my turquoise-studded rein,  
 My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain.”  
 The Colonel’s son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,  
 “Ye have taken the one from a foe,” said he;  
 “will ye take the mate from a friend?”  
 “A gift for a gift,” said Kamal straight; “a limb for the risk of a limb.  
 Thy father has sent his son to me, I’ll send my son to him!”  
 With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest –  
 He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.  
 “Now here is thy master,” Kamal said, “who leads a troop of the Guides,  
 And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.  
 Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,  
 Thy life is his – thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.

So, thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,  
 And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Border-line,  
 And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power –  
 Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur.”  
 They have looked each other between the eyes, and there they found no fault,  
 They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on leavened bread and salt:  
 They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,  
 On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the Wondrous Names of God.  
 The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy the dun,  
 And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there went forth but one.  
 And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty swords flew clear –  
 There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood of the mountaineer.  
 “Ha' done! ha' done!” said the Colonel's son.  
 “Put up the steel at your sides!  
 Last night ye had struck at a Border thief – tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!”

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,  
 Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;  
 But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,  
 When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Is the West so very different from the East? Why, or why not?
2. Do you think the poet makes a distinction based on creed, deed, or race?
3. What values seem to be most important in this poem?
4. Do soldiers and men-at-arms have a different set of values? What do you think are their public and private codes of conduct?
5. How similar and different are Kamal and the Colonel's son?

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Are there differences in how the West and Asians perceive justice and its role in State and Society?
2. How do we bridge the gap between East and West, the self and other, and between male and female?
3. How different do you think the encounters between Afghans and British soldiers are today from the time that Kipling was writing (late 1800s)? What do you think has changed between then and now?
4. Does this story have universal validity? In other words, could this encounter have taken place between other cultures in a different part of the world?

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- The Ballad of East and West by Rudyard Kipling, [www.bartleby.com/246/1129.html](http://www.bartleby.com/246/1129.html)
- Complete collection of poems by Rudyard Kipling, [www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/kipling/kipling\\_ind.html](http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/kipling/kipling_ind.html)
- Biography of the author, [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard\\_Kipling](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard_Kipling)
- Rudyard Kipling – Biography and Works, [www.online-literature.com/kipling/](http://www.online-literature.com/kipling/)

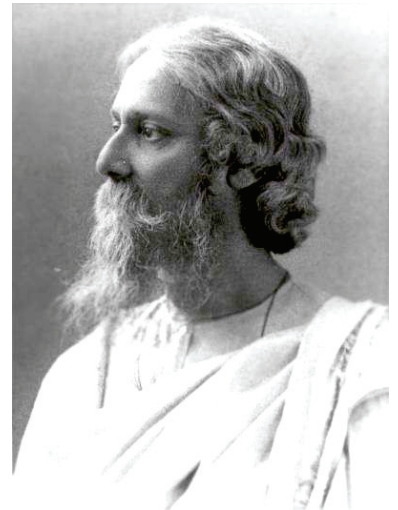


COLE, THOMAS. THE VOYAGE OF LIFE YOUTH. 1842. NEW YORK



## RABINDRANATH TAGORE: GITANJALI – MIND WITHOUT FEAR

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was an Indian poet, philosopher, literary figure, painter and political activist. He was the first Asian to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. His works include the *Gitanjali: Song Offerings* (1912), *Gora* (1910), and *Ghare-Baire* (1916). He remains the only poet in the world to have two of his songs adopted as the national anthems of different countries, India and Bangladesh, *Jana Gana Mana* and *Sonar Bangla*, respectively.



*“Song Offerings”*

*Translations made by the author from the original Bengali.*

### MIND WITHOUT FEAR

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand  
of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action –  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Can humans be ever fully free from fear? Why or why not?
2. Is knowledge free? Do you pay for tuition? Do you buy books? Then what does the poet mean by free knowledge?
3. What are narrow domestic walls? How can we break them? Do we like having walls? Can we live without them? Do we want to live without them?
4. We know we are not perfect, why then should we seek perfection?
5. We have been told that habits are good; why then does the poet think reason is superior to habits?
6. Why is the poet not seeking a better world but only a better country, his own?

**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. Are the values espoused in the poem any different from those expressed by Kipling? Are these universal values?
2. Why do you get the sense that the protagonists in this poem and in the Kipling poem are all individuals with a great deal of self-respect and dignity? Are self-respect and dignity essential conditions for equality and social justice? They also seem to radiate courage and honor. Is courage more important than justice?
3. Can you find any parochial values in these two poems that set Eastern values apart from Western ones?
4. What values are needed to support social justice?



SURIKOV, VASILY IVANOVICH. MORNING OF EXECUTION OF STRELTSY

## NIKOLAY NEKRASOV: WHO CAN BE HAPPY AND FREE IN RUSSIA?

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*Translated by Juliet M. Soskice**With an Introduction by Dr. David Soskice*

1917

Nikolay Alexeyevich Nekrasov (1821-1878) was a Russian poet and publisher of *Sovremennic* (The Contemporary Journal). He grew up on the banks of the Volga, where he observed the hard labor workers and the conditions of Russian peasants, which were reflected in his writings. His collection of poetry includes *Dreams and Sounds*, *Three Countries of the World*, and *Dead Lake*, but the most important work was *Who can be Happy and Free in Russia?* (1873-1876). The poem narrates the tale of seven peasants seeking happiness and freedom in Russian society. Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) noted that Nekrasov was the greatest poet since Pushkin and Lermontov.

## PROLOGUE

The year doesn't matter,  
The land's not important,  
But seven good peasants  
Once met on a high-road.  
From Province "Hard-Battered,"  
From District "Most Wretched,"  
From "Destitute" Parish,  
From neighbouring hamlets –  
"Patched," "Barefoot," and "Shabby,"  
"Bleak," "Burnt-Out," and "Hungry," 10  
From "Harvestless" also,  
They met and disputed  
Of who can, in Russia,  
Be happy and free?

Luka said, "The pope,"  
And Roman, "The Pomyeshchick,"  
Demyan, "The official,"  
"The round-bellied merchant,"  
Said both brothers Goobin,  
Mitroodor and Ivan. 20  
Pakhom, who'd been lost

In profoundest reflection,  
Exclaimed, looking down  
At the earth, "'Tis his Lordship,  
His most mighty Highness,  
The Tsar's Chief Adviser,"  
And Prov said, "The Tsar."

Like bulls are the peasants:  
Once folly is in them  
You cannot dislodge it 30  
Although you should beat them  
With stout wooden cudgels:  
They stick to their folly,  
And nothing can move them.  
They raised such a clamour  
That those who were passing  
Thought, "Surely the fellows  
Have found a great treasure  
And share it amongst them!"

They all had set out 40  
On particular errands:



VASNETSOV, VICTOR. MOVING HOUSE. 1876.  
OIL ON CANVAS, 53x67. TRETYAKOV GALLERY.

The one to the blacksmith's,  
Another in haste  
To fetch Father Prokoffy  
To christen his baby.  
Pakhom had some honey  
To sell in the market;  
The two brothers Goobin  
Were seeking a horse  
Which had strayed from their herd. 50

Long since should the peasants  
Have turned their steps homewards,  
But still in a row  
They are hurrying onwards  
As quickly as though  
The grey wolf were behind them.  
Still further, still faster  
They hasten, contending.  
Each shouts, nothing hearing,  
And time does not wait. 60  
In quarrel they mark not  
The fiery-red sunset  
Which blazes in Heaven  
As evening is falling,  
And all through the night  
They would surely have wandered  
If not for the woman,  
The pox-pitted "Blank-wits,"  
Who met them and cried:  
"Heh, God-fearing peasants, 70  
Pray, what is your mission?

What seek ye abroad  
In the blackness of midnight?"

So shrilled the hag, mocking,  
And shrieking with laughter  
She slashed at her horses  
And galloped away.

The peasants are startled,  
Stand still, in confusion,  
Since long night has fallen, 80  
The numberless stars  
Cluster bright in the heavens,  
The moon gliding onwards.  
Black shadows are spread  
On the road stretched before  
The impetuous walkers.  
Oh, shadows, black shadows,  
Say, who can outrun you,  
Or who can escape you?  
Yet no one can catch you, 90  
Entice, or embrace you!

Pakhom, the old fellow,  
Gazed long at the wood,  
At the sky, at the roadway,  
Gazed, silently searching  
His brain for some counsel,  
And then spake in this wise:  
"Well, well, the wood-devil  
Has finely bewitched us!  
We've wandered at least 100  
Thirty versts from our homes.  
We all are too weary  
To think of returning  
Tonight; we must wait  
Till the sun rise tomorrow."  
Thus, blaming the devil,  
The peasants make ready  
To sleep by the roadside.  
They light a large fire,  
And collecting some farthings 110  
Send two of their number  
To buy them some vodka,  
The rest cutting cups  
From the bark of a birch-tree.  
The vodka's provided,  
Black bread, too, besides,  
And they all begin feasting:



Each munches some bread  
And drinks three cups of vodka –  
But then comes the question 120  
Of who can, in Russia,  
Be happy and free?

Luka cries, “The pope!”  
And Roman, “The Pomyeshchick!”  
And Prov shouts, “The Tsar!”  
And Demyan, “The official!”  
“The round-bellied merchant!”  
Bawl both brothers Goobin,  
Mitrodor and Ivan.  
Pakhom shrieks, “His Lordship, 130  
His most mighty Highness,  
The Tsar’s Chief Adviser!”

The obstinate peasants  
Grow more and more heated,  
Cry louder and louder,  
Swear hard at each other;  
I really believe  
They’ll attack one another!  
Look! now they are fighting!  
Roman and Pakhom close, 140  
Demyan clouts Luka,  
While the two brothers Goobin  
Are drubbing fat Prov,  
And they all shout together.  
Then wakes the clear echo,  
Runs hither and thither,  
Runs calling and mocking  
As if to encourage  
The wrath of the peasants.  
The trees of the forest 150  
Throw furious words back:

“The Tsar!” “The Pomyeshchick!”  
“The pope!” “The official!”  
Until the whole coppice  
Awakes in confusion;  
The birds and the insects,



ARGUNOV, IVAN PETROVICH. PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN PEASANT, 1784. TRETYAKOV GALLERY, MOSCOW.

The swift-footed beasts  
And the low crawling reptiles  
Are chattering and buzzing  
And stirring all round. 160  
The timid grey hare  
Springing out of the bushes  
Speeds startled away;  
The hoarse little jackdaw  
Flies off to the top  
Of a birch-tree, and raises  
A harsh, grating shriek,  
A most horrible clamour.  
A weak little peewit  
Falls headlong in terror 170  
From out of its nest,  
And the mother comes flying  
In search of her fledgeling.  
She twitters in anguish.  
Alas! she can’t find it.  
The crusty old cuckoo



RYABUSHKIN, ANDREI. A 17<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY MOSCOW STREET ON A HOLIDAY. 1895. OIL ON CANVAS. THE RUSSIAN MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

Awakes and bethinks him  
To call to a neighbour:  
Ten times he commences  
And gets out of tune, 180  
But he won't give it up....

Call, call, little cuckoo,  
For all the young cornfields  
Will shoot into ear soon,  
And then it will choke you –  
The ripe golden grain,  
And your day will be ended!

From out the dark forest  
Fly seven brown owls,  
And on seven tall pine-trees 190  
They settle themselves  
To enjoy the disturbance.  
They laugh – birds of night –  
And their huge, yellow eyes gleam  
Like fourteen wax candles.  
The raven – the wise one –  
Sits perched on a tree  
In the light of the fire,  
Praying hard to the devil  
That one of the wranglers, 200  
At least, should be beaten  
To death in the tumult.  
A cow with a bell  
Which had strayed from its fellows  
The evening before,  
Upon hearing men's voices  
Comes out of the forest  
And into the firelight,

And fixing its eyes,  
Large and sad, on the peasants, 210  
Stands listening in silence  
Some time to their raving,  
And then begins mooing,  
Most heartily moos.  
The silly cow moos,  
The jackdaw is screeching,  
The turbulent peasants  
Still shout, and the echo  
Maliciously mocks them –  
The impudent echo 220  
Who cares but for mocking  
And teasing good people,  
For scaring old women  
And innocent children:  
Though no man has seen it  
We've all of us heard it;  
It lives – without body;  
It speaks – without tongue.

The pretty white owl  
Called the Duchess of Moscow 230  
Comes plunging about  
In the midst of the peasants,  
Now circling above them,  
Now striking the bushes  
And earth with her body.  
And even the fox, too,  
The cunning old creature,  
With woman's determined  
And deep curiosity,  
Creeps to the firelight 240  
And stealthily listens;



At last, quite bewildered,  
She goes; she is thinking,  
“The devil himself  
Would be puzzled, I know!”

And really the wranglers  
Themselves have forgotten  
The cause of the strife.

But after awhile  
Having pummelled each other 250  
Sufficiently soundly,  
They come to their senses;  
They drink from a rain-pool  
And wash themselves also,  
And then they feel sleepy.  
And, meanwhile, the peewit,  
The poor little fledgeling,  
With short hops and flights  
Had come fluttering towards them.  
Pakhom took it up 260  
In his palm, held it gently  
Stretched out to the firelight,  
And looked at it, saying,  
“You are but a mite,  
Yet how sharp is your claw;  
If I breathed on you once  
You’d be blown to a distance,  
And if I should sneeze  
You would straightway be wafted  
Right into the flames. 270  
One flick from my finger  
Would kill you entirely.  
Yet you are more powerful,  
More free than the peasant:  
Your wings will grow stronger,  
And then, little birdie,  
You’ll fly where it please you.  
Come, give us your wings, now,  
You frail little creature,  
And we will go flying 280  
All over the Empire,



SEDOV, GEORGIY. TSAR IVAN IV AT THE DEATHBED OF HIS WIFE  
VASILISA. 1875.

To seek and inquire,  
To search and discover  
The man who in Russia –  
Is happy and free.”

“No wings would be needful  
If we could be certain  
Of bread every day;  
For then we could travel  
On foot at our leisure,” 290  
Said Prov, of a sudden  
Grown weary and sad.

“But not without vodka,  
A bucket each morning,”  
Cried both brothers Goobin,  
Mitrodor and Ivan,  
Who dearly loved vodka.

“Salt cucumbers, also,  
Each morning a dozen!”  
The peasants cry, jesting. 300

“Sour qwass, too, a jug  
To refresh us at midday!”

"A can of hot tea  
Every night!" they say, laughing.

But while they were talking  
The little bird's mother  
Was flying and wheeling  
In circles above them;  
She listened to all,  
And descending just near them 310  
She chirruped, and making  
A brisk little movement  
She said to Pakhom  
In a voice clear and human:  
"Release my poor child,  
I will pay a great ransom."

"And what is your offer?"

"A loaf each a day  
And a bucket of vodka,  
Salt cucumbers also, 320  
Each morning a dozen.  
At midday sour qwass  
And hot tea in the evening."

"And where, little bird,"  
Asked the two brothers Goobin,  
"And where will you find  
Food and drink for all seven?"

"Yourself you will find it,  
But I will direct you  
To where you will find it." 330  
"Well, speak. We will listen."

"Go straight down the road,  
Count the poles until thirty:  
Then enter the forest  
And walk for a verst.  
By then you'll have come  
To a smooth little lawn  
With two pine-trees upon it.  
Beneath these two pine-trees  
Lies buried a casket 340  
Which you must discover.  
The casket is magic,  
And in it there lies  
An enchanted white napkin.  
Whenever you wish it

This napkin will serve you  
With food and with vodka:  
You need but say softly,  
'O napkin enchanted,  
Give food to the peasants!' 350  
At once, at your bidding,  
Through my intercession  
The napkin will serve you.  
And now, free my child."  
"But wait. We are poor,  
And we're thinking of making  
A very long journey,"  
Pakhom said. "I notice  
That you are a bird  
Of remarkable talent. 360

So charm our old clothing  
To keep it upon us."  
"Our coats, that they fall not  
In tatters," Roman said.  
"Our laputs, that they too  
May last the whole journey,"  
Demyan next demanded.

"Our shirts, that the fleas  
May not breed and annoy us,"  
Luka added lastly. 370

The little bird answered,  
"The magic white napkin  
Will mend, wash, and dry for you.  
Now free my child."

Pakhom then spread open  
His palm, wide and spacious,  
Releasing the fledgeling,  
Which fluttered away  
To a hole in a pine-tree.  
The mother who followed it 380  
Added, departing:  
"But one thing remember:  
Food, summon at pleasure  
As much as you fancy,  
But vodka, no more  
Than a bucket a day.  
If once, even twice  
You neglect my injunction  
Your wish shall be granted;  
The third time, take warning: 390  
Misfortune will follow."

The peasants set off  
In a file, down the road,  
Count the poles until thirty  
And enter the forest,  
And, silently counting  
Each footstep, they measure  
A verst as directed.  
They find the smooth lawn  
With the pine-trees upon it, 400  
They dig all together  
And soon reach the casket;  
They open it – there lies  
The magic white napkin!  
They cry in a chorus,  
“O napkin enchanted,  
Give food to the peasants!”

Look, look! It’s unfolding!  
Two hands have come floating  
From no one sees where; 410  
Place a bucket of vodka,  
A large pile of bread  
On the magic white napkin,  
And dwindle away.

“The cucumbers, tea,  
And sour qwass – where are they then?”  
At once they appear!

The peasants unloosen  
Their waistbelts, and gather  
Around the white napkin 420  
To hold a great banquet.  
In joy, they embrace  
One another, and promise  
That never again  
Will they beat one another  
Without sound reflection,  
But settle their quarrels  
In reason and honour  
As God has commanded;  
That nought shall persuade them 430  
To turn their steps homewards  
To kiss wives and children,  
To see the old people,  
Until they have settled  
For once and forever  
The subject of discord:  
Until they’ve discovered  
The man who, in Russia,  
Is happy and free.

They swear to each other 440  
To keep this, their promise,  
And daybreak beholds them  
Embosomed in slumber  
As deep and as dreamless  
As that of the dead.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext06/7whrs10.txt>

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think the peasants found happiness and freedom to be so important that they quarreled about it so strongly?
2. Why is their quest for finding the individual who was happy and free in Russia more important than finding a job, earning some money or just resting for some time?

3. Why did they select the Pope, the official, the merchant, or the Tsar as the most likely persons to be happy and free? What was common to all these people?
4. What is the role of nature in this poem?
5. Do the peasants seem to be dissatisfied? Are they unhappy or depressed? Why, or why not?
6. When a miracle happens to them, what do the peasants want? Why didn't they ask for gold, jewels, or palaces?

### REVIEW QUESTIONS:

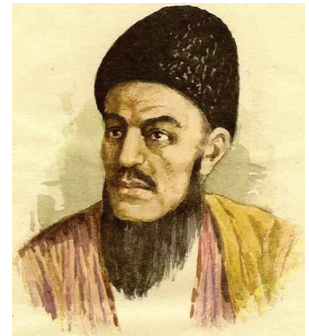
1. How does this poem relate to the others?
2. Are there any commonalities between soldiers, thieves, intellectuals and peasants?
3. How do poets see justice? Is it of paramount importance, of some importance or not at all? Justify your answer?
4. Does poetry give us a different perspective than prose? Why, or why not?

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## MAKHTUMKULI: WHEN JUDGMENT DAY COMES SONGS FROM THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA

**Makhtumkuli Pyragy (Makhdumqoli Faraghi (1733-1783))** was a Turkmen spiritual leader and philosophical and ethical poet, who made significant efforts to bring education to communities, to challenge society, to teach the ruling class, and to secure independence and autonomy for his people. Poetry was his main instrument to implement his mission as enlightener. He was also a devout Sufist, who traveled throughout the lands observing the lives of the people, including Turkmens, teaching and praying for the salvation of the people. He promoted the idea of keeping people's ways sacred, as well as maintaining the unity and integrity of all nations.



Brethren become more notorious day by day,  
Heresy increases year on year.  
Alcohol-drinkers and adulterers, I fear,  
Amid the ranks of infamy must stay.  
O Muslim brothers, do not deviate!  
You'll cross the Sirat Bridge, thin as a hair.  
A few more years, Daijal will come – so they declare –  
To stir the world like embers in a grate.  
He's dressed in black, his one eye is the keener.  
The poor burn in the fire the wicked light –  
See where the honest Muslims go when they take flight:  
Holy Damascus, Mecca, and Medina.  
Jesus and Mahdi bring justice and peace,  
But Gog and Magog only tyranny:  
They'll dig right through the Oaf Mountains to get at me,  
Their knuckles scraping ground, fearsomely obese.  
Pen trembles with the pain orphans have born;  
The minds of lovers burn with fire and wonder;  
The sky will burst and every mountain fall asunder;  
Israfil will blow his brazen horn.  
Great waters will recede and rivers drain:  
Sun, moon, and stars will fail in a relapse  
When all the high hills melt and Heaven and Earth collapse  
Only my Lord Himself will then remain.  
When Death calls, man will give up all his wealth,  
Kin, family, and lastly even breath.  
The Lord will then decree the swart Angel of Death,  
Even that darkling angel, kill himself!  
Save God alone, no living entity  
Will then remain. Israfil's horn will die.

In forty days of rain, the seas are earth, earth's sky,  
 All mingled. Afterwards, new plants will be.  
 A horse dressed in caparison full brave  
 Shall come – gold, silver, green and bright scarlet;  
 Four angels will patrol in unearthly quartet,  
 Arriving at Muhammad's earthly grave.  
 An angel's wings will cause the air to shake.  
 "Yea", it will say, and when "Arise" is said  
 The grave will open up and soil pour on His head.  
 Then "Oh, my ummah!", cries he, and will wake.  
 Fear of that Day of Judgement will prevail  
 Exceedingly. "Where are my ummah?", cries  
 He, prostrate – from Sajdah he hesitates to rise  
 Till guards will come and say, "Get up, all hail!"  
 Great Israfil takes up his brazen horn  
 To stand alert in the Almighty's sight:  
 Two golden calls he blows anon, to left and right –  
 And lo! God's creatures, suddenly reborn  
 Sneezing, they clamber from that doleful lair,  
 The grave. Wheezing, they gape up at the sky,  
 Or queasily survey the changing scene nearby –  
 For forty days remaining transfixed there.  
 They see that birds and beasts are all good friends,  
 That rivers flow together, lip to lip,  
 That perfect lovers know perfect companionship,  
 And rise up singing, as the lark ascends!  
 Demons of Hell hold each a mace of fire –  
 The scales are set – the sun shines brilliant black –  
 While those who deal in horses, they are mounted on Buraq –  
 This one gold-shod, and those in silk attire!  
 The sun will boil and while the whole world burns  
 The court is established, judging Wrong from Right.  
 Brains fry within the skull until they catch alight.  
 The bread you gave for alms to shadow turns.  
 Pharaoh, Haman, Shaddad – all infidel –  
 Will stand there, clutching unbelieving head,  
 Asking, "Who revived us from the dismal dead?"  
 Servants of God will answer them full well.  
 These infidels will shake in agitation.  
 As fires rage, their arguments subside:  
 Now into many ranks of twelve groups they divide.  
 He comes, thunderous, for their Interrogation.  
 One group's transformed into a swine brigade,  
 While other groups transformed to monkeys come,  
 All chattering. Yet others wander, deaf and dumb.  
 It's with such suffering that sin's repaid.  
 Some rush with flames at every orifice,  
 Some run with pus boiling in throat and lungs,  
 Mullahs who forsook the Word chew on their tongues.



All this will be, O Lord. It comes to this!  
Some moan with liquid fire for a gown,  
Some drunken fall in mud and cannot rouse,  
Some find grotesque new legs grow spurting from their brows –  
So henceforth they must travel upside-down.  
This one is pinned beneath an iron mattress  
So hot his forehead folds about his nose.  
His tongue protrudes into his navel. Comatose,  
Past deeds enmesh him snakelike in distress.  
Devout chase Infidel from crag to crag.  
Snakes large as dromedaries foul the ground.  
But Men of God gather in crowds to march around  
The world. Muhammad flies his awesome flag!  
Prophets face fear and all that it entails:  
Sons avoid fathers, fathers shun their sons  
In guilt and hate. Muhammad, where the river runs,  
Pitches his green flag by the justice scales.  
Adam the Prophet murmurs “Oh, my Son!”  
Old Abraham will “Oh, the One God!” cry.  
Moses and Jesus name the Architect on High.  
Everyone is fed by everyone.  
Prayers from many prophets God beguile;  
Both left and right sides self-effacement keep.  
So will Muhammad then expose his head and weep,  
Repeating “Oh, my ummah,” all the while.  
All Men of God to unchecked tears will yield.  
They'll not ask of their kin, for good or ill,  
From other friends. In due course, golden Israfil  
Controls the scales of justice in the field.  
All unbelievers have their gowns alight,  
To be kicked where the fires of Hell await.  
Serpents the size of mules will swiftly infiltrate,  
Snakes thick as camels' necks spit flame and bite.  
They'll call for help. No one can hear them roar  
Although they bray like donkeys crammed in pens.  
For nourishment, poisons alone are fed them thence.  
They'll serve this sentence out for ever more.  
We see what the devout do in their turn:  
What work they have and how they fill their hours  
So that Muhammad on them all his blessing showers.  
Those who do not know this will quickly learn.

Devout folk then will be like paths unwinding,  
 Some swift as lightning, some as winter's wind,  
 Some as flood waters, some as hotly-hunted hind,  
 And some as falcon, wild upon the wing.  
 This is the Way that takes three thousand years:  
 Uphill, level, downhill, but always far –  
 Darker than pitch and sharper than a scimitar.  
 Yet some will pass through e'er a midnight nears.  
 Others must find their Way by slow parades:  
 Ten days, perhaps – others, a year in all,  
 Others fifteen, screaming like kulans in the hall  
 Others at last, fifty thousand decades.  
 His blood is shed, a thousand years unfold:  
 He crosses Sirat's Bridge at last. Now up  
 He drinks the precious wine from Kowsar's cup –  
 This elder now becomes as one year old.  
 Each youth now wreathes the laurels round his head.  
 They all have Joseph's beauty, Jesus' age.  
 They are as David was, as young and just as sage.  
 Each one embraces now his beloved.  
 They take their thrones. Their robes are seventy.  
 Their steeds have reins adorned with malachites.  
 They enter Paradise, survey its dazzling sights,  
 Knowing that they will live eternally.  
 On seventy silk mattresses they'll lie,  
 The Tuba tree will shade them like a friend,  
 While seventy silken Houris to their wants attend.  
 The beauty of the Lord will gratify.  
 Those who care nothing for the world below,  
 Drunkards and sluggards – such are Infidels.  
 "These things will happen", Makhtumkuli here foretells.  
 Come Judgement Day, all Men of God will know

**SOURCE:** [http://www.turkmens.com/Documents\\_files/documents/English.html](http://www.turkmens.com/Documents_files/documents/English.html)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is your opinion of the description of Judgment Day? What is unique in Makhtumkuli's interpretation of Judgment Day? Is it different from the traditional religious interpretation of this concept? What happens to good people who are not believers but do good things and act socially very well? Will they be burned in hell, as many people think, or will they go to Heaven? What do believers think about it? How can non-believers respond?
2. Do you find the concept of "judgment day" important for Muslims?
3. How can we connect this idea with the concept of justice?
4. Do you think that fear is the most important tool for educating people, for good behavior in individuals, and for improving moral relationship?

**REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

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1. Compare the concept of Judgment Day in different religions: what is common and what is different between them? How does the concept of perfection of human beings work in them?
2. What other ways are there to educate people to do good to others and to implement justice practically?
3. Compare the concept of justice in the poems of Kipling, Tagore, Nekrasov and Makhtumkuli: what makes each of the above-mentioned concepts of justice unique?
4. How does poetry help people to challenge society and the ruling class about failures in justice and inspire them to think about life values?
5. Write an essay or a research paper on justice and poetry.

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