THE EXISTENTIAL POLITICAL THEORY OF DOSTOEVSKY

APPROVED:

[Signatures]

H. W. Kamp
Major Professor

[Signature]

Minor Professor

[Signature]

Director of the Department of Political Science

[Signature]

Dean of the Graduate School

The problem undertaken is a study of the political philosophy of Fyodor Dostoevsky to determine to what extent Dostoevsky was a political thinker.

Traditional research methods were used. Since there is little secondary source criticism of Dostoevsky's political philosophy, primary sources served as the fundamental resource data.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I introduces Dostoevsky as a political thinker. It explains Dostoevsky's idea that traditional political theory is founded on false premises.

Chapter II is an analysis of Dostoevsky's criticism of traditional western political philosophy. There are four subdivisions to this chapter. The first three subdivisions deal with traditional notions of the nature of man, truth, and freedom. The fourth subdivision concerns what Dostoevsky believed are the consequences of the false ideological orientation of the West.

Chapter III is a study of Dostoevsky's apocalyptic ideas. This chapter explains Dostoevsky's beliefs concerning the inevitable nihilistic, materialistic, and existential revolutions. In addition, this chapter points out the differences between
Dostoevsky's apocalyptic vision and that of traditional socialistic revolutionaries.

Chapter IV concerns Dostoevsky's political beliefs. This chapter has four subdivisions. The first subdivision deals with Dostoevsky's ideological beliefs. It explains Dostoevsky's ideological point of view and how he fits into the traditional ideological framework. The second subdivision concerns Dostoevsky's beliefs about man's nature. It deals with those aspects of Dostoevsky's anthropology that relate to political theory. The third subdivision in Chapter IV concerns the nature of freedom, the importance of justice, and the relationship of justice and freedom. The final subdivision is Dostoevsky's analysis of socialism.

Chapter V is the conclusion. The conclusion reiterates Dostoevsky's basic contributions to political theory. These contributions are in Dostoevsky's analysis of freedom, his understanding about man's irrational and unpredictable nature, and his belief that the western essentialistic tradition is distorted and destined to be changed in an existential revolution.
THE EXISTENTIAL POLITICAL THEORY OF DOSTOEVSKY

THESIS

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By

Darrell W. Lewis, B.A.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. DOSTOEVSKY AND WESTERN POLITICAL THEORY</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Truth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of Distorted Ideological Tradition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE APOCALYPSE</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DOSTOEVSKY'S POLITICAL THEORY</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Nature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom and Justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Dostoevsky's political speculations are the watershed of contemporary existential political thought. His ideas do not constitute a complete political philosophy, but they do provide new insights into the essentialistic traditions of the past and provide the nucleus of an existentialist political theory.

Dostoevsky believed that the essentialistic tradition of the western world failed to come to grips with existence. It recognized the existence of beings but not of being, and of objective truth but not of the subjective self. Having accepted the a priori assumption that both man and the world are rational, the West set out to quantify and describe the things of the world and to speculate about reality and truth. The process was very clinical, very academic, very artificial. From Plato's "virtue is knowledge" to the modern communists, positivists, and organized religions, the West made its calculations without considering the concrete data of human experience. The orientation was to objects and their manipulation; the epistemological emphasis was to the intellect and the rationality of the universe. This built-in bias toward the immutable--while a tremendous boon to the development of science and technology--created a wholly
distorted image of the nature of man, an image that by externalizing the search for meaning alienated man from man and man from himself.

Numerous humanistic attempts were made to restructure man’s image of himself, but these attempts were always made within the confines of the traditional positivistic formula. The fundamental questions were rarely raised. Each person was expected to start from the same unquestioned premise. The West preached individualism and freedom of conscience but because of its penchant for the absolute, ideas became reified and a permanent inquisition was established to crush free individuals. So nothing really substantial was accomplished, nothing for twenty-five centuries, nothing until Dostoevsky.

Dostoevsky believed that the whole approach of the West was distorted, and he predicted a revolution in man’s image of man and the world. This revolution will occur after the distorted individualism produced by the Platonic cosmological schemata has run its course. In its place will rise a new age, devoid of an explicit ideology and based on the spiritual and moral yearnings of a people thirsting for individual meaning, community, and peace. This new style, which is something more than an attitude but less than an ideology, will be based on the awareness of the uniqueness of each life and the fear of death and nothingness. This apocalyptic age of Aquarius was more
than a hope for Dostoevsky, and it was not a dream; it was a vision, and he was the first to see it.

Dostoevsky's contributions to political theory occur in three aspects of his thought. Accordingly, this paper will concentrate on his analysis of western political philosophy, his beliefs about the coming apocalypse, and his own existential political theories.

Even though a product of the nineteenth century, Dostoevsky is a thoroughly modern writer. And even though Russian, he is a writer for all mankind. He was a product of the virgin soil of Russia and the nineteenth century, but his genius is not dated or provincial. He is a man for all time and for all people.
Dostoevsky was radically opposed to the ideology that had characterized western thought since Plato. He believed that this ideology, which is fundamentally essentialistic, had created a false and dangerous image of the nature of man, truth, and freedom. The long term consequence of this distorted interpretation of human nature, truth, and freedom is that human beings became merely manipulative objects in a world of things.

The fallacy of the western ideological tradition was manifested very clearly in its political theory which became plastic and artificial. It moved progressively from a concern for existence, with its recognition of the complexity of human nature, the subjectivity of truth, and importance of freedom of conscience, to a concern for essence. This emphasis on essence resulted in the sacrifice of human beings and man's freedom of consciousness to objectified notions of man's essence and the essence of freedom and truth. Essence became more important than existence; the general became more important than the particular; images of the essence of man, truth, and freedom became more important than free individuals living by their own particular truths.
Nature of Man

The image of man's nature that came down from antiquity and that was reinforced by institutional forces and political speculation all along the way was that the individual is, or at least should be, a thinking, rational being. An individual is supposed to use his reason to overcome and control his willful tendencies. Dostoevsky questioned whether reason itself can control man's animal instincts. Indeed, he argued that reason tends to be used to justify animal conduct that individuals could not, in good conscience, otherwise justify.

Dostoevsky believed that man is not necessarily rational and that there is no obvious advantage for being rational. As Dostoevsky said through the underground man, reason is important but "reason is only reason, and it can only satisfy the reasoning ability of man. . . ."¹ It cannot satisfy the remaining nine-tenths of man's nature.

One of the most significant consequences of the false idolation of reason in western political theory is that political theory, in its love affair with reason, recognized only the superficial aspects of man's nature and ignored the real data about man and the world. It assumed that the hidden aspects of man's nature are not the province of political theory.

Dostoevsky disagreed. He believed that these aspects of man's nature make up the only really valid and important data about man because man's life is fundamentally composed of conflicts, worries, and fears, and not intellectual exercises. Western political theory's infatuation with reason resulted in the real man being replaced by the intellectual man, resulting in theoretical conclusions as artificial as they are false.

The western political tradition also misconstrued human motives. It assumed that people are basically motivated out of self-interest and that people will not act to their disadvantage if they know what is to their disadvantage. On the basis of this assumption, western political theory and western governments tried to encourage the proper behavior through the use of educational devices and punitive restraints.

Dostoevsky believed that the assumption that people's actions are generally motivated out of self-interest is erroneous. He said that some people do act out of self-interest, and that self interest is a factor, but that it is not the only or primary consideration of people. He also argued, through the underground man, that history bears witness to the fact that individuals with full knowledge of the consequences have "... left them in the background and rushed along a different path to take a risk,
to try his luck, without being in any way compelled to do it by anyone or anything, but just as though he deliberately refused to follow the appointed path. . . ."\(^2\)

The recognition that individuals do not coldly and rationally calculate their actions in terms of self-interest should have a chilling impact on government, especially in the area of criminal law. It should signal the approaching end of punishment and the threat of punishment as the main tool in the control and prevention of conduct considered deviant by the community.

Another aspect of the western political tradition's understanding of the nature of man concerns the issue of man's spiritual and material needs. Traditional political theory was basically materialistic. It recognized man's material needs but not his spiritual ones. It assumed that the satisfaction of material appetites can make people better and happier. This resulted in western governments reducing everything to the issues of appetite and comfort and calculating problems and formulating solutions in materialistic terms. "That's the easiest solution to the problem," said Dostoevsky through Raskolnikov. "It's seductively clear and you mustn't think about it. That's the great thing, you mustn't think! The whole secret of life in two pages of print."\(^3\)

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 126

Dostoevsky believed that western political theory was wrong in subordinating man's spiritual needs to his materialistic ones. Dostoevsky believed that when forced to choose between freedom of conscience, which allows one to satisfy his spiritual needs, and material security, people of character and strength will choose freedom. He said that even if one were offered "... full security, promised food and drink, and found work, and as against this he is merely required to give up a tiny grain of his personal freedom for the sake of the common good . . ."4 he would not do it because of the price.

Dostoevsky believed that man is much more complex than traditional political theory believed. The over-simplification of man through the emphasis on human reason, human predictability, and materialism provided the foundation for the formation of ideological systems. Dostoevsky believed that these systems inevitably lead to repression because of their failure to recognize the complexity of human nature.

Again through Raskolnikov, Dostoevsky argued against the over-simplification of man. He said that systems reduce "everything to the building of walls and the planning of rooms and passages in a phalanstery. The phalanstery is ready, indeed, but your human nature is not ready for the phalanstery--

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it wants life, it hasn't completed its vital process, it's too soon for the graveyard!"5

Nature of Truth

Western political philosophy accepted the positivistic notion that truth is objective and absolute. It assumed that truth is something analogous to Plato's absolute forms or something discoverable through the quantification of the things of the external world. In the first place, the individual is subordinated to some abstract notion of truth. In the second, he becomes an object in the quantification of the world. One reduces everything to an object. The other reduces everything to a thing. Both sacrifice individuals to abstractions. Both distort the truth by attempting to reduce everything to a mathematical formula. As the underground man said, "man is so obsessed by systems and abstract deductions that he is ready to destroy the truth deliberately, he is ready to deny the evidence of the senses, so long as he justifies his logic."6

The consequence of the reduction of everything to an object is that science and technology developed in the West at the expense of the development of man's spiritual and human consciousness.

5Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment, p. 223.
6Magershack, The Best Short Stories, p. 128.
In "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man," Dostoevsky provided a metaphor to describe the development of the western ideological tradition. The ridiculous man was ridiculous because he believed that nothing mattered. On the night that he was to kill himself, he dreamed that after killing himself, he was transported to some new earth. Approaching it, he noticed the outlines of Europe. He arrived on an island which resembled an island from the Greek archipelago on the earth. It was paradise. The people knew everything without the benefit of science. And for them everything was alive—people, trees, animals, rocks—and they loved everything. They communed with the animals and the trees and the stars and everything in the paradise. They had children and the children belonged to everyone because they were all one family. There was little illness, and the old died peacefully. There was no grief or tears. They could not understand about eternal life, and they did not worship any particular god but all the universe.

Then they were corrupted. The people began to separate into alliances. Science was introduced, and people began to talk of brotherhood and humanity. They invented justice and wrote books of law. They began to divide on the basis of ideas, and each group worshiped its idea and built temples to it. When they finally began to realize what they had lost, they put their faith in science to lead them again to the
truth. Theories were expounded that were designed to bring peace and unity back to the earth. Wars were fought over the theories. The combatants believed that science, knowledge and the animal instinct to preserve oneself would eventually force mankind to unite into a "... harmonious and intelligent society, and therefore, to hasten matters, the 'very wise' did their best to exterminate as rapidly as possible the 'not so wise' who did not understand their idea, so as to prevent them from interfering with its triumph."7

Dostoevsky's story attempts to show the consequences of couching everything in terms of absolutes. Dostoevsky believed that individuals should follow the dictates of their moral consciences rather than attempt to understand rationally and scientifically what is right and what is wrong.

Nature of Freedom

Traditionally, one of the main concerns of political theory has been the idea of freedom. Dostoevsky believed that the western ideological tradition failed to appreciate the many dimensions of freedom. Its over-simplification of the nature of freedom created a climate in which free individuals could be repressed in good conscience in the name of freedom. This repression resulted from three mistaken attitudes about the meaning of freedom.

7Ibid., p. 319.
First, freedom was understood as a fixed idea, rather than a living principle. Freedom, as an idea, became an object of study and adoration rather than an active and vital aspect of each person's life. Western political theory reified the idea of freedom, and under the ostensible reason of expanding freedom, people's actual choices were restricted. One was compelled by public opinion or the State to accept a definition of freedom that rewarded blind faith in certain basic and fundamental principles of belief and conduct. The interpretation of freedom as a rational, objective idea resulted in the repression of free individuals in the name of freedom.

Second, freedom was understood in intellectual and humanitarian circles as an unbearable burden for the great bulk of mankind who, according to the Grand Inquisitor, prefers "... peace, and even death, to freedom of choice ...." Western political theorists theorized, possibly even unconsciously, from the viewpoint that man is weak and vile and incapable of handling the responsibility of thinking for himself. Possibly without even realizing what they were doing, political, social, and philosophical theorists relieved individuals of their freedom of conscience through fostering particular essentialistic systems of thought that make freedom of conscience unnecessary.

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8. Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov (Chicago, 1952), p. 132
If they did move purposefully to enslave man's minds, they did so more out of a desire to relieve human suffering than from any other motive, Dostoevsky believed. In this respect, Dostoevsky's "The Grand Inquisitor" provides Dostoevsky's explanation behind the enslavement of man's minds. The Grand Inquisitor, at one point in his life, believed that man is good and strong and able to live with his freedom. After seeing all the suffering brought on by the freedom of the knowledge of good and evil, the Grand Inquisitor decided that people would be happier and more free if their freedom of conscience was taken from them. He believed that when it was finally gone, people would be more "... persuaded than ever that they had ... perfect freedom. ..." 9

Third, freedom was understood in terms of material goods and physical restraints. The result was that individuals came to feel that they would become more free if they could only satisfy their physical appetites or overstep moral boundaries. Concerning the fulfillment of one's appetites, Dostoevsky said through a priest in The Brothers Karamazov that "interpreting freedom as the multiplication and rapid satisfaction of desires, men distort their own nature, for many senseless and foolish desires and habits." 10

9Ibid.
10Ibid., p. 164.
Interpreting freedom as the removal of restraints also has a disfiguring effect on the character of individuals. Dostoevsky tried to teach the danger of this false understanding of the nature of freedom in a number of his works. In *Crime and Punishment*, Dostoevsky told the story of a man who interpreted freedom in terms of moral limits. Raskolnikov wanted to be like Napoleon; he wanted to overstep principles. Wanting to be free, he attempted to stride over the moral limit involving murder. He killed a worthless, wicked old woman. The murder tormented him until he finally recognized that he had to accept the criminality of his act. He realized that he could not enlarge his freedom through trying to overstep moral boundaries. Raskolnikov said, "I killed the principle, but I didn't overstep; I stopped on this side . . . . I was only capable of killing."^{11}

Consequences of Distorted Ideological Tradition

The false understanding of the nature of man, truth, and freedom has been disastrous for both western society and government. It has led, Dostoevsky believed, to distorted individualism, materialistic societies and governments, and nihilism.

Distorted Individualism

By distorted individualism, Dostoevsky meant an infatuation with a "fixed idea." The consequence of this false

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idolatry is the estrangement of individuals from themselves and others. Individuals searching the external for something that does not exist in the external, namely the ultimate formulas for happiness, must have a feeling of alienation and rejection.

Dostoevsky used particular characters in his works to depict the effects of distorted individualism on the development of one's personality. In *Crime and Punishment*, the character, Raskolnikov, was intoxicated with the idea of overstepping boundaries. He murdered an old woman, after deducing a justification for murder. He said that if "... such a one is forced for the sake of his idea to step over a corpse or wade through blood, he can, I maintain, find himself, in his conscience, a sanction for wading through blood."12

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Karamazov was intoxicated with the idea that if God is dead, then everything is permissible. He could not shake himself of the logic of his idea. He went insane because after developing his idea, he could not justify saving the life of his father, and he realized that he should have saved him, but he could not reconcile preventing the murder with his "fixed idea."

Kirillov, in *The Possessed*, was infatuated with the idea that man had done nothing throughout history but invent God

12 Ibid., p. 227.
in order to make life bearable. Kirillov did not believe in God, and he refused to invent Him. He had no higher belief, he said, than that God does not exist. He decided to kill himself to show humanity that there is no God and that each person can become a man-god. In his own distorted and twisted, but rational, way Kirillov concluded that if there is no God, then he himself must be God. If God does not exist, then he must prove his own divinity through self-will. Since the highest point of self-will is to take one's own life, he was bound, he said, to show his unbelief through taking his own life. To realize that God is dead and not to realize at the same time that one is God himself is an absurdity, Kirillov believed, or else one would certainly kill himself. "If you recognize it you are sovereign, and then you won't kill yourself but will live in the greatest glory. But one, the first, must kill himself . . . to begin and prove it."

Dostoevsky believed that individuals distorted through self-will are capable of almost any type of extreme in conduct. One cannot predict what idol will appeal to any particular individual. An individual twisted as a result of the false ideology of the West can through his own logical process justify almost any form of action. For certain rational, intelligent people, however, Dostoevsky believed

the most common "fixed idea" involves some system for the moral, economic, or social improvement of humanity. These people think in terms of general solutions rather than particular problems, Dostoevsky believed. They want one final solution to the problems of mankind. They are unwilling to accept the responsibility for the day-to-day struggle to solve particular problems.

To illustrate his point, Dostoevsky told a story of a doctor who, because he was in a hurry to get home, refused to help a drowned man who had just been removed from the water. Dostoevsky speculated about the doctor. He said that perhaps the doctor was an educated man with modern ideas "... who demanded new general laws and rights for everybody, neglecting isolated cases. He might even have believed that isolated cases are rather harmful because they postpone the general solution to the problem." 14

Raskolnikov, who suffered from a different "fixed idea," expressed Dostoevsky's utter contempt for the sacrifice of particular individuals in behalf of some abstract "general solution." He said, "I don't want to wait for the 'happiness of all.' I want to live myself, or else better not live at all. I simply couldn't pass by my mother starving, keeping my rouble in my pocket while I waited for the 'happiness of all.'" 15

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15 Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment, p. 239.
One of the most harmful aspects of distorted individualism is that it allows one to rationalize conduct that he knows is incorrect. Rational, scientific language is partially responsible for this, Dostoevsky believed. In *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov spoke of a young girl who became a prostitute. He was enraged with the arguments propounded by rational people to justify this practice. Prostitutes must exist, they argued, to keep the rest chaste. A certain percentage must succumb. Raskolnikov reflected upon the argument. "A percentage! What splendid words they have; they are so scientific, so consolatory. . . . Once they've said percentage there's nothing more to worry about. If we had any other word we might feel more uneasy. . . . But what if Dounia were one of the percentage?"\(^{16}\)

Individuals distorted through self-will create tremendous problems for society and government. One cannot predict what these "true believers" will do. A society can only protect itself as best it can from the consequences of their actions. The most obvious lesson in this regard for political theory is that a society is foolish to place too much power in the hands of a single person. Dostoevsky believed that tyranny is a habit that can and often does develop into a disease. He maintained that "... the very best of men may be coarsened and hardened into a brute by habit. Blood and power intoxicate; coarseness and depravity are

\(^{16}\text{Ibid.}, p. 45.\)
developed. . . . The man and the citizen is lost forever in the tyrant. . . . "17 The history of mankind is the history of people learning, and then forgetting, and then having to relearn this principle.

**Materialistic Societies and Governments**

Another consequence of the false ideology of the West is the development of materialistic societies and governments. Dostoevsky believed the western world is intoxicated with the idea that material goods can bring human happiness. Dostoevsky abhorred all aspects of the material eudemonistic tendencies of the times. He believed that people are in bondage to the habits that they have created. Far from increasing one's freedom and happiness, the pursuit of things isolates individuals and makes it impossible for them to really be concerned with the rest of humanity. As Dostoevsky said through Father Zossima, "they have succeeded in accumulating a greater mass of objects, but the joy in the world has grown less."18

Politically, the consequence of this pursuit of things has been the formation of bourgeois capitalistic systems and the theories of the socialists, Dostoevsky believed. For Dostoevsky, both are bad because both reduce everyone to his material worth to others.

18 Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, p. 164.
Dostoevsky had two criticisms of capitalism. His main criticism is that it enslaves the bodies of people for the benefit of others. Dostoevsky maintained that in a capitalist system, freedom often means that the rich can do whatever they wish with the poor. He said, "When can a man do anything he wants? When he has a million. Does freedom give everyone a million? No. What is a man without a million. A man without a million is not a man who does anything he wants but a man with whom anything is done that anyone wants." Dostoevsky believed that freedom in a capitalistic society means that the poor are merely pawns in a physical game in which each person's importance is calculated in terms of his materialistic station in life.

Dostoevsky's second criticism of capitalism is that it relegates man's spiritual needs to a secondary position. People are taught that their spiritual needs are not as important as their materialistic ones. Societies, therefore, give greater consideration to the satisfaction of material appetites than they give to understanding and satisfying people's spiritual needs, which Dostoevsky believed are far more important.

For Dostoevsky, socialism is more harmful than capitalism. Capitalism enslaves the body and corrupts the mind. Socialism enslaves both man's body and his mind. Socialism leads, Dostoevsky believed, to the division of mankind into

19Dostoevsky, Summer Impressions, pp. 79-80.
two unequal parts. One-tenth enjoys absolute freedom and control over the spirits and bodies of the other nine-tenths. According to the theory of shigalovism, Dostoevsky's term for Socialism, the nine-tenths "... have to give up all individuality and become, so to speak a herd, and through boundless submission, ... by a series of regenerations attain primaeval innocence, something like the Garden of Eden."20

Dostoevsky's main ideas about socialism and arguments against it are presented in a later chapter. At this point, it is only necessary to say that he believed that socialism and capitalism have more in common than they have in difference since both are a product of a distortion of man's nature, the nature of truth, and the nature of freedom.

Nihilism

A third consequence of the false ideology of the West is moral nihilism. Dostoevsky maintained that the world is absurd in that it cannot be understood through reason, and since it is not amenable to logic, the continued penchant for quantification and reductive abstractions could only lead to some form of nihilistic nonsense that all truth is relative and knowledge of good and evil is beyond human comprehension.

Dostoevsky developed this theme in many of his writings. His most vivid description of the emerging nihilism is found in a dream that Raskolnikov has in *Crime and Punishment*. Raskolnikov dreamed that the world was punished with a terrible new plague that came from Asia. The microbes that carried the plague were endowed with powers of intelligence and will. People attacked became angry and furious when infected with the plague. "... never had men considered themselves so intellectual and so completely in possession of the truth as these sufferers, never had they considered their decisions, their scientific conclusions, their moral convictions so infallible." 21

The whole western world was infected with the plague. Everyone was in a frenzy. People talked with each other but could not agree about anything. Everyone thought that he had the ultimate truth. The people "... did not know how to judge and could not agree what to consider evil and what good; they did not know whom to blame, whom to justify." 22

Men killed each other out of spite. Armies were formed, but as they prepared for war, the soldiers began to fight among themselves. People stopped working both in the city and on the land. People organized for protection, but since no one could agree, the organizations broke up. Everyone

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22 Ibid.
and everything was involved in the destruction. The plague spread throughout the land. "Only a few men could be saved in the whole world. They were a pure chosen people, destined to found a new race and a new life, to renew and purify the earth, but no one had seen these men, no one had heard their words and their voices."\(^{23}\)

The plague that Dostoevsky feared is the plague of moral nihilism which is a western corruption of eastern subjectivism. The pan-objective philosophy which ignores the individual and reduces everything to an object must eventually lead, Dostoevsky believed, to pan-subjectivism. Pan-subjectivism recognizes the inviolable subject but nothing else. Dostoevsky believed that the western world will eventually react against pan-objectivism because of its failure to live up to its optimistic promises. The result will be a denial of all moral limits.

Dostoevsky was as opposed to pan-subjectivism as he was to pan-objectivism. The reduction of everything to a subject is as dangerous as the reduction of everything to a thing because in each case the humanity of man is rejected and life as it is lived is ignored.

Dostoevsky's fear of the nihilistic, pan-subjective, isolation of each individual in his own world was realized in the ascension to power of fascism in the twentieth century.

\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 469-470.
Dostoevsky believed that western ideology with its distorted image of the nature of man, truth, and freedom has been disastrous for both the growth of man and the development of civil society. Governmental policies are false because the political philosophy on which they are based is plastic. The denial of existence and the refusal of societies to allow individuals to develop their own essences free from the coercive and corrupting influences of traditional dogma has frustrated individual growth and denied humanity the opportunity to understand man's true nature, the nature of truth, and the nature of freedom.
Dostoevsky believed that history is moving inexorably towards an apocalypse. He alluded to this impending destruction in most of his literary works and in his diary. While he did not delineate fully the nature of the apocalypse, it is clear that he believed that the apocalypse will occur in a series of stages. One of these stages is the fulfillment of positivism in a socialistic revolution. Another stage is the death of God, a period when the belief in the objectivity of truth is no longer believed because it is no longer believable. A third stage is the existential revolutionary awakening and the restoration.

Dostoevsky maintained that these revolutions are inevitable because of the distorted ideology of the West. The false orientation of western political, social, and philosophical thought with its built-in bias towards the immutable and its complete disregard for the existence of individual contingency, particularity, and irrationality will lead, said Dostoevsky through a character in The Possessed, to "... such an upset as the world has never seen before ... the earth will weep for its old gods. ..."

1Dostoevsky, The Possessed, p. 428.
Dostoevsky never specified exactly which of the first two stages would occur first. However, on the basis of his belief that socialism is a positivistic product, one could conclude that Dostoevsky believed that socialism will precede nihilism. Socialism is atheistic, Dostoevsky believed, and therefore will lay the foundation for the complete denial of positivism.

The question of God's existence was crucial for Dostoevsky. He believed that when the idea of God and the belief in man's immortality cease to be believable for the preponderance of western people, the apocalypse will have arrived. Dostoevsky appreciated the arguments of those who believed that the death of God will have beneficial effects on mankind. In The Brothers Karamazov, Dostoevsky enunciated a common argument. When people no longer believe in God, the old conception of the world and the traditional notions of morality will fall and everything will begin anew. At that point, the man-god will appear. He will enjoy life and accept death gracefully. "Love will be sufficient only for a moment of life, but the very consciousness of its momentariness will intensify its fires, which now is dissipated in dreams of eternal love beyond the grave."2

Dostoevsky understood and appreciated this point of view, and at one point in his life he believed it, but that was

2Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 345.
before his conversion in prison to the existential philosophical viewpoint. In *The Possessed*, Dostoevsky argued that the death of God will not lead, as some believe, to "titanic pride and the mangod," but to the degeneration of man. Kirillov, a character in *The Possessed*, was intrigued with the significance of the death of God. He developed a whole philosophy on His death. Kirillov said that there will be full freedom when the notion of God and immortality are gone. Then everything will be changed. Then a new man will appear and life will take on new significance. The new man will conquer pain, and it will be just the same whether he lives or dies. He will be proud and happy, and he will be a new man. He will be a god.

When the man-god has arrived, history will be divided into two parts, argued Kirillov. "... from the gorilla to the annihilation of God, and from the annihilation of God. ...." "To the gorilla?" queried Dostoevsky through another character. No, "to the transformation of the earth, and of man physically."[^3]

Dostoevsky believed that the death of God will lead to the destruction of mankind. He could not understand, as he said through one of the Karamazov brothers, how man "... is going to be good without God? That's the question. I always come back to that. For whom is man going to love

then? . . . Rakitin says that one can love humanity without God. Well, only a snivelling idiot can maintain that.

Dostoevsky believed that socialism and other materialistic systems will attempt to fill the vacuum left by God's departure. They will fail because of their inability to satisfy the basic spiritual needs of human beings. Their attempts to improve humanity through the fulfillment of physical appetites and the formation of dogmatic ideological formulas will be unsuccessful, Dostoevsky believed, because the regimentation inherent in dogmatic ideology and socialistic economies rejects the particularity and individuality of man's spiritual nature.

Concerning the penchant for regimentation in socialist systems, Dostoevsky believed that regimentation carries the seeds of its own destruction. He said through the underground man that should the materialistic utopia with its positivistic formulas for human betterment ever arrive, mankind would go insane with boredom. And somewhere down the line someone would "... arise amid all that future reign of universal common sense and ..." say to all the well-nurtured but spiritually deprived people, "Well, gentlemen, what about giving all this common sense a mighty kick and and letting it scatter in the dust before our feet simply

4Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 314
to send all these logarithms to the devil so that we can again live according to our foolish will?" He would quickly find followers because "... man has always and everywhere—whoever he may be—preferred to do as he chose, and not in the least as his reason or advantage dictated. ..."6

Dostoevsky believed that nihilism, with its rejection of external limits, will succeed socialism. It will be characterized by individuals seeking personal answers to the eternal questions. The period will bring destruction and death because values will lose their basis. Nihilism can only lead to the notion that everything is permissible.

After this nihilistic stage, man will experience an existential awakening, Dostoevsky believed. In this post-nihilistic period, man will discover that he is responsible "to all for all." At that point, said Dostoevsky through Father Zossima—the character who gives Dostoevsky’s refutation of the arguments of the Grand Inquisitor—"... the kingdom of Heaven will be for them not a dream, but a living reality."7

In Dostoevsky's short story, "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man," Dostoevsky clarified the truth as he saw it. The ridiculous man said, "I have beheld the Truth. ... The

5Magarshack, The Best Short Stories, p. 130.  
6Ibid., p. 131.  
7Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 158.
main thing is to love your neighbor as yourself--that is the main thing, and that is everything, for nothing else matters. Once you do that, you will discover at once how everything can be arranged." The combination of a recognition of one's responsibility for others and love for one's neighbor will bring people together and they will marvel, said Father Zossima, ". . . that they have sat so long in darkness without seeing the light." 

Dostoevsky called it the Golden Age. Father Zossima, Dostoevsky's chief spokesman for spiritual consciousness and religious truth said, "And can it be a dream, that in the end, man will find his joy in deeds of light and mercy, and not in cruel pleasures as now, in gluttony, fornication, ostentation, boasting, and envious rivalry. . . . I firmly believe that it is not." 

The utopia that Dostoevsky prophesied will be golden, he believed, because it will be based on freedom rather than compulsion. People will learn freely to be brothers. As Dostoevsky said through Father Zossima, "No sort of scientific teaching, no kind of common interest, will teach men to share property and privilege with equal consideration for all.

8Magarshack, The Best Short Stories, p. 321.
9Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 159.
10Ibid., p. 166.
Everyone will think his share too small. ..."11 Dostoevsky believed that "man must instinctively and of his own accord be drawn towards brotherhood, fellowship, and concord."12

Dostoevsky predicted that man will learn this lesson in the Golden Age. Mankind will accept Father Zossima's admonition that "... security is to be found in social solidarity rather than in isolated individual effort."13 Mankind will be pulled together, and not through theories or reasonable arguments in favor of solidarity, but through a natural inclination for a feeling of community. Dostoevsky believed that this is utopia. He said, "What a Utopia this is, really! It is all based on sentiment and on nature, and not on reason. Surely this is humiliating for reason. What do you think? Is this Utopia or not?"14

Dostoevsky's apocalyptic vision is similar in many respects to that of other revolutionary writers. It envisions a final resolution to the problems of mankind. It is simplistic. It is characterized by a proselytizing, religious fervor. This similarity to traditional revolutionary theories might be explained in terms of Dostoevsky's earlier experiences. In his youth, before he was converted to a different

11 Ibid., p. 158.
12 Dostoevsky, Summer Impressions, p. 83.
13 Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 159.
14 Dostoevsky, Summer Impressions, p. 84.
theory about man's nature and the nature of truth, he was a socialist. The historicity that he learned in his socialist period had an appreciable impact on his later writings.

While Dostoevsky's revolutionary temperament is similar to the revolutionary attitudes of socialist revolutionaries, his ideas are very different. His radical temperament led him to emphasize man's spiritual needs rather than his materialistic ones. This concern for the spirit carried over to nations. Dostoevsky believed that nations are not created on the principles of science and reason. Nations are moved by a greater force. That force, as he said through a character in The Possessed, "... is the force of an insatiable desire to go to the end, though at the same time denies that end. It is the force of the persistent assertion of one's own existence and a denial of death."\(^{(15)}\)

Dostoevsky called this spiritual need of a people the "seeking after God." He believed that every great nation has its own individual God. A nation becomes great and retains its greatness only so long as it believes that it is the chosen people, chosen by the true God, and that it is the embodiment of the truth. Dostoevsky said in The Possessed that if a great people does not believe that the truth is only to be found embodied in itself, "... if it does not believe that it alone is fit and destined to raise up and

\(^{(15)}Dostoevsky, The Possessed, p. 253.\)
save all the rest by its truth, it would at once sink into being ethnographical material, and not a great people."\(^{16}\)

Another difference that distinguishes Dostoevsky's apocalypse from that of socialist revolutionaries is Dostoevsky's passionate concern for existence. Socialist revolutionaries, while they preach the importance of existence, are concerned primarily with essence. Their pre-conceived notions of the simplicity of man's nature and the nature of truth preclude the possibility that they will proceed through radical empiricism to discover man. Their failure to recognize the complexity of man's nature, combined with their apocalyptic vision, leads inevitably to expediency. And in the final analysis, their much proclaimed love for humanity evaporates in the sacrifice of particular men to general theories.

Dostoevsky emphasized the importance of political theory following radical empiricism and only generalizing from the most obvious data about man. Over-simplifying man's nature leads to man's sacrifice, and Dostoevsky more than any other political philosopher prized life dearly. His ethic of existence may have stemmed from his close brush with death during his youth. Dostoevsky was a radical socialist at one point in his life. The authorities considered Dostoevsky and the others in his group to be a threat to the government. They were arrested and charged with sedition. Dostoevsky was ultimately sent to Siberia to serve a prison term. Before

\(^{16}\)Thid. p. 255.
he was sent, the authorities staged a mock execution to teach the revolutionaries a lesson. Dostoevsky was informed that he would be shot. He believed that he had at most only three minutes to live. His whole life passed before his eyes for a moment, and he realized how foolishly he had wasted so much of his life. When the announcement was made that this death sentence had been commuted to a prison term, Dostoevsky vowed to live every moment from that point onward.

Another possible explanation of Dostoevsky's passionate defense of life is that he never quite convinced himself of the existence of God and immortality. Life might have seemed more valuable for him because he was not sure about life after death.

Whatever the basis of his belief, Dostoevsky was eloquent in his glorification of existence. One of his fictional characters expresses this idea very clearly. He said, "I exist! In thousands of agonies--I exist! Though I sit alone on a pillar--I exist! I see the sun, and if I don't see the sun, I know it's there. And there's a whole life in that, in knowing the sun is there."17

A third difference between Dostoevsky's apocalyptic views and those of other revolutionaries involves the nature of man. Traditional revolutionaries justified their theories

17Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 314.
and actions on the basis that man is fundamentally good. If man is good, then the injustice and suffering in the world must stem from false institutions or beliefs. On the basis of this simplistic view of man and the world, revolutionaries taught that the manipulation of certain variables, such as the economic system and the governmental structure, will erase suffering and make all people happy. Since all men are fundamentally alike in what they want and need, a utopia is only a matter of recognizing man's needs, satisfying them, and educating men to want only what is good for them.

Dostoevsky believed that man's nature is very complex. Men are not basically good or bad. The motives that move people are as numerous as there are people. One cannot, by altering circumstances, make people either better or worse. According to Dostoevsky, men cannot blame institutions or conditions for their suffering; they can only blame themselves. Dostoevsky refused to accept any theory of determinism that rejects the notion that each individual is ultimately responsible for everything that he is and everything that he does.

Concerning the most immediate course for arriving at the Golden Age, Dostoevsky believed it to be the course of people living in a responsible way. Utopia is possible, according to Dostoevsky, but it will not result from attempts to alter conditions or institutions. The manipulation of
men and circumstances only continues the process of man's
dehumanization. It does not lead to the salvation of man;
it leads to his slavery. Utopia will appear when men over-
come their false teachings and allow themselves to be human.
CHAPTER IV

DOSTOEVSKY'S POLITICAL THEORY

Dostoevsky's political philosophy was fundamentally existential. His basic identification was with human beings and not the outside world of objects. He emphasized the concrete data of immediate human experience—dread, anguish, fear of death, metaphysical homelessness—rather than artificial academic problems. As an epistemological method, he emphasized radical empiricism rather than pan-objectivism or pan-subjectivism. He stressed freedom of conscience above any form of contrived orthodoxy. He emphasized both the noetic and vital aspects of man's nature rather than just his noetic ones. He considered man's spiritual needs to be more important than his materialistic ones. The combination of Dostoevsky's radical attitude and his political ideas constitute the nucleus of an existentialist political philosophy.

Ideology

Dostoevsky's personal ideology recognized the limits of reason. He believed that reason has limited value in two respects. First, as a guide to action, Dostoevsky did not believe that reason is or should be an individual's only
people act out of feeling rather than reason. And in the second place, far from being primitive, this is the way it should be. Reason dictates that one do nothing that brings harm to oneself. Dostoevsky maintained through the underground man that on certain occasions "... one may choose to do something if it is against one's own advantage and sometimes one positively should...".1

Second, Dostoevsky was pessimistic of reason's ability to understand the world. Traditionally, reason has been characterized by pan-objective empiricism and speculation. Dostoevsky rejected both. He rejected pan-objectivism for two reasons. First, he rejected it because it emphasized data which Dostoevsky believed was basically irrelevant. It refused to consider the hidden or darker aspects of man's nature. The second reason that Dostoevsky rejected pan-objectivism is that it functioned under what Dostoevsky believed was a false premise--it assumed that there is no moral data, only moral constructions of data. Dostoevsky believed that one can use radical empiricism to discover moral data.

The second aspect of reason that Dostoevsky rejected is its speculative tendencies. Dostoevsky believed that life is too complex to fit into any contrived formula or system. He said that "real life is infinite in its variety in comparison

1Megarshack, *The Best Short Stories*, p. 131.
with even the cleverest abstract generalizations, and it
does not admit of sharp and sweeping distinctions.\(^2\)

Many critics have attacked Dostoevsky's critical attitude toward the value and importance of human reason as irrational. It possibly is irrational in the sense that Dostoevsky's ideology regards man's intellect as secondary to his intuitive characteristics. Dostoevsky was committed to the notion that reason can only be a reflex of feeling.

In terms of political theory, Dostoevsky's attitude concerning reason raises a number of questions. Does an irrational view of the world presuppose a conservative, reactionary, or fascist political ideology as has been believed? Would a denial of rational orthodoxy lead to nihilism, the will to power, and the man-god? Can governments function if they have to justify every action on the basis of its direct impact on particular individuals rather than on the basis of some theory or system?

Dostoevsky's answers to the previous questions are clear and to the point. Concerning the first two questions, Dostoevsky believed that anything short of a realistic understanding of man's nature and the nature of the world will lead to a conservative attitude towards man which inevitably produces not only repression but eventually a nihilistic will to power. A recognition of man's complexity should protect him from the tendencies

of over-zealous conservative moralists. It should also pro-
tect him from liberals and radicals turned conservative when
human nature frustrates their attempts to usher into history
a millennium. It should protect him from the tendencies of
the traditional conservative and the converted one to reform
human nature.

Concerning the third question—whether governments can
function if they must justify every action on the basis of
its impact on particular people, Dostoevsky believed that
governments not only can but must function in this manner.
Freedom is too important to be casually restricted by govern-
ment with little explanation or justification. In this
respect, Dostoevsky was one of the most democratic of writers.
He refused to accept any political theory that failed to take
into consideration its ramifications on the freedom of con-
science of people. He would require governments to be more
sensitive to the needs of people. If this sensitivity led
to less grandiose schemes for improving society economically
and socially, then so much the better, Dostoevsky believed.
His basic concern was that man's freedom of conscience be
protected.

Dostoevsky's personal political philosophy stressed style
rather than dogma. He was not so much concerned with the de-
cisions that individuals reached as he was with the process
through which they reached them. He had, of course, a number
of a priori convictions about human nature, the world, and
ethics that he hoped that individuals would come to accept, but his basic emphasis was with procedure. He believed that solutions to human and societal problems could not be handed down from authorities or answered in theories. All problems, both social and individual, must be worked out to be solved. For Dostoevsky the world is more of a battlefield where people struggle with and among themselves to solve particular problems rather than a path to a fixed goal. Once a goal is posited, everything becomes contingent in terms of that all-encompassing goal. Dostoevsky was afraid of general goals for society. He said through the underground man that "... perhaps the whole aim mankind is striving to achieve on earth merely lies in this incessant process of achievement, or ... in life itself, not really in the attainment of any goal, which, needless to say, can be nothing else but twice-two-makes-four; that is a formula. ..." \(^3\) And a formula is not life. "It is the beginning of death."\(^4\) In place of a prescribed formula, one should experience life. He said twice-two-makes-four "is a farcical, dressed up fellow who stands across your path with arms akimbo and spits at you. Mind you, I quite agree that twice-two-makes-four is a most excellent thing; but ... then twice-two-makes-five is sometimes a most charming little thing, too."\(^5\)

\(^3\)Magarshack, The Best Short Stories, p. 139.
\(^4\)Ibid.
\(^5\)Ibid.
One final aspect of Dostoevsky's ideology involves ideological classifications. The modern ideological spectrum grew out of the Enlightenment and the French revolution. Its left-right dichotomy is a product of the platonic-positivistic tradition of the past in that it stresses ideas over behavior, essence over existence. Dostoevsky was too complex to be labeled on the basis of this traditional system of classification. Dostoevsky was too "irrational" to be a liberal and too apocalyptic to be a conservative. He was too opposed to materialism and the ant-hill to be a radical socialist and too empathetic with the "insulted and injured" to be a reactionary or a fascist. He loved justice too much to be a reactionary; he appreciated freedom too much to accept the policies of radicals. His ideas cannot be written off as sentimental prattlings because he was too thoroughly modern and realistic to be a romantic.

It is virtually impossible to label Dostoevsky on the basis of the traditional ideological framework. His a priori suspicion of the exercise of political power places him closer to the nineteenth century conception of the liberal than the twentieth century one, but his ideas about alienation and metaphysical homelessness and his opposition to utilitarianism do not fit the nineteenth century definition of a liberal. It is possible that he is what he called a "'higher liberal,' that is, a liberal without any definite aim. . . ."\(^6\) He is

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\(^6\)Dostoevsky, The Possessed, p. 31.
this, however, only if the social engineering and melioristic connotations of the word "liberal" are deleted.

Dostoevsky was too complex and too fluid to fit into any rigid essentialistic classification. Its liberal-conservative dichotomy is invalid as far as describing him is concerned. Possibly it is invalid in describing most people. If so, Dostoevsky is the bad breath of twentieth century existential reality behind the sparkling, but artificial, teeth of traditional essentialistic classification and regimentation.

Human Nature

A central question for Dostoevsky was the nature of man and his place in the world. He was preoccupied with man and his destiny. He was especially concerned with man as he wrestles with his problems and his intoxicating ideas. He said in The Brothers Karamazov that "it's terrible what mysteries there are! Too many riddles weigh men down on earth. We must solve them as we can. . . . God and the devil are fighting . . . and the battlefield is in the heart of man."\(^7\) Dostoevsky believed that the real data about men was the struggle of these ideas within each person.

Man was important for Dostoevsky basically for two reasons. First, Dostoevsky believed that the individual is the center of the universe and that regardless of how weak

\(^7\)Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, p. 54.
or insignificant or criminal an individual might be he is still an absolute value.

Second, Dostoevsky believed that the riddle of the universe is locked within the soul of the individual. While he was a young man, Dostoevsky decided that his goal in life was to unravel the mystery of man. To understand the enigma, he plowed deep into the recesses of man's inner being, giving air to both man's angelic and demonic characteristics. This gives his literary works a negative, even a morbid appearance. But by stripping the individual of all his props and leaving him with nothing but his egoism, amorality, and criminal and benevolent impulses, Dostoevsky was able to understand and unravel the mystery.

Dostoevsky's anthropology is apotheosistic. This apotheosistic anthropological position, however, should not be confused with that of the humanists and naturalists. The humanists recognize only the intellectual aspects of man's nature; the naturalists recognize only the amoralistic will to power. Dostoevsky's anthropology is different in that it is pervaded with the spiritual and ethical qualities of man.

There are five aspects of Dostoevsky's anthropology that relate directly to political theory. The first concerns what Dostoevsky believed is man's highest value. He said that it is not peace, freedom, prosperity, or wealth. These are important, but not any one or any combination of these is man's most valued possession.
What is this good "... which is greater and more desirable than all other goods ..."? What is this good which makes people "... challenge all laws, that is to say, reason, honour, peace, property—in short, all those excellent and useful things, provided he can obtain that primary and most desirable good which is dearer to him than anything in the world." What is this highest good? Dostoevsky said through the underground man that it is freedom of choice. He maintained that "all man wants is an absolutely free choice, however dear that freedom may cost him and wherever it may lead him to."

Man's freedom of choice is so important that it overshadows all other values. Its importance is indicated by the fact that "... it sets at naught all our classifications and shatters all the systems set up by the lovers of the human race for the happiness of the human race." But as important as it is, it is rarely considered by political or social theorists.

One of the most widely accepted systems of thought that is shattered by what Dostoevsky believed is "man's highest

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8 Magarshack, The Best Short Stories, p. 127.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p. 131.
11 Ibid., p. 128.
good" is the notion that man is less barbarous than formerly and that he is improving steadily as he increases his wealth and knowledge. The result will be that man's bad habits will disappear as he is re-educated by common sense and science. At that point man will cease making deliberate mistakes that are contrary to his normal interests. Science will teach him that he has neither will nor uncontrollable desires, and "... that he himself is nothing more than a sort of piano-key or organ-stop."\(^{12}\)

Dostoevsky believed that man is not necessarily improving. At any rate, he is not improving as a consequence of his learning through science and reason how to follow his own self-interest. He said that civilization is no less barbaric and bloodthirsty than primitive times. Cleopatra stuck golden pins into the breasts of her slavegirls. People no longer do this, but they are still as barbaric, Dostoevsky maintained. As he said through the underground man, "We live in barbarous times because ... today, too, we stick pins into people; today, too, though man has learnt to see things more clearly than in barbarous times, he is still very far from having learnt to act in accordance with the dictates of reason and science."\(^{13}\)

A second widely held system of thought which is put to naught by Dostoevsky's "highest good" is the idea that society

\(^{12}\)Ibid. p. 129.

\(^{13}\)Ibid.
can be organized in such a way as to make men happy. Dostoevsky said that happiness is a personal thing and not something that can be produced through altering external circumstances.

The second important aspect of Dostoevsky's anthropology is his view of man's moral nature. Western societies proceeded on the basis that man is evil. They placed all sorts of restrictions on man in order to control him. Many unnecessary restrictions were placed on people. Dostoevsky opposed these physical restrictions. But his basic opposition to the notion that man is evil in that it results in all sorts of theories and orthodox religions that deprive individuals of the opportunity to create their own essences.

The central question in "The Grand Inquisitor," a chapter in The Brothers Karamazov, is the nature of man. Dostoevsky took the side of Christ against the Grand Inquisitor. Christ believed that people are basically good and strong, or can be. The Grand Inquisitor believed that men are not good or strong, and that the price paid in tears and suffering waiting for men to become good and strong on their own is too high a price. The Grand Inquisitor criticized Christ, saying that by respecting man too much Christ asked "... far too much from him. ... Respecting him less, Thou wouldst have asked less of him. That would have been more like love, for his burden would have been lighter. He is weak and vile."  

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14 Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 132.
did not believe that man is so weak that he cannot become strong and good. He said through one of his characters that he could not "... believe that evil is the normal condition among men."\textsuperscript{15}

The third aspect of man's nature is the issue concerning the existence of ordinary and extraordinary men. Dostoevsky did not believe in the existence of a natural aristocracy that can rule over the lives and values of others. Granted that there may be people wiser than others, and more right than others, and that many people are mistaken. But, said Dostoevsky through one of his characters, granted that "... have I not the common, human, eternal, supreme right of freedom of conscience. I have the right not to be bigoted or superstitious if I don't wish to and for that I shall naturally be hated by certain persons to the end of time."\textsuperscript{16}

Dostoevsky prized life too much to countenance to any form of moral nihilism that would divide people in such a way as to justify the sacrifice of human blood to an abstraction. In \textit{Crime and Punishment}, Raskolnikov created such a dichotomy and acted on it. He divided people into the ordinary who is conservative and law-abiding and who lives "... under control and loves to be controlled," and the extraordinary who is lawless and who has the "... right ... that is not an official right, but an inner right to decide in his own

\textsuperscript{15}Magarshack, \textit{The Best Short Stories}, pp. 321-322.

\textsuperscript{16}Dostoevsky, \textit{The Possessed}, p. 58.
conscience to overstep . . . certain obstacles . . . in case it is essential for the practical fulfillment of his idea. . . .”

Raskolnikov killed. Dostoevsky believed that murder is the inevitable result of a philosophy that separates people on the basis of their value to society.

The fourth important aspect of Dostoevsky's anthropology is his voluntaristic psychology. Dostoevsky rejected all forms of determinism. He was voluntaristic basically for two reasons. First, he did not want people to be able to use the excuse of determinism to absolve themselves of the responsibility for their conduct. Second, he did not want any deterministic historicity or meliorism to become an official or accepted orthodoxy and drug people into not thinking for themselves. In the first place, Dostoevsky did not want people to forget their responsibility to others; in the second, he did not want them to forget their obligation to themselves. In "The Grand Inquisitor" Christ represents voluntarism. The Grand Inquisitor attacked Christ for introducing voluntarism into the world. As a consequence, says the Grand Inquisitor, "in the place of the rigid ancient law, man must hereafter with free heart decide for himself what is good and what is evil. . . .”

Dostoevsky agreed with Christ. He did not want any form of determinism or idolatry to deprive the individual of his ultimate responsibility for his decisions.

18Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 132.
The fifth and final aspect of Dostoevsky's anthropology that relates to political theory is his recognition that each person needs something to live for. He realized that each person longs for that which is certain. This nostalgia for the absolute almost invariably leads to the leap of faith in favor of some system, or man, or nation state. Dostoevsky regretted this fact about man because he did not want people to surrender their freedom. Possibly he believed that one can overcome this tendency.

In Dostoevsky's story, "The Grand Inquisitor," Christ argued that one can live without surrendering himself to some immutable theory. The Grand Inquisitor represented the opposing view. He said that "... so long as man remains free he strives for nothing so incessantly and so painfully as to find someone to worship. But man seeks to worship what is established beyond dispute, so that all men would agree at once to worship it."19 To worship is not enough. One must have something that everyone can worship and believe in, argued the Grand Inquisitor. "... what is essential is that all may be together in it."20 Dostoevsky wanted people to pursue truth and goodness, and not to surrender themselves to a theory about truth and goodness.

Dostoevsky did not want people to create an idol and give up their freedom to it. He, however, recognized that aspect

19Ibid., p. 131.
20Ibid.
of human nature. He understood how some system of thought can be used as a tool in controlling man's conduct. Governments have also recognized this and through chauvinism and other contrived idols have been able to persuade human beings to perform the most inhuman actions. Dostoevsky deplored this development in western history.

Freedom and Justice

Dostoevsky believed that the supreme value in the world (second only to life itself) is freedom. By freedom, Dostoevsky meant freedom of conscience and conviction. He said that "the freedom of conscience and of conviction is the first and principal freedom."21

Dostoevsky had a deep appreciation of freedom. He knew the importance of freedom because he had spent part of his life as a slave. About freedom and prison life, he said that "the prisoner is a great dreamer. . . . What will one not give for freedom."22 In another one of his works, he said that from the first day in prison, his only thought was getting out. "To calculate in a thousand different ways when my days in prison would be over became my favourite occupation. It was always in my mind, and I am sure that it is the same with everyone who is deprived of freedom for a fixed period."23

21Dostoevsky, Summer Impressions, p. 89.
23Ibid., p. 89.
Dostoevsky's term in prison not only taught him an appreciation of freedom; it also taught him the meaning of freedom. Dostoevsky's understanding of the nature of freedom ranges from an understanding of its various dimensions to an analysis of the relationship between freedom and justice. Concerning the nature of freedom, Dostoevsky recognized freedom to have four basic characteristics.

First, Dostoevsky recognized that freedom is more spiritual than physical in character. He believed that material conditions do not necessarily restrict man's freedom. Second, Dostoevsky believed that freedom is not dependent upon reason. He rejected the notion that only rational choices are free choices. He believed that freedom becomes little more than necessity when one is required to conform to some preconceived idea of what is rational.

Third, Dostoevsky understood freedom more in terms of what a free person does than in what he is. Western political theory placed the choice above the choosing, and the idea of freedom above being free. The idea of freedom was reified and under the ostensible pretenses of expanding freedom, individual's actual area of choice was restricted. As the West became more intoxicated with absolutes, it became more intoxicated with freedom as an idea. And the more it idolized freedom as an idea, the more it moved towards the repression of "free individuals." And it repressed free individuals,
itself. Placing "... the consciousness of life ... above life"\textsuperscript{24} results in the sacrifice of "life," Dostoevsky said through the ridiculous man.

Finally, Dostoevsky recognized that the element of existence has to be injected back into the definition of freedom. Only through the reappearance of existence can there be a free-existent. Any other way—the travailing activities of life, vicarious enjoyments, immutable cosmological systems—do not free man, but rather deny him the opportunity of becoming free or enable him to escape from his freedom. Freedom of choice has no meaning if one's essence predates his existence. What freedom is there if one receives his ideology ready-made. None, Dostoevsky believed. And one should not excuse this tendency to emphasize essence rather than existence just because people are willing to accept and even desire it. Dostoevsky believed that one should not be allowed to pass through life without struggling with the eternal questions because only through the struggle can one's spiritual consciousness grow.

In his writings, Dostoevsky tried to do for his readers what Christ had done for mankind: "... instead of giving a firm foundation for setting the conscience of man at rest for ever, ... he chose all that is exceptional, vague and

\textsuperscript{24}Magarshack, The Best Short Stories, p. 318.
enigmatic... Instead of taking possession of man's freedom,..." Christ increased it.25

Dostoevsky recognized these four aspects of freedom. He also understood the conflict between freedom and justice. For Dostoevsky, the issue of freedom versus justice boils down to the question of evil. According to Dostoevsky, regardless of where one looks, all he sees is suffering and injustice. If there is a God, he allows this suffering to continue because he does not want to interfere with man's freedom. He could have created a world of justice, but to do so he would have had to deprive man of his freedom. For Dostoevsky, mankind has reached a point where it can assume the power of God in determining whether it will sacrifice human freedom to social justice or social justice to human freedom. In The Brothers Karamazov, in the chapter entitled "Pro and Contra," Dostoevsky developed the arguments in the dispute between freedom and justice. In the first part of the chapter, Dostoevsky allowed Ivan to preach for justice at any cost, even if it meant the loss of freedom. In the second part of the chapter, Dostoevsky used the story of Christ's return to earth to justify the suffering of the world in the name of freedom.

Ivan hated this world of suffering and injustice. He said that "it's not that I don't accept God... it's the world created by Him I don't and cannot accept."26 Ivan

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25Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 132.
26Ibid., p. 121.
said that he could not understand why the world is arranged as it is. He said that he supposed that men suffer because they rejected paradise for freedom. But he still could not keep from following his own Euclidian logic which taught him that there is suffering and that there is none guilty. He demanded justice. He said that he "... must have justice, or ..." he would destroy himself.

Dostoevsky allowed Ivan to use the case of children to give the greatest force to the argument for justice. Ivan said that he did not have to use children to get his point across, but, he said that he took their case "... because in their case what I mean is so unanswerably clear." Ivan proceeded to attack every argument that justifies the suffering of children. He refused to accept the idea that children should suffer for the sins of their ancestors. He also rejected the idea that the suffering of children is an acceptable price to pay for peace and harmony in the world. He said that if his own personal suffering is the "manure" to prepare mankind for the future world harmony, that is one thing. And he said that he wanted to be brought back to hear the explanation for it all. The suffering of children is altogether something else. He said, "that's the question I can't answer..."

Listen! If all must suffer to pay for the eternal harmony,

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27 Ibid., p. 126.

28 Ibid., p. 125.
what have children to do with it... It's beyond all comprehension why they should suffer, and why they should pay for the harmony."29

To further build his case for the sacrifice of freedom to bring about justice, Dostoevsky told, through Ivan, of instances in which children suffered unjustifiably. He told of a child of five who was beaten by her parents until she was one bruise. Her parents locked her in a privy, and when she did not ask to be taken out, they filled her mouth with excrement. And the child cried and beat "... her tiny fist in the dark and cold..."30 and cried to her good, kind God for protection.

Dostoevsky also told of a serf boy who threw a rock and hurt the paw of a general's dog. The child of eight was locked up for a night and brought the next morning to a field where his mother and other serfs were located. The general ordered the child stripped naked. The child shivered in the cold, "... numb with terror, not daring to cry. ... 'Make him run,' commands the general. 'Run! Run!' shout the dog-boys. The boy runs... 'At him!' yells the general... The hounds catch him, and tear him to pieces before his mother's eyes!"31

29 Ibid., p. 126.
30 Ibid., p. 125.
31 Ibid.
Ivan could not understand how a good God could allow this type of suffering to exist in his creation. He asked his brother if he had the opportunity to make men happy for all time but to do so he had to torture to death only one tiny creature, would he consent "... to found that edifice on its unavenged tears?" Ivan's brother, who was a religious man and destined for the ministry, said that he would not. Ivan could not understand why God had not said "No" also. For Ivan, some future world harmony is not worth "... the tears of that one tortured child who beat itself on the breast with its little fist and prayed in its stinking outhouse, with its unexpiated tears to 'dear, kind God!'"

Ivan wanted justice to be tempered with sentiment and forgiveness. He did not want God's vengence on cruel people. He said that he could not see the benefit of a hell for oppressors. What good is hell since "... those children have already been tortured." Punishment cannot make people better, and it will not frighten them into being more just. Punishment and retribution can only continue the injustice and the suffering. Ivan said that he wanted to forgive and embrace.

To clarify this point, Dostoevsky told of a convicted robber and killer who was sentenced to death. Christian people

32 Ibid., p. 127.
33 Ibid., p. 126.
34 Ibid.
of the community and pastors smothered him with compassion. They taught him to read and they preached the Gospel to him. When, at last, he was converted, everyone in the community was ecstatic with happiness. They embraced and kissed him, and they called him their brother in the Lord. But even though he was their brother, they would not show mercy on him because the law requires that anyone who sheds blood must die. During his last day, he spent every moment crying and repenting. They took him limp and weak to the scaffold and "... chopped off his head in brotherly fashion, because he had found grace."35

After giving the best arguments for the sacrifice of freedom to bring about justice, Dostoevsky presented the case for freedom. He did this through a story told by Ivan Karamazov to his brother. The story in The Brothers Karamazov is called "The Grand Inquisitor" and involves a confrontation between Christ and an authority of the orthodox religion. In the story, Christ justified freedom even though it results in suffering and injustice.

Christ returned to earth. All the people were drawn to Him, and He was recognized by all. When the Grand Inquisitor realized who He was, he promptly had Him arrested. At night, the Grand Inquisitor went to talk to Christ. He knew that Christ had returned to restore to man the freedom that had been taken from him by the orthodox religion. The Grand Inquisitor said that he would not allow Christ to restore man's

freedom to him. He said, "for fifteen centuries we have been wrestling with Thy freedom, but now it is ended and over for good. ... Today people are more persuaded than ever that they have perfect freedom, yet they have brought their freedom to us and laid it humbly at our feet." 36

The Grand Inquisitor said that he himself had at one time believed in the freedom offered by Christ, but that was before he recognized what he considered to be man's true nature. When he finally realized that men in general are weak and vile and unable to live with the terrible freedom offered by Christ, he joined those who had corrected Christ's works. He said that he "... left the proud and went back to the humble, for the happiness of the humble." 37

For Dostoevsky, Christ represented one approach to evil; the Grand Inquisitor represented a second. Christ represented the idea that freedom and individual growth justify any amount of suffering. The Grand Inquisitor represented the idea that since man is incapable of living with the terrible freedom of conscience offered by Christ, freedom is only an illusion for most people, and therefore of secondary importance to justice and contentment. Christ wanted people to be strong and free. The Grand Inquisitor wanted people to be submissive and humble and happy.

36 Ibid., p. 130.
37 Ibid., p. 135.
The Grand Inquisitor attacked Christ for introducing rebellion into the world. He said that the followers of Christ are proud and rebellious, but they will learn submission, he said. They will come to realize at last that "... He who created them rebels must have meant to mock at them." They will be persuaded that they will only become free when they renounce their freedom. At that point they will learn the value of complete submission. "Thou didst lift them up and thereby taught them to be proud. We shall persuade them at last not to be proud. ... We shall show them that they are weak, that they are only pitiful children, but that childlike happiness is the sweetest of all."39

Dostoevsky wanted a world of justice and peace. But while he sympathized with the "Ivans" of the world who are sentimental and sensitive to the suffering of humanity, he was still unwilling to accept the sacrifice of human freedom in order to bring about a more peaceful or just world. He refused to sacrifice human freedom for two reasons. First, he believed that freedom is more important than justice. For Dostoevsky, man would cease to be human if he lost his freedom of conscience and choice. Moreover, the only type of justice that could result from the repression of freedom is the justice of the slave-camp. Dostoevsky believed that God had refused

38Ibid., p. 133.
39Ibid., p. 134.
to build a utopia on the ashes of human freedom. He hoped that mankind also would reject this alternative.

The second reason that Dostoevsky rejected the Grand Inquisitor's solution to the problem of evil is that he believed that a just society can be created without depriving man of his freedom. Dostoevsky had a strong faith in the fundamental goodness of man. He believed that man can shoulder the burden of freedom offered by Christ. Christ had, according to the Grand Inquisitor, refused to take possession of man's freedom. Instead, He had, by rejecting a firm foundation for setting the conscience of man at rest, increased the burden of freedom. "In place of the rigid ancient law, man must hereafter with free heart decide for himself what is good and what is evil, having only . . . " the image of Christ before him as a guide. The Grand Inquisitor believed that this is too great a burden for man. Dostoevsky disagreed. He believed that Christ had not asked too much from man. Moreover, Dostoevsky believed that any other way but the example of Christ will fail to make the world more just. To the age-old political question of whether freedom and justice are compatible, Dostoevsky argued that not only are they compatible but that true justice is but a reflex of a consciousness elevated through the expansion of human freedom.

40Ibid., p. 132.
Socialism

Dostoevsky was a violent opponent of socialism. Indeed, the basic theme of one of his better works, The Possessed, is that socialism is corrupt and dangerous. For Dostoevsky, socialism is fundamentally a materialistic system that sacrifices man's freedom in order to satisfy his physical needs. Dostoevsky believed that socialistic systems can only occur through revolutions and that socialistic governments are inevitably despotic.

Dostoevsky believed that the socialistic revolution would be carried out in the name of the people. However, he questioned whether the intellectuals who would lead the revolution understand or even like the common people. The result of the failure of revolutionaries to understand the people is the sacrifice of the freedoms of the people. Dostoevsky believed that when socialistic governments finally realize that the basic concern of people is not the satisfaction of their materialistic appetites, they will cease to believe in the innate goodness of human nature and will institute an inquisition for the re-education of mankind. Dostoevsky told of the reaction of a socialist when confronted with man's true nature.

A man is offered full security, promised food and drink, and found work, and as against this he is merely required to give up a tiny grain of his personal freedom for the sake of the common good--just a tiny, tiny grain. But man does not want to live on these conditions, he finds even the tiny grain too irksome. . . . And when he is free he is knocked about and refused work, he starves to
death and has no real freedom. But all the same the strange fellow still prefers his own freedom. Naturally enough, the socialist is simply forced to give up and tell him that he is a fool, that he is not ready yet, not ripe enough to understand what is good for him; that a dumb little ant, a miserable ant is more intelligent than he is because everything is so lovely in the ant-hill, so well-ordered, no one goes hungry and all are happy, everyone knows what he has to do; in fact man has a long way to go before he can hope to reach the standards of an ant-hill.41

After the socialistic revolution, the people will be re-educated and regimented, Dostoevsky believed, and society will become a human ant-hill. Everyone will be equal. As he said through a socialist in The Possessed, "Everyone belongs to all and all to everyone. All are slaves and equal in their slavery."42

Dostoevsky believed that the revolution will be marked with bloodshed. The revolutionaries will justify this suffering on the basis of the new era that is emerging and on the belief that an evolutionary approach would cause even more suffering. The slow approach which consists of the dreams of humanitarians and academic planning and calculation would take a thousand years. The revolutionary approach can bring change immediately. The socialist says that the argument about 'a hundred million heads' may be a metaphor, but one should not fear it. "... with the slow day-dreams on paper, despotism in the course of some hundred years will devour not a hundred but five hundred million heads."43

41 Dostoevsky, Summer Impressions, pp. 85-86.
43 Ibid., p. 415.
Dostoevsky believed that after the revolution, the basic concern of the socialist government will be the practical one of how to stay in power. The socialists will then recognize the importance of man's spiritual needs. They will understand, as the Grand Inquisitor did, that "... only one who can appease their conscience can take over their freedom. ... For the secret of man's being is not only to live but to have something to live for." Since the old gods are gone, new ones will have to be invented. The socialists will possibly invent legends and myths about themselves. They might say that their great leader is "in hiding." About this particular myth, a socialist in *The Possessed* said, "Oh, what a legend one can set going. And the great thing is it will be a new force at work! And we need that; that's what they are crying for. ... in this we have a force, and what a force!"

Dostoevsky believed that the socialistic revolution will lead to the repression of the people. In *The Possessed*, he explained the theory of shigalovism, which he believed is the inevitable consequence of socialism. The proponent of the theory in *The Possessed* said that he was perplexed by his own data because his conclusion was in direct contradiction with his original idea. He said, "Starting from unlimited freedom, I arrive at unlimited despotism. I will add, however, that there can be no solution of the social problem but mine."

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44 Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, p. 131.
46 Ibid., p. 409.
Shigalovism provides for the division of mankind into two unequal parts. "One-tenth enjoys absolute liberty and unbounded power over the other nine-tenths. The others have to give up all individuality and become, so to speak, a herd. . . ." The "one-tenth" will become the directors. After all, "slaves must have directors," said the socialist.

Socialism will, according to Dostoevsky, repress both man's spiritual and physical needs. Dostoevsky's main concern was with man's spiritual needs, but he was also interested in protecting man from physical repression. Dostoevsky said that the slavery of the body is very bad, not because of the hard work, but because the labor is "... compulsory, obligatory, enforced." A peasant works harder, Dostoevsky argued, but he has freedom. "... he is working for himself, he is working with a rational object."

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48 Ibid., p. 425.
Dostoevsky made many important contributions to political theory. His critique of western thought, his visions of an apocalypse, and his beliefs about the nature of freedom, man, ideology, and socialism all have a place in the western political tradition.

Underlying all of his contributions is the recognition by Dostoevsky that institutions and political structures are merely reflexes of individual consciousness. This is the reason that Dostoevsky gave so little attention to political institutions and programs. It was not that he was insensitive to the importance of the structure of institutions. He merely considered them of secondary importance to the development to human consciousness. Dostoevsky firmly believed that only through a change in the consensus community conscience can man make substantial improvements in his condition. This is not to say that one should ignore the importance of working to bring about needed reforms. Dostoevsky believed that one should strive to improve society, but should not place his complete faith in the manipulation of political, economic, and social structures and authorities for the salvation of man. This is the case, maintained Dostoevsky, because even
the most radical of revolutions, unless it is a product of a general revolution of man's consciousness, tends to recoil into an ultraorthodoxy. The libertarian rebel of yesterday becomes, when in power, the authoritarian tyrant of tomorrow.

Because Dostoevsky gave so little attention to institutions, political theory traditionally has failed to recognize him to be a political theorist. Dostoevsky's reason for disregarding political institutions is adequate and should no longer pose an obstacle to those who wish to use the lessons of his literary and philosophical works to improve mankind's political and social environment. This is especially the case since Dostoevsky's ideas about freedom, man, and truth are so relevant to today's world.

The significance of Dostoevsky's concept of freedom is his unique definition of freedom and his justification for it. Dostoevsky's definition of freedom is essentially that freedom is the activity of growth through the exercise of free choice. His definition does not contain the confining elements found in traditional definitions of freedom that limit individual freedom to those choices considered normal or rational by society. Dostoevsky's notion of freedom recognizes that freedom is intuitive rather than intellectual, willful rather than rational, personal rather than objective and general. His definition recognizes that freedom is more an activity of living as a free person than a definitive concept or theory of how a free person should live. Traditional
notions of freedom elevated the idea of freedom above the activity of being free, Dostoevsky believed. This led to the sacrifice of free individuals in the name of preserving and expanding human freedom. Dostoevsky maintained that freedom has no substance unless understood in terms of what a free person does.

Dostoevsky did not justify freedom on the basis of natural law or individual rights or superiority of strength or position. He justified it on the basis of humanity. He believed that freedom of conscience and choice is the essence of humanity. If man is deprived of his freedom, he becomes less of a human being, and small human beings, who have been stunted through an intellectually stagnant atmosphere or government fostered orthodoxy, are only capable of small things.

Dostoevsky stood firm in his defense of freedom even though he was a sentimental humanitarian who thirsted for justice and peace. His demand for justice did not lead him to support or condone the sacrifice of freedom to bring about a more just or humane society. He believed that a society without freedom, even though just, is unacceptable because it is nothing more than an antheap. Indeed, his concern for justice, rather than detracting from his defense of freedom, added a new element. Dostoevsky believed that without freedom no society can be just. Therefore, the Golden Age of justice and peace will dawn if men are allowed, through the exercise of their freedom of choice, to grow strong and morally responsible,
and, from this position of strength and moral accountability for oneself and responsibility for others, to freely act to create a just and peaceful society.

The significance of Dostoevsky's notion of man centers around his understanding of man's nature and Dostoevsky's defense of life. For Dostoevsky, man is unpredictable and irrational. It is this unpredictability and irrationality that differentiates man from other animate things in the world. Dostoevsky believed, that since man is unpredictable, all the laws and logical arguments and religious dogma are of little avail in restraining human impulses. For Dostoevsky, man's greatest hope in bringing about a peaceful world lay, first of all, in the recognition by each person that he is responsible for everything that he does and, second, in the glorification of life and existence. A re-emergence of an acceptance and appreciation of the example of Christ is essential in teaching human responsibility and the importance of life, Dostoevsky believed.

Finally, Dostoevsky's contributions in the area of ideology and truth are very important. Dostoevsky believed that the West has corrupted itself through the worship of the false god: rational, objective truth. The West assumed that truth is objective and attainable through objective reason and scientific empiricism. This led to the glorification of essence over existence. The result was that the West frustrated creative thought through its assumption of the
self-evident and objective nature of truth, and it sacrificed human beings to caricatures of human beings and general abstract laws through its glorification of particular essentialistic idols.

Political theory, like all other speculative thought, dealt with the essence of things and did not explore man's existence with all of its hidden elements. Political theory assumed that political truth is generated from an exploration of the essence of the objects of the world. After divorcing itself from its first love, man's day to day existence, political theory got lost in a maze of speculative thought.

Dostoevsky believed that existence is paramount to essence. He maintained that essentialism puts the essence of life above living and subordinates the "living" human being to rational constructions of the meaning of life. Moreover, the emphasis on essence leads man away from the "Truth" instead of toward it, Dostoevsky believed.

If Dostoevsky's ideas about man, truth, freedom, and socialism are substantially accurate, Dostoevsky is very relevant to today's world. There are four basic conclusions that one can draw about contemporary western society on the basis of Dostoevsky's ideas. First, his ideas help explain the spiritual malaise in the western world today. Dostoevsky believed that the problems of the world are fundamentally spiritual in nature and that the spiritual bankruptcy of the West results from the downgrading of man's spiritual needs.
If Dostoevsky is correct in this regard that man's physical and social problems cannot be solved until man's spiritual needs are satisfied, it is imperative that governments and societies allow individuals to experience an existential encounter and to work out their own salvation free from the coercive and intoxicating influence of traditional dogma and the intimidation of government and public opinion.

Second, Dostoevsky's ideas help explain the tendencies of certain western countries to repress free individuals in the name of freedom. The recognition that there is a disparity between man's actions, in this regard, and in his beliefs and that this disparity is mainly the consequence of the essentialistic tendency of the West in reducing everything to an abstract, innocuous definition should, in this age of honesty, result in greater tolerance toward the unorthodox and in a new spirit of change and creativity.

Third, Dostoevsky's ideas teach the importance of political theory's recognizing the value of life and studying every aspect of man's existence. Traditional political theory was only concerned with the one-tenth of man that is readily visible, his intellect and his beliefs and actions. It was not concerned with the other nine-tenths of man's nature which includes anxieties, worries, fears, and spiritual homelessness. Dostoevsky taught the importance of exploring every aspect of man's existence and generalizing only from the most concrete and immediate data. A general acceptance of this belief would
not only give added protection to life, but would also open up a whole new area of fertile ground for research about man and the world.

Fourth, Dostoevsky's pronouncement about human responsibility is an important lesson for contemporary society. Dostoevsky believed that everyone is responsible for all. He believed that when man has been finally stripped of his materialistic and essentialistic crutches, mankind will rise to the position of recognizing the moral accountability of each person for everything that he does and the moral responsibility of each person for each other. This is Dostoevsky's vision of the future. He believed that the Golden Age is coming. The current anti-materialistic and anti-establishment attitude of the young may be laying the foundation for this Golden Age.

The concern of political theory throughout history has been the establishment of a more perfect society. Dostoevsky believed that political theory has been correct in its impulses but wrong in its methods. He believed that a more perfect society is possible, even inevitable, and will emerge from the ashes of ritualistic dogma, materialism, archaic religions, and the other remanents of essentialism. It will not be produced through more dogma, more materialistic formulas, and more regimens. These weaken the individual through denying him his freedom to grow through the exercise of his free choice. And weak men are incapable of creating a free, democratic society.
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Articles


