ACT 11 THE PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS OF EVIL pdf

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Since World War II, moral, political, and legal philosophers have become increasingly interested in the concept of evil. This interest has been partly motivated by ascriptions of 'evil' by laymen, social scientists, journalists, and politicians as they try to understand and respond to various atrocities and horrors, such as genocides, terrorist attacks, mass murders, and tortures and.

Either the universe had a beginning or it did not. If it did, either that beginning was caused or it was not caused. If it was caused, either the cause was personal or it was impersonal. Based on these dilemmas, the argument can be put in the following logical form: Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its existence. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe has some kind of cause of its existence. The cause of the universe is either an impersonal cause or a personal one. The cause of the universe is not impersonal. Therefore, the cause of the universe is a personal one, which we call God. This version of the cosmological argument was bolstered by work in astrophysics and cosmology in the late twentieth century. On one interpretation of the standard Big Bang cosmological model, the time-space universe sprang into existence ex nihilo approximately Such a beginning is best explained, argue kalam defenders, by a non-temporal, non-spatial, personal, transcendent causeâ€"namely God. The claim that the universe began to exist is also argued philosophically in at least two ways. First, it is argued that an actual infinite set of events cannot exist, for actual infinities lead to metaphysical absurdities. Since an infinite temporal regress of events is an actual infinite set of events, such a regress is metaphysically impossible. So the past cannot be infinite; the universe must have had a temporal beginning. A second approach begins by arguing that an infinite series of events cannot be formed by successive addition one member being added to another. The reason why is that, when adding finite numbers one after the other, the set of numbers will always be finite. The addition of yet another finite number, ad infinitum, will never lead to an actual infinite. Since the past is a series of temporal events formed by successive addition, the past could not be actually infinite in duration. Nor will the future be so. The universe must have had a beginning. Many objections have been raised against the kalam argument, both scientific and philosophical, including that there are other cosmological models of the universe besides the Big Bang in which the universe is understood to be eternal, such as various multi-verse theories. Philosophical rebuttals marshaled against the kalam argument include the utilization of set theory and mathematical systems which employ actual infinite sets. Teleological Arguments Teleological arguments in the East go back as far as C. In the West, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics offered arguments for a directing intelligence of the world given the order found within it. There is an assortment of teleological arguments, but a common theme among them is the claim that certain characteristics of the natural world reflect design, purpose, and intelligence. These features of the natural world are then used as evidence for an intelligent, intentional designer of the world. The teleological argument has been articulated and defended at various times and places throughout history, but its zenith was in the early nineteenth century with perhaps its most ardent defender: In his book, Natural Theology, Paley offers an argument from analogy: Artifacts such as a watch , with their means to ends configurations, are the products of human design. The works of nature, such as the human hand, resemble artifacts. Thus the works of nature are probably the products of design. Furthermore, the works of nature are much more in number and far greater in complexity. Therefore, the works of nature were probably the products of a grand designerâ€"one much more powerful and intelligent than a human designer. Those offered by David Hume â€" in his Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion are often taken to be archetype refutations of traditional design arguments. Among them are that the analogy between the works of nature and human artifacts is not particularly strong; that even if we could infer a grand designer of the universe, this designer turns out to be something less than the God of the theistic religions especially given the great amount of evil in the world ; and that just because a universe has the appearance of design, it does not follow that it is in fact designed; such an event could have occurred through natural, chance events. A more recent version of the design argument is based on the apparent fine-tuning of the cosmos. Fine-tuning arguments, whose current leading defender is Robin Collins, include the claims that the laws of nature, the constants of physics, and the

initial conditions of the universe are finely tuned for conscious life. Consider the following three: While each of the individual calculations of such constants may not be fully accurate, it is argued that the significant number of them, coupled with their independence from one other, provides evidence of their being intentionally established with conscious life in mind. Objections to fine-tuning arguments are multifarious. According to an anthropic principle objection, if the laws of nature and physical constants would have varied to any significant degree, there would be no conscious observers such as ourselves. Given that such observers do exist, it should not be surprising that the laws and constants are just as they are. One way of accounting for such observers is the many-worlds hypothesis. In this view, there exist a large number of universes, perhaps an infinite number of them. Most of these universes include life-prohibiting parameters, but at least a minimal number of them would probably include life-permitting ones. It should not be surprising that one of them, ours, for example, is life-permitting. Much of the current fine-tuning discussion turns on the plausibility of the many-worlds hypothesis and the anthropic principle. There are other versions of the teleological argument that have also been proposed which focus not on fundamental parameters of the cosmos but on different aspects of living organisms—including their emergence, alleged irreducibly complex systems within living organisms, information intrinsic within DNA, and the rise of consciousness—in an attempt to demonstrate intelligent, intentional qualities in the world. If successful, the cosmological argument only provides evidence for a transcendent first cause of the universe, nothing more; at best, the teleological argument provides evidence for a purposive, rational designer of the universe, nothing more; and so on. Natural theologians maintain, however, that the central aim of these arguments is not to offer full-blown proofs of any particular deity, but rather to provide evidence or warrant for belief in a grand designer, or creator, or moral lawgiver. Some natural theologians argue that it is best to combine the various arguments in order to provide a cumulative case for a broad form of theism. Taken together, these natural theologians argue, the classical arguments offer a picture of a deity not unlike the God of the theistic religious traditions and even if this approach does not prove the existence of any particular deity, it does nonetheless lend support to theism over naturalism which, as used here, is the view that natural entities have only natural causes, and that the world is fully describable by the physical sciences. Along with arguments for the existence of God, there are also a number of reasons one might have for denying the existence of God. If the burden is on the theist to provide highly convincing evidences or reasons that would warrant his or her believing that God exists, in the absence of such evidences and reasons disbelief is justified. Another reason one might have for not believing that God exists is that science conflicts with theistic beliefs and, given the great success of the scientific enterprise, it should have the last word on the matter. Since science has regularly rebuffed religious claims in the past, we should expect the claims of religion to eventually become extinct. A third possible reason for denying the existence of God is that the very concept of God is incoherent. And a fourth reason one might have is that the existence of God conflicts with various features of the natural world, such as evil, pain, and suffering. The Challenge of Science Over the last several hundred years there has been tremendous growth in scientific understanding of the world in such fields as biology, astronomy, physics, and geology. These advances have had considerable influence on religious belief. When religious texts, such as the Bible, have been in conflict with science, the latter has generally been the winner in the debate ; religious beliefs have commonly given way to the power of the scientific method. It has seemed to some that modern science will be able to explain all of the fundamental questions of life with no remainder. Given the advances of science and the retreat of religious beliefs, many in the latter half of the twentieth century agreed with the general Freudian view that a new era was on the horizon in which the infantile illusions, or perhaps delusions, of religion would soon go the way of the ancient Greek and Roman gods. With the onset of the twenty-first century, however, a new narrative has emerged. Religion has not fallen into oblivion, as many anticipated; in fact, religious belief is on the rise. Many factors account for this, including challenges to psychological and sociological theories which hold belief in God to be pathological or neurotic. In recent decades these theories have themselves been challenged by medical and psychological research, being understood by many to be theories designed primarily to destroy belief in God. Another important factor is the increase in the number of believing and outspoken scientists, such as Francis Collins, the director of the human genome project. But despite this orchestrated opposition arguing the falsity

and incoherence of theism, it has proved rather resilient. Indeed, the twenty-first century is reflecting a renewed interest in philosophical theism. The Coherence of Theism Philosophical challenges to theism have also included the claim that the very concept of God makes no sense—that the attributes ascribed to God are logically incoherent either individually or collectively. There are first-rate philosophers today who argue that theism is coherent and others of equal stature who argue that theism is incoherent. Much of the criticism of the concept of theism has focused on God as understood in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but it is also relevant to the theistic elements found within Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and certain forms of African and Native American religions. The question of whether theism is coherent is an important one, for if there is reason to believe that theism is incoherent, theistic belief is in an important sense undermined. The logical consistency of each of the divine attributes of classical theism has been challenged by both adherents and non-adherents of theism. Consider the divine attribute of omniscience. If God knows what you will freely do tomorrow, then it is the case now that you will indeed do that tomorrow. But how can you be free not to do that thing tomorrow if it is true now that you will in fact freely do that thing tomorrow? There is a vast array of replies to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that omniscience is incompatible with future free action and that, since there is future free action, God—if God exists—is not omniscient. Another objection to the coherence of theism has to do with the divine attribute of omnipotence and is referred to as the stone paradox. An omnipotent being, as traditionally understood, is a being who can bring about anything. So, an omnipotent being could create a stone that was too heavy for such a being to lift. But if he could not lift the stone, he would not be omnipotent, and if he could not make such a stone, he would not be omnipotent. Hence, no such being exists. A number of replies have been offered to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that the notion of omnipotence as traditionally defined is incoherent and must be redefined if the concept of God is to remain a plausible one. Arguments for the incoherence of theism have been offered for each of the divine attributes. While there have been many challenges to the classical attributes of God, there are also contemporary philosophers and theologians who have defended each of them as traditionally understood. There is much lively discussion currently underway by those defending both the classical and neo-classical views of God. But not all theistic philosophers and theologians have believed that the truths of religious beliefs can be or even should be demonstrated or rationally justified. Problems of Evil and Suffering a. Logical Problems Perhaps the most compelling and noteworthy argument against theism is what is referred to as the problem of evil. Philosophers of the East and the West have long recognized that difficulties arise for one who affirms both the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God and the reality of evil. David Hume, quoting the ancient Greek thinker Epicurus — B. Is he [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Is he able, but not willing? Is he both able and willing?

The conditions for the possibility of evil are established with this first act of freedom, and indeed, freedom may itself be the first act of evil, in that it commits a violence against nature, violates nature by turning it into an object for scientific inquiry and for instrumental reason.

Definitions Defining philosophy is as difficult as trying to define love. The word philosophy is not much help. Philosophy is a combination of two Greek words, philein sophia, meaning lover of wisdom. In ancient times a lover of wisdom could be related to any area where intelligence was expressed. This could be in business, politics, human relations, or carpentry and other skills. Philosophy had a "wholeness" approach to life in antiquity. In contrast to this, some modern definitions restrict philosophy to what can be known by science or the analysis of language. Philosophy is a term applied to almost any area of life. Some questions may express this general attitude: If this popular misuse of the word were to prevail, one may admit that anyone who thinks seriously about any subject is a philosopher. If we do this, we are ignoring the academic disciplines, or study of philosophy. If this very general definition is accepted, everyone becomes a philosopher. It becomes true, paradoxically, that when everyone is a philosopher, no one is a philosopher. This becomes so loose a definition that philosophy becomes meaningless as a definition. If this definition prevailed, it would mean that a philosopher is anyone who says he is a philosopher. Because of this inadequacy it becomes apparent that we have to look elsewhere for a definition of philosophy. Because the original meaning of the word, philosophy, does not give us much for specific content, we will turn to descriptive definitions. A descriptive definition of philosophy is that it seeks to describe its functions, goals, and reasons for existence. In the following pages a number of these definitions will be set forth and examined. A word of warning is offered to the beginning student of philosophy. The beginner may despair over diverse definitions. Students who come from a scientific background frequently expect concise, clear, and universally accepted definitions. This will not be true in philosophy and it is not universally true concerning all issues in any science or non-scientific study or discipline. The diversity of opinion in philosophy becomes a source of embarrassment for the beginner when asked to explain to parents or unknowing friends just what a course in philosophy is all about. It might be expected that one of the oldest disciplines or subjects in academia should achieve some uniformity or opinion, but this is not the case. Yet in spite of diversity, philosophy is important. Plato declared that philosophy is a gift the gods have bestowed on mortals. Plato also warned against the neglect of philosophy. He wrote that "land animals came from men who had no use for philosophy. But more seriously, men live by philosophies. Which one will it be? We now turn to consider several definitions of philosophy. These will include the historical approach, philosophy as criticism, philosophy as the analysis of language, philosophy as a program of change, philosophy as a set of questions and answers, and philosophy as a world-view. Along the way we will also analyze the definitions and attempt to reach some conclusions about this analysis. The Historical Approach Remember our question: According to this approach philosophy is really the study of historical figures who are considered philosophers. All are considered philosophers. What holds them together since they are so diverse in many of their views? One answer lies in their common set of problems and concerns. This may serve as a link to another definition to be considered later. The argument for the historical approach is that no real understanding of philosophy can be had unless one understands the past. Philosophy would be impoverished if it lost any of the names above. Some argue that knowing the history of philosophy is required for a positive appreciation of philosophy, and necessary if one is to make creative contributions to the advancement of philosophy. This definition of philosophy has its problems: This would make philosophy a sub-unit of history. The value of the historical approach is that it introduces the student to the great minds of the past and the confrontation one has with philosophic problems that are raised by thinking people in all ages. This is desirable in itself even though this is not the best definition of philosophy. Philosophy is the Analysis of Language This is one of the more extreme definitions of philosophy. This definition began as an emphasis in philosophy at about the turn of the century. A growing revolt took place against the metaphysical systems in philosophy. Metaphysical systems in philosophy explained everything from the standpoint of a great idea like

"mind" or "spirit. More of this will be forthcoming in the fifth definition. The analysis-of-language-emphasis rejected metaphysics and accepted the simple, but useful modern standard of scientific verification. Their central thesis is that only truths of logic and empirically verifiable statements are meaningful. What does scientific verification mean in this context? If you can validate or reproduce an experiment or whatever, you can say it is true. If there is no way to reproduce or validate the experiment in the context of science, there was then no claim for truth. How do verification and language work together? How do you know when to take a statement as referring to a fact? We can use three sentences: These sentences are constructed in a similar manner. But only one is factual, i. Thousands of people go yearly to Disneyland and anyone who doubts can go see for himself. But you cannot scientifically verify that rape is wrong and that God is love. I can say factually that a person was raped and may even witness the event as a fact, but how can I verify the word "wrong? Are these statements meaningful? One of the greatest names in philosophy, was born in Athens, knew Socrates as a youth, and desired to enter politics until the death of Socrates. Plato founded the Academy in Athens which may be called the first European university. The conclusion reached by analytic philosophers is that anything not verifiable is nonsense. All of the systems of the past that go beyond verification are to be rejected as nonsense. This means that the realm of values, religion, aesthetics, and much of philosophy is regarded only as emotive statements. An emotive statement reflects only how a person "feels" about a topic. Declaring that rape is wrong is only to declare that I feel it is wrong. I may seek your agreement on the issue, but again it is not an objective truth, but two "feelings" combined. Other analytic philosophers moved beyond the limitations of the verification principle to the understanding of language itself. Instead of talking about the world and whether things exist in the world, they talk about the words that are used to describe the world. This exercise in "semantic ascent" may be seen in contrasting talk about miles, distances, points, etc. Language philosophers such as Quine spend entire treatises on the nature of language, syntax, synonymous terms, concepts of abstractions, translation of terms, vagueness and other features of language. This is a philosophy about language rather than being interested in great issues that have frequently troubled the larger tradition of philosophers. Language analysis as the definition of philosophy changes philosophy from being a subject matter into a tool for dealing with other subject matters. It becomes a method without content. This definition is as one-sided as the definition it rejected. The analysis of language has been an important part of philosophy from the time of Socrates and others to the present. But language connected with verification and restricted by that principle places great limitations on areas that philosophy has often regarded as important. This limitation is seen particularly in the areas of morals and ethics. Morality cannot be verified in a scientific way. But it does seem obvious that we can discuss actions and adopt some means of objective evaluation in terms of reason. Moreover, it does not seem obvious that some moral distinctions are merely "emotive feelings. If verification is required for the statement--it is wrong to kill the child--then all moral standards are at an end, and philosophy is turned into stupidity. Philosophy is a Program of Change Karl Marx declared that the role of philosophy is not to think about the world, but to change it. Philosophy is not to be an ivory tower enterprise without relevance to the world of human conditions. A contemporary Marxist has asked: What is the point in subtle epistemological investigation when science and technology, not unduly worried about the foundations of their knowledge, increase daily their mastery of nature and man? What is the point of linguistic analysis which steers clear of the transformation of language ordinary language! What is the point in philosophical reflections on the meaning of good and evil when Auschwitz, the Indonesian massacres, and the war in Vietnam provides a definition which suffocates all discussion of ethics? And what is the point in further philosophical occupation with Reason and Freedom when the resources and the features of a rational society, and the need for liberation are all too clear, and the problem is not their concept, but the political practice of their realization. But the question of change is not one for philosophy per se. It seems natural that one who is thinking seriously about the problems of man that one seek good solutions. It seems natural also that one having good solutions should seek to carry them out.

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In the beginning of existence the Evil One is the embodiment of everything unpleasant, then of everything bad, evil, and immoral. He is hatred, destruction, and annihilation incarnate, and as such he is the adversary of existence, of the Creator, of God.

The question of evil is, of course, an old and venerable one in Western philosophy, having fascinated philosophers from Socrates and Augustine through Leibniz and Kant. If God is beneficent and omnipotent, why does he allow there to be such evil in the world? After Kant, philosophy largely severed its ties with theology, and, with that, the question of evil receded. Evil seemed no longer to be a question for philosophy, but instead became a question for psychiatry, sociology, and biology. Yet, in the past few years, a loosely connected group of philosophers and theorists, influenced by the work of Kant and Jacques Lacan, has returned to the question of evil. Among these is Alain Badiou, who in published Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil. An analysis, critique, and reformulation of the discourse of evil in contemporary thought, the work rejected both the theological and the scientific psychological, sociological, etc. Badiou asked to add the final paragraphs of his interview after the events of 11 September. The idea of the self-evidence of evil is not, in our society, very old. It dates, in my opinion, from the end of the s, when the big political movement of the s was finished. We then entered into a reactive period, a period that I call the Restoration. We are in such a period. Today we see liberal capitalism and its political system, parliamentarism, as the only natural and acceptable solutions. Every revolutionary idea is considered utopian and ultimately criminal. In truth, our leaders and propagandists know very well that liberal capitalism is an inegalitarian regime, unjust, and unacceptable for the vast majority of humanity. Where is the power of the people? Where is the political power for third world peasants, the European working class, the poor everywhere? We live in a contradiction: To justify their conservatism, the partisans of the established order cannot really call it ideal or wonderful. So instead, they have decided to say that all the rest is horrible. Sure, they say, we may not live in a condition of perfect goodness. Our democracy is not perfect. No intellectual will actually defend the brutal power of money and the accompanying political disdain for the disenfranchised, or for manual laborers, but many agree to say that real evil is elsewhere. Who indeed today would defend the Stalinist terror, the African genocides, the Latin American torturers? Under the pretext of not accepting evil, we end up making believe that we have, if not the good, at least the best possible state of affairs—even if this best is not so great. Note that even Churchill said that democracy that is to say the regime of liberal capitalism was not at all the best of political regimes, but rather the least bad. Philosophy has always been critical of commonly held opinions and of what seems obvious. My personal position is the following: It is necessary to examine, in a detailed way, the contemporary theory of evil, the ideology of human rights, the concept of democracy. It is necessary to show that nothing there leads in the direction of the real emancipation of humanity. It is necessary to reconstruct rights, in everyday life as in politics, of truth and of the good. Our ability to once again have real ideas and real projects depends on it. Courtesy Moderna Museet, Stockholm. You say that, for liberal capitalism, evil is always elsewhere, the dreaded other, something that liberal capitalism believes it has thankfully banished and kept at bay. For decades, popular films and novels have been obsessed with the idea of evil lurking within in the mind, in the house, in the neighborhood. Just over a month ago, Andrea Yates, a Texas mother, systematically drowned her five children, prompting a national discussion about whether or not we are all capable of such evil. Is this idea perennial, or does it tell us something peculiar about our historical moment? Do you see these two notions of evil external and internal as connected with one another in any way? There is no contradiction between the affirmation that liberal capitalism and democracy are the good and the affirmation that evil is a permanent possibility for any individual. The second thesis evil inside of each of us is simply the moral and religious complement to the first thesis, which is political parliamentary capitalism as the good. History shows that democratic liberal capitalism is the only economic, political, and social regime that is truly humane, that truly conforms to the good of humanity. Every other political regime is a monstrous and bloody dictatorship, completely irrational.

The proof of this fact is that political regimes that have fought against liberalism and democracy all share the same face of evil. Thus, Fascism and Communism, which appeared to be opposites, were actually very similar. These monstrous regimes cannot produce a rational project, an idea of justice or something of that sort. Those who have led these regimes Fascist or Communist were necessarily pathological cases: One needs to study Hitler or Stalin with the tool of criminal psychology. As for those who have supported them, and there were thousands of them, they were alienated by the totalitarian mystique. They were finally directed by evil and destructive passions. If thousands of people were able to participate in such ridiculous and criminal undertakings, it is obviously because the possibility of being fascinated by evil exists in each of us. First, liberal capitalism is not at all the good of humanity. Quite the contrary; it is the vehicle of savage, destructive nihilism. Second, the Communist revolutions of the twentieth century have represented grandiose efforts to create a completely different historical and political universe. Politics is not the management of the power of the State. Politics is first the invention and the exercise of an absolutely new and concrete reality. Politics is the creation of thought. The Lenin who wrote What is to be Done? Certainly, the politics of emancipation, or egalitarian politics, have not, thus far, been able to resolve the problem of the power of the State. They have exercised a terror that is finally useless. But that should encourage us to pick up the question where they left it off, rather than to rally to the capitalist, imperialist enemy. There is, on the side of Communism, a universal desire for emancipation, while on the side of Fascism, there is a national and racial desire. These are two radically opposed projects. The war between the two has indeed been the war between the idea of a universal politics and the idea of racial domination. Fourth, the use of terror in revolutionary circumstances or civil war does not at all mean that the leaders and militants are insane, or that they express the possibility of internal evil. Terror is a political tool that has been in use as long as human societies have existed. It should therefore be judged as a political tool, and not submitted to infantilizing moral judgment. It should be added that there are different types of terror. Our liberal countries know how to use it perfectly. The colossal American army exerts terrorist blackmail on a global scale, and prisons and executions exert an interior blackmail no less violent. Fifth, the only coherent theory of the subject mine, I might add, in jest! The death drive is a necessary component of sublimation and creation, just as it is of murder and suicide. There are projects of thought, or of actions, on the basis of which we distinguish between those who are friends, those who are enemies, and those who can be considered neutral. The question of knowing how to treat enemies or neutrals depends entirely on the project concerned, the thought that constitutes it, and the concrete circumstances Is the project in an escalating phase? Instead, you offer an alternative theory of evil. Were I to reverse the tables, as you suggest, I would leave everything in place. To say that liberal capitalism is evil would not change anything. I would still be subordinating politics to humanistic and Christian morality: My philosophy desires affirmation. I want to fight for; I want to know what I have for the good and to put it to work. Grandeur is considered a metaphysical evil. Me, I am for grandeur, I am for heroism. I am for the affirmation of the thought and the deed. Certainly, it is necessary to propose another theory of evil. But that is to say, essentially, another theory of the good. Evil would be to compromise on the question of the good. To give up is always evil. To renounce liberation politics, renounce a passionate love, renounce an artistic creation€¦ Evil is the moment when I lack the strength to be true to the good that compels me. The real question underlying the question of evil is the following: What is the good? All my philosophy strives to answer this question. A truth is a concrete process that starts by an upheaval an encounter, a general revolt, a surprising new invention , and develops as fidelity to the novelty thus experimented. A truth is the subjective development of that which is at once both new and universal. To become a subject and not remain a simple human animal , is to participate in the coming into being of a universal novelty. That requires effort, endurance, sometimes self-denial. There is evil each time egoism leads to the renunciation of a truth. Then, one is de-subjectivized. Egoistic self-interest carries one away, risking the interruption of the whole progress of a truth and thus of the good. One can, then, define evil in one phrase:

Hannah Arendt is a twentieth century political philosopher whose writings do not easily come together into a systematic philosophy that expounds and expands upon a single argument over a sequence of works. Instead, her thoughts span totalitarianism, revolution, the nature of freedom and the.

On this view we can more accurately, and less perniciously, understand and describe morally despicable actions, characters, and events using more pedestrian moral concepts such as badness and wrongdoing. By contrast, evil-revivalists believe that the concept of evil has a place in our moral and political thinking and discourse. On this view, the concept of evil should be revived, not abandoned see Russell and Someone who believes that we should do away with moral discourse altogether could be called a moral-skeptic or a moral nihilist. Evil-skepticism is not as broad. Evil-skeptics believe the concept of evil is particularly problematic and should be abandoned while other moral concepts, such as right, wrong, good, and bad, are worth keeping. Evil-skeptics give three main reasons to abandon the concept of evil: The monsters of fictions, such as vampires, witches, and werewolves, are thought to be paradigms of evil. These creatures possess powers and abilities that defy scientific explanation, and perhaps human understanding. Many popular horror films also depict evil as the result of dark forces or Satanic possession. Some evil-skeptics believe that the concept of evil necessarily makes reference to supernatural spirits, dark forces, or creatures. Evil-revivalists respond that the concept of evil need not make reference to supernatural spirits, dark forces, or monsters. The concept of evil would have explanatory power, or be explanatorily useful, if it were able to explain why certain actions were performed or why these actions were performed by certain agents rather than by others. Evil-skeptics such as Inga Clendinnen and Philip Cole argue that the concept of evil cannot provide explanations of this sort and thus should be abandoned. According to Clendinnen the concept of evil cannot explain the performance of actions because it is an essentially dismissive classification. To say that a person, or an action, is evil is just to say that that person, or action, defies explanation or is incomprehensible see Clendinnen , 81; see also, Pocock Joel Feinberg also believes that evil actions are essentially incomprehensible. But he does not think that we should abandon the concept of evil for this reason. Similarly, Cole believes that the concept of evil is often employed when we lack a complete explanation for why an action was performed. For instance, we might wonder why two ten-year-old boys, Robert Thompson and Jon Venerables, tortured and murdered two-year-old James Bulger while other ten-year-old boys with similar genetic characteristics and upbringings cause little harm? Cole believes that the concept of evil is employed in these cases to provide the missing explanation. However, Cole argues that the concept of evil does not provide a genuine explanation in these cases because to say that an action is evil is just to say either that the action resulted from supernatural forces or that the action is a mystery. To say that an event resulted from supernatural forces is not to give a genuine explanation of the event because these forces do not exist. To say that an event is a mystery is not to give a genuine explanation of an event, but rather, it is to suggest that the event cannot be explained at least with the information currently available , 6â€"9. Evil-revivalists have offered several responses to the objection that the concept of evil should be abandoned because it is explanatorily useless. Another common response is to argue that evil is no less explanatorily useful than other moral concepts such as good, bad, right, and wrong Garrard , â€"; Russell , â€" Thus, if we should abandon the concept of evil we should abandon these other moral concepts as well. Eve Garrard and Luke Russell also point out that even if the concept of evil cannot provide a complete explanation for the performance of an action, it can provide a partial explanation. For instance, Garrard argues that evil actions result from a particular kind of motivation. Call this an E motivation. Thus, to say that an action is evil is to say that it has resulted from an E motivation. This provides a partial explanation for why the action was performed. Bush made it more likely that suspected terrorists would be mistreated and less likely that there would be peaceful relations between the peoples and governments of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea and the peoples and government of the United States. But should we abandon the concept of evil because it leads to harm when it is misapplied or abused? So why do they believe that we should abandon the concept of evil? An evil-skeptic might reply that we should abandon only the concept of evil, and not other

normative concepts, because the concept of evil is particularly dangerous or susceptible to abuse. We can discern several reasons why ascriptions of evil might be thought to be more harmful or dangerous than ascriptions of other normative concepts such as badness or wrongdoing. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that evildoers not only deserve the greatest form of moral condemnation but also the greatest form of punishment. Thus, not only are wrongfully accused evildoers subjected to harsh judgments undeservedly, they may be subjected to harsh punishments undeservedly as well. For instance, some people believe that to say that someone performed an evil action implies that that person acted out of malevolence see e. Given this ambiguity, it might be unclear whether an attribution of evil attributes despicable psychological attributes to an evildoer, and this ambiguity might result in an overly harsh judgment. For instance, on some conceptions of evil, evildoers are possessed, inhuman, incorrigible, or have fixed character traits See Cole , 1â€"21; Russell , , and ; Haybron a and b. These metaphysical and psychological theses about evildoers are controversial. If evildoers have these traits, and thus will continue to perform evil actions no matter what we do, the only appropriate response might be to isolate them from society or to have them executed. But if evildoers do not have these fixed dispositions and they are treated as if they do, they will likely be mistreated. Thus, while most theorists agree that the concept of evil can be harmful or dangerous there is considerable disagreement about what conclusion should be drawn from this fact. Evil-skeptics believe that because the concept of evil is harmful or dangerous we should abandon it in favour of less dangerous concepts such as badness and wrongdoing. Evil-revivalists believe that because the concept of evil is harmful or dangerous more philosophical work needs to be done on it to clear up ambiguities and reduce the likelihood of abuse or misuse. Card and Kekes argue that it is more dangerous to ignore evil than to try to understand it Card and ; Kekes For if we do not understand evil we will be ill-equipped to root out its sources, and thus, we will be unable to prevent evils from occurring in the future. But his reasons for thinking that the concept of evil is dangerous are different from those discussed above. Nietzsche believes that the concept of evil is dangerous because it has a negative effect on human potential and vitality by promoting the weak in spirit and suppressing the strong. In On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic, Nietzsche argues that the concept of evil arose from the negative emotions of envy, hatred, and resentment he uses the French term ressentiment to capture an attitude that combines these elements. He contends that the powerless and weak created the concept of evil to take revenge against their oppressors. Nietzsche believes that the concepts of good and evil contribute to an unhealthy view of life which judges relief from suffering as more valuable than creative self-expression and accomplishment. For this reason Nietzsche believes that we should seek to move beyond judgements of good and evil Nietzsche and Instead, she argues that judgments of evil often indicate a healthy recognition that one has been treated unjustly. Card also argues that we have just as much reason to question the motives of people who believe we should abandon the concept of evil as we do to question the motives of people who use the concept. She suggests that people who want to abandon the concept of evil may be overwhelmed by the task of understanding and preventing evil and would rather focus on the less daunting task of questioning the motives of people who use the term Card , According to this line of argument, it is hard to deny that evil exists; and if evil exists, we need a concept to capture this immoral extreme. A second argument in favour of the concept of evil is that it is only by facing evil, i. A third reason to keep the concept of evil is that categorizing actions and practices as evil helps to focus our limited energy and resources. If evils are the worst sorts of moral wrongs, we should prioritize the reduction of evil over the reduction of other wrongs such as unjust inequalities. For instance, Card believes that it is more important to prevent the evils of domestic violence than it is to ensure that women and men are paid equal wages for equal work Card , 96â€" A fourth reason not to abandon the concept of evil is that by categorizing actions and practices as evil we are better able to set limits to legitimate responses to evil. By having a greater understanding of the nature of evil we are better able to guard against responding to evil with further evils Card , 7â€"8. However, philosophers have considered the nature and origins of evil in the broad sense since ancient times. Although this entry is primarily concerned with evil in the narrow sense, it is useful to survey the history of theories of evil in the broad sense since these theories provide the backdrop against which theories of evil in the narrow sense have been developed. Philosophers and theologians have recognized that to solve the problem of evil it is important

to understand the nature of evil. One theory of evil that provides a solution to the problem of evil is Manichaean dualism. According to Manichaean dualism, the universe is the product of an ongoing battle between two coequal and coeternal first principles: God and the Prince of Darkness. From these first principles follow good and evil substances which are in a constant battle for supremacy. The material world constitutes a stage of this cosmic battle where the forces of evil have trapped the forces of goodness in matter. For example, the human body is evil while the human soul is good and must be freed from the body through strict adherence to Manichaean teaching. The Manichaean solution to the problem of evil is that God is neither all-powerful nor the sole creator of the world. God is supremely good and creates only good things, but he or she is powerless to prevent the Prince of Darkness from creating evil. For more about Manichaeanism see Coyel and Lieu Since its inception, Manichaean dualism has been criticized for providing little empirical support for its extravagant cosmology. A second problem is that, for a theist, it is hard to accept that God is not an all-powerful sole creator. For these reasons influential medieval philosophers such as Saint Augustine, who initially accepted the Manichaean theory of evil, eventually rejected it in favor of the Neoplatonist approach. For instance, the evil of disease consists in a privation of health, and the evil of sin consist in a privation of virtue. The Neoplatonist theory of evil provides a solution to the problem of evil because if evil is a privation of substance, form, and goodness, then God creates no evil. For instance, it seems that we cannot equate the evil of pain with the privation of pleasure or some other feeling. Pain is a distinct phenomenological experience which is positively bad and not merely not good. Similarly, a sadistic torturer is not just not as good as she could be. She is not simply lacking in kindness or compassion. These are qualities she has, not qualities she lacks, and they are positively bad and not merely lacking in goodness Calder a; Kane See Anglin and Goetz and Grant for replies to these objections. Instead, Kant equates evil with having a will that is not fully good. According to Kant, we have a morally good will only if we choose to perform morally right actions because they are morally right Kant , 4: There are three grades of evil which can be seen as increasingly more evil stages of corruption in the will. First there is frailty. A person with a frail will attempts to perform morally right actions because these actions are morally right, but she is too weak to follow through with her plans. Instead, she ends up doing wrong due to a weakness of will Kant , Bk I, 24â€" The next stage of corruption is impurity. A person with an impure will does not attempt to perform morally right actions just because these actions are morally right. Instead, she performs morally right actions partly because these actions are morally right and partly because of some other incentive, e.

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Political philosophy, also known as political theory, is the study of topics such as politics, liberty, justice, property, rights, law, and the enforcement of laws by authority: what they are, why (or even if) they are needed, what, if anything, makes a government legitimate, what rights and freedoms it should protect and why, what form it.

Early Islamic philosophy emphasized an inexorable link between science and religion , and the process of ijtihad to find truth â€"in effect all philosophy was " political " as it had real implications for governance. This view was challenged by the "rationalist" Mutazilite philosophers, who held a more Hellenic view, reason above revelation, and as such are known to modern scholars as the first speculative theologians of Islam; they were supported by a secular aristocracy who sought freedom of action independent of the Caliphate. By the late ancient period, however, the "traditionalist" Asharite view of Islam had in general triumphed. According to the Asharites, reason must be subordinate to the Quran and the Sunna. However, in the Western thought, it is generally supposed that it was a specific area peculiar merely to the great philosophers of Islam: Hence, not only the ideas of the Muslim political philosophers but also many other jurists and ulama posed political ideas and theories. For example, the ideas of the Khawarij in the very early years of Islamic history on Khilafa and Ummah , or that of Shia Islam on the concept of Imamah are considered proofs of political thought. The clashes between the Ehl-i Sunna and Shia in the 7th and 8th centuries had a genuine political character. Political thought was not purely rooted in theism, however. Aristotleanism flourished as the Islamic Golden Age saw rise to a continuation of the peripaetic philosophers who implemented the ideas of Aristotle in the context of the Islamic world. Abunaser, Avicenna and Ibn Rushd where part of this philosophical school who claimed that human reason surpassed mere coincidence and revelation. They believed, for example, that natural phenomena occurs because of certain rules made by god , not because god interfered directly unlike Al-Ghazali and his followers. In it, he details the role of the state in terms of political affairs i. For Ibn Khaldun, government should be restrained to a minimum for as a necessary evil, it is the constraint of men by other men. It had much in common with the Mutazilite Islamic thinking in that the Roman Catholics though subordinating philosophy to theology did not subject reason to revelation but in the case of contradictions, subordinated reason to faith as the Asharite of Islam. The Scholastics by combining the philosophy of Aristotle with the Christianity of St. Augustine emphasized the potential harmony inherent in reason and revelation. Magna Carta , viewed by many as a cornerstone of Anglo-American political liberty, explicitly proposes the right to revolt against the ruler for justice sake. Other documents similar to Magna Carta are found in other European countries such as Spain and Hungary. While the Middle Ages did see secular politics in practice under the rule of the Holy Roman Empire , the academic field was wholly scholastic and therefore Christian in nature. That work, as well as The Discourses , a rigorous analysis of the classical period , did much to influence modern political thought in the West. A minority including Jean-Jacques Rousseau interpreted The Prince as a satire meant to be given to the Medici after their recapture of Florence and their subsequent expulsion of Machiavelli from Florence. At any rate, Machiavelli presents a pragmatic and somewhat consequentialist view of politics, whereby good and evil are mere means used to bring about an endâ€"i. Thomas Hobbes , well known for his theory of the social contract , goes on to expand this view at the start of the 17th century during the English Renaissance. Although neither Machiavelli nor Hobbes believed in the divine right of kings, they both believed in the inherent selfishness of the individual. It was necessarily this belief that led them to adopt a strong central power as the only means of preventing the disintegration of the social order. During the Enlightenment period, new theories about what the human was and is and about the definition of reality and the way it was perceived, along with the discovery of other societies in the Americas, and the changing needs of political societies especially in the wake of the English Civil War , the American Revolution , the French Revolution , and the Haitian Revolution led to new questions and insights by such thinkers as Thomas Hobbes , John Locke , Montesquieu and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. These theorists were driven by two basic questions: These fundamental questions involved a conceptual distinction between the concepts of "state" and "government. The term "government" would refer to a specific group of people who

occupied the institutions of the state, and create the laws and ordinances by which the people, themselves included, would be bound. This conceptual distinction continues to operate in political science , although some political scientists, philosophers, historians and cultural anthropologists have argued that most political action in any given society occurs outside of its state, and that there are societies that are not organized into states that nevertheless must be considered in political terms. As long as the concept of natural order was not introduced, the social sciences could not evolve independently of theistic thinking. Since the cultural revolution of the 17th century in England, which spread to France and the rest of Europe, society has been considered subject to natural laws akin to the physical world. However, the enlightenment was an outright attack on religion, particularly Christianity. After Voltaire, religion would never be the same again in France. As well, there was no spread of this doctrine within the New World and the advanced civilizations of the Aztec , Maya , Inca , Mohican , Delaware , Huron and especially the Iroquois. The Iroquois philosophy in particular gave much to Christian thought of the time and in many cases actually inspired some of the institutions adopted in the United States: In it Locke proposes a state of nature theory that directly complements his conception of how political development occurs and how it can be founded through contractual obligation. The theory of the divine right of kings became a passing fancy, exposed to the type of ridicule with which John Locke treated it. For Locke, knowledge is neither innate, revealed nor based on authority but subject to uncertainty tempered by reason, tolerance and moderation. According to Locke, an absolute ruler as proposed by Hobbes is unnecessary, for natural law is based on reason and seeking peace and survival for man. Industrialization and the Modern Era[edit] The Marxist critique of capitalismâ€"developed with Friedrich Engels â€"was, alongside liberalism and fascism, one of the defining ideological movements of the twentieth century. The industrial revolution produced a parallel revolution in political thought. Urbanization and capitalism greatly reshaped society. During this same period, the socialist movement began to form. In the midth century, Marxism was developed, and socialism in general gained increasing popular support, mostly from the urban working class. Without breaking entirely from the past, Marx established principles that would be used by future revolutionaries of the 20th century namely Vladimir Lenin , Mao Zedong , Ho Chi Minh , and Fidel Castro. In addition, the various branches of anarchism , with thinkers such as Mikhail Bakunin , Pierre-Joseph Proudhon or Peter Kropotkin , and syndicalism also gained some prominence. In the Anglo-American world, anti-imperialism and pluralism began gaining currency at the turn of the 20th century. The Russian Revolution of and similar, albeit less successful, revolutions in many other European countries brought communism â€"and in particular the political theory of Leninism , but also on a smaller level Luxemburgism gradually â€"on the world stage. At the same time, social democratic parties won elections and formed governments for the first time, often as a result of the introduction of universal suffrage. In continental Europe, on the other hand, the postwar decades saw a huge blossoming of political philosophy, with Marxism dominating the field. Communism remained an important focus especially during the s and s. Colonialism and racism were important issues that arose. In general, there was a marked trend towards a pragmatic approach to political issues, rather than a philosophical one. Much academic debate regarded one or both of two pragmatic topics: The rise of feminism , LGBT social movements and the end of colonial rule and of the political exclusion of such minorities as African Americans and sexual minorities in the developed world has led to feminist, postcolonial , and multicultural thought becoming significant. This led to a challenge to the social contract by philosophers Charles W. Mills in his book The Racial Contract and Carole Pateman in her book The Sexual Contract that the social contract excluded persons of colour and women respectively. Rawls used a thought experiment , the original position , in which representative parties choose principles of justice for the basic structure of society from behind a veil of ignorance. Rawls also offered a criticism of utilitarian approaches to questions of political justice. Most of these took elements of Marxist economic analysis, but combined them with a more cultural or ideological emphasis. Along somewhat different lines, a number of other continental thinkersâ€"still largely influenced by Marxismâ€"put new emphases on structuralism and on a "return to Hegel ". Within the post- structuralist line though mostly not taking that label are thinkers such as Gilles Deleuze , Michel Foucault , Claude Lefort , and Jean Baudrillard. The Situationists were more influenced by Hegel; Guy Debord , in particular, moved a Marxist analysis of

commodity fetishism to the realm of consumption, and looked at the relation between consumerism and dominant ideology formation. Another debate developed around the distinct criticisms of liberal political theory made by Michael Walzer , Michael Sandel and Charles Taylor. The liberal - communitarian debate is often considered valuable for generating a new set of philosophical problems, rather than a profound and illuminating clash of perspective. Bell argue that, contra liberalism, communities are prior to individuals and therefore should be the center of political focus. Communitarians tend to support greater local control as well as economic and social policies which encourage the growth of social capital. A pair of overlapping political perspectives arising toward the end of the 20th century are republicanism or neo- or civic-republicanism and the capability approach. To a liberal, a slave who is not interfered with may be free, yet to a republican the mere status as a slave, regardless of how that slave is treated, is objectionable. Prominent republicans include historian Quentin Skinner , jurist Cass Sunstein , and political philosopher Philip Pettit. The capability approach, pioneered by economists Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen and further developed by legal scholar Martha Nussbaum , understands freedom under allied lines: Both the capability approach and republicanism treat choice as something which must be resourced. In other words, it is not enough to be legally able to do something, but to have the real option of doing it. A prominent subject in recent political philosophy is the theory of deliberative democracy. Wrote his Politics as an extension of his Nicomachean Ethics. Notable for the theories that humans are social animals, and that the polis Ancient Greek city state existed to bring about the good life appropriate to such animals. After Pierre Joseph Proudhon , Bakunin became the most important political philosopher of anarchism. His specific version of anarchism is called collectivist anarchism. The first thinker to analyze social justice in terms of maximization of aggregate individual benefits. Developed the distinction between positive and negative liberty. Irish member of the British parliament, Burke is credited with the creation of conservative thought. Burke was one of the biggest supporters of the American Revolution. The first thinker to relate ethics to the political order. Helped introduce postmodern philosophy into political theory, and promoted new theories of Pluralism and agonistic democracy. Co-founder of pragmatism and analyzed the essential role of education in the maintenance of democratic government. The major figure of the Chinese Fajia Legalist school, advocated government that adhered to laws and a strict method of administration. Critiqued the modern conception of power on the basis of the prison complex and other prohibitive institutions, such as those that designate sexuality, madness and knowledge as the roots of their infrastructure, a critique that demonstrated that subjection is the power formation of subjects in any linguistic forum and that revolution cannot just be thought as the reversal of power between classes. Instigated the concept of hegemony. Argued that the state and the ruling class uses culture and ideology to gain the consent of the classes it rules over. Modern liberal thinker and early supporter of positive freedom. Contemporary democratic theorist and sociologist. He has pioneered such concepts as the public sphere , communicative action , and deliberative democracy. His early work was heavily influenced by the Frankfurt School. He argued that central planning was inefficient because members of central bodies could not know enough to match the preferences of consumers and workers with existing conditions. Hayek further argued that central economic planning â€"a mainstay of socialismâ€"would lead to a "total" state with dangerous power. He advocated free-market capitalism in which the main role of the state is to maintain the rule of law and let spontaneous order develop. Emphasized the "cunning" of history, arguing that it followed a rational trajectory, even while embodying seemingly irrational forces; influenced Marx, Kierkegaard , Nietzsche , and Oakeshott.

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His mother died shortly thereafter and his father was killed in the Battle of the Marne in , so Ricoeur and his sister were reared by their paternal grandparents and an unmarried aunt in Rennes. They were devout members of the French Reformed Protestant tradition. He studied philosophy first at the University of Rennes and then at the Sorbonne. From the earliest years of his academic life he was convinced that there is a basic, irreducible difference between things and human beings as persons and as agents. Unlike things, persons can engage in free, thoughtful action. But Ricoeur never accepted any version of a substance dualism in the person as the Cartesian cogito and the Kantian transcendental subject can be read to require. Soon after being called up for service in the French army in he was captured and spent the rest of the war in prison camps in Germany. After the war, he completed his doctorate and was appointed lecturer, then professor of the history of philosophy at the University of Strasbourg, where he succeeded Jean Hyppolite. He remained there until , when he was named to the chair of general philosophy at the Sorbonne. In , he joined the faculty of the new University of Paris at Nanterre, now Paris X, whose establishment he had supported in light of the rapid growth in the number of university students at that time. He served a difficult year as Dean of the faculty of letters following the student uprising of Except for three years he then spent at Louvain, he continued to teach a seminar at the Husserl Archive in Paris until he reached the mandatory retirement age in From on, Ricoeur also lectured regularly in the United States and Canada. In he was named to succeed Paul Tillich as the John Nuveen professor of philosophical theology at the University of Chicago, with a joint appointment in the Divinity School, the Philosophy Department, and the Committee on Social Thought. He taught there regularly for a portion of each year until In he gave the Gifford Lectures in Edinburgh, Scotland. In , he was co-recipient of the John W. It would also address the problem of evil and its answer, Transcendence as expressed through a poetics of the will. This latter volume never appeared. It was delayed, then set aside when Ricoeur discovered new problems he had not foreseen and when he sought to respond to new challenges to philosophy coming especially from structuralism. The first volume, Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary , proposes a phenomenology of the will, while bracketing the reality of evil and its solution. It draws on the method of phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl. This can be seen through a phenomenological description of the three structures that constitute the voluntary: There is no seamless harmony between these dimensions of what is finally only a finite freedom. Human beings have to struggle with the tension between them and ultimately to consent to their embodied lives and the world as something they do not fully create. It is the always fragile resolution of this conflict that ultimately makes human freedom genuinely human, and that gives us our distinctive identities both as individuals and as members of larger historical communities and ultimately of humanity. Ricoeur extends his account of freedom to take up the problem of evil in Fallible Man and The Symbolism of Evil, both published in In these works he addresses the question of how to account for the fact that it is possible for us to misuse our freedom, the reality of a bad will, a question that had been bracketed in the initial phenomenological volume. In Fallible Man he argues through a transcendental analysis that this possibility is grounded in the basic disproportion that characterizes human existence as located between the finite, perspectival nature of experience and the infinite, rational dimensions of taking up that experience in perception, practice, and feeling, leading to the concept of fallibility. This disproportion shows up in every aspect of human existence, from perceiving to feeling to thinking. It is evident in the human quest for possessions, power, and prestige. By reason of this disproportion, we are never wholly at one with ourselves and hence we can go wrong. We are fallible, yet evil, the misuse of our freedom, is neither original nor necessary, only always possible. Nor does this disproportion render our existence meaningless. Rather, the very disproportion that makes us fallible and makes human evil possible is also what makes goodness, knowledge, and achievement possible. It is what distinguishes us from one another—each one of us has his or her unique spatiotemporal location and perspective but can we we can know ourselves as one human among many

and we can know the world beyond our individual perspective on it. At the same time our fallibility makes it possible for us to communicate with each other through our use of the logos which seeks to transcend our localized points of view. Though the unity of humanity is never more than a unity founded on communication, precisely because we can communicate, the differences among us are never absolute. Furthermore, no one of us alone could be a person. Though each of us has an individual identity, our identities show that we are bound up with others: The kind of unity that binds people to one another even though they differ is found in their quest for esteem and recognition. This quest aims for genuine mutuality that expresses a mutual esteem for the worth that each of us has by reason of both our common humanity and our individual uniqueness. This esteem positively values the disproportion constitutive of every person. Both our constitutive disproportion and our quest for mutual esteem are also visible through the study of history which acknowledges the temporality of our existence. And such attention to history, in turn, further clarifies the finite nature of human freedom. For Ricoeur, there is an order and structure to history conveyed through the narrating of history. Otherwise history would be unintelligible. But this narrated history also recounts events and deeds that disrupt the prevailing order and reorder it, leading to the question whether forgiveness for the wrongs that have occurred and debts that have been incurred might be possible, however difficult to achieve. What we say and do would be meaningless if it did not fit into some antecedent structure or pattern established by natural processes, on the one hand, and into what we say about such doings which intervene in those processes, on the other. Our words and deeds are intended to express the meaning of what exists, if only because they give meaning to things as they now stand. In this sense, our words and deeds get their significance from being responses to contexts not wholly of our own making. What we say and do in such contexts can also aim beyond things as they now stand and sometimes does give expression to new meanings and values, as well as to unintended and as yet unrealized possibilities. In a word, our exercising of our finite freedom has worth and efficacy only by reason of our embodiment in a natural and cultural setting that is largely not of our own making, but this is a world that we seek to appropriate through our words and deeds—and our use of a productive imagination. Ricoeur saw that this conception of the disproportion that characterizes human beings was insufficient to account for actual occurrence of a bad will and evil deeds. No direct, unmediated inspection of the cogito, as Descartes and Husserl had proposed, can show why these evils, contingent as each of them is, in fact came to be. Ricoeur next explored the problem of how then to account for the existence of evil in The Symbolism of Evil. There, he argued that we have to consider how people have tried to come to terms with their inability to make sense of the existence of evil by using language that draws on the great symbols and myths that speak of its origin and end. This is language that conveys more than a single meaning, language that can always be understood in more than one way; hence it needs always to be interpreted. This study concluded by saying that philosophy must learn to make sense of such language and learn to think starting from it, something Ricoeur summed up in a famous phrase: This means considering those uses of language that extend beyond a single word or sentence, as well as those which cannot be reduced logical propositions. Like symbols these are forms of discourse that may have more than one meaning. To make sense of the fullness of language, therefore, philosophy has to develop a theory of interpretation since actual discourse is not always, if ever univocal and its meanings do change over time when discourse outlives the speakers and situations in which it was originally produced. In working out this theory of interpretation in terms of a theory of language as discourse, Ricoeur saw that what he now called the hermeneutic field was itself divided internally between an approach such as that used in The Symbolism of Evil which sought to recover meaning that was assumed to be already there and what he now called a hermeneutics of suspicion, like that found in Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, which held that nothing ultimately means what it first seems to say. The rise of structuralism in the s and 70s, drawing on developments in linguistics, contributed to this emphasis on suspicion by holding that it was an underlying structure or structures that gave rise to the apparent surface meaning. Structuralism also introduced the idea that the identifying of such underlying structures could count as a reductive explanation of any surface-level meaning. Over time, he came to see that this limiting of structural analysis to a method of interpretation can be shown to follow from the fact that structuralists always presupposed the surface meaning they were trying to explain away. Moreover, because they ignored time and discarded any notion of change,

because the deep structures they discovered were understood to be static and atemporal, they could not really account for how structures generated surface meanings, that is, how one structure could change into a different structure. This is an approach through which he seeks to find the middle term that can mediate between two polar terms and allow us to move back and forth between them. Locating such a mediating term leads to enhanced understanding. It always comes about through interpretation but is also itself open to critique. In other words, it is a method that mediates and negotiates rather than removes the conflict of interpretations. Besides recognizing the fruitfulness of structural analyses of particular well-defined fields of experience, Ricoeur resisted those structuralists who sought to reduce language itself to a closed system of signs having no reference to anything outside itself. Following clues found in the works of Emile Benveniste and Roman Jakobson, he defined discourse as the use of such sign systems by someone to say something about something to someone, using existing but malleable phonetic, lexical, syntactic, and stylistic rules. That is, discourse always involves a speaker or writer and a hearer or reader as well as something said in some situation about some reality, ultimately a world that we might inhabit. It follows that any interpretation of a form of discourse requires both the objective sort of analysis for which structuralism provides a tool and an acknowledgment that there is always a surplus of meaning that goes beyond what such objective techniques seek to explain. There is a surplus of meaning because we apply objective techniques to things we already understand as having a possible meaning without fully exhausting that meaning. The meaning of acts of discourse is moreover always open to new interpretations, particularly as time passes and the very context in which interpretation occurs itself changes. On one level, he explored the practice of methods of interpretation as an arc leading from an initial situation and understanding to broadened understanding, both of the interpreter and the world as a world we can imagine ourselves as inhabiting. On a second level, he explored the broader notion of the fullness of language through investigation of different forms of extended discourse. These are uses of language that are longer than the single sentence and whose truth and meaning is not simply reducible to the sum of the truth values of the individual sentences which constitute such extended discourse. On the basis of these two interwoven levels, he could also take up the questions of selfhood and responsible human action, allowing him in turn to spell out in greater detail the ethical theory that had always been implicit in his philosophy. This discussion of ethics started from a focus on person to person relations, the self and just one or only a few nearby others, and subsequently moved on to the question of justice and living with others beyond those one may meet every day or face to face. In those final years, he also continued to explore other dimensions of the fullness of language, for example, through some significant essays on the notion of translation as occurring not just between languages but also within them On Translation, His approach was rather to connect his theory of discourse as a use of language meant to say something to someone with examples of such discourse and their interpretation. But language as spoken is ephemeral, it disappears. The event of speaking might disappear but the text remains for anyone who knows how to read. Structuralism was correct that texts have a structure. But this structure varies depending on the kind of discourse inscribed in the text, so discerning that structure and how it contributes to shaping that discourse helps one identify the discourse as being of a certain type or genre. This is a world that we can think of ourselves as inhabiting. Interpretations, of course, need to be checked against and challenged by other interpretations and they will sooner or later need to be redone as situations change over time. So there is a possibility of both internal and external critique: Explanatory techniques also play a role, particularly when understanding breaks down. In a nice turn of phrase, Ricoeur liked to say one seeks to explain more in order to understand better. He agreed with Gadamer, moreover, that the goal of interpretation was to enable us to make sense of our embodied existence with others including our predecessors and successors in the world. Ricoeur did not produce a general theory of interpretation. His reflections on hermeneutics were themselves an instance of the philosophical practice of interpretation leading to insight into what ultimately underlies and enables such activity: Forms of Extended Discourse Ricoeur examined a number of different forms of extended discourse, beginning with metaphorical discourse. Like the talk about symbols he had explored earlier a live metaphor is a kind of discourse that says more than one thing at the same time.

Law and Evil opens, expands and deepens our understanding of the phenomenon of evil by addressing the theoretical relationship between this phenomenon and law. Hannah Arendt said 'the problem of evil will be the fundamental question of post-war intellectual life in Europe'. This statement is.

Ahankar , or Egotism One who gives in to the temptations of the Five Thieves is known as " Manmukh ", or someone who lives selfishly and without virtue. Inversely, the " Gurmukh , who thrive in their reverence toward divine knowledge, rise above vice via the practice of the high virtues of Sikhism. Nam Simran , or meditation upon the divine name. Islamic views on sin There is no concept of absolute evil in Islam , as a fundamental universal principle that is independent from and equal with good in a dualistic sense. Accordingly, qualifying something as evil depends on the circumstances of the observer. An event or an action itself is neutral, but it receives its qualification by God. Human beings are responsible for their choices, and so have the free will to choose good life in olam haba or bad death in heaven. Devil in Christianity Evil according to a Christian worldview is any action, thought, or attitude that is contrary to the character or will of God. This is shown through the law given in both the Old and New Testament. This evil shows itself through deviation from the character or will of God. The devil , in opposition to the will of God, represents evil and tempts Christ, the personification of the character and will of God. Ary Scheffer , Christian theology draws its concept of evil from the Old and New Testaments. The Christian Bible exercises "the dominant influence upon ideas about God and evil in the Western world. Evil is that which keeps one from discovering the nature of God. It is believed that one must choose not to be evil to return to God. Christian Science believes that evil arises from a misunderstanding of the goodness of nature, which is understood as being inherently perfect if viewed from the correct spiritual perspective. This has led to the rejection of any separate power being the source of evil, or of God as being the source of evil; instead, the appearance of evil is the result of a mistaken concept of good. Christian Scientists argue that even the most evil person does not pursue evil for its own sake, but from the mistaken viewpoint that he or she will achieve some kind of good thereby. The final resolution of the struggle between good and evil was supposed to occur on a day of Judgement , in which all beings that have lived will be led across a bridge of fire, and those who are evil will be cast down forever. In Afghan belief, angels and saints are beings sent to help us achieve the path towards goodness. Lewis , in The Abolition of Man , maintained that there are certain acts that are universally considered evil, such as rape and murder. The numerous instances in which rape or murder is morally affected by social context call this into question. Up until the midth century, the United States—along with many other countries—practiced forms of slavery. As is often the case, those transgressing moral boundaries stood to profit from that exercise. Arguably, slavery has always been the same and objectively evil, but men with a motivation to transgress will justify that action. Adolf Hitler is sometimes used as a modern definition of evil. Universalists consider evil independent of culture, and wholly related to acts or intents. Thus, while the ideological leaders of Nazism and the Hutu Interhamwe accepted and considered it moral to commit genocide, the belief in genocide as fundamentally or universally evil holds that those who instigated this genocide are actually evil. He therefore considered non-Muslims and Shiite Muslims evil people intent on destroying Islamic purity and therefore heretic.

8: Paul Ricoeur (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

So, if war is politics carried out by different means, then politics is war carried out by different means. And make no mistake, our world is at war, the final war, Armageddon, the final conflict between good and evil, life and death.

From an Anglo-Saxon MS. We read in the Vision of Perpetua: The old views are, as a rule, preserved but transformed. There is nowhere an absolutely new start. Either the main idea is preserved and details are changed, or vice versa, the main idea is objected to while the details p. Changes of a radical nature take place in the religious conceptions of mankind, yet the historical connexion is preserved. Italian miniature of the thirteenth century. But for that reason we must recognise the prestige of the Devil. The pedigree of the Evil One is older than the oldest European aristocracy and royal p. Having outlined in the preceding chapters the history of the Devil, we shall now devote the conclusion of this book to a philosophical consideration of the idea of evil; and here we are first of all confronted with the problem of the objective existence of evil. The Era of Subjectivism. The question presents itself: Is it not a relative term which ought to be dropped as a one-sided conception of things? Does it not exist simply because we view life from our own subjective standpoint, and must it not disappear as soon as we learn to comprehend the world in its objective reality? In ancient times man was in the habit of objectifying the various aspirations and impulses of his soul. In order to understand beauty the Greek mind fashioned the ideal of Aphrodite, and the moral authority of righteousness appeared to the Jew as Yahveh the Lord, the Legislator of Mount Sinai. Religious aspirations were actualised in the Church by means of ceremonials and ecclesiastical institutions. Things changed at the opening of that era in the evolution of mankind which is commonly called modern history. A new age was prepared through the inventions of gunpowder, the compass, and printing, and began at p. The more the horizon of the known world grew, the more man began to comprehend the importance of his own subjectivity. Men felt that religion should not be an external, but an internal, factor. Toleration became a universal requirement, and subjectivity was made the cornerstone of public and private life. Thus the era of the Reformation showed itself as a revolutionary movement, which, proclaiming the right of individualism and subjectivity, overthrew the traditional authority of an external objectivity. The originators of this movement did not intend to discard all objective authority, but the spirit of nominalism which dominated them prevailed over their movement in its further progress. The last consequences of the principle of subjectivity, which starts with the famous assumption cogito ergo sum, were not anticipated by Descartes, for he naively assumes objective existence on one of the most trivial arguments. Nor would Luther with his peculiar education and stubborn narrowness, which were by no means inconsistent accompaniments of his greatness, ever have endorsed later theories based upon the purely subjective aspect of conscience; but the fact remains that the last consequence of the recognition of p. Our present civilisation is based upon the Protestant ideal of individualism, and nobody who lives and moves in our time can be blind to the enormous benefits which we derive from it. Nevertheless, we must beware of the onesidedness of subjectivism. Objectivism is not so utterly erroneous in principle as it appears from the point of view of modern subjectivism. There are Protestants who might object that Protestantism is not merely negative; it is also positive. It is not only a protest, but also an affirmation. But most of the Protestant affirmations are simply relies of the old Romanism which bound the consciences p. The fanatics among the Protestants are by no means friends of liberty and free inquiry; and the positive power, the new factor in history that was destined to build up a new civilisation, was nothing else than Science. Therefore, Protestantism is not as yet the last word spoken in the religious development of mankind. We must look to higher aims and more positive issues, and a new reformation of the Church will obtain them only on the condition of its again recognising the importance of objectivity. Mankind will not return to the dogmatic system of hierarchical institutions, which would only bind again the consciences of men by man-made authority. But the fact must be recognised that truth is not a mere subjective conception; it must be seen that truth is a statement of facts, and, accordingly, that it contains an objective element, and that this objective element is the essential part of established truth. In the old period of objectivism, the ultimate authority was lodged in great men, prophets, reformers, and priests, whose spirit, after it had been adapted to the needs of the

powerful, was embodied in Church institutions. The new objectivism discards all human authority; it rests ultimately upon science, which is an appeal to facts. Truth is no longer what the Church teaches, or what some infallible man may deem wise to proclaim; nor is it what appears to me as true, or to you as true; but it is that which according to methodical critique has been proved to be objectively true, i. Objective truth, demonstrable by evidence and capable p. God reveals himself in the facts of life, among which we include our afflictions and personal experiences; God speaks in our conscience, which is, as it were, the moral instinct, the result of all our inherited and acquired experiences, and this is the reason why the voice of conscience makes itself heard in our soul with that automatic force which is characteristic of all deep-seated subconscious reactions. God also appears in our sentiments, our ideal aspirations, our devotions, our hopes and our yearnings. All these various manifestations are important and must not be lost sight of; but above them all is the objectivity of truth which speaks through science. It is impossible for all men to be scientists, but for that reason it is not necessary that their minds and hearts should be enslaved by blind faith. The faith of every man should be the trust in truth, not in fairy tales that must be taken for granted, but in the truth,--the truth which in its main outlines is simple enough to be comprehensible to all,--the truth that this world of ours is a cosmic harmony in which no wrong can be done without producing evil effects all around. Faith in the objective authority of truth is the next step in the religious evolution of mankind. We stand now at the threshold of the third period which will be, to characterise it in a word, an era of scientific objectivism. The tendency of the second era was negative, revolutionising, theorising; the tendency of the third will be positive, constructive, practical. Negativism and subjectivism appear from the standpoint p. It is a reaction. Milton was a Protestant, a revolutionist, a subjectivist, and he unconsciously sympathised with Satan, who in the terms of a philosopher of the age declares: The mind is its own place and in itself Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven. What matter where, if I be still the same And what I should be. The negativism of the second period is not a mistake. It was an indispensable condition of the third period; for it manufactured the tools for a higher and better positivism,--criticism. But criticism is insufficient for positive construction; we must have actual results, methodical work, and positive issues; and the prophet of the twentieth century finds it necessary again to emphasise the importance of objectivity. A modern fable characterises the relativity of good and evil in the story of a farmer, who, weeding his field with a cultivator, curses the morning-glories which grow luxuriantly on his maize stalks as being created by the Devil. Evil and good may be relative, but relativity does not imply non-existence. Relations are facts too. If mischief is wrought by good things being out of place, the evil does not become chimerical but is as positive as any other reality. In the same way, the relativity of knowledge does not prove as some agnostic philosophers claim the impossibility of knowledge. Concrete things, such as stones and other material bodies, are not the only realities; relations, too, are actual, and the same thing may under different conditions be either good or evil. A proper comprehension of the relativity of goodness and badness, far from invalidating the objectivity of the moral ideal, will become a great stimulus that will work for the realisation of goodness, for there ought to be nothing so bad but that it can by judicious management be turned to good account. Badness, however, is sometimes spoken of as a mere negation, and the assertion is made that it is not a positive factor. Looking for the most characteristic representative of this view among the ablest authors of our time, we find a statement written by the well-known author of the novel Ground p. Bertha von Suttner, one of the most prominent advocates of universal peace on earth. She knows as well as Schopenhauer that the ills of life are positive, for she describes all the horrors of war in their drastic reality. They are mere shadows, zeros, nothingnesses. They are negations of real things, but not real things themselves There is light, but there is no darkness: There is life, death is only a local ceasing of life-phenomena. We grant that Ormuzd and Ahriman, God and Devil, are at least thinkable, but there are other opposites in which it is apparent that one is the non-existence of the other. Think of a silence so powerful as to suppress a noise. Darkness has no degree, while light has. There is more light or less light, but various shades of darkness can mean only little or less light. Thus, life is a magnitude, but death is a zero. Something and nothing cannot be in struggle with each other. Nothing is without arms, nothing as an independent idea is only an abortion of human weaknesses. If I am in the room, I am here; if I leave it, I am no longer here. There can be no quarrel between my ego-present and ego-absent. It is the expression of the negativism of philosophy from Descartes to Spencer. It seems to be

consistent monism. And yet, we cannot accept it. The evil principle cannot be conceived as an independent substance, essence, or entity. But for that reason we cannot shut our eyes to its real and positive existence. Granted that silence is the absence of noise; yet noise is not goodness, neither is silence badness. While I think or write, noise is to me an evil, while silence is bliss. Silence, where a word of cheer is expected or needed, may be a very positive evil, and a lie is not merely an absence of truth. The absence of food is a mere negation, but considered in relation to its surroundings, as an empty stomach, it is hunger; and hunger is a positive factor in this world of ours. Sickness can be considered as a mere absence of health, but sickness is caused either by a disorder in the system or the presence of injurious influences, both of which are unquestionably positive. A debt is a negative factor in the books of the debtor, but what is negative to the debtor is positive to the creditor. If negative ideas were "mere abortions of human weakness," as Bertha von Suttner claims, how could mathematicians have any use for the minus sign? And if the idea of evil were an empty superstition, how could its influence upon mankind have been so lasting? On the one hand it is true that all existence is positive, but on the other hand we ought to know that existence in the abstract is neither good nor bad; goodness and badness depend upon the relations among the various existent things. And these relations may be good as well as p. Some existences destroy other existences. Certain bacilli are destructive of human life, certain antidotes destroy bacilli. There are everywhere parasites living upon other lives, and what is positive or life-sustaining to the one is negative and destructive to the other, and every such negation is a reality, the effectiveness of which neutralises the action of another reality.

9: The Concept of Evil (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Evil, in a general sense, is the opposite or absence of www.enganchecubano.com can be an extremely broad concept, though in everyday usage is often used more narrowly to denote profound wickedness.

Recommended Further Reading 1. Chronology of Life and Works The political philosopher, Hannah Arendt , was born in Hanover, Germany, in , the only child of secular Jews. In , Arendt began her studies in classics and Christian theology at the University of Berlin, and in entered Marburg University, where she studied philosophy with Martin Heidegger. In she began a romantic relationship with Heidegger, but broke this off the following year. She moved to Heidelberg to study with Karl Jaspers, the existentialist philosopher and friend of Heidegger. In , she met Gunther Stern, a young Jewish philosopher, with whom she became romantically involved, and subsequently married In , her dissertation Der Liebesbegriff bei Augustin was published. In the subsequent years, she continued her involvement in Jewish and Zionist politics, which began from onwards. In , fearing Nazi persecution, she fled to Paris, where she subsequently met and became friends with both Walter Benjamin and Raymond Aron. The Life of a Jewess. In , she published "Reflections on Little Rock," her controversial consideration of the emergent Black civil rights movement. A Report on the Banality of Evil. Volumes 1 and 2 on "Thinking" and "Willing" were published posthumously. Context and Influences Hannah Arendt is a most challenging figure for anyone wishing to understand the body of her work in political philosophy. She never wrote anything that would represent a systematic political philosophy, a philosophy in which a single central argument is expounded and expanded upon in a sequence of works. Rather, her writings cover many and diverse topics, spanning issues such as totalitarianism, revolution, the nature of freedom, the faculties of "thinking" and "judging," the history of political thought, and so on. This complicated synthesis of theoretical elements is evinced in the apparent availability of her thought to a wide and divergent array of positions in political theory: However, it may still be possible to present her thought not as a collection of discrete interventions, but as a coherent body of work that takes a single question and a single methodological approach, which then informs a wide array of inquiries. This is not, however, to gloss over the profound differences that Arendt had with Heidegger, with not only his political affiliation with the Nazis, or his moves later to philosophical-poetic contemplation and his corresponding abdication from political engagement. This phenomenological approach to the political partakes of a more general revaluation or reversal of the priority traditionally ascribed to philosophical conceptualizations over and above lived experience. That is, the world of common experience and interpretation Lebenswelt is taken to be primary and theoretical knowledge is dependent on that common experience in the form of a thematization or extrapolation from what is primordially and pre-reflectively present in everyday experience. It follows, for Arendt, that political philosophy has a fundamentally ambiguous role in its relation to political experience, insofar as its conceptual formulations do not simply articulate the structures of pre-reflective experience but can equally obscure them, becoming self-subsistent preconceptions which stand between philosophical inquiry and the experiences in question, distorting the phenomenal core of experience by imposing upon it the lens of its own prejudices. Therefore, Arendt sees the conceptual core of traditional political philosophy as an impediment, because as it inserts presuppositions between the inquirer and the political phenomena in question. Therefore, perhaps the only way to proceed is to present a summation of her major works, in roughly chronological order, while nevertheless attempting to highlight the continuities that draw them together into a coherent whole. Where older tyrannies had used terror as an instrument for attaining or sustaining power, modern totalitarian regimes exhibited little strategic rationality in their use of terror. Rather, terror was no longer a means to a political end, but an end in itself. Its necessity was now justified by recourse to supposed laws of history such as the inevitable triumph of the classless society or nature such as the inevitability of a war between "chosen" and other "degenerate" races. For Arendt, the popular appeal of totalitarian ideologies with their capacity to mobilize populations to do their bidding, rested upon the devastation of ordered and stable contexts in which people once lived. The impact of the First World War, and the Great Depression, and the spread of revolutionary unrest, left people open to the promulgation of a single, clear and unambiguous idea that would

allocate responsibility for woes, and indicate a clear path that would secure the future against insecurity and danger. Accordingly the amenability of European populations to totalitarian ideas was the consequence of a series of pathologies that had eroded the public or political realm as a space of liberty and freedom. These pathologies included the expansionism of imperialist capital with its administrative management of colonial suppression, and the usurpation of the state by the bourgeoisie as an instrument by which to further its own sectional interests. This in turn led to the delegitimation of political institutions, and the atrophy of the principles of citizenship and deliberative consensus that had been the heart of the democratic political enterprise. The rise of totalitarianism was thus to be understood in light of the accumulation of pathologies that had undermined the conditions of possibility for a viable public life that could unite citizens, while simultaneously preserving their liberty and uniqueness a condition that Arendt referred to as "plurality". For example, the inquiry into the conditions of possibility for a humane and democratic public life, the historical, social and economic forces that had come to threaten it, the conflictual relationship between private interests and the public good, the impact of intensified cycles of production and consumption that destabilized the common world context of human life, and so on. In this work she undertakes a thorough historical-philosophical inquiry that returned to the origins of both democracy and political philosophy in the Ancient Greek world, and brought these originary understandings of political life to bear on what Arendt saw as its atrophy and eclipse in the modern era. Her goal was to propose a phenomenological reconstruction of different aspects of human activity, so as to better discern the type of action and engagement that corresponded to present political existence. In doing so, she offers a stringent critique of traditional of political philosophy, and the dangers it presents to the political sphere as an autonomous domain of human practice. The prime culprit is Plato, whose metaphysics subordinates action and appearances to the eternal realm of the Ideas. Moreover, she arranges these activities in an ascending hierarchy of importance, and identifies the overturning of this hierarchy as central to the eclipse of political freedom and responsibility which, for her, has come to characterize the modern age. Labor is distinguished by its never-ending character; it creates nothing of permanence, its efforts are quickly consumed, and must therefore be perpetually renewed so as to sustain life. In this aspect of its existence humanity is closest to the animals and so, in a significant sense, the least human "What men [sic] share with all other forms of animal life was not considered to be human". Because the activity of labor is commanded by necessity, the human being as laborer is the equivalent of the slave; labor is characterized by unfreedom. Arendt argues that it is precisely the recognition of labor as contrary to freedom, and thus to what is distinctively human, which underlay the institution of slavery amongst the ancient Greeks; it was the attempt to exclude labor from the conditions of human life. The prioritization of the economic which has attended the rise of capitalism has for Arendt all but eclipsed the possibilities of meaningful political agency and the pursuit of higher ends which should be the proper concern of public life. Work thus creates a world distinct from anything given in nature, a world distinguished by its durability, its semi-permanence and relative independence from the individual actors and acts which call it into being. It should be clear that work stands in clear distinction from labor in a number of ways. Firstly, whereas labor is bound to the demands of animality, biology and nature, work violates the realm of nature by shaping and transforming it according to the plans and needs of humans; this makes work a distinctly human i. The common world of institutions and spaces that work creates furnish the arena in which citizens may come together as members of that shared world to engage in political activity. Labor and its effects are inherently impermanent and perishable, exhausted as they are consumed, and so do not possess the qualities of quasi-permanence which are necessary for a shared environment and common heritage which endures between people and across time. In industrial modernity "all the values characteristic of the world of fabrication - permanence, stability, durability Then we have work, which is a distinctly human i. Again it is Plato who stands accused of the instrumentalization of action, of its conflation with fabrication and subordination to an external teleology as prescribed by his metaphysical system. For Arendt, the activity of work cannot be fully free insofar as it is not an end in itself, but is determined by prior causes and articulated ends. The fundamental defining quality of action is its ineliminable freedom, its status as an end in itself and so as subordinate to nothing outside itself. Arendt argues that it is a mistake to take freedom to be primarily an inner,

contemplative or private phenomenon, for it is in fact active, worldly and public. Our sense of an inner freedom is derivative upon first having experienced "a condition of being free as a tangible worldly reality. We first become aware of freedom or its opposite in our intercourse with others, not in the intercourse with ourselves. And further, that freedom is to be seen: Man does not so much possess freedom as he, or better his coming into the world, is equated with the appearance of freedom in the universe; man is free because he is a beginning The new always happens against the overwhelming odds of statistical laws and their probability, which for all practical, everyday purposes amounts to certainty; the new therefore always appears in the guise of a miracle. This "miraculous," initiatory quality distinguishes genuine action from mere behavior i. The definition of human action in terms of freedom and novelty places it outside the realm of necessity or predictability. It has been argued that Arendt is a political existentialist who, in seeking the greatest possible autonomy for action, falls into the danger of aestheticising action and advocating decisionism. Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men Another way of understanding the importance of publicity and plurality for action is to appreciate that action would be meaningless unless there were others present to see it and so give meaning to it. The meaning of the action and the identity of the actor can only be established in the context of human plurality, the presence others sufficiently like ourselves both to understand us and recognize the uniqueness of ourselves and our acts. It is through action as speech that individuals come to disclose their distinctive identity: Such action is for Arendt synonymous with the political; politics is the ongoing activity of citizens coming together so as to exercise their capacity for agency, to conduct their lives together by means of free speech and persuasion. Politics and the exercise of freedom-as-action are one and the same: Without it, political life as such would be meaningless. Arendt takes issue with both liberal and Marxist interpretations of modern political revolutions such as the French and American. Against liberals, the disputes the claim that these revolutions were primarily concerned with the establishment of a limited government that would make space for individual liberty beyond the reach of the state. Rather, Arendt claims, what distinguishes these modern revolutions is that they exhibit albeit fleetingly the exercise of fundamental political capacities - that of individuals acting together, on the basis of their mutually agreed common purposes, in order to establish a tangible public space of freedom. Yet Arendt sees both the French and American revolutions as ultimately failing to establish a perduring political space in which the on-going activities of shared deliberation, decision and coordinated action could be exercised. Meanwhile, the American Revolution evaded this fate, and by means of the Constitution managed to found a political society on the basis of comment assent. Yet she saw it only as a partial and limited success. America failed to create an institutional space in which citizens could participate in government, in which they could exercise in common those capacities of free expression, persuasion and judgement that defined political existence. As far as Arendt could discern, Eichmann came to his willing involvement with the program of genocide through a failure or absence of the faculties of sound thinking and judgement. He operated unthinkingly, following orders, efficiently carrying them out, with no consideration of their effects upon those he targeted. The human dimension of these activities were not entertained, so the extermination of the Jews became indistinguishable from any other bureaucratically assigned and discharged responsibility for Eichmann and his cohorts. This amounted to a failure to use self-reflection as a basis forjudgement, the faculty that would have required Eichmann to exercise his imagination so as to contemplate the nature of his deeds from the experiential standpoint of his victims. However, in the last phase of her work, she turned to examine these faculties in a concerted and systematic way. Understanding yields positive knowledge - it is the quest for knowable truths. Reason or thinking, on the other hand, drives us beyond knowledge, persistently posing questions that cannot be answered from the standpoint of knowledge, but which we nonetheless cannot refrain from asking. The value of thinking is not that it yields positive results that can be considered settled, but that it constantly returns to question again and again the meaning that we give to experiences, actions and circumstances. This, for Arendt, is intrinsic to the exercise of political responsibility - the engagement of this faculty that seeks meaning through a relentless questioning including self-questioning. As noted earlier, Arendt bemoans the "world alienation" that characterizes the modern era, the destruction of a stable institutional and experiential world that could provide a stable context in which humans could organize their collective existence.

Moreover, it will be recalled that in human action Arendt recognizes for good or ill the capacity to bring the new, unexpected, and unanticipated into the world. This quality of action means that it constantly threatens to defy or exceed our existing categories of understanding or judgement; precedents and rules cannot help us judge properly what is unprecedented and new. So for Arendt, our categories and standards of thought are always beset by their potential inadequacy with respect to that which they are called upon to judge. Tradition lies in shattered fragments around us and "the very framework within which understanding and judging could arise is gone. Arendt confronts the question: If we are to judge at all, it must now be "without preconceived categories and Arendt eschews "determinate judgement," judgement that subsumes particulars under a universal or rule that already exists. Kant requires us to judge from this common standpoint, on the basis of what we share with all others, by setting aside our own egocentric and private concerns or interests. The faculty of reflective judgement requires us to set aside considerations which are purely private matters of personal liking and private interest and instead judge from the perspective of what we share in common with others i. Arendt places great weight upon this notion of a faculty of judgement that "thinks from the standpoint of everyone else. In this faculty, Arendt find a basis upon which a disinterested and publicly-minded form of political judgement could subvene, yet be capable of tackling the unprecedented circumstances and choices that the modern era confronts us with. More specifically, Arendt has decisively influenced critical and emancipatory attempts to theorize political reasoning and deliberation.

The Unseen Queen (Star Wars: Dark Nest, Book 2) The Towers of Bois-Maury Volume 1 The end of Bubbling Springs Kaiserwald : November, 1943-fall, 1944 Enlightenment materialism and natural theology Yamaha mio mxi 125 service manual Principles of animal cognition roberts Nhs pregnancy book 2012 Konica minolta bizhub 350 manual espaÃ±ol Book mathematica Southwest ceramic art Christmas Bauble Books English conversation practice book Mathematicall recreations The Mother Tongue Pricing methods and practices in international marketing Pierre Nicole, Jansenist and Humanist Developmental approaches Structure of the male member or penis Network security assessment by oreilly 2nd edition Commentary on the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration Reflection Revisited V. 4 Avarice. Anger. E-government research Info Trail Emergent Stage the Great Fire of London A history of Christianity in the world Ch. 3 Peripheral mechanism of acupuncture Book site floridawriters.net Culture in early Anglo-Saxon England Magnus chase the ship of the dead How to write horror fiction Whatever happened to Hegel? Introduction to philosophical hermenuetics Verb present tense worksheet with answers Iba mba admission test preparation guide Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society. New cinema in Britain. Social regeneration the work of Christianity The character of the late Dr. Samuel Annesley, by way of elegy: with a preface Being the Fat Girl