

Seminar Topic: The Community Framework of Political Behavior.

Mr. Alfred de Grazia

Purpose of the Series

Readings, reports and discussions will be centered generally on the proposition that "Every political system has a psychological system behind it." It will be the object of the class to discover the basic psychological theories, from external or internal sources, which support the system of political ideas in the case of each of the selected readings. In the course of exploring our primary proposition, we would hope to shed light on certain other major propositions: Every scientific system is ethically motivated ultimately; the natural and social scientists share equally in social "responsibility"; on the ultimate levels of scientific theory the useful distinction between fact statements and preference statements breaks down and is no longer useful in guiding thought; psychological science, like any other science, performs useful tasks at different levels of probability, and the absolute defense probability (and therefore smallest compass) is in itself "irrational," and an abdication of some social importance; political scientists, with their requirements for a theory of man's psychic needs, will prefer partially substantiated but systematic psychologies to more probable but unconnected psychological findings.

<u>Readings</u>	Period No.
Plato, THE REPUBLIC	I
John Dewey, THE PUBLIC AND ITS PROBLEMS	I
Gustave le Bon, THE CROWD	II
Graham Wallas, THE GREAT SOCIETY	II
John Locke, ESSAY ON GOVERNMENT	III
Niccolo Machiavelli, THE PRINCE	III
Alexander Leighton, THE GOVERNING OF MEN	III
Sebastian de Grazia, THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY	IV
Emile Durkheim, THE DIVISION OF LABOR	IV

Procedure

Five class members will be active in each seminar period in the following manner; two will report on the basic proposition of the course in relation to a book assigned them; three will discuss the two (in one case three) books reported on in terms of secondary hypotheses listed below, one to each person.

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- I. Reports on Plato and Dewey, followed by reports on the following hypotheses:
  1. Both works are "utopian" in the sense that they try to fit present needs into a workable but non-existent system.
  2. In both instances, gaps in evidence which might be filled logically-empirically are filled by psychological hypotheses of a reducible nature, although not necessarily contradictory to the total psychology of the author.
  3. Whereas Plato is more concerned with creating a division of labor, Dewey is more concerned with the excessive character of the modern division of labor.

- II. Reports on le Bon and Wallas, followed by reports on the following hypotheses:
1. Both authors suffer from a lack of systematic reduction of their propositions to the intelligible and communicable level needed for detailed investigation.
  2. The breakdown of the Great Society, which Wallas sees, is behind the enormous force of the modern "crowd" which le Bon describes.
  3. The psychological criticisms of le Bon which Wallas makes in Chapter VIII have received some substantiation by developments in psychology since 1920.
- III. Reports on Locke, Machiavelli, and Leighton, followed by reports on the following hypotheses:
1. Locke's denial that organized government has competence to deal with life, liberty, and property has no meaning to Machiavelli.
  2. Machiavelli's Chap. XXV on Fortune is an essay on the difficulties of applied social science.
  3. A comparison of Machiavelli and Leighton shows that the net result of modern psychological discoveries on the governing of men has been negligible.
- IV. Reports on De Grazia and Durkheim, followed by reports on the following hypotheses:
1. The sociological results of the division of labor as they are described by Durkheim contradict the essential requirements of political community as described by De Grazia.
  2. The transfer of symbols from immediate attendants to remote attendants, which De Grazia describes, is a purely verbal transfer.
  3. Both authors agree that "abnormal" forms of the division of labor are associated with the deterioration of the total community communications.