

Answer Key: Power, Protest, and the Polis: A Junior's Guide to Political Thought

Synthesize the tension between state authority and individual agency across 10 demanding challenges that move beyond simple definitions into systemic analysis.

1. In her analysis of the 'banality of evil,' Hannah Arendt suggests that totalizing political systems succeed primarily because:

Answer: A) Citizens lose the capacity for independent thought and moral judgment.

Arendt argued that political catastrophes often result not from monsters, but from ordinary people who cease to think critically about the orders they follow within a system.

2. The concept of _____, popularized by Antonio Gramsci, describes how a ruling class maintains power by shaping the cultural common sense of society rather than through force.

Answer: B) Hegemony

Cultural hegemony refers to the dominance of one social group over others by means of ideological and cultural influence rather than overt military power.

3. True or False: Frantz Fanon argued that for a colonized people, the use of violence can be a psychologically liberating act that restores their humanity.

Answer: A) True

In 'The Wretched of the Earth,' Fanon suggests that because colonialism is established by force, its reversal involves a violent confrontation that helps the colonized reclaim their identity.

4. Which political philosopher would most likely support the 'Panopticon' model of surveillance as a metaphor for how modern states discipline their citizens?

Answer: B) Michel Foucault

Michel Foucault used the Panopticon to illustrate how modern power operates through constant observation and internalizing social norms.

5. Isaiah Berlin's concept of _____ liberty refers to the presence of possibilities and the freedom from external constraints on one's actions.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Answer: B) Negative

Negative liberty is 'freedom from' interference, whereas positive liberty is the 'freedom to' achieve self-mastery or participate in collective rule.

6. True or False: Mikhail Bakunin, a leading anarchist, argued that the state is an inherently oppressive structure that must be abolished to allow for voluntary associations.

Answer: A) True

Bakunin believed that any state, even a socialist one, would inevitably result in tyranny, advocating for a society based on voluntary cooperation.

7. In his 'Letter from Birmingham Jail,' Martin Luther King Jr. distinguishes between just and unjust laws by arguing that an unjust law is one that:

Answer: C) Is out of harmony with the moral law or the law of God.

King relied on natural law theory, stating that any law that degrades human personality is unjust and does not command a moral duty of obedience.

8. The political doctrine of _____, championed by thinkers like Edmund Burke, emphasizes the value of tradition and the organic development of society over radical change.

Answer: B) Conservatism

Burkean conservatism argues that society is a complex contract between the dead, the living, and the unborn, requiring gradual rather than revolutionary change.

9. Judith Butler's political contributions suggest that the state regulates citizens not just through laws, but by defining which lives are considered 'grievable' or valuable. This is a core component of:

Answer: A) Biopolitics

Biopolitics involves the state's exercise of power over the physical lives and bodies of populations, determining who is protected and who is marginalized.

10. True or False: Martha Nussbaum's 'Capabilities Approach' argues that justice should be measured by the actual opportunities available to people, rather than just their total wealth.

Answer: A) True

Name: _____

Date: _____

Nussbaum and Amartya Sen argue that a just society must ensure individuals have the 'capability' to function in key areas like health, education, and political participation.