

## Basic Bakunin

**Part A.**

Mikhail Bakunin: "Father of Political Anarchy"

**Directions:** Read the following selections from the writings of Mikhail Bakunin, and answer the questions. Be prepared for class discussion.

### *From Catechism of a Revolutionist*

The Revolutionist is a doomed man. He has no private interests, no affairs, sentiments, ties, property nor even a name of his own. His entire being is devoured by one purpose, one thought, one passion—the revolution. Heart and soul, not merely by word but by deed, he has severed every link with the social order and with the entire civilized world; with the laws, good manners, conventions, and morality of that world. He is its merciless enemy and continues to inhabit it with only one purpose—to destroy it.

He despises public opinion. He hates and despises the social morality of his time, its motives and manifestations. Everything which promotes the success of the revolution is moral, everything which hinders it is immoral. The nature of the true revolutionist excludes all romanticism, all tenderness, all ecstasy, all love.

### *From Marxism, Freedom, and the State*

... The principle of political or State morality is very simple. The State, being the supreme objective, everything that is favorable to the development of its power is good; all that is contrary to it, even if it were the most humane thing in the world, is bad. This morality is called Patriotism. The International is the negation of patriotism and consequently the negation of the State. If therefore [Karl] Marx and his friends of the German Socialist Democratic Party should succeed in introducing the State principle into our programme, they would kill the International.

### *From God and the State*

... I am truly free when all human beings around me, men and women alike, are equally free. Far from being a limitation or negation of my freedom, the freedom of my neighbor is instead its precondition and confirmation. I only become truly free through the freedom of others, so that the greater the numbers of free men around me, and the more extensive and comprehensive their freedom, the more extensive and profound my freedom becomes. . . .

1. What did Bakunin believe was the sole purpose of the revolutionary?
  2. How did Bakunin express the idea that the end justifies the means?
  3. How did Bakunin define *patriotism*?
  4. What importance did Bakunin place on freedom?
  5. Why did Bakunin say the revolutionary must love liberty and justice?
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