I. Basic Concepts for understanding politics & the state

1. POLITICS
   1.1 Practice: human action analyzed in terms of its transformative effects on the world.
   1.2 General format of discussions of practice
      - Raw material – the object of transformation
      - The means of transformation – the instruments, tools, organizations, etc. that are used to accomplish transformation
      - The process of transformation
      - The product of transformation
   1.2 Political Practice compared to other practices
      - Political practice: human social action that transforms social interactions into social relations.
      - Economic practice transforms nature into use-values, and
      - Ideological practice transforms human lived experience into subjectivity.
   1.3 Reproduction as Transformation.
   1.4 Type vs Aspect of Practice.
   1.5 Multiplicity of Types of Political Practice.

2. POLITICAL POWER
   2.1 Power in General = the capacity to produce the transformations specific to a type of practice.
   2.2 Instrumental & structural power.
   2.3 Means & efficacy of Instruments of power.
   2.4 Organizations as the “Means” of Politics.

3. DOMINATION
   3.1 Power vs Domination as concepts.
   3.2 The Multiple faces of Domination.
   3.3 System-logic notions of power/domination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of power</th>
<th>Objective of power</th>
<th>Nature of politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systemic power</td>
<td>power over what game is to be played</td>
<td>revolutionary v counterrevolutionary politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional power</td>
<td>power over the rules of the game</td>
<td>reformist v reactionary politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational power</td>
<td>power over plays within a given set of rules</td>
<td>Liberal vs conservative politics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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4. THE STATE
   4.1 General definition: (1) the most superordinate, (2) territorially centralized (3) institution of domination society.
   4.2 Contrast with Weberian definitions and some Marxist definitions.
   4.3 Variability in the degree of stateness.

5. STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

II. The Classical Marxist theory of the state: the Base & Superstructure model

1. BASE/SUPERSTRUCTURE

2. FUNCTIONAL EXPLANATIONS
   2.1 The structure of functional explanations: the beneficial effects of a structure help explain the structure.

   An example (form Mallinowski)

   ![Diagram](Fishing rituals) ➔ Anxiety and fear in open-sea fishing ➔ Objective Danger of open-sea fishing

   2.2 functional vs intentional explanation
   2.3 functional explanation & functional description

3. What is problematic with the superstructural view of the state?

   (1) State as arena of struggle ➔ contested functionality.
   (2) the State in a complex system ➔ contradictory functionality.
   (3) The state as an historically specific structure: contingent contradictory functionality.