

# AP Euro Seminar

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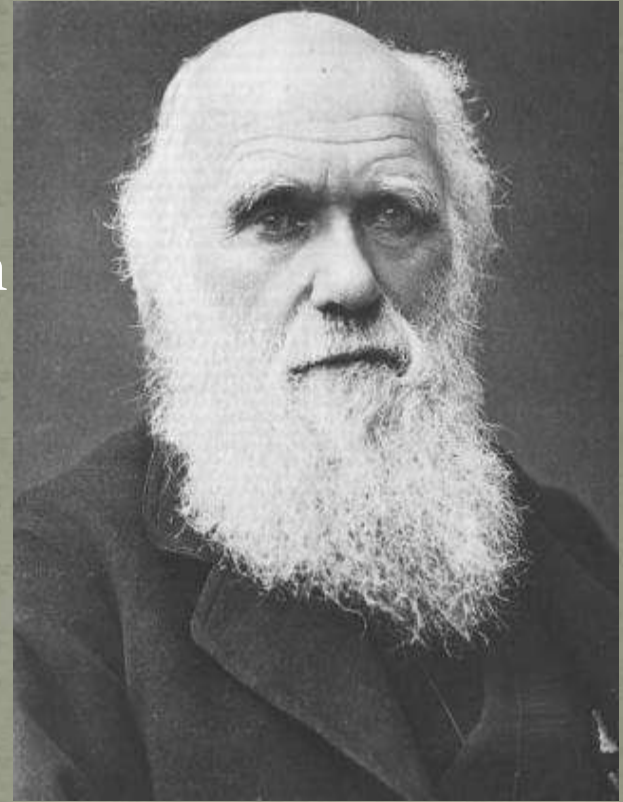
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# Question

- Analyze the ways in which the theories of both Darwin and Freud challenged traditional European ways of thinking about religion, morality, and human behavior in the period circa 1850-1950.

# Background on Darwin

- An English naturalist
- Lived from 1809 to 1882.
- Had 2 theories: natural selection and evolution.



# Darwin's effect on religion

- *On the Origins of Species by the Means of Natural Selection (1859)*: Darwin argued that chance differences among the members of a given species help some survive while others die. Thus the variations that prove useful in the struggle for survival are selected naturally and gradually spread to the entire species through reproduction. It contradicted the early belief that humans were created by a supernatural being/creator.
- *The Descent of Man (1871)*: States that young with a certain favorable adaptation will pass it on to the next generation and survive or adapt even more using the first adaptation. This implies that all humans were created the same way, contradicting the teachings of the church that all humans are unique.
- His theories reinforced the teaching of secularists such as Comte and Marx, who scornfully dismissed religious belief in favor of agnostic or atheistic materialism.

# Darwin's effect on morality

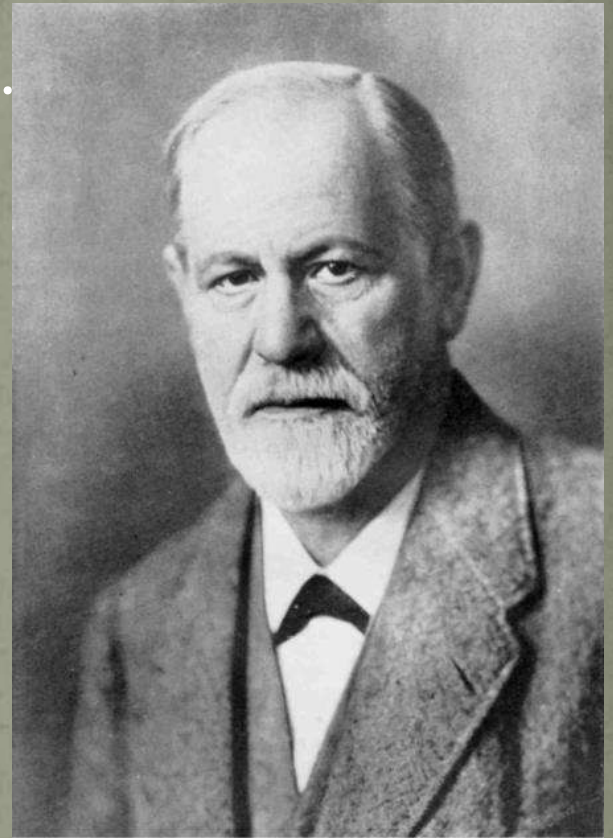
- He said that a man must judge himself between conflicting vague probabilities.
- *The Descent of Man (1871)*: It stated that Darwin considered sympathy to be one of the most moral virtues and that it was a product of natural selection that is beneficial to social animals, including humans.

# Darwin's effect on human behavior

- Believed in “survival of the fittest”
- *The Descent of Man (1871)*: Darwin said that there should be open competition for all men, and the most able should not be prevented by laws or customs from succeeding best and rearing the largest number of offspring.

# Background on Freud

- Viennese founder of psychoanalysis.
- Lived from 1856 to 1939.
- He was a physician that began his career treating mentally ill patients.



*Photograph by courtesy of Max Halberstadt*

# Freud's effect on religion

- Freud stated that religion, once necessary to restrain man's violent nature in the early stage of civilization, in modern times, can be set aside in favor of reason and science.
- Freud perceived religion, with its suppression of violence, as mediator of the societal and personal, the public and the private, the forces of life and death.



# Freud's effect on morality

- Freud concluded that much unconscious psychological energy is sexual energy, which is repressed and precariously controlled by rational thinking and moral rules.
- The key to understanding the mind is the primitive, irrational unconscious, which he called the id. Freud stated unconscious part of the mind is driven by sexual, aggressive, and pleasure seeking desires and is locked in a constant battle with the other parts of the mind: the rationalizing conscious, the ego, which mediates what a person can do, and ingrained moral values, the super ego, which specify what a person should do. This resulted in many opponents and even some supporters of Freud to interpret him saying that the first requirement for mental health is an uninhibited sex life. Thus after the First World War, the popular interpretation of Freud reflected and encouraged growing sexual experimentation, mostly among the middle class women.

# Freud's effect on human behavior

- He postulated that much of human behavior is motivated by unconscious emotional needs whose nature and origins are kept from conscious awareness by various mental devices he called defense mechanisms.
- He also noted that the hysteria of his mentally ill patients appeared to originate in bitter early-childhood experiences wherein the child had been obliged to repress strong feelings. This infers that the way parents raise their children should be changed.

# Conclusion

- In conclusion, Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection challenged the European way of religion, morality, and human behavior and Freud's theory of id, unconsciousness, and self defense mechanisms challenged the European way religion, morality, and human behavior.