This chapter examines the basics of political philosophy, focusing in particular on what makes the state legitimate, or what is the ideal state we should be striving for. It first considers the use of normative analysis by political philosophers — that is, they are concerned with asking how the state ought to be organized and how much freedom ought individuals be granted. It then discusses the issues of consent and democracy, social contract, and the general will, along with utilitarianism as an account of state legitimacy. It also explores liberalism and liberty in relation to the state, Marxism and communitarianism, the idea of a just state, and how the traditional state focus of political theory has been challenged by globalization. Finally, it describes the influence of anarchism on modern politics and the position of anarchists with respect to the ideal state.
7. The Ideal State

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