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# CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Movements and Regimes

FIFTH EDITION

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This book is dedicated to my late son, Peter, who turned out to have been the only “ideologue” in the family. He drowned in the Columbia River on March 11, 1978, while trying to realize a youthful dream with his friend, Tim Black, crossing the United States from West to East by canoe.

Roy C. Macridis

# Chapter 1

## Political Ideologies

### Introduction

*Olympian bards who sung  
Divine ideas . . .  
Which always find us young  
And always keep us so*

Ralph Waldo Emerson  
*The Poet*

**W**hether we know it or not, all of us have an ideology, even those who claim openly that they do not. We all believe in certain things. We all value something—property, friends, the law, freedom, or authority. We all have prejudices, even those who claim to be free of them. We all look at the world in one way or another—we have “ideas” about it—and we try to make sense out of what is going on in it. Quite a few of us are unhappy, discontented, critical of what we see around us as compared to what we would like to see. Some become alienated—rejecting the society and its values, sulking into their separate and private tents but ready to spring forth into action.

People with the same ideas about the world, our society, and its values band together. We are attracted by those with similar values and ideas, who like the same things we do, who have prejudices similar to ours, and who, in general, view the world in the same way we do. We talk of “like-minded” people, individuals who share certain beliefs and tend to congregate—in clubs, churches, political parties, movements, various associations, and so on. No matter how independent we claim to be, we all are influenced by ideas. We are sensitive to appeals made to us—to our honor, patriotism, family, religion, pocketbook, race, or class—and we can all be manipulated and aroused. We are creators and creatures of ideas, of ideologies, and through them we manipulate others or are ourselves manipulated.

Ideologies are very much a part of our lives; they are not dead and they are not on the decline anywhere, as some authors have argued.

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a Heaven for?

wrote Browning in 1885. Almost a century later, a strong upsurge in ideological and utopian movements made powerful governments totter as many sought their own vision of heaven on earth. "Be rational; think of the impossible" was one of the slogans of intellectuals and students in the late 1960s.

Not only are ideologies surviving, their all-embracing importance is again being recognized. "Neo-Marxists" now agree that a drastic revolutionary overhaul of the society, if there is to be one, must be above all a moral and intellectual revolution: a revolution in the *ideology* of society. It must create its own "counterconsciousness," its own "counterculture"—a new set of beliefs and values and a new style of life that will eat, like a worm, into the core of prevailing liberal-capitalist orthodoxy. Only with its ideological core gone can the old society be changed and replaced.

But "ideologies" are resilient; they persist. The core is far more resistant to change than most people had thought. Established ideas and values cannot be pulled out like a rotten tooth. They have deep roots in the soil in which they grew. While there has been so much emphasis and discussion on ideologies that either brought about change or command change, little attention has been given to the complex of values, habits, and practices that resist change—to the phenomenon that may be called *ideological conservation*. The family, the church, attachment to property and nationalisms continued to defy, as we have seen recently in the break up of Communist regimes, the Communist-revealed and imposed truths. Ideological "formation" has been continuously in conflict with ideological "preservation."

## WHAT IS AN IDEOLOGY?

Ideology has been defined as "a set of closely related beliefs, or ideas, or even attitudes, characteristic of a group or community."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, a *political* ideology is "a set of ideas and beliefs" that people hold about their political regime and its institutions and about their own position and role in it. Political ideology accordingly appears synonymous with "political culture" or "political tradition." The British or the Americans or the French or the Russians pattern their political life on the basis of different sets of interrelated ideas, beliefs, and attitudes.

Various groups, however, within one and the same political community may, and often do, at given times and under given conditions, challenge the prevailing ideology. Interests, classes, and various political and religious associations may develop a "counter-ideology" that questions the status quo and attempts to modify it. They advocate change rather than order; they criticize or reject the political regime and the existing social and economic arrangements;

they advance schemes for the restructuring and reordering of the society; and they spawn political movements in order to gain enough power to bring about the changes they advocate. In this sense, a political ideology moves people into action. It motivates them to demand changes in their way of life and to modify the existing political, social, and economic relations, or it mobilizes them on how to preserve what they value. In discussing ideologies—all ideologies—we must always bear in mind these two all-important characteristics: a given political ideology rationalizes the status quo, whereas other, competing ideologies and movements challenge it.

## Philosophy, Theory, and Ideology

A distinction should be made between philosophy or theory on the one hand, and ideology on the other. *Philosophy* literally means love of wisdom—the detached and often solitary contemplation and search for truth. In the strictest meaning of the terms, *theory* is the formulation of propositions that causally link variables to account for or explain a phenomenon, and such linkages should be empirically verifiable. This is, of course, true for natural scientists. They operate within a clearly defined framework of rules accepted by them all. However, in the social sciences there is not as yet an accepted framework of rules, and it is very difficult to come up with empirical verifications.

What separates theory or philosophy from ideology is that, while the first two involve contemplation, organization of ideas, and whenever possible, demonstration, ideology shapes beliefs that incite people into action. Men and women organize to *impose* certain philosophies or theories and to realize them in a given society. Ideology thus involves action and collective effort. Even when they originate (as they often do) in philosophy or theory, ideologies are inevitably highly simplified, and even distorted, versions of the original doctrines. It is always interesting to know the philosophy or the theory from which an ideology originates. But it is just as important to understand ideology as a distinct and separate entity to be studied in terms of its own logic and dynamics rather than in terms of the theory from which it stems or of how closely it resembles that theory.

It is difficult to understand when and under what circumstances a theory or a philosophy becomes transformed into an ideology—that is, into an action-oriented movement. Important theories and philosophic doctrines remain unnoticed and untouched for generations before they are "discovered." The well-known German sociologist Max Weber makes the point by indicating that theories or philosophies are "selected" to become transformed into ideologies without, however, explaining precisely how, when, and why. History may be compared to a freezer where ideas and theories are stored for use at a later time. Different works of Plato, for example, have been at various times the origin of different ideological movements. Similarly, whereas a powerful ideological movement developed from the major works of Karl Marx, it is his early

some contemporary movements and tastes. The same is the case with powerful religious or nationalist movements that pick and choose from different parts of the Bible or the Koran. There is a dialectic between ideas, as such, and social needs; both are indispensable in order to have an ideology. Heartfelt demands arising from the social body may fail for the lack of ideas; and ideas may go begging for a long time for the lack of relevance to social needs.

## POLITICAL IDEOLOGY: THE BUILDING BLOCKS

The debt most political ideologies owe to political speculation and philosophy is quite obvious when we look at some of the major themes that political ideologies address: (1) the role and the nature of the individual (human nature); (2) the nature of truth and how it can be discovered; (3) the relationship between the individual and the group, be it the tribe, the small city-state, or the contemporary state as we know it; (4) the characteristics of political authority—its source and its limits, if any; (5) the goals and the mechanics of economic organization and the much-debated issue of material and economic equality as it relates to individual freedom. Normative judgments about each of these themes and many more are the very “stuff” of contemporary political ideologies. Some have been hotly debated over many centuries and will continue to be debated.

### The Individual

Political ideologies are addressed to each one of us; they all begin with one pre-conception or another about us—about human nature. Some believe that we are the creatures of history and the environment, that our nature and characteristics are interwoven with the material conditions of life and ultimately shaped by them. Human nature is plastic and ever-changing and with the proper “social engineering”—another term for education—it can be shaped into a pattern. Many ideologies assume that, with the proper changes in our environment and the proper inculcation of new values, “new” men and women can be created. There is nothing sacrosanct, therefore, in our present institutions and values; on the contrary, some of them are downright bad.

On the other hand, many well-known philosophers, especially those in the period of the Enlightenment and in the nineteenth century, have presented a different notion of human nature. People have some innate characteristics: we are born with traits of sociability, goodness, and rationality. We are also endowed with rights, such as life, liberty, and property. Institutions are but a reflection of these human traits and rights, and a political organization must respect them; indeed, it must provide the best means for protecting them. Therefore, the state that protects these rights cannot invade them—the state is limited. Finally, other political philosophers have argued that human nature is “greedy,” “selfish,” and “bellicose” and that it is the duty of the state to curb our ignoble drives. Political power and coercion are what make social life possible and safe.



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**Plato (c. 427–347 B.C.)**

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The Greek philosopher Plato was a disciple of Socrates and the founder of philosophic idealism, according to which ideas exist in themselves and by themselves, forming a perfect and harmonious universe. As a political philosopher, Plato wrote *The Republic*, a work describing an ideal state with a strict class structure ruled by philosopher-kings who divested themselves of property and family ties in order to rule for the common good.

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Of particular interest are psychological theories of individual motivation, generally associated with economic liberalism, which we examine in Chapter 2. Rejecting the notion of natural rights, British philosophers and economists postulated an individual driven by desire who seeks only the gratification of pleasure. Each and all of us are motivated by the pursuit of pleasure and the only constraints are external—the pleasures and drives of others. Competition in a free market provides such constraints. Similar notions about the “political man,” thirsty for power and glory, led to the formulation of theories of checks and balances—each power checking the other to provide for a balance that preserved the freedom of all. It was because of the depravity of human nature that James Madison, one of the authors of *The Federalist Papers* and our fourth president, considered government to be necessary.

### The Nature of Truth

Is there one truth? Or is truth progressively discovered as many ideas and points of view compete with each other—every generation adding something to it? The notion that there is one truth revealed only to some or perceived authoritatively by them requires us to submit to it. We must hew as closely as possible to what is given, and obey those who speak for it. Human beings are thus deprived of the freedom to seek truth, to experiment with new ideas, to confront each other with different points of view, and to live in a system that tolerates different ways.

On the other hand, there are those for whom a constant exploration of the universe by human beings and a constant inquiry into the foundations and conditions of life are the only ways to discover truth. “Such is the nature of the understanding that it cannot be compelled to the belief of anything by outside force,” wrote John Locke. People who hold this view favor competition of ideas, advocate tolerance for all points of view, and want to assure the conditions of freedom that are indispensable for ongoing inquiry. This is what we call *pluralism*. If one Absolute Truth did exist, pluralists would have none of it for fear that it would deprive human beings of the challenge of discovering it!

### The Individual and Society.

For some social scientists there is no such entity as an “individual.” The individuals are perceived as part of a herd or a group whose protection and survival require cooperation. The individual is considered helpless outside the group or the state. The group or the state then makes the rules of conduct and establishes the relationship between rulers and ruled. The individual is a “social being”—first and last!

The other point of view stresses the opposite—the primacy of individuals. They are perceived as having originally lived in the state of nature and endowed

these individuals contrive to create a political society that protects their lives and their property. The political system—the state—is made up of individuals, by the individuals, and for the individuals. It is the result of a contract—freely entered upon.

As with theories about human nature, our view of the relationship between the individual and the society often determines our political ideology. Those who give primacy to the group show an inclination to emphasize the “organic” nature of society and the political system: it is a whole, like our body, and the individuals are like the cells of our organism. They are only parts that fit into the whole; they have no freedoms and rights. The “organic” theory puts the accent on the whole and the close interdependence of the parts that is required to make it function. This theory leaves little room for change, unless it is very gradual. Sudden change shifts the balance of existing relationships among the parts and hence endangers the whole—the society. The “organic” theory also is totalitarian in the name of society’s overriding purpose to which all parts and individuals remain subservient.

Those who assume the primacy of the individual reach diametrically opposite conclusions. *The individual is what counts most.* Individuals *make* the political society in which they live, and they can change it. Political life is an act of will and political authority is based on consent. The society consists of a maze of overlapping, cooperating, or conflicting wills and units—both individuals and groups—participating in the political system. Change, reform, experimentation, and even revolution must spring from the will and the consent and the common effort and action of the individuals. If, as Thomas Jefferson did, revolution is to be envisaged, it must stem from the will of the majority of the people.

### Political Authority

Basic divisions on the nature and organization of political authority derive from theories about the nature of truth and about the relationship between the individual and the group. Belief in one overriding truth leads almost always to an authoritarian position. It is *elitist*. It assumes that a small group “knows” and is capable of governing on the basis of certain qualities. For Plato these qualities were *intellectual*: the philosopher-king; for some they are *prescriptive*: based on inheritance. The qualities deemed necessary for governing could also be *charismatic*: appeal and personality, or *class*—either the property owners or the working class—having a historical mission of ruling or transforming the society.

On the other hand, those who postulate that political authority derives from the will of individuals favor limiting political authority in order to allow for participation and open deliberation. They advocate freedom of thought and expression, respect for individual freedoms, and freedom for associations, political parties, and all other organizations. *No claims to rule based on birth, heredity, wealth, intellectual superiority, or prescriptive titles are accepted.* No “monop-

## Equality and Property

Many of the most important political ideologies can be distinguished in terms of the answers they try to provide to the following questions: *Who produces and who decides what is produced? Who gets what and how much?* The answers are complex, and all the more so since the very concepts and questions, let alone the answers, are laden with emotions and values; they are steeped in ideology.

The central issue remains that of equality. For the early liberals, equality was interpreted narrowly to mean equality before the law, or equality of all to vote and participate in the choice of political leaders. Yet, unless people have equal access to education and material living standards (even if minimal), equality before the law is a fiction. Throughout the twentieth century, as we will see, those who advocated political or legal equality above all clashed with the proponents of material equality. There is a constant tension between material and economic equality on the one hand and formal legal and political equality on the other.

Property and the right of individual property have been the subject of intense ideological conflicts, as we will see. Few theorists and philosophers have given to individual property their unqualified blessing. Whenever they did, as it was the case with Aristotle and John Locke, among others, property was considered in physical terms—that which individuals managed by their labor to bring under their direct control. From Plato, who would have none of it, through the Christian fathers, down to many Utopian Socialists, and of course including Marxists, property was viewed, especially when unevenly distributed, as something disruptive of the community and social life. Property set one against another. It was not a natural right, but the result of forceful exploitation—the source of and the reason for inequality that accounts for social strife.

Liberal democracies have emphasized property rights—even when they have been forced to qualify them for the sake of greater material equality. Socialism and communism, on the other hand, have favored the socialization of property. Throughout the twentieth century, virtually all political regimes and all political ideologies have come to terms with the need for providing greater material opportunities and equality. Even when individual property is accepted, its uneven distribution has been a source of profound concern and a reason for reconsideration of property rights. How does a political system avoid excessive differences and inequalities? Taxation—in many cases steep progressive income taxes—has been used and the monies procured have been redistributed to the poor and the needy in the form of services and outright grants. This is the essence of the welfare state that became the political formula of all liberal democracies, until very recently.

Property is no longer defined only in terms of land or the real estate one owns or even in terms of liquid wealth and high salaries, although they are still important. For many people in most societies, “property” has now become “public” in the sense that it consists of claims against the state that individuals have for service and benefits to which they are entitled. Education, health,

assistance programs have become rights—“entitlements”—and they are just as important as property rights. Whatever the justification or the adequacy of such entitlements, they have significantly changed the distribution of material benefits and the nature of property in most all societies. For many people, such services and benefits have provided a cushion just as important as ownership.

Notions about human nature, truth, political authority, freedom, property and equality, and the production and distribution of goods and services outlined here are present in each and every ideology we will study in this book. They are the major building blocks of all contemporary ideologies and movements. Men and women organize behind their respective visions of a just and better world or barricade themselves to defend their own visions of justice. Political philosophy gives us all a chance to contemplate these notions in a detached and objective way; political ideologies and movements often transform them into a battle cry.

## THE USES OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

An *ideology*, then, is a set of ideas and beliefs held by a number of people. It spells out what is valued and what is not, what must be maintained and what must be changed, and it shapes the attitudes of those who share it accordingly. In contrast to philosophy and theory, which are concerned with knowledge and understanding, ideologies relate to social and political behavior and action. They incite people to political action and provide the basic framework for such action. They infuse passion and call for sacrifice.

### Legitimization

As pointed out earlier, one of the most important functions of a political ideology is to give value to a political regime and its institutions. It shapes the operative ideas that make a political regime work. It provides the basic categories by which the people know the political regime, abide by the rules, and participate in it. To perform this all-important role, a political ideology must have a *coherent set of rules* and must set them forth as clearly as possible. Although a constitution is a political document that embodies these rules, it cannot function well unless it is valued by the people. A political ideology shapes these values and beliefs about the constitution and lets the people know of their roles, positions, and rights within their own political regime.

### Solidarity and Mobilization

A common sharing of ideas integrates individuals into the community, a group, a party, or a movement. Commonly held ideas define the things that are acceptable and the tasks to be accomplished, excluding all others. Ideologies play

common to the members and what is alien. The Soviet Communist ideology purported to unify those who adhered to it by branding the outside world of capitalism as the enemy. The same is increasingly so with Islamic fundamentalism. All ideologies perform this function of unifying, integrating, and giving a sense of identity to those who share it, but they do so with varying degrees of success. Nationalism as an ideology, for instance, has provided the unifying and integrating force that has made it possible for nation-states to emerge and retain their positions. The greater the integration sought and the stronger the solidarity to be maintained, the greater the emphasis on unifying symbolisms.

### Leadership and Manipulation

Although ideologies incite people to action, what kind of action and for what purpose depend very much on the content and substance of an ideology. Manipulation of ideas, a special case, often involves the conscious and deliberate formulation of propositions that incite people to action for ends that are clearly perceived only by those in power or attempting to get political power. They may promise peace in order to make war, freedom in order to establish an authoritarian system, socialism in order to consolidate the position and privileges of the property holders, and so on.

Ideology can often be used as a powerful instrument of manipulation. Usually in times of social distress and anxiety, or when society seems divided into warring groups and frustration warps daily life, simple propositions and promises on how to remove the evils besetting society fall upon receptive ears and minds. Ideologies are great simplifiers. For instance, "Islam is the solution" is the cure-all slogan of Islamic fundamentalists. The demagogue, the leader, the self-professed savior is lurking somewhere in all societies at such times to spread his or her message and to manipulate those who seem to have nowhere else to turn.

### Communication

A coherent set of ideas—an ideology—shared by a given number of people makes communication among them much easier. It provides a *common, highly simplified, special language*; like shorthand. Words have special meaning—"the Reds," "the bleeding-heart liberals," "the pigs," "the Establishment," "fat cats," "the power elite," "the chosen people," or "Communist conspiracy." These are terms easily understood by those who belong to a given group, and they help others to place them within a given ideological family. They are, of course, very crude terms, and ideologies usually provide more sophisticated ones. "The last stage of capitalism," "neocolonialism," "avant-garde of the working class," "democratic centralism," "democratic pluralism," "human rights," and "gradual change" are commonly understood by those who use them in their own respective political group or party. These terms can help the outsider to

identify the ideological family to which the speaker belongs. A common ideology simplifies communication and makes common effort easier for all those who accept it.

Communication is also made easier because people with a common ideology look upon the outside world with the same preconceptions. They all have the same binoculars! People receive messages from the world outside and have to put these messages into some kind of order—into concepts. These concepts, in terms of which messages for the outside world are sorted out, depend on ideology. For some, the condition of the poor calls for study and concern; for others, it is a bore—the situation of the poor is attributed to innate laziness. This, however, is an extreme case. More frequent are cases of interpretation or evaluation, where the same event is seen from a different viewpoint—a different ideological perspective. The assassination of a political leader is applauded by some and mourned by others. Any Soviet move anywhere in the world is an indication of Communist aggression for some; for others, it is an inevitable reaction to American provocation! People may also reject messages because of their ideology. A mystic is blind to the world outside; for a scientist, the world is a constant source of wonder to be studied and explained.

### Emotional Fulfillment

Some have argued that the primary function of an ideology is to rationalize and protect material interests or to provide for a powerful medium for their satisfaction. Thus, liberal democracy has been viewed as the rationalization of the interests of the rich and the relatively well-to-do, while socialism is an instrument for the satisfaction of the demands of those without property, the workers, and the poor. But it is not only interest that spawns an ideology. Emotional drives and personality traits are expressed through different ideologies. Not only do ideas simplify, they also tap emotions and often arouse the public into a frenzy. Nationalism and religious fundamentalism, Islamic or other, are but two illustrations among many. In recent years, the fight for or against abortion in the United States has reached a level of emotional crescendo that brooks no rational discourse and no easy compromise.

There also may be some correlation between ideology and personality types. There may be, for instance, an "authoritarian personality" that finds expression and fulfillment through being subject to rank and authority. An ideology can provide a form of expression to people with similar personality traits. Animal rights activists, environmentalists, proponents or opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment, as well as Democrats, Communists, and Fascists, all may give vent to their emotions through a particular ideology that fits their personality.

Ideology, then, provides for emotional fulfillment. People who share it are closely knit together; they share the same ambitions, interests and goals and work together to bring them about. A person who has an ideology that is shared

with a group of people is likely to be happy and secure: basking in the togetherness of a common endeavor. Identifying with it, he or she is never alone.

### Criticism, Utopia, and Conservation

Ideologies often embody social criticism. Critical examination of social and political beliefs has played an important role in the development of new ideologies and the rejection of others. Many beliefs have yielded to it, to be replaced by others. Institutions like slavery, property, hereditary monarchy, bureaucratic centralization, and many others have been critically challenged and accordingly abandoned or qualified.

In certain instances, criticism may be pushed to extremes. Certain ideologies are like a *dream*, an impossible and unrealizable quest: world government, perfect equality, abundance for all, elimination of force, and abolition of war. Many political ideologies have something of this quality, but those that have it in an exaggerated form are called *utopias*, a word derived from the Greek for “nowhere.” If we give this particular meaning to the term, we are implying that an “ideologue” is either naive or dangerous or a little bit crazy, ignoring Shakespeare’s pithy remark that dreams are the stuff that life is made of! The opposite of an individual who dreams of utopia is one who accepts the existing state of affairs—the conservation of the status quo—of the values and ideas that we inherited.

The noted German sociologist Karl Mannheim made the distinction between “ideology,” the set of values and beliefs we share about our society, and “utopia,” the critical exposition of new ideas for its restructuring. It is hard—except in the extreme cases—to know when we deal with an “ideology” or a “utopia.” While ideas constantly emerge to criticize existing values and beliefs, there are also ideologies dedicated to the preservation of values. Conservatives and fundamentalists extol with passion the past and romanticize it. In so doing, however, they, too, often verge on utopia, since a return to past traditions, values, and beliefs is cast in terms of a critical evaluation and rejection of the existing ideology. Most all ideologies, even conservative and preservative ones, include elements of criticism of the present. Moreover, most all utopias share elements of the prevailing truths and values, even if they propose to recast them. The kingdom of God or of the Prophet is part of the values and beliefs of many, but few would like to sacrifice themselves to bring it about; the greed and selfishness of human nature are acknowledged by most, but few would call for a revolution to transform it.

### Ideology and Political Action

Above all, ideology *moves* people into concerted action. Sometimes it moves a whole nation; sometimes it is a group, a class, or a political party that unites

beliefs. In France, socialism is still for many the vindication of a long-standing quest for equality—material equality. In the United States, on the other hand, it is political and economic liberalism—the freedom to produce, consume, think, and worship—that seems to be the major rallying point for many political movements. An example of a single-issue organization motivated by ideology to take political action is the environmentalist group Greenpeace, which both in the United States and elsewhere seeks to put an end to the despoliation of our physical environment; it shares many of the same objectives as the various “No Nuke” organizations. Other powerful single groups want to reintroduce religious teaching and prayers in the schools, while still others mount a fierce campaign against abortion. “Welfare liberals” continue to reconcile freedoms with state intervention and welfare legislation to mitigate the harshness of economic competition. Communism—whether adopted by a nation, a movement, or a party that challenges the existing political order—is an ideology that projects a vision of abundance, equality, and peace. Most of the Communist movements have viewed the Soviet Union as the legitimate advocate of a new social order that would replace the existing one. With the weakening of communism, many are searching now for a substitute.

The dynamics of politics, therefore, lie in the ideas people develop. But the same is true with political institutions, movements, social groups, and political parties. We have to focus on the ideologies they represent, and the beliefs they propagate and legitimize. The same is true for political attitudes. They, too, are fashioned by political ideologies. It is in terms of different constellations of attitudes that major political movements and ideologies can be identified and described. Liberals share common attitudes with regard to race relations, economic policy, prayers in the school, the United Nations, taxes, the draft, nuclear weapons, food stamps, social security, and so on. Conservatives can be identified in terms of a set of different attitudes with regard to some of the same issues; so can Socialists or Communists.

In studying political ideologies, we are also studying the dynamics of political systems—the type of political regime, its constitution, and institutions—the degree to which the regime is accepted, the existing conflicts within the regime, and the manner in which conflicts can be resolved. Compatibility of ideological outlooks makes for stability and acceptance; incompatibility always presages conflict, instability and possibly revolution.

### THE INTELLECTUALS

Most ideologies have been shaped by “intellectuals”—the clergy, lawyers, professors, writers. The American historian R. R. Palmer in his book *Twelve Who Ruled*, which discusses the “Committee of Public Safety” that was responsible for the terror and the use of the guillotine against opponents in the last year of the French Revolution, finds that all twelve members of the committee had one



and had different professions, had different careers and lifestyles. Those who engineered the Bolshevik Revolution were also intellectuals, versed in philosophy, economics, and history, conversant in three or four languages. The only exception was Stalin, who survived them all after disposing of them all! The road to both the American and French revolutions had been paved by intense literary and philosophic work, with the writing of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson, and in France by the remarkable body of literature produced by a new school of intellectuals—the Encyclopedists.

Who are the intellectuals, and why do they play such an important role in the creation of ideas associated with the formulation of a new political ideology? There are no easy answers. But if we assume that most ideologies reflect interest, class, or status and rationalize given positions in the society, then ideas are directly linked with them. Rarely can ideologies rise above such positions or be dissociated from the interests with which they are linked—be they material or spiritual ones. The intellectuals, however, represent a group of people with no such positions and no such linkages or attachments to interests. They float somehow between, among, and above them. In this sense they have more freedom than all others to criticize and dream. They can use the word, written and spoken; the typewriter, the radio, the press, and the TV better than others—that is why they are intellectuals—and can therefore direct new messages where they wish. For example, it was a group of intellectuals in Britain who at the end of the nineteenth century introduced socialism.

Intellectuals criticize and manage to elevate their criticism to new ideological heights that transcend the existing formulations. In the same way that inventors or talented managers may renovate the state of the art in a trade or industry, intellectuals attempt to renovate society, its life, and its values, but with a far wider impact. The intellectuals influence profoundly and reshape our views and perceptions, and one of the reasons they do not dominate the society—except in some extreme cases—is that they are not a coherent group with common ideas, like a party. In fact, they are constantly at odds with each other. Another reason is that their messages are resisted by those to whom they are addressed—people don't like change. For instance, there has been a shared distrust between left-wing intellectuals and workers in liberal democracies. Workers feared that the ideology of intellectuals was but a device for them to gain power without necessarily providing to the workers the benefits they had promised. Workers feared that the Marxists intellectuals would become a “new class.”<sup>2</sup> There has been little love lost, too, between the British Socialist intellectuals and the British trade unions. Similarly, during the uprisings against the “Establishment” in many liberal democracies in the late 1960s, which were spearheaded by intellectuals and students, the workers were reluctant to join in the protests. When they did, it was to improve their wages and conditions of

work, not to change the society. As for the intellectuals in liberal capitalist regimes that purport to be democratic, they never made their peace with property and the free-market economy and more generally with the materialistic ethics of capitalism. For many of them, Marxism became the major weapon of criticism. It became a passionate commitment to save us all by creating a new society. It became in the words of another intellectual, Raymond Aron, an opium—intoxicating the intellectuals and opiating the people.<sup>3</sup>

Whether they dispense lifesaving drugs or opium pills, it is the function of intellectuals to stir up our thinking and our ideas about the world. They are a thorn in the flesh of every established order and prevailing ideology. Socrates was the first of many thousands to pay the price with his life. Scratch each and all of the intellectuals and you will find an ideologue. But by and large, they remain divided and therefore harmless. Only those among them who begin to develop a common set of beliefs geared to a common goal and who are in search of a new order may play an important role. They become “organic” intellectuals, assembling and synthesizing existing beliefs, compromising among many, rejecting others, and suggesting new ones until they form a “bloc.”<sup>4</sup>

By and large, intellectuals perform a critical and innovative role that all societies need. They criticize the old and constantly open up new horizons of thought and social endeavor. As long as they exist, the formation of ideology will flourish.

## TYPES OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Political ideologies address themselves to values: the quality of life, the distribution of goods and services, freedom and equality. If there were agreement on each of these values, there would be a single ideology shared by all. But there is no agreement within any society nor, needless to say, among the various political societies of the world. People hold different views; nations project different values and beliefs.

It is precisely here that we see the role of political ideologies: they mobilize men and women into action in favor of one point of view or another, and in favor of one movement or party or another. Their aim is invariably either the preservation of a given point of view or the overhaul of the existing state of things, including the political system itself. British squires who defended their privilege and property; the workers who formed trade unions or parties to defend their interests; the American conservatives—all have had a common set of ideas that united them into a common posture. The same is true for the small terrorist bands who seize planes. They want to destroy what they despise most—

<sup>2</sup>Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, pp. 355–357. Dijas, *New Class, An Analysis of the Communist System*.

<sup>3</sup>Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals*.

<sup>4</sup>The terms were used by the Italian Communist intellectual Antonio Gramsci.

the complacency of an orderly society interested in material satisfaction.

We can divide political ideologies into three broad categories.

1. Those that defend and rationalize the existing economic, social, and political order at any given time in any given society, which we call *status quo* ideologies.
2. Ideologies that advocate far-reaching changes in the existing social, economic, and political order, which we call *radical* or *revolutionary* ideologies.
3. In between there is, of course, a large gray area favoring change. We may call these the *reformist* ideologies.

One way to state the difference between *status quo*, *reformist*, and *revolutionary* ideologies is to think of maps and mapmaking. Someone who diligently learns to read a map and to travel by following given routes and signals may be considered to represent a status quo mentality or ideology: he or she simply follows the rules and the signs and is guided by them. On the other hand, a person who attempts to trace his or her own route and to change the signals, but not the destination, is a reformist. There is an agreement that the means must change, not the end. *But a revolutionary changes both the map and the destination.*

This classification is merely a formal one because ideologies shift and change not only in content but also in the particular functions and roles they perform. A revolutionary ideology, for instance, may become transformed into one of status quo when it succeeds in imposing its own values and beliefs. Similarly, the same ideology may be a status quo ideology, protecting the existing order of things in a given place at a given time, and a revolutionary one in a different place or at a different time. Communism in the Soviet Union is a status quo political ideology, while in other countries communism is considered to be a revolutionary one. While workers in the nineteenth century were protesting in the name of socialism against Western European liberalism, which had become a status quo ideology, liberalism was very much a revolutionary ideology in the eyes of many in Central Europe and Russia.

Status quo, reformist, and revolutionary ideologies can also be distinguished by the tactics used to realize goals. These include persuasion, organization, and force. Few, if any, ideologies rely exclusively on any one to the exclusion of others. Most use, in different proportions, all these tactics. The more fundamental and comprehensive the goals are and the more an ideology challenges the status quo, the greater the chances that it will be translated into a political movement that will resort to organized force, without, of course, neglecting organization and persuasion. A political ideology, on the other hand, that has limited and incremental goals, as is the case with reformist ideologies, is more likely to resort to political organization and persuasion.

In general, political ideologies and movements that challenge the status quo are more likely to use force at the time when they confront it. This was the case with liberalism before it overthrew the aristocratic and monarchical re-

gimes in the eighteenth century and after, and with the Communist and other revolutionary movements first in Russia and later in other countries. Yet, when such political ideologies succeed—when they have been transformed into political regimes and have implemented their major goals and consolidated their position—persuasion and organization are likely to take the place of force.

There is one qualification to these generalizations. According to some analysts, there are some political ideologies for which force is a necessary and permanent characteristic. And there are others for which persuasion and political organization, rather than force, are inherent characteristics. Some authoritarian systems—and Communist regimes are included—institutionalize the use of force in order to bring about and maintain compliance. On the other hand, liberal and democratic regimes, committed to political competition and pluralism, eschew the use of force. If it is to be used, it is only as a last resort.

## THE MAJOR POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

### Criteria of Choice

If we look at the spread of contemporary political ideological movements, we have a rich choice of subjects: liberalism, capitalism, democratic socialism, socialism, communism, national communism, consociationalism, corporatism, Eurocommunism, anarchism, Gaullism, Stalinism and post-Stalinism, communalism, self-determination in industry, Titoism, Maoism, welfarism, to say nothing of variations that come from the Third World under various labels. Which ones do we discuss, and why? We obviously need some criteria to help, and I suggest four: *coherence*, *pervasiveness*, *extensiveness*, and *intensiveness*.

**Coherence** By coherence I have in mind the overall scope of an ideology, along with its internal logic and structure. Is it complete? Does it clearly spell out a set of goals and the means to bring them about? Do its various propositions about social, economic, and political life hang together? Is there an organization—a movement or a party—to promote the means of action envisaged?

**Pervasiveness** Pervasiveness refers to the length of time that an ideology has been “operative.” Some ideologies may be in decline over a period, only to reappear. Others have been operative over a long period, despite variations and qualifications. Whatever the case, the basic test is the length of time during which an ideology has been shared by people, affected their lives, and shaped their attitudes and actions.

**Extensiveness** The criterion of extensiveness refers simply to a crude numerical test. How many people share a given ideology? One can draw a crude “ideological map” showing the number of people sharing common political ideologies. The larger the “population mass” of a given ideology, the greater its

extensiveness. How many people are influenced today by communism? By liberalism? By socialism? By anarchism? By religious fundamentalism? An estimate of numbers will answer the question of extensiveness.

**Intensiveness** Finally, by intensiveness I mean the degree and the intensity of the appeal of an ideology—irrespective of whether it satisfies any of the other three criteria. Does it evoke a spirit of total loyalty and action? “Interest is sluggish,” wrote John Stuart Mill. Ideas are not! They are like weapons, which in the hands of even a small minority may have a far greater impact on society than widely shared interests. Intensiveness implies emotional commitment, total loyalty, and unequivocal determination to act even at the risk of one’s life. It was this kind of intensiveness that Lenin managed to impart to his Bolsheviks and to the Communist party.

Ideally, we should choose among various ideologies only those that satisfy *all* the criteria set forth here—coherence, pervasiveness, extensiveness, and intensiveness. However, this would fail to do justice to some ideologies that have played or are playing an important role in our political life, even though they may satisfy only one or two of these criteria, and so I intend to take several such movements into account. (See Table 1.1 for a sampling of ideologies and how they fare according to these four criteria.)

For each ideology discussed, I begin by examining the basic theoretical formulations to which it owes a major debt and describe its transformation into a political movement and, in some cases, into a political regime. We should never lose sight of the fact that we are dealing with ideas that become political movements and lead people to political action; and the fact that their “influence” can be assessed in terms of the strength of the movements and parties through which ideas become readied and armed for a struggle for supremacy. Ideologies are not disembodied entities; they are not abstractions. They exist because men and women share them and adopt them as part of their own lives. Ideologies are weapons when men and women make them so; but they are also havens that produce companionship, cooperation, and fulfillment.

**Value Judgment** One last remark is in order. If there are so many ideologies, and if all of us share different ideologies to help us “know” the outside world and to prompt us to act in one way or another, which one of them is “correct”? If all ideologies provide us with different views and perceptions of the world, how do we know what the world is really like? How can we describe the landscape if we use different binoculars? This is the nagging question throughout the book—the question of the validity of a given ideology. When it comes to political ideologies, there is really no authoritative test to produce definitive proof of validity. We can only present the various political ideologies in terms of their internal logic, their coherence, their relevance to the outside world, and the passion and intensity for action they infuse.

This book does not ask, therefore, which ideologies are “true” and which are “false.” Instead, our approach will be expository: Where does an ideology

Table 1.1 THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES DISCUSSED

	Coherence	Pervasiveness	Extensiveness	Intensiveness
Democratic liberalism	Strong	Long	Wide	Weak
Democratic socialism	Weak	Long	Wide	Mediocre
Utopian socialism	Weak	Sporadic	Limited	High
Communism	Strong, but rapidly weakening	Long, but in the process of being questioned	Wide, but in the process of being regionalized	High, but increasingly weakening
Conservatism	Weak	Long	Wide	Weak
Fascism/nazism	Weak	Sporadic	Uncertain	High
Nationalism	Weak	Long	Wide	High
Anarchism	Weak	Sporadic	Limited	High
Religious fundamentalism	Strong	Sporadic	Selective, regional	Very high
Feminism	Weak	Gaining	Progressively widening	Uncertain
Environmentalism	Weak	Recent	Widening	Mediocre, but increasing

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# PART One

## DEMOCRACY: MANY ROOTS AND FAMILIES

*Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of the few but of the many.*

Thucydides

*Funeral Oration of Pericles*

**D**emocracy literally means “the government of the people.” It comes from the Greek words *demos*, people, and *kratos*, government or power. The concept developed first in the small Greek city-states, the Athenian democracy (roughly between 450 B.C. and 350 B.C.) is what we usually point to as the principal early example. Pericles, the great Athenian statesman, speaking in 431 B.C., defined democracy in the following terms:

Our constitution is named a democracy, because it is in the hands not of the few but of the many. But our laws secure equal justice for all in their private disputes and our public opinion welcomes and honors talent in every branch of achievement . . . on grounds of excellence alone. . . . Our citizens attend both to public and private duties and do not allow absorption in their various affairs to interfere with their knowledge of the city's. . . . We decide or debate, carefully and in person, all matters of policy, holding . . . that acts are foredoomed to failure when undertaken undiscussed.<sup>1</sup>

In this classic formulation, Pericles identifies the following characteristics of a democracy:

<sup>1</sup>Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. Edited and translated by Sir Richard Living-

1. Government by the people with the full and direct participation of the people.
2. Equality before the law.
3. Pluralism—that is, respect for all talents, pursuits, and viewpoints.
4. Respect for a separate and private (as opposed to public) domain for fulfillment and expression of an individual's personality.

Participation, equality before the law, pluralism, and individualism for everyone (except for women and also the many slaves)—these were the cornerstones of early democracy, before it disappeared from Greece and the then known world after a relatively short revival in Rome.

## CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRACY: MAJOR PHASES

Contemporary democratic thought can be traced back to the sixteenth century and earlier. It has many roots: feudal practices and institutions, theories about natural law and natural rights, the religious wars and the demand for toleration, the assertion of property rights and freedom to pursue individual economic ventures, the notion of limitations upon political authority—to name the most important of them. The basic landmark is provided by the English philosopher John Locke who, writing in the latter part of the seventeenth century, developed in some detail four of the cardinal concepts of democracy: *equality, individual rights and freedoms, including property, government based upon consent of the governed, and limitations upon the state*. Locke's theories led to the development of representative and parliamentary government.

The second historical landmark—the emergence of economic liberalism—came with the works of Adam Smith, especially his *Wealth of Nations* (1776), and of a new school of radical philosophers known as the *utilitarians*. In the first half of the nineteenth century, they developed the theory of the “economic man” who is driven by twin impulses: to satisfy pleasure and avoid pain. In line with Adam Smith, they constructed a theoretically limited state that would allow individuals freedom to pursue their own interests. The utilitarians became the exponents of economic individualism—that is, capitalism.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Locke's theory of consent and representative government was broadened, but economic liberalism and economic individualism came constantly under scrutiny and criticism. The works of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, especially his *Social Contract* (1762), were used to broaden the theory of participation so as to include everybody. The role of the state was reassessed to favor more intervention in economic and social matters for the better protection of the poor, the unemployed, the old, the young, and many disadvantaged groups. For the first time the notion of a *positive state*—one that acts to provide social services and to guarantee economic rights—appeared. Finally, the last half of the

tieth century and extending well into the present, socialists and a growing number of democrats have begun to broaden the notion of a positive state. They ask for sweeping reforms of the economic system so that the state assumes the obligation of providing an ever-increasing number of services. This has come to be known as the *welfare state*.

Socialists question economic individualism and want to replace it with a system in which the major productive resources are owned and managed by the state itself. The economy is to be run by the state, no longer for the purpose of profit, but to further social and community needs. Many of the Socialist parties were committed to this position until very recently, representing a synthesis that combined democratic political and individual rights with massive state intervention in the economy and socialization of some of the major units of production. In this part we do not include, of course, Marxism and the Communist regimes since they rejected democratic political practices and committed themselves to the socialization and management by the state of every branch of the economy—including trade, agriculture, and services.

In discussing democracy as an ideology, we are dealing therefore with a very rich and comprehensive body of thought and action—one that has undergone shifts and changes in the past three centuries and has produced a great variety of political movements. We will look at the liberal phase of democracy, its political and economic doctrine and institutions, its welfarist, socialist, or collectivist phase, and again the most recent reassertion of economic liberalism—capitalism.