Political Ideas and Ideologies

*'The philosophers have only interpreted the world
in various ways: the point is to change it.'*

KARL MARX, *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845)

PREVIEW All people are political thinkers. Whether they know it or not, people use political ideas and concepts whenever they express their opinions or speak their mind. Everyday language is littered with terms such as freedom, fairness, equality, justice and rights. In the same way, words such as conservative, liberal, fascist, socialist or feminist are regularly employed by people either to describe their own views, or those of others. However, even though such terms are familiar, even commonplace, they are seldom used with any precision or a clear grasp of their meaning. What, for instance, is 'equality'? What does it mean to say that all people are equal? Are people born equal, should they be treated by society as if they are equal? Should people have equal rights, equal opportunities, equal political influence, equal wages? Similarly, words such as communist or fascist are commonly misused. What does it mean to call someone a 'fascist'? What values or beliefs do fascists hold, and why do they hold them? How do communist views differ from those of, say, liberals, conservatives or socialists? This chapter examines political ideas from the perspective of the key ideological traditions. It focuses, in particular, on the 'classical' ideologies (liberalism, conservatism and socialism), but it also considers a range of other ideological traditions, which have arisen either out of, or in opposition to, the classical ones. Each ideological tradition constitutes a distinctive intellectual framework or paradigm, and so offers a particular 'lens' on political world. However, before examining the various ideological traditions, it is necessary to consider the nature of political ideology itself.

KEY ISSUES
- What is political ideology?
- Is politics intrinsically linked to ideology? Can ideology come to an end?
- What are the key ideas and theories of the major ideological traditions?
- What internal tensions do each of the major ideologies encompass?
- How has ideological thought changed over time?
- How can the rise and fall of ideologies be explained?

Ideology

From a social-scientific viewpoint, an ideology is a more or less coherent set of ideas that provides a basis for organized political action, whether this is intended to preserve, modify or overthrow the existing system of power relationships. All ideologies therefore (1) offer an account of the existing order, usually in the form of a 'world-view', (2) provide a model of a desired future, a vision of the Good Society, and (3) outline how political change can and should be brought about. Ideologies are not, however, hermetically sealed systems of thought; rather, they are fluid sets of ideas that overlap with one another at a number of points.

WHAT IS POLITICAL IDEOLOGY?

Ideology is one of the most controversial concepts encountered in political analysis. Although the term now tends to be used in a neutral sense, to refer to a developed social philosophy or world-view, it has in the past had heavily negative or pejorative connotations. During its sometimes tortuous career, the concept of ideology has commonly been used as a political weapon to condemn or criticize rival creeds or doctrines.

The term 'ideology' was coined in 1796 by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836). He used it to refer to a new 'science of ideas' (literally, an idea-ology) that set out to uncover the origins of conscious thought and ideas. De Tracy's hope was that ideology would eventually enjoy the same status as established sciences such as zoology and biology. However, a more enduring meaning was assigned to the term in the nineteenth century in the writings of Karl Marx (see p. 41). For Marx, ideology amounted to the ideas of the 'ruling class', ideas that therefore uphold the class system and perpetuate exploitation. In their early work *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels wrote the following:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force in society, is at the same time the ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of mental production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production. (Marx and Engels, [1846] 1970:64)

The defining feature of ideology in the Marxist sense is that it is false: it mystifies and confuses subordinate classes by concealing from them the contradictions on which all class societies are based. As far as capitalism is concerned, the ideology of the property-owning bourgeoisie (bourgeois ideology) fosters delusion or 'false consciousness' amongst the exploited proletariat, preventing them from recognizing the fact of their own exploitation. Nevertheless, Marx did not believe that all political views had an ideological character. He held that his own work, which attempted to uncover the process of class exploitation and oppression, was scientific. In his view, a clear distinction could be drawn between science and ideology, between truth and falsehood. This distinction tended, however, to be blurred in the writings of later Marxists such as Lenin (see p. 99) and Gramsci (see p. 175). These referred not only to 'bourgeois ideology', but also to 'socialist ideology' or 'proletarian ideology', terms that Marx would have considered absurd.

Alternative uses of the term have also been developed by liberals and conservatives. The emergence of totalitarian dictatorships in the interwar period encouraged writers such as Karl Popper (1902–94), J. L. Talmon and Hannah Arendt (see p. 7) to view ideology as an instrument of social control to ensure compliance and subordination. Relying heavily on the examples of fascism and communism, this Cold War liberal use of the term treated ideology as a 'closed' system of thought, which, by claiming a monopoly of truth, refuses to tolerate opposing ideas and rival beliefs. In contrast, liberalism, based as it is on a fundamental commitment to individual freedom, and doctrines such as conservatism and democratic socialism that broadly subscribe to liberal principles are clearly not ideologies. These doctrines are 'open' in the sense that they permit, and even insist on, free debate, opposition and criticism.

Debating . . .
Can politics exist without ideology?

The term 'ideology' has traditionally carried pejorative implications, often expressed through predictions of its imminent (and usually welcome) demise. Nevertheless, despite its varied obituaries, political ideology has stubbornly refused to die: while particular ideologies may rise or fall, ideological forms of politics seem to be an enduring feature of world history. Is politics intrinsically linked to ideology? Or may politics finally be able to emerge from the shadow cast by ideological belief?

YES

Overcoming falsehood and delusion. Most critiques of ideology associate it with falsehood and manipulation, implying that reason and critical understanding can, and will, emancipate us from ideological politics. In this view, ideologies are, in effect, political religions, sets of values, theories and doctrines that demand faith and commitment from 'believers', who are then unable to think outside or beyond their chosen world-view. If ideologies are intellectual prisons, the solution is to see the world 'as it is', something that can be achieved through the application of value-free scientific method. The purpose of political science is thus to disengage politics from ideology.

Rise of technocratic politics. Political ideology arose in the form of contrasting attempts to shape emergent industrial society. The left/right divide (see p. 225) and the struggle between socialism and capitalism has always been at the heart of ideological debate. However, the collapse of communism and the near worldwide acceptance of market capitalism means that this rivalry has become irrelevant to modern politics. Politics has therefore come to revolve not around ideological questions to do with ownership and the distribution of wealth, but around 'smaller' questions to do with the effective management of the capitalist system. Ideological politics has given way to technocratic politics.

Rise of consumerist politics. Ideology has little place in modern democratic systems due to the logic of electoral competition. Elections force political parties to behave like businesses in the marketplace, formulating 'products' (policies) in the hope of attracting the largest number of 'consumers' (voters). Parties thus increasingly respond to consumer/voter demands, rather than trying to reshape these demands in the light of a pre-existing ideological vision. Whether parties have historically been left-wing, right-wing or centrist in orientation, they recognise the electoral value of 'travelling light' in ideological terms. Electoral politics therefore contributes to a process of party de-ideologization.

NO

Ideology as an intellectual framework. Political ideology will always survive because it provides politicians, parties and other political actors with an intellectual framework which helps them to make sense of the world in which they live. Ideologies are not systematic delusions but, rather, rival visions of the political world, each illuminating particular aspects of a complex and multifaceted reality. Ideologies are therefore neither, in a simplistic sense, true nor false. Perhaps the most dangerous delusion is the notion of a clear distinction between science and ideology. Science itself is constructed on the basis of paradigms that are destined to be displaced over time (Kuhn, 1962).

Ideological renewal. The secret of ideology's survival and continued relevance is its flexibility, the fact that ideological traditions go through a seemingly endless process of redefinition and renewal. As old ideologies fade, new ones emerge, helping to preserve the relevance of political ideology. The world of ideologies does not stand still, but changes in response to changing social and historical circumstances. The declining relevance of the left/right divide has not led to the 'end of ideology' or the 'end of history'; it has merely opened up new ideological spaces that have been filled by the likes of feminism, green politics, multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism.

The 'vision thing'. As the principal source of meaning and idealism in politics, ideology touches those aspects of politics that no other political form can reach. Ideology gives people a reason to believe in something larger than themselves, because people's personal narratives only make sense when they are situated within a broader historical narrative. A post-ideological age would therefore be an age without hope, without vision. If politicians cannot cloak their pursuit of power in ideological purpose, they risk being seen simply as power-seeking pragmatists, and their policy programmes will appear to lack coherence and direction.

A distinctively conservative use of the term 'ideology' has been developed by thinkers such as Michael Oakeshott (see p. 177). This view reflects a characteristically conservative scepticism about the value of **rationalism**, born out of the belief that the world is largely beyond the capacity of the human mind to fathom. As Oakeshott put it, in political activity 'men sail a boundless and bottomless sea'. From this perspective, ideologies are seen as abstract 'systems of thought'; that is, as sets of ideas that distort political reality because they claim to explain what is, frankly, incomprehensible. This is why conservatives have traditionally dismissed the notion that they subscribe to an ideology, preferring instead to describe conservatism as a disposition, or an 'attitude of mind', and placing their faith in **pragmatism**, tradition (see p. 82) and history.

The drawback of each of these usages, however, is that, as they are negative or pejorative, they restrict the application of the term. Certain political doctrines, in other words, are excluded from the category of 'ideologies'. Marx, for instance, insisted that his ideas were scientific, not ideological, liberals have denied that liberalism should be viewed as an ideology, and conservatives have traditionally claimed to embrace a pragmatic rather than ideological style of politics. Moreover, each of these definitions is loaded with the values and orientation of a particular political doctrine. An inclusive definition of 'ideology' (one that applies to all political traditions) must therefore be neutral: it must reject the notion that ideologies are 'good' or 'bad', true or false, or liberating or oppressive. This is the virtue of the modern, social-scientific meaning of the term, which treats ideology as an action-orientated belief system, an interrelated set of ideas that in some way guides or inspires political action.

However, much of the debate about ideology since the mid-twentieth century has focused on predictions of its demise, or at least of its fading relevance. This came to be known as the 'end of ideology' debate. It was initiated in the 1950s, stimulated by the collapse of fascism at the end of World War II and the decline of communism in the developed West. In *The End of Ideology* (1960), the US sociologist Daniel Bell (1919–2011) declared that the stock of political ideas had been exhausted. In his view, ethical and ideological questions had become irrelevant because in most western societies parties competed for power simply by promising higher levels of economic growth and material affluence. This debate was revived in the aftermath of the collapse of communism by 'end of history' theorists, such as Fukuyama (see p. 271), who suggested that a single ideology, liberal democracy, had triumphed over all its rivals, and that this triumph was final (see p. 44). At the heart of such debates lies questions about the relationship between politics and ideology, and specifically about whether politics can exist without ideology (see p. 29).

● **Rationalism**: The belief that the world can be understood and explained through the exercise of human reason, based on assumptions about its rational structure.

● **Pragmatism**: A theory or practice that places primary emphasis on practical circumstances and goals; pragmatism implies a distrust of abstract ideas.

CLASSICAL IDEOLOGICAL TRADITIONS

Political ideology arose out of the transition from feudalism to industrial capitalism. In simple terms, the earliest, or 'classical' ideologies – liberalism, conservatism and socialism – developed as contrasting attempts to shape emerging industrial society. This meant that the central theme in ideological debate and argument during this period and beyond was the battle between two rival economic philosophies: capitalism (see p. 131) and socialism. Political ideology

John Locke (1632–1704)

English philosopher and politician. Locke studied medicine at Oxford University before becoming secretary to Anthony Ashley Cooper, First Earl of Shaftsbury, in 1661. His political views were developed against the backdrop of the English Revolution, and are often seen as providing a justification for the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, which ended absolutist rule and established a constitutional monarchy in Britain. Locke was a key thinker of early liberalism, placing particular emphasis on 'natural' or God-given rights, identified as the rights to life, liberty and property. An exponent of representative government and toleration, Locke's views had a considerable impact on the American Revolution. His most important political works are *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) and *Two Treatises of Government* ([1690] 1965).

thus had a strong economic focus. The battle lines between capitalism and socialism were significantly sharpened by the 1917 Russian Revolution, which created the world's first socialist state. Indeed, throughout what is sometimes called the 'short' twentieth century (from the outbreak of World War I to the fall of communism, 1989–91), and particularly during the Cold War period (1945–90), international politics was structured along ideological lines, as the capitalist West confronted the communist East. Although ideological debate has became richer and certainly progressively more diverse since the 1960s, not least as a result of the rise of so-called 'new' ideologies such as feminism and green politics, the classical ideologies have retain their central importance. In large part, this has been because of their capacity to reinvent themselves. In the process of doing so, the dividing lines between them have often been blurred.

Liberalism

Any account of political ideologies must start with liberalism. This is because liberalism is, in effect, the ideology of the industrialized West, and is sometimes portrayed as a **meta-ideology** that is capable of embracing a broad range of rival values and beliefs. Although liberalism did not emerge as a developed political creed until the early nineteenth century, distinctively liberal theories and principles had gradually been developed during the previous 300 years. Early liberalism certainly reflected the aspirations of a rising industrial middle class, and liberalism and capitalism have been closely linked (some have argued intrinsically linked) ever since. In its earliest form, liberalism was a political doctrine. As relected in the ideas of thinkers such as John Locke, it attacked absolutism (see p. 268) and feudal privilege, instead advocating constitutional and, later, representative government. By the early nineteenth century, a distinctively liberal economic creed had developed that extolled the virtues of *laissez-faire* (see p. 132) and condemned all forms of government intervention. This became the centrepiece of classical, or nineteenth-century, liberalism. From the late nineteenth century onwards, however, a form of social liberalism emerged that looked more favourably on welfare reform and economic intervention. Such an emphasis became the characteristic theme of modern, or twentieth-century, liberalism.

● **Meta-ideology**: A higher or second-order ideology that lays down the grounds on which ideological debate can take place.

Liberalism: key ideas

◆ **Individualism**: Individualism (see p. 158) is the core principle of liberal ideology. It reflects a belief in the supreme importance of the human individual as opposed to any social group or collective body. Human beings are seen, first and foremost, as individuals. This implies both that they are of equal moral worth and that they possess separate and unique identities. The liberal goal is therefore to construct a society within which individuals can flourish and develop, each pursuing 'the good' as he or she defines it, to the best of his or her abilities. This has contributed to the view that liberalism is morally neutral, in the sense that it lays down a set of rules that allow individuals to make their own moral decisions.

◆ **Freedom**: Individual freedom (see p. 339), or liberty (the two terms are interchangeable), is the core value of liberalism; it is given priority over, say, equality, justice or authority. This arises naturally from a belief in the individual and the desire to ensure that each person is able to act as he or she pleases or chooses. Nevertheless, liberals advocate 'freedom under the law', as they recognize that one person's liberty may be a threat to the liberty of others; liberty may become licence. They therefore endorse the ideal that individuals should enjoy the maximum possible liberty consistent with a like liberty for all.

◆ **Reason**: Liberals believe that the world has a rational structure, and that this can be uncovered through the exercise of human reason and by critical enquiry. This inclines them to place their faith in the ability of individuals to make wise judgements on their own behalf, being, in most cases, the best judges of their own interests. It also encourages liberals to believe in **progress** and the capacity of human beings to resolve their differences through debate and argument, rather than bloodshed and war.

◆ **Equality**: Individualism implies a belief in foundational equality: that is, the belief that individuals are 'born equal', at least in terms of moral worth. This is reflected in a liberal commitment to equal rights and entitlements, notably in the form of legal equality ('equality before the law') and political equality ('one person, one vote; one vote, one value'). However, as individuals do not possess the same levels of talent or willingness to work, liberals do not endorse social equality or an equality of outcome. Rather, they favour equality of opportunity (a 'level playing field') that gives all individuals an equal chance to realize their unequal potential. Liberals therefore support the principle of **meritocracy**, with merit reflecting, crudely, talent plus hard work.

◆ **Toleration**: Liberals believe that toleration (that is, forbearance: the willingness of people to allow others to think, speak and act in ways of which they disapprove) is both a guarantee of individual liberty and a means of social enrichment. They believe that pluralism (see p. 100), in the form of moral, cultural and political diversity, is positively healthy: it promotes debate and intellectual progress by ensuring that all beliefs are tested in a free market of ideas. Liberals, moreover, tend to believe that there is a balance or natural harmony between rival views and interests, and thus usually discount the idea of irreconcilable conflict.

◆ **Consent**: In the liberal view, authority and social relationships should always be based on consent or willing agreement. Government must therefore be based on the 'consent of the governed'. This is a doctrine that encourages liberals to favour representation (see p. 197) and democracy, notably in the form of liberal democracy (see p. 270). Similarly, social bodies and associations are formed through contracts willingly entered into by individuals intent on pursuing their own self-interest. In this sense, authority arises 'from below' and is always grounded in legitimacy (see p. 81).

◆ **Constitutionalism**: Although liberals see government as a vital guarantee of order and stability in society, they are constantly aware of the danger that government may become a tyranny against the individual ('power tends to corrupt' (Lord Acton)). They therefore believe in limited government. This goal can be attained through the fragmentation of government power, by the creation of checks and balances amongst the various institutions of government, and by the establishment of a codified or 'written' constitution embodying a bill of rights that defines the relationship between the state and the individual.

Classical liberalism

The central theme of classical liberalism is a commitment to an extreme form of individualism. Human beings are seen as egoistical, self-seeking and largely self-reliant creatures. In what C. B. Macpherson (1962) termed 'possessive individualism', they are taken to be the proprietors of their own persons and capacities, owing nothing to society or to other individuals. This **atomist** view of society is underpinned by a belief in 'negative' liberty, meaning non-interference, or the absence of external constraints on the individual. This implies a deeply unsympathetic attitude towards the state and all forms of government intervention.

In Tom Paine's (see p. 199) words, the state is a 'necessary evil'. It is 'necessary' in that, at the very least, it establishes order and security, and ensures that contracts are enforced. However, it is 'evil' in that it imposes a collective will on society, thus limiting the freedom and responsibilities of the individual. The classical liberal ideal is therefore the establishment of a minimal or 'nightwatchman' state, with a role that is limited to the protection of citizens from the encroachments of fellow citizens. In the form of **economic liberalism**, this position is underpinned by a deep faith in the mechanisms of the free market and the belief that the economy works best when left alone by government. *Laissez-faire* capitalism is thus seen as guaranteeing prosperity, upholding individual liberty, and, as this allows individuals to rise and fall according to merit, ensuring social justice.

Modern liberalism

Modern liberalism is characterized by a more sympathetic attitude towards state intervention. Indeed, in the USA, the term 'liberal' is invariably taken to imply support for **'big' government** rather than 'minimal' government. This shift was born out of the recognition that industrial capitalism had merely generated new forms of injustice and left the mass of the population subject to the vagaries of the market. Influenced by the work of J. S. Mill (see p. 198), the so-called 'New Liberals' (figures such as T. H. Green (1836–82), L. T. Hobhouse (1864–1929) and J. A. Hobson (1858–1940)) championed a broader, 'positive' view of freedom. From this perspective, freedom does not just mean being left alone, which might imply nothing more than the freedom to starve. Rather, it is linked to personal development and the flourishing of the individual; that is, the ability of the individual to gain fulfilment and achieve self-realization.

This view provided the basis for social or welfare liberalism. This is characterized by the recognition that state intervention, particularly in the form of social welfare, can enlarge liberty by safeguarding individuals from the social evils that blight individual existence. These evils were identified in the UK by the 1942 Beveridge Report as the 'five giants': want, ignorance, idleness, squalor and disease. In the same way, modern liberals abandoned their belief in *laissez-faire* capitalism, largely as a result of J. M. Keynes' (see p. 137) insight that growth and prosperity could be maintained only through a system of managed or regulated capitalism, with key economic responsibilities being placed in the hands of the state. Nevertheless, modern liberals' support for collective provision and government intervention has always been conditional. Their concern has been with the plight of the weak and vulnerable, those who are literally not able to help themselves. Their goal is to raise individuals to the point where they are able, once

● **Progress**: Moving forwards; the belief that history is characterized by human advancement based on the accumulation of knowledge and wisdom.

● **Meritocracy**: Rule by the talented; the principle that rewards and positions should be distributed on the basis of ability.

● **Atomism**: The belief that society is made up of a collection of largely self-sufficient individuals who owe little or nothing to one another.

● **Economic liberalism**: A belief in the market as a self-regulating mechanism tending naturally to deliver general prosperity and opportunities for all.

● **Big government**: Interventionist government, usually understood to imply economic management and social regulation.

again, to take responsibility for their own circumstances and make their own moral choices. The most influential modern attempt to reconcile the principles of liberalism with the politics of welfare and **redistribution** was undertaken by John Rawls (see p. 45). (The liberal approach to international politics is examined in Chapter 18.)

Conservatism

Conservative ideas and doctrines first emerged in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. They arose as a reaction against the growing pace of economic and political change, which was in many ways symbolized by the French Revolution. In this sense, conservatism harked back to the *ancien régime*. In trying to resist the pressures unleashed by the growth of liberalism, socialism and nationalism, conservatism stood in defence of an increasingly embattled traditional social order. However, from the outset, divisions in conservative thought were apparent. In continental Europe, a form of conservatism emerged that was characterized by the work of thinkers such as Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821). This conservatism was starkly autocratic and reactionary, rejecting out of hand any idea of reform. A more cautious, more flexible and, ultimately, more successful form of conservatism nevertheless developed in the UK and the USA, characterized by Edmund Burke's belief in 'change in order to conserve'. This stance enabled conservatives in the nineteenth century to embrace the cause of social reform under the paternalistic banner of 'One Nation'. The high point of this tradition in the UK came in the 1950s as the Conservative Party came to accept the postwar settlement and espouse its own version of Keynesian social democracy. However, such ideas increasingly came under pressure from the 1970s onwards as a result of the emergence of the New Right. The New Right's radically antistatist and antipaternalist brand of conservatism draws heavily on classical liberal themes and values.

Paternalistic conservatism

The **paternalistic** strand in conservative thought is entirely consistent with principles such as organicism, hierarchy and duty, and it can therefore be seen as an outgrowth of traditional conservatism. Often traced back to the early writings of Benjamin Disraeli (1804–81), paternalism draws on a combination of prudence and principle. In warning of the danger of the UK being divided into 'two nations: the Rich and the Poor', Disraeli articulated a widespread fear of social revolution. This warning amounted to an appeal to the self-interest of the privileged, who needed to recognize that 'reform from above' was preferable to 'revolution from below'. This message was underpinned by an appeal to the principles of duty and social obligation rooted in neofeudal ideas such as *noblesse oblige*. In effect, in this view, duty is the price of privilege; the powerful and propertied inherit a responsibility to look after the less well-off in the broader interests of social cohesion and unity. The resulting One-Nation principle, the cornerstone of what since the early nineteenth century has been termed a **Tory** position, reflects not so much the ideal of social equality as a cohesive and stable hierarchy that arises organically.

● **Redistribution**: A narrowing of material inequalities brought about through a combination of progressive taxation and welfare provision.

● *Ancien régime*: (French) Literally, 'old order'; usually linked with the absolutist structures that predated the French Revolution.

● **Paternalism**: An attitude or policy that demonstrates care or concern for those unable to help themselves, as in the (supposed) relationship between a father and a child.

● *Noblesse oblige*: (French) Literally, the 'obligations of the nobility'; in general terms, the responsibility to guide or protect those less fortunate or less privileged.

● **Toryism**: An ideological stance within conservatism characterized by a belief in hierarchy, an emphasis on tradition, and support for duty and organicism.

● **Natural aristocracy**: The idea that talent and leadership are innate or inbred qualities that cannot be acquired through effort or self-advancement.

Conservatism: key ideas

◆ **Tradition**: The central theme of conservative thought, 'the desire to conserve', is closely linked to the perceived virtues of tradition, respect for established customs, and institutions that have endured through time. In this view, tradition reflects the accumulated wisdom of the past, and institutions and practices that have been 'tested by time', and it should be preserved for the benefit of the living and for generations yet to come. Tradition also has the virtue of promoting a sense of social and historical belonging.

◆ **Pragmatism**: Conservatives have traditionally emphasized the limitations of human rationality, which arise from the infinite complexity of the world in which we live. Abstract principles and systems of thought are therefore distrusted, and instead faith is placed in experience, history and, above all, pragmatism: the belief that action should be shaped by practical circumstances and practical goals, that is, by 'what works'. Conservatives have thus preferred to describe their own beliefs as an 'attitude of mind' or an 'approach to life', rather than as an ideology, although they reject the idea that this amounts to unprincipled opportunism.

◆ **Human imperfection**: The conservative view of human nature is broadly pessimistic. In this view, human beings are limited, dependent, and security-seeking creatures, drawn to the familiar and the tried and tested, and needing to live in stable and orderly communities. In addition, individuals are morally corrupt: they are tainted by selfishness, greed and the thirst for power. The roots of crime and disorder therefore reside within the human individual rather than in society. The maintenance of order (see p. 400) therefore requires a strong state, the enforcement of strict laws, and stiff penalties.

◆ **Organicism**: Instead of seeing society as an artefact that is a product of human ingenuity, conservatives have traditionally viewed society as an organic whole, or living entity. Society is thus structured by natural necessity, with its various institutions, or the 'fabric of society' (families, local communities, the nation and so on), contributing to the health and stability of society. The whole is more than a collection of its individual parts. Shared (often 'traditional') values and a common culture are also seen as being vital to the maintenance of the community and social cohesion.

◆ **Hierarchy**: In the conservative view, gradations of social position and status are natural and inevitable in an organic society. These reflect the differing roles and responsibilities of, for example, employers and workers, teachers and pupils, and parents and children. Nevertheless, in this view, hierarchy and inequality do not give rise to conflict, because society is bound together by mutual obligations and reciprocal duties. Indeed, as a person's 'station in life' is determined largely by luck and the accident of birth, the prosperous and privileged acquire a particular responsibility of care for the less fortunate.

◆ **Authority**: Conservatives hold that, to some degree, authority is always exercised 'from above', providing leadership (see p. 300), guidance and support for those who lack the knowledge, experience or education to act wisely in their own interests (an example being the authority of parents over children). Although the idea of a **natural aristocracy** was once influential, authority and leadership are now more commonly seen as resulting from experience and training. The virtue of authority is that it is a source of social cohesion, giving people a clear sense of who they are and what is expected of them. Freedom must therefore coexist with responsibility; it therefore consists largely of a willing acceptance of obligations and duties.

◆ **Property**: Conservatives see property ownership as being vital because it gives people security and a measure of independence from government, and it encourages them to respect the law and the property of others. Property is also an exteriorization of people's personalities, in that they 'see' themselves in what they own: their houses, their cars, and so on. However, property ownership involves duties as well as rights. In this view, we are, in a sense, merely custodians of property that has either been inherited from past generations ('the family silver'), or may be of value to future ones.

Edmund Burke (1729–97)

Dublin-born UK statesman and political theorist who is often seen as the father of the Anglo-American conservative tradition. Burke's enduring reputation is based on a series of works, notably *Reflections on the Revolution in France* ([1790] 1968), that were critical of the French Revolution. Though sympathetic to the American Revolution, Burke was deeply critical of the attempt to recast French politics in accordance with abstract principles such as liberty, equality and fraternity, arguing that wisdom resided largely in experience, tradition and history. Nevertheless, he held that the French monarchy was, in part, responsible for its own fate since it had obstinately refused to 'change in order to conserve'. Burke had a gloomy view of government, recognizing that it could prevent evil but rarely promote good. He supported free market economics on the grounds that it reflects 'natural law'.

The One-Nation tradition embodies not only a disposition towards social reform, but also an essentially pragmatic attitude towards economic policy. This is clearly seen in the 'middle way' approach adopted in the 1950s by UK Conservatives. This approach eschewed the two ideological models of economic organization: *laissez-faire* capitalism on the one hand, and state socialism and central planning on the other. The former was rejected on the grounds that it results in a free for all, which makes social cohesion impossible, and penalizes the weak and vulnerable. The latter was dismissed because it produces a state monolith and crushes all forms of independence and enterprise. The solution therefore lies in a blend of market competition and government regulation – 'private enterprise without selfishness' (H. Macmillan).

Very similar conclusions were drawn after 1945 by continental European conservatives, who embraced the principles of **Christian democracy**, most rigorously developed in the 'social market' philosophy (see p. 133) of the German Christian Democrats (CDU). This philosophy embraces a market strategy, insofar as it highlights the virtues of private enterprise and competition; but it is social, in that it believes that the prosperity so gained should be employed for the broader benefit of society. Such a position draws from Catholic social theory, which advances an organic view of society that stresses social harmony. Christian democracy thus highlights the importance of intermediate institutions, such as churches, unions and business groups, bound together by the notion of 'social partnership'. The paternalistic strand of modern conservatism thought is often linked to the idea of 'compassionate conservatism'.

The New Right

The New Right represents a departure in conservative thought that amounted to a kind of counter-revolution against both the post-1945 drift towards state intervention and the spread of liberal or progressive social values. New Right ideas can be traced back to the 1970s and the conjunction between the apparent failure of Keynesian social democracy, signalled by the end of the postwar boom, and growing concern about social breakdown and the decline of authority. Such

● **Christian democracy**: An ideological tendency within European conservatism, characterized by commitment to social market principles and qualified interventionism.

Friedrich von Hayek (1899–1992)

Austrian economist and political philosopher. An academic who taught at the London School of Economics and the Universities of Chicago, Freiburg and Salzburg, Hayek was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1974. As an exponent of the so-called 'Austrian School', he was a firm believer in individualism and market order, and an implacable critic of socialism. *The Road to Serfdom* (1948) was a pioneering work that attacked economic interventionism. In later works such as *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960) and *Law, Legislation and Liberty* (1979) Hayek developed themes in political philosophy. Hayek's writings fused liberal and conservative elements, and had a considerable impact on the emergent New Right.

ideas had their greatest impact in the UK and the USA, where they were articulated in the 1980s in the form of Thatcherism and Reaganism, respectively. They have also had a wider, even worldwide, influence in bringing about a general shift from state- to market-orientated forms of organization. However, the New Right does not so much constitute a coherent and systematic philosophy as attempt to marry two distinct traditions, usually termed 'neoliberalism' and 'neoconservatism'. Although there is political and ideological tension between these two, they can be combined in support of the goal of a strong but minimal state: in Andrew Gamble's (1981) words, 'the free economy and the strong state'.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism (see p. 144) is an updated version of classical political economy that was developed in the writings of free-market economists such as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman (see p. 138), and philosophers such as Robert Nozick (see p. 68). The central pillars of neoliberalism are the market and the individual. The principal neoliberal goal is to 'roll back the frontiers of the state', in the belief that unregulated market capitalism will deliver efficiency, growth and widespread prosperity. In this view, the 'dead hand' of the state saps initiative and discourages enterprise; government, however well-intentioned, invariably has a damaging effect on human affairs. This is reflected in the liberal New Right's concern with the politics of ownership, and its preference for private enterprise over state enterprise or nationalization: in short, 'private, good; public, bad'. Such ideas are associated with a form of rugged individualism, expressed in Margaret Thatcher's famous assertion that 'there is no such thing as society, only individuals and their families'. The '**nanny state**' is seen to breed a culture of dependence and to undermine freedom, which is understood as freedom of choice in the marketplace. Instead, faith is placed in self-help, individual responsibility and entrepreneurialism. Such ideas are widely seen to be advanced through the process of globalization (see p. 142), viewed by some as neoliberal globalization.

● **Nanny state**: A state with extensive social responsibilities; the term implies that welfare programmes are unwarranted and demeaning to the individual.

Neoconservatism

Neoconservatism reasserts nineteenth-century conservative social principles. The conservative New Right wishes, above all, to restore authority and return to

traditional values, notably those linked to the family, religion and the nation. Authority is seen as guaranteeing social stability, on the basis that it generates discipline and respect, while shared values and a common culture are believed to generate social cohesion and make civilized existence possible. The enemies of neoconservatism are therefore **permissiveness**, the cult of the self and 'doing one's own thing', thought of as the values of the 1960s. Indeed, many of those who style themselves neoconservatives in the USA are former liberals who grew disillusioned with the progressive reforms of the Kennedy–Johnson era. Another aspect of neoconservatism is the tendency to view the emergence of multicultural and multireligious societies with concern, on the basis that they are conflict-ridden and inherently unstable. This position also tends to be linked to an insular form of nationalism that is sceptical about both multiculturalism (see p. 167) and the growing influence of supranational bodies such as the UN and the EU. Neoconservatism also developed into a distinctive approach to foreign policy, particularly in the USA under George Bush Jr, linked to attempts to consolidate US global domination, in part through militarily imposed 'regime change'.

Socialism

Although socialist ideas can be traced back to the Levellers and Diggers of the seventeenth century, or to Thomas More's *Utopia* ([1516] 1965), or even Plato's *Republic*, socialism did not take shape as a political creed until the early nineteenth century. It developed as a reaction against the emergence of industrial capitalism. Socialism first articulated the interests of artisans and craftsmen threatened by the spread of factory production, but it was soon being linked to the growing industrial working class, the 'factory fodder' of early industrialization. In its earliest forms, socialism tended to have a fundamentalist (see p. 53), utopian and revolutionary character. Its goal was to abolish a capitalist economy based on market exchange, and replace it with a qualitatively different socialist society, usually to be constructed on the principle of common ownership. The most influential representative of this brand of socialism was Karl Marx, whose ideas provided the foundations for twentieth-century communism (see p. 275).

From the late nineteenth century onwards, however, a reformist socialist tradition emerged that reflected the gradual integration of the working classes into capitalist society through an improvement in working conditions and wages, and the growth of trade unions and socialist political parties. This brand of socialism proclaimed the possibility of a peaceful, gradual and legal transition to socialism, brought about through the adoption of the 'parliamentary road'. Reformist socialism drew on two sources. The first was a humanist tradition of ethical socialism, linked to thinkers such as Robert Owen (1771–1858), Charles Fourier (1772–1837) and William Morris (1834–96). The second was a form of **revisionist** Marxism developed primarily by Eduard Bernstein (see p. 43).

During much of the twentieth century, the socialist movement was thus divided into two rival camps. Revolutionary socialists, following the example of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, called themselves 'communists', while reformist socialists, who practised a form of constitutional politics, embraced what increasingly came to be called 'social democracy'. This rivalry focused not only on the most appropriate means of achieving socialism, but also on the nature of the socialist

● **Permissiveness**: The willingness to allow people to make their own moral choices; permissiveness suggests that there are no authoritative values.

● **Revisionism**: The modification of original or established beliefs; revisionism can imply the abandonment of principle or a loss of conviction.

Socialism: key ideas

◆ **Community**: The core of socialism is the vision of human beings as social creatures linked by the existence of a common humanity. As the poet John Donne put it, 'no man is an Island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main'. This refers to the importance of community, and it highlights the degree to which individual identity is fashioned by social interaction and membership of social groups and collective bodies. Socialists are inclined to emphasize nurture over nature, and to explain individual behaviour mainly in terms of social factors, rather than innate qualities.

◆ **Fraternity**: As human beings share a common humanity, they are bound together by a sense of comradeship or fraternity (literally meaning 'brotherhood', but broadened in this context to embrace all humans). This encourages socialists to prefer cooperation to competition, and to favour collectivism over individualism (see p. 158). In this view, cooperation enables people to harness their collective energies and strengthens the bonds of community, while competition pits individuals against each other, breeding resentment, conflict and hostility.

◆ **Social equality**: Equality (see p. 454) is the central value of socialism. Socialism is sometimes portrayed as a form of egalitarianism, the belief in the primacy of equality over other values. In particular, socialists emphasize the importance of social equality, an equality of outcome as opposed to equality of opportunity. They believe that a measure of social equality is the essential guarantee of social stability and cohesion, encouraging individuals to identify with their fellow human beings. It also provides the basis for the exercise of legal and political rights. However, socialists disagree about the extent to which social equality can and should be brought about. While Marxists have believed in absolute social equality, brought about by the collectivization of production wealth, social democrats have favoured merely narrowing material inequalities, often being more concerned with equalizing opportunities than outcomes.

◆ **Need**: Sympathy for equality also reflects the socialist belief that material benefits should be distributed on the basis of need, rather than simply on the basis of merit or work. The classic formulation of this principle is found in Marx's communist principle of distribution: 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need'. This reflects the belief that the satisfaction of basic needs (hunger, thirst, shelter, health, personal security and so on) is a prerequisite for a worthwhile human existence and participation in social life. Clearly, however, distribution according to need requires people to be motivated by moral incentives, rather than just material ones.

◆ **Social class**: Socialism has often been associated with a form of class politics. First, socialists have tended to analyse society in terms of the distribution of income or wealth, and they have thus seen social class (see p. 153) as a significant (usually the most significant) social cleavage. Second, socialism has traditionally been associated with the interests of an oppressed and exploited working class (however defined), and it has traditionally regarded the working class as an agent of social change, even social revolution (see p. 85). Nevertheless, class divisions are remediable: the socialist goal is either the eradication of economic and social inequalities, or their substantial reduction.

◆ **Common ownership**: The relationship between socialism and common ownership has been deeply controversial. Some see it as the *end* of socialism itself, and others see it instead simply as a *means* of generating broader equality. The socialist case for common ownership (in the form of either Soviet-style state collectivization, or selective nationalization (a 'mixed economy')) is that it is a means of harnessing material resources to the common good, with private property being seen to promote selfishness, acquisitiveness and social division. Modern socialism, however, has moved away from this narrow concern with the politics of ownership.

goal itself. Social democrats turned their backs on fundamentalist principles such as common ownership and planning, and recast socialism in terms of welfare, redistribution and economic management. Both forms of socialism, however, experienced crises in the late twentieth century that encouraged some to proclaim the 'death of socialism' and the emergence of a postsocialist society. The most dramatic event in this process was the collapse of communism brought about by the Eastern European revolutions of 1989–91, but there was also a continued retreat of social democracy from traditional principles, making it, some would argue, indistinguishable from modern liberalism.

Marxism

As a theoretical system, Marxism has constituted the principal alternative to the liberal rationalism that has dominated western culture and intellectual enquiry in the modern period. As a political force, in the form of the international communist movement, Marxism has also been seen as the major enemy of western capitalism, at least in the period 1917–91. This highlights a central diffi-culty in dealing with Marxism: the difference between Marxism as a social philosophy derived from the classic writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1820–95), and the phenomenon of twentieth-century communism, which in many ways departed from and revised classical principles. Thus, the collapse of communism at the end of the twentieth century need not betoken the death of Marxism as a political ideology; indeed, it may give Marxism, now divorced from the vestiges of **Leninism** and **Stalinism**, a fresh lease of life.

Marx's ideas and theories reached a wider audience after his death, largely through the writings of his lifelong collaborator Engels, the German socialist leader Karl Kautsky (1854–1938) and the Russian theoretician Georgi Plekhanov (1856–1918). A form of orthodox Marxism, usually termed '**dialectical materi-alism**' (a term coined by Plekhanov, not Marx), came into existence that was later used as the basis for Soviet communism. This 'vulgar' Marxism undoubt-edly placed a heavier stress on mechanistic theories and historical determinism than did Marx's own writings.

Classical Marxism

The core of classical Marxism – the Marxism of Marx – is a philosophy of history that Engels described as the 'materialist conception of history', or **historical materialism**. This highlights the importance of economic life and the conditions under which people produce and reproduce their means of subsistence. Marx held that the economic 'base', consisting essentially of the 'mode of production, or economic system, conditions or determines the ideological and political 'superstructure'. Following Hegel (see p. 59), Marx believed that the driving force of historical change was the dialectic, a process of interaction between compet-ing forces that results in a higher stage of development. In its materialist version, this model implies that historical change is a consequence of internal contradic-tions within a 'mode of production', reflected in class conflict. Like all earlier class societies, capitalism is therefore doomed to collapse; in this case, as a result of conflict between the bourgeoisie or capitalist class, the owners of productive wealth, and the proletariat, who are, in effect, 'wage slaves'. This conflict is irrec-oncilable, because the proletariat is necessarily and systematically exploited

● **Leninism**: Lenin's theoretical contributions to Marxism, notably his belief in the need for a 'vanguard' party to raise the proletariat to class consciousness.

● **Stalinism**: The structures of Stalin's USSR, especially a centrally placed economy linked to systematic and brutal political oppression.

● **Dialectical materialism**: The crude and deterministic form of Marxism that dominated intellectual life in orthodox communist states.

● **Historical materialism**: The Marxist theory that holds that economic conditions ultimately structure law, politics, culture and other aspects of social existence.
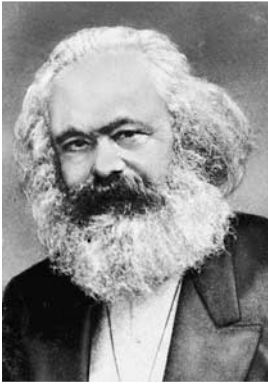
Karl Marx (1818–83)

German philosopher, economist and political thinker, usually portrayed as the father of twentieth-century communism. After a brief career as a university teacher, Marx took up journalism and became increasingly involved with the socialist movement. He settled in London after being expelled from Prussia, and worked for the rest of his life as an active revolutionary and writer, supported by his friend and lifelong collaborator Friedrich Engels. In 1864, Marx helped to found the First International, which collapsed in 1871 because of growing antagonism between Marx's supporters and anarchists led by Bakunin. Marx's classic work was the three-volume *Capital* ([1867, 1885, 1894] 1970). His best-known and most accessible work is the *Communist Manifesto* ([1848] 1967).

under capitalism, the bourgeoisie living by extracting 'surplus value' from its labour.

According to Marx, the inevitable proletarian revolution will occur once a series of deepening crises have brought the proletariat to full class consciousness. This would allow the working masses to recognize the fact of their own exploitation and so become a revolutionary force. The proletarian revolution would usher in a transitionary 'socialist' period of development, characterized by the '**dictatorship of the proletariat**'. However, as class antagonisms fade and a fully communist society comes into existence, this proletarian state will 'wither away', meaning that a communist society will be both classlessness and statelessness. As a system of 'commodity production' gives rise to one based on 'production for use' and geared to the satisfaction of genuine human needs, 'the free development of each would become the precondition for the free development of all' (Marx).

Orthodox communism

Marxism in practice is inextricably linked to the experience of Soviet communism (see p. 275), and especially to the contribution of the first two Soviet leaders, V. I. Lenin and Joseph Stalin (1879–1953). Indeed, twentieth-century communism is best understood as a form of Marxism–Leninism: that is, as orthodox Marxism modified by a set of Leninist theories and doctrines. Lenin's central contribution to Marxism was his theory of the revolutionary or vanguard party. This reflected Lenin's fear that the proletariat, deluded by bourgeois ideas and beliefs, would not realize its revolutionary potential because it could not develop beyond 'trade-union consciousness': a desire to improve working and living conditions rather than to overthrow capitalism. A revolutionary party, armed with Marxism, was therefore needed to serve as the 'vanguard of the working class'. In due course, this 'vanguard' or 'Leninist' party, composed of professional and dedicated revolutionaries, became the model for communist parties across the globe.

The USSR was, however, more profoundly affected by Stalin's 'second revolution' in the 1930s than it had been by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. In reshaping Soviet society, Stalin created a model of orthodox communism that was followed in the post-1945 period by states such as China, North Korea and Cuba, and throughout Eastern Europe. What may be called 'economic Stalinism' was

● **Dictatorship of the proletariat**: A temporary proletarian state, established to prevent counter-revolution and oversee the transition from capitalism to communism.

Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979)

German political philosopher and social theorist, and co-founder of the Frankfurt School. A refugee from Hitler's Germany, Marcuse lived in the USA from 1934. He developed a form of neo-Marxism that drew heavily on Hegel and Freud. Marcuse came to prominence in the 1960s as a leading thinker of the New Left and a 'guru' of the student movement. He portrayed advanced industrial society as an all-encompassing system of repression that subdued argument and debate, and absorbed opposition. His hopes rested not on the proletariat, but on marginalized groups such as students, ethnic minorities, women and workers in the developing world. His most important works include *Reason and Revolution* (1941), *Eros and Civilization* (1958) and *One-Dimensional Man* (1964).

initiated with the launch in 1928 of the first Five Year Plan, which brought about the swift and total eradication of private enterprise. This was followed in 1929 by the collectivization of agriculture. All resources were brought under the control of the state, and a system of central planning dominated by the State Planning Committee (*Gosplan*) was established. Stalin's political changes were no less dramatic. During the 1930s, Stalin transformed the USSR into a personal dictatorship through a series of purges that eradicated all vestiges of opposition and debate from the Communist Party, the state bureaucracy and the military. In effect, Stalin turned the USSR into a totalitarian dictatorship, operating through systematic intimidation, repression and terror.

Although the more brutal features of orthodox communism did not survive Stalin's death in 1953, the core principles of the Leninist party (hierarchical organization and discipline) and of economic Stalinism (state collectivization and central planning) stubbornly resisted pressure for reform. This was highlighted by Gorbachev's ***perestroika*** reform process (1985–91), which merely succeeded in exposing the failings of the planning system, and in releasing long-suppressed political forces. These eventually consigned Soviet communism to what Trotsky (see p. 369) had, in very different circumstances, called 'the dustbin of history'. However, political Stalinism survives in China, despite the embrace of market reforms, and North Korea remains a thoroughgoing orthodox communist regime. The collapse of communism during the 1989–91 period is widely seen as the most significant ideological event of the modern period (see p. 44).

Neo-Marxism

A more complex and subtle form of Marxism developed in western Europe. By contrast with the mechanistic and avowedly scientific notions of Soviet Marxism, western Marxism or neo-Marxism (see p. 64) tended to be influenced by Hegelian ideas and by the stress on 'Man the creator' found in Marx's early writings. In other words, human beings were seen as makers of history, and not simply as puppets controlled by impersonal material forces. By insisting that there was an interplay between economics and politics, between the material

● ***Perestroika***: (Russian) Literally, 'restructuring'; a slogan that refers to the attempt to liberalize and democratize the Soviet system within a communist framework.
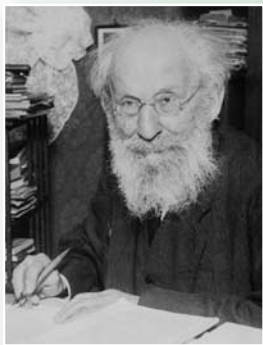
Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932)

German socialist politician and theorist. An early member of the German SPD, Bernstein became one of the leading advocates of revisionism, the attempt to revise and modernize orthodox Marxism. Influenced by British Fabianism and the philosophy of Kant (see p. 410), Bernstein developed a largely empirical critique that emphasized the absence of class war, and proclaimed the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism. This is described in *Evolutionary Socialism* ([1898] 1962). He left the SPD over his opposition to World War I, although he subsequently returned and served as the secretary of state for the economy and finance in the Ebert government (1918–19). Bernstein is often seen as one of the founding figures of modern social democracy.

circumstances of life and the capacity of human beings to shape their own destinies, neo-Marxists were able to break free from the rigid 'base–superstructure' straitjacket. This indicated an unwillingness to treat the class struggle as the beginning and end of social analysis.

The Hungarian Marxist Georg Lukács (1885–1971) was one of the first to present Marxism as a humanistic philosophy. He emphasized the process of 'reification', through which capitalism dehumanizes workers by reducing them to passive objects or marketable commodities. In his *Prison Notebooks*, written in 1929–35, Antonio Gramsci emphasized the degree to which capitalism was maintained not merely by economic domination, but also by political and cultural factors. He called this ideological 'hegemony' (see p. 174). A more overtly Hegelian brand of Marxism was developed by the so-called 'Frankfurt School', the leading members of which were Theodor Adorno (1903–69), Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) and Herbert Marcuse (see p. 42). Frankfurt theorists developed what was called 'critical theory', a blend of Marxist political economy, Hegelian philosophy and Freudian psychology, which had a considerable impact on the New Left in the 1960s. A later generation of Frankfurt members included Jürgen Habermas (see p. 84).

While early critical theorists were primarily concerned with the analysis of discrete societies, later theorists have tended to give greater attention to uncovering inequalities and asymmetries in world affairs. This has been evident in an emphasis on the hegemonic power of the USA (Cox, 1987) and the analysis of capitalism as a 'world-system' (Wallerstein, 1984).

Social democracy

Social democracy lacks the theoretical coherence of, say, classical liberalism or **fundamentalist socialism**. Whereas the former is ideologically committed to the market, and the latter champions the cause of common ownership, social democracy stands for a balance between the market and the state, a balance between the individual and the community. At the heart of social democracy there is a compromise between, on the one hand, an acceptance of capitalism as

● **Fundamentalist socialism**: A form of socialism that seeks to abolish capitalism and replace it with a qualitatively different kind of society.

# Fall of communism: the triumph of liberal democracy?

Events: The collapse of communism was precipitated by a series of revolutions that took place during the momentous year of 1989. The first popular challenge to a communist regime in 1989 was the Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing, China, which began in April, but were suppressed by a military crackdown on 4 June. Events in Eastern Europe nevertheless gathered momentum the following day, as Solidarity, the newly-legalized independent trade union movement, swept the board in parliamentary elections, leading, by September, to the formation of the first non-communist government in the Eastern bloc. In October, the Hungarian parliament adopted legislation providing for multiparty elections and, eventually, the establishment of a second non-communist government. Pressure for political change built up in East Germany, the USSR's firmest Eastern bloc ally, as thousands of East Germans escaped to West Germany, via Hungary, and a growing wave of demonstrations eventually culminated on the night of 9/10 November in the fall of the Berlin Wall, the chief symbol of the Cold War and of Europe's East–West divide. Whereas peaceful protest led to the collapse of communist rule in Czechoslovakia (the 'velvet revolution') in December, and in Bulgaria in February 1990, the process was more violent in Romania, where the communist leader Ceauşescu and his wife Elena were summarily executed on Christmas Day 1989. The period of revolutionary upheaval eventually culminated in December 1991 with the official dissolution of the USSR, the world's first communist state, following a succession of nationalist uprisings across the multinational Soviet state.

Significance: The ideological significance of the fall of communism has been profound and far-reaching, and, in some senses, it remains a continuing process. The dominant early interpretation of the collapse of communism was advanced by so-called 'end of history' theorists such as Fukuyama (see p. 271). In this view, the collapse of orthodox communist regimes across Eastern Europe and beyond indicated the death of Marxism as an ideology of world-historical importance, revealing western-style, and more specifically US-style, liberal democracy as the determinant end-point of human history. The events of 1989–91 therefore merely illustrate the irresistible fact that human societies are destined to converge around an essentially liberal model of economic and social development, as only western liberalism can offer the benefits of social mobility and material security, on the one hand, and the opportunity for personal self-development without the interference of the state, on the other hand. Such an analysis suggests not only that communism is a spent ideological force, but also that socialism in its wider forms has been seriously compromised by the dramatic failure of the world's only significant non-capitalist economic systems. Social-democratic parties have, as a result, gone through a process of de-radicalization, encouraging some to proclaim that socialism, as a distinctive ideology, is dead.

However, there are reasons for thinking that the 'end of history' thesis was at best premature and at worst wholly misconceived. In the first place, the period since 1989–91 has certainly not witnessed worldwide ideological convergence around the principles of liberal democracy. Indeed, in the non-western world, liberalism has sometimes been contested more ferociously than ever before, not least by the forces of ethnic nationalism and religious fundamentalism, especially in the Muslim world. In China, and across much of East and Southeast Asia, Confucian and other indigenous ideas have gained renewed political currency, gaining strength in large part from the desire to resist the spread of atomistic and rights-orientated liberal thinking. Similarly, in its western heartland, liberalism's ascendancy has been challenged by an array of ideological forces, ranging from green politics and certain strains within feminism to communitarianism, multiculturalism and postmodernism. Finally, despite its undoubted resilience, it is difficult to see how liberal capitalism will ever achieve a universal appeal, given its inherent tendency towards social inequality and instability.
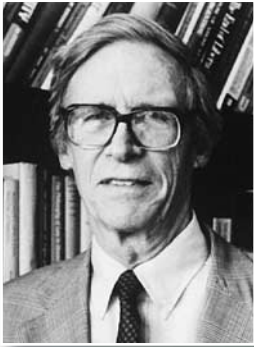
John Rawls (1921–2002)

US academic and political philosopher. His major work, *A Theory of Justice* (1970), is regarded as the most important work of political philosophy written in English since World War II. It has influenced modern liberals and social democrats alike. Rawls proposed a theory of 'justice as fairness' that is based on the belief that social inequality can be justified only if it is of benefit to the least advantaged. This presumption in favour of equality is rooted in Rawls' belief that most people, deprived of knowledge about their own talents and abilities, would choose to live in an egalitarian society, rather than an inegalitarian one. As, for most people, the fear of being poor outweighs the desire to be rich, redistribution and welfare can be defended on grounds of fairness. Rawls' other works include *Political Liberalism* (1993) and *The Laws of People* (1999).

the only reliable mechanism for generating wealth and, on the other, a desire to distribute wealth in accordance with moral, rather than market, principles. For socialists, this conversion to the market was a difficult, and at times painful, process that was dictated more by practical circumstances and electoral advantage than by ideological conviction.

The chief characteristic of modern social democratic thought is a concern for the underdog in society, the weak and vulnerable. There is a sense, however, in which social democracy cannot simply be confined to the socialist tradition. It may draw on a socialist belief in compassion and a common humanity, a liberal commitment to positive freedom and equal opportunities, or, for that matter, a conservative sense of paternal duty and care. Whatever its source, it has usually been articulated on the basis of principles such as welfarism, redistribution and social justice. In the form of Keynesian social democracy, which was widely accepted in the early period after World War II, it was associated with a clear desire to 'humanize' capitalism through state intervention. It was believed that Keynesian economic policies would secure full employment, a mixed economy would help government to regulate economic activity, and comprehensive welfare provision funded via progressive taxation would narrow the gap between rich and poor.

Since the 1980s, a further process of revisionism has taken place within social democracy. This occurred for a variety of reasons. In the first place, changes in the class structure, and particularly the growth of professional and clerical occupations, meant that social-democratic policies orientated around the interests of the traditional working class were no longer electorally viable. Second, globalization appeared to render all specifically national forms of economic management, such as Keynesianism, redundant. Third, nationalized industries and economic planning proved to be inefficient, at least in developed states. Fourth, the collapse of communism undermined the intellectual and ideological credibility not just of state collectivization, but of all 'top-down' socialist models. In this context, it became increasingly fashionable for politicians and political parties to rethink or revise 'traditional' social democracy.

'New' social democracy

'New' social democracy (sometimes called 'neo-revisionism' or the 'third way') is a term that refers to a variety of attempts by social-democratic parties, in countries ranging from Germany, Italy and the Netherlands to the UK and New Zealand, to reconcile old-style social democracy with, at least, the electorally-attractive aspects of neoliberalism. Although 'new' social democracy is imprecise and subject to a number of interpretations, certain characteristic themes can nevertheless be identified. The first of these is the belief that socialism, at least in the form of 'top-down' state intervention, is dead: there is no alternative to what Clause 4 of the UK Labour Party's constitution, rewritten in 1995, refers to as 'a dynamic market economy'. With this goes a general acceptance of globalization and the belief that capitalism has mutated into a 'knowledge economy', which places a premium on information technology, individual skills, and both labour and business flexibility. In this light, the state came to be seen not as a vehicle for wholesale social restructuring, but as a means of promoting international competitiveness; particularly by building up education and skills.

A further feature of 'new' social-democratic politics is that it has broken with socialist egalitarianism (which is seen as a form of 'levelling') and embraced, instead, the liberal ideas of equality of opportunity and meritocracy. Neorevisionist politicians typically endorse welfare reform. They reject both the neoliberal emphasis on 'standing on your own two feet' and the 'traditional' social-democratic commitment to 'cradle to grave' welfare in favour of an essentially modern liberal belief in 'helping people to help themselves', or, as the former US president Bill Clinton put it, giving people 'a hand up, not a hand out'. This has led to support for what has been called a 'workfare state', in which government provision in terms of benefits or education is conditional on individuals seeking work and becoming self-reliant. Critics of 'new' social democracy, on the other hand, argue either that it is contradictory, in that it simultaneously endorses the dynamism of the market and warns against its tendency to social disintegration, or that, far from being a centre-left project, it amounts to a shift to the right.

OTHER IDEOLOGICAL TRADITIONS

Liberalism, conservatism and socialism by no means exhaust the field of ideological politics. Other ideological traditions have nevertheless tended to develop either out of, or in opposition to, these core ideologies. Where they have drawn, to a significant extent, on liberal, conservative and/or socialist thinking, these other ideologies have a 'cross-cutting' character, in that they incorporate elements from 'bigger' ideological traditions. This applies, albeit in different ways, to anarchism, feminism, green politics and cosmopolitanism, as well as to nationalism and multiculturalism; ideological traditions that are examined, respectively, in Chapters 5 and 7. Where other ideological traditions have emerged largely in opposition to liberalism, conservatism and socialism, they have been marked by an attempt to challenge and overturn core features of the western political tradition itself. This applies in the case of

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945)

German Nazi dictator. Hitler was the son of an Austrian customs official. He joined the German Worker's Party (later the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP), or Nazi Party) in 1919, becoming its leader in 1921. He was appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, and declared himself *Führer* (Leader) the following year, by which time he had established a one-party dictatorship. The central feature of Hitler's world-view, outlined in *Mein Kampf* ([1925] 1969), was his attempt to fuse expansionist German nationalism and virulent anti-Semitism into a theory of history in which there was an endless battle between the Germans and the Jews, who represented, respectively, the forces of good and evil. Hitler's policies contributed decisively to both the outbreak of World War II and the Holocaust.

fascism and certain trends in non-western ideological thought, notably political Islam.

Fascism

Whereas liberalism, conservatism and socialism are nineteenth-century ideologies, fascism is a child of the twentieth century. Some would say that it is specifically an interwar phenomenon. Although fascist beliefs can be traced back to the late nineteenth century, they were fused together and shaped by World War I and its aftermath and, in particular, by the potent mixture of war and revolution that characterized the period. The two principal manifestations of fascism were Mussolini's Fascist dictatorship in Italy in 1922–43, and Hitler's Nazi dictatorship in Germany in 1933–45. Forms of neofascism and neo-Nazism have also resurfaced in recent decades, taking advantage of the combination of economic crisis and political instability that often followed the collapse of communism or, more widely, of increased anxieties over immigration and multiculturalism (see p. 167).

In many respects, fascism constituted a revolt against the ideas and values that had dominated western political thought since the French Revolution: in the words of the Italian Fascist slogan, '1789 is dead'. Values such as rationalism, progress, freedom and equality were thus overturned in the name of struggle, leadership, power, heroism and war. In this sense, fascism has an 'anticharacter'. It is defined largely by what it opposes: it is a form of anticapitalism, antiliberalism, anti-individualism, anticommunism, and so on. A core theme that, nevertheless, runs throughout fascism is the image of an organically unified national community. This is reflected in a belief in 'strength through unity'. The individual, in a literal sense, is nothing; individual identity must be absorbed entirely into that of the community or social group. The fascist ideal is that of the 'new man', a hero, motivated by duty, honour and self-sacrifice, prepared to dedicate his life to the glory of his nation or race, and to give unquestioning obedience to a supreme leader.

Not all fascists, however, think alike. Italian Fascism was essentially an extreme form of statism (see p. 71) that was based on unquestioning respect

and absolute loyalty towards a 'totalitarian' state. As the Fascist philosopher Gentile (1875–1944) put it, 'everything for the state; nothing against the state; nothing outside the state'. German National Socialism (or Nazism), on the other hand, was constructed largely on the basis of racialism (see p. 120). Its two core theories were Aryanism (the belief that the German people constitute a 'master race' and are destined for world domination), and a virulent form of anti-Semitism (see p. 121) that portrayed the Jews as inherently evil, and aimed at their eradication. This latter belief found expression in the 'Final Solution'.

Anarchism

Anarchism is unusual amongst political ideologies in that no anarchist party has ever succeeded in winning power, at least at national level. Nevertheless, anarchist movements were powerful in, for example, Spain, France, Russia and Mexico through to the early twentieth century, and anarchist ideas continue to fertilize political debate by challenging the conventional belief that law, government and the state are either wholesome or indispensable. Anarchist thinking has also been influential within the modern anti-capitalist, or anti-globalization, movement. The central theme within anarchism is the belief that political authority in all its forms, and especially in the form of the state, is both evil and unnecessary (anarchy literally means 'without rule'). Nevertheless, the anarchist preference for a stateless society in which free individuals manage their own affairs through voluntary agreement and cooperation has been developed on the basis of two rival traditions: liberal individualism, and socialist communitarianism. Anarchism can thus be thought of as a point of intersection between liberalism and socialism: a form of both 'ultraliberalism' and 'ultrasocialism'.

The liberal case against the state is based on individualism, and the desire to maximize liberty and choice. Unlike liberals, individualist anarchists such as William Godwin (1756–1836) believed that free and rational human beings would be able to manage their affairs peacefully and spontaneously, government being merely a form of unwanted coercion. Modern individualists have usually looked to the market to explain how society would be regulated in the absence of state authority, developing a form of **anarcho-capitalism**, an extreme version of free-market economics. The more widely-recognized anarchist tradition, however, draws on socialist ideas such as community, cooperation, equality and common ownership. Collectivist anarchists (sometimes called social anarchists) stress the capacity for social solidarity that arises from our sociable, gregarious and essentially cooperative natures. On this basis, the French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (see p. 381), for instance, developed what he called '**mutualism**'. Other anarchists, such as the Russian Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921), advanced a form of **anarcho-communism**, the central principles of which were common ownership, decentralization and workers' self-management. Modern thinkers influenced by anarchism include Noam Chomsky (see p. 181) and the US libertarian and social ecologist Murray Bookchin (1921–2006).

● **Anarcho-capitalism**: An ararchist tradition which holds that unregulated market competition can and should be applied to all social arrangements, making the state unnecessary.

● **Mutualism**: A system of fair and quitable exchange, in which individuals or groups trade goods and services with one another without profiteering or exploitation.

● **Anarcho-communism**: An anarchist tradition which takes common ownership to be the sole reliable basis for social solidarity, thereby linking statelessness to classlessness.

Feminism

Although feminist aspirations have been expressed in societies dating back to Ancient China, they were not underpinned by a developed political theory until the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's (see p. 50) *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* ([1792] 1985). Indeed, it was not until the emergence of the women's suffrage movement in the 1840s and 1850s that feminist ideas reached a wider audience, in the form of so-called 'first-wave feminism'. The achievement of female suffrage in most western countries in the early twentieth century deprived the women's movement of its central goal and organizing principle. 'Second-wave feminism', however, emerged in the 1960s. This expressed the more radical, and sometimes revolutionary, demands of the growing Women's Liberation Movement (WLM). Feminist theories and doctrines are diverse, but their unifying feature is a common desire to enhance, through whatever means, the social role of women. The underlying themes of feminism are therefore, first, that society is characterized by sexual or gender inequality and, second, that this structure of male power can, and should be, overturned.

Feminist thinking has traditionally been analysed in terms of a division between liberal, socialist and radical schools of thought. **Liberal feminists**, such as Wollstonecraft and Betty Friedan (see p. 263), have tended to understand female subordination in terms of the unequal distribution of rights and opportunities in society. This 'equal-rights feminism' is essentially reformist. It is concerned more with the reform of the 'public' sphere; that is, with enhancing the legal and political status of women, and improving their educational and career prospects, than with reordering 'private' or domestic life. In contrast, **socialist feminists** typically highlight the links between female subordination and the capitalist mode of production, drawing attention to the economic significance of women being confined to a family or domestic life where they, for example, relieve male workers of the burden of domestic labour, rear and help to educate the next generation of capitalist workers, and act as a reserve army of labour.

However, the distinctive flavour of second-wave feminism results mainly from the emergence of a feminist critique that is not rooted in conventional political doctrines; namely, **radical feminism**. Radical feminists believe that gender divisions are the most fundamental and politically significant cleavages in society. In their view, all societies, historical and contemporary, are characterized by patriarchy (see p. 65), the institution whereby, as Kate Millett (1969) put it, 'that half of the population which is female is controlled by that half which is male'. Radical feminists therefore proclaim the need for a sexual revolution, a revolution that will, in particular, restructure personal, domestic and family life. The characteristic slogan of radical feminism is thus 'the personal is the political'. Only in its extreme form, however, does radical feminism portray men as 'the enemy', and proclaim the need for women to withdraw from male society, a stance sometimes expressed in the form of political lesbianism. However, since the 1970s feminism has, in many ways, moved beyond the three-fold division into liberal, socialist and radical traditions. Although 'new feminism' or 'third-wave feminism' are disparate, they tend to be characterized by doubts about the conventional goal of gender equality, placing an emphasis

● **Liberal feminism**: A feminist tradition whose core goal is equal access for women and men to the public realm, based on a belief of genderless personhood.

● **Socialist feminism**: A feminist tradition that seeks to restructure economic life to achieve gender equality, based in links between patriarchy and capitalism.

● **Radical feminism**: A feminist tradition that aims to overthrow patriarchy through a radical transformation of all spheres of life, but especially 'the personal'.

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97)

UK social theorist and feminist. Deeply influenced by the democratic radicalism of Rousseau, Wollstonecraft developed the first systematic feminist critique some 50 years before the emergence of the female-suffrage movement. Her most important work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* ([1792] 1985), was influenced by Lockean liberalism, and it stressed the equal rights of women, especially the right to education, on the basis of the notion of 'personhood'. However, the work developed a more complex analysis of womanhood itself that is relevant to the concerns of contemporary feminism. Wollstonecraft was married to the anarchist William Godwin, and she was the mother of Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*.

instead on differences, both between women and men and between women themselves.

Green politics

Although green politics, or ecologism (see p. 51), is usually seen as a new ideology that is linked to the emergence of the environmental movement since the late twentieth century, its roots can be traced back to the nineteenth-century revolt against industrialization. Green politics therefore reflects concern about the damage done to the natural world by the increasing pace of economic development (exacerbated since the second half of the twentieth century by the advent of nuclear technology, acid rain, ozone depletion, global warming and so on), and anxiety about the declining quality of human existence and, ultimately, the survival of the human species. Such concerns are sometimes expressed through the vehicle of conventional ideologies. For instance, ecosocialism explains environmental destruction in terms of capitalism's rapacious desire for profit. Ecoconservatism links the cause of conservation to the desire to preserve traditional values and established institutions. And ecofeminism locates the origins of the ecological crisis in the system of male power, reflecting the fact that men are less sensitive than women to natural processes and the natural world.

However, what gives green politics its radical edge is the fact that it offers an alternative to the **anthropocentric**, or human-centred, stance adopted by all other ideologies; it does not see the natural world simply as a resource available to satisfy human needs. By highlighting the importance of ecology, green politics develops an ecocentric world-view that portrays the human species as merely part of nature. One of the most influential theories in this field is the Gaia hypothesis, advanced by James Lovelock (1979, 2006). This portrays the planet Earth as a living organism that is primarily concerned with its own survival. Others have expressed sympathy for such radical **holism** by drawing on the ideas of Eastern religions that emphasize the oneness of life, such as Taoism and Zen Buddhism (Capra, 1983). 'Shallow' or humanist ecologists, such as those in some environmental pressure groups, believe that an appeal to self-interest and common sense will persuade humankind to adopt ecologically sound policies and lifestyles, usually in line with the principle of sustainable development (see

● **Anthropocentrism**: The belief that human needs and interests are of overriding moral and philosophical importance; the opposite of ecocentrism.

● **Holism**: The belief that the whole is more imortant than its parts, implying that understanding is gained only by studying relationships among its parts.

Ecologism

Ecology (a term first used by Ernst Haeckel in 1873) is the study of the relationship between living organisms and their environment. It thus draws attention to the network of relationships that sustain all forms of life. Ecologism is a political doctrine or ideology that is constructed on the basis of ecological assumptions, notably about the essential link between humankind and the natural world: humans are part of nature, not its 'masters'. Ecologism is sometimes distinguished from environmentalism, in that the former implies the adoption of a biocentric perspective, while the latter is concerned with protecting nature, ultimately for human benefit.

Figure 2.1   As ecologists argue, human-centredness poses a threat to both nature and, ultimately, human survival (Ferrybridge, UK).

p. 140). 'Deep' ecologists, on the other hand, insist that nothing short of a fundamental reordering of political priorities, and a willingness to place the interests of the ecosystem before those of any individual species, will ultimately secure planetary and human survival. Members of both groups can be found in the 'anti-party' green parties that have sprung up in Germany, Austria and elsewhere in Europe since the 1970s.

Cosmopolitanism

Although cosmopolitan ideas can be traced back to the Cynics of Ancient Greece and the Stoics of Ancient Rome, cosmopolitanism has only been treated as an ideological tradition in its own right since the 1990s. This occurred as the moral, political and cultural implications of growing global interconnectedness became increasingly apparent. In that sense, cosmopolitanism can be viewed as the ideological expression of globalization (although the relationship between the two is complex, cosmopolitans often calling for radical changes in the currently dominant forms of globalization). In a literal sense, cosmopolitanism means a belief in a *cosmopolis* or 'world state'. However, such 'political' cosmopolitanism, which is reflected in the quest to establish global political institutions, has limited relevance to modern cosmopolitan thinking, due to its association with the unfashionable idea of **world government**. Modern cosmopolitanism therefore tends to have a moral or cultural character.

'Moral' cosmopolitanism, the notion that underpins much anti-globalization activism, is the belief that the world constitutes a single moral community. This implies that people have obligations (potentially) towards all other people in the world, regardless of nationality, religion, ethnicity and so forth. Such ethical thinking is based on the core idea that the individual, rather than any political community, is the principal focus of moral concern. Most commonly, this is asserted through the doctrine of human rights (see p. 342). Nevertheless, moral cosmopolitanism has taken contrasting liberal and socialist forms.

● **World government**: The idea of all of humankind united under one common political authority, whether a unitary world state with supranational authority or a federal body that shares sovereignty with nation-states.

Liberal cosmopolitanism has been expressed in two ways. The first is the attempt to universalize civic and political rights, especially classic 'liberal' rights such as the right to life, liberty and property, freedom of expression and freedom from arbitrary arrest. This form of cosmopolitanism has been associated with, amongst other things, support for humanitarian intervention (see p. 424) and attempts to strengthen the framework of international law, notably through international courts and tribunals. The second form of liberal cosmopolitanism derives from economic liberalism, and places particular stress on attempts to universalize market society, seen as a means of widening individual freedom and promoting material advancement. In marked contrast, socialist cosmopolitanism is rooted in the Marxist belief that proletarian class solidarity has a transnational character, graphically expressed in the famous final words of the *Communist Manifesto*: 'Working men of all countries, unite!' Modern versions of such thinking are, nevertheless, more likely to be based on the idea of economic and social rights, than on Marxist analysis. The key theme in this form of cosmopolitanism is the quest for global social justice, implying both a substantial redistribution of wealth from the global North to the global South and a radical reform of the system of global economic governance (discussed in Chapter 19).

Such thinking is often associated with 'cultural' cosmopolitanism, which highlights the extent to which people's values and lifestyles have been reconfigured as a result of intensified global interconnectedness. In this sense, political community is in the process of being redefined as people come to think of themselves as 'global citizens', rather than merely citizens of a particular state. The supposed evidence for this is the shift from nationalism to multiculturalism, or, at least, a form of multiculturalism that emphasizes hybridity and cultural mixing, or 'mongrelization' (Waldron, 1995). However, although cosmopolitanism has had a growing impact on ethical thinking, it has had only a limited impact in terms of cultural restructuring. Nationalism may be under growing pressure from forces both within and without, but (as discussed in Chapter 5) the nation remains the pre-eminent basis for political community, with no international body, including the European Union, coming close to rivalling its ability to foster affection and civic allegiance.

Non-western ideological trends

In origin, political ideology was a distinctively western construct. The major ideological traditions developed as contrasting attempts to shape emergent industrial society, their ideas and theories being indelibly shaped by historical experience in Europe and North America. Moreover, in the case of liberalism and socialism in particular, political ideology drew from an Enlightenment tradition that emphasized the ideas of reason and progress, and helped to shape wider intellectual and cultural developments in the West. As political ideology spread, it therefore exported to the rest of the world an essentially western model of modernity, or, more accurately, competing western models of modernity. Ideological trends such as 'Arab nationalism', 'African socialism' or 'Chinese communism' therefore amounted to attempts to apply western ideas in non-western contexts, although, at times, western doctrines were also entangled with indigenous values and ideas. As Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania, 1964-85,

pointed out, 'We, in Africa, have no more real need to be "converted" to socialism, than we have of being "taught" democracy'. He therefore described his own views as 'tribal socialism'.

Postcolonialism

Nevertheless, more explicit attempts to give political ideology a non-western identity emerged out of trends associated with postcolonialism (see p. 52). The characteristic feature of postcolonialism is that it sought to give the non-western world a distinctive political voice separate from, in particular, the universalist pretensions of liberalism and socialism. An early but influential attempt to do this was undertaken at the Bandung Conference of 1955, when 29 mostly newly-independent African and Asian countries, including Egypt, Ghana, India and Indonesia, initiated what later became known as the **Non-Aligned Movement**. They saw themselves as an independent power bloc, offering a 'Third World' perspective on global political, economic and cultural priorities. This 'third-worldism' defined itself in contradistinction to both western and Soviet models of development.

However, postcolonial ideological trends have been highly disparate. They have been reflected in Gandhi's (see p. 54) political philosophy, which was based on a religious ethic of non-violence and self-sacrifice that was ultimately rooted in Hinduism. In this view, violence, 'the doctrine of the sword', was a western imposition on India. In contrast, the Martinique-born French revolutionary theorist Franz Fanon (1926–61) highlighted the extent to which colonial rule operates at a psycho-political level through the asymmetrical relationship between 'whites' and 'blacks', and that this could only be destroyed through the purifying force of 'absolute violence' (Fanon, 1968).

Religious fundamentalism

Postcolonialism has, nevertheless, been expressed most forcibly through the upsurge, especially since the late 1970s, in religious fundamentalism and, most importantly, Islamic fundamentalism, or political Islam. The idea that an intense and militant faith that Islamic beliefs constitute the overriding principles of social life and politics first emerged in the writings of thinkers such as Sayyid Qutb (1906–66) and through the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood. Their goal was the establishment of an Islamic state based on the principles of *shari'a* law. Political Islam was brought to prominence by the Iranian revolution of 1979, which led to the founding of the world's first Islamic state, under Ayatollah Khomeini (see p. 164). It subsequently spread throughout the Middle East, across North Africa, and into parts of Asia. Although the Shi'a fundamentalism of Iran has generated the fiercest commitment and devotion, Islamism (see p. 165) in general has been a vehicle for expressing anti-westernism, reflecting both antipathy towards the neo-colonial policies of western powers and anxiety about the 'imposition' of permissive and materialist values. This was clearly reflected in the Taliban regime of Afghanistan (1997–2001), and also in the growth of **jihadist** groups such as al-Qaeda, for whom the spiritual quest became synonymous with militant politics, armed struggle and possibly martyrdom.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948)

An Indian spiritual and political leader (called *Mahatma*, 'Great Soul'), Gandhi trained as a lawyer in the UK and worked in South Africa, where he organized protests against discrimination. After returning to India in 1915, he became the leader of the nationalist movement, campaigning tirelessly for independence, finally achieved in 1947. Gandhi's ethic of non-violent resistance, *satyagraha*, reinforced by his ascetic lifestyle, gave the movement for Indian independence enormous moral authority. Derived from Hinduism, Gandhi's political philosophy was based on the assumption that the universe is regulated by the primacy of truth, or *satya*, and that humankind is 'ultimately one'. Gandhi was assassinated in 1948 by a fanatical Hindu, becoming a victim of the ferocious Hindu-Muslim violence which followed independence.

Asian values

Other non-western ideological trends have had no connection with fundamentalist religion, however. During the 1980s and 1990s, for example, the idea of so-called **'Asian values'** gained growing currency, fuelled by the emergence of Japan as an economic superpower and the success of the 'tiger' economies of Hong Kong, South Korea, Thailand and Singapore. While not rejecting the idea of universal human rights, Asian values drew attention to supposed differences between western and Asian value systems, highlighting the extent to which human rights had traditionally been constructed on the basis of culturally-biased western assumptions. Asian values had sought to rectify this by offering a vision of social harmony and cooperation grounded in loyalty, duty and respect for authority. Although their influence declined markedly following the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis, they have resurfaced through their association with Confucianism (see p. 278), bolstered by the rise of China.

Beyond dualism

An alternative non-western ideological trend has contrasted the non-dualistic emphasis found in some non-western philosophical traditions with the resolute **dualism** of conventional western philosophy. Aristotle's (see p. 6) insistence that everything has a distinctive essence that it cannot lack, expressed through the idea that 'everything must either be or not be', can thus be contrasted with the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna's (*ca*. 150–250 CE) doctrine of *sunyata* or 'emptiness'. According to this, all concepts and objects lack 'own-being', highlighting intrinsic interdependence. Such thinking, often influenced by Buddhism or Taoism, was also been expressed by Kyoto School philosophers in Japan such as Nishada Kitaro (1870–1945), who asserted that the world is characterized by the 'absolute unity of opposites'. If western 'either/or' thinking is set aside in favour of a world-view that stresses integration and oneness, all other forms of dualism – mind/body, good/evil, subject/object, humankind/nature and so on – begin to collapse. Non-dualistic thinking has had its greatest ideological impact in relation to green politics, where it provides the philosophical foundation for many forms of deep ecology.

● **Asian values**: Values that supposedly reflect the history, culture and religious backgrounds of Asian societies; examples include social harmony, respect for authority and a belief in the family.

● **Dualism**: The belief that reality consists of two basic principles, often taken to be mind and matter but it may extend to other dualities.

SUMMARY

● Ideology is a controversial political term that has often carried pejorative implications. In the social-scientific sense, a political ideology is a more or less coherent set of ideas that provides a basis for organized political action. Its central features are an account of existing power relationships, a model of a desired future, and an outline of how political change can and should be brought about.

● Ideologies link political theory with political practice. On one level, ideologies resemble political philosophies, in that they constitute a collection of values, theories and doctrines; that is, a distinctive world-view. On another level, however, they take the form of broad political movements, and are articulated through the activities of political leaders, parties and groups.

● Every ideology can be associated with a characteristic set of principles and ideas. Although these ideas 'hang together', in the sense that they interlock in distinctive ways, they are systematic or coherent only in a relative sense. All ideologies thus embody a range of rival traditions and internal tensions. Conflict within ideologies is thus sometimes more passionate than that between ideologies.

● Ideologies are by no means hermetically sealed and unchanging systems of thought. They overlap with one another at a number of points, and they sometimes have shared concerns and a common vocabulary. They are also always subject to political or intellectual renewal, both because they interact with, and influence the development of, other ideologies, and because they change over time as they are applied to changing historical circumstances.

● The significance of particular ideologies rises and falls in relation to the ideology's relevance to political, social and economic circumstances, and its capacity for theoretical innovation. Development during the twentieth century and beyond have forced major ideologies such as liberalism, conservatism and socialism to re-examine their traditional principles. Since around the 1960s, the ideological landscape has been transformed by the emergence of so-called 'new' ideologies, such as feminism, green politics and cosmopolitanism, and by a growing recognition of the ideological significance of a range of non-western ideas and theories.

Questions for discussion

● Why has the concept of ideology so often carried negative associations?
● Is it any longer possible to distinguish between liberalism and socialism?
● To what extent do New Right ideas conflict with those of traditional conservatism?
● Is 'new' social democracy a meaningful and coherent ideological stance?
● Has Marxism a future?
● What circumstances are most conducive to the rise of fascism?
● Do anarchists demand the impossible?
● Why have feminism, green politics and comopolitanism grown in significance?
● To what extent do non-western ideological trends challenge western ideologies?

Further reading

Freedman, M., *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (2003). A brief (as promised) but authoritative guide to the nature of ideology and its place in the modern world.

Heywood, A., *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (5th edn) (2012). An accessible, up-to-date and comprehensive guide to the major ideological traditions.

Good introductions to particular ideologies include the following: Arblaster (1984) on liberalism, O'Sullivan (1976) on conservatism, Wright (1987) on socialism, Giddens (2001) on the 'third way', Marshall (1991) on anarchism, Laqueur (1979) on fascism, Bryson (2003) on feminism, Dobson (1990) on green politics, Appiah (2007) on cosmopolitanism, and Marty and Appleby (1993) on religious fundamentalism.