Great Ideas/ Grand Schemes

Political Ideologies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

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CHAPTER 2

Classical Liberalism

Liberalism has fallen on hard times, as even those politicians who hold liberal values and support liberal policies avoid labeling themselves "liberals." Most citizens and students apparently wish to distance themselves from any identification with the dreaded "L-word." Such resistance to liberalism invites analysis because liberal ideas—or at least the ideas of classical liberalism—are sewn into the fabric of American government and culture. When liberalism emerged as the first ideology two centuries ago, it endorsed many ideas that are widely accepted today. Classical liberals believe that individuals should enjoy extensive social, political, and economic liberties. They assert that although natural rights are distributed equally to all citizens, the unequal distribution of many social goods, including property and wealth, is not unjust. Classical liberals want the powers of governments to be limited, divided, and subject to the consent of their citizens. They argue that revolutions—like the American Revolution—may be justified if governments abuse their powers and curtail individual liberties and rights.

Many liberal ideas originated several centuries before the term "liberalism" was coined in 1810 by the *Liberales* in the Spanish legislature. To understand how classical liberalism emerged as a coherent ideology, we examine the following developments. First, we explore the problems that concerned "men of liberal temperament"—especially Englishmen and Frenchmen—during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries.[1] Second, we briefly specify the political goals of leading Enlightenment thinkers during the eighteenth century. Third, the philosophical assumptions of classical liberalism are presented. Fourth, we discuss the political principles that emerged to justify capitalism in

[1]Male nouns and pronouns are used here and subsequently in this chapter because most classical liberals thought and wrote in terms of a male-centered society. Of course, some liberals recognized that liberal assumptions implied equal rights for women. Two feminist classics within the liberal tradition are Mary Wollestonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, published in 1792, and John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women*, published in 1869. Mill's longtime companion, Harriot Taylor, played an important role in the development of this book, but whether she is properly a coauthor continues to be debated.

increasingly democratic societies. Sidebar 2-1 identifies some of the major contributors to classical liberalism and their principal writings.

In subsequent chapters, we will see that the ideas of classical liberalism have been both partially abandoned by contemporary liberals and partially absorbed by adherents of other political ideologies. Indeed, libertarians and contemporary conservatives often argue that they are the true heirs of the liberal tradition, and that contemporary liberals are no longer committed to individualism and limited government. For now, it is important to recognize that classical liberalism describes beliefs and values that were dominant in western Europe (especially England and France) and the United States during the nineteenth century and that are still widely held today. People currently holding these views are seldom regarded as liberals, however, as contemporary liberalism has emerged as a separate, though related, ideology.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Classical liberalism slowly emerged as a response to a variety of problems confronting Europe as it abandoned its feudal and medieval past and embraced

Sidebar 2-1

Some Classical Liberals and Their Main Writings

John Locke (1632–1704)
- *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689)
- *Two Treatises of Government* (1690)
- *Essay on Human Understanding* (1690)

Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755)
- *The Spirit of Laws* (1750)

Voltaire (Francois-Marie Arouet) (1694–1778)
- *Lettres Philosophiques* (1734)

Adam Smith (1723–1790)
- *The Wealth of Nations* (1776)

Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832)
- *Fragment on Government* (1776)
- *Introduction to Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789)

Thomas Paine (1737–1809)
- *The Rights of Man* (1791)

James Madison (1751–1836)
- *The Federalist Papers* (1787–1788), with John Jay and Alexander Hamilton

James Mill (1773–1836)
- *Essay on Government* (1820)

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873)
- *Principles of Political Economy* (1848)
- *On Liberty* (1859)
- *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861)
- *Utilitarianism* (1861)
- *The Subjection of Women* (1869), with Harriet Taylor

Friedrich Hayek (1899–1992)
- *The Road to Serfdom* (1944)
- *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960)

to these earlier principles can promote an environment of economic, intellectual, and political freedom that will revitalize the economy, unleash the intellectual energies of individuals, ensure political rights, and thus promote human progress.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Classical liberalism was the first systematic ideology, and it remains a powerful voice not only in the United States and Western Europe but in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics. Classical liberals argue that their enduring influence is due to their having created a science of politics providing universally valid principles of political economy based on appropriate philosophical assumptions. By assuming a natural world in which humans are utility maximizers and in which society is simply an aggregation of self-interested individuals, they have deduced "objective" standards for evaluating the goodness of political institutions: To what extent do these institutions protect the natural rights of citizens? To what extent do these institutions provide for the greatest good of the greatest number?

A minimal government is needed to protect natural rights, and capitalism is needed to maximize economic utility. Constitutional government and representative democracy limit governmental power and protect the rights and interests of citizens. In order to turn their energies to private and, often, economic concerns, citizens need only participate in the periodic selection of their representatives and obey minimal governmental laws. Human progress is secured by allowing individuals to pursue their own happiness as they see fit, as is possible within a free society, a capitalist economy, and a constitutional democracy.

The principles of classical liberalism have brought many social, economic, and political benefits to those countries in North America and Europe where they have been applied. Societies which provide the opportunity for social mobility have replaced societies based on fixed social status. Religious intolerance and religious wars have, for the most part, subsided. Absolutist governments have given way to constitutional democracies. Political liberties—such as freedom of the press and freedom of speech—are widely permitted. Capitalism has produced enormous material wealth. And individuals enjoy an extensive private sphere in which to think, act, and live according to their own wishes.

But classical liberalism has not been without its detractors, as we shall see when we explore alternative ideologies in subsequent chapters. Perhaps the philosophical assumptions of liberalism are inadequate. Is the material world our only world, and what are the political implications of beliefs in divinity? Are humans only utility maximizers, or is there something more noble in the human spirit? Are societies only an aggregation of individuals, or do they exist prior to individuals, imposing social roles and obligations on everyone? Do people really have natural rights? Is utilitarianism an adequate guide for evaluating the merit of political practices and policies?

When liberal assumptions about these questions are rejected, numerous criticisms of liberal principles emerge. Perhaps governments should do more than secure individual rights—perhaps they should regulate morality and the economy. Perhaps market justice is unfair to those who fail in the marketplace. Perhaps limited and divided government diminishes the capacity of political authority to achieve the public good. Perhaps representative democracy is unable to provide strong national leadership or

ample opportunities for citizen participation in government. And perhaps liberal principles have excused citizens from taking an active role in public life and exercising more social responsibilities. While classical liberals can become ideologues who are blind to the limitations of their philosophical assumptions and political principles, liberalism is an inherently tolerant and open-minded political outlook. True liberals engage in continuous internal debate and have developed a variety of "liberalisms" to accommodate their evolving political differences.[32]

[32]See, for example, John Gray, *Liberalisms: Essays in Political Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1989).

CHAPTER 3

Traditional Conservatism

Traditional conservatism is a political outlook formulated by those who sought to protect customary ways of life against the liberal (and sometimes radical) ideas that emerged in western Europe during and after the eighteenth century. Traditional conservatives think that the liberal celebration of individualism is misguided, because it undermines traditional social units such as the family, the church, the guild, and the local community. They argue that the growth of capitalist economies encourages individuals to take self-interested rather than public-regarding actions, and that it encourages innovation and competitiveness to a degree that undermines social order. For traditional conservatives, strong political and religious authority—located in the monarchs, the landed aristocracy, and religious leaders—is necessary for social stability and to guide society toward the public good. Most generally, they believe that traditions and conventions of societies serve as more prudent guidelines for individual, social, and political conduct than do the scientific theories of political liberals and the utopian ideas of radicals.

Between the Middle Ages and the late 1700s, most Europeans assumed that social solidarity was more important than individual rights, that governments must create social harmony, that societies should be governed by natural leaders, and that traditions must be respected. Nevertheless, these ideas began to be challenged by several developments at the dawn of modernity. The Renaissance (particularly in France and Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) had emphasized intellectual and artistic creativity and humanism. It had questioned traditional ideas about political authority and had pried open some space for individualism. The Protestant Reformation, a religious upheaval that broke the monopoly of the Catholic Church during the sixteenth century, had initiated resistance to religious authority and had voiced new understandings about individualism, equality, and participation in government. The scientific revolution that occurred in Britain and western Europe from about 1550 to 1650, gave rise to more natural understandings of

both the social and the physical worlds, and it suggested that humans could know, control, and change the world on the basis on their empirical investigations and rational deductions regarding it. The Enlightenment, a philosophical movement that was centered in France during the eighteenth century, had attacked traditional and religious beliefs as enemies of rationality and had placed the individual at center stage, as both a source of knowledge and as a unit of inquiry. The industrial revolution had begun and gave rise to demands for economic freedom, especially the freedom to trade in a manner unrestricted by religious, governmental, and customary regulations. Each of these attacks on tradition had evoked criticisms from "conservatives" who feared instability and disorder from these developments. Nevertheless, these conservative criticisms and impulses required a defining moment to emerge as a full-blown ideology.

The **French Revolution** provided such a defining moment. In 1789, the absolutist state of King Louis XVI was overthrown, and a National Assembly established the principles for a new order with its *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.* By 1791, a new constitution established a constitutional monarchy and extended citizen rights to tax-paying property holders. In the period from 1792 to 1793, radical politicians abolished the monarchy and executed the king and queen. The French Republic was born. In theory, this regime was to act on the basis of the national will, as known by majority vote, and was to cast aside all traditions in favor of rational principles of government. But resistance to this regime led to the suspension of constitutional government and the creation of a provisional regime. This provisional regime initiated the "Reign of Terror" to suppress enemies of the revolution and to achieve a "Republic of Virtue," wherein popular education would mold ethical citizens. The most radical events and phases of the French Revolution had run their course by 1795, when one of the revolution's principal leaders, Robespierre, was executed. However, these events in France and the threat that such

Sidebar 3-1

Some Traditional Conservatives and Their Main Writings

Edmund Burke (1729–1797)
Reflections on the Revolution in France (1790)
An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs (1791)

Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821)
Considerations on France (1797)

Henry Adams (1838–1918)
History of the United States of America (1889)
Democracy: An American Novel (1880)

Emile Durkheim (1858–1917)
Suicide (1897)

José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955)
The Revolt of the Masses (1930)

Michael Oakeshott (1901–1990)
Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays (1962)

Russell Kirk (1918–)
A Program for Conservatives (1954)

revolutionary events would be repeated elsewhere in Europe were sufficient to give rise to traditional conservatism articulated as a set of counterrevolutionary principles. Indeed, by 1790, the basic ideas of traditional conservatism were set forth in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* by the central and guiding figure in conservative thought, the Irish intellectual Edmund Burke (1729–1797), who served as a member of the British Parliament for thirty years.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, traditional conservatives accepted some new developments in politics and economics. They accepted certain aspects of democratization, such as increasing the number of elected officials and enlarging the franchise, but they never forgot the need for strong political authorities. They accepted certain aspects of capitalism, but they never celebrated capitalism (as did classical liberals), because they feared that the economic liberties of individuals posed moral dangers to the good society. Resisting the rapid social, economic, and political changes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, traditional conservatives sought to protect the world against this avalanche of change. When protection proved impossible, as was often the case, traditional conservatives fought to slow down the modernization of society.

The number of self-proclaimed traditional conservatives has declined in the twentieth century, but many of their ideas continue to be embraced by people who believe that human rationality and individualism have been unduly celebrated in the contemporary world and that traditional values and virtues have been unduly neglected. To some extent, the ideas of traditional conservatives are expressed by contemporary conservatives, but traditional conservatism and contemporary conservatism have sufficient differences to merit consideration as separate ideologies. Traditional conservatism continues to provide imporant political insights and interesting perspectives that are inadequately captured by the views of most people who call themselves "conservatives" today.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Most generally, traditional conservatives feared liberal and radical innovations. The human propensity to resist change and to clutch the old and habitual routines is not new and is certainly not uniquely modern. Criticisms of change accompanied by reverence for traditional practices had long been common in western Europe. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the scientific revolution, and the Enlightenment all had their opponents. The French Revolution, however, inspired more than a "typical" conservative reaction. Because the French Revolution combined the most radical assaults on the old order with a methodical ruthlessness, it drove conservative commentators to focus their criticisms and to elaborate their perspectives into a more coherent view that served as the foundation for traditional conservative ideology.

Edmund Burke summarized the traditional conservative reaction to the

in regard to change. First, there is a conservative preference to avoid change entirely. The past should be respected, and tradition should be revered. Change always entails a loss of the familiar, with no guarantee that the loss will be offset by new gains. The modern fascination for innovation, for the new, and for the ideal is not shared by traditional conservatives. Well-established routines, time-honored conventions, and familiar surroundings are imperative components of the proper environment for living the good life.

Second, changes that are necessary should be put into place gradually and should be aimed at solving limited and specific problems. Innovation should resemble growth in an organism, rather than wholesale remodeling of a machine. Change will always have unexpected costs and unanticipated consequences; thus, change must be gradual and contained so that if it does go awry, the costs will be limited and the consequences manageable.

Third, changes in the law should reflect changes in public opinion and understanding. Traditional conservatives oppose the use of law to try to change public views or to alter traditional behaviors. Laws should try to follow public norms rather than try to shape public norms. Traditional conservatives have not been sympathetic to feminism nor to "liberation" movements in general. They see such reforms as attempts to "engineer" a new society. Moreover, such reforms fail to acknowledge that differentiation and difference are necessary for the organic and unequal society traditional conservatives seek.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The twentieth century, of course, has not been a favorite century for traditional conservatives. This has been the case even in societies that have resisted socialist and fascist ideologies. Democratic values have encouraged a variety of reforms aimed at greater social equality. Furthermore, democracies in their quest for change have relied increasingly on bureaucracies to provide such change. Bureaucracies treat everyone the same, destroying the possibility for individual excellence. Even the art of war has become a science of killing, leading Winston Churchill to comment, "War, which used to be cruel and magnificent, has now become cruel and squalid."

Capitalism also undermines traditional conservative values, because it rewards innovation and provides opportunities for social mobility. Capitalism encourages a utilitarian perspective that robs the world of intrinsic worth and an egoism that shatters community life.

Liberalism has generated demands for laws designed to change cultural norms. Some liberal societies have passed laws and enforced court rulings that have protected minorities against majoritarian wishes *and* traditional norms. In the United States, the courts, much to the dismay of traditional conservatives, have been willing to make decisions that shape public norms and ignore traditional conventions.

In the face of these onslaughts on their values, twentieth-century traditional conservatives have advocated a personal commitment to a conservative temperament more than they have championed a systematic political agenda. Michael Oakeshott's descrip-

tion of this temperament reveals the distance between traditional conservatism and the other ideologies we will examine in this text:

> The man of conservative temperament believes that a known good is not lightly to be surrendered for an unknown better. He is not in love with what is dangerous and difficult; he is unadventurous; he has no impulse to sail uncharted seas; for him there is no magic in being lost, bewildered or shipwrecked. If he is forced to navigate the unknown, he sees virtue in heaving the lead every inch of the way. What others plausibly identify as timidity, he recognizes in himself as rational prudence; what others interpret as inactivity, he recognizes as a disposition to enjoy rather than to exploit. He is cautious, and he is disposed to indicate his assent or dissent, not in absolute, but in graduated terms. He eyes the situation in terms of its propensity to disrupt the familiarity of the features of his world.[21]

[21]Oakeshott, "On Being Conservative," pp. 172–173.

CHAPTER 5

Marxism

For many Americans, Marxism embodies some foolish ideas that were embraced by communist regimes in the Soviet Union, "Red China," North Vietnam, Cuba, and elsewhere during the Cold War. In this view, Marxism is responsible for the international hostilities between "the East and the West" and for the lack of freedom for people living behind the "Iron Curtain." It justifies despotic government and relies on failed economic doctrines that undermine productivity and human initiative in an attempt to enforce a drab equality on people everywhere. Perhaps there is some truth to such a characterization of Marxism, but a less biased assessment of this ideology requires a deeper understanding of its many great ideas.

"Marxism" refers generally to the ideas proposed by Karl Marx (1818–1883). According to Marx, humans are naturally laboring beings, and all human activity is ultimately economic activity. All societies are divided, on the basis of economic activity, into ruling and subordinate classes. All societies pursue economic productivity by enforcing a division of labor that alienates humans from their potential as creatively laboring beings. These features are especially true of capitalist society, in which there are only two significant classes: a small group of capitalists, who own all the means of production, and the large mass of the proletariat, who own only their own labor and who are the more alienated of the two classes. Analysis of the laws of history and political economy reveals that capitalism is doomed and will be overthrown by the proletariat. This revolution will pave the way to a classless, communist society. Private property will be abolished, and the political state (which upholds the interests of the ruling class) will cease to be necessary and will ultimately wither away. In this society, all human beings will achieve their potential as creative laborers, and none will be alienated from their labor, from the products of their labor, or from each other.

On the basis of such ideas, Marx sought to provide an intellectual foundation to the working-class movements in Europe during the latter half of the nineteenth century. *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which he wrote with Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) in 1848, was an attempt to unite the work-

Sidebar 5-1

Main Writings of Marx and Engels

Karl Marx (1818–1883)
- *On the Jewish Question* (1843)
- *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844; published in 1927)
- *The German Ideology* (1846)
- *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (with Engels, 1848)
- *The Grundrisse* (1856–1857)
- *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859)
- *Das Kapital, vol. 1* (1867)
- *The Civil War in France* (1871)
- *Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875; formally published in 1891)
- *Das Kapital, vol. 2* (1885; edited by Engels)
- *Das Kapital, vol. 3* (1894; edited by Engels)

Friedrich Engels (1820–1895)
- *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845)
- *Anti-Duehring* (1878)
- *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880)
- *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884)

ing classes throughout Europe and inspire them to engage in coordinated revolutionary activity at a time when revolutions were sweeping the continent. The "revolutions" of 1848, however, were uprisings of liberals and progressives, and were essentially targeted against the monarchies and the autocratic regimes of the period—not against the capitalist regimes at which Marx and Engels aimed their efforts. After the failure of these liberal revolts, Marx began extensive studies of capitalism and the problem of how to develop class consciousness among working men and women. During the 1850s, he sketched out a grand ideological system that placed capitalism into broad historical-economic perspective. The notebooks in which Marx recorded the development of his ideas at this time are called the *"Grundrisse."* It is from the outlines in the *Grundrisse* that Marx fleshed out the text he published as the first volume of *Das Kapital* in 1867. Two subsequent volumes were published posthumously under Engel's editorship in 1885 and 1894.

Marx was active in the working-class politics of his era. In 1864, he participated in founding the International Workingmen's Association, and remained active in the group until the early 1870s. He often competed with anarchists such as Mikhael Bakunin for doctrinal leadership in the association (later known as the First International). By 1872, his influence in the International had waned, after many former allies deserted him.[1]

Despite his limited political influence during his lifetime, however, Marx bequeathed to opponents of classical liberalism (or of democratic capitalism) a number of economic, sociological, political, and philosophical doctrines. Even before his death, intellectuals sympathetic to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism began to interpret and, to some extent, alter Marx's theo-

[1]David McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 407–411.

ries. These activities showed that they regarded his theories as an authoritative beginning point. Engels was perhaps the most enthusiastic interpreter and systematizer of Marx's frequently complex and chaotic writings; his interpretations became the credo of **orthodox Marxists**. Such Marxists maintain that capitalism is plagued with contradictions that doom it to self-destruction; they believe that a revolution against capitalism is inevitable once "conditions are ripe," and that an egalitarian, socialist order will eventually appear after the revolution. Orthodox Marxists remained influential in many communist and socialist parties in Europe throughout the twentieth century, but other critics of capitalism who believed themselves to be the true Marxists gave Marx's writings different interpretations.

Revisionist Marxists, who emerged in Germany during the 1890s, argued that Marx was not as deterministic as Engels and other orthodox Marxists claimed, and they argued that Marx had not foreseen the political, economic, and sociological changes that enabled the working class to challenge capitalism and establish socialism by nonrevolutionary means. Revisionist Marxism has evolved into democratic socialism, a distinct and powerful ideology that is the basis of many socialist parties that have successfully competed in democratic elections and governed pluralist societies throughout the twentieth century. In Chapter 9, we describe democratic socialism as a separate ideology—but it is one that has nevertheless been strongly influenced by Marx.

sidebar 5-2

Karl Marx

Karl Marx was born in 1818 to a well-to-do Jewish lawyer and his wife, both of whom had converted to Protestantism in order to circumvent the anti-Semitism of the time. Marx studied philology at the universities of Bonn and then of Berlin, where he became associated with the Young Hegelians. Upon completing his doctoral dissertation, "The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophies of Nature," he wrote articles for a Young Hegelian journal, and became editor of *Rheinische Zeitung*, an opposition newspaper in Cologne. There he met Friedrich Engels. The Prussian government exiled him for his radical activities, and when he continued these activities in Paris, it successfully petitioned the French government to exile him again. He moved his young family to Brussels, and then, in 1849, to London. For the next twenty years, Marx and his family lived in genteel poverty. To support himself, he wrote articles for newspapers and journals, such as the *New York Tribune* (and received considerable financial help from Engels), but he spent the greater part of his time in the British Museum, studying and writing about economics and history.

During his lifetime, Marx (often supported by Engels) engaged in frequent, vociferous debates and disputes with other socialists, but Marx remained little known outside the socialist movement in Germany until shortly before his death in 1883. Then, Marx's writings rapidly became known throughout Europe and, especially, in Russia.

Marx's writings were interpreted—and perhaps significantly modified—in yet other ways by many, including Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), Mao Zedong (1893–1976), and other revolutionary strategists who orchestrated "communist" revolutions in societies in which capitalism was nascent, but in which conditions were not ripe for true communist revolutions, according to orthodox Marxism. **Marxism-Leninism** has been influential in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union, in China, and in many of the developing countries throughout the present century. We discuss these interpretations of Marxism in Chapter 6, which describes communism.

Our separate treatments of Marxism in this chapter and communism in the next are based on the belief that Marxism and communism are not the same ideology. Marx is the central figure in both Marxism and communism, but whereas Marx was chiefly concerned with an analysis of the historical laws of economic development that culminate naturally in a revolution and a classless society, communists like Lenin and Mao were more concerned with how to bring about the revolution, and how to establish communist party rule once the revolution has taken place. Most Marxists have emphasized the need for an analysis and critique of capitalist society, and they have developed the "laws of history" from a study of capitalism and of the various stages of history before capitalism. Marx provided only the most basic outline of the features of a postcapitalist life, and he never intended his outline to be a guide for governing (a transitory) socialist society or for developing an ideal communist society. As Bertil Ollman suggests, Marx considered attempts to pro-

Sidebar 5-3

Friedrich Engels

Friedrich Engels was born in 1820, in Barmen, Germany, the son of a wealthy businessman. Unlike Marx, Engels received little formal philosophical training. Although he managed to attend lectures at the University of Berlin and to join the Young Hegelian radicals while serving in the Prussian Army, his father had sent him to business school to train for service in the family business. On his way to Manchester, England, to complete his business training, Engels met Marx in November 1842, in Cologne. By this time, Engels had written various articles for press journals, and in 1844 he sent "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" to Marx, who published it. On his return to Germany from Manchester, Engels visited Marx in Paris. Their lifelong collaboration and profound friendship dated from this meeting. Engels collaborated with Marx on several "Marxist" works, including *The Holy Family* (1845) and *The German Ideology* (1846).

Shortly after Marx moved to London, in 1849, Engels moved to Manchester to work for his father's firm. For the next twenty years he financially supported both Marx and himself. In 1870, he moved to London, remaining active in publishing Marx's works and in the international communist movement, even after Marx's death. Engels died in 1895, twelve years after Marx.

vide systematic accounts of communism to be "foolish, ineffective, and even reactionary."[2] Communism, in contrast, is chiefly concerned with life "after the revolution." While Marxism claims to be a scientific critique of present practices based on a knowledge of the laws of history and economics, communism is an ideology that focuses on the practical problems of governing. It is concerned with how the dictatorship of the proletariat should be organized, how the proletariat should govern, and how the governing Communist party can gain, maintain, and retain power and legitimacy.

Yet another interpretation of Marx has emphasized the philosophical and humanistic aspects in Marx's writings, especially those in the works of the **young Marx**. George Lukács (1885–1971) was the first Marxist intellectual to recapture Marx's appreciation—as well as his critique—of the works of George W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), the great German idealist philosopher of the Napoleonic era. Lukács's writings opened the way for a favorable intellectual reception of *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, which Marx had written in 1844, but which remained unpublished until 1927. These manuscripts reveal a philosophical and idealist strain in Marx, along with a strong Hegelian influence, that seems to undermine the claim by orthodox Marxists that Marx was strictly a scientist and a materialist.

We believe that Marxism is best understood when one recognizes the general doctrines of political economy stressed by orthodox Marxists, but interprets these doctrines in light of the philosophical and humanistic concerns of the young Marx. In short, our presentation of Marx is based on the judgment that the young Marx established many of the goals and theoretical foundations of Marxism, while the "scientifically based" laws of history and political economy that the mature Marx stressed describe the means by which these goals can and will be achieved.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Insofar as Marx attempted to provide a scientific theory of the historical processes that resulted in capitalism, we cannot say that his ideology is a response to the problems of capitalism, nor can we classify it as an effort to ameliorate those problems. Instead, Marxism must be seen as an attempt to uncover the laws of the social, economic, and political forces that led to capitalism, including those problems that would eventually lead to its collapse and to the advent of communist society. In developing this analysis, however, Marx also uncovered many of the problems of capitalism and thereby provided a body of criticism that has remained useful even for those who do not subscribe to his "science" of history. Four problems are particularly prominent.

[2]See Bertil Ollman, "Marx's Vision of Communism: A Reconstruction," in *Critique no. 8*, 1978, cited in Alec Nove, *The Economics of Feasible Socialism Revisited* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), p. 12n1.

the weapons that humans can use to catch or shoot their prey. On such matters, communist citizens will govern themselves, and this will be a demanding and time-consuming activity. Most importantly, the nature of citizenship will be transformed from what is regarded as citizenship in liberal societies. Rather than viewing citizenship as a means of protecting his or her rights and pursuing his or her self-interests, the communist citizen is envisioned by Marxists as someone who possesses an extraordinary degree of public-spiritedness and a strong sense of responsibility. Such a citizen would disregard the liberal distinction between the public and private spheres of life. Citizens would live entirely within the public sphere, always concerned with society, understanding their own good as being intertwined with the public good. Rather than viewing citizenship as primarily an obedience to the laws of the state, the communist citizen would submit to the decisions of those who are active in resolving the issues of community life. Such submission, however, would not be problematic. If goods are abundant, and if everyone is public-spirited, the decisions of self-governing citizens will hardly be repressive, but will simply represent the (general) will of free men and women finally making their own history in accordance with their shared understanding of the good life.[61]

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The collapse of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has led to a general discrediting not only of communism, but also of Marxism, which is nominally the underlying ideology of these regimes. As we shall see in the next chapter, Marx would likely have been very critical of communists' attempts to "telescope" the various stages of history to bring about the revolution (before he, relying on his science, would have considered it historically possible) in the countries of Eastern Europe, Russia, or China. Such peasant countries, Marx (and Marxists) might argue, must shed their crude communism and make the tough and long, but necessary, transition to capitalism and bourgeois democracy, before they can hope for the final transition to true communism.

However we may interpret Marxism's practical political failure at the hands of the communists, which for the time being remains manifest, this perspective also raises many theoretical questions. Is it true that labor and the material processes of production are the essence of human beings? Or is this materialist supposition suspect, just as it is in the case of liberalism? Are spiritual and intellectual phenomena only the epiphenomena of material forces, or is this an inadmissible form of reductionism? If there are more than merely material forces shaping our human nature, is it not true that Marx's hope for a future communist society becomes just one more utopian wish that is essentially a "castle in the air," as Jonathan Swift might have called it? Moreover, is it truly possible to understand the forces of history in the way that Marx claims? If so, why is Marx's class consciousness not determined by his historical situation in the way that

[61]While such an abstract vision of a self-governing citizenry may seem attractive, it obviously rests on assuming away the two problems that make for politics: the diversity of interests that make people self-regarding rather than public-regarding, and the scarcity of resources that intensifies the diversity of interests.

he claims it is for all other human beings? In other words, if our consciousness of ourselves is not transcendent, but depends entirely on our material place in history, how is Marx able to transcend the limitations of his historical-material "place" and deliver a total picture of history that overcomes the limitations of his location? These questions are serious, perhaps damning. It is also true that Marx failed to see the ability of capitalism to adapt to the complaints of the proletariat. Communists would address themselves to these adaptations and question whether the material dialectic was as straightforward as Marx and, especially, Engels seemed to think.

Yet Marxism also offers insights that may retain their utility. His analysis of the ways in which ruling classes use ideology, religion, and other intellectual forms to suppress dissent and to mollify their subjects, his insight—shared with other political thinkers—that class conflict is a perennial aspect of politics, and his examination of human alienation may be aspects of his ideology that endure beyond its demise in the rubble of the Eastern European political economy.

CHAPTER 6

Communism

Marxism provided the intellectual foundations for communism, which became one of the most influential ideologies of the twentieth century. Between World War II and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the debate between communism and democratic capitalism structured much of international politics. Recent world history and the current conditions of many countries cannot be understood without grasping the ideas central to communism, summarized by the following: Worldwide imperialism—where advanced industrial societies economically dominate underdeveloped nations—constitutes a higher stage of capitalism than Marx had foreseen, and this development requires certain modifications in Marx's predictions about the processes that will bring about a communist society. Instead of revolutions occurring automatically in mature industrialized societies, revolutions must be initiated by a "vanguard" of intellectuals and activists in nascent industrial societies and in developing nations, which suffer most under imperialism. Nations that experience successful revolutions must temporarily be ruled by this vanguard—organized as a communist party—that acts on behalf of the true interests of the proletariat (and peasants) and whose duty it is to pave the way for an ideal communist society. In order to achieve economic affluence and to eliminate human alienation—accomplishments that are prerequisites for ideal communism—party leaders must nationalize private property, plan economic investment, production, and distribution, and prevent the dissemination of counterrevolutionary (capitalist or bourgeois) ideas. While communist party rule may involve some temporary sacrifices by the general population, communist ideology provides reassurance that these sacrifices are worthwhile, because they are necessary for the future achievement of an affluent, and classless society.

Modern communism is a direct descendant of Marxism. Communists rely on the basic doctrines of Karl Marx concerning dialectical materialism, human alienation, labor as the essence of human nature, the need to abolish private

property, and the importance of a transforming revolution. Nevertheless, communism is sufficiently distinct from Marxism to be regarded as a separate ideology. Among the many differences between these ideologies, two stand out. First, Marxists are less politically active than communists. While Marxists do not seek to foment revolutions (because they believe capitalism will inevitably fall when conditions are ripe), communists accept the necessity of human initiative to bring about revolutions. Second, Marxism is essentially a protest ideology, while communism is often a governing ideology. Marxists are primarily concerned with criticizing capitalist societies, and their principles about socialist and communist societies are not well-developed, because Marx and his immediate followers never had to govern or to legitimate their governing principles. In contrast, communists have come to power in many societies, and they have had to transform Marxism into an ideology that legitimates their rule. Given these differences, we may think of communism as a kind of "applied Marxism." Communists have taken Marx's basic ideas as the bases of their ideology, but they have interpreted and perhaps modified Marx in various ways so as to foster their revolutionary and governing activities.

Marxism may also be less historically bounded than communism. Arising in the mid-1800s to analyze capitalism, Marxism may provide insights into the nature of capitalist societies well into the twenty-first century. In contrast, communism may be considered a distinctly twentieth-century ideology. Vladmir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924) most fully developed a communist ideology out of the writings and thought of Marx. Lenin wrote "What Is to Be Done?" in 1902, became the leader of the Bolshevik Party in Russia in 1903, and founded the Soviet Communist state after the Russian Revolution of 1917, guiding the state in its formative years. Communist ideology has also been shaped by other twentieth-century Marxists such as Rosa Luxemburg (1879–1919), Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), Ernesto ("Che") Guevara (1928–1967), and the leaders of various parties and regimes that call themselves communists. Perhaps the most important of these leaders are:

1. Joseph Stalin (1879–1953), who became the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union after Lenin's death in 1924, and who nationalized industry, collectivized agriculture, and developed a police state in pursuit of "socialism in one country," in the Soviet Union
2. Mao Zedong (1893–1976), who established the People's Republic of China in 1949 and who served as the Chinese president and chairman of the Chinese Communist Party until his death
3. Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980), who became the secretary-general of the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1937 and the prime minister of Yugoslavia in 1945, and who led a national communist regime that retained its independence from the Soviet Union throughout the cold war era
4. Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969), who was the founder of the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930, one of the main opponents of Western imperialism in Asia after World War II, and the leader of North Vietnam during its war with the United States in the 1960s

5. Fidel Castro (1926–), who led the Cuban revolution that ousted the corrupt regime of Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and who created a communist regime that continues to survive only a few miles from U.S. shores

The presence of communist regimes in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and in other Asian, African, and Latin American countries after World War II made communism the major ideological rival to various democratic (and capitalist) ideologies during most of the second half of the twentieth century. As we approach the twenty-first century, however, the crumbling of the communist bloc and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 have been widely interpreted, by most of the world, as signaling the end of communism as an attractive ideological alternative.[1]

Communism is undoubtedly in retreat. While still nominally communist, China has introduced many market reforms in recent years. Bereft of the aid of the Soviet Union, Cuba appears to be sliding toward capitalism. The most prominent communist revolutionary movement in recent years, the "Shining Path" in Peru, recently saw its leader arrested and has become less visible as a model for Latin American rebellion. Nevertheless, it may be too soon to proclaim the demise of communism. The fates of the communist regimes in China and Cuba are yet to be determined. Communist parties in Eastern Europe—such as those in Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia—continue to do reasonably well in popular elections. Because the citizens of for-

[1]Perhaps the two most important expressions of this view are those of Francis Fukuyama, in *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992), and Z (an anonymous observer of the Soviet Scene), in "To the Stalin Mausoleum," *Daedalus* (winter 1990), pp. 295–342.

Sidebar 6-1

Some Communists and their Major Writings

Vladmir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924)
- *What Is to Be Done?* (1902)
- *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917)
- *The State and Revolution* (1917)

Rosa Luxemburg (1879–1919)
- *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913)

Leon Trotsky (1879–1940)
- *The Defense of Terrorism* (1920)
- *History of the Russian Revolution* (1933)

Joseph Stalin (1879–1953)
- *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (1938)
- *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* (1952)

Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937)
- *The Prison Notebooks* (1929–1936)

Mao Zedong (1893–1976)
- *On Contradiction* (1937)
- *On Practice* (1937)
- *The Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside* (1956)

Ernesto ("Che") Guevara (1928–1967)
- *Guerrilla Warfare* (1961)
- *Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War* (1968)

Mikhail Gorbachev
- *Perestroika* (1987)

mer communist countries continue to suffer many hardships as their governments begin to create free markets and implement democracy, communism remains attractive to those who recall more prosperous and stable periods in their nations' histories. In short, while communism is currently an "endangered species," it cannot be ignored or discounted. It is impossible to understand world politics in the twentieth century without understanding communism.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Communism seeks to address many of the same problems that were the context for Marx's development of a science of history: the problems of the working conditions of the proletariat; the immoral and exploitative characteristics of capitalism; human alienation; and the false consciousness of the proletariat. Of these, the most central problem for communist theory is false consciousness, but communists treat this problem differently than did Marx.

While Marx believed that the objective conditions of capitalism would, of themselves, result in the maturing of the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat, Lenin believed that workers by themselves lack the ability to develop a proper revolutionary consciousness. He stressed that the proletariat requires leaders to guide and shape them into a coherent class having the necessary consciousness of itself as a class to initiate or to support the revolution. According to Lenin, the communist party serves this function. In short, because the proletariat does not know its true interests, the leaders of the Communist Party must act on its behalf. The possibility that communist party leaders can exercise their free human initiative in history and can act as an elite vanguard on behalf of the proletariat most clearly sets communism apart from Marxism.

Communists also confront other problems Marx did not notice or that arose after Marx's writings. First, capitalism appears to be more adaptable than Marx had predicted. According to Marx, there is a fundamental contradiction within capitalism that will eventually result in its demise. The surplus value that capitalists attain from workers allows for capital accumulation, investment, economic efficiency, and thus the production of an increasing abundance of consumer goods, but this process of capital accumulation is accompanied by the enlargement and progressive impoverishment of the working class. Because most people cannot afford the goods that capitalism produces, economic stagnation and the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system is, according to Marx, inevitable. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the massive economic dislocations that Marx predicted had not occurred. In 1902, an English economist, John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940), wrote *Imperialism: A Study*, in which he suggested the failure of Marx's theory. According to Hobson, the limited purchasing power of most citizens made it rational for

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is perhaps ironic that of all the ideologies studied in this text, communism has been most affected by historical developments. The ideology that most clearly identified with a "science of history" that it uses to implement its strategies has been most changed by developments in history itself.

The apparent demise of Soviet and East European communism, economic reforms in China, and a faltering Cuban economy give communism an uncertain political future. For the most part, free-market economies or the mixed economies supported by democratic socialists are replacing centralized planning. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" has been exchanged for various versions of either benevolent authoritarianism or parliamentary democracy. Communism may become an ideological relic of the very history it sought to transform. Whereas Marxism may live on in the form of various critiques of capitalism and liberal society, communism appears, for now, to have been politically and intellectually discredited. The revolution did not develop as communists hoped and foretold. Instead, tyrannical and totalitarian regimes firmly entrenched themselves, with no future society of free creativity and plenty for all in sight. In the end, we witnessed the peculiar sight of communist "conservatives"—a seemingly self-contradictory phrase—trying to retain political power in the face of popular uprisings against them.

CHAPTER 7

Fascism and Nazism

Most thoughtful people regard the events associated with the rise of German nazism and Italian fascism—the Holocaust and World War II—as signaling the darkest hour in human history. While humans have long acted toward one another in cruel and barbarous ways, the magnitude and scope of evil that these ideologies wrought on the world in general and the Jews in particular was unprecedented. Perhaps most chilling is the fact such evil could be committed by citizens of highly developed and cultured societies.

What ideas did nazism and fascism share that won the acceptance, and often the firm allegiance, of such people? Both rejected liberalism, stressing the supremacy of the collectivity over the individual. Both rejected communism, believing that Marxist notions of class conflict and injustice undermine the unity of society and retard the attainment of the common good. Both rejected democracy, arguing that it panders to human weaknesses and special interests. Both endorsed rule by authoritarian leaders who mobilize the masses on behalf of elite-defined goals. Both believed that human reason can play only a limited role in political life, and stressed that collective greatness depends on an intuitive understanding of human destiny and on energizing human emotions and will in order to unite citizens behind such goals as military conquest and national unity.

Nazism and fascism are not, however, the same ideology. Fascism celebrates the nation as the collectivity that its members should venerate and serve, while nazism celebrates the so-called "Aryan race" as the collectivity to be promoted.[1]

The origins of nazism are found in the ideas and governing practices of Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), who became influential in Germany during the 1920s

[1]Technically, the Aryan peoples are the Indo-Europeans who originate in southwestern India and Iran. Rather than celebrate such darkly complected peoples, the nazis asserted the racial superiority of the light-complected Germanic peoples who were of Scandinavian origin. But they called these peoples "Aryans," nonetheless.

and was dictator of the German Third Reich from 1933 to 1945.[2] Hitler stressed **racial struggle** (primarily between Aryans and the Jews) as the central problem of politics. Nazism proclaimed that many German problems were due to the "Jewish conspiracy"[3] and sought as a major goal the development of a superior and pure Aryan race that could bring greatness to humankind. By planning the physical annihilation of the "Jewish race" and by killing an estimated six million European Jews during the **Holocaust**, the nazis made racial genocide (of Jews, Gypsies, and others) and racial supremacy (of Aryans) the central tenets of their ideology. Other ideologies have been accused of leading to spiritual stultification, abuses of judicial power, and tyranny, but the use of nazi ideology to justify the systematic murder of large numbers of people exposes most clearly the dark side of ideological thinking.

[2]For nazis, the "First Reich" refers to the era characterized by the centralizing tendencies evinced by German kings in various Germanic territories, between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. The Second Reich was the Imperial German Empire that was shaped by the policies of Otto von Bismarck between 1871 and 1918, and that was dismantled after World War I by the Treaty of Versailles.
[3]For evidence of a Jewish conspiracy, Nazis frequently cited the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an alleged record of Jewish plans to conquer the world. The *Protocols* were a forgery, fabricated in the late nineteenth century by anti-Semites to provoke popular hatred of the Jews.

Sidebar 7-1

Some Precursors and Proponents of Fascism and Nazism and Their Main Writings

PRECURSORS

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860)
World as Will and Representation (1818)

Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882)
Essay on the Inequality of Human Races (1854)

Guiseppe Mazzini (1805–1872)
The Duties of Man (1875)

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)
The Genealogy of Morals (1887)

Georges-Eugène Sorel (1847–1922)
Reflections on Violence (1906)

Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923)
The Mind and Society (1916)

Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927)
Foundations of the Nineteenth Century (1899)

Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941)
The Ruling Class (1896)

FASCISTS

Benito Mussolini (1883–1945)
The Doctrine of Fascism (1928)

Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944)
The Philosophical Basis of Fascism (1928)

NAZIS

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945)
Mein Kampf (1925–1926)

Rudolf Huber (1903–)
Constitutional Law of the Greater German Reich (1939)

The foundations of fascism are in the ideas and governing practices of Benito Mussolini (1883–1945), who was dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1945. Fascist philosophers, such as Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944), made clear that true fascists reject the racist ideas of nazism. Rather than being racists, fascists are primarily nationalists, who put the power of the nation at the center of their principles. While a stress on the nation can have racial overtones, it does not necessarily entail a belief in racial struggle or "racial eugenics" (hereditary improvement by genetic control and manipulation of racial characteristics). Indeed, Mussolini's regime (and, for a time, the fascist regime in Hungary) treated Jews much better than did the nazis.[4]

The defeat of the German nazis and the Italian fascists at the end of World War II in 1945 discredited these ideologies in the minds of many people. Nevertheless, nazism and fascism contain ideas that have been the bases of various governing regimes and of many radical right-wing movements throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. The Spanish Fascist Party (the

[4]See Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (New York and London: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 138–140, 176–180; and David E. Ingersol and Richard K. Matthews, *The Philosophic Roots of Modern Ideology: Liberalism, Communism, Fascism,* 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1991), pp. 246–247.

Doonesbury

Falange) led a rebellion against the Spanish Republic in 1936 and brought Francisco Franco to power, which he retained until his death in 1975. Argentina's Juan Perón (1895–1974) incorporated many fascist ideas into the Peronist party, which ruled Argentina from 1945 to 1955 and from 1973 to 1976. Various third-world military dictatorships—such as that of Saddam Hussein in Iraq—have also incorporated fascist principles into their regimes, although they usually avoid claiming allegiance to fascism as a whole. Until very recently, the Nationalist Party in South Africa used the racist policy of **apartheid**—the complete separation of all whites and all "coloreds"—to guarantee white minority rule and the repression of black Africans. The Serbian policy of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia (a republic within what was formerly greater Yugoslavia) is the most conspicuous reminder that racial goals similar to those of the nazis are alive and well in the post-cold-war era. Industrialized and democratic nations like Germany and the United States also continue to be influenced by neo-nazi organizations and movements that are able to mobilize significant numbers of people behind their racist political ideas. While we will stress Italian fascism and German nazism in this chapter, it is important to remember that the principles of these ideologies continue to play important roles in world politics.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Fascism and nazism are usually linked to a particular set of social, economic, and historical developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To understand the emergence of these two ideologies, let us begin with the problems they addressed during that time. Because nazism and fascism seem originally to have been nearly ad hoc responses to a particular set of historical problems, one might conclude that they will not become prominent again as ideologies, unless similar circumstances reemerge. This belief is an oversimplification, but it is useful to our understanding to consider carefully the several historical conditions that seem to have prompted the rise of fascism in Italy and nazism in Germany.

The first condition was a sense of international injustice engendered by the punitive measures of the Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919 and ending World War I. Many Germans, in particular, believed that the treaty unfairly blamed and punished Germany for the war. Germany lost roughly one percent of its prewar arable land, ten percent of its population, all overseas colonies and other investments, and much of its military and merchant fleets. It was also forced to pay large sums for reparations to France and Great Britain. Signing the treaty at all was an unpopular measure among the German populace. The Italians, who had broken their treaty with Germany and joined the Allies in 1915, putting them on the winning side of the war, also had grievances stemming from the postwar settlement. In her secret treaty with the Allies, Italy had been promised territory in modern-day Slovenia if the Allies were victo-

in Mussolini's fascists a counterweight to the threatening Bolsheviks and socialists. When the fascists, and especially the nazis, had come to power, however, conservatives soon realized that they had encouraged forces not in sympathy with their own aims.

Despite their apparent "conservative" features, fascism and nazism soon disillusion conservatives, because both are revolutionary ideologies in ways that conservatism is not. They arose in a context of serious social and political problems (as well as "manufactured" problems) that their ideologues took it upon themselves to solve. Thus, fascism is an ideology that emphasizes revolutionary action over ideological speculation or preservation of established social customs and institutions. Openly antagonistic to both communism and liberalism (and, implicitly, toward conservatism), fascism constitutes an effort to overthrow and eradicate both ideologies. Since both liberalism and communism divide and weaken society, fascists require a quick, fundamental change in the structures and aims of the liberal or socialist state in order to synchronize and organize the people, and thereby to establish the strength and power of the nation and to restore it to its rightful place of prominence in the community of nations. This goal cannot be achieved by speculation on the meaning and direction of history, as in communism, nor by gradual education and institutional reformation, as in liberalism, nor by incremental change with a steady view to the past, as in traditional conservatism. It requires immediate political—and possibly violent—action.

The most radical or revolutionary component of nazism may be its intention to effect a complete transformation of the citizens of the state. Nazis envision the creation of a new kind of man and woman, based on the image of a superior racial type. The conservative images that nazis romantically evoke are merely the tools they use to mobilize the masses toward this end. The masses are moved in a rather different direction, from conservatism to a realization of a new type of superhuman—the men and women of the Aryan race. Human nature, which is neither perfect nor static, must itself be transformed.

The methods of coming to power have varied among the Spanish and Italian fascist and the German national socialist movements. It is ironic that the nazis came to power more or less legally through elections in the Weimar Republic. In Italy, government resolve would have defeated Mussolini's modest coup, yet he was invited to become ruler by the Italian king during the crisis of a general strike in 1923. On the other hand, Franco came to power in Spain only after a bloody civil war. It is not the method of coming to power, but the fact that action is taken to do so that is important to fascists and nazis.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

National socialism, and especially fascism, are not dead. Variants of both continue to flourish. At present, movements based on both ideologies exist in nearly all industrialized nations. Politically legitimate fascist political parties exist in Germany, France, and elsewhere. These movements remind liberals, Marxists, and adherents to variants

of liberalism and Marxism not to disregard the nonrational and noneconomic dimensions of human life. Human needs for a feeling of belonging, for a sense of purpose that transcends the individual, and for a sense of glory and power will continue to make fascism and even national socialism attractive to some. Moreover, the continued existence of fascism serves as a warning to liberals, socialists, and conservatives alike of the power of chauvinism and nationalism, fear of isolation, and the need for community. Nazism continues to warn us of the power of racist thinking as a way of constituting a sense of community. Both nazism and fascism serve to remind us of the limits of liberal individualism, socialist egalitarianism, and conservative traditionalism.

CHAPTER 8

Contemporary Liberalism

We have seen that liberalism—at least in its classical articulation as a defense of democratic capitalism—was relentlessly criticized throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a result, many Europeans with a commitment to liberty and democracy sought to fuse these liberal ideals to other ideologies (such as democratic socialism) rather than to reform or recast liberalism. In America, however, liberalism remained a highly respected, if somewhat flawed, doctrine. Efforts to retain the "liberal" label and core liberal ideas while recasting the ideology to answer its critics have been, therefore, primarily an American enterprise. Such American intellectuals as John Dewey (1859–1952) and such American politicians as Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) were instrumental in redefining liberalism in the following terms. While political, social, and economic liberties are of prime importance, they are more often furthered than threatened by democratic governments. While there is no injustice in owning private property or in the inequalities of wealth that emerge under capitalism, it is desirable and fair for governments to regulate certain uses of private property and redistribute wealth. While governments must act within constitutional limitations and electoral mandates, strong and active national governments are needed to stimulate and regulate the economy and to extend liberty and equality. While social change and progress are important, they should occur through reform, not through revolution.

While classical liberalism emerged at the beginning of the industrial revolution to justify capitalism and limited government, liberals acknowledged many problems with unfettered capitalism as industrialism matured. The seeds for the emergence of "reform liberalism" were sown as early as 1848, when John Stuart Mill suggested (in *Principles of Political Economy*) that goods should be produced and exchanged according to capitalist principles, but that governments could play a role in distributing (or redistributing) these goods in a more equal manner. But it was not until the twentieth century that reform liberalism emerged as a coherent ideology committed to reforming capitalism,

extending democracy, enhancing the role of government, and developing more egalitarian theories of justice.

The idea of reforming capitalism is like a two-edged sword. On the one hand, reforming capitalism involves a fundamental commitment to capitalism. Like classical liberals, contemporary liberals believe that the good life requires material prosperity that can best be attained through a capitalist economy. By promoting steady economic growth and facilitating business interests, contemporary liberals are sometimes seen as advocating "corporate liberalism."[1] On the other hand, reforming capitalism involves commitments that are often regarded as hostile to capitalism. For example, because they wish to impose regulations on businesses and to enlarge welfare rights, contemporary liberals are sometimes regarded as "welfare-state liberals." These two tendencies within contemporary liberalism have led to extensive debate and some confusion regarding its political principles, but Theodore Lowi has suggested that contemporary liberals have sought to resolve these tensions by becoming "interest-group liberals."[2] Such liberals regard the demands of most groups in society as sufficiently legitimate to warrant a positive governmental response: If businesses face bankruptcy, then liberal governments should provide subsidies that bail them out of their financial difficulties. If the wealthy need encouragement to invest in new economic enterprises, then liberal governments should provide appropriate tax incentives. If labor needs safer working conditions, liberal governments should regulate the workplace. If minorities are discriminated against, liberal governments should enact and enforce civil rights legislation. If the poor need better health care, liberal governments should improve their access to medical services. Such examples could be multiplied endlessly. While contemporary liberals seldom identify themselves as "interest-group liberals," they have evolved principles and policies that they hope appeal to corporate leaders, welfare recipients, minorities, and many other groups and interests within society.

"Reform liberalism," "corporate liberalism," "welfare-state liberalism," and "interest-group liberalism" are thus the main designations applied to contemporary liberalism to differentiate it from classical liberalism. In this chapter, we try to describe contemporary liberalism in a way that recognizes these different emphases. This requires that contemporary liberalism be viewed as more pragmatic than philosophical. Its political principles reflect the problems that liberals hope to address rather than specific philosophical assumptions about the nature of the universe, humans, society, and knowledge. Accordingly, we defer our consideration of the (often implicit) philosophical foundations of contemporary liberalism until after we have described the political bases of the ideology and its political principles.

[1]James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal and the Liberal State* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); and R. Jeffrey Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

[2]Lowi is a contemporary American political scientist. In this and subsequent chapters, persons who are identified without dates of birth and death should be regarded as contemporaries. Lowi's most well-known book is *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979).

curriculum. They assess the performance of current practices in the area against many criteria—for example, Are such practices economical? effective? fair? responsive to the preferences of interested parties? They consider new ways of doing things and, using various criteria, evaluate how these reforms affect performance. Because various proposed reforms affect various criteria in different ways, there can be no absolutely and objectively best reform. But through political deliberation in which people apply various kinds of rational judgments, people can come to reasonable decisions to experiment with reforms promising enhanced performances of ongoing practices. In addition, such experiments are subject to continual appraisal and reappraisal. Contemporary liberals believe that such processes provide for continuous social progress even in the absence of absolute liberal principles—despite our uncertainty about what the good society is like, and despite our tentative knowledge about the effectiveness of reforms.[78] In short, because human knowledge about the good society is always limited and tentative, the best society and government is a liberal one which guarantees human freedom and which continuously deliberates over how to reform problematic social and economic conditions.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the principle of **tolerance** best summarizes the outlook of contemporary liberals, but their idea of toleration extends well beyond the religious toleration emphasized by John Locke and other founders of classical liberalism. Contemporary liberals are more tolerant than classical liberals, because they recognize the fragility of their own philosophical foundations. They understand that liberal principles cannot be proved on the basis of indubitable conceptions of how the universe, humans, or society works. They recognize that allegiance to liberal principles depends upon acceptance of certain liberal values that can be questioned by those who are attracted to other ideologies. While contemporary liberals have a low opinion of absolutist and intolerant ideologies like communism and fascism, such liberals regard democratic socialism and contemporary conservatism (and such emerging ideologies as feminism and environmentalism) as their "friends" as long as these ideologies remain tolerant and friendly toward liberalism.[79] Contemporary liberals share some principles with their friends. Like democratic socialists, they are committed to more equality. Like contemporary conservatives, they are committed to the maintenance of capitalism. Like feminists, they support equal rights and opportunities for women. Like environmentalists, they recognize the need to address our environmental problems. And all of these ideologies share with contemporary liberalism a commitment to constitutional and representative democracy. Such overlapping principles provide the bases for broad support for fundamental liberal institutions and for building temporary coalitions on specific policy issues.

In addition to being "externally" tolerant of other pluralist ideologies, contemporary liberals are "internally" tolerant of the diversity within liberal societies. Liberals tolerate life plans and lifestyles that differ from their own. They tolerate the expression

[78]Contemporary liberals may be contradictory on this point. How can liberals identify what constitutes social progress if they fail to have knowledge about what the good society is like?
[79]Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1982).

of various viewpoints regarding religion and morality. Liberals disagree among themselves about many practical political issues. Which social and economic problems should rise to the top of the political agenda? Which reforms best address important problems? Which competing principles (e.g., efficiency or equality) should be stressed when dealing with a particular problem? Because answers to such questions cannot be deduced from the abstract principles of contemporary liberals, those who think of themselves as liberals are often in conflict with other liberals on these practical matters. Contemporary liberals tolerate other liberals who disagree with them on specific issues, hoping to reach accommodation through further deliberation and hoping to reconnect with their disagreeable liberal friends on future issues. However, the fact that internal disagreement on specific issues is implied by the principles of liberal ideology dashes any hope for a united and disciplined liberal party.

Currently, contemporary liberalism is both enjoying unprecedented success and experiencing an enormous crisis. On the one hand, the demise of communism has led some observers to argue that ideological conflict is at an end, because liberal principles and values now reign supreme over much of the world.[80] Capitalism is being introduced into Eastern Europe. Despite conservative attacks on the excesses of contemporary liberalism, liberal welfare states remain strong in much of the world. Constitutional and representative democratic regimes govern an increasing number of nations. Support for expanding citizen rights is widespread. And the secular and material values that accompany liberalism seem increasingly to dominate cultures throughout the world. On the other hand, liberalism is under attack, denigrated as the awful "L-word," and the "liberal" label is avoided by politicians (even politicians having liberal principles) because liberalism has become associated—at least in many American minds—with big and intrusive government, bureaucratic domination, excessive business regulations that strangle the economy, reverse discrimination, coddling of criminals, moral permissiveness, and (especially) higher taxes.[81] Perhaps contemporary liberalism is implicated in these problems, but solving such problems is what liberals like to do best. Given their commitment to and experience with reform, contemporary liberals may well be up to the task of reforming the society and politics they have created and, simultaneously, reforming their own political principles.

[80]Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

[81]R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., founder of *The American Spectator*, is perhaps the most caustic critic of contemporary liberalism. His criticisms are summarized in J. David Hoeveler, Jr., *Watch on the Right: Conservative Intellectuals in the Reagan Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 207–231. For a more academic discussion of how liberalism is currently regarded in America, see J. Roland Pennock, "Liberalism Under Attack," *The Political Science Teacher* 3 (winter 1990).

CHAPTER 9

Democratic Socialism

America is the only major industrialized democratic society without a significant democratic socialist party. Nevertheless, various types of radicals (and, to some extent, liberals) have brought to the American political conversation many democratic socialist ideas, such as the following. Although capitalist institutions, processes, and values can play legitimate roles in a good society, modern life is dominated by capitalism, resulting in economic inefficiencies, social injustices, and moral degradation. To curtail capitalist domination, private property and economic inequalities need not be abolished, but the public should control the use of property and make economic necessities equally available to all. To curtail capitalist domination, liberal values involving individual freedoms and rights need not be eliminated, but they must be complemented with other values emphasizing social solidarity, respect and concern for others, and individual responsibility to the community. Ending capitalist domination does not require revolutionary change but, rather, can and should take place slowly, through evolutionary processes by which citizens acquire socialist values, become empowered politically, and use democratic governments as primary vehicles for achieving a good and just society.

Socialist sentiments are probably nearly as old as human life, but the ideology of socialism is a reaction to capitalism. Thus, the precursors of socialism—people like Sir Thomas More (1478–1535),[1] Gerrard Winstanley (1609–1660?),[2] François-Noël (Gracchus) Babeuf (1760–1797),[3] and most impor-

[1]More published *Utopia* in 1516; in it he strongly criticized the acquisitive society that was emerging in Europe.

[2]Winstanley was the leading theoretician of the Diggers—a radical group within Cromwell's army during the English Civil War between 1651–1660. Winstanley called for communal ownership of and access to land. See George Shulman, *Radicalism and Reverence: The Political Thought of Gerrard Winstanley* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

[3]Babeuf sought to abolish private property during the French Revolution and advocated absolute equality. He wrote, "Let there be no other difference between people than that of age and sex. Since all have the same needs and same faculties, let them henceforth have the same education

Sidebar 9-1

Some Democratic Socialists and Their Main Writings

Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932)
Evolutionary Socialism (1899)

Sidney Webb (1859–1947) and
Beatrice Potter Webb (1858–1943)
Socialism in England (1890)

Richard H. Tawney (1880–1962)
Equality (1931)

George (G. D. H.) Cole
(1889–1959)
History of Socialism (1953–1960)

Erich Fromm (1900–1980)
Escape from Freedom (1941)
The Sane Society (1955)

Alec Nove*
The Economics of Feasible Socialism (1983)

Anthony (C. A. R.) Crosland
(1918–1977)
The Future of Socialism (1956)

Irving Howe (1920–1993)
Beyond the Welfare State (1982)
Socialism and America (1985)

Michael Harrington (1928–1989)
The Other America: Poverty in the United States (1962)
Twilight of Capitalism (1976)

Michael Walzer*
Spheres of Justice (1983)

*Living Author.

tantly Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778)[4]—wrote as capitalism began to emerge. Nevertheless, the term "socialism" did not appear until 1827, when it was introduced in the *Cooperative Magazine* by proponents of the ideas of Robert Owen (1771–1858). Owen suggested that the problems of capitalism could be overcome by inventing and developing new types of social communities that emphasized cooperation, sociability, and social control over private property and wealth.[5] Nevertheless, Owen and other early socialists were criticized by Marx and Engels as being **utopian socialists** because they thought that the truth of socialist principles could be shown by philosophy and science, that productive and harmonious communes would be developed by enlightened industrialists, true Christians, and social reformers, and that the success of these communes would prompt everyone to embrace them. Their belief that socialism would be embraced by everyone simply because it would ultimately benefit everyone was rejected by Marx. Perceiving that

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and the same diet. They are content with the same sun and the same air for all; why should not the same portion and the quality of nourishment suffice for each of them?" For a discussion of Babeuf, see Steven Lukes, "Socialism and Equality," *Dissent* 22 (spring 1975), p. 155.

[4]Rousseau's anticipation of socialism includes his critique of the liberal bourgeois society that was emerging in Europe by the middle of the eighteenth century (in his *First Discourse* [1749]), his analysis of the evolution and causes of inequality (in his *Second Discourse* [1755]), and his vision of a communal society where people transcended self-interest and willed the good of all (in *The Social Contract* [1762]).

[5]Among the many interesting discussions of the utopian socialists is that of Robert Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), chap. 5.

the immediate material interests of the upper classes would ensure their allegiance to capitalism, Marx theorized that socialism could only occur by means of a revolution by the working class. Under Marx's influence, socialism became a revolutionary ideology during most of the latter half the nineteen century. Despite its many precursors—from More to Marx—democratic socialism did not emerge as a distinct and complete ideology until radicals absorbed Marx's critical understanding of capitalism while they abandoned his theory that capitalism could only be superseded by socialism through revolutionary means. The Fabians in England and the Revisionists in Germany were instrumental in this regard and are thus the proper founders of democratic socialism.

In 1884, the Fabian Society was founded by a group of intellectuals led by Sidney Webb (1859–1947), his wife Beatrice Potter Webb (1858–1943), and the famous playwright George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950). The **Fabians** shared Marx's indictment of capitalism and were deeply committed to egalitarianism, humanism, and Christian morality. Nevertheless, they wanted to move away from capitalism and toward socialism gradually. Such an orientation was symbolized by their name, which they took from the Roman general Fabius. Just as Fabius defeated the stronger forces of Hannibal in 209 B.C.E. by his patient, cautious, and defensive strategies, the Fabians hoped to subdue the overwhelming power of capitalism by a patient, cautious, and defensive campaign demonstrating that socialism was economically, socially, and morally superior to capitalism. As support for socialism increased, the Fabians believed that socialists could be elected to Parliament, where they could introduce socialist reforms in the capitalist system. In 1901, the Fabians cooperated with leaders of the major British trade unions to form the Labour Party and, by 1906, they had secured twenty-nine seats in the House of Commons. Forty years later, following World War II, the Labour Party captured control of the House of Commons, and—under the rules of Britain's parliamentary system—it thus formed the government. While in power, the Labourites implemented a number of socialist policies—such as nationalizing the production of electricity, steel, and coal, and socializing the distribution of medical care. Throughout the century, the Fabian Society has continued to develop and defend socialism, and the Labour Party has been the principal competitor of the Conservative Party and a major force in British politics.

In continental Europe, a variety of socialist parties and movements formed toward the end of the nineteenth century, including the *Sozialistische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) in Germany. By 1895, the SPD membership was divided between revolutionary (or orthodox) Marxists and Revisionists—Marxists whose views were influenced by the Fabians. The most prominent Revisionist, Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932), argued that orthodox Marxists had misinterpreted Marx, making his theory of change too deterministic. According to Bernstein, the orthodox Marxist doctrine of dialectical materialism—which claimed that capitalism would collapse and that socialism would arise when economic forces developed in predictable ways and produced an inevitable crisis—gave the SPD little to do but to sit around and await the

revolution.[6] In 1899, Bernstein wrote *Evolutionary Socialism*, which argued that capitalism was not about to collapse, that the working class was becoming less revolutionary, and that increases in democratization permitted the SPD to achieve political power and institute reforms leading to socialism. However, Bernstein's aspiration to realize socialism through democratic means was thwarted at the turn of the century because Germany had an imperial system, headed by Kaiser Wilhelm II. Even though the SPD eventually won more popular votes in national legislative elections than any other party in Germany, it was unable to govern or enact socialist legislation during the Second Reich (1870–1918). The chaotic conditions of the Weimar Republic (1919–1933) and Hitler's totalitarian rule during the Third Reich (1933–1945) also provided few opportunities for the SPD to institute reforms. When the Federal Republic of Germany was created in West Germany following World War II, however, the SPD reemerged as a leading contender for power. During the 1970s, the SPD was the dominant party in a coalition that ruled West Germany, and its leader, Willy Brandt, became chancellor. Today, the SPD governs a variety of states and cities in a unified Germany and retains the potential to win control of the central government.

With the exception of the United States, all industrialized Western democracies have significant social democratic parties, and the ideology of democratic socialism remains a major voice in these nations. At one time or another since 1975, social democratic parties have ruled in Britain, France, West Germany, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, and other western European democracies. Social democratic parties have also formed governments in several provinces in Canada since the 1950s. Democratic socialism has been advanced by leaders of postcolonial Africa—such as Léopold Sédar Senghor of Senegal, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt—and socialists have effectively governed Tanzania, Algeria, and Guinea-Bissau.[7] Since 1989, many of the formerly communist nations in Eastern Europe have been guided by social democratic values and programs. However, social democracy's greatest success story has been in Sweden.

The Social Democratic Labor Party (SAP) first came to power in Sweden in 1932. By governing almost continuously since then, the SAP has helped transform Sweden from one of Europe's poorer nations to one of the world's most affluent. Simultaneously, Sweden has achieved one of the world's most equal distributions of income. In pursuit of economic prosperity and income equality, the SAP developed an extensive welfare state, but it eschewed public ownership of the means of production. Today about eighty-five percent of Swedish industry remains privately owned. While the SAP has thus aban-

[6]Bernstein's main opponent, Karl Kautsky (1854–1938), provided a basis for this interpretation by maintaining that "the task of Social Democracy consists, not in bringing about the inevitable catastrophe, but in delaying it as long as possible, that is to say, in avoiding with care anything that could resemble a provocation. . . ." This quote, along with an excellent summary of revisionism, is provided by David McLellan in *Marxism After Marx* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), pp. 20–41.
[7]For a discussion of African socialism, see Crawford Young, *Ideology and Development in Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp 97–182.

doned one of the main programs of the Fabians and Revisionists, its successes have helped to reorient the focus of democratic socialism from economic production to economic distribution.[8]

In this chapter, we provide an account of democratic socialism, which we refer to as "socialism" for brevity. Our presentation is complicated by the fact there are several varieties of democratic socialism.[9] On the one hand, there is a relatively centralist vision—exemplified by the Fabians and the Revisionists and still often present in the rhetoric of socialist parties—stressing that economic production and distribution be managed by the national state. On the other hand, there is a relatively decentralist vision—exemplified by the utopian socialists and recent communitarian socialists and evident in the actual governing practices of socialists—stressing local attacks on capitalist domination, extensive citizen participation in workplaces and local communities, and a "socialized" (rather than "nationalized") approach to the just distribution of goods and services. The tensions between these different varieties of socialism ensure that when the term "evolution" is linked to socialism, it refers not only to the preferred means of change for achieving socialist values, but also to continuing development of the goals and principles of socialists.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

For democratic socialists, most economic, social, and political problems result from the pervasive influence of capitalism. Because other ideologies also focus on the problematic aspects of capitalism, it is useful to compare and contrast the socialist critique of capitalism with those developed by contemporary liberals, fascists, and Marxists (and communists).

Like contemporary liberals, socialists believe that a pure capitalist system is plagued by various market failures. Recurring business cycles produce deep economic recessions that undermine economic productivity and prosperity. Free markets provide inadequate supplies of some goods (like housing) and services (like medical care) that the public needs but cannot afford. Market competition encourages businesses to externalize their costs of production onto the public (e.g., by dumping waste by-products into the environment). But socialists believe that a critique of capitalism that focuses solely on its economic shortcomings is superficial. They believe that liberals fail to see how the capitalist system dominates and undermines many other aspects of human life, as we shall see.

Like fascists, socialists believe that the individualistic and materialistic val-

[8]See Joanne Barkan in "Sweden: Not Yet Paradise, but. . . ." *Dissent* (spring 1989), pp. 147–151; Barkan, "The End of the Swedish Model?" *Dissent* (spring 1992), pp. 192–198; and Robert Heilbroner et al., "From Sweden to Socialism: A Small Symposium on a Big Question," *Dissent* (winter 1991), pp. 96–110.

[9]Anthony Wright, *Socialisms: Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

actually work together to define common lives and treat each other with equal respect. As these local communities more closely approximate the communal and egalitarian associations that socialists prefer, it will be increasingly possible for national societies to evolve in socialist directions.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is often observed that socialism is an endangered political ideology. In recent years, Western European societies (and the United States) have drifted toward more conservative outlooks. Socialist parties have lost political support. The demise of communism in the former Soviet empire is sometimes taken as additional evidence that socialism is unworkable as a set of ideas for governing nations. Democratic socialists, of course, deny that the collapse of communism signifies the weakness of socialism, because they regard communism as a distinct ideology, one they have always opposed because of its authoritarian and totalitarian tendencies. More troubling for democratic socialists is the ascension of the "ideology of selfishness" in both its contemporary conservative and liberal forms. They wonder about a "derangement of modern life" in which many people experience unprecedented levels of prosperity and erroneously believe that they have "made it on their own," ignoring that "we all prosper together or not at all" and retreating from the spirit of mutualism that lies at the heart of socialism.[84] Nevertheless, democratic socialists do not regard this movement away from socialist values as irreversible. The current period of retrenchment can be followed by fresh movements in socialist directions as people experience once again the economic and social problems and moral decay of capitalist domination and the evolution of its ideology of selfishness.

Perhaps the prospects for a democratic socialist resurgence are less favorable in the United States than they are elsewhere in the world. One commonplace in the study of ideologies is that the United States is exceptional because it is the only advanced industrial society where democratic socialist ideology and democratic socialist parties are dismissed as outside the realm of everyday politics. Students of **American exceptionalism** have proposed a number of explanations for this phenomenon.[85] Cultural explanations suggest that socialism in America is hindered by the ethos of rugged individualism, the dream of upward mobility, and the fear of equality. Economic explanations suggest that America's great natural resources, coupled with the development of industrialism, have permitted unusual economic expansion and have provided opportunities for the vast majority of Americans to succeed within capitalism and thus Americans are reluctant to oppose capitalism. Historical-political explanations suggest that the U.S. Constitution was specifically designed to reduce the capacity of any class-based faction—such as a socialist party—to dominate the political system. Sociological explanations suggest that American ethnic and racial heterogeneity have made it difficult for the working classes of various ethnic and racial groups to unify behind a socialist party that represents their common economic interests. While the thesis of American exceptionalism is certainly important—and discouraging to those who support democratic socialism—it may also be somewhat misleading.

Perhaps Americans are not exceptionally hostile to democratic socialist values and

[84]Walzer, "The Community," p. 11–12.

[85]A brief introduction to the literature on American exceptionalism is available in Irving Howe, *Socialism and America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1985), pp. 105–144.

policies. Perhaps what is remarkable about the United States is that "it practices middle-class socialism" through its extensive regulations of capitalism, its numerous social distributions, and its various uses of populist democratic processes, but "calls it something else."[86] Perhaps it is the term "socialism" that Americans dislike, even while they admire many of its values and ideals and put them into practice in many ways.

There are many ideas and ideals to admire in socialism. It provides provocative insights into problems with capitalism. Its goals regarding communal harmony, individual freedom, social justice, and popular democracy may simply constitute a logical, progressive extension of liberal values. It is difficult to dismiss as unreasonable socialist principles supporting a political economy of market socialism, endorsing governmental authority that acts as a counterforce to capitalist domination, seeking a more just distribution of economic goods and political power, and calling for a stronger sense of citizenship. Socialist strategies for achieving change, emphasizing evolutionary progress through democratic action and persuasion, certainly fall within the realm of acceptable pluralist politics.

What, then, are the deficiencies of socialism as a political outlook? Perhaps its criticisms of capitalism could lead to the dismantling of the world's most productive and prosperous economic system. Perhaps its goals—enhancing individual freedom, providing more equal conditions, and developing more communal harmony—are not as compatible with each other as socialists claim. Perhaps the changes sought by socialism threaten social stability. Perhaps its endorsement of strong government creates oppressive domination by a governmental elite. Perhaps socialist societies inevitably produce bureaucratic red tape, depersonalization, and inefficiency. Perhaps its ideas of social justice create false expectations about a more egalitarian society that is unachievable. Perhaps socialists seek too much democracy, forgetting that when citizens are overly empowered they end up electing charlatans and demagogues and pursuing policies that undermine the public good and the rights of minorities. Perhaps the whole socialist project is founded on naive and overly optimistic assumptions about human nature and society; while stressing the benevolent possibilities within humans and societies, socialists may ignore the inherent weakness of humans and the need to structure society to account for such weaknesses. Contemporary conservatives have found many such deficiencies in socialism (and its less radical friend, contemporary liberalism). Their ideas and arguments will be explored in the next chapter.

[86]Alan Ryan, "Socialism for the Nineties," *Dissent* (fall 1990), p. 438.

CHAPTER 10

Contemporary Conservatism

Contemporary conservatives—including such prominent political leaders as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, such well-regarded academics as Thomas Sowell and Jeane Kirkpatrick, and such media pundits as Rush Limbaugh and Pat Buchanan—believe that communists, democratic socialists, and contemporary liberals create unrealistic expectations about what can be accomplished in political life. They assert that governments cannot solve a wide variety of human problems. While some governmental authority is needed to provide national security and social order, more expansive governmental power threatens individual liberty, the autonomy of civil society, and the economic prosperity provided by free markets. According to contemporary conservatives, most governmental programs intended to solve such problems must be regarded as failures, and they must be eliminated, reduced, and/or modified in ways that provide for greater individual incentives and choices. If there is to be progress, it will come about by the hard work of individuals who exhibit traditional virtues and who are motivated by the rewards available to them in the marketplace and from their involvements in voluntary associations.[1]

Contemporary conservatism is thus a reaction against communism, democratic socialism, and contemporary liberalism.[2] To criticize the "threats" posed to freedom and capitalism by these ideologies, contemporary conservatives rely on many of the ideas of classical liberalism. To condemn the assaults on traditional political practices and social customs by these ideologies, contem-

[1]A much more extensive list of ideas held by contemporary conservatives is provided by Rush Limbaugh, *The Way Things Ought to Be* (New York: Pocket Star Books, 1992), pp. 2–3. This best-seller by the popular talk show host is just the latest of a series of conservative books that have captivated Americans. Perhaps the first and most revered book in this tradition is Barry Goldwater's *The Conscience of a Conservative* (New York: Macfadden Books, 1960).

[2]Contemporary conservatives, such as England's Winston Churchill, have also been strong opponents of the totalitarian ideologies of fascism and nazism. However, because contemporary conservatism has been most fully developed since the heyday of these ideologies, its principles have been largely defined in reaction to those held by its opponents on the political left.

porary conservatives also draw on some of the ideas developed by traditional conservatives. Contemporary conservatism is a mix, then, of portions of two ideologies that were historically and philosophically antagonistic. Contemporary conservatism is able to overcome some of the contradictions and tensions between traditional conservatism and classical liberalism by focusing very sharply on the problems generated by communism, democratic socialism, and contemporary liberalism.

The rise of contemporary conservatism as a coherent ideology, especially in the United States, can be attributed to the publication of the first issues of *National Review* in 1955. William F. Buckley, Jr., the first editor of *National Review*, provided a magazine where intellectuals distressed about the advances made by contemporary liberals, socialists, and communists after World War II could air their grievances. Many of these intellectuals were uncomfortable with what they perceived to be the blatant contemporary liberal (and even radical) bias in journalism, in the entertainment industry, in government bureaucracies, and in universities. Buckley's magazine provided a forum where contemporary conservatives could articulate a more consistent critique of current affairs among colleagues with similar concerns.

Throughout the 1950s, conservatives prided themselves on their position as an intellectual elite outside the mainstream of academic and political affairs.

Sidebar 10-1

Some Contemporary Conservatives and Their Main Writings

William F. Buckley, Jr.*
- *McCarthy and His Enemies: The Record and Its Meaning* (1954)
- *Up From Liberalism* (1959)
- *Keeping the Tablets: Modern American Conservative Thought*, editor, with Charles R. Kesler (1988)

Milton Friedman*
- *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962)
- *Free to Choose: A Personal Statement*, with Rose Friedman (1980)

George Gilder*
- *Wealth and Poverty* (1981)

Friedrich von Hayek (1899–1992)
- *The Road to Serfdom* (1944)
- *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960)

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick*
- "Dictatorships and Double Standards" (1980)

Irving Kristol*
- *Two Cheers for Capitalism* (1978)

Thomas Sowell*
- *Preferential Policies: An International Perspective* (1990)
- *Inside American Education: The Decline, the Deception, and the Dogma* (1993)

George Will*
- *Statecraft as Soulcraft: What Government Does* (1982)
- *The Pursuit of Virtue and Other Tory Notions* (1983)

*Living author.

In the 1960s, conservatives began to deliver their criticisms to the public, and they launched political campaigns based on the conservative ideology that was developing. The conservatives associated with *National Review*—mostly intellectuals from the eastern United States—soon found allies among Republicans from the western states, who celebrated rugged individualism and the competition in free market economies. Many of these western conservatives were much more libertarian than were the eastern conservatives, but both were able to agree that communism abroad and big government at home were the most pressing problems facing American society after World War II.

During the 1960s, several developments in the United States gave momentum to the conservative movement. The growth of the welfare state, the free speech movement and antiwar demonstrations on college campuses, the women's movement, the civil rights movement, and the riots in urban areas were just some of the developments prompting many citizens to rethink their allegiance to contemporary liberalism. In the early 1970s, many intellectuals who had originally been supportive of contemporary liberal programs, especially the programs of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society initiative," joined the conservative movement because they considered these programs naive and dangerous failures. These intellectuals were dubbed the "neoconservatives," and they brought innovative ideas to conservatism by suggesting ways of using the market itself to achieve many of the goals that had previously been sought by governmental regulation of, and intervention in, the free market. The most important outlets for these ideas have been *The Public Interest* (first published in 1965) and the various publications of the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation, two leading conservative think tanks.

The decade of the 1980s was marked by numerous victories by conservatives at the polls. The elections of Ronald Reagan and George Bush in the United States, Brian Mulrony in Canada, Margaret Thatcher (and, subsequently, John Major) in Great Britain, and Helmut Kohl in Germany are the most visible examples of the popularity of conservatism in recent years. Such politicians succeeded, in large part, because of their incisive criticisms of the failures of contemporary liberalism, socialism, and communism to deliver the good life for citizens. In the 1990s, conservatives have not always enjoyed the electoral successes of the previous decade, but over the past forty years, they have shaped an ideology that has mass appeal and that offers a constant counterpoint to communist, democratic socialist, and contemporary liberal ideologies.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Conservatives have identified four general problems facing Western Europe and the United States in recent years: (1) the failure of western foreign policy to promote the interests of the "free world"; (2) the promotion of socialist

deployed for nuclear defense systems. The search for theoretical insights that have little foreseeable application is not opposed by conservatives, but they see little reason for the government to support such research.

Conservatives draw on the works of Eric Voegelin and Leo Strauss to question the concerns of the social sciences. Voegelin and Strauss argued that classical political thought sought to understand the social world in order to improve political life and to nourish the qualities of the good citizen. The modern social sciences have forsaken the quest for the good citizen in the good polity in order to provide an "objective" explanation of how social life works. The social sciences now explain behavior, but that behavior is not judged in relation to any model of the best behavior, because social scientists seek neutrality in their presentations. The modern social sciences are thus distanced from the concerns of the good political life and have lost the classical ability to criticize political life.[55]

Social sciences that only explain, but that cannot judge, have a disastrous effect on society. Neutrality in scholarship leads to relativism in the classroom. Since standards of the good citizen in the good polity are not used, all forms of political life are deemed worthy of attention and respect. Universities promote a multicultural tolerance that leaves the critical abilities of students impaired and that fails to win the allegiance of citizens to the best in the western tradition.[56] Conservatives claim that modern knowledge of the social world is too often simply the explanation and prediction of behavior, without the evaluation of human action.

Conservatives employ reason, but they recognize the limitations of all forms of reason in understanding a natural world and a social world that are too complex for human mastery. The best understandings of the human condition will blend the four forms of reasoning that conservatives employ. These understandings will be rich and multifaceted, but they will not approach the richness and complexity of our lives.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Contemporary conservatism has achieved dramatic and rapid success as an ideology. Conservatives have scored electoral successes in many western nations, especially since the 1980s. Conservatives, once highly critical of the media—from which they felt excluded—now command much space on the editorial pages of newspapers and magazines, and control much time on the radio and on television. Conservative ideas on policy issues are taken seriously by policy makers, including those who would never describe themselves as conservatives. Possibly the most telling aspect of conservative success is the unwillingness of nonconservative politicians to describe themselves as liberals. Conservatives have effectively turned liberalism into a ten-letter "four-letter word."

[55]For detailed and explicit criticisms of this type applied to political science research, see *Essays on the Scientific Study of Politics*, edited by Herbert J. Storing (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962).

[56]Sowell, *Inside American Education*, esp. pp. 70–74.

This, of course, does not mean that conservatism is without difficulties as an ideology. Conservatives still confront the challenge posed by their defense of dynamic market economies *and* their desire for stable social and private relationships. Can communities be cohesive and stable when markets create innovation and dislocation? Are market approaches to education dangerous to neighborhoods, which have been a source of community valued by conservatives? Can the nuclear family survive when economic conditions in many western countries force or, at least, encourage, both spouses to work? Can the self-discipline that conservatives applaud be generated in market economies that often laud immediate gratification? These are questions that cannot be answered by merely criticizing liberal and radical reforms.

In the foreign policy arena, conservatives must respond to a world in which their archenemy, communism, is no longer as powerful or as threatening. Conservative reluctance to embrace international organizations makes the future of conservative foreign policy difficult to predict. Conservatives are now arguing among themselves over how much internationalism to embrace, and how to carry out foreign policy objectives.

In the domestic policy arena, conservatives must start to illustrate the effectiveness of their approaches to domestic issues. Conservatives cannot simply point to the failure of previous liberal regimes after conservatives too have had the opportunity to wield national power. Marketlike approaches to pollution and education seem likely to be pursued by western governments in the 1990s, and the results of these attempts may provide conservatism with the positive agenda needed for continuing its electoral success. Conservatives must also illustrate that they can cut taxes without engaging in the deficit spending that they so often criticized when they were not in power.

In the electoral arena, conservatives also face tough questions and decisions. Were the electoral successes in the 1980s the result of broad ideological changes in the populace of western nations, or were they the result of the charisma and forcefulness of such leaders as Reagan and Thatcher? Can conservatives win elections without procuring the allegiance of "new right" and neofascist groups? In the United States, the 1992 campaign of George Bush was damaged when he alienated the "new right," but it was also hurt when Bush then allowed the "new right" to dominate the first night of the Republican National Convention—its adherents scared many voters with their strident and mean-spirited oratory. In France and Germany, conservative politicians must decide how much anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy they will borrow from neofascist groups and parties.

Conservatives must also decide whether, without diluting their ideology, they can broaden their appeal in western nations. The environmental concerns of young people are not met by conservative ideas about nature, and conservatives may have to reassess their utilitarian and "managed-conservation" approaches to the environment. Conservatives must also confront the lack of support for their ideology among women and minorities. Conservatism has some adherents among women and minorities, but its strongest support is from white males. Conservative leaders have not been very effective so far in making their ideology more inclusive. Can they do so, without threatening the base of conservative support?

Conservatism, despite its many challenges, remains a potent ideology. The defense of the economic ideas of classical liberalism will continue to find adherents in a world in which planned economies have rarely proved dynamic or successful. The search for stable social and personal relations is unlikely to disappear from the modern agenda. How conservatives will handle the tension between these two powerful sources of support will shape the future successes (or failures) of contemporary conservatism.

CHAPTER 12

Environmentalism

During the 1960s and 1970s, new and radical voices emerged in the environmental movements in western Europe and the United States. Dissatisfied with the "shallow" conservationism of existing environmental groups, these new environmentalists demanded a "deep" ecological movement that would focus on revealing the fundamental flaws in contemporary ideas and actions. **Deep ecologists**, or "**greens**," argue that traditional environmental groups fail to grasp the primary causes of environmental degradation and simply protect ". . . the health and affluence of people in developed countries."[1] For greens, the prevailing ideologies in developed countries all rely on flawed views on production, consumption, and technological development. A new ethic is necessary to avoid the antienvironmental assumptions and practices embedded within existing western ideologies.

The greens, then, have been very self-conscious in their attempts to provide an alternative to contemporary ideologies. Greens have sometimes been reluctant to call their alternative an ideology, but they are certainly engaged in trying to create a comprehensive and cohesive worldview. As in most nascent ideologies, there is much greater agreement among greens about the problems that must be solved than there is agreement about the principles, procedures, and institutions required to solve them.

THE POLITICAL BASES

Problems

Greens agree with the older conservation groups that pollution, resource depletion, and the inhumane treatment of animals are pressing problems. Greens, though, see these problems as symptoms of two more basic, and inter-

[1]Arne Naess, *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle: Outline for an Ecosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 28. Naess first developed these points in "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-

largely gone unchallenged, even by ideologies criticized by greens. Some contemporary conservatives do warn about the limits imposed on private property rights by environmental regulations and criticize the antigrowth positions of greens. However, many contemporary conservative politicians are sensitive to the environmental concerns of their constituents and try to avoid conflict with environmental groups.

Environmental activism is appearing in developing countries, and it sometimes has promoted green ideals. For example, in 1974, women in rural India formed a circle around a small forest to prevent loggers from removing the trees. This "Chipko" movement (*Chipko* means "to hug" in Hindi) involved "tree hugging" that protected the environment for its own sake. In Kenya, a Greenbelt movement has been organized by women to restore trees to the landscape. The Greenbelt movement has promoted an appreciation of nature and provided members with an environmental education.[13]

These changes are too shallow to satisfy greens that sufficient change is taking place. However, even the shallow level of raised global consciousness about ecology is impressive. Less than twenty-five years after the first Earth Day, there have been major changes in the environmental values and practices of individuals and societies. Environmental concerns do not seem limited to industrialized countries nor to wealthy individuals. Clearly there is the potential for green concerns to have a universal appeal.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

While greens have been assembling the foundations for a green ideology, more work remains for its full and coherent rendering. Some continuing and important differences can exist within an ideology, but greens' differences on many significant political and philosophical issues are presently too diverse to allow green thought to be considered as more than a nascent ideology.

If greens should decide to pursue party politics, they must broaden their appeal and clarify their economic proposals. Greens have often been more sensitive to the environmental hazards posed to animals than to the environmental hazards that humans confront in the workplace and in urban settings. Greens need an environmental approach that includes workers and urbanites. Greens have not been clear about how industrialized societies could deindustrialize into small, self-sufficient agrarian and low-technology communities. Furthermore, it is far from obvious what type of economic system would be appropriate for a green future. Would communities produce only enough goods for use and not for exchange? How would the "greedy" producer who sought to exchange goods for sustained and planned profits be sanctioned? Is the slower pace of life envisioned by greens a pace that modern individuals could endure and enjoy? Are individuals who have been raised to be good consumers willing to forego the delights of consumption that capitalism provides? Can the self-interested individuals in capitalist societies be easily changed into communitarians in harmony with nature?

[13]V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 142–147.

The idea of being in harmony with nature raises some difficult issues for greens. What are the relative values of humans, fauna, and flora? Is an animal life equal to a human life? Are some animals and plants more valuable than others? Should native animals and plants be protected against nonnative species? If so, what should be done when nonnative species encroach "naturally" (without human intervention)? How should animal and plant populations be managed?[14] What ethic should guide the managed conservation and use of natural resources?

Greens do not have to provide specific answers to all of these questions in order to be taken seriously, but they do have to tackle tough questions for which nature provides no obvious answers if they are to realize their goals. In exploring these questions, greens may come to greater agreement not only on how to value the environment, but also on why we should value nature at all. If greens are to replace utilitarian calculations with ecologically sensitive approaches, they must provide a convincing argument that human-use values are not the appropriate guide for human ideas and actions.

[14]For an excellent brief discussion of the controversy surrounding the protection of African elephants, see Elisabeth Marshall Thomas, "Of Ivory and the Survival of Elephants," *The New York Review of Books* 41 (Mar. 24, 1994), pp. 3–6.

CHAPTER 13

Feminism

Most of the contributors to the ideologies that we have thus far examined have been men, and we, too, are men. Historically, political activists, theorists, and philosophers have been predominately men. Feminists question this marginalization and near exclusion of women's voices from the political world. Feminists ask whether the questions that men ask and the problems that men address reflect a peculiarly male view of human life and give inadequate attention to the concerns of women. They ask whether the ideas that men provide in answer to these questions reflect male experiences and understandings, rather than reflecting human experiences and understandings that include those of women. Feminists ask whether men have structured social, economic, and political life in ways that undermine the rights and interests of women—and, perhaps, of men too.[1] In short, just as environmentalists accuse political thought to date of reflecting a *homocentric* bias, feminists accuse such thought of reflecting an **androcentric bias**.

The idea that women should have "equal rights" with men dates at least to the birth of ideologies. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, in which she reminded the founders of classical liberalism that women, too, could reason, and thus should be equal participants in the liberal project. Throughout the past two centuries, other women have made and extended these claims, but in the past twenty-five years there has been an explosion of female voices, both in the world of political theory and in the concrete world of political activity. These contributors have not spoken in a single voice. Consequently, feminism—understood as the voices of women expressing the experiences, concerns, and interests of

[1]Among the many recent works in the history of political thought that raise these sorts of questions are Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), and Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Meditations on Modern Political Thought* (New York: Praeger, 1986).

women[2]—is not a single cohesive ideology. Perhaps women have (marginally) contributed—in ways that reflect women's perspectives—to most of the other ideologies we have examined. Perhaps such contributions imply the existence of different versions of feminism—liberal, conservative, anarchist, Marxist, socialist, among others.[3] Yet, many feminists resist such classifications, and the boundaries among these various feminist groupings remain unclear. In an attempt to capture some of the diversity within feminism without aspiring to present a comprehensive account of this diversity, we distinguish three main forms of feminism.

Liberal feminists are primarily concerned with providing women the same rights that men already possess. They assert the intrinsic equality of men and women, and they argue that women's interests, needs, and preferences should be given consideration equal to that given men's interests, needs, and preferences. Liberal feminists rely on legal reform and electoral victories to bring about change. Thus, they accept the basic institutions of liberal society—its representative democracy, its capitalist economy, and the basic structure of social life—including the primacy of the nuclear family. The goals of liberal feminists are to have women share political power equally with men, to have opportunities for economic advancement for women that parallel those of men, and to reform the patriarchal family so that mothers and fathers share parental authority and household responsibilities more equally.

In contrast, **radical feminists** often reject the basic institutions of liberal society. Drawing from anarchists, they question the kind of power structures that exist in representative democracies, and they search for alternative forms of political decision making in which power is conceptualized and exercised in a different, less controlling manner than has been the case in male-dominated liberal societies. Drawing from Marxists and democratic socialists, radical feminists often believe that capitalism creates environments hostile to women's (and men's) interests. For them, major restructuring of politics and economics is necessary to eliminate the gender biases in modern societies. Some radical feminists assert that all western social institutions, including marriage, undermine the freedom of all and abet the oppression of women. The most radical feminists claim that the oppression of women is inherent in female/male relationships. For these feminists, only separate women's communities can provide women the freedom, cooperation, and mutual affection that fully tap the potential of women.

As both liberal and radical feminists have criticized the political and social practices of liberal and other modern societies, many female scholars have begun to question the epistemological bases of the ideologies that sustain these practices. Many of these scholars have argued that the foundations of all

[2]By adopting this as our initial definition of feminism, we intentionally express our belief that women should *define* the ideas of feminism. Nevertheless, we think that men can understand, interpret, and support feminism. Charlene Stinard, Marisa Kelly, and Cryss Brunner have been particularly helpful in defining feminism for us, but all errors of interpretation are, of course, ours.
[3]A good summary of different types of feminism is presented by Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989).

Sidebar 13-1

Some Feminists and their Writings

LIBERAL FEMINISTS

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797)
A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792)

Betty Friedan*
The Feminine Mystique (1963)
The Second Stage (1981)

Gloria Steinem*
Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions (1983)

Susan Moller Okin
Justice, Gender, and the Family (1989)

RADICAL AND SOCIALIST FEMINISTS

Kate Millet*
Sexual Politics (1970)

Catherine MacKinnon*
Feminism Unmodified (1977)
Toward a Feminist Theory of the State (1989)

Juliet Mitchell*
Women's Estate (1971)

Lise Vogel*
Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Towards a Unitary Theory (1983)

Marilyn French*
Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals (1985)

POSTMODERN FEMINISTS

Mary Daly*
Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism (1978)
Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy (1984)

Nancy Hartsock*
Money, Sex, and Power: Toward a Feminist Historical Materialism (1983)

Lorraine Code*
What Can She Know? (1991)

Sandra Harding*
The Science Question in Feminism (1986)

*Living author.

human knowledge are seriously flawed. They question the abstractness and "objectivity" of the scientific and philosophical modes of thinking characteristic of political ideologies (and other intellectual constructions) that men have provided to understand the natural and social worlds. Such **postmodern feminists** argue that we must first "deconstruct" our understandings of the world, as such understandings are based on male experiences. They argue for quite different ways of thinking and knowing that give equal—and perhaps greater—attention to the more immediate, concrete, and relational ways that women experience the world. Postmodern feminists thereby challenge not only the ideas that other ideologies have provided but the very process of developing any ideology.[4]

[4]These forms of feminism are not distinct, as some women are simultaneously and without contradiction both radical and postmodern feminists. However, not all postmodern feminists are radical.

for, and value of, abstract theories of justice, such as theories of "just deserts" that link one's rewards to one's contributions. Carol Gilligan questions the assumption of most ideologies that moral development demands allegiance to abstract and universal claims about just treatment. While contemporary liberals—such as John Dewey and Lawrence Kohlberg—have argued that the ability to generate universal and abstract rules of fairness is central to moral development, Gilligan argues that such abstract rules are simply unimportant and irrelevant to women's understanding of the treatment of self and of others. For Gilligan, the liberal fascination with theories of justice is a male fetish, and she proposes an **ethic of care** as an alternative to (or at least as a complement to) theories of justice. In an analysis that reflects the "natural justice" sought by anarchists, Gilligan argues that women see justice as particular acts of caring that are not amenable to theorizing or abstraction.[22] Rather than learning abstract principles of justice, women develop a disposition to care for the particular people in their communities. Rather than attend to abstract rights, women seek to act responsibly toward others and to nurture relationships. Women respond to the particulars of ethical dilemmas, and this is not an indication of mental weakness but an alternative and thoughtful way to respond to questions of justice.

Change

All feminists want social, economic, and political change, but—as indicated by their diverse principles—they differ greatly on how extensive and of what kind these changes should be. Nor have feminists reached agreement on strategies for bringing about change. Some seek to work within existing institutions to bring about incremental changes in public policies, while others want revolutionary changes. Most feminists, however, have relied on nonviolent forms of action to encourage change. The most radical separatist feminists have given up on the possibility of change within patriarchal societies and have opted to engage in change within their own communities. Postmodern feminists believe that the key to real change is to begin the slow process of rethinking everything we know about the world and social life.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The issues that link feminists together have not disappeared. Women still face many of the same problems that motivated early feminists to action. Liberal states have made some legislative reforms that address women's issues, but inequities remain. Socialist and communist countries have also addressed some women's issues, but in doing so they have revealed the deep cultural habits and perspectives that limit women's access to social activities and to equal treatment.

[22]Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982). For a recent defense of the ethic of care, see Joan C. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

Feminists have opened a dialogue that calls into question many traditional activities and understandings. Even those who don't consider themselves feminists have been forced to refocus their personal and political lenses because of the critiques generated by feminists. Feminists may continue to disagree on a wide range of political and philosophical issues, but the dialogue they have initiated will not be dampened by these disagreements.

Feminists have not (yet) created a single cohesive ideology to redress the grievances of women, but they have generated many insights that demand respect. They have forced theorists to consider that the differences between men and women may be both minimal—in terms of their fundamental rights—and profound—in terms of their different perspectives on social life. They have illustrated that what occurs in the intimacy of family relationships can be as politically important as the activities of the state. Most importantly, they have been successful in bringing women's voices to the conversation about how humans can live peaceful and prosperous lives.

CHAPTER 14

Beyond Ideologies

Recently there has been considerable discussion about the "end of ideology." At times, the intent of this discussion has been to prescribe eliminating ideological concepts and debate from political life. From this perspective, the rhetoric employed by liberals and conservatives (or other ideologues) only obfuscates the issues that face political communities and leads to unnecessary division and deadlock.[1] In this view, our pressing problems are clear enough, and pragmatic, "businesslike" solutions to these problems are needed. Rather than a conservative or a liberal approach to crime (or health care or education or any other problem), we need workable and effective approaches developed by competent experts who transcend ideological preconceptions and biases. Such a technocratic prescription reflects a perennial aspiration to reduce political conflict, but it forgets that problems need to be recognized and prioritized, and that ideologies play a major role in this regard. It also forgets that experts, too, disagree about solutions to problems precisely because the most workable and effective solutions to political problems remain unknown.

At other times, the intent of pointing to the end of ideology has been to argue that ideologies have lost their relevance for understanding political life. From this perspective, such factors as the interests and powers of political actors have become much more important determinants of political actions and public policies than are ideological motivations and concerns. According to Theodore Lowi, after both liberals and conservatives embraced positive government during the New Deal:

> The basis for the liberal-conservative dialogue did die. Liberalism-conservatism as the source of public philosophy no longer made any sense. . . .
>
> [Now] the most important difference between liberals and conservatives,

[1]See, for example, E. J. Dione, *Why Americans Hate Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), pp. 9–28; and Alexander Shtromas, *The End of ISMs?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

> Republicans and Democrats, is to be found in the interest groups they identify with.[2]

Such claims deserve serious consideration, because ideological rhetoric can serve to deflect attention from the actual motivations and activities of political actors. Nevertheless, the actions and behavior of people are clearly influenced by the ideas that they hold, and ideologies continue to influence people's thoughts.[3] Lowi's observation, moreover, is directed only at the American polity at a particular point in time. Even if his remarks are accurate, they do not reflect a global situation.

Most often, however, discussions of the end of ideology have focused on the perception that ideological conflict is ending worldwide. From this perspective, the winding down of the cold war and the apparent decline in the appeal of communism as an ideology has been interpreted as indicating that a consensus is forming that democracy and capitalism—the ideas of liberal democracy—best achieve peace and prosperity.[4] The claim that ideological conflict is ending may be an attractive idea, but such claims have been made before and have proven rather misleading, at best.

The relatively peaceful and prosperous 1950s witnessed the first claim that ideological conflict was ceasing. The formulators of this **end-of-ideology thesis** adopted a critical conception of ideologies as simplified ideas packaged in a manner that appeal to human emotion rather than to reason; in this conception, ideologies were viewed as "weapons" used to arouse people to take often fanatical actions in the false, chiliastic hope that such actions would lead to human and social perfection.[5] They then claimed that such ideologies were "exhausted," because their "truth" was no longer credible. Few serious minds could believe that the "blueprints" of ideologies like fascism and communism could bring about the new utopias they proclaimed when they were instead responsible for "such calamities as the Moscow Trials, the Nazi-Soviet pact, the concentration camps, the suppression of the Hungarian workers," and so forth.[6] The initial formulators of the end-of-ideology thesis also claimed that ideological struggle over the perennial issues of politics had ceased to characterize domestic politics. Conservatives no longer regarded every increase in state power as an intrusion on personal and political liberty. Socialists no longer advocated the abolition of private property.[7] Instead, a "rough consensus" had emerged that accepted the welfare state, preferred decentralized to centralized power, advocated a mixed economy rather

[2]Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States*, 2d ed. (New York: Norton, 1979), pp. 43, 51. For a more recent claim about the declining relevance of the differences between liberalism and conservatism, see Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven* (New York: Norton, 1991).

[3] Lawrence J. R. Herson, *The Politics of Ideas: Political Theory and American Public Policy* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1984), esp. pp. 279–294.

[4]Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

[5] Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (New York: Collier Books, 1960), pp. 393–396.

[6]Bell, *The End of Ideology*, p. 397.

[7]Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1960), p. 404.

than pure capitalism or pure socialism, and supported political pluralism—understood as the existence and toleration of many groups having diverse ideas and interests and pursuing their interests in competitive electoral and legislative arenas.[8] Within this broad consensus, political conflict was reduced to questions regarding the need for a little more or a little less governmental welfare, ownership, regulation, and planning in particular policy areas.[9]

Perhaps domestic politics during the 1950s did approach such an ideological consensus, but, in retrospect, it is hard to understand how the end-of-ideology thesis could be seriously entertained in a world that was increasingly divided by the capitalist-communist split. In any event, the turbulent 1960s made the end-of-ideology notion rather short-lived domestically. Sharp ideological differences were most clearly evident in the Goldwater-Johnson Presidential elections in 1964 and in the Nixon-McGovern race in 1972. Not only did conservative principles clash significantly with liberal and socialist principles in most Western democracies during the 1970s and 1980s, but these decades saw a rise in new ideological perspectives such as feminism, black nationalism, environmentalism, and various types of religious fundamentalism. As the 1990s approached, few political analysts believed that ideological differences had waned.

But the decline of communism has renewed discussion of the end-of-ideology thesis, and in a perhaps more profound form than that espoused during the 1950s. The most notable expression of the idea that ideological differences are evaporating as we approach the "**end-of-history**" is that presented by Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and the Last Man.* According to Fukuyama, the transformation of communist regimes in Eastern Europe into democratic countries bent on establishing market economies is simply the most visible event in a trend that has been evident since the dawn of the age of ideology almost two hundred years ago. According to Fukuyama, the superiority of capitalism and democracy became evident as early as 1806, when Napoleon defeated the Prussian monarchy at the Battle of Jena.[10] Drawing on the work of Hegel as interpreted by Alexandre Kojeve, Fukuyama argues that the ideals of classical liberalism—"the twin principles of liberty and equality"—cannot be improved upon. Societies that are governed by modern technocratic and bureaucratic states that are based on these ideas satisfy mankind's "deepest and most fundamental longings,"[11] making impossible the further historical development of the ideas that should govern political communities. Capitalism is the system of economic organization that best embodies the principle of liberty while it also provides the economic development that satisfies human desires for security and the accumulation of wealth. Democracy is the system of political organization that best embodies the principle of equality,

[8]Bell, *The End of Ideology*, p. 397.
[9]Lipset, *Political Man*, pp. 404–405.
[10]Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* (summer 1989), p. 5.
[11]Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, p. xi.

assuring the equal recognition of everyone as a human being and as a citizen with equal basic rights.

By claiming that the triumph of democratic capitalism implies an "end of history," Fukuyama does not deny that there have been—and will continue to be—very important historical events. Instead, he claims that there has not been—and there will not be—any further historical "development of underlying principles and institutions, because all of the big questions have been settled."[12] Since the development of classical liberalism, there has been no credible denial of the idea that states must be based upon, and must act upon, the principles of liberty and equality. From this perspective, Marxism and communism simply had mistaken notions of how to achieve liberty and equality, and these flaws would inevitably be discovered and corrected. From this perspective, the horrors of fascism and nazism simply taught humans of the incredible evils achievable by capitalist technology when it is employed in opposition to the principles of liberty and equality. Of course, the principles of liberty and equality are not fully realized in any political community. But today even illiberal and undemocratic regimes give lip service to the principles of liberty and equality, because these ideas are so universally acknowledged that no regime can long survive if it denies allegiance to them. In time, however, the internal contradictions of regimes that violate these principles become apparent, leading to the demise of illiberal and undemocratic regimes and to the universal realization of capitalist and democratic communities.

Fukuyama does not argue that the end of history—or the end of ideological conflict—is a good thing. The formal equalities (such as equal political and legal rights to all) and extensive economic and social liberties within the (private) sphere of civil society provided by democratic capitalism are interpreted as "freedom," but such equal freedom is directed toward the fulfillment of material desires rather than toward encouraging deeper spiritual pursuits. At the "end of history," in Fukuyama's interpretation, politics no longer involves moral or ethical debate about such great ideas as the appropriate principles of justice. Without such fundamental conflict over the meaning of existence, the differences among political communities wane, and a boring sameness characterizes human life. Think of it this way: Every good story has a plot that involves conflict between a protagonist and an antagonist. This conflict may be within a single individual, between individuals or groups, between an individual and nature, and so on. Without some form of conflict, there is no story. If all serious conflict among ideological, religious, and philosophical points of view has been resolved by liberalism, then there is no story left to tell. History has ended, and boredom ensues.

There is much to admire in Fukuyama's analysis. Political communities do appear to be losing their unique identities as they become more homogeneous. Certainly there is much recent movement toward more democratic political systems and more capitalist economies. Perhaps the ideals of equality and liberty are fundamental to contemporary political communities. But, to para-

[12]Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, p. xii.

phrase Mark Twain, the rumors of the demise of ideological conflict may be greatly exaggerated. Two considerations lead us to question Fukuyama's end-of-history thesis. First, the broad global trends toward democratic capitalism should not obscure the viability of regimes that practice neither democracy nor capitalism. Various brands of authoritarianism, nationalism, tribalism, and fundamentalism cannot be disregarded as ideological alternatives to democratic capitalism in today's world or in the world of the future. Second, within democratic capitalism the ideals of liberty and equality continue to be given quite different interpretations, yielding very different political principles. Even if there should be agreement that the basic ideas of capitalism should be adopted, large ideological disagreements would persist about where to limit or override pure capitalist processes. Even if there should be agreement that democracy is better than nondemocratic regimes, significant ideological differences would remain about the requirements of democracy. Even if people should accept the highly abstract ideas of liberty and equality, fundamental questions would remain about authority, justice, and citizenship. In short, even at the "end of history," ideological differences would persist. Such differences imply an escape from boredom, as individuals and communities will continue to have different ideas and practices about how best to constitute political life. Such differences also impose a responsibility that we think clearly about the ideas and practices that should govern our political lives.

LEVELS OF INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING ABOUT POLITICS

Few people, however, seem to think clearly and deeply about politics and, according to the conventional wisdom in American political science, the few people who are most sophisticated in their political thinking are "ideologues." In a classical study of the political ideas of Americans, Philip Converse suggested that there were five levels of sophistication in political thinking. As a principal investigator in the National Election Surveys, Converse drew upon interview data collected from thousands of American citizens during the 1956, 1958, and 1960 national elections to describe these "political belief systems."[13] According to Converse, at level one—the lowest level of political understanding and thinking—are 22.5 percent of the public who are largely without political ideas; they are generally uninformed about political issues and attribute no significance to political matters. At level two, 24 percent of the public simply evaluates parties and candidates in terms of the "nature of the times" (giving them credit and praise for peace and prosperity or blame for war and economic difficulties), or in terms of how they stand on a narrow issue. At level three, 42 percent of the public understand politics as involving conflicting group interests, and they orient themselves toward particular issues and can-

[13]Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in *Ideology and Discontent*, edited by David E. Apter (New York: Free Press, 1964).

didates based on their chosen leaders' assessments of how those issues (or electoral outcomes) affect the interests of the groups with whom they identify. Thus, according to Converse, the 88 percent of the public comprising levels one through three are therefore "innocent" of ideology because they fail to make much use of abstract ideas or principles when orienting themselves toward politics. At level four are people who make some use of the abstract ideas that characterize ideologies, but they do not understand such abstractions very well nor do they apply them to current issues very much; such "near ideologues" constitute another 9 percent of the public. Only at level five, comprising just 2.5 percent of the public, are there "ideologues" who are adept at employing abstract concepts and whose ideas are coherently structured.

Converse's findings have been viewed with alarm by most students of American democracy because they indicate that the political ideas of most American citizens have no foundation in broader principles, are inconsistent with each other, are unstable over time, and are generally ill-considered and ill-informed.[14] Moreover, these findings suggest that the political thinking of the general public is markedly different from and inferior to that of political elites. While ideologies play a very important role in the political thinking of elites, the general public is largely innocent of ideologies. When political leaders and activists discuss political and policy choices, they draw upon the abstract and well-organized principles that ideologies provide. But most citizens do not hold or make use of the abstract political ideas that are central to political ideologies. Thus, the lack of facility with ideological thinking among citizens may hinder their active and effective participation in politics.

These findings and considerations suggest that citizens need to develop abstract principles and general political beliefs, such as those provided by ideologies, in order to become active and effective participants in politics. They suggest that large numbers of citizens need to become ideological in order to

[14]There are least two major rebuttals to this conventional wisdom in political science. First, Converse's findings may reflect the particularly nonideological period in American history in which his data were collected. According to Norman Nie, Sidney Verba, and John Petrocik, in their study, *The Changing American Voter* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), the public is more ideological when elections are ideologically polarized. However, others have found that such elections seem to enhance ideological sophistication only minimally, bringing about only a small increase in "the nonideological use of ideological terminology." Second, Converse's findings may reflect certain preconceptions about how ideas should be patterned and may fail to take into account the ways in which citizens reach reasonably sophisticated conclusions through "often unique patterning of ideas in their own terms." According to Robert Lane in his *Political Ideology* (New York: Free Press, 1962), the public can achieve a fairly high level of sophistication in political thinking by "morselizing" (by thinking about political events in isolation from one another) rather than by "contextualizing" (by placing events in ideological and historical perspective). Such challenges to the conventional wisdom have resulted in a general recognition that the American mind is not completely empty of political ideas, but that "such ideas defy parsimonious description. Some beliefs are classically liberal, some classically conservative. There are some authentic opinions, tenaciously held; there are some nonattitudes, casually expressed. There are patches of knowledge and expanses of ignorance." For an excellent summary of this literature, see Donald Kinder, "Diversity and Complexity in American Public Opinion," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, edited by Ada Finifter (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1983), p. 401.

close the gap between elites and the masses and thereby move political communities towards more genuine democracy. Developing broad principles about how political communities are and should be governed and applying these principles to current issues would, according to this argument, increase political sophistication for those whose political thinking is at or below the level of "near ideologues" in Converse's scale of political sophistication. But are ideologues the most sophisticated political thinkers? Is there not some kind of political thinking that improves on the ideas held by ideologues?

QUESTIONING ONE'S IDEOLOGICAL PRECONCEPTIONS

In Converse's analysis, an "ideologue" is someone who understands and applies to the real world a coherent system of abstract political beliefs and ideals. If there is some form of political understanding that transcends ideological orientations toward politics, it calls into question the ideas that the ideologue readily accepts and searches for better ideas than any particular ideology provides. Questioning one's current ideology is the first step a person should take in order to move beyond being merely an ideologue who accepts an entire ideological system to becoming a political theorist and philosopher who seeks better beliefs and ideals. Why do you hold certain political beliefs and ideals? Unless the ideas that one holds are based on fairly extensive self-reflection, it is entirely possible that one should discard these ideas as products of a previous "false consciousness." At least four major sources of our ideological preconceptions can be identified; people seeking to transcend ideological thinking might profit from asking themselves whether their current beliefs and values simply reflect (1) various socialization experiences, (2) psychological strains that they have experienced, (3) control needs that they possess, or (4) an unquestioning assimilation of the ideas of the most powerful interests in society.

Many social institutions can obviously play important roles in influencing our ideological preconceptions. Parents and other family members can express certain ideas and principles that shape people's political principles for years to come. Both in the content of what they teach and in the procedures they employ, schools and churches can influence people's political beliefs and values. Various social organizations—ranging from fraternities and sororities to various community service groups—espouse political ideas that can be assimilated into one's basic political outlook. Workplace organizations—the companies that employ people and the unions that organize them—stress certain ideas that can be perhaps too easily accepted. Governmental and party leaders peddle ideas continually, and we presumably assimilate some of them. In short, our ideological predispositions are often influenced by a variety of **agents of socialization.** As a first step in questioning our allegiance to a particular ideology, it may be helpful simply to recall those agents whose views we have trusted, and to ask whether our trust has been well-founded. How-

ever, the impact of such socialization agents is often complex and subtle, and we must consider other determinants of our ideological predispositions.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) argued that our political beliefs and values (as well as religious and other ideas) are based on psychological strains. When people feel insecure and anxious, they seek comfort by developing beliefs in the benevolence of powerful authorities—in God or in some wise and virtuous political rulers. Freud's analysis gave rise to **strain theory** as an explanation for our ideological predispositions.[15] According to strain theory, ideologies are the psychological responses of people living under troubled and stressful social conditions. Societies and the secondary associations within societies put multiple and conflicting demands on people, causing similar stresses on people having similar roles in society. For example, white men who have developed some expertise and seniority in their particular jobs are likely to feel that their economic "rights" (e.g., that promotions should go to the most qualified and senior workers) are jeopardized by affirmative action (e.g., that special consideration be given to minorities and women for those promotions that are "rightfully" theirs). Strain theory claims that such people will develop an ideology that allows them to integrate the tension between their concerns as workers and their status as citizens who are expected to obey the just laws of government. Rather than viewing affirmative action policies as legitimate efforts by governments to rectify past injustices to minorities and women, they will define such policies as "reverse discrimination." Rather than viewing such policies as the result of a democratic process, they will see these policies as the work of a small group of African-American extremists, radical feminists, and bungling bureaucrats. And they may conclude that their government has been taken over by such illegitimate factions, necessitating a political (nonviolent) "counterrevolution" by "the silent majority." As an alternative example, strain theory might recognize that comfortable white men with secure jobs may also belong to organizations that proclaim the historical mistreatment of minorities and women. Such circumstances may lead them to feel "white man's guilt," facilitating their ready acceptance of affirmative action and other aspects of the more egalitarian strand of contemporary liberalism. In short, strain theory maintains that particular ideologies are developed to accommodate the tensions felt by people living in similar social positions and experiencing similar value conflicts. The ideas of the ideology are then tenaciously maintained in order to allow those experiencing such stress to cope both intellectually and emotionally with the frustrations, anxieties, or guilt that they feel.

A third basis for our ideological thinking may be found in the concept of the **libido dominandi**, or "lust for ruling," presented by St. Augustine (354–430) long before ideologies per se had been created. In this interpretation, ideological thinking is the product of a desire to rule over nature, history, other human beings, or the world, even though we cannot, in fact, completely exer-

[15]"Strain theory" is discussed by Clifford Geertz in "Ideology as a Cultural System" in *Ideology and Discontent*, pp. 52–57.

cise such control. An ideology gives us the illusion of control by providing a coherent or consistent set of principles about the world, nature, history, or human beings and by providing prescriptions about the manner in which we can control them. Thus, we develop ideologies because of a need for control or power. Augustine underscored the often arbitrary control and violent power that emerges from this "lust" to rule, and recognized that such control and power may bring a kind of satisfaction and enjoyment.[16] In a manner somewhat similar to that described by Freud's "strain theory," this satisfaction of the *libido dominandi* arises in part from a relief from fear. The fear of death, the fear of not being in complete control of one's destiny, and the anxiety of not being completely certain about the meaning of one's existence—all of which everyone experiences from time to time—may be relieved by adherence to a satisfying ideology that provides extended and morally certain answers addressing these fears. If, moreover, those who espouse a satisfying ideology come to hold political power, they can make the world over in conformity to the requirements of their ideology, as communists and nazis have attempted to do. For good or ill, most people desire a release from existential anxiety and uncertainty, but the perilous qualities of the *libido dominandi* have been revealed several times in this century when various ideological "makeovers" have resulted in the deaths of millions of human beings.

Karl Marx suggested a fourth basis for our ideological preconceptions, asserting that widespread acceptance of classical liberal ideology emerges from the interests and power of the ruling class. Because capitalists control the major economic resources of society, they have an interest in generating and disseminating certain ideas that legitimate democratic capitalism—such as the ideas that the inequalities derived from market exchanges are just, that representative democracy empowers average citizens more than it empowers business interests, and that minimal regulation of the economy improves everyone's condition. Moreover, Marx contended that capitalists' control over economic resources gives them control over "mental production," enabling them to create "false consciousness" in the working class; contrary to their real interests, many workers are falsely persuaded that the ideology of capitalists provides natural truths about social and economic life and serves the interests of the working class as well as those of the capitalists.

Marx's analysis has given rise to **interest theory** as an explanation for our ideological preconceptions. According to interest theory, ideologies are the political weapons of everyone—not just of capitalists, as Marx had contended. Every ideology is developed in order to further the interests of a particular class or group of people, and each ideology attempts to persuade others to support its political objectives by claiming a universal validity and benevolence. An ideology claiming that inequality produces freedom and prosperity for all is rooted in the interests of the wealthy. An ideology claiming that economic equality will deliver humans from alienation and exploitation is rooted

[16]John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1990), p. 390. Cf. St. Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIV, 15 and 28; Book XV, 7.

in the interests of the economically disadvantaged. An ideology that looks to divine supremacy as the source of political guidance is rooted in the interests of those who claim to know the word of God. In short, interest theory asserts that humans are primarily motivated to further their own economic well-being, power, and status, and that they do so by developing and articulating the ideological principles that are said to be true and beneficial to all, but of which primary effect is to enhance the position of a particular set of people.

Interest theory thus suggests that we should examine two possible sources of our ideological preconceptions. First, we should consider the most powerful interests in our society and their capacity to mold our political beliefs and ideals. Do capitalists dominate our society, and have they used their power to induce unquestioned allegiance to the principles of classical liberalism? Does a "new class" dominate our society, and have its members used their power to bring about widespread acceptance of the ideas of contemporary liberalism or democratic socialism? Or does some other interest dominate society, bringing about another sort of ideological hegemony?

Second, interest theory suggests that we consider our own interests as a source of our ideological preconceptions. Perhaps, because we are professors at public universities, we have an interest in supporting the strong state endorsed by contemporary liberals that is given the authority to invest more money in education (including faculty salaries!) to solve various social problems. Perhaps you or your family are effective entrepreneurs who have the skills and resources to succeed in capitalist competition, predisposing you to support classical liberalism or contemporary conservatism. One's political ideas naturally *seem* more thoughtfully grounded when they reflect one's own interests, rather than the views of the dominant interests of society, but it is doubtful that principles should be grounded in self-interest. Contemporary political philosophers generally argue that people should choose their principles in an *impartial* manner that ignores their own talents, capacities, resources, and backgrounds.[17] When we adopt and hold "principles" that merely reflect our interests and capacities, we are subject to the charge by others that our principles are but rationalizations for our actions and weapons for "forcing" others to conform to our interests. Although it may be impossible for us to assume a completely impartial position that enables us to put aside our interests and capacities, it may be desirable for us to employ various intellectual

[17]The "veil of ignorance" has been proposed by John Rawls as a device for requiring people to choose their principles in a manner that overlooks their talents and backgrounds. Rawls suggests that people should choose principles without considering their own class or status in society, their own natural talents, intelligence, strength and so forth. According to Rawls, the veil of ignorance helps people to choose principles that they are prepared to live with whatever their circumstances turn out to be. Rawls claims that it is a basic presumption of morality and justice that people not design their principles to coincide with their known interests. See his *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 136–142. Brian Barry agrees with Rawls on the importance of impartiality, but he believes impartiality can be achieved without such devices as the veil of ignorance; according to Barry, it is part of human nature to seek to justify one's actions to others without appealing to self-interest. See Barry's *A Treatise on Social Justice*, Vol. 1, *Theories of Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p. 364.

methodologies and devices that curtail the influence of self-interest when we assess competing political ideas and become committed to certain political principles.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

As a scholarly discipline, political science aspires to achieve impartiality, or "objectivity," regarding political beliefs. In general, political science serves to provide methods for guarding against the influence of various biases in determining the validity of our ideas that describe and explain the workings of actual political communities, and its scientific procedures are usually thought to have little or no efficacy in the assessment of "value-laden" or "subjective" normative ideals. Nevertheless, the capacity of the scientific method to overcome ideological predispositions about how the political world functions has often been questioned.[18] For example, our ideological orientations are alleged to shape the questions we ask about the empirical world, the hypotheses we form about it, and the observations we make about it. Such allegations suggest that we cannot transcend ideology in forming political beliefs because ideologies are particular and narrow lenses that channel our thoughts and perceptions about the empirical world, and these lenses necessarily distort our thinking and perceptions in ways that make objectivity impossible.

Ideologies undoubtedly do shape the questions we ask about how the political world actually works. For example, many contemporary liberals and conservatives, who recognize that their Marxist and socialist rivals emphasize the importance of classes and class conflict, have raised the question, "Are social classes dying?" in the hope of undermining the current relevance of Marxist and socialist ideas.[19] As another example, a Marxist who holds the idea that democratic governments are merely "the executive committee for the capitalist class" is likely to raise questions about the distribution of power in communities that are formally democratic: Who really rules? Who really has predominant power in American cities and other political communities? Thus, if ideologies influence the subject matters of scientific investigations, this is probably an asset rather than a liability. Insofar as science often focuses on rather trivial questions, ideologies can redirect political scientific research back to bigger issues, such as the importance of classes and the distribution of power in contemporary communities.

Ideologies may also influence the hypotheses that one chooses to investigate. In response to the question of whether classes are losing their importance, conservatives and liberals are predisposed to suggest that the political signif-

[18]See, for example, Eugene Miller, "Positivism, Historicism, and Political Inquiry," and the rejoinders to his argument in the *American Political Science Review* 66 (Sept. 1972), pp. 796–873.

[19]Robert Nisbet, "The Decline and Fall of Social Class," *Pacific Sociological Review* 2 (1959), pp. 11–17, and Terry Clark and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Are Social Classes Dying?" *International Sociology* 6 (Dec. 1991), pp. 397–410.