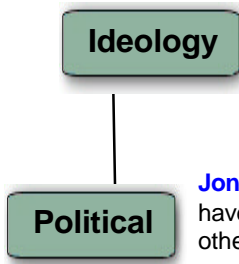


Political Ideologies and Political Parties

Mullins (1972): Political ideologies involve: "A program of collective action for the maintenance, alteration or transformation of society".
Gerring (1997): "Ideologies" (a set of related beliefs and values) become political ideologies when they "specify a concrete programme of action" (such as a party manifesto).

Bjørnskov (2004): Ideology is: "Hotly disputed...difficult to define and consequently difficult to measure".
 Involves general ideas about how we think about (and behave in) the social world.



Beliefs
 About the nature of the world.

Political objectives
 Whatever these beliefs are designed to achieve.

Instructions
 About how these objectives can be realised.

Justifications
 For those beliefs (and about the superiority of such beliefs when compared to other ideologies).

Forms

Party

Systemic

Relate to the particular ways systemic beliefs are operationalised within a society.

Example: In the UK, although each party represented in Parliament has its own unique set of policies, principles and practices, all generally subscribe to the notion of a democratic political ideology.



Relate to broad (and fundamental) beliefs about the basis and general organisation of political behaviour in a society - they refer, in other words, to the idea of political systems.

Democratic

A set of fundamental ideas and practices (a totalist ideology) that are the only permissible political ideas.

Grobman (1990): Totalist ideologies involve "Complete political, social, and cultural control over their subjects".

Examples (20th century): Soviet Union under the control of Stalin (*Communism*) Nazi Germany under the control of Hitler (*Fascism*).

Totalitarian

Ideology



General Pinochet in Chile (1980's): Powerful dictator at the head of an oligarchic group.

Single Party

Unlike democracies, where different parties and ideologies may be in competition (pluralism), totalitarian societies are organised around a single party.
Example: Modern China

Organisation

Friedrick and Brzezinski (1965): Party organisation is always strongly hierarchical with a high degree of centralised control and decision-making.

Control

This system extends control *downwards* into every area of social life and the legal system is usually under the control or influence of the Party hierarchy.

Dictatorship

Can take different forms, from a single powerful figure (a leader) to a powerful group (an oligarchy).

Power

Exercised "from the centre, outwards". Decisions are made by a small group at the top of the Party hierarchy and disseminated to the mass of the party / population.

Extends across all areas of society - economic, political and ideological. This may involve the development of a *Corporate State* structure, as well as Party control of all means of communication - press and television, for example.

Policing

A common feature is a "secret police force" whose main role is to maintain and extend the existing political order. Such policing may involve imprisonment without trial, torture or even death.