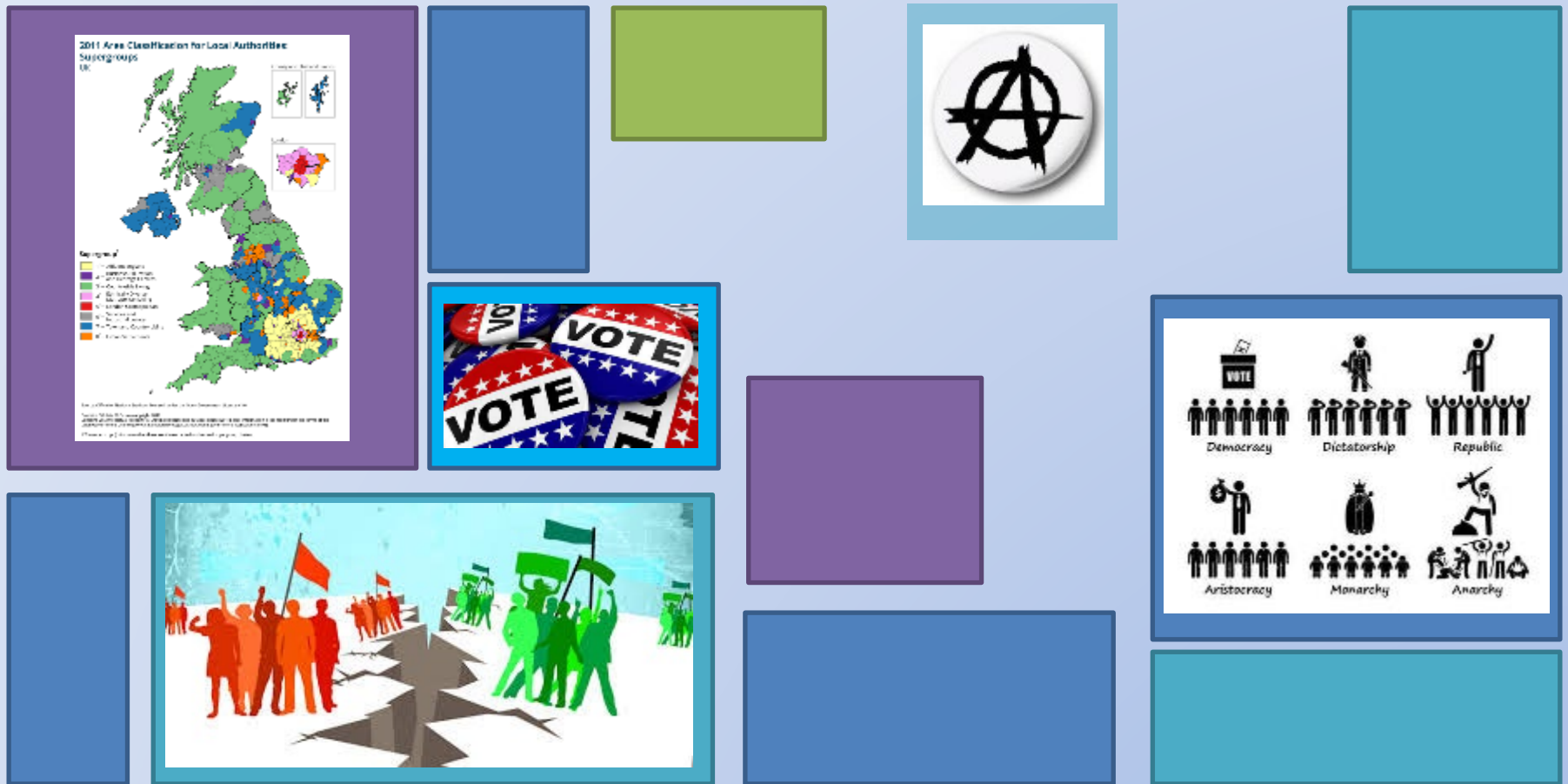




ECED7001: Political Influences in Inequality & Diversity

Theme 3: Ideological Paradigms & Frameworks

Part 1: Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism

Ideological Paradigms and Frameworks

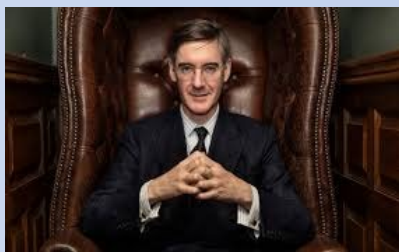
- In this Theme, we will focus on four dominant ideological paradigms observable in most industrialised democracies
 - Conservatism
 - Liberalism
 - Socialism
 - Green Politics
- Brown *et al* (2018) argue that the first three of these ‘emerged from the conjunction of the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, and the political revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’

Ideological Paradigms and Frameworks

- In the course of our discussions we will also discuss other frameworks that are either associated with these four main ideologies or which have sought to influence them, namely;
 - Social Democracy
 - Communitarianism
 - Marxism
 - Anarchism
 - Feminism
 - Nationalism
 - Utilitarianism

CONSERVATISM

- As with the normative concepts we looked at in the previous Theme this term is also fluid in meaning
- What it is to be a **conservative** has changed over time and is different depending on the context
- Although, in the UK we have a **Conservative** party it is fair to say that the party contains individuals with very different ideas about what they mean by **conservatism**



- However, one generalisation that it is possible to make is that it is ‘a political philosophy which aspires to the preservation of what is thought to be the best in established society, and opposes **radical** change’
(Brown, *et al*, 2018)

CONSERVATISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- As Brown *et al* (2018) state, it is possibly easier to follow the thread of conservatism through history than it is to define a conservative ideology
- The UK Conservative party can trace its roots back to the English Civil War (1642–1651) and its aftermath
- Two political groupings formed in Parliament, Whigs and Tories.
- The Tory party was predominantly in favour of the Monarch having more power than parliament, of the hereditary right to rule even for Catholic members of the royal family and of ‘high church’ Anglicanism
- These beliefs lead them to oppose the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688 which saw the removal of the Catholic James II and the placing on the throne of William of Orange and Mary

CONSERVATISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- For a good part of the 18th Century the Tory group was out of power
- Although, at a 'grass roots' level those who considered themselves Tories continued to be active in local politics and administration
- However, it would not be correct to say that there was such a thing as a Tory Party at this time
- This began to change in response to significant events such as the American War of Independence and the French Revolution
- Those who saw these events as threatening the social order coalesced into a more organised Party which represented the 'squirearchy', country gentry, merchants and local officials

CONSERVATISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Following victory in 1815 against Napoleon the party continued to develop but could still be seen to embody a preference for traditional systems and an opposition to radical and rapid change
- The desire for social order lead to the formation of the first police force by Sir Robert Peel when Home Secretary (1822-1827)
- The party was given the name Conservative at the time of the debates about the Great Reform Act (1832) because they were seen as wanting to conserve the status quo (*Latin – the existing state of affairs*).
- In the UK Conservatism has changed over time but can be seen to have had an element of ideological consistency until the time of Margaret Thatcher

CONSERVATISM

- Before we look at the way in which 'Thatcherism' redefined British conservatism we need to explore two aspects of political thinking; social ideology and economic ideology (remember the Political Compass)
- Social conservatism can be seen to embody traditional views of the family, traditional values such as 'neighbourliness, decency & courtesy' as seen in the Back to Basics campaign of John Major
- It can also be seen to uphold social order and traditional social norms and therefore to be opposed to 'deviance' & 'difference'
- In the past economic conservatism has been associated with protectionism (of British business interest), trade with the Empire and low taxation
- However, post WW2, conservative Governments also embraced the ideas in the Beveridge report (see Theme 2)

CONSERVATISM

- It can be argued that post Margaret Thatcher the conservative party has remained largely social conservative (see Back to Basics and [Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988](#))
- However, 'Thatcherism' can be seen to be an economically radical adoption of neo-liberal economic policy (see also 'Reaganomics')
- The meant de-regulation of the financial markets, the privatisation of nationalised industries to promote competition and the creation of a home-owning, share owning democracy
- One other aspect of UK Conservatism that should be mentioned is that the party that we know as 'The Conservatives' is actually registered with the Electoral Commission as the [Conservative and Unionist party](#).

What is significant about this?



CONSERVATISM

- As with everything we have looked at thus far we can see that conservatism is a complex and changing concept
- However in broad terms it can be seen to have the following principles;
- Respect for property
- Respect for individuals
- A limited state
- Against over-regulation of Government, markets and business
- BUT support for regulation that promotes 'acceptable' private and social conduct
- Established Institutions (monarchy, church, state) deserve respect
- A rejection of radical and 'Utopian' ideas
- Acceptance of the 'natural order of things'

CONSERVATISM

- Although a 'secular' party, this concept of the 'natural order of things' exemplifies the strong links between UK conservatism and Anglicanism
- This can be illustrated if we look at a verse from the hymn "[All Things Bright and Beautiful](#)"
- 'The rich man in his castle, The poor man at his gate; God made them, high or lowly, And ordered their estate'.
- This connection between Anglicanism and conservatism lead the Suffragist and political campaigner Maude Royden, in a 1917 speech, to call the Church of England 'the Conservative Party at prayer'

Have we heard of the term **Suffragist** before?



CONSERVATISM

- In some extreme cases conservatism can take a 'reactionary' form, 'harking back to, and attempting to reconstruct, forms of society which existed in an earlier period'.
- Most modern forms of conservatism acknowledge that society is not static but argue for slow, evolutionary change rather than rash and revolutionary change.
- In some ways conservatism can be seen to be anti-ideological in that it opposes new, 'political' forms of thinking in favour of the status quo

EUROPEAN CONSERVATISM

- Internationally, the notion of conservatism as a political framework is equally confused
- For example, the European People's Party grouping in the European Parliament contains mainly Christian Democrat parties of the centre right (e.g. the German CDU party).
- It is the largest of the seven political groupings in the EU Parliament and has members from 26 EU countries
- 'The group's goal is to create a more competitive and democratic Europe. Other priorities include migration, trade and jobs'. [EU Parliament](#)
- However, there is also a Conservative and Reformist group which included the UK conservatives and is now largely made up of right of centre MEPs and is the 6th largest grouping
- 'This ECR group believes that Europe is in need of decentralisation and less bureaucracy. They also want to promote fair and free trade, economic recovery, growth and competitiveness as well as a reform of the EU's migration system' [EU Parliament](#)

LIBERALISM

- In a general sense liberalism can be seen to be the 'belief that it is the aim of politics to preserve individual rights and to maximize freedom of choice' (Brown *et al*, 2018)
- In contrast to conservatism, with its reliance on tradition and the status quo, classical liberalism can be seen to be teleological in nature
- This is to say that liberalism has a commitment to the improvement of social conditions and a belief that society is progressing through a number of stages
- In this sense liberalism owes much, philosophically, to the writings of Locke, Hume and Rousseau
- It can also be seen in the theories of sociologists such as T.H. Marshall who we will look at in our digression into distributive justice/welfare if we have time
- In terms of UK politics it might be useful to look at the historical context

LIBERALISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- We have already commented on the development of two political groupings in Parliament in the 17th century
- The 'Whigs' were established in opposition to the 'Tories' (N.B. both terms were abusive)
- The Whigs were in favour of a parliament that had more freedom from royal influence
- For various reasons this grouping held power as the 'government' for at least 50-60 years after the Glorious Revolution (1688)
- The Whigs were a complicated coalition of radical aristocrats, non-conformists and industrialists
- The more radical nature this grouping caused it to suffer by association with the revolutions in America and France and many Whigs joined the Tory party at this time.

LIBERALISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- As the Tory party transformed itself into the Conservatives over the course of the 19th century so the Whig party became the Liberal Party
- We must always remember that the ideology and Party are not one and the same thing
- However, during the course of the 19th and early 20th century the Liberal Party could be seen as pursuing socially liberal policies (e.g. rights for non-conformists and Catholics and the first pension and national insurance acts)
- As well as liberal economic policy (e.g. free trade)
- In contemporary UK politics the Liberal Democrats are now seen as occupying the 'centre' ground with the Conservatives to the right and Labour to the left

Liberalism & Individual Rights

- In the previous theme we have seen the influence of liberalism on the concept of rights (e.g. US Declaration, The Rights of Man, A Vindication of the Rights of Women)
- 17th century Civil Rights (freedom of speech, thought and religion)
- 19th century Political Rights (right to vote and hold office)
- 20th century Social Rights (economic and social security)
- In the first two instances these arguments were in favour of an individual's rights in the face of autocratic monarchy, in the first instance, and
- An individual's rights in the face of unfair exclusion due to religion, gender etc. in the second instance
- However, the social rights can be seen as something different

Amelioration of social injustice

- This is seen as being the other central tenet of liberalism
- It is argued that, through no fault of their own, people can be unable to benefit from society in the same way that others can
- Age (very young or very old), disability, ill-health (both physical and mental), closure of industry etc. were all seen as being conditions that could lead to social injustice which would then need 'ameliorating'
- This influence can be seen in the Liberal reforms in the early 20th century and in the Beveridge report that we have already look at.
- In this sense liberalism can be seen as focusing on both individual rights and on the responsibility of society to look after those who may not be able to look after themselves
- In both senses these **liberal** concepts can be seen to have been influenced by the writings of John Locke (1632-1704)

John Locke and Liberalism

- Locke is often called “[the father of liberalism](#)” because of his influence on liberal political thought
- In his *Second Treatise on Government* (Edited by Gough, 1948) he argued that political power should depend on the consent of the people to be governed
- In this sense his argument relied on the concept of **natural or inalienable rights** and the idea of the **social contract**
- This latter idea has been summarised as ‘the view that persons’ moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement among them to form the society in which they live’ (Fieser & Dowden, No Date)
- He further argued that, if a monarch or government broke this social contract they forfeited the right to govern
- It was this argument that influenced both the American and French revolutions

John Locke and Liberalism

- It has also been argued, by Layman (2020) among others, that Locke also influenced radical liberal thought in other ways
- One group, which Layman calls the ‘libertarian radicals’, argue that there are ‘no grounds for state redistribution except to correct past injustices, and governments are typically little more than thieving and oppressive gangs’
- This group can be seen to have influenced the ameliorative trend in liberal thought
- The other group, which Layman calls the ‘egalitarian radicals’, claim that ‘states should ensure, through redistributive taxation and other progressive policies, that our institutions respect this common right’ to ‘to share equally in the world’s resources’
- This latter group can be seen to have not only influenced radical liberalism but other redistributive ideologies such as socialism and Marxism

Liberalism - Principles

- For much of its early history liberalism was a radical and revolutionary principles
- It argued for a limited state and government by 'consent'
- On one hand it was primarily concerned with defending the freedom of Individuals against the overbearing reach of the Law (i.e. Negative Liberty as we described it in Theme 2)
- But it was also driven by a desire to address the inequalities in human society to allow all to achieve their potential (i.e. Positive Liberty as we discussed in Theme2)
- Because of this liberalism can be seen to be undertaking a balancing act between a fear of authoritarian state intervention to deny the rights of the individual and the creation of state intervention to support those disadvantaged by society

EUROPEAN LIBERALISM

- As we have seen the Liberal Party in the UK is, like the Conservatives and the Labour Party a political alliance of **interest groups** who have come together with the 'goal of attaining political power' (Ball, 1988)
- This 'political alliance' concept is further illustrated in the grouping of 'Liberal' parties in the European Parliament.
- Previously known as the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) the grouping now includes Emmanuel Macron's La Republique En Marche! (LREM) and, until Brexit, the Liberal Democrats from the UK and is known as the Renew Europe group.

EUROPEAN LIBERALISM

- Of the three largest groups in the EU Parliament this could be seen as the most 'non ideological' in that in some ways Liberalism now defines itself as being 'against' other ideologies
- This stance can be detected in the words of the President of the Group, Dacian Ciolos, when he states that 'By ending the dominance of the Conservatives and the Socialists, Europeans have given us a strong mandate to change Europe for the better'.
- Indeed he goes further and states that the group 'will stand up for the people who suffer from the illiberal and nationalistic tendencies that we see returning in too many countries.'
- In this way the Liberal grouping can be seen to be defining itself as an *absence* of some of the ideologies looked at elsewhere in this Theme

SOCIALISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

*How old is socialism as a
political ideology?*



SOCIALISM – HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- As Brown *et al* (2018) have argued this was the third political response to the social, economic and moral upheavals of the 17th & 18th centuries.
- Like the terms ‘conservatism’ and ‘liberalism’ the term ‘socialism’ was first coined in the 19th century by followers of Robert Owen(1771–1858) in the UK and Claude-Henri de Rouvroy Saint-Simon (1760–1825) in France and therefore pre-dates Marxism
- However, socialist principles can be detected in some of the radical religious movements of the 17th century (e.g. the Levellers and the Diggers) who sought a fairer society based on their reading of the Bible (Corns 1992)
- Indeed there is a strong tradition of Christian socialism running throughout the development of this ideology (see for example Tony Benn’s *Arguments for Socialism* (1980))

Socialism

- Indeed in his later years Robert Owen was also influenced in his thinking by the teachings of the Gospels
- However his early work is best summed up in *A New View of Society* (Owen, 1812 – republished 1970)
- In this he argued that the dehumanising effects of industrialisation and the factory system could be offset by the co-operative ownership of the means of production by the workforce
- Co-operativism and socialism were to develop alongside each other in UK politics throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and into the 21st
- Indeed, even to this day many MPs on the Labour Benches in the House of Commons were elected as members of both the [Labour Party and the Co-operative Party](#)



Any thoughts on this fact?



Socialism

- Socialism, as with all the other ideological paradigms and frameworks that we look at in this Theme, has many versions in different periods and different parts of the world
- However, what they generally have in common are;
- A sense that the excesses of industrial and post-industrial capitalism need to be ameliorated by the promotion of collective well-being
- That the selfish individualism that is part of human nature can be tempered by a reliance on concepts such as association, community, and cooperation, solidarity and mutual interdependence
- Examples of this can be seen in the development of building societies (Boddy, 1980), initiatives such as the [Caerphilly District Miner's Hospital](#) the [Worker's Educational Association](#) and movements such as the [Kinder Scout mass trespass](#) the [National Clarion Cycling Club](#) and the Co-operative Society ([Robertson, 2012](#))

Socialism

- Thus, whilst socialism is often dismissed as Marxism ‘lite’, it can be seen that it was often a grass-roots movement which sought to promote well-being and mutual support
- However, it would be wrong to only describe socialism in such a way.
- At the ideological and political level, socialist principles influenced both communist and anarchist theorists
- Although many socialist theorists also claimed that the ideology was global in scope, particularly in its approaches to worker solidarity (e.g. the First and Second International Working Men’s Association) and pacifism, it often ended up attempting to change society at the nation state level

SOCIALISM – MORE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- The Labour Party, as it existed in the 20th century at least, was created by an alliance of left of centre groupings
- One, the Social Democratic Federation, was lead by H. M. Hyndman and included artists such as William Morris.
- This grouping was influenced by Marxism and would later splinter into various groups of differing radicalism.
- Another was the Fabian Society, a London based grouping of left leaning writers and intellectuals such as George Bernard Shaw and Annie Besant (who helped to organise [the match-girls' strike](#))
- The Fabian Society promoted a less confrontational brand of 'evolutionary socialist collectivism' and has provided many leaders of the Labour Party

SOCIALISM – MORE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Lastly was the Independent Labour Party which was the largest of the three groupings with around 10,000 members.
- This grouping was formed in 1893, largely as a result of the Manningham Mills Strike against low wages and treacherous working conditions in the Bradford textile industries ([Barker, 2013](#))
- These were the main socialist groupings that came together in a conference in 1900 which founded the Labour Representation Committee which would become the Labour Party
- Thus, in the UK, socialism as represented by the main party can be seen to be an amalgam of radical liberalism, co-operativism and various forms of socialism and even Marxist ideologies
- As with the UK other parties the Labour party became a broad coalition of people generally on the left of the centre of British politics

Socialism

- In some cases an extreme emphasis on state control both of the mechanisms of welfare (the welfare state) and the means of production (industry) has taken the form of State Socialism (as opposed to the more localised versions of socialism proposed by Owen). This gave rise to the systems seen in the USSR and China under Mao Zedong.
- In others, where the principles of collectivism and state solidarity have been allied to principles of nationalism and racial purity it has lead to National Socialism
- In other cases as is argued in Brown *et al* (2018) that ‘some formerly socialist parties no longer support anything recognizable as socialism— for example New Labour’.
- This can be seen as a negative analysis of the attempt by Tony Blair to define a ‘Third Way’ in UK politics
- In some ways this could be seen as an attempt to create a move towards **Social Democracy** (see for example Keman, 2011)

EUROPEAN SOCIALISM

- The Socialists and Democrats (S&D) - full title Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament grouping in the EU Parliament is the second largest
- It comprises parties which describe themselves as 'socialist', social democratic' and 'labour' parties.
- In this way it can, again, be seen to be a broad coalition of parties that are generally considered to be left of centre (House of Commons, 2019)
- They state that their priorities are a fairer Europe for all, an new **social contract** and maintaining equitable social standards in the face of globalisation and environmental change (S&D Group, 2021)

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