Foundations of Diplomacy

Politics & Ideology: The Birth of the Modern World

Course Content

Since the days of the Enlightenment, and the birth of the modern state, our political landscape has been fundamentally based, challenged and framed by competing ideologies, each of which seeks to set out ‘idealised’ visions of our rights and responsibilities - and most of all perhaps ‘ideal’ visions of the relationship between States and Citizens.

This course, then, examines key political ideologies, and their origins, development and nature, from those which inspire explicit parties and movements, like Liberalism and Conservatism, Anarchism, Socialism and Fascism, to those which make the personal political, like Feminism and Nationalism.

In the process we shall see not only how modern democratic society has been constructed as part of this ideological process, but also modern dictatorship, modern totalitarianism – and in reaction, perhaps - even modern fundamentalism.

Week 1 Introduction
The Idea of Ideology
Key Issues and terms – an Overview

Week 2 Absolutism
Divine Right to Rule & the Idea of Providence
The Role of the ‘Sun King’

Week 3 Liberalism
The Enlightenment & Revolution.
Classical Liberalism - Political & Economic
New Liberalism & the State
The Challenges of Toleration

Week 4 Conservatism
Tradition & Order
Rights & Duties
Paternalism & One Nation Toryism
The New Right & Neo-Conservatism
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Week 5 Socialism
The Rights of Individual vs the Rights of Society
Marxism or Reformism?
The Problem of Division
The New Labour Project & Socialism

Week 6 Anarchism
The Problem of the State
Self-governing Communities
Liberty & Libertarianism

Week 7 Fascism
The Idea of the Leader
The Idea of the State
The Concept of Totalitarianism
Ethnicity & Race
Nazism & Fascism

Week 8 Nationalism
The Idea of the Nation
Identity & Belonging. Sovereignty, Citizenship and Representation
The Process of ‘Othering’

Week 9 Feminism
The Rights of Woman
The Personal as Political
Militant & Radical Feminism
Post-Feminism

Week 10 Ideology Today
Multiculturalism & Fundamentalism
Opportunities... and Challenges

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- understand the key role ideology has played in the development of modern politics
- differentiate between major ideologies
- explain the ideological issues affecting Europe today