



POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL

TERENCE BALL

RICHARD DAGGER

SIXTH EDITION

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Arizona State University



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*Political Ideologies
and the Democratic Ideal*

To
Andrew and Alexandra Ball
and
Emily and Elizabeth Dagger

Preface to the Sixth Edition

These are the times that try men's souls," wrote Thomas Paine when the American Revolution seemed doomed to failure. Some times try men's and women's souls more than others. We are not now in a period of political revolution, nor of civil war, nor of worldwide economic depression, for which we should surely be grateful. But those of us living in the English-speaking parts of the world have not escaped challenges of other kinds. We *are* living in an era of environmental degradation, of global terror, of genocide in the Sudan and elsewhere, of hot wars fought with weapons and culture wars fought with competing ideas. And because our world keeps changing and hurling new challenges at human beings, people's ideas—and especially those systems of ideas called "ideologies"—change accordingly.

In this, the sixth edition of *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal*, we have tried to track and take account of changes in our world and in how people interpret those changes with the aid of one or another ideology. This is no easy task, and we sometimes fear that any account must fall short of the mark. Nevertheless, we have here done our best to offer a reasonably up-to-date and systematic account of the ideologies that have shaped and continue to reshape the world in which we live. As before, we have described in some detail the deeper historical background out of which these ideologies emerged and developed.

This sixth edition differs most significantly from its predecessors in the addition of a full chapter devoted to Muslim thought (Chapter 10), with special emphasis on radical Islam. We have made many other changes, too, in order to make the text as clear, accurate, readable, and up to date as we can. Among these other changes are expanded discussions of fascism in Chapter 7, of "indigenism" in Chapter 8, and of globalization in the Postscript, which is now Chapter 11.

As in previous editions, we have tried in this new one to improve upon *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal* without sacrificing the qualities that have made the book attractive to many students and teachers. Our principal aims in this sixth edition continue to be the two that have guided us since we set out, in the late 1980s, to write the first edition. We try, first, to supply an informed and accessible overview of the major ideologies that shaped the political landscape of the twentieth century and now begin to give shape to that of the twenty-first. Our second aim is to show how these ideologies originated and how and why they have

changed over time. In addition to examining the major modern “isms”—liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and fascism—we try to provide the reader with a sense of the history, structure, supporting arguments, and internal complexities of these and other, recently emerging ideologies.

The basic structure of the text remains the same as in previous editions. We begin by constructing a fourfold framework—a definition of “ideology” in terms of the four functions that all ideologies perform—within which to compare, contrast, and analyze the various ideologies. We also show how each ideology interprets “democracy” and “freedom” in its own way. Democracy is not, in our view, simply one ideology among others; it is an *ideal* that different ideologies interpret in different ways. Each ideology also has its own particular conception of, and its own program for promoting, freedom. We use a simple three-part model to illustrate this, comparing and contrasting each ideology’s view of freedom in terms of agent, obstacle, and goal. In every chapter devoted to a particular ideology, we explain its basic conception of freedom in terms of the triadic model, discuss the origin and development of the ideology, examine its interpretation of the democratic ideal, and conclude by showing how it performs the four functions of political ideologies. We do this not only with liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and fascism but also with the more recent ideologies. These include “liberation ideologies”—black liberation, women’s liberation, gay liberation, native people’s liberation, liberation theology, and animal liberation—as well as the emerging environmental or “Green” ideology and the ideology of radical Islam.

This text is twinned with an accompanying anthology, *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, also published in a newly revised edition by Pearson/Longman. Although each book can stand alone, they are arranged to supplement and complement each other. Other instructional materials are available from the publisher (www.ablongman.com).

We first undertook this collaborative effort in the belief that two heads are better than one. We found in writing the first edition that a project of this sort requires more, or better, heads than the authors could muster between themselves, and revising the book for the subsequent editions has only strengthened that conclusion. To those who shared their time, energy, and wisdom with us in preparing this new edition, especially our families and the staff at Pearson/Longman, we offer our deepest thanks. We are particularly grateful to Professor Roxanne Euben of Wellesley College and Dr. Salwa Ismail of Exeter University for help with radical Islam. Professor Stephen Chilton and his sharp-eyed students at the University of Minnesota–Duluth also deserve special thanks for helping us to correct several errors in the previous edition. We are also grateful to professors John Nelson of the University of Iowa and Ron Dart of the University College of the Fraser Valley, Canada, for comments that were more helpful than this new edition will indicate.

We also want to express our gratitude to those scholars and fellow teachers whose thoughtful reviews of the previous edition of this book helped us to prepare this new one: William Buschert, University of Saskatchewan; Allen Meyer, Mesa Community College; and Marvin S. Soroos, North Carolina State University.

Terence Ball

Richard Dagger



To the Reader

We want to call three features of this book to your attention. First, many of the primary works quoted or cited in the text are also reprinted, in whole or in part, in a companion volume edited by the authors, *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, sixth edition. When we cite one of these primary works in this text, we include in the note at the end of the chapter a reference to the corresponding selection in *Ideals and Ideologies*.

Second, the study of political ideologies is in many ways the study of words. For this reason we frequently call attention to the use political thinkers and leaders make of such terms as “democracy” and “freedom.” In doing so, we have found it convenient to adopt the philosophers’ convention of using quotation marks to mean the word—as in “democracy” and “freedom.”

Third, a number of key words and phrases in the text are set in boldface type. Definitions of these words and phrases appear in the Glossary at the back of the book, just before the Index.

We also invite you to send us any comments you have on this book or suggestions for improving it. You may write to us at the Department of Political Science, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-3902 or send e-mail to Terence Ball at terence.ball@asu.edu and Richard Dagger at rdagger@asu.edu.

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Ideology and Ideologies

It is what men think, that determines how they act.

John Stuart Mill, *Representative Government*

On the morning of September 11, 2001, nineteen terrorists hijacked four American airliners bound for California from the East Coast and turned them toward targets in New York City and Washington, D.C. The hijackers crashed two of the airplanes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and a third into the Pentagon in Washington. Passengers in the fourth plane, which crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, thwarted the hijackers' attempt to fly it into another Washington target. In the end, nineteen Al Qaeda terrorists had taken the lives of nearly 3,000 innocent people. Fifteen of the terrorists came from Saudi Arabia; all nineteen professed to be devout Muslims fighting a "holy war" or *jihad* against western, and particularly American, "infidels." Condemned in the West as an appalling act of terrorism, this concerted attack was openly applauded in certain Middle Eastern countries where Al Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, is widely regarded as a hero and its nineteen perpetrators as martyrs.

This terrorist attack was not the first launched by radical Islamists, nor has it been the last. Since "9/11," Islamist bombings have taken more than 200 lives in Bali, more than 60 in Istanbul, more than 190 in Madrid, and more than 50 in London, to list only the most prominent examples. How anyone could applaud or condone such deeds seems strange or even incomprehensible to most of us in the West, just as the deeds themselves seem purely and simply evil. Evil they doubtless were. But the terrorists' motivation and their admirers' reasoning, however twisted, is quite comprehensible, as we shall see in the discussion of radical Islam in Chapter 10 of this book.

Nor should we think that all terrorists come from the Middle East or act in the name of Allah or Islam. For evidence to the contrary, we need only look back to 9:02 on the morning of April 19, 1995, when a powerful fertilizer bomb exploded in front of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. One hundred sixty-eight people, including nineteen children, died in that act of terror by American neo-Nazis. More than 500 people were seriously injured. The building was so badly damaged that it had to be demolished. The death and destruction attested not only to the power of the bomb. It also attested to the power of

ideas—of neo-Nazi ideas about “racial purity,” “white power,” Jews, and other “inferior” races and ethnic groups. At least one of the bombers had learned about these ideas from a novel, *The Turner Diaries* (discussed at length in Chapter 7). The ideas in this novel, and in contemporary neo-Nazi ideology generally, have a long history that predates even Hitler (to whom *The Turner Diaries* refers as “The Great One”). This history and these ideas continue to inspire various skin-heads and militia groups in the United States and elsewhere.

These are but two dramatic examples of the power of ideas—and specifically of those systems of ideas called *ideologies*. As these examples of neo-Nazi and radical Islamic terrorism indicate, ideologies are sets of ideas that shape people’s thinking and actions with regard to race, nationality, the role and function of government, the relations between men and women, human responsibility for the natural environment, and many other matters. So powerful are these ideologies that Sir Isaiah Berlin (1909–1997), a distinguished philosopher and historian, concluded that there are

two factors that, above all others, have shaped human history in this [twentieth] century. One is the development of the natural sciences and technology....The other, without doubt, consists in the great ideological storms that have altered the lives of virtually all mankind: the Russian Revolution and its aftermath—totalitarian tyrannies of both right and left and the explosions of nationalism, racism, and, in places, of religious bigotry, which, interestingly enough, not one among the most perceptive social thinkers of the nineteenth century had ever predicted.

When our descendants, in two or three centuries’ time (if mankind survives until then), come to look at our age, it is these two phenomena that will, I think, be held to be the outstanding characteristics of our century, the most demanding of explanation and analysis. But it is as well to realise that these great movements began with ideas in people’s heads: ideas about what relations between men have been, are, might be, and should be; and to realise how they came to be transformed in the name of a vision of some supreme goal in the minds of the leaders, above all of the prophets with armies at their backs.¹

Acting upon various visions, these armed prophets—Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini, Mao, and many others—left the landscape of the twentieth century littered with many millions of corpses of those they regarded as inferior or dispensable. As the Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky said with some understatement, “Anyone desiring a quiet life has done badly to be born in the twentieth century.”²

Nor do recent events, such as “9/11” and subsequent terrorist attacks, suggest that political ideologies will fade away and leave people to lead quiet lives in the twenty-first century. We may still hope that it will prove less murderous, but so far it appears that the twenty-first century will be even more complicated politically than the twentieth was. For most of the twentieth century, the clash of three political ideologies—liberalism, communism, and fascism—dominated world politics. In World War II, the communist regime of the Soviet Union joined forces with the liberal democracies of the West to defeat the fascist alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan. Following their triumph over fascism, the communist and liberal allies soon became implacable enemies in a Cold War that

lasted more than forty years. But the Cold War ended with the collapse of communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the terrifying but straightforward clash of ideologies seemed to be over. What President Ronald Reagan had called the “evil empire” of communism had all but vanished. Liberal democracy had won, and peace and prosperity seemed about to spread around the globe.

Or so it appeared for a short time in the early 1990s. In retrospect, however, the world of the Cold War seems to have been replaced by a world no less terrifying and certainly more mystifying: a world of hot wars, fought by militant nationalists and racists bent on “ethnic cleansing”; a world of culture wars, waged by white racists and black Afrocentrists, by religious fundamentalists and secular humanists, by gay liberationists and “traditional values” groups, by feminists and antifeminists, and many others besides; and a world of suicide bombers and terrorists driven by a lethal combination of anger, humiliation, and religious fervor. How are we, as students—and, more important, as citizens—to make sense of this new world with its bewildering clash of views and values? How are we to assess the merits of, and judge between, these very different points of view?

One way to gain the insight we need is to look closely at what the proponents of these opposing views have to say for themselves. Another is to put their words and deeds into context. Political ideologies and movements do not simply appear out of nowhere, for no apparent reason. To the contrary, they arise out of particular backgrounds and circumstances, and they typically grow out of some sense of grievance or injustice—some conviction that things are not as they could and should be. To understand the complicated political ideas and movements of the present, then, we must understand the contexts in which they have taken shape, and that requires understanding something of the past, of history. To grasp the thinking of neo-Nazi “skinheads,” for example, we must study the thinking of their heroes and ideological ancestors, the earlier Nazis from whom the neo- (or “new-”) Nazis take their bearings. And the same is true for any other ideology or political movement.

Every ideology and every political movement has its origins in the ideas of some earlier thinker or thinkers. As the British economist John Maynard Keynes observed in the 1930s, when the fascist Benito Mussolini, the Nazi Adolf Hitler, and the communist Joseph Stalin all held power,

The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back.³

In this book we shall be looking not only at those “madmen in authority” but also at the “academic scribblers” whose ideas they borrowed and used—often with bloody and deadly results.

All ideologies and all political movements, then, have their roots in the past. To forget the past, as the philosopher George Santayana remarked, is to increase the risk of repeating its mistakes. If we are fortunate enough to avoid