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## Political Structure and Ideologies

Below we will read about different ideologies that together can form different political structures.

- **What is an Ideology?!**

An ideology is a **system of ideas** and ideals; especially political and social principles and beliefs that forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy.

- **Political ideologies**

**socialism** - a political theory in which society is organized. Major industries are owned and controlled by the government rather than by individual people and companies.

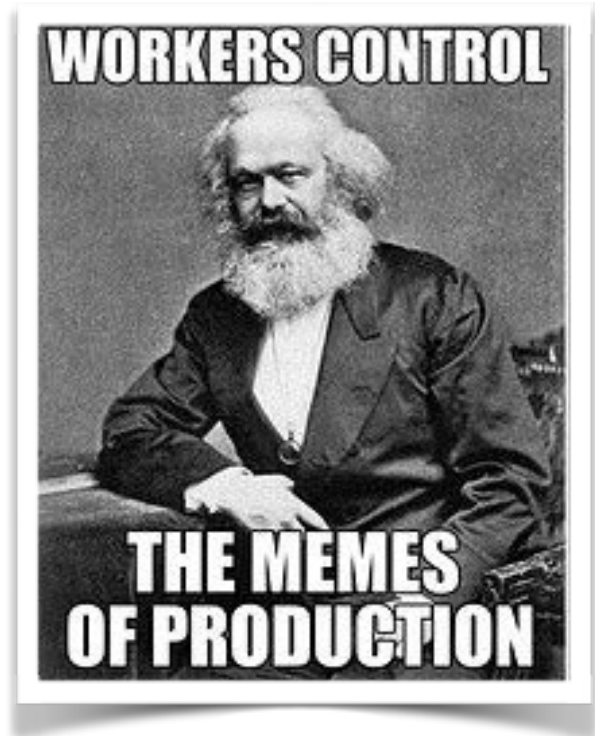
**Values: common ownership, equality, free access to goods**

**conservatism** - a political philosophy based on tradition and social stability, stressing established institutions, and preferring gradual development to abrupt change.

**Values: tradition, family, resistance to change, willingness to limit freedom to maintain traditional values, distrust of human nature**

**liberalism** - a political philosophy based on the preservation of individual liberty and maximization of freedom of choice should be the primary aim of a representative government. It stresses that all individuals stand equal before law (without class privileges) and have only a voluntary contractual relationship with the government. It defends freedom of speech and press, freedom of artistic and intellectual expression, freedom of worship, private property, and use of state resources for the welfare of the individual.

**Values: favours change, uses government to improve the human condition, preference to individual freedom, trust in human reason and optimistic about human nature**



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• **Forms of Governance**

**Totalitarianism** - A form of government that does not permit any individual freedom. All aspects of the individual's life are subject to the authority of the leader and what he provides. Uses propaganda, intimidation, and violence to maintain rule.

*Examples of Totalitarian States:*

*Benito Mussolini's Italy*

*Adolf Hitler's Germany*

*Emperor Hirohito's Japan*

**Fascism** - A form of right-wing totalitarianism which emphasizes the subordination of the individual to advance the interests of the state.

**Authoritarianism** - A form of government in which one individual or small group holds all the power and directs the lives of citizens. On occasion, elections are held to justify the continued hold on power.

*Examples of of Authoritarian States:*

*Iran - hold elections but all candidates must be approved by the theocratic regime*

*Cuba*

**Democracy** - Majority rule. A government in which the supreme power is held by the people. Power can be exercised directly or indirectly through representation that has been selected through the rule of majority (the voting process).

• **Systems of Economic Organization**

**Capitalism** - An economic system characterized by private ownership of capital goods. The cost of goods and services are determined by supply and demand.

**Communism** - An economic theory of organization in which the state is no longer necessary, has withered away. The workers control all means of production, and the people collectively organize and distribute those goods equally and equitably.

*Note: So far, we have seen Communism manifest as dictatorships, with a single authoritarian party in total control. This is NOT true Communism.*

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Your Mission:

You and your group are forming a new nation, unaffected by any outside influence. You are able to choose your political ideology, your form of governance and your system of economic organization. Go through the following steps to establish your state.

### AS A GROUP

Step 1. Name your nation.

Step 2. What will your political ideology be?

Step 3. What are your core values based on your chosen ideology?

Step 4. How will your core values influence your form of government?

Step 5. How does your government exercise power? Who decides?

Step 6. How will your state economically organize?

Step 7. Now that you have organized your state, you must choose a nation at random, evaluate their ideological beliefs and system of governance and economy.

- Go to CIA factbook @ [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)
- Click on a continent of your choice
- Choose a country of your choice
- Go to the government section
- Answer the following questions

1. What is the name of the nation
2. What is the government type
3. What is the level of suffrage
4. a) What are/or are there political pressure groups?  
b) Who are these groups?  
c) What can you infer about the state by looking at their political pressures?
5. Now that you know about the states values, perspectives and beliefs. Is there enough that you have in common, that you would be able to cooperate. Would your state, be friends with your randomly chosen state? Why or why not.