**Conservatism**

As Liberalism was a response to absolute monarchy, emerging during the Enlightenment, then Conservatism was a response to the French Revolution. Its founding father, the Irish MP Edmund Burke, was no Conservative in the modern sense, being something of a radical, but he looked in horror at what was happening in France and argued that revolutionary change which paid no heed to time-honoured institutions was inevitably flawed. He therefore sought to promote evolutionary change above revolutionary change.

Arguably, Conservatism is not an ideology at all. Some observers would maintain that it is a predisposition, a view of the world, which places the desire to conserve successful institutions and practices at its heart, combined with a pragmatic approach to human affairs. It is the pragmatism, above all else, which casts a shadow doubt over Conservatism as an ideology. This pragmatism is driven by a belief that humans are flawed, intellectually and morally (a product of ‘original sin’), and that therefore any blueprint devised by humans is inevitably imperfect. Writers such as Michael Oakeshott and Ian Gilmour eschew ideological blueprints and abstract dogma. The Conservative writer Roger Scruton argues that socialist visions of utopia are flawed abstractions which bear little relation to how people genuinely think about the world. This rejection of ideology was once summed up by David Cameron in his remark: “I don’t do *isms*.”

Rooted in Burke’s writings, Conservatism began as a response to the French Revolution. To Burke, what began as an ideologically flawed attempt (1) to overthrow the established order in France, the *ancien regime*, descended into chaos and bloodletting. The removal of the aristocracy created a disorderly power vacuum in which French society turned in on itself, ultimately resulting in one of the revolution’s principal architects, Robespierre, facing the guillotine. Thus, in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Burke warned against the perils of revolutionary change. However, Conservatism does not present an outright rejection of change. Indeed some of the most radical, reforming governments in the UK have been Conservative (2). Instead it holds to the mantra ‘change in order to conserve’.

Conservatism holds a pessimistic view of human nature, based on the notion of human imperfection. It proposes a small, but strong and authoritative state to control the base instincts that are apparent in human nature and throughout its history has been torn between advocating a free market economy and protectionism. Traditional conservatism is founded on the three pillars of ‘flag, faith and family’, emphasising the importance of patriotism, the church, and the centrality of family to society. So what are its core values?

**Core values:**

Human imperfection

Organic society

Tradition

Hierarchy & authority

Property

Pragmatism

**Core Values:**

**Human Imperfection:**

The conservative view of human nature is pessimistic and derived from Hobbes’ belief that “the life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short” (3). Conservatives see humans as imperfect beings. Indeed, perfection is an ideal beyond human capacity. By nature people are selfish, greedy, dependent creatures. They are limited, both psychologically and intellectually. This somewhat bleak picture that humans are flawed is an idea derived from the Old Testament belief in original sin (4). Traditionally, conservatives believe that we are born with original sin. If left to our own devices we succumb to base appetites and instincts and we are therefore untrustworthy.

It follows, therefore, that conservatives believe individuals desire security and a sense of belonging. This is not to be found in the freedom which liberalism offers, but can only be provided by social order. It is to the stability and certainty which social order creates to which people are inevitably drawn. Conservatives therefore believe in the need for a strong and authoritative state which can police the base desires and criminal tendencies to which, left unchecked, individuals might be drawn. People need deterring from anti-social or criminal behaviour by laws which are strictly enforced and justice system which is tough on criminal behaviour. Conservatives hold a strong belief in the importance of law and order. This was evident, for example, in Thatcher’s policy of increasing police pay in the 1980s when other public servants’ pay was kerbed, or in her Home Secretary, Willie Whitelaw’s, ‘short, sharp, shock’ treatment for young offenders, or more recently in Cameron’s response to the rioting and looting in the summer of 2011, applying political pressure on the courts to come down hard on those convicted. The belief in the need for a strong state goes back to Burke’s notion that the relationship between the government and the people should be similar to that between parent and a child.

Another consequence of the conservative belief in human imperfection is the notion that, as individuals are intellectually flawed, ideas which presume to offer a vision of a future ‘perfect’ society are also inevitably flawed. Thus conservatives do not accept ideological blueprints born of imperfect abstract thought. The world is a complex place, beyond human understanding. Whereas socialists offer a plan to change the world and create a fairer, more egalitarian society, conservatives dismiss such ideas as utopian dreams, believing that the realization of such a dream is impossible. This is exemplified in the book ‘Dancing with Dogma’ (1992), written by the Conservative MP, Ian Gilmour, who explained, “Socialists look forward to some grim utopia. Conservatives have no such illusions about the future or the past. For them there has never been a ‘golden age’ and there never will be. Similarly there is no fixed or golden policy to which the Conservative party could or should turn.” (6) This rejection of radical change based on abstract ideas arose from Burke’s observations of the French Revolution which failed to accomplish its ideals and resulted, not in egalitarianism, but in a power struggle, infighting and blood-letting. Instead, conservatives argue we should adopt a cautious approach to change, looking to the wisdom of ‘tradition, experience and history’. Conservatives therefore prefer pragmatism to ideological conviction. They argue that it is better to be unencumbered by the ‘baggage’ of ideological dogma and to approach issues of the time as circumstances allow. As Ian Gilmour advocates, “The wise Conservatives travels light.”

However, these traditional conservative views, which were held by One Nation Conservatives, were largely rejected by the conservative New Right of the 1980s. Margaret Thatcher arguably introduced ideology to British conservatism, embracing neoliberal economics and New Right social authoritarianism (see below).

**Pragmatism**

It is therefore evident that conservatives prefer pragmatism to ideological dogma. Pragmatism is a view of the world which emphasises common sense judgement and everyday human experience in preference to abstract theory (7). If ideologies are flawed by the limitations of human intellect, conservatives argue it is better not to seek to impose pre-determined solutions, or ideological ‘blueprints’, to solve the problems of society, but to respond practically to the circumstances of the time. They consider that policy should be determined in response to changing circumstances and not moulded by pre-conceived ideas. To this extent conservatism can be described as ‘reactionary’.

Pragmatism is an approach that has recently been adopted by many political parties throughout the Western world. In the United States the two main parties have arguably become more rooted in their respective ideologies in the last two decades, but they still exhibit far less of the ideological zeal that was apparent in British politics in the 1980s. In the UK the Labour party embraced pragmatism in the Blair era, arguably abandoning many of the core values of traditional socialism (see chapter 4 below).

**Organic society**

Conservatives see society as a fragile set of interdependent relationships forming an organic whole. By contrast socialists and liberals have a more mechanical view of society, believing it is possible to change parts of society in the same way that it possible to replace or rearrange the components of a machine without affecting the whole. They believe that society is composed of rational individuals who shape society. The revolutionaries in France believed they could remove the aristocracy without damaging he rest of society, but what Burke observed was that the revolution had unintended consequences in creating a violent power-vacuum. So conservatives envisage that society is like a living being, each part being interdependent on the other: cut away part of the being and the whole might wither and die. The organic nature of society is beyond the limitations of human understanding. Organisms are greater than the sum of their parts. We should therefore not radically tinker with society as we cannot understand the long-term consequences of our actions.

Humans seek the security of society which provides a sense of belonging. For conservatives, a key building-block of society is the family. The family is not an invention, it is a natural phenomenon, and children do not ‘contract’ to be part of a family (as liberals believe citizens ‘contract’ into society), they are naturally born into a family. Similarly, conservatives believe that citizens are ‘born’ into wider society, which provides them both with a sense of identity and belonging, and also a set of social responsibilities. Citizens therefore have social duties and obligations which help to bind society.

This view of the fragile fabric of society leads conservatives to further reject notions of radical change, preferring evolutionary change instead. Traditional institutions which have survived and developed over time are integral to society and we change them at our peril. The monarchy, the church and the House of Lords are therefore all examples of time-honoured institutions that are a vital part of society. The reform of such institutions is dangerous as the very fact that they have survived for so long is indicative that they are important to the functioning of society.

As with human imperfection, Thatcher’s New Right undermined the conservative belief in organic society, replacing it instead with the robust individualism more associated with classical liberalism. Thatcher promoted self-reliance and self-interest, famously asserting that “There are individual men and women and there are families….There is no such thing as society.” However, more recently Cameron has reasserted the importance of society as a set of interdependent relationships, promoting a Big Society and retorting, “There is such a thing as society, it is just not the same as the state.”

**Tradition**

Tradition lies at the heart of conservatism. Customs, practises and institutions which have stood the test of time must, by the very reason that they have survived, fulfil useful functions in society. They have developed ‘organically’. They are a part of cultural heritage, they represent the accumulated wisdom and experience of the past and should be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Conservatives therefore believe in the popular mantra, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”. They seek to maintain those institutions and practises which root us in who we are. The monarchy, the church, the family are all part of our societal traditions. For some conservatives, tradition is ‘God given’, derived from ‘the law of our Creator’ as Edmund Burke asserted. To refute tradition is therefore tantamount to refuting the will of God.

Tradition promotes respect in ancient institutions and offices. It is reassuringly familiar and helps provide a sense of belonging. It therefore fulfils an important psychological function helping to provide a sense of common identity. It is a comforting reminder of where we have come from. Burke saw society as a “partnership between “those who are living, those who are dead and those who are yet to be born”. Tradition strengthens social solidarity, providing a sense of a common past.

However, it would be wrong to assume that conservatives abhor change. Burke suggested that ‘change is only necessary in order to conserve’, although as we shall see below, some conservatives, such as Margaret Thatcher, embrace radical change.

**Hierarchy and Authority**

Unlike liberalism, which promotes the idea of a meritocracy, most conservatives believe that social status is a matter of ‘breeding’ and that there will always be those who are ‘born to rule’ and those who are not. Traditional conservatism supports a belief in a legitimate aristocracy and nobility, the notion that there is a ‘natural’ elite within society who have both a birth-right and a duty to rule.

Inequality is also seen as natural. Talents and skills are different for different people and conservatives believe that to try to promote equality in society is both unrealistic and undesirable. Society is made up of ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’ just as families naturally comprise ‘parents’ and ‘children’; and just as naturally many conservatives believe that with authority comes both privilege and obligation. Indeed, paternalistic One Nation Conservatives believe in the concept of ‘noblesse oblige’: the obligation of the nobility towards those who are less privileged (see below)

Conservatives believe that authority, and respect for those in authority, is essential to maintaining social order. Given that human beings are driven by base instincts, it is important that a small but strong government is able to kerb and police those instincts. Respect for the law and those institutions which create and uphold the law is therefore vital to social stability. Without such authority conservatives fear society would dissolve into anarchy and chaos. It follows, therefore, that conservatives favour institutions such as the armed forces and the police, which provide security for citizens and maintain order. Authority is also embodied in the court system and the church, and discipline is promoted through the family and the education system.

To authoritarian conservatives leadership and discipline are important requirements of a healthy social order: people need to know where they stand. Strong leadership provides a clear sense of direction, whilst discipline ensures that everyone fulfils their obligation to society.

However, libertarian conservatives seek to reduce what they perceive as the excessive authority of the state, and neoliberal New Right conservatives, such as Thatcher, would promote the liberal idea of meritocracy above the traditional conservative view of a natural hierarchy.

**Property**

To conservatives property has an almost mystical significance (8). Private property is a symbol of social status, and helps define the social order, as expressed in the traditional hymn which includes the line, “The rich man at his castle, the poor man at his gate”. Property is an expression of wealth, privilege and personal identity. Private property provides security and protection from future financial difficulties and from state intrusion.

Property also creates respect in society. Those who own property appreciate the value of the property of others. This is exemplified in two recent Conservative party policies. In 2001 William Hague, then leader of the Conservative party, encouraged people to ‘have a go’ at burglars who had invaded their property, believing that legislation had swung too far in favour of the rights of criminals. His belief has influenced a change in legislation under the 2010-15 coalition government. Property owners thus have an investment in ensuring the maintenance of law and order. A second policy which illustrates the link between property and respect was Thatcher’s sale of council houses. Social housing which had previously been run down because local authorities could ill-afford their upkeep suddenly became ‘gentrified’ and ‘prettified’ by their new ‘owners’, with features such as stone-cladding and manicured lawns appearing. People began to take pride in their property.

Property bestows duties and obligations towards others. This is apparent both in the duty of the upkeep of property and in the obligations that ownership of property might bring towards others. A land owner, for example, might have certain obligations towards those who live and work on his or her estate. This links to paternalistic concepts of noblesse oblige, explored later in this chapter. Not least, property brings with it the obligation that, where possible, it should be held in trust for future generations.

Conservative believe in property extends beyond mere bricks and mortar and the family silver. Harold Macmillan famously criticised Thatcher’s privatisation of public utilities, including British Gas, the Electricity Board, and the Water Board, as ‘selling off the family silver’ (9). Cameron’s environmentalism, most evident between 2006 and 2010, is also attributable to the conservative view on property. The planet is a property shared by us all to be preserved and held in trust for future generations. Environmentalism therefore accords with the conservative notion of ‘property’.

**Conservative Thinkers**

There are fewer conservative philosophers than are found in liberalism. This is because conservatism is more pragmatic and less given to abstract philosophical thought.

**Thomas Hobbes** (1588-1679) was an English political philosopher whose contribution to conservative thought lies in his pessimistic view of human nature, as described in his major work Leviathan, which was written during the English Civil War. Hobbes believed that human beings were selfish and greedy, writing that “the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short”. He defended the notion of a male bloodline monarchy as the only way to prevent a disorderly power-struggle for dominance within society, proposing that citizens have an obligation to serve a benevolent absolutist sovereign. His notion of a social contract was also influential in shaping Enlightenment liberal thought.

**Edmund Burke** (1729-1797) was an Irish MP who is acknowledged to be the founding father of conservatism. In fact, Burke never used the name ‘conservatism’ or ‘conservative’, but he did allude to what he called “the principles of conservation” (10), asserting “A state without the means of some change is without the means of conservation.”. Writing about the chaotic revolution in France, Burke contributed to conservatism both a scepticism towards abstract ideological dogma and a belief that change should be evolutionary, not revolutionary. In asserting this he noted that the French monarchy had been intransigent and that it was sometimes necessary to “change in order to conserve”. His major work, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), described the “little platoons” which are the backbone of society and to which Cameron made reference in his idea of a ‘Big Society’.

Fascinating fact:

Burke fact a Whig whose sympathies lay with the American War of Independence and he was a supporter of the classical liberal economist Adam Smith.

**Benjamin Disraeli** (1804-1881) was a Conservative Prime Minister in the 19th century. Disraeli’s contribution to conservative thought was ‘One Nation Conservatism’. Disraeli wrote of ‘two nations’ in his novel Sybil (1845) and subsequently argued that Britain was facing a crisis of social cohesion, being divided between the rich and the poor. In continental Europe there was an outbreak of revolutionary fervour at the time and, fearing such unrest could spread to Britain, Disraeli argued that the privileged has an obligation to care for those less privileged in society. The wealthy and powerful had a burden of responsibility towards the poor, and it was in their interests to do so. This obligation of the nobility, or noblesse oblige, is integral to the idea of an organic society in which all the parts are interdependent.

Fascinating fact:

Disraeli never actually used the phrase ‘One Nation’; it was first used by another Conservative Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin (1867-1947).

**Michael Oakeshott** (1901-1990) was a philosopher and pragmatist who argued that conservatism should have no fixed goals. He described the state as being analogous to a ship at sea which has no port of origin and no destination. It is the job of the captain to keep the ship moving and ensure the safety and well-being of its passengers. In his essay, On Being Conservative, (1962), he wrote, “The ship of state should be suspicious of would-be pilots claiming to guide us to a final port of destination.” In other words, governments should be wary of ideological dogma which appears to offer a way forward to a utopian destination.

***Fascinating fact:***

Michael Oakeshott’s father, Joseph, was a leading member of the Fabian Society and a friend of George Bernard Shaw.

**Ian Gilmour** (1926-2007) was a One Nation Conservative MP who regularly opposed Margaret Thatcher. He argued against ideological ‘blueprints’ famously asserting that ‘The wise conservative travels light’.

**Friedrich Hayek** (1899-1992) was an Austrian-born economist whose ideas influenced Margaret Thatcher and Keith Joseph. In The Road to Serfdom (1944) he warned that state intervention in the economy of the kind that Keynes was advocating would inevitably lead to totalitarianism. As the state grew in size and responsibility he believed it would seize more power, creating a Soviet-style system which oppressed individualism. Hayek was therefore a keen advocate of the free market.

***Fascinating fact:***

On the advice of Margaret Thatcher, In 1984 Hayek was appointed as a member of the [Order of the Companions of Honour](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Companions_of_Honour) by the Queen for his "services to the study of economics".

**Margaret Thatcher** (1925-2013) was the first woman British Prime Minister who arguably introduced ideology to the Conservative Party. She admired Hayek (see above) and proposed neoliberalism and monetarism (inspired by the economist Milton Friedman) as economic strategies to revive Britain’s ailing economy. She privatised the utilities and deregulated the financial sector and she talked of ‘Rolling back the frontiers of the state’, echoing the efforts of her friend President Reagan in the United States. Her New Right thinking embraced social authoritarianism. She emphasised individualism, asserting, “There is no such thing as society”.

***Fascinating Fact:***

Addressed by a conservative pragmatist at a party meeting in 1975, Thatcher is said to have produced a copy of Hayek’s *The Constitution of Liberty* from her briefcase, slammed it on the table and asserted, “This is what we believe!”

**David Cameron** (1966-Present) is a Conservative Prime Minster who is widely regarded as the most liberal conservative to hold such an office. Eschewing ideological dogma, he claimed, “I don’t do isms.” He describes himself variously as a ‘liberal’, ‘compassionate’, ‘One Nation’ Conservative. Advised by his friend, **Steve Hilton,** he promoted his idea of a ‘Big Society,’ in contrast to ‘big government’, in which communities would take more responsibility for their own services and well-being. In a coalition government, however, he oversaw public sector cuts which he argued were a pragmatic response to Britain’s economic deficit, but which others argued were a return to ‘Thatcherite’ neoliberal policies.

**Schools of conservative thought**

**Traditional conservatism**

Traditional conservatism was founded on the principles of ‘flag, faith and family’. Widely regarded as ‘reactionary’, it defended the importance of monarchy and patriotism and the authority of the church against the scepticism, secularism and tolerance of liberalism. It is pragmatic and pessimistic of human nature, believing in small but strong government. It Britain it was rooted in national pride, as asserted by Pitt the Younger, and a resistance to revolutionary France and Napoleon.

 Abroad reactionary, traditional conservatism took on a still more authoritative appeal. It asserted the authority of rulers above the constraints of liberal constitutionalism. Among its proponents was Joseph de Maistre, a fierce critic of the French revolution, who argued that hierarchy and authority was vital to maintaining social stability. He sought to restore the power of absolute monarchy and the obedience of subjects. In the nineteenth century authoritative conservatives included Tsar Nicholas I in Russia (who decreed the principles of ‘orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality’ in response to the French cry of ‘liberty, equality, fraternity), Bismark in Germany, and Pope Pius IX (who condemned the radical and progressive ideas of nationalism, liberalism and socialism as “false doctrines”), and in the twentieth century Mussolini (11).

**One Nation conservatism**

One Nation conservatism is a form of paternalistic conservatism which asserts that the state has a responsibility regulate and provide for its citizens in much the same way as a father might look after his children. It therefore assumes a benevolent elitism, proposing that the ruling classes have a duty of care towards those who are less fortunate. In the UK such a view arose from Disraeli’s observation that Britain was divided into ‘two nations’: the rich and the poor. Disraeli feared the spread of revolutionary unrest from Europe and acknowledged growing demands to widen the franchise. It was a Conservative government under Lord Derby which introduced the 1867 Reform Act and extended the vote to some working class males.

One Nation Conservatism is also founded on the moral principle that it is the responsibility, or obligation, of the privileged to look after the poor: noblesse oblige. Disraeli might be credited with introducing ideology to the Conservative Party, but in reality One Nation Conservatism is was a pragmatic response to the changing circumstances of the time, ensuring that the Conservative Party remained electable at a time when the franchise was widening. Arguably if the party had continued only to serve the interests of the aristocracy it would have faced becoming increasingly unpopular and unelectable. The paternalism of One Nation Conservatism was apparent as a central tenet of Conservative Party thinking for over a century until the arrival of Neo-liberalism in the 1970s. It was particularly strong as a belief in the consensus politics of the 1950s under leaders such as Harold Macmillan. More recently, Cameron claims to have revived One Nation conservatism, describing himself as a ‘compassionate One Nation Conservative’.

**Christian democracy**

Abroad, notably in West Germany and Italy after the Second World War, paternalistic conservatism found its expression in Christian democracy. This promoted democratic principles, emphasising that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level of institution, and was often based on the sense of community evident within the Catholic church. Christian democratic parties embraced Keynesian economics and the idea of a ‘social market economy’, in which the market becomes a means of generating wealth to support wider social goals.

**The New Right**

In the 1970s and 80s, both in the UK and the USA, conservatism took a new direction. Combined with Neoliberal economic thinking (see Chapter 2) conservatives embraced the New Right tradition. In the UK its intellectuals included Keith Joseph, one of Margaret Thatcher’s chief lieutenants. This strand of conservatism emerged as a critique of One Nation Conservatism, which it’s followers believe had compromised for too long with socialism. Its mission was to “rescue Britain from creeping socialism” (12), principally by tackling the power of the trade unions. Thatcher called the National Union of Mineworkers “the enemy within”. Among its core principles it emphasised strong, authoritarian government, particularly in maintaining social order and discipline. It embraces moral absolutism rather than the moral relativism of liberalism. Beliefs which are central to the New Right are lower taxation, immigration control, a retreat from permissive social values and laissez faire economics (which it sees as a moral duty in combating the end of state tyranny). Both in America under President Reagan and in Britain under Margaret Thatcher there was a drive to ‘roll back’ or reduce the functions of central government. There was a belief held by New Right thinkers that the expectations of citizens as to what governments can and should do for them had grown too great. It is therefore critical of the welfare state, which it believes creates a “dependency culture”, promoting instead the notion of self-reliance. Thus throughout the 1980s the size of the public sector was reduced in an effort to end ‘big government’, and there was greater emphasis of social authoritarianism (see below).

**Neoliberalism**

Neoliberal thought emerged in the Conservative Party in the 1970s under Margaret Thatcher, who
was inspired by Hayek. It involves limited government and a laissez faire approach to free market economics, following the ideas of Adam Smith. Under Thatcher neoliberalism became synonymous with “rolling back the state” (reducing the size of the public sector and privatising industries) and an emphasis on individualism. It is essentially a modern take on classical liberalism (see Chapter 2: Liberalism/schools of thought).

**Neo-conservatism**

Associated with the New Right, in the United States Neo-conservatism emerged as a reaction to the growing role of the Federal government. Neo-conservatism proposed that the era of ‘big government’ was over, and voiced opposition to left-wing radicalism and to appeasement with the Soviet Union. Most influential in the Republican Party, Neo-conservatives sought to strengthen national defence against those regimes it saw as totalitarian and a threat to liberal democracy. Neo-conservatism is also anti-permissiveness, upholds patriarchal familial structures and is against the provision of welfare. It defends natural inequality and rugged individualism, believing that sovereign individuals should be free to forge their own destiny.

**Libertarian conservatism**

In contrast to paternalistic conservatism, Libertarian conservatism, associated with Friedrich von Hayek, proposed to liberate the economy from state intervention. At its extreme it argues that state welfare provision should gradually be abolished, that the free market provides the best mechanism for wealth creation and that the role of governments should be reduced to a minimum. These conditions, it asserts, will allow increased individual responsibility and self-reliance, reversing the negative consequences of the ‘nanny state’.

**A Brief History of Conservatism in the UK**

**Beginnings**

While the conservative ideology owes its origins to Burke’s response to the French Revolution, the modern Conservative Party owes its origins to the ‘Tory’ supporters of the monarchy. The name was originally intended as an insult: a ‘Tory’ was an Irish brigand or bandit. Early Tories believed in tradition, monarchy and patriotism. For many years it was eclipsed as a force in Parliament. However, it was Pitt the Younger’s influence who gave rise to ‘Toryism’ as a genuine force in Parliament. Though not a Tory himself, Pitt held a strong pride in his country and was Prime Minister during the Napoleonic Wars.

In 1816 the writer William Hazlitt described Tories thus, “…a blind idolater of old times and long established customs…A tory objects to increasing the power of the Crown, or abridging the liberties of people, or even calls into question the justice or wisdom of any of the measures of government…A Tory values long pedigree and ancient families, and despises low-born persons…”(13).

Although Tories were suspicious of change, they did accept Burke’s adage of ‘change in order to conserve’. For example, between 1828 and 1830 the Tory Party under the Duke of Wellington removed the discriminatory bars that had prevented Protestant nonconformists and Catholics from holding political office, and Robert Peel, who followed him, passed the Great Reform Act (1832) to extend the franchise and went on to create the modern Conservative Party. Peels’ Tamworth manifesto (1834) set out the principles of moderate, progressive Conservatism. It called on the party to conduct 'a careful review of institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, undertaken in a friendly temper (to ensure) the correction of proved abuses and the redress of grievances'. He sought to improve public health and regulate factory hours.

Peel’s tenure over the Conservative Party ended over the issue of the Corn Laws. Peel favoured free trade and resigned when the party failed to support him, leaving the Earl of Derby to lead a protectionist Conservative Party. Faced with demands to further extend the franchise, Derby’s government passed the 1867 Reform Act, which was steered through the Commons by Disraeli.

**Disraeli and One Nation Conservatism**

When Derby became ill In 1868 Disraeli assumed leadership of the Conservative Party and became Prime Minister. He introduced the ‘ideology’ of One Nation Conservatism, observing that the nation was divided into the rich and the poor in his novel Sybil. His belief was driven both by events in Europe, where revolutionary ideas had gained currency, and also by a pragmatic imperative to ensure the Conservative Party would continue to appeal to the widening electorate. One Nation Conservatism has also a moral perspective: it promotes the obligation of the privileged to look after the poor, or noblesse oblige. Disraeli also offered a mixed message of patriotism, supporting expansion of the British Empire, and social reform, including the 1876 Artisan’s Dwellings Act which paved the way for slum clearance.

**The Early 20th Century**

However, it would be true to say that the party has not always willingly followed the maxim ‘change to conserve’. In 1910 the Conservative-dominated House of Lords rejected Lloyd George’s People’s Budget and reluctantly only gave way on possible Lords’ Reform when the King threatened to create more Liberal peers. The party also took a strong stance against Irish Home Rule.

But under the leadership of Stanley Baldwin and, later, Neville Chamberlain the party enjoyed electoral success in the inter-war years, offering such social reforms as housing subsidies (1923), the first comprehensive pensions scheme (1925), the creation of the national grid (1926), the right to unemployment benefit for everyone (1927), and a plan to encourage firms to move into areas of high unemployment (1934). In addition, the Equal Franchise Act (1928) gave women voting rights on the same terms as men. The Party's commitment to social improvement made it reluctant to increase defence spending in the 1930s, as Winston Churchill demanded, causing controversy over appeasement. In 1940 Churchill became Prime Minister of a national government, but in the 1945 election the Conservatives lost against a Labour landslide.

**Post-war consensus**

In the immediate post-war years the Conservative Party accepted many of the reforms introduced by Attlee’s Labour government, although they reversed the nationalisation of the steel industry. The political consensus became known as ‘Butskellism’: a term based on the fact that the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer in the early fifties was Rab Butler, had followed the economic policies of his Labour predecessor, Hugh Gaitskell.

The Conservative government faced difficulties in the later fifties and early sixties, which eventually ended their tenure in office in 1964. There was Anthony Eden’s ill-faced Suez campaign (13; this was swiftly followed internal fighting over Eden’s successor (14); and finally the Profumo scandal (15) exposed what many felt was the hypocrisy of the conservative establishment. The economic upturn which had allowed Eden’s successor, Harold Macmillan, to claim in the 1959 general election that “You’ve Never Had It So Good”, turned to economic downturn in the early sixties, further compounding the fortunes of the Conservative Party.

**The Heath years:**

The Conservative Party sought a change in style with the election of Edward Heath as party leader. Out went the aristocratic, public school educated leadership. In came a moderniser: a grammar school educated, One Nation Conservative who was enthusiastically pro-European and who tried to realign the party as business-friendly. At a meeting of business leaders at the Selsdon Park Hotel during the election campaign in 1970 Heath steered the party towards free-market and monetarist approaches to the economy (heralding the beginning of a more ideological/doctrinaire approach to policy), which led Harold Wilson to claim that Heath was ‘Selsdon Man’. The jibe, after the prehistoric Piltdown Man, was intended to suggest that Heath was reactionary that the policies were a vote-loser. In fact, Heath went on to win the election.

Heath faced a difficult time in government. With rising unemployment and growing inflation he was forced to abandon his free-market, monetarist policies and turned instead to a programme of nationalisation (including Rolls Royce and the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders) in order to save jobs. This ‘U’ turn was the source of much criticism of his premiership and something which Thatcher was later keen to avoid. Additionally, Heath’s time was plagued by industrial unrest and the beginning of The Troubles in Northern Ireland. He saw as his greatest achievement his negotiation of Britain’s entry into the European Economic Community, now the EU, in 1973, although this subsequently became a source of dispute and division within the party.

In 1973 the Oil and Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raised the price of oil, triggering an energy crisis. The National Union of Mineworkers, led by Arthur Scargill, seized the opportunity to press for higher wages and a series of strikes began across Britain’s coal mines. The resulting loss of supplies to the power stations meant that Heath had to take the drastic measure of limiting British industry to a three day week. Faced with continued industrial unrest, Heath called a snap election on the theme ‘Who Governs Britain?’ and got the answer he did not want: ‘not you’. Despite winning more votes than Wilson’s Labour Party, Heath won fewer seats in parliament and Wilson was returned to power as Prime Minister. In terms of ideology, the election heralded the end of consensus politics. A new Conservative Party, under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, was about to step out from the wings.

**The Thatcher Years:**

*If you can quote St Francis of Assisi,*

*While all around you fall about amazed,*

*You’ll find the rest comes pretty easy*

*Despite the fact your policies are crazed;*

*If you can make a cut for every minute,*

*And justify your dogma to the end,*

*You’ll wreck this Land and everything that’s in it;*

*What’s more, you’ll be a Minister, my friend. (16)*

Margaret Thatcher was a controversial and radical party leader who swept aside many of the tenets of One Nation Conservatism. Instead she embraced a brand of neoliberalism, inspired by Hayek, and New Right social authoritarianism. Many believe she introduced ideology to the Conservative Party. Her agenda was threefold: 1) to shed the state of many of its responsibilities, following Hayek’s assertion that Keynesian-style state intervention inevitably leads towards totalitarianism; 2) to promote New Right social thinking; and 3) to reclaim Britain’s authority in Europe, reducing her commitment to European subsidies which she believed favoured the French and Germans.

Thatcher set about “rolling back the frontiers of the state” by limiting public spending, and cutting spending in housing and education, and she raised interest rates to control inflation. Her free market and monetarist policies led to rising unemployment, but she refused to be steered off course, telling the Conservative Party Conference in 1980 “U-turn if you want to, the lady’s not for turning”. She privatised the public utilities, such as British Gas and the Water Board, and deregulated financial markets in what became known as the ‘Big Bang’. In a populist move, echoing the conservative belief in private property, she legislated for the sale of council houses. This, she believed, would ensure that people would take pride in their property and, by extension, their estates. She sought to create a ‘property owning democracy’. She also promoted the individualism of neoliberal thinking, asserting that “There is no such thing as society”.

Combative in style, Thatcher was not prepared to bow to industrial action by the miners over potential pit closures. Her government sought to close uneconomic mines, leading to a prolonged and bitter dispute. She had learned the lessons of Ted Heath’s government and secretly stockpiled coal to prevent the power stations from closing.

Thatcher also embraced the **social authoritarian** conservative thinking of the New Right. This included a commitment to being tough on matters of law and order. Her Home Secretary, Willie Whitelaw, implemented a “short, sharp shock” regime of strict quasi-military discipline at young offender institutes and her government introduced Section 28 which forbade the ‘promotion’ of homosexuality by local authorities.

Fiercely patriotic, Thatcher revelled in her nickname, ‘The Iron Lady’, arising from her stance against the Soviet Union. She also committed British forces to repel the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands Islands. In Europe she adopted a tough Eurosceptic stance, demanding a rebate on the UK’s contribution to the European Budget and resisting calls for a greater federal structure within the European Community (the forerunner to the European Union) and increased centralised decision making.

Thatcher was also noted for her dogmatic, autocratic style of leadership. She progressively created an inner circle in cabinet which excluded the party “wets” (One Nation Conservatives who opposed her monetarist policies and supported public spending) and surrounded herself with “dies” (those who supported her monetarist approach). Her dogmatic style also increasingly isolated her from significant members of her cabinet, particularly over the issue of greater European integration, leading to the high-profile resignations of her Deputy Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, and her Chancellor, Nigel Lawson.

Her downfall, however, is often attributed to the ill-judged introduction of the Community Charge, or “poll tax” as it became known. The charge replaced the old local authority rates system and was a flat tax which was widely seen as regressive. Opposition erupted into mass protests and violent demonstrations, most notably in Trafalgar Square. Thatcher’s poll ratings began to fall. With an election looming and the Conservative Party’s prospects of staying in government diminishing, Thatcher became increasingly viewed as a liability. In November 1990 a leadership challenge was launched by Michael Heseltine which ultimately led to Thatcher’s resignation and the election of John Major as party leader.

Thatcher can, however, be seen as pragmatic. Arguably her neo-liberal economic policies were a response to the circumstances of the time in trying to revive an ailing economy. She also rejected some of Keith Joseph’s more extreme proposals on the economy and was willing to talk to Irish Republicans during hunger strike protests. Despite being urged by her Cabinet she refused to privatise the NHS.

**The Major Years:**

John Major’s tenure as leader of the Conservative Party was dogged by growing divisions between the Europhiles and Eurosceptics. It had been commonly assumed within the party that Major would continue with Thatcherite policies. But early on in his leadership Major surprised some and disappointed Thatcher by successfully negotiating a deal in the Maastricht Treaty. The treaty established greater European integration, particularly on the issue of the free movement of people within the European Union, but Major negotiated an opt-out clause for the UK on the Social Chapter, which included the national minimum wage and the work time directive which limited the maximum working week. Fending off a serious backbench rebellion, this was arguably a more pragmatic approach to Europe than the Eurosceptic dogma of Thatcher.

In 1992 Major secured a fourth successive term for a Conservative government .His campaign emphasised his credentials as a man of the people; he was the only post-war prime minster not to have attended university. The son of a juggler and music hall artiste, Major was brought up in a flat in Brixton. He made capitol of his humble origins in an election broadcast, Back to Brixton, in which he revisited his childhood haunts. Despite poor poll predictions which had Labour triumphant at the prospect of government, Major went on to win with the largest recorded share of the vote in any post war election before or since.

In another pragmatic move, Major was forced to abandon Britain’s commitment to the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) which the European countries had adopted in preparation for the introduction of the Euro. On what became known as Black Wednesday, 16th September 1992, Majors government was faced with a financial crisis as the pound sterling fell against other European currencies. Early attempts to bolster the pound by desperately raising interest rates failed and Major and his Chancellor, Norman Lamont, were forced to accept that withdrawal from the ERM was the only practical solution.

Arguably less pragmatic was his privatization of the railways in 1993, evidence that Thatcher’s neoliberalism was still evident in the Conservative Party. Even Thatcher had never dared privatize the railways. But Major’s government’s biggest challenge was that of ‘sleaze’. At a time when Major called for a ‘Back to Basics’ campaign to restore family and moral values in society, several of his ministers were involved in scandals: either sexual infidelities or being paid ‘cash for questions’ in parliament. The image of the Conservative Party was tarnished, and Blair’s New Labour seemed to offer a fresh, cleaner approach to politics. Despite a rapidly improving economy, Major suffered the worst electoral defeat of any government since 1832. New Labour swept to power with an unassailable landslide majority of 179 seats.

**The Nasty Party: 1997-2005**

There period immediately after John Major’s government saw a rapid turnover of party leaders as the party struggled with its ideological identity and New Labour’s dominance at Westminster. The party was also blighted by further ideological divisions: over inclusiveness, over Europe and over the extent to which the party was social authoritarian or social libertarian.

After the blistering electoral defeat of 1997 William Hague became party leader. He spearheaded an attempt to make the party more inclusive, presenting himself as a moderniser, promising a “fresh start” within the party, particularly in its approach to Europe. His attempts to appeal to younger, more ethnically diverse voters were pilloried in the press, particularly his wearing of a baseball cap to symbolise this change. Michael Portillo announced to the party conference in 1997 that they should welcome single parents and gays into the party, signalling a greater emphasis on social libertarianism, or ‘compassionate conservatism’ as it became known. This led to a struggle between the social libertarians and the social authoritarians, championed by Ann Widdecombe. Typically the social libertarians favoured gay rights, inclusiveness within the party, a less punitive custodial system, and a more liberal approach to soft drugs. Conversely the social authoritarians in the party were against the extension of gay rights, sought stricter legislation on drugs and a zero-tolerance approach to crime, including harsher prison sentences.

In 1998 Hague declared that “Thatcherism is dead” and sought to change the party’s name to “Modern Conservatives”, with the deputy leader, Peter Lilley, rejecting Thatcherite values. But the mood of the party was not receptive to such pronouncements, and under pressure from the wider party Hague began to move the party back to a Eurosceptic, neoliberal Thatcherite agenda.

By 2000 Hague was promoting a populist agenda which was anti-euro, anti-asylum seekers and anti-petrol taxes. He wanted to make a “bonfire of regulations”, believing that Whitehall was producing too many regulations which restricted the lives of citizens, and he called for a reform in the law to allow home owners confronted by an intruder to have more right to defend their property by using reasonable force. Faced with a party still spilt between the Europhiles and Eurosceptics, in the 2001 general election campaign he promised to “save the £” against what he saw as the possibility of New Labour signing Britain to the Euro. The election produced the lowest turnout ever, with the Conservative Party gaining just a single seat and Hague duly resigned as party leader.

His successor, Iain Duncan Smith, or IDS as he is known, fared little better. Duncan Smith was elected for his Eurosceptic credentials. In 2003 he issued the ‘Prague declaration’ which rejected European calls for greater political integration. But despite predictions by some that the party would lurch to the right under Duncan Smith he developed a pragmatic modern approach to party policy. Notably, he was was also keen to promote a social justice agenda, later establishing the think-tank The Centre for Social Justice with the aim of finding innovative policies for tackling poverty. He also ejected the right-wing Monday Club from the party for their extreme views on immigration.

However, the party was also increasingly perceived as the “nasty party”. This derogatory term was something of an ‘own goal’ for it was a term used by Thesea May, then Chair of the Conservative Party, in the party conference in 2002.

 It was at the dispatch box where Duncan Smith’s failings were most apparent. His soft voice and quiet manner earned him the nickname “the quiet man”, which the Labour benches turned to ridicule by calling “shush” as he stood to speak. His poor performance at the dispatch box was increasingly seen as a liability and in 2003 his leadership was challenged within the party with a vote of no confidence. The resulting leadership election saw Michael Howard take charge as party leader.

Howard instigated organisational reforms but ideologically he did little to distance the party from its ‘nasty party’ image. He sought tougher controls on asylum seekers and travellers and a cap on immigration. The party’s 2005 manifesto, entitled “are you thinking what we’re thinking?” offered a tougher stance on law and order, with 40,000 more police officers being recruited, and stronger discipline in schools, with headteachers having more powers to expel pupils. The answer to the question posed in the manifesto title was ‘no’. The Conservative campaign was an example of ideological disjuncture, a disconnect between the voters wishes and the manifesto pledges. Howard lost the 2005 general election and in October 2005 he was replaced by David Cameron.

**David Cameron:**

David Cameron has been described as ‘Chameleon Dave’, a nickname derived from his apparent willingness to change his ideas to suit the climate of the time. Some observers discern two phases to Cameron’s leadership: his pre-election ‘compassionate conservatism’ in which he purported to support the public sector and in which he appeared more liberal, and his time in office in which he has promoted austerity and deficit reduction.

Cameron has variously described himself as a “liberal, compassionate conservative” and a One Nation Conservative, and certainly he was keen to distance the Conservative Party from its ‘nasty party’ image. Out went the old party logo of a flaming torch lighting the way, in came a logo which attempted to capture the party’s new found environmentalism, a green and blue tree. To emphasise his environmental credentials Cameron was photographed at the arctic, seeing at first hand the effects of global warming, and cycling to Westminster rather than using his car. Some in the media dismissed these as mere photo-opportunities and stunts rather than the signs of a deeply-held conviction. At the 2006 local elections and again in the 2010 general election the party adopted the slogan ‘Vote Blue, Go Green’. In government, however, a commitment to environmentalism has become secondary to the commitment to reducing the deficit.

Among Cameron’s early reforms to the party was the ‘Built to Last’ agenda (2006) which talked of strengthening public services and of work-life balance and was confused by some as a Labour Party policy platform. Perceived to be more liberal on drugs he argued for a “huge increase” in drugs rehabilitation places for young offenders. He was also photographed among young people on a council estate, arguing that young people are negatively stereotyped by society and that we should reflect on that stereotype and, as the media put it, “hug a hoodie”.

Cameron spoke of ‘general well-being’ rather than GDP, suggesting that the pursuit of profit should be subordinate to the pursuit of happiness, and in government he instigated a national happiness survey: "It's time we admitted that there's more to life than money, and it's time we focused not just on [GDP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_domestic_product), but on GWB - general well-being". He also talked of recognizing civil partnerships. In government he further displayed his liberal inclinations by successfully promoting a Same Sex Marriage Bill against opposition from within his own party. He also claimed to seek a return to ‘consensus politics’, at least publically welcoming a coalition with the Liberal Democrats in 2010.

He stated that he was “certainly a big Thatcher fan, but I don’t know whether that makes me a Thatcherite,” and in a further attempt to distance himself from Thatcher he famously declared that “There is such a thing as society, it’s just not the same thing as the state.” He advocated a ‘Big Society’ rather than big government, envisaging “little platoons” of volunteers (a phrase lifted from Burke) fulfilling some of the work of state institutions and promoting social cohesion.

Early in his leadership there were claims by journalists that he described himself as the “heir to Blair”, but he has been keen to suggest that he is pragmatic rather than ideological, asserting he does not do “isms”. He did, however, emphasise the concept of “social responsibility” as the essence of his political approach, echoing something of Blair’s assertions, a belief that has been echoed in the ‘strivers and shirkers’ debate over benefits promoted by the Work and Pensions’ Secretary, Iain Duncan Smith.

Influences on Cameron have included Richard Thaler, an economist who advocated libertarian paternalism and the free market. Thaler advocated the ‘nudge theory’, the belief that it is possible to create a critical mass of support for an idea (such as the Big Society) in society. Another influence has been Phillip Blond, the director of the think tank *Res-Public,* who proposed Red Toryism. This argues against both state and market monopolies. In 2010, [*The Telegraph*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Daily_Telegraph) called Blond "a driving force behind [David Cameron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Cameron)'s '[Big Society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Society)' agenda," although the true architect of the Big Society is Cameron’s friend and adviser Steve Hilton. In government the Conservatives appear to have quietly dropped the Red Toryism stance.

The Big Society, a flagship idea in the 2010 election, is a policy which has the stated aim is to create a climate that empowers local people and communities, building a "big society" that will take power away from politicians and hand it to people. Again, however, this idea failed to connect with the voters and was largely dropped in government.

In 2010 the Conservative Party formed a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats. In government, the deficit forced Cameron to make cuts in the public sector, which he views as a pragmatic rather than an ideological response to current circumstances. He called for Britons to embrace a “wartime spirit” to help tackle the deficit. However, the public sector cuts were only a part of the strategy. In 2013 spending on housing and schemes to encourage first-time buyers, together with spending on HS2 (the high-speed rail links between London and Birmingham) were introduced in an effort to boost the economy.

In coalition Cameron has steered through the Fixed-term Parliament Bill, which provides for more limited powers of government in that they are no longer able to choose the date of the next election. This is arguably a liberal principle. Cameron’s pragmatic credentials are evident in his agreeing to a referendum on Scottish independence; which, being a patriotic, pro-unionist Conservative, he does not want the ‘yes’ vote to win.

In 2012 he argued for a freeze in the European budget and is perceived to be moderately Eurosceptic, offering an ‘in/out’ referendum on Europe after the 2015 election. Others, on the right of the party, argue he is not Eurosceptic enough. On health he sought to transfer powers for commissioning patient care from hospitals to GP fundholding practices. In supporting localism, another liberal principle, the Conservatives have sought to introduce elected mayors and elected police commissioners. Both initiatives have fared badly at the polls.

On the question of citizens’ rights Cameron has called for the introduction of a British Bill of Rights to replace the Human Rights Act. After gaining the first Conservative majority in parliament for over twenty years in 2015, Cameron made reference to this proposal in the Queen’s Speech. If backbench opposition can be overcome it is likely to be implemented in the lifetime of the current parliament.

An old Etonian, Cameron has been described as elitist by Nadine Dorries, a Conservative MP. The criticism of social elitism has led some to scepticism about his “caring, compassionate, conservatism”. That said, his efforts to reform the House of Lords, agreed with the Liberal Democrats, were rebuffed by his own backbenchers in 2012. Recent calls for further austerity measures beyond 2015 have led some commentators to argue that Cameron’s conservative Party is out of touch with the “squeezed middle” to which Ed Miliband refers. However, the signs of an economic upturn in 2014 have boosted the party’s confidence in Cameron’s leadership.

In the 2015 election they promised further austerity in order to reduce the deficit and ensure fiscal responsibility and additional funding for the NHS. The Queen’s Speech in 2015 proposed the ‘right to buy’ for housing association tenants (echoing Thatcher)’ and a referendum on continued EU membership. Cameron also promised further devolved powers to Scotland and Wales, potentially threatening the union of the United Kingdom, which many conservatives hold as a key principle of their party. However, in an effort to combat the elitist image which his precious government attracted, Cameron has promised ‘One Nation Conservatism’ and to govern for the ‘working people’ of the country.

**Differences between strands of Conservatism**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | One Nation Conservatism | Thatcherism: inspired by neoliberalism/New Right thinking | Cameronism: compassionate conservatism |
| On the economy | Support a mixed economy (eg Butskellism) | Supports the free market | Supports the private sector, but encourages some infrastructure spending (eg new homes, HS2) |
| On leadership | Supports hierarchy (flag, faith & family) | Supports a meritocracy | Criticised for being elitist |
| On the role of the state | Paternalistic | Emphasises the importance of the individual | Proposes the Big Society whereby a hollowed-out state is supported by ‘little platoons’ of volunteers. |
| On the nation | One nation | There is no such thing as society | There is such a thing as society, it’s just not the same as the state. |
| On social freedom | Paternalistic; Burkean notion of the state/ citizen relationship like the parent/child. | Social authoritarian/ New Right | Social Libertarian |
| Pragmatism | Principally pragmatic | Principally ideological | Arguably both pragmatic and ideological |

**Conclusion**

Looking back through the history of conservatism in the UK it is apparent that the rejection of ideological blueprints and the pragmatic imperative have been significant drivers to the approach which the party has taken. It is arguable that even Disraeli’s One Nation Conservatism was a pragmatic response to the changing circumstances of the time. Thatcher’s time as party leader stands out as the period when the party most abandoned its commitment to pragmatism in favour of ideological dogma, but even Thatcherism can be viewed from the prism of pragmatism as a response to the economic circumstances of the time. Today’s Conservative Party still owes its economic heritage to the Thatcher period: it continues to emphasise the importance of governance. Social disorder is still largely viewed as a consequence of a lack of individual responsibility, as is evident in Cameron’s reaction to the 2011 riots. But the party’s social agenda is arguably far more liberal and pragmatic than under Thatcher, as evidenced by the support for same-sex marriage. It is a party which, for the most part, continues to dismiss ideological dogma.



**Useful websites:**

[www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com) The website of the British Conservative Party.

[www.cornerstone-group.org.uk](http://www.cornerstone-group.org.uk) This is a group which represents the traditional conservative values of ‘flag, faith and family’.

[www.conservativehome.com](http://www.conservativehome.com) This is a website purporting to represent grassroots Conservative opinion.

[www.bowgroup.org](http://www.bowgroup.org) The Bow Group is an independent conservative think tank open to all strands of conservative thought.

[www.trg.org.uk](http://www.trg.org.uk) The Tory Reform Group represents One Nation Conservatism.

[www.conwayfor.org.uk](http://www.conwayfor.org.uk) This is a pro-Thatcherite campaign group.

**Further reading:**

Heywood, A., *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, (London, 1992) fourth edition 2007, Chapter 3.

Woodley, D., *Political Ideologies*, Philip Allan, (Oxford; 2009), Chapter 2.

Woodley, D., *Conservatism*, Philip Allan, (Oxford; 2006).

Bloor, K., A definitive guide to Political Ideologies, (AuthorHouse; Milton Keynes, 2010),

**Accessible primary sources:**

Burke, E., *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790).

**Endnotes**

1. The term ‘ideology’ was first coined by Destutt de Tracey during the French Revolution.
2. For example, Disraeli’s government extended the franchise to working class males in the 1867 Reform Act; Salisbury introduced radical housing reforms in 1885; and Thatcher pushed forward economic and social reforms in the 1980s.
3. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), from Dale, I., *The Dictionary of Conservative Quotations*, (Biteback; London, 2013) p 202.
4. Heywood, A., *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, (London, 1992) fourth edition 2007, p71.
5. *Ibid*, p 72.
6. Dale, I, *op cit.,* p 161.
7. Woodley, D., Political Ideologies, (Philip Allan; Oxford; 2009) p36
8. Heywood, A., *op cit*, p 78
9. In fact this is an oft-quoted paraphrase of Macmillan’s speech, he never quite used those exact words.
10. Dupre, B., *Fifty Political Ideas*, (Quercus, Oxford, 2012) p 61.
11. Bloor, K., A definitive guide to Political Ideologies, (AuthorHouse; Milton Keynes, 2010), p44
12. Schama, S., *A History of Britain*, Vol 3, (BBC, London, 2002) p 121
13. President Nasser of Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal, denying British ownership of the important trade route. Eden mounted a campaign with France to retake the canal, but the attempt backfired and Britain was left embarrassed amongst the international community. His health failing, Eden resigned.
14. Rab Butler was expected to become party leader, but Macmillan was appointed.
15. John Profumo, Secretary of State for War, was exposed for his affair with Christine Keeler, having lied to the House of Commons about the affair.
16. Simon Rae & Willie Rushton, *Soft Targets*, ‘If’- from *The Guardian*, 7/1/79.