

# POLITICAL CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY



## I. Political Culture – Definition and Sources

## II. Commonalities and Cleavages in British Political Culture

## III. The British Ideological Spectrum



# I. POLITICAL CULTURE – DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES

- POLITICAL CULTURE: widely shared beliefs, values and norms concerning the relationship of citizens to government and to one another.
  - Political Culture v. Public Opinion
- POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION: The process by which we are taught and develop our individual and collective political beliefs.
  - Socialization occurs through family, education, church, peers, media, etc.
- Stability and Change in Political Culture
  - ‘Tectonic events’ and political culture



## II. COMMONALITIES AND CLEAVAGES IN BRITISH POLITICAL CULTURE

- COMMONALITIES: Key orientations toward –
- (A) Problem Solving: Empirical v. Rationalist
  - UK pragmatic ('what works'), incremental, asymmetric
- (B) Political System: allegiant orientation
  - Strong support for institutions of system (including the monarchy); more contingent support for those who occupy high office
- (C) Cooperation: cooperative/conciliatory orientation
  - Northern Ireland as exception
- (D) Orientation towards Other People: generally trusting of others



## II. COMMONALITIES AND CLEAVAGES IN BRITISH POLITICAL CULTURE

- CLEAVAGES:
- Social Class
  - Objective v. Subjective
  - Cultural/Social as well as economic
- National/Regional
  - Scotland/Wales v. England
  - North-South divide
- Ethnicity
  - Immigration largely from south Asia and Caribbean
  - Concentrated in certain urban areas

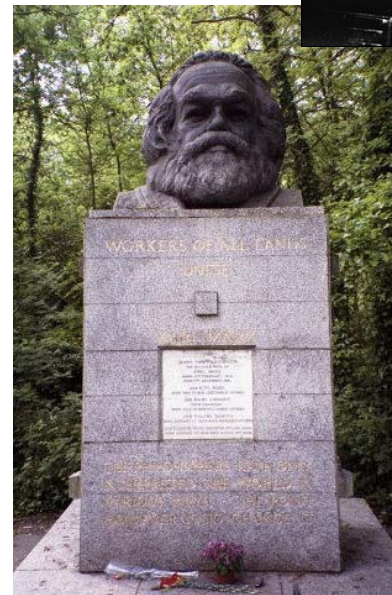


The 'North-South Divide'



## II. THE BRITISH IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM

- Understanding Ideology
- Liberalism
  - Gladstonian Liberalism
  - Progressive Liberalism
  - Thatcherite Neoliberalism
- Conservatism
  - Traditional Conservatism
  - One-Nation Conservatism
- Socialism
  - Fabian Socialism
  - Old Labour Socialism
  - New Labour's Third Way



And their ideas  
never really  
took root...

TOP: Sir Oswald Mosley, head of the British Union of Fascists;  
BOTTOM: Karl Marx's grave in Highgate Cemetery, London

## IV. THE BOUNDS OF BRITISH POLITICS

- Public Services
- Taxation
- The Economy
- Personal Freedom
- Institutional Reform
- The British Union
- The European Union



“Don’t take our NHS...”