Overview

- Definitions of ideology
- Ideology at the individual level
- Ideology at the societal level
- Ideology at the group level
- An integrative framework
Definitions of Ideology

- A coherent system of political cognitions, attitudes and feelings maintained by an individual
- A set of ideas that directs one’s goals, expectations, and actions
- A set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved
- A vision of the ideal arrangement of society
- Evaluative; subjective; non-conscious or conscious; interconnected with values, attitudes, norms; prescriptive; abstract (Maio et al., 2003)
- Better world and nationalistic ideologies (Staub, 1999)
Ideology at the Individual Level: The One-Dimensional View

- Liberalism–conservatism (left–right)
  1. Advocating versus resisting social change (as opposed to tradition, stability, status quo)
  2. Rejecting versus accepting inequality

- Correlated for historical reasons

- Easy and frequent use in political discourse

- Rooted in interrelated psychological motives (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003)
Figure 1

The motivational substructure, discursive superstructure, and downstream consequences of political ideology.
Limitations

- Based mostly on data from Western countries

- Rationale for one-dimensional model context-bound: correlation for historical reasons

- “It is at least conceivable that the two core aspects of left–right ideology are decoupled or even negatively correlated in socialist or communist regimes...” (Jost et al., 2009, p. 329)
Ideology at the Individual Level: The Two-Dimensional View

- Social/cultural and economic conservatism (e.g., Middendorp, 1991)
- Moral regulation—individual freedom and compassion—competition (Ashton et al., 2003)
- Right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation (e.g., Duckitt, 2001)
- Empirically not fully uncorrelated; but differential correlations and interrelation moderated
Implications for Intergroup Conflict

- Correlations of ideology with
  - Prejudice (e.g. Altemeyer, 1998)
  - Attitudes to human rights (e.g. Cohrs et al., 2005a)
  - Militaristic attitudes (e.g. Cohrs et al., 2005b)
  - Political behaviour (e.g. Van Hiel et al., 2007)

- Decontextualized ... but some studies examined correlates in conflict contexts

- Unclear how *individual* ideology affects *intergroup* and *societal* violence
Ideology at the Societal Level

- Three fundamental questions all societies face (Douglas, 1966; Schwartz, 2006):
  1. What is the appropriate relationship between the individual and society?
     - individual autonomy vs. social embeddedness/control
  2. What is the appropriate way of guaranteeing that necessary tasks are done?
     - hierarchies/fixed roles vs. egalitarianism/altruism
  3. What is the appropriate relationship of society to its natural and social environment?
     - mastery/exploitation vs. harmony/adaptation

- Ideologies then refer to different societal preferences in response to these questions.
Ideology at the Societal Level

- Cultural preconditions of destructive ideologies (Staub, 1999)
  - Strong respect for authority
  - Monolithic/hierarchical vs. pluralistic society

- Schwartz’s (2006) theory of cultural values

- Basabe & Valencia (2007): Culture of peace
- Fischer & Hanke (2009): Global peace index
Ideology at the Group Level

- Ideologies shared within groups (van Dijk, 1998)
  - For values: race, ethnicity, gender, social class, immigrant status, religion (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004)

- Propagated by group leaders (Staub, 1999)

- Legitimizing myths created by dominant groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999)

- *Destructive* ideologies identify enemies that hinder the fulfilment of the vision (Staub, 1999)
  - Ideologies of antagonism
  - Problem/solution structure (van Dijk, 1998)
An Attempt of Integration

- Multiple levels of analysis: societal – group – individual
- Hierarchical structure of ideology: general dimensions – specific belief systems
Hierarchical Structure of Ideology

General dimensions
1. Autonomy-embeddedness
2. Hierarchy-egalitarianism
3. Harmony-mastery

Specific belief systems

- Societal beliefs; ideology of antagonism; legitimizing myths
- Nazi ideology: Führerprinzip, Aryan superiority, Lebensraum
Multilevel Model of Destructive Ideologies

- Societal level
- Group level
- Individual level

Ideology → Violence

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Ideology → Violence
Directions for Research

- Examine top-down effects and moderators of potency of ideology (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999)
  - Embeddedness, certainty, consensuality (hegemony), mediational strength

- Examine how ideologies become influential in predicting violence

- Examine reciprocal and bottom-up effects
Figure 1
Cultural Dimensions: Prototypical Structure

(Schwartz, 2006)
Discussion Time

Thank You Very Much for Your Attention!