

Contemporary
Political Ideologies

2nd Grade

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Green Ideology

Green Ideology

1. **Introduction**
2. **Origins & Development**
3. **Core themes**
4. **Green Ideology in a Global Age**

Introduction

- The term 'green' was first used **in connection with environmentally-orientated politics.**
- The term became more prominent from the 1970s onwards.
- The German Greens (*Die Grünen*), founded in 1980.
- From this point onwards, the term was accepted more widely, being used to refer to **green philosophy, green politics and green ideology** (sometimes called 'ecologism', 'political ecology' or 'greenism').

- Green ideology is based on the belief that **nature is an interconnected whole**, embracing humans and non-humans, as well as the inanimate world.
- There are different tendencies within green ideology. Some greens are committed to shallow ecology, which attempts to connect the lessons and teachings of ecology to human ends and needs.
- Deep ecologists, completely reject any belief that the human species(type) is in some way superior to, or more important than, any other species

Origins and development

- Modern environmental politics did not emerge until the **1960s** and **1970s**, ecological ideas can be traced back to much earlier times.
- Green ideology was, and remains, **a reaction against the process of industrialization.**
- This was obvious in the nineteenth century, when the spread of urban and industrial life created a **profound(deep) nostalgia for an idealized rural existence.**

- This reaction was strongest in those countries that had experienced the most rapid(speedy) process of industrialization.
- For example, Germany's rapid industrialization in the nineteenth century deeply scarred its political culture, creating powerful myths about the purity and dignity of farmer life, and giving rise to a strong **'back to nature'** movement among Germans.

- A new generation of activist pressure groups have also developed campaigning on issues such as the dangers of pollution, the decreasing reserves of fuels, deforestation and animal experimentation.
- From the 1980s onwards, **environmental questions have been kept high on the political agenda** by green parties, which now exist in most industrialized countries.

Core themes: return to nature

- Thinking about the environment only acquired a fully ideological character through the rise of the green movement.
- By the end of the 1970s, green thinking was widely viewed as an ideology in its own right.
- Green theorists believe that conventional ideologies commit mistake of believing that humans are the centrepiece of existence. David Ehrenfeld (1978) called this the ‘arrogance of humanism’.

Core themes: return to nature

- Green ideology has therefore uncovered new ideological terrain(ground, land).
- It differs from both the '**politics of material distribution**', as practised by the classical ideologies (liberalism, conservatism and socialism) *and* '**identity politics**' as practised by most of the so-called 'new' ideologies that have emerged since the 1960s (feminism, religious fundamentalism and multiculturalism).

Set of Values and Beliefs

▪ The central themes of green ideology are:

1. ecology
2. holism
3. sustainability
4. environmental ethics
5. from having to being

1- ECOLOGY

ECOLOGY

- The central principle of all forms of green thought is ecology, a term coined in 1866 by the German zoologist Ernst Haeckel.
- Ecology is the study of the relationship between living organisms and the environment; ecology emphasizes the network of relationships that sustains all forms of life.

2- HOLISM

HOLISM

A belief that the **whole is more important than its parts**; holism implies that understanding is gained by studying relationships among the parts.

Traditional political ideologies have assumed that human beings are the masters of the natural world, and have therefore regarded nature as little more than an **economic resource**. In that sense, they have been part of the problem and not part of the solution.

The term '**holism**' was coined in 1926 by Jan Smuts, (a Boer general and twice prime minister of South Africa). He used it to describe the idea that the natural world could only be understood as a **whole** and not through its **parts**.

3- SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY

The capacity of a system to maintain its health and continue in existence over a period of time.

human life has unlimited possibilities for material growth and prosperity. A particularly influential for the environmental movement has been the idea of 'spaceship Earth', because this emphasizes the **notion of limited and exhaustible wealth.**

4- ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Green politics, in all its forms, is concerned with spreading moral thinking in a number of new directions. This is because conventional ethical systems are clearly **anthropocentric**, orientated around the pleasure, needs and interests of human beings.

5- FROM HAVING TO BEINGS

FROM HAVING TO BEINGS

Green ideology seeks not only to revise conventional moral thinking, but also to reshape understanding of happiness and human well-being. In particular, green thinkers have advanced a critique of materialism and consumerism.

Green Ideology in a global age

The environment is often viewed as the ideal example of a **'global' issue**. This is because environmental processes are no respecters (recognize) of national borders; they have an essentially transnational character.

This has been underlined by the issue of climate change, regarded by some as the most urgent and important challenge currently confronting the international community.

Thanks