**AN INTRODUCTION TO MODERN SOCIAL
AND POLITICAL THOUGHT**

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ANDREW GAMBLE

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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
1 The world and the West	1
1 The meaning of the West and the Western tradition	1
2 The coming of world history	5
3 Western social and political thought	8
4 The Western ideology	12
5 Conclusion	16
2 The state and civil society	22
1 The idea of revolution	22
2 The bourgeois revolution	26
3 The Industrial Revolution	31
4 The origins of capitalism	34
5 The state of nature	41
6 Political economy	45
7 The idea of the state	47
8 Sovereignty	49
9 State and civil society	54
10 The new technology	57
11 The new cosmology	58
12 The new philosophy	60
13 Science and the intellectuals	63
3 Liberalism	66
1 The political revolutions	66
2 The constitutional state	75
3 The theory of popular sovereignty	87
4 The state as an ethical idea	94
5 Conclusion	98
4 Socialism	100
1 The unfinished revolution	100
2 The reaction to laissez-faire	104
3 Rationalism	106
4 Libertarianism	109
5 The origins of Marxism	110

6	The production of commodities	118
7	Accumulation	124
5	Politics and industrial society I: The national question	130
1	Introduction	130
2	Nationalism	132
3	The anti-Enlightenment	137
4	Gemeinschaft	146
6	Politics and industrial society II: The social question	151
A	NATIONAL LIBERALISM	
1	The rise of modern industry	151
2	Order and liberty	154
3	Democracy	160
4	Stratification and elites	168
B	SOCIAL DEMOCRACY	
5	The new liberals	173
6	Anomie	176
7	The anarchy and waste of capitalist production	178
8	Equality	181
7	Politics and industrial society III: The spectre of revolution	186
1	The Russian Revolution	186
2	Engels and the Second International	188
3	Leninism	197
4	Western Marxism	209
5	Conclusion	215
8	Conclusion	218
	<i>Guide to further reading</i>	232
	<i>Biographies</i>	238
	<i>Glossary</i>	254
	<i>Index</i>	262

Preface

This book is intended as an introduction to Western social and political thought in the modern period, and particularly since the French Revolution. The material that could be included in such a survey is vast, the need for selection great, and I am conscious that much that is important has had to be omitted, and that it has scarcely been possible to deal adequately with the thinkers and the theories that appear in the text. The aim of the book is to encourage all who read it to read further, both the works of some of the writers discussed in these pages and the ever-multiplying literature about them. I have provided a short bibliography which I hope will be useful for this purpose. Biographical material has mostly been left out of the text and placed in a separate section at the end. I have also included a short glossary of some of the more important terms and concepts used in the book, not in an attempt to provide final definitions but for reference.

I do not think it possible to stand outside the Western tradition and pronounce upon its character and its value from the standpoint of eternity. I have not tried to do so. I have tried to be objective and accurate in my exposition of different theories, but the evaluation of them and the selection of what is important is naturally shaped by the overall approach I have adopted.

I have enjoyed writing this book and hope it will be rewarding to read. Many people, teachers, colleagues, and students of mine have contributed to it, most of them unwittingly. I give thanks to them all, but especially to Chris and Tom and Corinna for not complaining too much or too loudly.