

Modernity and the State



This volume addresses the problem of how modern societies politically cohere, and poses one of the most fundamental questions of contemporary political analysis: how can legitimate authority co-exist with effective governing capacity? In addressing this question, the author draws on a wide variety of material in both political theory and empirical sociology. The book is divided into four parts. In the first of these, Claus Offe explores general questions concerning the nature and stability of modern societies, and critically examines contemporary approaches to political theory. In the second part he examines new developments facing the state, and assesses new departures in state theory. In the third part, problems and policy prescriptions which have emerged in connection with developments in Western welfare states are addressed. In the final part, Offe seeks to illuminate through comparative analysis many of the new questions facing political sociology in the light of the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. The result is an account of developments in contemporary society both in the West and in the East. It should be of interest to students and scholars in social and political theory, political sociology and East European studies.

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