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# The rise of the Tea Party movement and its Impact on American Politics : a Study beyond a Mere Populist Conservatism

Amira Achouri

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## **THÈSE**

Pour obtenir le grade de

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Présentée par

**Amira ACHOURI**

Thèse dirigée par **Susanne BERTHIER FOGLAR, Professeure des Universités, Université Grenoble Alpes, ILCEA4** préparée au sein du **Laboratoire ILCEA4** dans l'**École Doctorale LLSH (Langues, Littératures et Sciences Humaines)**

**Une étude du mouvement des *Tea Parties* et son impact sur la politique étasunienne : une analyse qui dépasse le simple conservatisme populiste**

**The rise of the Tea Party movement and its Impact on American Politics: A Study beyond a Mere Populist Conservatism**

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M. Mokhtar BEN BARKA, Professeur, Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France, rapporteur et président du Jury

Mme Susanne BERTHIER-FOGLAR, Professeure, Université Grenoble Alpes, directrice de la thèse

M. Jean-Daniel COLLOMB, Professeur, Université Grenoble Alpes

M. Wassim DAGHRIR, Maître de Conférences, Université de Sousse (Tunisie), rapporteur

M. Mohamed Salah HARZALLAH, Maître de Conférences, Université de Sousse (Tunisie)

Mme Marie-Christine MICHAUD, Professeure, Université Bretagne Sud





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December 16, 2009, a few weeks prior to the primaries that would agree on the official contestant of the Democratic and Republican parties in the U.S., a group of people in Boston dressed in a way inspired by the American Revolution era. The flags they held symbolized a black rattlesnake on a yellow setting, by means of the slogan “Do not Tread on Me,” in the same manner as the Boston Tea Party of 1773. The public meeting, which was initially and principally an evident movement in the dwelling of the U.S. representative Ron Paul, was held together with a fundraising campaign prearranged by activists, which would make available a \$6 million fundraising on the Internet in only one day, owing to \$50 individual donations. One year later, a group of Republican candidates swept the Democratic majority in the midterm elections of November 2010 and won 60 more seats in the House of Representatives, celebrating one of the biggest Republican triumphs during the last fifty years. Far from being a trivial movement in 2009, the Tea Party movement, is considered by many to have had a significant impact in this victory. The crystallization of the debate on the health care reform had given the movement unexpected power and influence. Today, they represent a new conservative movement, yet formerly well established in the country.

This dissertation explores the rise of Conservative social movements since World War II and the motives behind this. In the last chapter, it focuses on the Tea Party movement as the latest chapter in the history of the populist conservative movement as the “Party of No.” I analyze (1) the historical background of the Right’s economic theories and ideologies, (2) how the U.S. society has been pulled to the right since the late 1970s in the most continuous political reaction since the Reconstruction era after the Civil War, (3) how

welfare programs - as a unifying factor - have been used as a source of fear and fantasy for the Right, and (4) the origins of the movement: the who, what and why of the Tea Party movement and how they changed the American political landscape.

Keywords: American Studies, American civilization, American history, Socio-political studies, Conservatism, Tea Party, social movements.





# Table of Contents

Abstract

Acknowledgements

<u>I.</u>	Introduction: .....	1
	<u>1.</u> The aim of the thesis: .....	5
	<u>2.</u> Organization of the thesis: .....	6
<u>II.</u>	Methodology .....	18
	 Chapter One: A brief overview of American Conservatism and conservative economic theories .....	 28
<u>I.</u>	Understanding American Conservatism .....	30
	<u>1.</u> The American Old Right: .....	30
	<u>2.</u> Postwar modern Conservatism: .....	33
	<u>3.</u> The Role of Ideology in American politics: .....	36
<u>II.</u>	American conservative economic theories: .....	40
<u>1.</u>	The rise of conservative capitalism .....	40
	<u>a.</u> Traditional conservative view of capitalism .....	40
	<u>b.</u> The New Right and neoliberal economics: .....	46
<u>2.</u>	Libertarianism: .....	52
<u>III.</u>	Conservative long-defended values: .....	59

1.	Individualism .....	59
a.	Historical perspective of individualism .....	59
b.	Conservative defense of Individualism: .....	62
2.	The value of self-reliance in the conservative ideology: .....	67
3.	Anti-state ideology and Tolerance to Inequality .....	69
a.	Anti-state ideology: .....	70
b.	Tolerance to inequality: .....	72
4.	Anti-union ideology: .....	76
Chapter Two: The Right and Welfare programs.....		86
I.	American welfare: Definition, history and conservative theoretical background on welfare:.....	87
1.	Defining the American welfare: .....	87
2.	Ideologies of the social welfare system: .....	94
3.	Historical background of the social welfare in the United States:.....	95
a.	The Great Depression and the New Deal (1925–1940):.....	96
b.	World War II and the postwar era (1940–1960):.....	98
c.	Social and welfare reform (1960–1990s): .....	99
4.	American health care policy: .....	102
5.	Major health care programs:.....	104
a.	Medicare: .....	104

<u>b.</u>	Medicaid: .....	106
<u>II.</u>	Conservative theory and politics of welfare:.....	109
<u>1.</u>	Opposing the New Deal and inventing a new one:.....	109
<u>2.</u>	Goldwater Conservatism and the Election of 1964: Revolt against welfare: .....	116
<u>3.</u>	Reaganism and the rise of privatized social security: .....	119
<u>III.</u>	The U.S. system of taxation and the Conservative approach:.....	130
<u>1.</u>	Historical perspective of the US tax system: .....	130
<u>a.</u>	From the colonial times to the Civil War: .....	130
<u>b.</u>	The impact of the two World Wars: .....	136
<u>c.</u>	The Growth of Direct Taxation: .....	138
<u>2.</u>	The Right turn in economic policy and the rise of fiscal conservatism: ...	140
<u>3.</u>	From the “Reagan Revolution” to the Bush Tax Cuts: .....	146
Chapter Three: The Rise of the Right since the 1960s .....		152
<u>I.</u>	The factors behind the rise of modern conservatism: .....	153
<u>1.</u>	The break between old and new conservatism: .....	153
<u>2.</u>	The welfare fear: .....	161
<u>3.</u>	The rise of right-wing movements:.....	169
<u>4.</u>	The role of big business: .....	177
<u>5.</u>	The New Right union: .....	181

<u>II.</u>	Populism and American conservatism: .....	189
<u>1.</u>	Historical background of populism in the United States: .....	189
<u>2.</u>	Right-wing movements and paranoid politics: .....	193
<u>3.</u>	The Right-wing populist discourse: .....	199
<u>III.</u>	Third Party existence in the United States: .....	208
<u>1.</u>	Ross Perot’s third party in the US as an example: .....	208
<u>2.</u>	Before the Tea Party: the rise of the conservative Republican base 1964 - 2008: .....	213

Chapter Four: The emergence of the Tea Party movement: A new turning point

in American conservatism .....

<u>I.</u>	The Tea Party and the revival of the conservative movement: .....	224
<u>1.</u>	Origins of the Tea Party mobilization: .....	224
<u>a.</u>	Economic conditions: .....	224
<u>b.</u>	Anger and fear: .....	228
<u>c.</u>	The Tea Party and the idea of “taxed too much”: .....	231
<u>2.</u>	Who are the Tea Parties? .....	233
<u>a.</u>	Major groups of the Tea Party: .....	233
<u>b.</u>	Tea Party figures: .....	234
<u>c.</u>	Supporters of the Tea Party: .....	235
<u>II.</u>	The rise of the Tea Party: .....	242
<u>1.</u>	The events .....	242

<u>2.</u>	Behind the Tea Party:.....	245
<u>3.</u>	Media coverage of the Tea Party:.....	252
<u>III.</u>	The ideology of the Tea Party:.....	256
<u>1.</u>	The Tea Party and the social support policy:.....	256
<u>2.</u>	Race relations in the Tea Party ideology:.....	258
<u>3.</u>	The Tea Party and the Religious Right:.....	265
<u>4.</u>	Analyzing the Tea Party discourse:.....	269
<u>5.</u>	The Tea Party and the conspiracy theory:.....	274
<u>IV.</u>	The Tea Party and the Republican Party:.....	277
<u>1.</u>	The role of the Tea Party in the elections:.....	277
<u>2.</u>	The Republican Party: more to the right:.....	282
<u>3.</u>	The Tea Party Insurgency and its impact on American politics:.....	293
	Conclusion and discussion.....	302
	Bibliography.....	313
	Index.....	379

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Gross Public Debt as a percentage of GNP, selected years, 1902-1976.....	92
Figure 2: Welfare as a Reason to Like vs. Dislike the Democratic and Republican Parties Comparison of Party Balances and Issue Salience over Time.....	113
Figure 3: A group of angry Bostonians disguised as Mohawk Indians and armed with tomahawks boarded the British ships at Griffin’s Wharf in Boston harbor and threw the tea. ....	132
Figure 4: Average Feeling Thermometer Evaluation of Democratic Presidential Candidate among Republican Identifiers over the last decades .....	221
Figure 5: A chart representing Tea Party supporters.....	239
Figure 6: A profile of Tea Party voting .....	240
Figure 7: Week-by-week media coverage of the Tea Party on Fox News and CNN, from February 15 to May 24, 2009 .....	253
Figure 8: Week-by-week coverage of the Tea Party onFox News and CNN, May 31 through August 2, 2009 .....	254
Figure 9: Gall up poll: Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement or neither.....	289

## List of Tables

Table 1: Real per capita social welfare and public welfare expenditures, selected years, 1902-1975 (in 1967 dollars) .....	89
Table 2: Gross public debt as a percentage of GNP selected years, 1902-1976 (\$ billions).....	91
Table 3: Total tax revenue as percentage of, 1965-71 average.....	91
Table 4: The percentage of Campaign Activism among Republican Identifiers by Decade .....	220
Table 5: Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Active Republicans vs. Overall Electorate in 2008.....	222
Table 6: Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Tea Party Supporters vs. Non-Supporters.....	236
Table 7: Political Activities of Republican Tea Party Supporters vs. Other .....	241
Table 8: Results of the 2010 Elections .....	280





## Introduction:

“The Conservative has learned that the economic and spiritual aspects of man’s nature are inextricably intertwined. He cannot be economically free, or even economically efficient, if he is enslaved politically; conversely, man’s political freedom is illusory if he is dependent for his economic needs on the State.”<sup>1</sup>

Barry Goldwater - *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960)

When Barry Goldwater wrote *The Conscience of a Conservative* in 1960, which became a bestseller, it reignited the American conservative movement, which was to gain influence during the following decades helping to lay the foundation for the Reagan Revolution of the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> The book, which elaborates on Goldwater’s conservative ideology as contrasted with that of Republicans and Democrats alike in the post-Depression era, has resisted time directing it at the moral diffidence of what will presently be called the “Republican Establishment.” For his book, Goldwater chose to deal with a number of topics: States' Rights, Civil Rights, labor unions, education, taxation and spending, the welfare state, and the Soviet Menace.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, most historically minded conservatives would agree that conservatism evolved in reaction to the French Revolution.<sup>4</sup> However, the political efforts that have stirred the conservative to his deepest considerations - the reactions against the New Deal, the Great Society, the Civil Rights Movement, Feminism, and Gay rights - have been anything but that. A reflection of this profound form of conservatism provides us with a plain meaning of what conservatism is. Although conservatism is an idea of reaction against the liberation movements of the sixties and seventies, thereaction has rarely been comprehended. By reforming the old regime and absorbing the new

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<sup>1</sup> Goldwater, Barry M. *The Conscience of a Conservative*. Shepherdsville, KY: Victor Pub., 1960. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Frohnen, Bruce, Jeremy Beer, and Jeffrey O. Nelson. *American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*. Wilmington, DE: ISI, 2006. 179-80.

<sup>3</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. 42

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 42.

one, conservatism seeks today to renovate a floundering old regime into a forceful, ideological movement, which brings dynamism to people.<sup>5</sup> While conservatives are antagonistic to the aims of the left, mainly the empowerment of societies lower and middle classes, they frequently learn from the left as they look to the left for new strategies, a new discourse, or even new media.<sup>6</sup>

American conservatism has consistently opposed the liberal establishment seeking new changes in American political and cultural life. Although rightist agenda was front throughout the Reagan administration as it undercut key Great Society commitments in economic and social policy; conventional analysis still maintains that American conservatism is an irregular phenomenon that flows against the dominant liberal democratic thought and policy.<sup>7</sup> Critics such as Sam Tanenhaus, Andrew Sullivan, Sidney Blumenthal, and John Dean assert that Conservatives gained influence during the Reagan, Bush, and even Clinton administrations thanks to the mobilization of different sources including media technology. It became able to positively convert its political agenda into a legislative proposal in opposition to other challenging proposals, mainly those of the Left, and to effectively hide its fanaticism and emerge as moderate.

The election of Democrat Bill Clinton to the White House in 1992 ended twelve years of Republican control. Under President Clinton, several major pieces of legislation were passed after they had languished for years in Republican administrations. After twice being vetoed by President George H. W. Bush in 1988 and 1990, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was passed and signed into law in January of 1993. Although it was minimal in its coverage and far less than what activists had hoped to achieve, the FMLA marked the first time in history that the federal government had mandated employers to guarantee unpaid leave for workers after the birth or adoption of a child, or during the illness of a dependent or family member. Other social welfare reforms passed under President Clinton included the Brady Bill, which

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<sup>5</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. 49.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 49.

<sup>7</sup> Domhoff, G. William. *The Power Elite and the State: How Policy Is Made in America*. New York: A. De Gruyter, 1990. 32.

enacted controls on the purchase and ownership of handguns, and the Anti-Crime Bill, which outlawed automatic assault weapons. These two bills had been introduced to Congress during the Reagan and Bush administrations and had met with defeat each time. The 1994 victory in midterm elections or known also as the Republican Revolution, however, symbolized the provisional infiltration of right-wing extremists who continue today to be an important force in the U.S. political landscape. In fact, today's conservatives engage in an essential effort to contest and reshape the very established "truths" in the U.S. liberal democratic institution.<sup>8</sup>

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century opened with some of the same conditions of the previous decade. The contentious 2000 election, which gave a plurality of popular votes to Democrat Al Gore but gave the electoral vote and, hence, the presidency to George W. Bush, marked the beginning of the century. The bitter division of electoral politics that influenced the 1990s became more entrenched during the new decade. With the return of the presidency to the Republican Party, the ideas of limited government and individual responsibility were reinforced. Less government was thought to be better, and lowering taxes was the rallying point for the Bush presidency.

During the early years of President George W. Bush's first administration, the public was worried about the high cost of medications for elderly people. Many fixed-income senior citizens were no longer able to compensate their medical treatments and the problem hence needed economic and social intervention. In 2003, politicians reacted by adjusting the Medicare program and increasing medical prescriptions coverage that would comprise drugs. By creating an innovative program for elderly people, the legislation simply proved the flow of the social welfare system.<sup>9</sup>

The early days of Barak Obama's administration saw a large expanded role of government - both in size and scope. The Obama stimulus package and the Troubled Assets Recovery Program (TARP), passed in the final days of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ansell, Amy Elizabeth. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Boulder, Colo: Westview, 1998. 14.

<sup>9</sup> McInnis-Dittrich, Kathleen. *Integrating Social Welfare Policy & Social Work Practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Pub., 1994. 6.

Bush administration, along with healthcare reforms, extended the federal government spending. With the federal government sharing ownership of what had been many private enterprises such as American automobile manufacturers, numerous banks, and AIG, several conservatives affirmed that the Obama administration had become a threat to American capitalist economy.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, after the passage of the bailout of banks and revival consumption (American Recovery Reinvestment Act ARRA) in February 2009, concern towards big government continued to be reflected in the media and in popular opinion. While experts and political analysts agreed to diagnose the end of a great political cycle of the reinvention of American conservatism by Ronald Reagan, a popular protest movement began to grow upon the winter of 2009. A New York Times/CBS News poll, among others, indicated that the majority of Americans became uncomfortable with an expanded government.<sup>11</sup> Conservative media expressed indifferent manners that “capitalism was dead”, and sometimes used the words of Milton Friedman, that Americans were “all Keynesians now.”<sup>12</sup> Millions of Americans began to organize under the label of the Tea Party movement in 2009 to protest irresponsible government spending in the stimulus package, the blocked budget bill, the massive mortgage entitlement program, and the debt-exploding government healthcare invasion.<sup>13</sup>

The failure of the GOP to shrink government the last three times it had power is precisely what motivates the anger of the Tea Party base - a force that still exhibits a remarkable ability to lead the Republican Party. These are people who mainly kept quiet about the rapid growth of government during George W. Bush's first term because their leaders told them “it was necessary for national security” or to achieve Karl Rove's vision of a “permanent Republican majority.” But their anger grew in the second term in inverse

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<sup>10</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012. 2.

<sup>11</sup> News, CBS. “CBS/NYT Poll: GOP Voters Have Deep Concerns about Government.” CBS News. CBS Interactive, 27 Oct. 2015.

<sup>12</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: The Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2010. 4.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* XXI.

proportion to Bush's popularity. TARP, followed by the Obama victory, pushed them over the edge.

## **1. The aim of the thesis:**

The aim of the thesis is to analyze the rise of the New Right ideas and policies since World War II. Rather than viewing the contemporary right wing as essentially irrelevant to the conventional economy and society of the United States, the thesis reveals the numerous ways in which the new conservatism is deeply drawn in the American political debates. In fact, I consider three broad questions: These questions are: (1) Is there a New Right, and if so, what is it and why is it characterized as “new”? (2) What is the role of conservative ideas in contributing to the right turn in government policy formation? And (3) what are the implications of the new conservatism for the future character of American democracy?

Following the failure of neoconservatives under the Bush administration and the victory of Barack Obama as a first Black president in American history, commentators declared the end of conservatism in the United States. However, the emergence of the Tea Party as an influential grassroots movement simply proved the opposite. In the first day of the movement, the Tea Party was merely cast as a racist group, fearing the rising authority of a Black president. Hence, the thesis aims at revealing that the elements surrounding the Tea Party movement's reaction were actually more profound, going beyond racism and going back to decades of a long-standing conservative movement entrenched in American life and politics.

The thesis also implies to examine the sources of support for the Tea Party movement in the American political sphere. Between the 2008 emergent events and the 2010-midterm elections, the Tea Party movement has become an important mobilizing force that has generated considerable interest in the American politics. I intend to clarify why the Tea Party movement emerged when it did, right away after the election of a Democratic president in 2008. In order to understand the origins of the movement, I highlight the features that could have helped the emergence of this political phenomenon. I seek to trace

back in its evolution from February 2009 to October 2010 the factors of its development.

## **2. Organization of the thesis:**

Chapter one presents an overview of American conservatism by specifically exploring the conservative economic values and ideologies. Besides, I examine the effects of ideology on the U.S. conservatism, including its role in determining welfare policy. An understanding of social welfare policy involves the capacity to seize the economic accounts and effects that inspire policy decisions. I advance a historical understanding of the drives and philosophies of the American conservative movement. This is important given its achievement in determining the American political life.

The Tea Party's rhetoric creates a cultural pedagogy that privileges certain forms of cultural capital such as symbolic power and privilege. While the Tea Party is a very anomalous and erratic group amongst its membership, the core fundamentals to which the Tea Party abides by are fairly similar to the New Right ideologies. These ideals primarily originate from the neoliberal agenda of big business and the strategy constructed by the Republican Party in the 1960s, which will be analyzed in greater details in chapter one.

I demonstrate how neoliberalism is at the heart of the Right's agenda referring to the rule of the "free market" above all. I explore the historical relationship between neoliberal ideologies and conservatism, mainly the American one. For instance, regarding individualism as a preserved value for conservatism in general and for the Tea Party in particular, I investigate how the American conservative individualistic belief is rooted in the idea of limited government. In that case, I explore how conservative ideologues and opinion-makers spin any redistributive policy as a zero-sum game. This will consider how the writings of conservative economists and commentators such as Milton Friedman, George Gilder, Laurence Mead, and Charles Murray developed anti-state economic theories after the 1960s.

The Tea Party opposes any tendency toward any sort of redistribution of wealth in favor of poor or marginalized people, and believes that health-care

reform or any form of welfare only targets the so-called “undeserving poor”, Blacks, and immigrants. In this chapter, I try to expose that this idea is a recurring pattern in U.S. history where large sections of the white population mainly Right-wing populists painted those who have no healthcare as “undeserving” acting against the interests of the poor people or the minorities. Therefore, I analyze how Right-wing populists are not concerned about the deficit budget and the gross wealth disparities in U.S. society.

Since Obama became president, the rapid emergence of the Tea Party has made the Republicans even more clamorous in their resistance to welfare. The GOP is contesting every Democratic social and economic regulation regarding the stimulus bill, aid to state governments, labor rights, healthcare reform, unemployment benefits, more access to food stamps and Head Start, global warming, and immigrant rights. Conservatives generally see all these as simply a theft of money.<sup>14</sup> The Tea Party, more specifically, argues that today’s American social welfare programs are “excessive” and “unproductive” coming at the expense of something else.

The first part of the chapter defines welfare and traces a historical background of its evolution in the U.S. Defining “social welfare” is a tool used to expose the growing trust assets, the growth in state and local expenditure, and the subsidization of key financial welfares (both to the advantaged as well as to the poor) rather than simply what is going to the truly disadvantaged. Then, I question the method in which the United States has paid for its welfare programs. In the Scandinavian nations and in Western Europe, the rising welfare state has been mainly funded by enhanced taxation. In the United States welfare has been generally funded through debt.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the New Right denounced the Great Society heritage as an excessively generous mode of social enterprise. In fact, Reagan’s election gave more credibility to a new generation of right-wing think tanks, writers, sponsored studies and was an essential support for further

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<sup>14</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. New York, NY: OR, 2010. 172



mainstream writers to advocate their anti-welfare ideas and how it only benefited the poor.<sup>15</sup>

Conservative scholars such as Charles Murray and Irving Kristol rebuked welfare policies for substituting the free market system with less efficient government contributions. Then, I show how, by the early 1990s, the perception of inequality as a social inevitable fact becomes the basis for conservatives' opposition to government welfare policies. These theories supported the New Right's rhetoric helping it become an undeniable political force. Conservatives condemn government welfare policies as producing "dependency," which offends the Protestant idea that individuals are held responsible for their own achievement. In this manner, conservatives make New Deal and Great Society welfare rights and provisions problematic.

Today, any perception of the influence is constructed upon a historic recognition of the differing fears towards the nature of welfare in addition to recognizing how the welfare fear has been used in different ways by distinct elements of the rightwing convention. I investigate the origins of the Right's fears towards welfare and how they are essentially related to the established radical capitalists<sup>16</sup> who fear that either restraints on wealth or extra aid for "nonproductive elements" would deteriorate the country. Even in times of severe depression, radical capitalists asserted the predictable threats of a big government, regardless of how vigorous the populist claims are.

The last section of the chapter provides a brief understanding of the economic, political, and social context of the U.S. tax system. First, I define the concept of taxation and present an overview of taxation history in the United States. I define and discuss some basic terms, including tax progressivity and the distinctions between several forms of taxes.

A last section looks at both Democratic and Republican partisanship influence on the system of taxation. I expect to find that changes in corporate

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<sup>15</sup> Gilder, George F. *Wealth and Poverty*. New York: Basic, 1981. 27.

<sup>16</sup> The term "radical capitalism" is useful as it helps us consider the ideology related to the most extreme logic of capitalism, as contrasted with the different logic that originate from capitalists who see a genuine use of the state to help preserve the value of life outside the market.

taxation and in redistribution between capital gains income and earned income and between corporate taxation and individual taxation are strongly influenced by political partisanship, with Democratic administrations increasing the tax burden on firms and their owners. How far corporations engage in electoral financing - measured through the establishment of corporate political action committees - is also influential.

The scholarship has spent so much time looking for the explanation to the rise of the Right that it has missed one of the most interesting stories about the era: the multiple factors that fueled the rise of different segments of the Right and the struggles to keep these different factions together. The third chapter presents the different factors that helped the rise of conservatism. I argue that U.S. society has been pulled to the right since the late 1970s in the most continuous political reaction since the Reconstruction era after the Civil War.

The first section of the chapter addresses the historical context out of which the New Right came, the political facts that outline the sociopolitical and cultural actions of nowadays conservatives, and the culturally particular forms of implication that make contemporary right-wing rhetoric and representation so reminiscent in the broad social mind. In fact, in its attempt to elucidate current facts in a popular language, the conservative movement has brought to the political scene new symbols forming the right turn in a policy development that has steadily become bipartisan.

Since the 1970s, as political analysts have observed, Conservatives deliberately began to unite around a basis of common interests. A significant element of this new union was the restitution of very old fears of welfare into a widespread vision. The latter would imply the option of repealing the profits that had been created by the New Deal, and to finish by all the hard work of the “progressive movement.” I show how welfare fear and fantasies had contributed to the significant rise of conservatism throughout the last decades.

Although each stream of the Right had its own view, all shared their mutual fear towards welfarism. Therefore, it is important to observe the different conservative worries so as to comprehend how they have been

traditionally divided and how they have today been merged into a unique compound vision. The basis of this historical vision will definitely include immigrants and minorities regarding the close connection of welfare to race relations. I demonstrate how Right-wing theorists not only perceived welfarism as a source of economic failure, but also used it in many different ways as a source of political influence.

Then, I inspect the relation of diverse organizational, ideological and political strands that have defined the right-wing in the United States throughout this century. How did right-wing groups benefit from the Cold War and came to see the government as the new dissident adversary? In fact, the different opinions designate the need to explain the relationship of today's conservatism with right-wing movements of the past, as well as with other blocs of the new Right. With such questions in mind, this thesis elucidates how the modern Right is similar to and distinct from more Far Right groups and from earlier trains of conservatism in the U.S. political history.

Hence, I bring to light the diverse organizational, ideological and political strands that have defined the American Right. Ultraconservative organizations such as the Liberty Lobby and the John Birch Society took profit of the Cold War and came to build the government as the new dissident adversary. I examine the tools of mobilization toward welfare programs assisting minorities mainly Blacks and Hispanics.

Moreover, I explore the relationship between corporate interests and right-wing movements in the late decades of U.S. history. Here, I examine the Big Business's role in that development. Liberal thinkers assume that capitalist support to right-wing movements has been beneficial to either part. Therefore, I explore the rise of the Conservative movement since World War II. The latest rise in right-wing ideas and policies is significant in U.S. politics; in spite of the differences of opinion over the relevance of the term "New Right."

I argue that the political Right is composed of a network of cultural, social and political intersections. Different parts of the Right in terms of ideology, devotion, and strategy comprise elite institutions, core leaders, information networks, and grassroots social movements that shape, suspend,

and restructure coalitions over time based on many factors. Various wings of these parts sometimes agree and sometimes challenge each other over concerns such as commercial materialism, federal intrusion into private affairs, and how Hollywood is the new Babylon.<sup>17</sup> Such perception of the Right presumes a variety of values that extend along many sequences and hence questions the notion of an “extremist” or “radical” Right. I not only observe the different factors that helped the very fast rise and special strength of today’s American Right since the 1970s but also track the rising strategic and organizational process by which conservatives grew through Reaganism since the 1970s to become the influential power today in Congress, in presidential campaigns, and in the media.

Having conceived a positive alliance between the Right and corporations from the beginning, I disclose how the relationship between the two groups has been exceptional. Using a business conflict investigation as advanced by Ronald Cox, I underline the extent to which right-wing political conflicts in recent decades have often matched capitalist party rifts. Ronald Cox reveals how the right-wing’s interaction with the business interests delivered Reagan the White House in 1980 and again in 1984.<sup>18</sup> I realize that this very interaction was actually at the origin of the fragmentation of the right-wing coalition in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Although the role of the grassroots was influential along with other aspects, the rise of the New Right represented a right turn. Business well-funded media campaigns and other advantages do not sufficiently explain the other factors such as the enormous politicization of evangelical Christians since the 1970s, the prominence of abortion rights and gays and lesbians as right-wing targets, or the ultraconservative Right’s change from overtracism toward implicit modes of racism and cultural chauvinism. This chapter also argues that U.S. society has been pulled to the right since the late 1970s in the most continuous political reaction since the Reconstruction era after the Civil

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<sup>17</sup> Ansell, Amy Elizabeth. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Boulder, Colo: Westview, 1998. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2008. 140.

War.<sup>19</sup> There have always been efforts to restructure the New Deal and enclose the social liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

I conclude that, since the 1970s, many factors have helped conservatives to unite the Right under the new vision of welfare fears, pauperism, and “dependency”. Yet, women's new status since the feminist movement of the 1960s has offered a further incentive for union of right-wing factions. In this matter, I try to demonstrate how the notion of the conspiracy theory became the basis of the Conservative movement, each time blaming New Deal socialism from different views including social, moral, religious, and economic. The theme had further matched and supported the Libertarian ideology that communism only harms the traditional free-market system. This had resulted in significant pro-Reagan coalitions around issues of government spending and taxation, hence helping the rise of the New Right.

The second section of the chapter is dedicated to the rise of populism and how it stood for one of the elements that helped in the rise and strength of conservatism. The populist Right mobilizations for a moral totalitarian agenda, such as the rigorous ideological conservative contest against the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) have emerged as an extreme opposition to the status quo that theoretically slipped into a real grassroots anti-capitalist movement.<sup>20</sup> I question the different approaches a political movement that explicitly supports policies in favor of the wealthy make itself as a populist liberal democratic defender of “the people.”

I also examine how the American Religious Right undertakes a populist approach when mobilizing a number of politicians and dismissing others, and how it uses a similarly composite strategy to merge into the Republican Party, and so pulling the political center far to the right. Today, these strategies attract even conventional politicians who, in order to attract masses, would go farther as to even sanction acts of discrimination. I observe how the development of a right-wing populist movement was mainly based on fear and nostalgia leading

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<sup>19</sup> Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. 585-612.

<sup>20</sup> E. Laclau, “Fascism and Ideology,” in *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London: Verso, 1977), 81-142.

to the scapegoating of welfare recipients as the cause of all economic and social problems.

Indeed, in order to understand the origins of the Tea Party movement, I refer back to the emergence of Barack Obama on the American political scene. I finally study the context of the long-term growth of partisan-ideological polarization within the American electorate and particularly the rising conservatism of the activist base of the Republican Party.

Since its first emergence in early 2009, the Tea Party movement has attracted important attention from political observers, journalists, candidates, and elected officials. In the fourth chapter, I scrutinize the motivations of Tea Party members in the protests. Then, I study the emergence of the Tea Party movement in the United States, its rise, its nature, its popular block, and its relationship with the Republican Party. Considered as a complex phenomenon, the appearance of the Tea Party movement in the weeks following the election of the Democrat Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008 was the most surprising phenomenon of recent American politics. The Tea Party event was seen as a potential step in the revolutionary transformation of force in American politics.

In order to understand the origins of the movement, I seek first and foremost to underline the elements, which could have facilitated the emergence of this political phenomenon. It is important to trace back in its evolution from February 2009 to October 2010 the factors of its development. Using a theoretical perspective based on the work of McAdam, Tarrow, Meyer, and Minkoff, I explain the evolution of this social conservative movement by observing three key factors: the division within the partisan coalitions, the significant role allies play in its expansion, and the presence of inspiring challenges. Furthermore, the political opportunities of mobilization had potentially influenced the emergence of the movement.

It is appropriate in the context of this research to identify the main ideological factions of the Tea Party movement. Indeed, some aspects of American conservatism have been set aside to allow a coalition of activists who do not agree on social issues. For instance, I discern the differences

between social conservatives and libertarians, two groups that are at the heart of support for the conservative movement. Evidently, common elements favored support of these two groups and I consider that these relatively abstract issues have played a key role in the initiation of the mobilization, as supporters of the Tea Party are politically active and highly conservative.

Using indicators derived from a database created from *the New York Times* articles, the second part of the chapter examines the ideology, structure, and intensity surrounding the mobilization of the Tea Party. Thus, it is likely that the mobilization has evolved through some opportunities, since it has changed drastically during the last months preceding the 2010 midterm election. Combining these observations allows us to investigate the establishment of the movement, while identifying the complexity of this phenomenon.

I outline the ways in which individualism and capitalism play a role in Tea Party rhetoric which is at the foundation of the movement itself tracing back to “The Southern Strategy” and Ronald Reagan. Therefore, I discover the ways through which the Tea Party movement strongly opposes welfare while promoting capitalism and individualism.

The second part of the chapter looks at the factors and opportunities that have facilitated the mobilization of a social movement like the Tea Party. Indeed, these factors are signs of the political power that is likely to be open to the activists’ demands. It follows that I question the characteristics of the Tea Party by dealing with the nature of the conservative movement studied before in the previous chapters. I present two ideological groups that support the mobilization, identifying their differences and similarities. At that point, an understanding of the movement’s ideology allows going beyond the explanation that the Tea Party simply opposes Obama.

I explore the political context surrounding the emergence of the mobilization in order to answer questions related to the origins of the protesters, their demands and the sustainability of the movement. An initial section should identify two forms of mobilization that have taken place between July 2009 and October 2010, either through informal meetings or

through public demonstrations. These two types of events show that mobilization served two purposes: to inform activists on issues of their time and demonstrate openly that social movement exists.

For the same purpose, I address the impact of issues that occurred between 2009 and 2010, the Republican Party and its allies. Here, I seek to determine the favorable impact of these factors on the mobilization. I focus on three significant matters related to the development of the Tea Party: the economy, the healthcare reform, and the legislative elections. Likewise, the role of the Republican Party in the mobilization is a key element to study. While there may be a multitude of factions within a political party, the one existing between advocates of economic orthodoxy and the Republican establishment is critical in understanding the relationship with the Tea Party.

By observing the case of the religious right and its influence on the Republican Party, I investigate the strategy through which an autonomous social movement is able to mobilize an electoral base and attempts to influence a primary party. But how was the opposition to the Republican establishment viewed? Here again, I return to the NYT data to show how, throughout periods, more and more articles had mentioned anti-establishment terms. Indeed, I question how this intense period marked by rallies affected the appointment of political candidates with little or no experience.

Then, I identify the financing supporting forces and elected officials behind this conservative protest. In this way, I suggest how astroturfing<sup>21</sup> works. From an organizational point of view, the Tea Parties were billed as “astroturfing,” bottom-up upsurge against taxes, big government, and bailouts. I study the role played by wealthy individuals, conservative groups and media figures in stimulating the protests, and the possible long-term influence of the movement.<sup>22</sup> I outline the presence of the media and political allies who indicated support for the Tea Party movement, each in their way. I focus on the role of media in media coverage as a primary tool for the mobilization and emergence of the Tea Party especially between 2009 and 2010. In this matter, I

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<sup>21</sup> Astroturfing refers to a synthetic grass covering popular in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s called AstroTurf.

<sup>22</sup> Judis, John B. Tea Minus Zero. *The New Republic*, May 27, 2010. 19.



study the relationship between mobilization and the number of articles published about the movement. However, it is important to note that the number of articles does not only explain the increase in mobilization. Indeed, while dividing the mobilization in protest as well as meetings with the number of articles, I question why and how informal meetings were much less obvious to the media than street protests.

Whereas conservatism is the strongest element of support for the Tea Party movement, racial hostility also influenced their support. The third part of the chapter studies the racial resentment among Tea Party activists and outline how the rhetoric of the contemporary Tea Party is entrenched in the Republican's Southern Strategy, which is fundamental for understanding the methods through which the Tea Party acts. Besides, I observe how the Tea Party challenges the legitimacy of the U.S. state. In fact, when Tea Party participants charge the current government with various forms of totalitarianism, they contend that this administration has no right to impose taxes or make policy. To reject the grassroots popularity of the Tea Party movement was to omit the panic set off by the Great Recession, the growing anger about the incredible debt and the bailouts of carmakers, insurance companies, and the banks.

I consider how political allies and figures such as Sarah Palin, Michelle Bachmann, and John McCain gave credibility and visibility to the movement, creating in summer 2010 a caucus to study the various demands of the movement. The credibility and visibility given to the social movement by these figures are just examples of the external allies' support. However, in such a decentralized phenomenon, other actors are likely to play the role of external support. Accordingly, there is reason to believe that some of the parliamentary candidates were also political allies. In fact, I discuss the relationship between the Tea Party and the Republican Party in the last part of the chapter. Yet, for now, making the difference between candidates from the "outside" of the

“establishment” seems to achieve a short-term achievable goal: Electing candidates who share the movement’s ideals.<sup>23</sup>

Often, the interaction between a political party and a social movement is generally complex and contradictory. I analyze the interaction between the Tea Party and the Republican Party in terms of opportunities, showing that internal tensions during 2009 and 2010 could explain the Republican Party’s effect on mobilizing the movement’s activists. I show how tensions within the party favored new ideas, as members search to gain new support that will eventually get them elected. I also explain how economic long-lasting tensions between moderate Republicans and conservative Republicans helped nurture the rise of the Tea Party.

A key question raised in this study is whether the Tea Party movement is a new force in American politics or whether it is merely the latest, and possibly the loudest expression of the long-standing right-wing change of the Republican Party – a change that can be perceived as part of a wider development toward growing partisan polarization in American politics.<sup>24</sup>

To support the argument that the mobilization of the Tea Party was facilitated by this tension, this last section provides links to data from both the NYT and mobilization. In short, the rising number of articles involving a tension between the Republican Party and the Tea Party amid a transformation of mobilization support the idea that there were enough signs indicating that activists could be effective, particularly during elections. I look into the factors that the Republicans had faced favoring openness to a possible union with the Tea Party.<sup>25</sup> Although openness to the Tea Party provided a new perspective to the Republicans, I question how this openness was doubled-edged due to the differing interests of eitherpart. Hence, I discuss the risks associated with this

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<sup>23</sup> Zernike, Kate, Kitty Bennett, Ford Fessenden, Kevin Quealy, Amy Schoenfield, Archie Tse, Derek Willis. 2010d. Where tea party candidates are running. [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/15/us/politics/tea-party-graphic.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/15/us/politics/tea-party-graphic.html?_r=0)

<sup>24</sup> Bafumi, Joseph, and Robert Y. Shapiro. A New Partisan Voter. *Journal of Politics*, 2009. 71:1-24.

<sup>25</sup> Karpowitz, Christopher F., J. Quin Monson, Kelly D. Patterson et Jeremy C. Pope. 2011. “Tea Time in America? The Impact of the Tea Party Movement on the 2010 Midterm Elections” *Political Science & Politics* 44 (02): 303-9. 307.

openness. Although the Tea Party had focused on autonomy to the Republican Party, was it favorable to adopt this type of long-term relationship?

Finally, I suggest that the Tea Party movement is likely to adopt a right-wing ideology or pseudo-conservatism, as defined by Richard Hofstadter, generally marked by skepticism and resentment of other groups. For this, I review right-wing extremism in American history. I then turn to the content analysis of Tea Party websites to demonstrate how Tea Party discourse resonates with conservative ideology.

Along with the same purpose, I explore how the Republicans are moving far to the right because of the overwhelming Tea Party claims concerning immigration, taxation, and social issues. Indeed, the rise of the Tea Party has made the Republicans even more strident in their opposition, becoming the ‘Party of No’ more than ever before. They are fighting against every Democratic policy, affecting the functioning of the American Congress and other institutions.

The conservative activists’ performance in Massachusetts, a typically liberal state, was remarkable. Actually, Tea Party efforts accomplished a primary nationwide influence through the surprise victory of Scott Brown in that state’s special Senate election of January 2010. I question how the Tea Party invigorates right-wing activism in the launching of the 2010 midterm elections, and how can this demonstrate the course of American conservatism. Up to the present time, these questions have not been unanswered. In its early phases, the Tea Party was broadly misrepresented as only a populist uprising or a movement of political independents.

## **I. Methodology**

The chapters are divided so as to answer a key question; what is the purpose behind studying the Tea Party movement? I study the political context encompassing the rise of the mobilization in order to answer questions related to the origins of the protesters, their demands and the sustainability of the movement. The first chapter looks into the ideological background that gave birth to this movement. I take on the essential task of analyzing and evaluating

the New Right's economics. In an investigation of how the consensus around economic theories has been disputed and restructured the past three decades, I maintain that the conservative movement and agenda in economics has allowed the Right to hold recent economic issues responsible for accepting its policy proposal to take apart such intervention permitting the free market to reign without restrictions.<sup>26</sup>

The domain of research focuses on the conservative vision among ideological conservatives on government, welfare, and taxation. Then, I show how a conservative philosophy can be responsible for the infrequency of conservative protests creating unique challenges for conservative activists who engage in social movement politics. In order to analyze the Tea Party's emergence and aspect, I use grounded theory, which is the construction of theory from the ground up, where an analysis is done before any structural foundation is formed; it is in the analysis that a theoretical construction is created. In chapter two, I use an analysis of the Conservative worldview and economic theories.

Explaining the development of the New Right raises questions about how to identify and clarify substantive political change more generally. For this, I use critical realignment theory, a predictable political science medium established out of the mid-century insights of American political scientists such as Walter Dean Burnham<sup>27</sup> and Valdimer Orlando Key Jr.<sup>28</sup> The theory emerged as the leading framework through which I analyze political continuity and change. Critical realignment divides American political history into constant party-system eras that are interrupted by prevailing moments of electoral turmoil, which cause the formation of new-party systems, overseen by the rules of the new ruling party.

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<sup>26</sup> Ansell, Amy Elizabeth. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Boulder, Colo: Westview, 1998. 14.

<sup>27</sup> Walter Dean Burnham (born 1930) is a political expert in American elections and voting models, known for quantitative analysis the national popular vote, in establishing the "Party Systems" pattern, and for collecting election revenues for the whole country.

<sup>28</sup> Valdimer Orlando Key Jr. (March 13, 1908 – October 4, 1963), best known simply as V. O. Key, was an American political scientist known for his book *Southern Politics in State and Nation* published in 1949, which was an empirical study of American elections and voting behavior of eleven southern states.

At the grassroots level, the rise of the Tea Party movement reflects the increased conservatism of the Republican electoral base, and particularly its more politically engaged group, since the 1970s. I use evidence from American National Election Study surveys to demonstrate that Republican identifiers have been moving in a conservative trend for several decades and that this tendency has been most apparent among the most active members. Then, I use data from the October, 2010 wave of the American National Election Study Evaluations of Government and Society Survey about the social traits and political viewpoint of Tea Party followers. The large majority of Tea Party adherents were Republicans with more conservative beliefs than other Republicans.

Using data from the American National Election Studies collective file, I show that mass support for the Tea Party movement is the product of a growing conservatism within the Republican Party's activist base over the last decades. Whereas a minority of this active base has essentially been engaged in Tea Party protests, the growth of the politically engaged conservatives of the Republican Party formed a considerable sphere for new supporters.

When dealing with the Tea Party movement in the last chapter, my research analysis uses a corpus of texts including pamphlets, transcripts of speeches, books and articles founders of the movement. It also combined interviews, contestant observations, and content analysis. Taken together, the findings suggest that the Tea Party was not the only conservative movement in American history using populist discourse constructing itself as being of, by, and for America and its people, and that such discourse was also highlighted in media coverage. By studying this domain of Conservative political pressure groups, I sought to understand a somewhat unexplored phenomenon of the conservative protest and its concealed role and goals - and to shed light on the ways these social movements control politicians, political parties and political life.

To gain a better understanding of the Tea Party phenomenon, the ways in which it is covered, the fourth chapter features a participant observation of key Tea Party events from summer 2010 to gain on-the-ground insights into how the Tea Party movement presented itself to the public at large. An effort

was also made to draw a sample of Tea Party members that was as illustrative of the movement as possible, including a diverse sample of participants in terms of gender, race, age, career, and socioeconomic status, to the extent that the demographic makeup of the movement allowed.

I intend to identify the specific elements in the political context during the emergence of the Tea Party movement. This effort is intended to explain mobilization by the presence of external conditions for its development. Some work presented in the problematic section showed that the origins of mobilization were in the political context. In the present case, I wanted to know what happened between December 2007 (the first listed events) and November 2010 (legislative elections). To answer this question, it was appropriate to use the political opportunity theory, since it observes the elements of the political environment that facilitate the emergence of a popular movement. The identification of “winning conditions” by several authors, especially cyclical conditions, has allowed me to have an analytical framework that would determine the presence of political issues, a partisan division, and the allies’ movement. In reference to *the New York Times*, I identified these opportunities by associating these keywords concepts in time, which gave an idea of the subjects and their frequencies in the media. I thus identified an increase in their presence in the news mobilization.

In this study, I suggest using the elements of the political context behind the emergence of the Tea Party movement. Using data published by the Tea Party Patriots group, it was possible to observe an increase in mobilization over a long period, which runs from July 2009 to the mid-term election. Then, it was possible to distinguish between street protests and traditional events, which were much more present in the final months of the campaign. Moreover, the economic aspect of this mobilization was covered. As a result, I identified a support among two groups, social conservatives and libertarians denoting that the mobilization was likely the result of a coalition around the economic issue.

Using the longitudinal profile of this mobilization, I studied in the same period the opportunities and their likely impact on the Tea Party. The data, which were presented in time period (February to December 2009, from January to April and May to October 2010), have shown that media presence has undoubtedly facilitated this mobilization. Three main issues (the economic

crisis, the healthcare reform, and the parliamentary elections) were used by the Tea Party to mobilize activists. For example, the healthcare reform between January and April 2010 was associated with nearly 70% of articles published about the movement has sparked protests in the US capital before and after the final vote on the bill.

In 2014, the Tea Party movement's rise was at its peak and their emergence as an influential movement had started to be controversial. I seized the opportunity of my six-week fellowship program in the United States in 2014 to conduct a survey on the Tea Party. The different American people I had the chance to meet in Dallas, San Francisco, New York, and Washington kindly accepted to help me in my survey. With them, I conducted interviews that enabled me to ask questions and take notes at the same time by frequently using a tape recorder. The interviews ranged from about 15 minutes to 30 minutes or even more. Most informers were interviewed individually, while others were interviewed in pairs or in a small group. All interviews were recorded, saved for two cases in which informants did not consent to this. The diverse answers I collected were interesting as the respondents were activists from different American associations and political parties. They uncomplainingly answered the following questions: (1) What is your opinion on the Tea Party movement? (2) Do you think the Tea Party can play a crucial role in the 2016 presidential elections? (3) How are they influencing the Republican Party leadership? (4) What are the real motivations of the Tea Party members? (5) Why do you think the Tea Parties are targeting the level of taxation in the United States?

Besides, the presence of articles mentioning tensions between the Republican Party and the Tea Party is actually a fact that has existed long before the Tea Party's emergence. Fiscally, conservative groups within the party undeniably sought to get away from the Republicans. As a consequence, using this partisan tension, the Tea Party made sure to preserve its rebellious image (fiscally conservative against the moderate elements of the party) while being actively involved in the political process. It was, therefore, possible to identify an increase in media coverage that was consistent with the increase of mobilization according to the NYT data. Although the reports were due to the election campaign, the movement's visibility has in point of fact increased in

the period. Beyond the factual coverage by the NYT, some media were actively involved (through sustained and sympathetic coverage) in the Tea Party's representation suggesting an essential role of ally. Furthermore, a proportion of growing political figures were involved in the social movement. In short, rallying was attractive to the activist, as a significant number of the Republican candidates became very connected to the Tea Party movement.

A theoretical framework is subsequently built in order to understand the ways in which the Tea Party interacts. In that case, I use content analysis especially of political signs brought to Tea Party rallies, in relation to the theory that has been presented. Indeed, these factors are "indicators" of the political power that is likely to be open to the activists' demands. The newspaper article is a reasonable instrument in the practical validation of these factors, since the subject matter, being the Tea Party, is outlined to allow a better understanding of it. What are the characteristics of the Tea Party? Using further data from the Tea Party Patriots website, we examine the structure and power of the mobilization between July 2009 and October 2010. With the unpredictable and indefinable nature of the movement, a perception of the messages being disseminated to the public through the signs used at the rallies is required. In order to do so, a basic Google search for "Tea Party Rally Signs," brought up an important volume of information.<sup>29</sup> The debate guided the research into an analysis of the political signs and how intricate and fragmented the Tea Party is coming to light.

And so as to ascertain the possible origins of mobilization, I favored the analysis of documents with keywords allowing a superficial observation of a large number of articles.<sup>30</sup> The selection of keywords is based on the depiction of opportunities' aspects. Accordingly, I find out that terms such as "establishment" and "challenger" are associated with the idea that a group of individuals are resisting the "Republican establishment" or more specifically the Republican elected representatives. Tea Party members commonly consider

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<sup>29</sup> By using a basic Internet search, I was able to distinguish all information that is accessible to everyone. In fact, I'm concerned with this idea of open online information and how the message provides the opportunity of being disseminated. In addition, the pictures show and analyzed in this thesis are only a small representation of thousands of Tea Party signs.

<sup>30</sup> Downe-Wamboldt, Barbara. 1992. "Content analysis: method, applications, and issues." *Health care for women international* 13 (3): 313-21. 318.



them as corrupt; destabilizing the conservative principles in favor of political expediency.

I further discuss the conservatism of the movement. I often identify the expressions “Tea Party-backed candidate” or “Tea Party favorite” for the allies. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the issues are limited events that can provisionally facilitate mobilization. While the term “financial” generally refers to the financial crisis, the term “health” refers to the healthcare reform. For example: “Mr. Chabot is seeking to make the race a national referendum on every major element of the Democratic agenda, from healthcare to the economic stimulus plan to the growth of federal spending.”<sup>31</sup>

This work assumes that media such as *The New York Times* comprises signs of opportunities for activists to mobilize.<sup>32</sup> The process of collecting newspaper articles has engaged two steps. First, the irrelevant items for research (when the term Tea Party took a different meaning or that the article had been published in the magazine) were rejected. Second, neutral editorials were separated to encrypt only the events and facts (which are based on interviews).<sup>33</sup> Yet, in the absence of coverage of the Tea Party by the NYT, I use the Tea Party Patriots (TPP) website which includes an independent record of the Tea Party groups’ activities.

I also refer to cable news channels for both content analysis and media discourse as these have become a significant source of news in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Pew Research Center, 2010). For instance, Fox News is the most prevalent of all Conservative cable news networks, and has dynamically endorsed the Tea Party and its different actions.<sup>34</sup> In addition, it is noteworthy to mention that it has been the home of Glenn Beck who is considered an essential figure of the

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<sup>31</sup> Zeleny, Jeff. 2010. “Rougher road for democrats without Obama atop ticket” *The New York Times* (New York), 4 July: A1.

<sup>32</sup> McAdam, Doug 1999. *Political process and the development of Black insurgency, 1930-1970*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 237.

<sup>33</sup> Koopmans, Ruud. 2004. “Migrant mobilisation and political opportunities: variation among German cities and a comparison with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (3): 449-70. 54.

<sup>34</sup> Williamson, Vanessa, Theda Skocpolet John Coggin. 2011. “The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism” *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (01): 25-43. 31.

Tea Party movement. In fact, Beck represented an important source of information for over 75% of Tea Party members.<sup>35</sup>

However, cable news analysis remains challenging as it provided only a partial understanding of news content related to the Tea Party. Obviously, some steps were followed to alleviate the limits of content analysis such as the subjectivity of some article writing styles. The main disadvantage of the use of editorial sources was also linked to the random selection of events. Actually, for rivalry reasons between newspapers, they are unable to cover all the events of any given social movement.<sup>36</sup> With respect to the reflection of the Tea Party events, I have attempted to somewhat mitigate this difficulty by scanning the headlines under which the articles about the Tea Party have been published and by skimming the articles themselves. However, I note that keywords research is also challenging since most of them do not usually share the same meaning. As I analyze an extensive number of terms, I had to check their meaning in the text.<sup>37</sup> Eventually, the combination of these methods and research questions provides a means to assess the discourse of the Tea Party movement in both relational and communal settings. The combination of interviews, contestant observation, and content analysis provided a chance to get a potential elucidation of the rise of the Tea Party.

Finally, this thesis comes to the conclusion that the advantageous circumstance out of these factors was a mechanism in the rapid rise of this conservative social movement. In other words, the political prospects of mobilization have potentially influenced the emergence of the movement. Using indicators derived from a database created from *the New York Times* articles, this research also tends to examine the ideology, structure, and intensity surrounding the mobilization of the Tea Party. Thus, it is likely that the mobilization has evolved through some opportunities, since it has changed drastically during the last months preceding the midterm election. Joining all

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<sup>35</sup> Pew Research Center (2011, December). In 2007, mood just beginning to sour, Democrats better regarded. Washington, D. C. Retrieved from <http://www.people-press.org/2011/12/20/in-2007-mood-just-beginning-to-sour-democrats-better-regarded/>

<sup>36</sup> Earl, Jennifer, Andrew Martin, John D. McCarthy and Sarah A. Soule. 2004. "The use of newspaper data in the study of collective action." *Annual Review of Sociology* 30: 65-80. 68-9.

<sup>37</sup>Downe-Wamboldt, Barbara. 1992. "Content analysis: method, applications, and issues." *Health care for women international* 13 (3): 313-21. 319-20.

these observations together allows us to consider the establishment of the Tea Party movement, while recognizing the complexity of its phenomenal aspect.

The present research reviews the organizational characteristics of the Tea Party movement inside the wider U.S. political system, and surveys the events and opinions of grassroots activists. I synthesize different sources of evidence - including statistics from a number of surveys of the demographic and attitudinal features of Tea Party activists and supporters; openly accessible data on national funding and sponsorship organizations; and evidence of involvement and ideology from several local Tea Party websites. I use the facts of fieldwork reflections and interviews conducted with the Greater Boston Tea Party by two of the authors during the first half of 2010.<sup>38</sup> This reveals how people generate and maintain Tea Party efforts locally, and how grassroots activities interact with the Republican Party and to state organizations. The evidence is important for understanding people's reactions, allowing the research to move beyond a simple idea that Tea Partiers are "angry," "racist," or "anti-government."

Through a broad examination of qualitative interviews with Tea Party sympathizers, and content analysis of Tea Party websites, I demonstrate that Tea Party supporters strongly resent minorities including blacks, immigrants, and gays and lesbians. Then, I evaluate quantitative study data to define if the findings can relate to the Tea Party supporters in general. Observers and Tea Party events gesture towards worries that go beyond limited government and fiscal conservatism.<sup>39</sup>

A year after the Tea Party's rise, the *St. Petersburg Times* portrayed Tea Party members as "largely Ross Perot-style libertarians," while the *LA Times* defined Tea Party members as "average Americans, 41 percent are Democrats, independents."<sup>40</sup> Reporting on the main demographics and political inclinations of Tea Party members, media started to become more precise and thorough.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> The Boston-area data was collected from February to May 2010, and the survey and interviews of Tea Party leaders nationally were conducted in April and May.

<sup>39</sup> Barreto, Matt A., et al. "The Tea Party in the Age of Obama: Mainstream Conservatism or Out-Group Anxiety?" *Rethinking Obama Political Power and Social Theory*, 2011. 105–137.

<sup>40</sup> Barry 2010; Malcolm 2010.

<sup>41</sup> See the different takes by a cultural historian and by liberal and conservative commentators; Lepore 2010; Wilentz 2010; Berkowitz 2010. What these have in common is a focus on

Hence, the research tends to go beyond a normative explanation by offering a historical examination of Tea Party positions and the likely political outcomes of this new divergence of right-wing activism.

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historical allusions and the actual or imputed intellectual content of a few Tea Party documents. There is little or no attention to the grassroots activists and supporters or to the organization and activity patterns of Tea Party groups.

**Chapter One: A brief overview of American  
Conservatism and conservative economic theories**

## I. Understanding American Conservatism

### 1. The American Old Right:

In his definition of the conservative, Michael Oakeshott states that “to be conservative is to prefer the familiar to the unknown . . . the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant.”<sup>42</sup> Conservative profound ideology has been remarkably agitated by many historical political changes such as the reactions against the French and Bolshevik revolutions, the resistance against slavery and Jim Crow, the anti-welfare state and anti-social democracy campaigns, and the Civil Rights Movement. Whether in Europe or in the United States, conservatism has been an agitated and persistent movement, limited to risk-taking and ideological adventurism, rebellious in its attitude, and populist in its demeanors welcoming newcomers and protesters.<sup>43</sup>

In the 1920s, in a period of economic growth before the Great Depression, the American political Right became related to racial nativism. Born out of the social and economic turmoil of the Reconstruction era, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was a renaissance of the violent nativist wing by defending white supremacy against federal intervention in the South on behalf of freed slaves. Sara Diamond stated that the American Right of the Depression was characterized by (1) the strident racism and anti-Semitism of its large, mass-based organizations (associated with William Dudley Pelley, Gerald Winrod, Gerald L. K. Smith, and Father Charles E. Coughlin); and (2) the anti-New Deal economic agenda of its corporate lobbies.<sup>44</sup>

Both groups were resiliently nationalistic, and both resented U.S. government intervention abroad. Several economic conservatives contested

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<sup>42</sup> Early twentieth century, 98% of the Republican - and anti-union - federal judiciary originated from “the very top of the nation’s class and status hierarchies.” William E. Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991, 33.

<sup>43</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 42.

<sup>44</sup> Ansell, Amy E. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 18.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal as a socialist organized labor, while others favored their anti-bolshevism in a fascist manner. For instance, Elizabeth Dilling's Red Record symbolizes the conspiratorial scapegoating attacks on Roosevelt from the Far Right in a fascist manner. In fact, Nativists and right-wing populist mass movements were associated with European fascism and Nazism.

In the United States, the term 'Conservative' was first used in 1938 by William Howard Taft<sup>45</sup> when he ran for the Senate, standing for the following main principles: individual liberty, pro-business economic liberty against a big government; anti-union position, resistance to liberal intellectual elites and their aspiration to change society, and praise for the qualities of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture. Religion is actually a key element to the conservative movement as Buckley and Schlafly were Catholics, and Reagan and Bush were born-again Protestants.<sup>46</sup>

The terms "conservative" and "conservatism"<sup>47</sup> were approved as their official name, hence rebuilding an appropriate ideology: With regard to economics, the conservative ideology basically defends a market free from any government restrictions, with more individual autonomy and better economic growth. Conservatives support economic libertarianism, which means reducing tax rates, federal spending, self-reliance on producing, and reaching individual and public wealth. In social issues, conservatives support

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<sup>45</sup> William Howard Taft was the 27<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America between 1909 and 1913. He was the leader of the progressive wing within the GOP in the early 20th century. His administration marked a rising tariff. In politics, Taft and the conservatives were alarmed at Roosevelt's plan of controlling the party mechanism. In 1912, Taft defeated Roosevelt for the Republican nomination that forced him out of the Republican Party. In 1921, he served as President and Chief Justice making the Supreme Court much more influential in deciding national policy.

<sup>46</sup> Dochuk, Darren. "The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism: A Short History.. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 2010 .667. 296.

<sup>47</sup> Conservatism is a political philosophy that is committed to traditional values and ideas with and opposed change or innovation. This preference has conventionally depended on a natural notion that society is an organism comprising closely connected members. Thus, Conservatives favor institutions and practices that have developed slowly showing continuity and constancy. Government should then resist any appeal to social or political transformation. In *The Devil's Dictionary* (1906), Ambrose Bierce mockingly identified the conservative as "a statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as distinguished from the Liberal, who wishes to replace them with others."

social traditionalism, which condemns the weakening of religion and its impact on social and social integrity, family ethics, and gender status and roles.

Hence, the American Old Right was originally a serious response to the very old conservatism of early nineteenth-century Europe. Its ideology was definitely opposed to the sovereign power but was also anti-statist and anti-big government. It was an expression of irreverence to the idea of absolute power exercised through traditional authority. The modern conservative movement's pro-business theory and opposition to state intervention in economy had been originally implemented since the early *laissez-faire* individualism of the Old Right. From the American perspective, this political-economic orientation has classically been referred to as libertarianism. The Old Right, *laissez-faire* individualism, classical liberalism, and libertarianism are terms that have a typical connotation in the American political theoretical terminology.

Opposition to the welfare state, a rising hatred to economic equality and its political effects, and a renewed brand of nationalism all indicate a "new conservative" setting: a social and political landscape where politics has accepted a number of the antidemocratic sections in culture, politics, and economics. However, it is the different changes in economic and social domains that have made Americans accept conservative ideas and policies, rather than ideology, political thinkers or even social movements.<sup>48</sup>

In the 1930s, the Old Right viewed the New Deal as an illustration of the state forcing totalitarian programs of redistribution of wealth. Yet, the massive progressive liberal programs and state expansion that took place in the 1930s and 1940s did not go uncontested. The old-right conservatism that fought the New Deal was based on the constitutional norm of limited government. This anti-statist philosophy had long intellectual and strategy origins, and until 1937 helped conservatives establish themselves in the legal system. However, even after they took control of Congress in 1947, the old right only offered old weary visions of a suspected regime against the rising political and public support to the New Deal. Opposition to the New Deal was suspended, as the Old Right was politically incapable to establish a strong and

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<sup>48</sup> Thompson, Michael. *Confronting the New Conservatism: the Rise of the Right in America*. New York University Press, 2007.9.



efficient opposition since the day the liberal reforms have been realized from the 1930s until the 1950s. The period leading up to the enactment of the New Deal and particularly the involvement of the United States in World War II were not appropriate for reliable libertarians. Keynesianism was broadly agreed, and consistent with a Roper poll for *Fortune Magazine*, over two-thirds of American people supported government welfare programs for the deprived and state interference in economic matters.<sup>49</sup>

Murray Rothbard confirmed that the Old Right included the American right from the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s.<sup>50</sup> Over the 1930s, the Old Right's rhetoric was drastically anti-establishment but sometimes elitist; provoking what came to be known as "Tory anarchism". Although the blockade was constantly a political alternative, conservatives needed to propose policy-applicable options other than just opposing the New Deal. They also lacked political and were exclusive of elite actors able of initiating policies and validations for them, and required the structural faculty to maintain either alliances or leaders.<sup>51</sup> Even though economic progress between 1930s and 1940s did not guarantee a total public New Deal support, the conservative movement was still unable to reverse those already-implemented reforms. Following World War II, Left-leaning Democrats had risen to dominate all three branches of government and New Deal advocates were able to maintain significant support by indicating that the expansion of the federal government throughout the war proved that government expenditure helped the economy growing. While the public consensus had notably reinforced the Democratic Party, it prevented the Republican Party to attract public support to the conservative thought. The fact that conservatives were not having clearly defined positions was problematic.

As an alternative to their political failure, conservatives opted to confront the New Deal supporters and Democrats on the international level

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<sup>49</sup> Erskine, Hazel. "The Polls: Government Role in Welfare." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1975. 257-274.

<sup>50</sup> Rothbard, Murray Newton. *The Betrayal of the American Right*. Ludwig Von Mises Institute, 2007. 7.

<sup>51</sup> Glenn, Brian J. "Conservatives and American Political Development." *Political Science Quarterly*. 611-638.

condemning them of being “Soft on Communism.” The era came to be known as McCarthyism. Starting from the 1950s, conservatives recognized the fact they had to reform their strategies and build their movement in order to mobilize and retrieve their political influence. Years later, they initially formed their views around their opposition to the New Deal and other shared themes. George H. Nash perceived the background of challenging conservative theories as “divergent tendencies” containing three interconnected factions: traditionalists, libertarians, and ex-radicals.<sup>52</sup> Ex-radicals and former progressives came into the conservative bend along different phases of the movement's evolution helping define its new trend.

We note the importance of the deeper roots of conservative religiosity, free-market ideas, isolationism, and antiradicalism “that predated the organization of the movement itself.” In his 1994 article, Alan Brinkley noticed that the collection of ideas that came to establish the post-World War II conservative movement did not adhere as a structured power until the era after World War II, at a time when an alliance of conservatives recognized a mutual enemy of liberalism. New Deal elites and their liberal supporters along with the requirements of fighting a total war during World War II founded a new perception about state regulation, the role of the state, and federal government accountability for the welfare state. The post-World War II libertarian anti-statism was a resonance of the “classical liberalism” at the core of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century concepts of state and economy.<sup>53</sup>

## **2. Postwar modern Conservatism:**

After World War II, the different components of conservatism were not commonly limited: While ex-Communists usually supported free-market capitalism, American traditionalists and libertarians generally opposed post-war emerging communism as it represented an important threat to American traditional values. However, the drives that encompassed the emerging

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<sup>52</sup> Nash, George H. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945*. Basic Books, 2006. 118.

<sup>53</sup> McGirr, L. “Now That Historians Know So Much about the Right, How Should We Best Approach the Study of Conservatism?” *Journal of American History*. 765-770.

conservative movement were obviously distinct.<sup>54</sup> Uniting conservatives and creating a kind of conceptual agreement had apparently its political benefits, as the conservative leading thinker William F. Buckley Jr. played a key role in this process with the establishment of the New Right journal of opinion, *National Review (NR)*. Buckley's *NR* would significantly endorse the fusion of the differing tendencies on the right. For conservatives overall, Nazism, Stalinism, and New Dealism were all considered as diverse forms of political and economic collectivism. Therefore, the government's various attempts toward equal redistribution of wealth were fervently resisted. Classical Liberals together with social Conservatives had basically formed the uniquely modern American conservatism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The free-market concepts changed considerably as libertarians were being gathered within the greater conservative scholarly and political movements. Nash and Rothbard show the Old Right as tormented groups of people who were fixed to their value, but then embraced the New Right's anti-communist campaign in order to protect their individual liberties against the New Deal social reforms after World War II.<sup>55</sup> Yet, in the early post war period, libertarians' rhetoric of the collectivist threat was incoherent and chaotic because Americans were simply optimistic and confident that the New Deal had been influential in fostering the living standards of deprived people. In fact, old libertarians were considered as isolationists, as the American political and ideological spectrum was restructured thanks to Roosevelt and his New Deal's drive.

How, then, are these values reflected in conservatism as it became prominent over the last sixty decades? In the aftermath of World War II, while the United States was considered a culturally conservative country, its politics was not conservative at all as the government had controlled the economy through either wartime crisis politics or the New Deal programs. Since 1945, conservative thinkers started to talk about what they regarded as a threatening fall of America into socialism. In fact, *libertarian*

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<sup>54</sup> Nash, George H. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945*. Basic Books, 2006. 118.

<sup>55</sup> Murray N. Rothbard, "Requiem for the Old Right" *Mises Institute*, 30 Nov. 2009, 24-27.

*economists*, led by Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, who strongly advocated the idea that capitalism free-market economics was able to rebuild Europe and the U.S. following the Soviet Union Communist threat. Libertarians supported limited government instead of socialism, individualism instead of welfarism, and private entrepreneurship instead of central planning.

The emergent strength of the Soviet Union along with the fall of China to Communism had become the major concern of American conservatives, who blamed liberals for not standing firm to Communism. Conservatives even suspected that Communists had infiltrated the federal government threatening the national interest and internal security. Conservatives steered an anti-Communist movement, which later became the backbone of American conservatism appealing to more people than any movement in the country. Modern conservatives fought the advance of Communism, the growth of the welfare state, the expansion of the size of government, the growing power of labor unions, civil rights activism in the courts, sexual liberalism, criminality, and the deterioration of the family, the schools and the churches. They blamed the Left for what they saw as the decline of the American traditional values.

During the 1960s and 1970s, conservatives started to effectively control politics as conservative organizations grew in numbers, financial funding was settled, and new magazines were formed, attracting young activists in colleges and universities. In 1980 Republicans nominated, and then elected, Ronald Reagan, the most prominent conservative politician in the history of American politics. From an intellectual movement in the 1950s, conservatism emerged as a political movement in the 1960s and 1970s to develop into a governing movement in the 1980s with Ronald Reagan. The latter reinforced conservative Republican influence with tax cuts, a significantly augmented military budget, sustained deregulation of the economy, and calls to traditional family values and conservative virtue. The 1980s became known as the “Reagan era” and his conservative politics as

“Reaganism”.<sup>56</sup> Reagan would influence a generation of prominent conservative politicians, academics, activists, and writers. In the 2010s, conservative politicians and Republican leaders claimed their devotion to Reagan's “ideological legacy”<sup>57</sup> on social, economic, and foreign policy issues President Ronald Reagan had set.

### **3. The Role of Ideology in American politics:**

An ideology stands for the structure of established values through which we observe the society and the world as general. The ideological doctrine is structured through communal public awareness and definition and every society tends to reproduce itself in part by reproducing its own ideology. Hence, generations assimilate the fundamental ideological beliefs of the former one. In the mid-Twentieth Century, Daniel Bell and Henry Aiken claimed that ideology started to become less important in politics and that it was substituted by rational analysis. New political deliberations had arisen reinforcing capitalist welfare systems and government interference into the free market. During the Great Depression, these ideological disparities were so “minimized” that Conservatives respected and embraced the New Deal system and beliefs although they suggestively infringed the Conservative philosophy.

American conservatism is a particularly distinct expanse of political thought. While some aspects of conservatism may seem more ideological than others, American conservatives are definitely driven by ideology rather than analysis. According to Winston Churchill, “It is stirred on almost all occasions by sentiment and instinct rather than by worldly calculations”.<sup>58</sup> Likewise, Clinton Rossiter contends that the American conservative typically “feels more deeply than he thinks about political principles, and what he feels most deeply

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<sup>56</sup> Harrison, Brigid C. *Power & Society: an Introduction to the Social Sciences*. Cengage Learning, 2017. 47-49.

<sup>57</sup> Maddex, Jack P. Jr. *Virginia Conservatives, 1867-1879: a Study in Reconstruction Politics*. University of North Carolina Press. 13.

<sup>58</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 10.

about them is that they are a gift of great old men”.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, if conservatism is principally driven by ideology, then it is essential to appreciate those fundamental principles within the distinct entity that form the American conservatism.

Moreover, Samuel Huntington (1957) advances two theories related to American conservative ideology. Huntington explains “When the foundations of society are threatened, the conservative ideology reminds men of the necessity of some institutions and the desirability of the existing ones”<sup>60</sup>. Huntington argues that ideological conservatism develops especially when people anxiously perceive precious useful institutions to be threatened by political, economic and social reforms. It is this responsiveness that actually helps conservatives provide an excuse to somehow defend those institutions.

Huntington<sup>61</sup> further claims “because the articulation of conservatism is a response to a specific social situation... The manifestation of conservatism at any one time and place has little connection with its manifestation at any other time and place.” In other words, conservatism is a very situational philosophy since conservatives have always sought to safeguard every single institution, “from monarchies, to aristocracies, to slavery, to tariffs, to free trade, to capitalism, to religion, to the defense of communism in the late 1980s in the Soviet Union.”<sup>62</sup>

While both the Democratic and Republican parties roughly shared the same political concepts specifically after the 1950s, the resemblance rapidly and considerably vanished in the early Twenty-First Century. Since World War II, the American Conservative agenda became motivated more by ideologies than by realism and sound analysis, winding up the old trivial conceptual relationship once emerged after the Great Depression. Since then, the policies of the Republican Party and conservatives in the United States have been

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<sup>59</sup> Rossiter, Margaret W. *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. 74.

<sup>60</sup> Huntington, Samuel. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. New York: Belknap Press, 1957. 455.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* 456.

<sup>62</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 6.

driven more by ideologies than by analysis and common sense. For instance, the laissez-faire ideology, so frequently advocated by conservatives, was the prevailing conservative vision in the post- Civil War era. The ideas that have inspired America's modern "conservative revolution," whether it was the "Reagan Revolution," Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America," or the recent George W. Bush's "Compassionate Conservatism", are ideologies that have been followed recurrently throughout American history. Hence, the "new conservatism" is ideologically and significantly different from the "old conservatism" in many ways.<sup>63</sup>

Social policies mainly welfare programs were organized through the lens of ideology. Ideological conservative trends have influenced social welfare in America. The hold of conservative ideology on welfare is particularly strong. American conservatism has largely shaped special welfare policy around values of individualism, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and free market, expecting disadvantaged people to be more independent. Conservatives would go so far as to tolerate the idea that 1 percent of Americans bring home nearly a quarter of the U.S. income every year controlling 40 percent of the nation's wealth.<sup>64</sup> They perceive higher tax rates and regulation as an unfair violation of their wealth, damaging the most productive members of society, who are also the job creators.<sup>65</sup> Ideological devotion figures profoundly in American politics, most particularly in the liberal-conservative thinking. Conservative doctrines played a significant role in influencing people's political preferences.

Today, the United States witnesses an unprecedented rise of the New Right ideologies and policies. Since the 1970s to the present moment, the New Right political figures have been pushing a conservative agenda by blocking any reform under Democratic administration. As far as the Tea Party movement is concerned, its followers maintain that the movement is embedded in ideological devotions regarding individualism, self-reliance, and the size and

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<sup>63</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 6.

<sup>64</sup> Stiglitz, Joseph E., and Stephen Doyle. "Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%." *The Hive*, Vanity Fair, 15 Dec. 2017, [www.vanityfair.com/news/2011/05/top-one-percent-201105](http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2011/05/top-one-percent-201105).

<sup>65</sup> Abelson, Max. "'Bankers Join Billionaires to Debunk 'Imbecile' Attack on Top 1%'." *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, Dec. 2011. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-12-20/bankers-join-billionaires-to-debunk-imbecile-attack-on-top-1-.html>

role of the federal government.<sup>66</sup> The excessive government spending and the healthcare reform controversy of the Left more generally created an “enemy” for conservatives like the Tea Party movement.<sup>67</sup>

Taking into consideration that the Tea Party is a conservative movement, what kind of conservatism does it reveal? Generally speaking, the Tea Party first developed as a libertarian response to alleged government violation into the economic lives of people.<sup>68</sup> In light of this perception, conservative ideology played an important role in the Tea Party movement as a real phenomenon in contemporary American politics. In its defense of a limited government, denial of wealth redistribution, and anti-elitist language, the Tea Party is simply the latest manifestation of conservative populism in the United States.<sup>69</sup>

## **II. American conservative economic theories:**

### **1. The rise of conservative capitalism**

#### **a. Traditional conservative view of capitalism**

Before the Civil War, slavery’s advocates maintained that the South’s economic system was more compassionate than the industrial capitalism that gradually controlled the North. Confirming capitalism’s progressive critics, defenders of slavery mourned dreadful conditions endured by workers under free labor in urban workshops. They proposed that slave owners had more ethical economic motivations to care for the welfare of their slaves than free labor. Such authoritarianism would be improbable in the atomized world of industrial capitalism. After the Civil War and the ensuing rise of the robber barons, opposition to capitalism shifted from the Old Right to the socialist left.

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<sup>66</sup> Krauthammer, Charles. “The last refuge of a liberal.” *The Washington Post*. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010//26/AR2010082605233.html>. Accessed 23 May 2013.

<sup>67</sup> Thompson, Michael. *Confronting the New Conservatism: the Rise of the Right in America*. New York University Press, 2007. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Rasmussen SW, Schoen DE *Mad as hell: How the Tea Party movement is fundamentally remaking our two-party system*. New York: Harper. 2010. 24.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*



Indeed, old right arguments against capitalism were mostly overlooked in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following World War I, the American corporation triumphed and the 1920s marked a decade of laissez-faire.

In his book *Conservatives Against Capitalism*, Peter Kolozi claimed that the Old Right had opposed capitalism since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Thus, laissez-faire capitalism has “undermined an established social hierarchy governed by the virtuous or excellent.” Kolozi offers an exceptional overview of neoconservative ideologues such as James Hammond and Irving Kristol, recording their great differences while also recognizing shared theories throughout conservative history.<sup>70</sup> In their well-known 1930 manifesto, *I’ll Take My Stand*, the Agrarians<sup>71</sup> claimed that the social hierarchies and agricultural economy of the South required standing firm against the crawling urbanization and industrialization that was beginning to overhaul the state. The Agrarians opposed modern capitalism defining it as morally corrupting, to people. The Agrarian arrangement was rigidly hierarchical, supporting the racial divide in the South at the time, and most continued to do so throughout the battle for civil rights. However, they argued that their social hierarchy was less brutal than the one that prevailed in industrial capitalism. According to them, capitalists had no concerns beyond profitability.<sup>72</sup>

For so long, traditional conservatives acknowledged the devastating influence of capitalism. Indeed, traditional conservative Russel Kirk, the founder of modern conservatism, promoted a capitalism mitigated by religion and culture, while recognizing that capitalism had “turned the world inside out.” He believed “true conservatism - Burke’s conservatism - was utterly antithetical to unrestrained capitalism and the egoistic ideology of indi-

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<sup>70</sup> Kolozi, Peter. *Conservatives against Capitalism: from the Industrial Revolution to Globalization*. Columbia University Press, 2017. 53.

<sup>71</sup> The Southern Agrarians, also known as the Twelve Southerners, the Vanderbilt Agrarians, the Nashville Agrarians, the Tennessee Agrarians, and the Fugitive Agrarians, were a group of twelve American writers, poets, essayists, and novelists originated from the Southern United States. They joined together to write and publish *I’ll Take My Stand*, a pro-Southern agrarian manifesto in 1930. Between the 1920s and 1930s, the Southern Agrarians played a major role in the revival of Southern literature.

<sup>72</sup> Shapiro, Edward S. “The Southern Agrarians, H. L. Mencken, and the Quest for Southern Identity” *American Studies*, 1972. 75-92.

vidualism.”<sup>73</sup> In fact, in condemning Ayn Rand’s free-market support, Kirk mentioned that “human creatures are sufficiently selfish already, without being exhorted to pursue selfishness on principle.” Accordingly, a conservative has to oppose capitalism’s individualism, atomism, and egoism.<sup>74</sup> Amid these different conservative ideologies, capitalism is identified as a threat to traditional morality. Yet, conservatives have to make a difficult choice between two alternatives: “One is cultural conservatism. The other is capitalist dynamism. The latter dissolves the former.”<sup>75</sup> Burke further wrote:

Personal loyalties gave way to financial relationships. The wealthy man ceased to be magistrate and patron; he ceased to be neighbor to the poor man; he became a mass-man, very often, with no purpose in life by aggrandizement. He ceased to be conservative because he did not understand conservative norms, which cannot be instilled by mere logic - a man must be steeped in them. The poor man ceased to feel that he had a decent place in the community; he became a social atom, starved for most emotions except envy and ennui, severed from true family-life and reduced to mere household-life, his old landmarks buried, his old faiths dissipated.<sup>76</sup>

In his volume, *The Quest for Community*, conservative writer Robert Nisbet explained that capitalism primarily affects the institutions of civil society including churches, associations, and organizations - thus inconsistently allowing the rapid growth of the administrative State. “Unfortunately, it has been the fate of these external institutions and relationships to suffer almost continuous attrition during the capitalist age,” he wrote:

First, the guild, the nucleated village, and the landed estate underwent destruction. For a long time, however, the family, local community, tangible property, and class remained as powerful, though external, supports of the economic system which the rationalists saw merely as the outcome of man’s fixed instincts and reason. But, in more recent decades ... even these associations have become steadily weaker as centers of

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<sup>73</sup> Nash, George. “The Life and Legacy of Russell Kirk.” The Heritage Foundation, [www.heritage.org/political-process/report/the-life-and-legacy-russell-kirk](http://www.heritage.org/political-process/report/the-life-and-legacy-russell-kirk).  
<https://www.heritage.org/political-process/report/the-life-and-legacy-russell-kirk>

<sup>74</sup> Hawley, George. “Some Conservatives Have Been Against Capitalism for Centuries.” The American Conservative, [www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/some-conservatives-have-been-against-capitalism-for-centuries/](http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/some-conservatives-have-been-against-capitalism-for-centuries/).

<sup>75</sup> As stated by traditional conservative George Will.

<sup>76</sup> Begbie, Harold. *The Conservative Mind*. Mills & Boon, 1925. 228.

security and allegiance... and in this whole process, the directive role of the political State becomes ever greater.

During the 1980 National Republican Convention, which entitled Ronald Reagan for presidency, George Will wrote:

The Republican platform of 1980 stresses two themes that are not as harmonious as Republicans suppose. One is cultural conservatism. The other is capitalist dynamism. The latter dissolves the former. Capitalism undermines traditional social structures and values. Republicans see no connection between the cultural phenomena they deplore and the capitalist culture they promise to intensify.<sup>77</sup>

Will stressed the fact that conservatives knew that capitalism has a radical influence over the traditional keystones of society, namely religion, damaging deep-rooted social engagements. Joseph Schumpeter, the American economist, defined this as “creative destruction,” which is a “process of industrial mutation that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one.” Schumpeter explained that capitalism has to unavoidably flow over into the social life of Americans. He wrote: “Capitalism inevitably and by virtue of the very logic of its civilization creates, educates, and subsidizes a vested interest in social unrest.”<sup>78</sup>

After World War II, capitalism has associated itself with conservatism both because of conservatives’ backing of limited government and because of the conviction rooted in the Protestant ethic that financial achievement is a designation of morality. In this observation, the moderate and hard-working people deserve to be remunerated. The wealthy and successful entrepreneur reveals the efficiency of conservative ideals, hence becoming the conservative hero. Anything that expands the recompenses, which attract people to the

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<sup>77</sup> “The Surprising Way The GOP Could Actually Win The Culture War.” Talking Points Memo, 4 May 2015, [talking points memo.com/cafe/how-conservatives-could-win-the-culture-war](https://talkingpointsmemo.com/cafe/how-conservatives-could-win-the-culture-war). <https://talkingpointsmemo.com/cafe/how-conservatives-could-win-the-culture-war>

<sup>78</sup> Schumpeter, Joseph Alois. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. Wilder Publications. 2018 82-83.

conservative values, should be reinvigorated.<sup>79</sup> In fact, it is this embrace of capitalism that Bell perceives as conservatism's antagonist. Conservatives and capitalists condemn that government regulation restrains all the necessary freedom the market requires. As usurped by conservatives, capitalism defends its persistence on freedom by differentiating between people and capital-generating capability. Modern conservatives won support for free market capitalism through concrete rather than ideological grounds based on the Burkean<sup>80</sup> notion of prescription.<sup>81</sup> They advocate free-market capitalism because it is "the most productive one", and "simply the right thing to do."

Today, conservatives advocate capitalism as the protector of the capitalist market society. Conservative capitalism succeeded in hybridizing the traditionalist and liberal movements. In fact, both trends have been at times divided over the role of the state endangering sometimes Reagan's policy programs. While liberals see the individual as capable of collaborating with others for the common good, conservatives identify a spiritual, imperfect and restricted nature of the individual who cannot be isolated. Conservatives are more concerned with providing a suitable setting that nurtures the assets of each individual, rather than using the state to regulate social equality and justice.

The New Right's liberal economic approach confirms that any economic progress strongly depends on the autonomy of private businesses to achieve better sustainability.<sup>82</sup> This conservative approach of economy, which is as old as two hundred years, operates today as a defense of the dedicated

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<sup>79</sup> Anderson, Virginia. "'The Perfect Enemy': Clinton, the Contradictions of Capitalism, and Slaying the Sin Within." *Rhetoric Review*, 2002. 384-400.

<sup>80</sup> Edmund Burke (12 January 1729 – 9 July 1797) was an Irish author, philosopher, and political theorist who served as a member of parliament between 1766 and 1794 in the House of Commons with the Whig Party. Burke condemned British treatment of the American colonies through its taxation policies. He also supported Catholic liberation and the impeachment of Warren Hastings from the East India Company. Burke's point on the link between prescription and the natural law is illustrated in his Works, vi, 412.

<sup>81</sup> Lucas Paul, "On Edmund Burke's Doctrine of Prescription; Or, an Appeal from the New to the Old Lawyers", *The Historical Journal*, Volume 11, Number 1, 1968. 36.

<sup>82</sup> The Right demonizes the Soviet economic system as it completely opposes its own philosophy.

modern New Right.<sup>83</sup> In addition, the New Right stresses an assessment to the post-economic depression era. Today, it tends to contest government intervention into economic freedom defining it as “old” and “unsuccessful”, thus justifying the use of the term “new”.<sup>84</sup>

Conservative capitalism tried to consolidate the interests of its traditionalist supporters with the policy precepts of the free market. As far as the values support the marketplace, conservative capitalism eventually detaches itself from the self-interest of the different classes even when endorsing Adam Smith's version of the “general interest of society”. When the ideology of the marketplace involves the individual in the general interest, conservatives cherish capitalism as an important asset that allows people to be self-reliant and “free to choose.” It is this particular pro-market ideology that conservative politicians use in elections. The rebirth of conservative capitalism marked the collapse of the “class compromise” that depended on economic development with moderate reforms that aim at elevating those on the bottom.<sup>85</sup> For the motive of conservative capitalism, libertarian politicians repudiated traditional elites, readjusted cultural value, and reduced social features to materialism and immediate self-centeredness.<sup>86</sup>

With the rise of Ronald Reagan to power in the 1980s, a significant public opinion has developed support for capitalism. Reagan has collected a series of conservative policies by reversing the growth of taxation, shifting resources service programs, and developing the evident substitution of the market. Liberal social ideals may have largely contributed to the rise of inequalities produced by capitalism, the Reagan policies made it clear that conservative capitalism was certainly different from liberal capitalism, which

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<sup>83</sup> The term “liberal” is used here in its classic meaning which is common in the European laissez-faire approach. It opposes all state intervention in the private economy, and is different from the American context, which supports state intervention to support general welfare.

<sup>84</sup> Ansell, Amy E. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 211.

<sup>85</sup> This is the general argument of Bowles and Gintis, Adam Przeworski, and Immanuel Wallerstein and others. Cf. Helene Slessarev, “Two Great Society Programs in an Age of Reaganomics” (Paper presented to the Midwest Political Science Convention, Chicago, April. 3-5.

<sup>86</sup> Scruton, Roger. “The Meaning of Conservatism.” Totowa. N.J.: Bares and Noble Books, 1980, 127-28.

believes that all people can compete in the free market. In their analysis of liberal democrat capitalism, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis oppose those on the Left who reject the liberals' reformist propensities.<sup>87</sup> They further indicate that conservatives have always perceived liberal reformers as regulators of class conflict and opponents of free enterprise.

In conservative capitalism, the market is the basic source of values with a limited government intervention such as President Reagan's New Federalism proposal and its partial execution. When combining the portrait of the dynamic forces of conservative capitalist ideology, aspects of the class interaction, individual character, and philosophy explain the division within both the liberal and conservative forms of capitalism.<sup>88</sup> In relation to President Barack Obama, I mention the name Saul Alinsky (1909-1972) who was a socialist writer, born of Russian immigrants, and was widely recognized for forming the modern Community Organizer movement. His well-known book, *Rules for Radicals*, is a how-to guide on turning voracious, corporate America into a socialist country. In a new strategy about control and how to fundamentally changing America, Alinsky wanted to take wealth from the haves and distribute it to the have-nots. From an Alinsky-based perspective, the bailout, for instance, and justification for it were just another example of *politics as usual* - a view reinforced by the relatively high number of low-income people and people of color who were sucked into the mortgage pyramid scheme that created the problem in the first place.

In the Austrian School, Mises and others notably Friedrich von Hayek, argued that failing to allow markets to clear simply blocks recovery. Hayek

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<sup>87</sup> The expression democratic capitalism has been avoided as it is employed for different reasons by both the Left and the Right. On the Left, democratic capitalism means that democracy has fundamentally changed capitalism and that the recent struggle is over the reaffirmation of capitalist control over democracy. This viewpoint is reviewed in Robert Alford, "The Reagan Budgets and the Contradiction between Capitalism and Democracy," in *The Future of American Democracy: Views from the Left*, Mark Kann, ed. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983, 22-53. On the Right, however, conservatives use "democratic capitalism" to suggest a different message: inequalities due to economic results of capitalism are made legal by democratic political standards. *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.

<sup>88</sup> Unlike the extrinsic relations character, human society is subject to intrinsic rational and abstract relations that are entrenched in precursor relations and values mainly political ideologies. See Tholfsen's *Ideology and Revolution in Modern Europe: An Essay on the Role of Ideas in History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, 2-3.

was one of the most significant free-market thinkers who argued with Keynes in the 1930s over government interference in the economy. From a Hayek-based perspective, the bailout violated the basic rules of free-market capitalism by making it possible for those who made bad decisions to dodge the consequences of their actions. Moreover, rather than being evidence of the bailout's efficacy, bipartisan support for the measure became evidence for how far out of touch the government was with the concerns of the citizens. In short, both paths led to a conclusion reminiscent of the line used by Ronald Reagan in his first inaugural address: "In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."<sup>89</sup>

Today, thanks to the fusion of conservative capitalism, conservatives portray themselves as protectors of the past and reformers who want to protect the society of the "deviations" of the Left.<sup>90</sup> The conservative ideology had actually played a role in the American version of conservative capitalism. The ideology proved to have a strong capacity in representing class members, providing a sense of class identification with conservatism in general. Like liberals, conservatives have used populism as a way of retrieving the support of those depressed by the liberal elite reforms.<sup>91</sup> In the American New Right, Stuart Hall identifies this as "authoritarian populism". In the context of conservative capitalism, ideology played an important role in shaping the conservative capitalist discourse. This clearly intended to resuscitate the image of conservatism, which has been once baffled since the twenties.

b. The New Right and neoliberal economics:

Neoliberalism refers to the political processes, which work to attack the downward redistribution of wealth, while enabling an upward consolidation of

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<sup>89</sup> Weisman, Steven R. "Reagan Takes Oath As 40th President; Promises An 'Era Of National Renewal'." *The New York Times*, archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/learning/aol/onthisday/big/0120.html.

<sup>90</sup> For a better examination of the relations between identity and politics, see Kenneth Hoover, *A Politics of Identity*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1976. esp. chs. 5, 6.

<sup>91</sup> See Stuart Hall's thesis concerning "authoritarian populism" in "Moving Right," *Socialist Review* 1981. 113-37. Cf. Vigurie, *The Establishment vs. the People*; Gamble, *Britain in Decline*, 145.

wealth. This has primarily been accomplished through pro-business activism, focused on “identity and cultural politics,” in order to maintain hegemonic control of material wealth and resources. Sara Diamond neatly summarizes the politics behind the Right’s obstructionism in her book, *Roads To Dominion*. She writes, “To be right-wing means to support the state in its capacity as *enforcer* of order and to oppose the state as *distributor* of wealth and power downward and more equitably in society.”<sup>92</sup> Sequentially, these principles flow around the main political philosophy that animates the modern right: neoliberalism.

Once the Right-wing economic theories are formulated, they were then used to further justify dispossession, contributing to the “Americanization of the law of real property.”<sup>93</sup> The nineteenth century was known for a furious speculative capitalism that generated an astounding inequality. At the same time, the Civil War cemented the metaphor whereby the free individual was defined by his opposite, the slave, and has been used ever since to frame conflicts.

Conservative traditionalist thinker such as Russell Kirk, William F. Buckley Jr., and Richard Weaver condemned the decline of the United States and the West during the first half of the twentieth century and believed that cultural, economic and political liberalism opposed American ethics. According to them, liberalism not only attacked individual liberties, economic freedom, free-market, and a limited size of government, but also had damaged the Western civilization. For instance, in 1955, William F. Buckley Jr. further explained how American conservatism strongly believed in individual liberty for people as the essential feature of democracy.<sup>94</sup> As such,

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<sup>92</sup> Diamond, Sara. *Roads to Dominion: Right-wing Movements and Political Power in the United States*. New York: Guilford, 1995. 8.

<sup>93</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. New York, NY: OR, 2010. 156.

<sup>94</sup> In *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* by Gregory L. Schneider, ‘the label (conservatism) is in frequent use and has come to stand for a skepticism, at times an outright hostility, toward government social policies; a muscular foreign policy combined with a patriotic nationalism; a defense of traditional Christian religious values; and support for the free market economic system.’, “Within the conservative disposition in America, there are inherent contradictions between supporters of social order and tradition and supporters of individual freedom.”2009. 4-9, 136.



fiscal Conservatives and libertarians typically favor small government, *laissez-faire* small economy, low income, and free enterprise. They consider that government should play a smaller role in regulating the economic activity, hence opposing high tax rates and welfare programs that target the disadvantaged.

Reagan, Reaganism, and what came to ultimately be known as “neoliberalism” represented a complete rejection of the role of government as an instrument for the fair redistribution of wealth in order to address the unfortunate, the unemployed, the under-employed, and the disregarded. In the logic of this philosophy, there is the notion that anything represented an obstacle to the accumulation of profits should be removed, and that individuals shouldn’t concern themselves with the collective good. In the early stages of neoliberalism, the focus was on government-controlled industries, government functions that the private sector sought, and government regulations that the private sector wished to eliminate.<sup>95</sup>

As a phenomenon, neoliberalism rose thanks to right-wing think tanks, or events in northern cities, such as the fiscal crisis of the 1970s in New York City.<sup>96</sup> Scholars such as Nancy MacLean suggest the Southern experience to understand the origins of the development of American neoliberal ideology. She declares:

No better tutors could be found than conservative southern elites for what David Harvey depicts as the core project of neoliberalism: the reassertion of class power in its rawest form so as to reduce everything to a commodity, especially labor, in the quest to free capital of social obligations and political constraint.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Fletcher, Bill. *“They’re Bankrupting Us!”: and 20 Other Myths about Unions*. Beacon Press, 2012. X.

<sup>96</sup> Joshua B. Freeman, *Working-Class New York: Life and Labor Since World War II*, New York: New Press, 2000, chapter 15. See also Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology and Development in American Urbanism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006; and David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005

<sup>97</sup> Nancy MacLean, “Southern Dominance in Borrowed Language: The Regional Origins of American Neoliberalism,” in *New Landscapes of Inequality*, ed. Micaela di Leonardo and Jane Collins. SantaFe: School of American Research, 2007. 21-38.

Elizabeth Tandy Shermer demonstrated how, for instance, the Phoenix businessmen attempted to use the state to weaken unions, lower taxes, and cut regulations. Neoliberalism was first established in the 1970s, throughout the Jimmy Carter administration, with financial deregulation of the banking, trucking, and airline companies.<sup>98</sup> The trend persisted into the Reagan Administration in the 1980s; covering federal income tax cuts by 25%, large defense expenditure, and trade deficit development.<sup>99</sup> David Harvey uses the word neoliberalism to define Lewis Powell's 1971 reliable memo from the business community to the US Chamber of Commerce.<sup>100</sup>

The economist Milton Friedman was a leading American participant in the post-war economics. Friedman's beliefs became the leading doctrines of neoconservatives, forcing the economic "reforms" of the Reagan administration. During the 1970s, Friedman and many liberal rightist fellows inspired the predominant discourse of the neoclassical economics. They argued that private individual capitalists working without any government economic interference created the most beneficial economy. Their philosophy proclaimed that history had shown how state intervention in the market place was completely pointless and prone to produce economic problems mostly unemployment. As a result, neoclassical economics renewed while protecting the old conformist Liberal Right economics.

The right-wing dominance began in 1979 when Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker launched one segment of the economic counterrevolution against the New Deal. Volcker forced strict monetarist anti-inflation policies that continued into the 1990s. Ronald Reagan supported the Federal Reserve's perspective to pursue a restricted money supply growth policy and follow interest rates according to collective demand situations, to focus on regulating the collective actions of the money supply and allowing the markets to define the rates. Since then, Reagan's budgetary policies have

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<sup>98</sup> Anderson, William L. "Rethinking Carter | William L. Anderson." Mises Institute, 25 Oct. 2000, [mises.org/library/rethinking-carter](https://mises.org/library/rethinking-carter).

<sup>99</sup> Karagiannis, Nikolaos, et al. *The US Economy and Neoliberalism: Alternative Strategies and Policies*. Routledge, 2015. 58.

<sup>100</sup> Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press 2005. 5.

securely been kept in the hands of neoliberal intellectuals and financial markets.

According to Reagan, the most important cause of American economic problems “has been the government itself.” He signed the Budget and Reconciliation Act of 1981 launching a series of tax cuts in overall government spending, while increasing market incentives and presenting across-the-board tax cuts that helped the redistribution of income to the rich. Other neoliberal actions included tax support indexation, deregulation of anticompetitive industries, setback of equal employment opportunities, and reduction of welfare support benefits such as food stamps.

Although Republicans and Democrats positions differed on many levels, neoliberalism continued during the Clinton Administration, which advocated the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the deregulation of the financial sector through the Commodity Futures Modernization Act and the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act. The Clinton Administration passed the Personal responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which implemented further cuts to the welfare state.<sup>101</sup>

For the last 25 years, neoliberalism has dominated economic policy and the public’s thinking. Modern neoliberalism is essentially related to the Chicago School of Economics, which stresses the effectiveness of market competition, the role of people in controlling economic outcomes, and changes connected with government interference and market regulations.<sup>102</sup> The vital incentive of neoliberal drive is found in the scholarly discords of Keynesianism and how it failed to acquire public considerations of the economy that are able to challenge the neoliberal rhetoric of “free markets.” There was a significant conservative opposition in the United States during Keynesianism offering a foundation to neoliberal attack. The resistance was dominant during the New Deal period, as revealed in conservative opposition to the Social Security and welfare system. The resentment continued until the 1950s and 1960s, and was

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<sup>101</sup> Karagiannis, Nikolaos, et al. *The US Economy and Neoliberalism: Alternative Strategies and Policies*. Routledge, 2015. 58.

<sup>102</sup> Palley, Thomas I. “From Keynesianism to Neoliberalism:” *Neoliberalism*. May 5, 2004. 20-29.

exemplified by the conservative Taft-Hartley Act (1947), which made strike actions illegal, thus destabilizing the influence of unions.

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 launched the official era of neoliberal economic policy supremacy in the United States. In fact, the last quarter-century has witnessed an increasing implementation of neoliberal concepts. Policies such as deregulation of financial markets, privatization, undermining of institutions of social protection, weakening of labor unions, and tax cuts dominated the new economic agenda. The international economic policy has even been dominated by the “Washington Consensus,” which advocates privatization, free trade, export-led growth, financial capital mobility, deregulated labor markets, and policies of macroeconomic austerity.

Michael Meeropol<sup>103</sup> claims that a major counterrevolution has emerged in American economic policy since the 1980s as the Keynesian New Deal was upturned in favor of the neoliberal “social contract with America.” In his book *Surrender: How the Clinton Administration Completed the Reagan Revolution*, Meeropol argues that when President Clinton submitted his welfare, budget, and tax reforms from 1995-1997, Reagan neoliberal programs were “going to achieve its major goals.” The Reagan Revolution of tax cuts, deregulation, free trade, and small government was more strengthened than before. In passing the Welfare Reform Bill of 1996 and the 1997 budget compromise, the Clinton administration overturned a long era of a government’s commitment to protect the poor against capitalism. In fact, while the top 20 percent of American income earners would benefit after-tax relief, 20 other percent would further suffer the disregarding of extending poverty. The policy continuity between Reagan and Clinton had helped neoliberal “revolution in economic policy” overturn postwar Keynesian welfare policies.

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<sup>103</sup> A professor of economics at Western New England College and researcher for the Center for Popular Economics. Michael Meeropol’s study of U.S. economic policy from Reagan to Clinton, *Surrender: How the Clinton Administration Completed the Reagan Revolution*, makes a timely contribution to such an assessment.

## 2. Libertarianism:

The old *laissez-faire* right in the United States became identified as libertarianism, and ultimately was assimilated into the New Right. American conservative libertarianism usually emphasizes on matters of the common good, including environmental issues or the institutions of family, marriage, church, and local community that used to be at the core of the traditionalist conservative political thinking. In fact, such traditional matters and institutions will no longer be influential in a radical individualist society. In his 1953 volume *The Quest for Community*, Robert Nisbet reveals how the orthodox primary institutions were in a profound decline. Conservatives tried to modify their position against domestic “collectivism” and their argument of *laissez-faire*, or “pristine capitalism.”<sup>104</sup> They had constantly condemned big government for hindering economic progress, and supported unfettered capitalism for endorsing it, but the liberal agreement and the fact that enlarged government spending has been consistent with economic health since the New Deal made their standpoint repelling. During the 1950s, conservatives tried to build a moral case for their proper model of capitalism. They brought together two contradictory types of conservative rhetoric: a libertarianism that stressed individualism and freedom; and a traditionalism that underlined moral order and community. In this manner, conservatives tried to incorporate traditionalism into an essentially libertarian viewpoint.

American Libertarianism avoided political and theoretical perceptions especially those, which reinforced a state interference and a big government, including military intervention in foreign affairs. While individual liberties were regarded as sacred, social inequalities were seen as an essential result of environments where labor’s recompense depended only on skills and distinction. It is crucial to outline the development of American libertarianism in order to understand its history and ideas as different from both classical conservatism and modern conservative movement. We focus on the movement’s role in establishing today’s economic and social policies and its

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<sup>104</sup> Pristine capitalists identify social and environmental costs of doing business. They perceive that society is held accountable for this. Such a position allows for governmental intervention through social costs to genuine costs for use in expanding profits.

related philosophies such as anti-statism, the moral work ethic, the value of individualism, self-reliance, and free-market. In fact, libertarians support the free market and populist political proposals because they “return power to people.” They believe that democratic doctrine is important, a notion different from the idealism of the Left and their concept of community-direct democracy.<sup>105</sup>

Libertarians believe that government intervention in individual economic competition is immoral while market inequalities as naturally moral.<sup>106</sup> In fact, equal opportunity is regarded as submissive, stressing individual reliance on the state rather than individual competition, as equal opportunity is only secured by equality before the law. Finally, libertarians believe that the government should only intervene in protecting individual freedom from different forms of violation or abuse. Traditional conservatives hold a rather more radical view of government's role. They believe that government authority in facing social inequalities is unreasonable and dangerous.<sup>107</sup> They assume that all individuals depend on each other and that government can only perform its power in preventing individuals from threatening the established social structure. The “evangelical Right” is the common cause in regulating social issues.

Libertarianism is hence a defense of a system of capitalism known as “pristine capitalism” wherein the market does not pave the way to the state in modeling economic dealings and distributing income; individual entrepreneurship impedes bureaucratic corporation; competition hinders monopoly, and owner-controlled property does not give way to conjectural stock ownership. Libertarianism did not abandon its individualist notion of society or its pristine capitalism, but simply had to build its arguments on ethics and values entrenched in religion. The libertarian defense of “pristine capitalism” has usually managed to be both materialist and secular. As

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<sup>105</sup> Stern, Fritz, and Samuel H. Beer. “Britain against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism.” *Foreign Affairs*, 1982. 230.

<sup>106</sup> Tibor Machan, ed., *The Libertarian Alternative*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1974. 499. See also Noel K. O'Sullivan, *Conservatism*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976. 27.

<sup>107</sup> Nash, George H. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945*. Basic Books, 2006. 73.

capitalism is defined by its larger productivity, advancement of scientific inventions and substantial growth, it attracts individual's self-interest. Based on such arguments, libertarians controlled conservative and right-wing Republican concepts from the New Deal until today.

Although it was at first difficult to merge the *laissez-faire* ideology with traditionalist conservatism, as the two philosophies were conflicting, libertarianism played a significant and crucial role in the American conservative movement.<sup>108</sup> For libertarians, collectivism was the incentive of central organization and expanded state control, which was at the origin of a steady decline of individual liberties and eventually totalitarianism. Inversely, collectivism represented an important drive to traditionalist conservatives. From such a perspective, conservatives define two opposing variants of the role of government. George Nash has identified these two conservative variations as traditionalist and libertarian.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, the mixture of libertarian and idealistic trends has significantly restructured the conservative movement embracing more democracy menacing the conservative traditionalist values. This new mixture triggered the concern of conservative thinkers, as the value of a rising ambition and anticipation has generated a new wave of privilege that threatens the Western way of life. To avoid the escalation of western values, conservative capitalists recommend limiting the growth of democracy that controls market.<sup>110</sup>

By embracing traditionalism to the libertarian beliefs, libertarians became unusually less radical and came to cooperate politically with traditionalist conservatives, notwithstanding theoretical conflict. Libertarianism focused more on the role of beliefs defining history, and thus a clash of beliefs was recognized as the most suitable answer to the collectivist menace. Libertarians also assumed that the American involvement in World War II and the cold war was a pointless expansion of government. According to *laissez-*

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<sup>108</sup> K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001.

<sup>109</sup> Nash, George H. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945*. Basic Books, 2006. 81-82.

<sup>110</sup> Piven, Frances Fox., and Richard A. Cloward. *The New Class War*. Pantheon Books, 1982. 23.

*faire* advocates, the world had started to deviate from the right economic and policy line.<sup>111</sup>

Apart from the struggles over the position of the elite, libertarians and traditionalists have different views regarding the role of reason in human affairs. While both Libertarians and Traditionalists share the same vision of the growth of the state as an organizer and a planner of social life, defended private property and were skeptical of egalitarian attempts, there are many differences between both ideologies as they have different notions of society. For instance, Burkean conservatism was initially created as a reaction against the rationalist systems of Lockean classical liberalism. Whereas both conservatives and libertarians agree on the idea that the established social convention should be reached, libertarians hold their specific version of the rationalist faith: an inflexible credence that the marketplace is the crucial social foundation. The market becomes the basic setting within the society advocating both self-interest and self-reliance.

Moreover, libertarians and traditionalists differ in their preferences for institutions. Traditionalists favor conformist institutions such as the church and the family that are naturally regular and hierarchically organized. Traditionalists believe the individual “cannot assure the power and means to live well . . . without the acquisition of more.”<sup>112</sup> During the Reagan presidency, conservative libertarians ordered the delegation of federal duties to national and local governments. They supported the populist discourse, which aimed to return power to the people, and reinforced the role of the market in attracting new investment and reducing local social services. The result of the new policy was a rising confusion regarding the forms of state regulation and service funding and a less effective setting for economic growth.

However, according to Robert Behrens, libertarians and traditionalists do not actually differ over the rationality of the market since both versions of

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<sup>111</sup> Darren Barany, “Laissez-Faire Individualism and Its Descent into Ideology in the US, from the Interwar Period to 1960.” *The Journal of Public and Professional Sociology*. 2012. 18.

<sup>112</sup> Hobbes, Thomas, and A. D. Lindsay. *Leviathan*. Dent, London: Penguin, 1970. 1-2.



conservatism have more than adequacy of doctrine.<sup>113</sup> Libertarians believe that a powerful unrestricted marketplace removes the negative impact of underdevelopment, relieves welfare reliance, and leads to more ordered personal conduct motivating the innovation of industry.<sup>114</sup> In fact, traditionalists also believe in the same goals. Arthur Aughey states:

There is no necessary relation between an economic system based on free enterprise and relations and a cohesive community. Conservatism presupposes a community, one nation, exhibiting 'differences' but not to the extent of irreconcilable conflict.<sup>115</sup>

Although their main fear had not changed since the New Deal, the conservatives of the 1950s wanted to renovate their defense against “collectivism”<sup>116</sup> in two ways. First, on international issues, they changed from being isolationists to being anticommunists. Traditionally, they had supported against the United States’ participation in international affairs. Nevertheless, this was not a political option in the post-war era, as it became ever more obvious that the United States has a concern in world politics. Before the reorganization of the 1950s, this was a matter of divergence for conservatives. On the one hand, while admitting that the isolationist position was no longer possible; many conservatives encouraged a “non-interventionist” standpoint of limited foreign policy using limited resources. They were wary of political power and its unplanned outcomes. On the other hand, the “interventionist” standpoint required full mobilization and tossing all resources into combating anticommunism. The formal conservative attitude was determined to be of the interventionist ideology as there was more communal support for it. By revealing their attitude on this concern, conservatives were ultimately able to differentiate their policies from the “containment” policies of the Democrats.

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<sup>113</sup> Behrens, Robert. *The Conservative Party from Heath to Thatcher: Policies and Politics 1974-1979*. Saxon House, 1980. 17-18.

<sup>114</sup> For a sampling of these claims, see W. H. Greenleaf, *The Rise of Collectivism*, Vol. I, *The British Political Tradition* London: Methuen, 1983. 63.

<sup>115</sup> Philip Norton and Arthur Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism*, London: Temple Smith, 1981, 285.

<sup>116</sup> Collectivism is a cultural value that underlines cohesiveness in society prioritizing the group over the individual. In contrast to individualism, individuals or groups who believe in collectivism tend to direct toward in-group than toward out-group viewpoints.

First, libertarians argued that the core concern was to limit individual freedom in the name of common good or shared values, and that such a tendency leads to collectivism. In this way, Libertarians consider that freedom and individualism are hindered when there is a common moral code. Libertarians assume society is an organization taking for granted that the individual has unconditional freedom and total ability for self-control. Libertarians generally do not define moral values of how individuals should live, fearing any collectivist inference in individual lives. They assume that social and political institutions ought to establish the circumstances under which individuals can pursue their own objectives, hence expecting the least state action. Finally, libertarians perceive “pristine capitalism” as the answer to collectivism. Although they consider capitalism as paving the way to collectivism by challenging the community, they are not anti-capitalists opting rather for a “distributist” image of a society wherein the majority holds the personal property.

Second, Traditionalists consider that moral order involves limits on both freedom and individualism. They do not trust individuals to be fully able to manage their lives alone without the assistance of communal values and social ties. Hence, Traditionalists stress on identifying the moral standards individuals should follow perceiving society as a community and social and political institutions as the defender of the common good.

Traditionalism gave up almost all its concepts except its stress on moral order. Although the mixture was challenging, both conservative schools accepted the new deliberation as it was the only line of reasoning that could efficiently be used to condemn domestic collectivism and specifically the welfare state. Conservatives illustrated a new capitalism in which the pursuit of profit and individual achievement could not threaten the free market or the moral values of society. In this way, conservatives blamed liberal elites for their unethical ideas and policies and their expansion of the state. Thus, conservatism in general was strong enough to depict a social moral order that works more effectively without government interference.

Clearly, there was a difficulty in merging these two ideologies into one consistent conservative ideology. Nevertheless, there have been creative efforts

to convince that both libertarian view of individual freedom and traditionalist concern with moral order can be intertwined. Most significantly, capitalism libertarians believe fundamental to individual freedom must be perceived as intrinsically good or even predestined. What remains is the materialist and secular explanation for “pristine capitalism” that was formerly unsuccessful in the mid-twentieth century. Thanks to this approach, conservatives became able to condemn the welfare state, regardless of its benefits on material life, based on the fact that it weakens the individual self-reliance concept. Conservatives oppose the welfare state by arguing that individual freedom is “the true condition of man’s created being.” On the whole, conservatives used traditionalist moral order to relocate individual freedom as a main concern and to make individual freedom the only social end in itself.

In *Road to Serfdom*, Hayek admitted that in order for the supporters of libertarianism to make profits, a political coalition with traditionalist conservatives was required.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, conservatives support a limited role of government in the free market because they believe in the value of civil society. In his volume *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville describes government interference in the economy as “soft oppression” because it challenges people’s feeling of responsibility, and hence entails higher tax rates. For instance, the typical U.S. free-market conservative administration under Ronald Reagan seized the unrestricted process of the market to be the foundation of modern conservatism.<sup>118</sup> This is why Reagan decided to cut the maximum capital gains tax from 28% to 20% and the individual income tax rates from 70% to 28% during his first term.

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<sup>117</sup> Rothbard, Murray N. 1980. “Requiem for The Old Right.” LewRockwell.com, reprinted from *Inquiry*, October 27. 7.

<sup>118</sup> In his book *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism*. W.W. Norton & Company; 2010, Darren Dochuk indicates how immigrants to Southern California from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas offered evangelical support for social conservatism.

### III. Conservative long-defended values:

#### 1. Individualism

##### a. Historical perspective of individualism

Although “individualism” is rather a new term in Western thinking, the individual person has always represented a unique and principal foundation of the Western civilization. Individualism first appeared in the discourse of those who firmly opposed the French Revolution. In fact, French writer Joseph de Maistre described the French Revolution as a horrible menace to long-established societal hierarchies, traditions, and social bonds. The revolution had carried the doctrine of individual natural rights that freed each individual to be his or her own moral judge. According to de Maistre, individualism did not confirm the individual dignity, and was rather a nightmare of ethical anarchism:

All known nations have been happy and powerful to the extent that they have more faithfully obeyed this national reason, which is nothing other than the annihilation of individual dogmas and the absolute and general reign of national dogmas, that is to say, of useful prejudices. Let each man call upon his individual reason in the matter of religion, and immediately you will see the birth of anarchy of belief or the annihilation of religious sovereignty. Likewise, if each man makes himself judge of the principles of government, you will at once see the birth of civil anarchy or the annihilation of political sovereignty. Government is a true religion: it has its dogmas, its mysteries, and its ministers. To annihilate it or submit it to the discussion of each individual is the same thing; it lives only through national reason that is to say through political faith, which is a creed. Man’s first need is that his nascent reason be curbed under this double yoke, that it be abased and lose itself in the national reason, so that it changes its individual existence into another common existence, just as a river that flows into the ocean always continues to exist in the mass of water, but without a name and without a distinct reality.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Garrard, Graeme. *Counter-Enlightenments From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*. Taylor and Francis, 2014. 53.

In his classic volume *Democracy in America* (1835), French writer Alexis de Tocqueville produced a more delicate and durable analysis of the American doctrine of individualism, which has long been sacred. The individualistic American fights back taxation because they believe in self-reliance and independence. He considered individualism to be America's awkward social way of life, a vision of the social life promoted by the rise of democracy that "disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellow-creatures: and to draw apart with his family and friends: so that . . . he willingly leaves society at large to itself."<sup>120</sup> Tocqueville, who was an eligible defender of democracy, believed that individualism was a consciously designed form of abandoning community and public life. Unlike de Maistre, Tocqueville saw in individualism a threat to the new order and social life. During the 1950s and 60s, Europeans attributed the negative impact of the Industrial Revolution, mainly the division of social ties, to the rise of individualism. French philosopher and founder of the discipline of sociology Auguste Comte severely criticized individualism as 'the disease of the Western world', highlighting the ideological division between conservatives and socialists.

Americans would not appreciate Tocqueville's theory of individualism, a theory that noticeably contradicts with the social and cultural self-conception. Americans, who barely experienced feudal, aristocratic, monarchical, and other premodern European political institutions, perceive individualism as a completely positive doctrine and even the basic component of the American way of life. However, we contend that such a vision is too simple because it ignores the deep and insightful impact of religious, political, socialist, and other nonliberal factors in American history, including slavery. American history involves more than the narrative of liberalism and the traditional individual rights declared in the Declaration of Independence.

The American dedication to individualistic ideals has definitely changed and progressed over history. In the American narrative, the term "individualism" may refer to an appreciation of the relationship between the

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<sup>120</sup> Rubin, Joan Shelley, and Scott E. Casper. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Cultural and Intellectual History*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 543.

individual and the community or the state, in which the first tends to preserve its liberty and dignity against the expansion or social-traditionalist demands of the second. More fundamentally, it may indicate a perspective of the state or the general public wherein all political and social entities are mere combinations of self-reliant people ruled by consensual contracts. It may also designate an accepted view that a person is a completely ethically autonomous individual, who is free to develop according to his proper choices and held responsible to no other person and no presumed law.

Americans need to be able to manage their businesses and their private lives without any type of government intervention. Indeed, the degree to which Americans would go to guarantee their individualism is rather exceptional. Robert Bellah et al.,<sup>121</sup> reviewed individualism by stating that Americans consider that “Anything that would violate our right to think for ourselves, judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious.”<sup>122</sup> The importance of the individual at the expense of the common good is very common in the United States. The American penchant for individual freedoms involves the fact that the American citizen has the right to bear handguns. The Second Amendment to the American Constitution clearly declares that a well-controlled militia is “necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”<sup>123</sup> Arms are thus made legal in the United States, as the country has an important gun lobby that merely does not exist in other advanced democracies.<sup>124</sup> By the 1970s, selfishness and egotism became the new meaning of individualism as rights to property were turned into property rights.<sup>125</sup> The Ayn Rand objectivist school of self-interest came to be

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<sup>121</sup> Bellah, Robert N. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California, 1985. 17.

<sup>122</sup> Walls, Stephanie. *Individualism in the United States: A Transformation in American Political Thought*. Continuum. 16.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* 17.

<sup>124</sup> Micklethwait, John, and Adrian Wooldridge. *The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America*. New York: Penguin, 2004. 176 – 178.

<sup>125</sup> Raskin, Marcus G. *Liberalism: The Genius of American Ideals*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2005. 70.

public policy through her foremost adherent, Alan Greenspan<sup>126</sup>. As a result, the United States becomes the only Western developed democracy that does not ensure a completely socialized health care system neither a government-provided child support program to all families.<sup>127</sup>

b. Conservative defense of Individualism:

Since the founding of the United States, Conservatives have struggled for a radical form of individualism and individual economic rights in particular. The defense of the individual or individualism as an established American creed gradually became the most important constituent in what is now recognized as American conservatism.<sup>128</sup> This perception developed out of the works of thinkers such as Edmund Burke and John Locke, from whom the founding fathers inspired greatly in drafting both the *Declaration of Independence* and the Bill of Rights.<sup>129</sup> For instance, Lockean individualism developed out of the Age of Enlightenment and the fight of the American Colonists in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century against the British Monarchical reign. The Lockean individualist perception can be grasped in numerous aspects of American society ranging from lenient regulations of incorporation, to extensive criminal rights, to the individualistic representations of popular culture.<sup>130</sup>

Then, “individualism” became a challenging term in American conservative philosophy. The origin of the term goes back to the primary tension within American conservatism between its libertarian and traditionalist

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<sup>126</sup> Alan Greenspan (born March 6, 1926) is an American economist who was appointed Federal Reserve chairman by President Ronald Reagan in August 1987. Then, he served as Chair of the Federal Reserve of the United States from 1987 to 2006. He currently serves as a private adviser presenting consulting for firms through his company, Greenspan Associates LLC.

<sup>127</sup> Micklethwait, John, and Adrian Wooldridge. *The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America*. New York: Penguin, 2004. Print. 11-20.

<sup>128</sup> Furedi, Frank. “Individualism: a Scapegoat for Society's Ills.” Spiked, Spiked, 19 June 2015, [www.spiked-online.com/2015/06/19/individualism-a-scapegoat-for-societys-ills/17082/](http://www.spiked-online.com/2015/06/19/individualism-a-scapegoat-for-societys-ills/17082/).

<sup>129</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 16.

<sup>130</sup> Bellah, Robert N. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California, 1985. 17.

factions. On the one hand, libertarians, who support nineteenth-century European liberalism, regard individualism as favorable to society and a defense against the collectivist, conformist, socialist and “oppressive” nationalist state. Moreover, libertarians believed in the individual as the major element of society and sought to protect the individual from Statist governance by restoring as many individual rights and freedoms as they can. Conservative economists, from Ayn Rand to Friedrich von Hayek, have long ago recognized radical individualism as a feature of modern conservatism and an approach to preserve laissez-faire capitalism and condemn the welfare state.<sup>131</sup>

On the other hand, traditionalists perceive individualism as anti-traditional, a pathology of modernism that has damaged the values and ethics of the contemporary era. Yet, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute<sup>132</sup>, which is one of the key defenders of traditionalist conservative philosophy in America, had first arisen as the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists. Richard M. Weaver, a recognized protagonist of traditionalist conservatism, exalted “social-bond individualism” as the best tool to eradicate both communism and socialism. Hitherto, as a traditionalist conservative, Weaver spoke about the need of reconciling the two opposing strains. Furthermore, the refusal of social individualism sends capitalists, who generally share similar ethical standards with Conservatives, to the Libertarian Party, looking for a complete application of individualism throughout all sections of society.<sup>133</sup> However, an absolute application of individualism does not mean that the majority of Conservatives want to live in a society, which tolerates prostitution, drug use, and abortion. In fact, much of the conservative movement in America has opposed a strict individual philosophy at the social level, choosing certain parts of society such as education and marriage to the church or the family.

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<sup>131</sup> Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, “Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater's Early Senate Career and the De-legitimization of Organized Labor”, *The Journal of American History*, Oxford University Press on behalf of Organization of American Historians. 2008. 678-709.

<sup>132</sup> The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) is a nonprofit educational organization that advances conservative ideology on college campuses. Its six core beliefs are the following: limited government, individual liberty, personal responsibility, the rule of law, free-market economics, and traditional Judeo-Christian values.

<sup>133</sup> Tucker, Steven Brodie. “Individualism: A Problem For Conservatism?” *The Bull Elephant*, 12 Sept. 2016, [thebullelephant.com/individualism-a-problem-for-conservatism/](http://thebullelephant.com/individualism-a-problem-for-conservatism/)



The 1950s fusionism of the Old Right and the New Right would prove to be essential for the subsequent political success of the conservative movement. Thus, Senator Barry Goldwater became the icon of the grassroots and populist conservative, which later seized the Republican Party in the 1960s. In the 1950s, Goldwater developed for American conservatism a new language of liberty and individualism that liberals in different groups had dominated for so long. Combining free-market policy with their primarily behavioral analysis of welfare and criticism of the New Left, the New Right changed the political conservatism to make it “more acceptable to a majority of American voters” and hence helped move the political culture rightward.<sup>134</sup>

Starting from the 1960s, conservative intellectuals began to influence American voters from the working class, who already believed in individualism as an American populist tradition, as a weapon against corporations and the liberal state.<sup>135</sup> This strongly contributed to the presidential victory of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the effecting of his neoliberal tax and spending policies in 1981. Although neoconservatives adopted the rhetoric of laissez-faire individualists, conservative Congressman Ron Paul has criticized the contemporary conservative movement in July 2003.<sup>136</sup> In fact, *Laissez-faire* individualism in its pure formula was ended as isolationist and atheistic “extremist” libertarians were expelled from the conservative movement, maintaining libertarian coverage in the form of neoliberalism.

Likewise, the contrast between both Communism and Conservatism disguised the value of the latter. When facing Marxist collectivism, the Conservative honored the individualist and supported the pride and self-sufficiency of individualism. Nevertheless, the postwar American conservative movement suffered from an internal struggle between individualism and

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<sup>134</sup> I. Kristol, ‘The Neoconservative Persuasion’, *The Weekly Standard* (August 25 2003), retrieved May 22, 2009 (<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/003/000tzmlw.asp>), 4.

<sup>135</sup> This is according to historian Michael Kazin.

<sup>136</sup> The main parts of that event can be extensively seen on the World Wide Web in a video which had gone viral in July 2003. “Neo-CONNED! by Congressman Ron Paul” Speech given by Congressman Ron Paul on the House floor on July 10, 2003 on YouTube Web site., director. YouTube, YouTube, 26 Nov. 2006, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8w\\_aT6L44Mg&feature=PlayList&p=B0DB59BC62ECF68A+&index=5](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8w_aT6L44Mg&feature=PlayList&p=B0DB59BC62ECF68A+&index=5)

communitarianism. Then, as the movement became institutional in the 1960s and 1970s, it managed to associate with the interests of the large corporations and the national security state. Conservatism provided a realistic indication of the prevailing economic authority and the language of individualism, which focused on the “self”, became more dominant than the language of family and communal ties.

Although it had historically arisen against the supremacy of the individual over the State or the Church, conservatism today champions individualism more than any other ideology. In 1968, Robert A. Nisbet asserted that conservatism denoted a “reaction to the individualistic Enlightenment.” It “stressed the small social groups of society” and viewed such groups as society’s “irreducible unit.”<sup>137</sup> The American conservative movement stresses on the authority of the individual and the limited role of the government. Today’s Republicans consider that individuals are the only ones who can decide about their own fates. For instance, a Pew Research Center poll has revealed that 57 percent of Republicans believe people are poor because they don’t work hard. Only 28 percent believe people are poor because of conditions beyond their control.<sup>138</sup> These Republicans believe that people need to rely on themselves rather than on government aid in order to succeed in their lives.<sup>139</sup>

Yet, conservatism’s recent rejection of societal unity comes particularly after George W. Bush’s failures and Barack Obama’s rise. Bush’s unpopularity at the end of his term incited conservatives, including the tea party movement, to retreat from what they referred to as “compassionate conservatism”. They

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<sup>137</sup> Jr., E.J. Dionne. “Conservatives Used to Care about Community. What Happened?” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 24 May 2012, [www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservatives-used-to-care-about-community-what-happened/2012/05/24/gJQAsR8inU\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservatives-used-to-care-about-community-what-happened/2012/05/24/gJQAsR8inU_story.html).

<sup>138</sup> “Partisan Polarization Surges in Bush, Obama Years.” Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 22 May 2014, [www.people-press.org/2012/06/04/partisan-polarization-surges-in-bush-obama-years/](http://www.people-press.org/2012/06/04/partisan-polarization-surges-in-bush-obama-years/)

<sup>139</sup> Sarsfield, Arthur. “The Lost Cause: Conservative Individualism In A Multi-Tribal Society.” *Social Matter*, 29 Oct. 2018, [www.socialmatter.net/2017/02/24/lost-cause-conservative-individualism-multi-tribal-society/](http://www.socialmatter.net/2017/02/24/lost-cause-conservative-individualism-multi-tribal-society/).

declared that Bush's failings arose from his "big government" and "big spending" policy, which were never "compatible with fiscal conservatism."<sup>140</sup>

In March 2012, Republican vice presidential nominee Paul Ryan criticized government aid: "We don't want to turn the safety net into a hammock that lulls able-bodied people into lives of dependency and complacency that drains them of their will and their incentive to make the most of their lives."<sup>141</sup> Ryan also adopts a libertarian philosophy of limited government that allows people to become successful without government intervention and taxation. Ryan simply represents his party's philosophy of personal independence and economic individualism that is predominant. The contemporary conservative movement slogans and spirit is very much influenced by the anti-state and individualist thinking of the Old Right and its politics.

In the Hoover-Taft-Goldwater line of antistatist politics, the term "individualism" was generally used positively along with the adjective "rugged" linked to it. Today, the conservative myth of "rugged individualism", which influences the American culture and is translated in a common resentment against the government, inspires the Tea Party Movement, particularly in its latest struggle against healthcare reform. In the rugged individualist spot, conservative journalist Glenn Beck has used Fox News platform to strongly defend the American institution of self-realization. His "9/12 Project" tended to restore the American spirit of solidarity that had just followed the 9/11 attacks by designing nine principles and 11 values of "the greatest nation ever created." In order to sound influential, Becks turns often to theorists such as Ayn Rand Institute president Yaron Brook to denounce the

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<sup>140</sup> Thereal Michelle Malkin. "Bush the Pre-Socializer: 'I Readily Concede I Chucked aside My Free-Market Principles.'" MichelleMalkin.com, 12 Jan. 2009, michellemalkin.com/2009/01/12/bush-the-pre-socializer-i-readily-concede-i-chucked-aside-my-free-market-principles/.

<sup>141</sup> Krugman, Paul. "Galt, Gold and God." *The New York Times*, 24 Aug. 2012, www.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/opinion/krugman-galt-gold-and-god.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=325BF143188DBD27E5DC3AA8196E4D2D&gwt=pay

“ideology of altruism and collectivism”.<sup>142</sup> He once declared that “the problem is, this individualist description of human nature seems to be wrong.”

In the Left-wing, David Brooks has used his *New York Times* platform to conduct a persistent campaign against the “pernicious individualism of Goldwater conservatives like Beck and Rush Limbaugh.”<sup>143</sup> In one of his columns<sup>144</sup>, David Brooks declared that “Over the past 30 years, there has been a tide of research in many fields, all underlining one old truth - that we are intensely social creatures, deeply interconnected with one another and the idea of the lone individual rationally and willfully steering his own life course is often an illusion.” According to Brooks, the emphasis on individual freedom as “the main impediment to Republican modernization” threatens the Republican Party. Brooks further notes that individualistic societies, which stress self-reliance and self-fulfillment, are generally wealthier than collectivist ones, which are secured by conformism and morality. Therefore, studies have shown that people in individualistic societies are happier than those who live in collectivist societies.

## **2. The value of self-reliance in the conservative ideology:**

Self-reliance is another significant aspect of American individualism. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis De Tocqueville remarked that Americans rely on their own convictions when it comes to their own views and that Americans stand by their own judgments in spite of the positions of the “received authority.” This self-reliance and rejection of “received authority” help American people escalate to high positions. Yet, it can also generate an atmosphere where Americans disbelieve political figures even those with superior knowledge.

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<sup>142</sup>Anochi. “Dr. Yaron Brook of the Ayn Rand Center on the Glenn Beck Program.” YouTube, YouTube, 3 June 2009, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQbDtWgLEjg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQbDtWgLEjg).

<sup>143</sup> Brooks, David. “The Social Animal.” *The New York Times*, 12 Sept. 2008, [www.nytimes.com/2008/09/12/opinion/12brooks.html?\\_r=2&ref=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/12/opinion/12brooks.html?_r=2&ref=opinion).

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

Moreover, since Americans consider that individuals ought to rely on themselves rather than on society, they are generally hostile to “losers” who “have failed to take the necessary initiative to take care of themselves.” Therefore, Americans are ashamed of welfare or any kind of government support to the poor. For instance, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, roughly 50% of Americans who were eligible for government aid programs preferred not to apply for help because they simply wanted to avoid the social stigma of being “on the dole.”<sup>145</sup>

As the historian Anthony Arblaster declares, individualism is ‘the metaphysical and ontological core of liberalism.’ In the Anglo-American institution, market freedom has been comprehended as one of the fundamental rights of the individual. The dominant political concepts of liberalism arise from individualism. Definitely, liberalism affirms that the crucial end of politics is to provide scope to the individual’s self-governance, self-assurance, and self-fulfillment.<sup>146</sup> In the era of modern capitalism, as more Americans rely on government welfare programs, from Medicare to Medicaid to school lunches to tax credits and mortgage relief, some react not with appreciation but offense, stressing their anger not at the government itself.<sup>147</sup> Hence, modern conservatism’s individualist ideology has for too long sought to persuade people, that self-reliance matches well with the American middle-class way of life.<sup>148</sup>

Conservatives, however, are typically skeptic of altruistic efforts challenging the liberal ethics of the “do-gooders”. Conservatives generally justify their thinking by the idea that charitable efforts only generate negative economic consequences such as encouraging laziness and dependence among the beneficiaries. Conservatives would go further so as to see government

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<sup>145</sup> Freidel, Frank Burt., and Hugh Sidey. *The Presidents of the United States of America*. Scala, 2006. Washington, D.C.: White House Historical Association. 15-16

<sup>146</sup> Cohen, Nancy. *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865-1914*. University of North Carolina Press, 2002. 7.

<sup>147</sup> Appelbaum, Binyamin, and Robert Gebeloff. “Even Critics of Safety Net Increasingly Depend on It.” *The New York Times*, 12 Feb. 2012, [www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/us/even-critics-of-safety-net-increasingly-depend-on-it.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/us/even-critics-of-safety-net-increasingly-depend-on-it.html).

<sup>148</sup> “Sunday Dialogue: Rethinking Self-Reliance.” *The New York Times*, 29 Sept. 2012, [www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/opinion/sunday/sunday-dialogue-rethinking-self-reliance.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/opinion/sunday/sunday-dialogue-rethinking-self-reliance.html).

welfare programs, designed to remove malnutrition, lead to the birth of more dependent children who enjoy government aids.

### **3. Anti-state ideology and Tolerance to Inequality**

#### a. Anti-state ideology:

Historically, Americans have always feared a strong central state and socialism more than Europeans, preferring lower taxes and less government spending (except for military intervention), revealing the Burkeian conservative inclination for the individualist philosophy. In fact, the American Constitution exceptionally includes a Bill of Rights, aimed at protecting individual liberties. A number of rights such as the Third and Fourth Amendment, which protect people against “unreasonable” pursuit and seizure, tend to control the random use of the federal state power. This unique American fear of state power revealed in the Bill of Rights simply suggests a historical belief that has sustained throughout times. In his speech to millions of Americans, Barry Goldwater clearly proclaimed: “I fear Washington and centralized government more than I do Moscow.” In exposing their fear of government power, preference for the free market, and disregard for collectivism, Americans accept higher levels of income inequality, hence following Burke’s penchant for individual liberties over state power.

The ideology of grassroots Tea Party supporters fits with established, well-recognized resistance to federal entitlement programs and adoption of populist organizations. Many Tea Partiers unsurprisingly express a link to former generations of conservative resistance to the US federal government. At an informal evening event in Boston, one of the few college-aged Tea Partiers was wearing a T-shirt with a picture of Barry Goldwater over the “AuH<sub>2</sub>O” slogan from his 1964 campaign; at another event, a man told one of the academics that he had not felt this politically engaged *since* Goldwater. This profound connection to Goldwater conservatism is not unique to Massachusetts; Kentucky Tea Party contestant Rand Paul has repeated

Goldwater's condemnations of the Civil Rights Act.<sup>149</sup> Even Democratic Party leaders, such as Bill Clinton, once declared, "The era of big government is over."<sup>150</sup> Conservatives believe that the role of the State is only limited to the security and the defense of estate and the free market to safeguard order, the safety of property, and the effectual process of the free market. They also expect the state to safeguard the central communal organizations of Church and family.

The United States is the only Western developed country that does not provide a system of completely socialized health care, nor has government-provided child sustenance to all families. Moreover, European countries and most advanced democracies provide paid maternity leave while the United States does not.<sup>151</sup> Even more largely, since the Civil Rights era of the 1960s, the Republican Party and popular conservative resistance have conveyed opposition to strong federal government interventions in social and economic life, regularly considering such interventions as anticipated compelling racial assimilation and offering special assistance to minorities. When the Social Security Act was passed in 1935, liberals believed that federal welfare programs represented the best relief for disadvantaged.

In their defense of individual liberties, conservatives more particularly suggest that the American welfare state is strange to the American culture that was only inflicted during a specifically helpless time by a quasi-tyrannical Franklin D. Roosevelt, and then supported well into the 1960s by key members of the business community. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, conservatives contended that higher taxes generated by the New Deal stole incomes from workers turning into slaves to the welfare state, as in the words of Barry Goldwater: "How can a man be truly free if he is denied the means to exercise

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<sup>149</sup> Kathleen Hennessey, Tribune Washington Bureau. "Tea Party' Candidate Faces Civil Rights Controversy." Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Times, 21 May 2010, [articles.latimes.com/2010/may/21/nation/la-na-rand-paul-20100521](http://articles.latimes.com/2010/may/21/nation/la-na-rand-paul-20100521).

<sup>150</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 14.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

freedom?”<sup>152</sup> Later, during the 1970s, Republican President Richard Nixon promoted the Family Assistance Plan,<sup>153</sup> a federal welfare program that quickly failed due to liberal opposition. In the 1980s, very few Republicans such as Jack Kemp overtly supported an American welfare state. In 1985, Kemp declared: Conservatives, obsessed as they are with the nominal size of government, measured exclusively by taxes and spending, may wonder why high European taxes don't suffocate their economies as they assume would be the case here. Meanwhile, Americans view much government spending as pure waste, have little trust in government, and tend to view welfare recipients as moochers and minorities.<sup>154</sup>

However, the overwhelming conservative ideology that was originally strengthened with Ronald Reagan has left the welfare system more in the hands of the private sector. Indeed, the significant role of the private institutions for welfare suggests the incredible retreat of the central government in fostering social programs. American conservatives, who identify themselves as libertarians, strongly oppose the welfare state for both economic and ethical reasons. They assume that it has unsurprisingly become distended, damaging efficient economic development and believe Europeans suffer economic deprivation because of their welfare programs.<sup>155</sup>

The election of Barack Obama in 2008 carried new hopes for social advocates who still believed in governmental social programs. Obama had inspired liberals who had projected the expansion of welfare. Nevertheless, hopes soon turned into despair as the Democratic Party considerably lost control of the House of Representatives and hardly preserved the Senate in the

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<sup>152</sup> Darren Barany, “Laissez-Faire Individualism as Ideology in the US: Interwar Pd. to 1960”, *The Journal of Public and Professional Sociology*. 34-18-2012 digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/jpps/vol4/iss1/3/.101.

<sup>153</sup> Waddan, Alex. “A Liberal in Wolf's Clothing: Nixon's Family Assistance Plan in the Light of 1990s Welfare Reform”, *Journal of American Studies* Cambridge Core, Cambridge University Press, 1 Aug. 1998, [www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-american-studies/article/liberal-in-wolfs-clothing-nixons-family-assistance-plan-in-the-light-of-1990s-welfare-reform/1A7A18DD3BAF3BDBDCFB33D844343C70](http://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-american-studies/article/liberal-in-wolfs-clothing-nixons-family-assistance-plan-in-the-light-of-1990s-welfare-reform/1A7A18DD3BAF3BDBDCFB33D844343C70).

<sup>154</sup> Fox, Cybelle. “The Changing Color of Welfare? How Whites' Attitudes toward Latinos Influence Support for Welfare.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 2004, [www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/422587](http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/422587). 580-625.

<sup>155</sup> Bartlett, Bruce. “A Conservative Case for the Welfare State.” *The New York Times*, 25 Dec. 2012, [economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/25/a-conservative-case-for-the-welfare-state/](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/25/a-conservative-case-for-the-welfare-state/).



2010-midterm elections. While liberal analysts confirmed the revival of “a vast new progressive movement,”<sup>156</sup> a strong conservative popular opposition emerged limiting Obama’s social aspirations. In this deep dispute between Democrats and Republicans over the welfare state, the Republican Party continues to contest an endless war against Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other social-welfare programs. Moreover, the financial crisis inside and outside the country along with two demanding wars undermined other economic priorities. Lower tax revenues hindered the ability of the government to afford the main responsibilities including social programs. Obama has also failed to build a bipartisan compromise to support his legislative agenda as Tea Party representatives controlled the GOP.

b. Tolerance to inequality:

One of the most comprehensive analyses of the redistribution of wealth in the United States <sup>157</sup> asserts that:

After the stock market crash of 1929, there ensued a gradual if somewhat erratic reduction in wealth inequality, which seems to have lasted until the late 1970s. Since then, inequality of wealth holdings, like that of income has risen sharply... The rise in wealth inequality from 1983 to 1989 ... is particularly striking.<sup>158</sup>

We try to understand why the American middle class has failed to demand an equal redistribution of wealth knowing that most of the population has less than an average total of wealth - the middle level of holdings. More accurately, why do Americans not support the downhill systematic redistribution of wealth? Although government transfers, such as social security, wage and price controls, and national health insurance, often benefit mainly the middle class, Americans resist downward redistribution, support

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<sup>156</sup> Dionne Jr., E. J. “The Opening Obama Saw.” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 3 Nov. 2008, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/02/AR2008110201719.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/02/AR2008110201719.html).

<sup>157</sup> Wolff, Edward N. 1995. *Top Heavy: A Study of the Increasing Inequality of Wealth in America*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press. 7.

<sup>158</sup> Richard C. Leone, the president of the Twentieth Century Fund, refers to Wolff’s findings on wealth inequality as “shaking traditional American optimism” and being “a root cause of the anger that is shaking the democratic system” (Wolff 1995, v-vi). He also emphasizes the findings that wealth inequality surpasses that of European countries, “those class ridden societies.”

horizontal redistribution, and are ignorant of upward redistribution. This concept is entrenched in the Majority Opinion of Justice Brown in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 when Brown declared “If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane.” Per se, Americans traditionally accept income inequalities and do not demand more economic equality because they are likely to exaggerate the degree of income mobility,<sup>159</sup> which explains impartiality and releases inequality. Similarly, further studies show that Americans fail to appreciate and understand the level of income and wealth inequalities prevailing in the country. Yet, when questioned about their ideal redistribution of wealth, Americans usually favor European standards that are prone to be more equal. They have a tendency to blame their personal economic failures to their individual experiences rather than their position in the distribution or the rising redistribution of wealth.<sup>160</sup>

Nonetheless, the absence of a pervasive leftist movement among America's poor class is the main explanation. Sombart and Marx asked: “Why is there no socialism in the United States?” Liberal theorists perceive American people as inspired by the pursuit of private, self-interested ambitions; hence expected to be balanced and self-conscious, constantly favoring more, rather than the same or fewer substantial goods. Specifically, the poor might support redistribution both because their complete need is larger and because the rich have more effective means to get richer.<sup>161</sup> Although American trade unions have demanded better salaries, better working conditions, and remunerations, and claimed public possession of industries, and better opportunities for minority groups, the United States has no feasible leftist party; at best one

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<sup>159</sup> Christian Bjørnskov Axel Dreher Justina A.V.Fischer Jan Schnellenbach Kai Gehring, “Inequality and Happiness: When Perceived Social Mobility and Economic Reality Do Not Match.” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, North-Holland, 19 Mar. 2013, Volume 91.75-92. [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167268113000620](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167268113000620).

<sup>160</sup> Guillermo Cruces Ricardo Perez-Trugliad Martin Tetaza, “Biased Perceptions of Income Distribution and Preferences for Redistribution: Evidence from a Survey Experiment.” *Journal of Public Economics*, North-Holland, 12 Nov. 2012, [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004727271200117X](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004727271200117X)

<sup>161</sup> Redistribution from the richest and poorest to the middle is as possible as redistribution from the richer 49 percent to the poorer 51 percent. See Joseph Pechman and Benjamin Okner, *Who Bears the Tax Burden?* Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1974; W. Lee Hansen and Burton Weisbrod, “The Distribution of Costs and Direct Benefits of Public Higher Education: The Case of California,” *Journal of Human Resources* 4, spring 1969. 176-191.

section of the Democratic Party represents a trivial social democratic movement. For instance, the plunge in unionization, from almost 40 percent of private-sector workers in the 1950s to 7 percent in 2010, accounts for up to a third of the chasm between the American haves and have-nots.<sup>162</sup>

In this context, conservatives generally oppose liberal moral altruists and ridicule the efforts of those who try to help the lives of those less privileged. Conservatives usually view income inequalities as a natural right and hence efforts to redistribute to the poor do not only cast “one’s pearls before swine,” but also ruin the natural order.<sup>163</sup> Conservatives typically claim that government efforts simply incite laziness and reliance among the beneficiaries leading to negative economic consequences.<sup>164</sup> For example, a government welfare program that provides aid to children in a family may be designed by conservatives to lead to the birth of more welfare beneficiaries who may take advantage of the government.<sup>165</sup>

Ronald Reagan’s New Federalism has largely changed the question of inequality and opportunity structure; and both became the main source of conflict between libertarians and traditionalists in conservative capitalism. The process of evaluating the conservative capitalism views took into consideration the economic effects of the rules passed to this point. The New Federalism proposals differentiated from tax policy variations, representing an essential part of the revolution Reagan had anticipated in federal relations. However, the tax policy changes would prove to increase inequality of income distribution. The 1984 Census Bureau data reported that 40 percent of the population has lost ground in middle income since 1980 in comparison to the top 40 percent.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Greenhouse, Steven. “Labor Law Is Broken, Economist Says.” *The New York Times*, 28 Oct. 2010, [economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/28/labor-law-is-broken-economist-says/?r=0](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/28/labor-law-is-broken-economist-says/?r=0).

<sup>163</sup> Muller, Jerry Z. *Conservatism an Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present*. Princeton N.J.: Princeton UP, 1997.18.

<sup>164</sup> Farmer, Brian. *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. 9-10.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Hoover, Kenneth R. “The Rise of Conservative Capitalism: Ideological Tensions within the Reagan and Thatcher Governments. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*.” Cambridge Core, Cambridge University Press, 3 June 2009, [www.cambridge.org/core/journals/comparative-studies-in-society-and-history/article/rise-of-](http://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/comparative-studies-in-society-and-history/article/rise-of-)

Conservative libertarians wanted to suggest a new consensus that would entirely remove the New Deal. During the seventies, reform liberals and social democrats revealed that the welfare state was the ultimate answer to capitalism's inequities. They considered that the welfare state came to help the middle class with new opportunities. However, the majority protested against tax cuts and became even distrustful of the rights of the poor. Amid an economic recession in the seventies, conservatives seized the chance to advocate their policy agenda.<sup>167</sup> The economic crisis of the 1970s gave the chance for political representation of the business community to get approval of severe amendments in economic policy, particularly regressive tax reforms and cuts in domestic spending.

Five important factors led to the irregular redistribution of wealth: (1) the upper middle-class's mistrust of the Republican party; (2) the Republicans' rising boundary of organization funds over the Democrats; (3) the division within the Democratic party; (4) the drastic weakening of organized labor; (5) lastly the political mobilization of big corporate and its attempt to reform the American political program. In fact, in the middle of the 1970s, big corporate succeeded in endorsing its proper policies including cutting tax rates on profits and asset income, reversing labor law reform, avoiding a consumer protection agency, restricting the increase of government domestic expenditure, and advancing deregulation of a certain number of industries. Big business clearly mobilized because corporate leaders saw that economic stagnation was behind the American political crisis. The former corporate-labor concessions along with the Keynesian social welfare programs were no longer efficient although they had once benefited capitalism. In fact, the persistently high levels of unequal redistribution of wealth and poverty challenged the implementation of further Federalist proposals. While libertarian conservatives greatly supported the degovernmentalization process, traditional conservatives expressed their concern over the gradually difficult circumstances of the underclass.

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conservative-capitalism-ideological-tensions-within-the-reagan-and-thatcher-governments/F8239494F0A42F3FE1191D3B4125F0C8.

<sup>167</sup> Edsall, Thomas B. "Republicans Sure Love to Hate Unions." *The New York Times*, 19 Nov. 2014, [www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html).

#### 4. Anti-union ideology:

It would be difficult to explore the complex history of conservative opposition to unionism in this section, as this covers a large set of individuals, movements, and institutions. I would briefly explore the conservative ideology towards labor unions and its political efforts in challenging them. To the present, after 2008, when there was a political debate about a new New Deal, the idea of trade unionism came under brutal attack. For instance, hostility to private sector trade unions remained greatly rooted in the American South's political background.<sup>168</sup> The anti-unionist sentiment became more dominant in the recent decade when "Yankee" trade unionists tried to establish two major industrial services in both South Carolina and Tennessee, which are "right-to-work" states.<sup>169</sup> In both cases, conservatives led the anti-union concern, even more than the big businesses themselves.<sup>170</sup>

The legislative attack on public sector unionism, shortly after Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker had suggested the cut of collective negotiated rights, gave rise to the upheaval in Wisconsin and other union strangleholds in 2011 and represented a response to the prevailing economic problems faced by the government. It was also the outcome of a long-lasting political and ideological resentment to trade unionism submitted by a conservative movement that is as old as the Haymarket Riot of 1886. The case in Madison and other state capitals tells us that labor's status and influence has always been at the center of American conservative ideology, today as well as more than a century ago.<sup>171</sup> In fact, since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, conservatives had sought to control and depreciate the very existence of the union movement by opposing government intervention by improving workforce freedom to

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<sup>168</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. X.

<sup>169</sup> The 1974 Taft-Hartley Act allowed states to prohibit collective deal contracts that necessitate union membership and excise payment as a provision of employment. Right-to-work states have mainly been restricted to the South, the Great Plains, and the Mountain west since decades. These government regulations undermined unions by providing many opportunities for « free riders » to profit from union-bargained revenues without having to pay their fair share.

<sup>170</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. x

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

engage with their employer. The very idea of unionism itself opposed the conservative ambitions through its numerous campaign movements and political contests. The long-lasting conservative political defamation of the union movement is one of the key elements that helped the rise of the American Right. Studying the relation of conservatism with labor unionism only began in the late 1980s as the twentieth-century reform era of the New Deal had ended.<sup>172</sup>

Public employee unionism in the post-World War II era played an important role as attacks on both the public sector and organized labor unions mainly in the South became a vital element to taking the New Deal order apart. This coincided with the restructuring process of the Republican Party that had started since World War II when conservative lobbying groups and business organizations have moved the party to the right with an anti-union agenda. Right-wing think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Pacific Research Institute were financed by a group of medium-sized organizations like Bradley and Olin who were behind resentment to the New Deal and the anti-union period. Over and above these influential institutions, the Right has also amended its conceptual and stylistic argument against labor unions.<sup>173</sup>

Attacks on public worker unions that actually represented both labor and the state marked the debut of the business-led attack on the New Deal and the rise of the New Right at the same time.<sup>174</sup> Anti-public sector unionism became one of the Sunbelt's most thriving ideologies in the United States in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Even before Reagan's victory, there were members and sections within the Republican Party that only recognized a few parts of the 1930s New Deal reforms of the 1930s, and hence, reluctantly, recognized the rights of organized labor. Over the last decades, the

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<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>173</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 8.

<sup>174</sup> A recent volume on the Sunbelt, *Sunbelt Rising*, totally neglects public sector workers. *The Right and Labor in America*, another recent edited collection, includes an essay by Joseph A. McCartin and Jean-Christian Vinel on the Sunbelt roots of one strand of anti-public sector union thinking, but it does not comprise any argument presented by the workers themselves. Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk, *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Place, Space and Region* Philadelphia, 2011.

conservative anti-union offensive has taken different ideological, economic, and political forms. During the 1950s, the right hardly condemned the working individuals regardless of their anti-unionism. It rather attacked unions' organizers and leaders accusing them of affecting inflation due to their "monopoly unionism".<sup>175</sup> During Reaganism and what came to be identified as "neoliberalism", workers gathered in organizations in order to oppose the accumulation of profits in the hands of businessmen and entrepreneurs.

American historians assume that political conflicts over social and economic issues still exist in the United States, arguing that labor unions stood on the intransigent margin of the liberal-conservative divide. The crucial question we need to answer is: Why do conservatives hate the union movement? Conservatives consider that unions have defended Communists, supported both the Cold War and the Vietnam War, and helped achieve equality for African-Americans, women, and the LGBT community.<sup>176</sup> On the other hand, liberalism reinforced the labor movement's organizing faculty in the political sphere to counter the rise of the Right in American politics and social thinking that often intended to seize the Democratic Party. During the 1960s, along with labor unions, liberals succeeded in passing different reforms covering health care services, immigration policies, and racial equality. They aspired to equalize wealth opportunities and generate better economic and social justice. As far as neoliberals were concerned, labor unions represented a major and significant burden to the business community agenda.<sup>177</sup> However, the scenario has completely changed when democrats failed to pass further labor legislation between 1978 and 1993, and 2010.

Thus, activist and institutional conservatism became so influential in American social and economic politics that it succeeded in dividing the working middle-class from liberalism. For so many years, larger conceptual and political streams have empowered the American conservatism. In the most

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<sup>175</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. xii.

<sup>176</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 6.

<sup>177</sup> Fletcher, Bill Jr. *"They're Bankrupting Us!": And 20 Other Myths about Unions*. Beacon Press. August 28, 2012. X.

vital economic sectors as trade, real estate, health care, and other services, conservatives strongly defended a smaller government, a more autonomous corporate management, and mostly weak labor unions. American big companies such as Marriott, McDonald's, Wal-Mart, and Goldman Sachs are not simply key economic institutions, but also political and cultural entities whose power has grown considerably during the last decades.<sup>178</sup>

Resentment to the trade movement as such was a stimulus element for the development of modern American conservatism that goes back to the rise of both Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan since the 1970s. The hostility reached its peak when President Ronald Reagan attacked his former allies in PACTO (Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization) and fired more than 11,300 air traffic controllers who were on strike in 1981.<sup>179</sup> The PACTO decision launched further attacks on labor unions in business communities. To nurture the fervor of these assaults, conservative politicians released myths in favor of the wealthy and big businesses. Eventually, corporate management throughout different industries became more committed to avoid coping impartially with labor unions designated by workers. The hostility has only increased when labor unions and their members have developed into a crucial column of the Democratic Party's mobilization. Labor unions remained one of the few institutions on the Left capable of mobilizing its members for social and political action outside of the electoral setting.

Conservatives saw in trade unionism a threat to American traditions by defending immigrants, feminists, and gays and lesbians. Yet, the assault on the labor movement starting from the 1930s moved to a rather long-term significant recurrent theme: Conservatives condemned organized labor of corruption and misrepresenting the working class. They formed their theory based on the famous scandals among the leaders of organizations such as the Laborers, the Teamsters, and the East Coast Long-shore men, who were accused of autocratic and self-centered practices. Then, *Fortune* magazine

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<sup>178</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 7.

<sup>179</sup> Arria, Michael. "This Lawyer Helped Reagan Bust the Air Traffic Controllers Union. Now Trump Wants Him on the NLRB.", 21 Sept. 2017, [inthesetimes.com/working/entry/20540/Ronald-reagan-air-traffic-controllers-union-busting-patco-nlr](https://www.inthesetimes.com/working/entry/20540/Ronald-reagan-air-traffic-controllers-union-busting-patco-nlr).



wrote in 1941 that ‘More than most American unions, the Teamsters’ has been accused of crimes and offenses against the public welfare, to say nothing of crimes and offenses against its own members’.

In the years after the Second World-War, things worsened. Rank-and-file democracy-movements within the Teamsters have, undeniably, indicated that there remain significant flows of resistance rebellious to the political face of the IBT. Conservatives considered even legal union actions, particularly those aimed at enhancing a sense of social harmony, as immoral and unconstitutional. Hence, judicial courts and representatives have challenged unions’ rights to strike and debate employment issues.<sup>180</sup>

When Barack Obama took office in 2008, labor forces seized the opportunity of a favorable liberal agenda and pushed for the adoption of a new Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which meant to support union institutions and improve collective negotiation.<sup>181</sup> Obama was a liberal, a former community organizer, and a union-sympathizer senator. As both Obama and his party were finally able to pass the revolutionary health care reform, liberals expected the EFCA reform to be also enacted. Conflict between employers and labor unions has constantly caused a politically intense discourse between Democrats and Republicans in Congress. The conflict surrounded EFCA as conservatives mobilized every single method to depict both the reform and the labor movement as immoral and unconstitutional. Marcus Ruth declared: “Workers deprived of a private vote. Work rules and pay dictated by government. Employers stripped of basic legal rights. They aren’t relics of the Cold War. They are the goals of the Orwellian ‘Employee Free Choice Act’ and a radical agenda for the National Labor Relations Board. Now, Americans are fighting back.”<sup>182</sup>

During the first year of the Obama administration, conservatives not only openly opposed any legislation that would support the institutional

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<sup>180</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 9.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>182</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 2.

influence of labor unions, but also sought to divide and weaken the liberal-Democratic principles. A decade ago, when the Employee Free Choice was being discussed, conservatives targeted private sector unionists for being repressive. Shortly after the 2008-2009 financial depression, Republicans held public sector unions responsible for the deep fiscal crisis some northern states such as New Jersey, Ohio, and Wisconsin had suffered; due to their previous negotiations on wage standards and pension benefits. They attacked them for demanding salary increases, allowances, and other welfares that local states were no longer able to afford. Conservatives identified employees as egocentric, deploring public sector unionism as essentially corrupt. Moreover, Republicans sought to weaken power of the 7.2 million organized movement at the state level mainly, which covers teachers, social workers, public hospital employees, civil service employees, road workers, clerks, and civil servants, even though it is generally declining.<sup>183</sup> For instance, New Jersey governor Chris Christie called the teachers' union "a group of political thugs," while Wisconsin's Scott Walker, who faced massive and sustained protests against his anti-union initiative, condemned "tone-deaf out of touch union bosses." Walker claimed: "a century of anti-union denunciations that assumed compulsory union dues were nothing more than exploitative rent, the abolition of which might well put hundreds of dollars into the pockets of Wisconsin's hard-pressed state employees."<sup>184</sup>

Conservatives also target organized unions, which include the American Federation of State, the American Federation of Government Employees County and Municipal Employees, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, and the Service Employees International Union. They consider unions, especially those who represent public sector employees, as the basis of the left, and a vital economic source.<sup>185</sup> Grover Norquist, the president of Americans for Tax Reform, once

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<sup>183</sup> "Table B-1. Employees on Nonfarm Payrolls by Industry Sector and Selected Industry Detail." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 5 Apr. 2019, [www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t17.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t17.htm).

<sup>184</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 2.

<sup>185</sup> Edsall, Thomas B. "Republicans Sure Love to Hate Unions." *The New York Times*, 19 Nov. 2014, [www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html).

declared in March at the Conservative Political Action Conference: “Unions are the largest player in American politics and they will be for some time... Fourteen million Americans have to pay union dues. If they average \$500, and that is a low estimate, that’s a \$7 billion slush fund for the left.”<sup>186</sup>

For instance, in South Carolina, the Republican Party played a major role in blocking the organization of a production unit that belonged systematically to a unionized private corporation. Following Republican midterm victories in the 2010 elections, “right-to-work” laws have spread across the Midwestern states. In 2012, both Indiana and Michigan adopted the right-to-work policy. Then, Governor Scott Walker signed a bill that made the state of Wisconsin the twenty-fifth to pass the right-to-work act. West Virginia followed suit in 2016 with its proper new right-to-work act.

During one of the C.P.A.C. events, Reince Priebus, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, clearly declared that conservatives succeeded in weakening public-sector unions thanks to a coordinated effort between the Republican Party and the Tea Party movement:

We had total and complete unity between the state party, Americans for Prosperity, the tea party groups, the Grandsons of Liberty, the 9-12ers were involved. It was a total and complete agreement that nobody got the credit, that everyone was going to run down the track together.<sup>187</sup>

The statement reflects the success of the conservatives’ strategy of undermining public sector unions. In fact, the anti-union coalition that arose between the Republican Party and the Tea Party greatly improved in the 2010 midterm elections on November, 4 anti-union force saw the rise of prominent conservatives such as Scott Walker, the governor of Wisconsin, and Rick Snyder, the governor of Michigan, who were later re-elected in states with a long history of important labor movements. For instance, Walker’s success in getting re-elected has changed the conservative thinking, making it more difficult to organize public workers. Hence, when Walker first took office in

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<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> Eidelson, Josh. “‘Wisconsin Is the Model’: Grover Norquist's Tea Party Scheme to Crush His Union Enemies.” Salon, Salon.com, 10 Mar. 2014, [www.salon.com/2014/03/08/wisconsin\\_is\\_the\\_model\\_grover\\_norquists\\_tea\\_party\\_scheme\\_to\\_crush\\_his\\_union\\_enemies/](http://www.salon.com/2014/03/08/wisconsin_is_the_model_grover_norquists_tea_party_scheme_to_crush_his_union_enemies/).

2011, 37 percent of the nation's 21-plus million public sector employees were union members; by 2012, this dropped to 35.9 percent.<sup>188</sup> In January 2011, Walker clearly summed up the strategy: "We can no longer live in a society where the public employees are the haves and taxpayers who foot the bills are the have-nots." For both Walker and Christie, attacks on labor unions - challenging teachers were simply fundamental to their nomination for the Republican presidential elections in 2016.

Yet, numerous voters in the Republican electorate are paradoxically middle and low income. In 2014, 67 percent of those who voted Republicans earned less than \$100,000 in household income; 30.4 percent made less than \$50,000. As Republicans considerably won legislatures and governor's races across the country, hopes for further anti-labor legislation also enhanced. In fact, the Obama administration has weakened the bargain leverage of the most important unions by inflicting a 40 percent excise tax on health insurance payments in surplus of \$10,200 per annum for individuals, and \$27,500 for families, in order to finance Obamacare.<sup>189</sup> The legislation, which should take effect in 2018, triggered the anger of labor leaders who saw the bargaining tax as a threat to the survival of key health insurance profits that unions have gained as part of overall worker compensation packages.

While in 1983, 23.4 percent of wage and salary employees were encompassed by unions,<sup>190</sup> the 2014 election was "a major political defeat for the unions, particularly state-wide public sector unions". Gary Chaison, a professor of industrial relations at Clark University declared that the election "shows how much the voting public sees unions as part of the problem of

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<sup>188</sup> See "Table 3. Union Affiliation of Employed Wage and Salary Workers by Occupation and Industry." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 16 Sept. 2015, [www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpslutab3.htm](http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpslutab3.htm).

<sup>189</sup> Abelson, Reed. "High-End Health Plans Scale Back to Avoid 'Cadillac Tax'." *The New York Times*, 19 Oct. 2013, [www.nytimes.com/2013/05/28/business/cadillac-tax-health-insurance.html?pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/28/business/cadillac-tax-health-insurance.html?pagewanted=all).

<sup>190</sup> In 2013, unions covered 11.3 percent of workers' salaries, down from 23.4 percent in 1983. In 2018, union coverage of private sector employees had declined to 7.5 percent, from nearly 35 percent in the mid-1950s. See Unions Members - 2018 News Release Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor January 18, 2019. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/union2.pdf>

persistent unemployment and underemployment, rather than being part of the solution.” He further states:

The election of Republicans is indicative of the degree to which the voters have turned on the unions. The victory of Republican governors shows how much unions have lost their political power. Chris Christie has called the New Jersey Education Association “a group of political thugs,” a union that has become “fat and rich and entitled.”<sup>191</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that union masses in the public sector counted for 35 percent while private sector unions counted for less than 7 percent, a substantial number of standards-unions nonetheless belonged to the alleged mainstream. In point of fact, neoliberals believed that an offensive against the existence of unions would not initially be effective, and that a new ideological public change towards labor unions had to be advanced. The neoliberal campaign was enhanced by corporate management’s resentment in workplaces where employees decided to join or form labor unions involving the National Labor Board union.

Conservatives were always in search for new approaches that targeted the trade union movement. They used the American ideal of self-reliance as a method to implement more right-to-work laws across the country. They went farther so as to target union revenues as in the 2014 Supreme Court’s *Harris v. Quinn* verdict, which ruled that home health care assistants did not have to pay monies to unions representing them.<sup>192</sup> On the Supreme Court, Justice Samuel Alito Jr. headed a conservative majority, which wanted to rule that any fee paid to the union representing workers, was a form of compulsion infringing the First Amendment rights of employees. Further judicial conservatives have gradually associated the “fair shares” paid by individual workers with the free speech rights already protected by the First Amendment. A trade union idea only threatened the political and economic aspirations of American conservatism. The latter continued to use every campaigning and lobbying political methods to weaken the influence of labor unions in both private and

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<sup>191</sup> Edsall, Thomas B. “Republicans Sure Love to Hate Unions.” *The New York Times*, 19 Nov. 2014, [www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/republicans-sure-love-to-hate-unions.html).

<sup>192</sup> Lichtenstein, Nelson, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. Xiii.

public sectors. The AFL-CIO warned, “Business has used the First Amendment as a sword, to argue that regulation, including their labor relations, interferes with corporate liberty, and as a shield, to protect the ever-increasing flow of money into our electoral system.”<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Trumka, Richard L., and Craig Becker. “The Future of Work: Labor Law Must Catch Up.” *Pacific Standard*, 14 Aug. 2015, [psmag.com/economics/the-future-of-work-labor-law-must-catch-up](http://psmag.com/economics/the-future-of-work-labor-law-must-catch-up).

## **Chapter Two: The Right and Welfare programs**

## **I. American welfare: Definition, history and conservative theoretical background on welfare:**

### **1. Defining the American welfare:**

“We can never insure one-hundred percent of the population against one-hundred percent of the vicissitudes of life. But we have tried to frame a law that will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age. This law, too, represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built, but is by no means complete... that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide for the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness.”<sup>194</sup>

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, August 14, 1935

The Social Security Administration (SSA) defines “social welfare” as federal, state, and local government programs that involve social insurance, health and medical programs, public aid, and other welfare programs such as education and housing.<sup>195</sup> Explaining “social welfare” has been used to reveal the increasing trust assets, the development in state and local spending, and the funding of vital business welfares - both to the privileged as well as to the deprived. Welfare-related spending is also described as the method developed by the Executive Branch in the annual American Budget. These outlays change incomes that are missing through retirement, disability, and death to enrich the income of the less fortunate people and families, mostly those at the lowest end of the income balance. Thus, “income security” includes money revenues such as food stamps and tax provisions for the elderly. For instance, income security programs were estimated to \$137 billion in FY 1977, that is almost 35 percent of federal expenditures.

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<sup>194</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law on August 14, 1935 during the Great Depression, when misery was pestering every community and family support structures collapsed. Every president since Franklin D. Roosevelt has supported Social Security.

<sup>195</sup> Lerner, et al. “Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1975. 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Edition.” ERIC, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 30 June 1975. 280.



Welfare-related expenditures are defined as “public assistance”, underlining only federal assets and revealing numerous welfare-related efforts as public assistance. These programs involve aid to the aged, disabled, blind, and mainly families with children. Likewise, it comprises Medicaid, the food stamp program, and several housing contributions.<sup>196</sup> The Social Security Administration describes “social welfare” as “cash benefits, services, and administration of all programs managed under public law that wholly promote individuals and families. It involves programs for income protection through the public assistance and the public provision of health, education, housing as well as the social insurances and public assistance and other welfare services.”<sup>197</sup>

Health and medical aid programs that commonly target the elderly and the poor who struggle to get a decent medical care are similarly welfare-oriented. Housing contributions are provided for the poor and less well-off families as everyone has the right to decent education and housing in a country as developed as the United States. In 1890 public welfare expenditure implied about 2.4 percent of GNP. Consequently, they steadily boosted until they reached 4 percent of GNP in 1929. Table 1 reports and assesses social welfare and public welfare expenditures in real dollars of insistent purchasing power. We note that social welfare expenses augmented significantly during the New Deal era, but decreased after 1936 until the end of World War II. Actually, since World War II, both Republican and Democratic administrations have remarkably funded social and public welfare programs, except the Trump administration.

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<sup>196</sup> Schultze, Charles Louis. *Setting National Priorities: the 1973 Budget*. D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1972.185.

<sup>197</sup> “Senate Finance Continues Work on Tax Cut Bill,” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 33, March 15, 1975. 530.

Fiscal Year	Social Welfare	Public Welfare	Fiscal Year	Social Welfare	Public Welfare
1975	\$934	N/A	1954	\$219	\$23
1974	832	N/A	1953	206	23
1973	807	\$100 (est.)	1952	202	23
1972	764	90	1951	201	N/A
1971	709	80	1950	211	28
1970	630	74	1949	191	N/A
1969	576	72	1948	177	21
1968	540	53	1947	181	N/A
1967	494	48	1946	148	17
1966	453	37	1944	108	15
1965	410	34	1942	138	22
1964	389	33	1940	163	25
1963	373	31	1938	149	24
1962	359	30	1936	199	20
1961	342	28	1934	123	20
1960	316	27	1932	85	10
1959	312	27	1929	65	N/A
1958	293	25	1927	N/A	3
1957	265	25	1922	N/A	2
1956	249	23	1913	N/A	2
1955	237	23	1902	N/A	2

Table 1: Real per capita social welfare and public welfare expenditures, selected years, 1902-1975 (in 1967 dollars)<sup>198</sup>

This was mainly significant as expenses started to exceed \$100 billion and sustained to rise after 1968. Furthermore, the defense budget persistently increased as World War II reduced social welfare spending by about 30 percent. On the one hand, the level of social welfare spending in the United States is relatively low compared to most European countries. In recent years, the American social security taxes are about 19 percent of overall tax incomes but are more than 30 percent in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands.<sup>199</sup> On the other hand, countries such as Canada, Ireland, and Denmark allocate less than 10 percent of their revenue to social security and education. Canada, Denmark, Cuba, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Russia

<sup>198</sup> Kaplan, Saul. "Social Welfare Expenditures under Public Programs in the United States, 1929-66. Ida C. Merriam, Alfred M. Skolnik." *Social Service Review*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1969. 376-376.

<sup>199</sup> Revenue Statistics of OECD Member Countries, 1965-1971; a Standardized Classification. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1973. 27.

assign a larger percentage of their national revenue for education than does the United States.<sup>200</sup>

I examine the approach through which the United States pays for its welfare programs. In the Scandinavian countries mainly and in Western Europe principally, the growing welfare state has been mostly financed by higher taxation. In the United States, welfare has been commonly financed through debt. This is evident by comparing the diverse national tax obligations as a percentage of GNP. Consequently, interest payments on government debt as a percentage of public expenses have denoted 8.2 percent of federal expenditures in 1968 then progressively rose to 10.9 percent in 1974. Moreover, the “burden” of public debt (measured as a percentage of GNP), which has been dropping since World War II, started to increase. Because the American debt burden is one of the highest in the world, the growing national debt has become the central political matter. Most liberal economists presume that government programs that are funded by loans rather than by taxes have affected the debt.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> “Senate Finance Continues Work on Tax Cut Bill,” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 33, March 15, 1975, 530.

<sup>201</sup>x, Richard A. *Public Finance in Theory and Practice*. McGraw-Hill Education, 2004. 587.

Year	GNP	Debt	Debt As A Year GNP Debt % of GNP
1902	17	3	18
1913	40	6	15
1922	74	33	45
1927	96	33	35
1932	59	39	66
1938	85	57	67
1940	101	63	62
1946	211	285	135
1950	286	282	99
1955	399	331	83
1960	506	372	74
1965	688	443	64
1970	982	589	60
1971	1,063	641	60
1972	1,171	683	58
1973	1,306	734	56
1974	1,407	790	56
1975 (est.)*	1,499	893	60
1976 (est.)*	1,593	1,033	65

Table 2: Gross public debt as a percentage of GNP selected years, 1902-1976 (\$ billions)<sup>202</sup>

1. Sweden .....	40%	12. Canada .....	30%
2. Netherlands .....	39	13. Italy .....	30
3. Norway .....	38	14. Ireland .....	29
4. Denmark .....	37	15. The U.S. ....	27
5. Austria .....	36	16. Australia .....	25
6. France .....	36	17. Greece .....	23
7. United Kingdom .....	35	18. Switzerland .....	23
8. Germany .....	34	19. Portugal .....	20
9. Belgium .....	33	20. Japan .....	19
10. Finland .....	33	21. Turkey .....	19
11. Luxembourg .....	33	22. Spain .....	19

Table 3: Total tax revenue as percentage of, 1965-71 average<sup>203</sup>

<sup>202</sup> The 1975-76 debt estimates are U.S. Budget increases for federal debt and the average increase for the past 5 years for the other categories. *Historical Statistics, Colonial Times to 1957*. 722; 1976 Economic Report of the President. 171, 247; U.S. Budget in Brief, FY 1977. 69.

<sup>203</sup> Source: Revenue Statistics of Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development Member Countries, 1965-1971. 1973. 25.



Figure 1: Gross Public Debt as a percentage of GNP, selected years, 1902-1976<sup>204</sup>

Social welfare policy is the collective response to the concerns of social well-being through maintaining social welfare policies and programs, usually representing the culmination of many social, political, and economic events. The American social welfare dates back to the time of the first European settlers where North America did not possess any recognized social, political, or economic system. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics states “Social workers should promote the general welfare of society... They should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice”.<sup>205</sup>

Since the earliest history of the United States, shifting economic and social circumstances moved the country from dependence on private social

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<sup>204</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Executive Office of the President, and Council of Economic Advisers.

<sup>205</sup> National Association of Social Workers. NASW code of ethics. Washington, DC: Author. 2008. 27.

welfare programs to reliance on public social welfare programs. The shifting design of the American social welfare policy basically reflects the ideologies, values, and beliefs of the society. Schlesinger believes that the two diverging beliefs, individual responsibility and social responsibility, have strongly helped the American social welfare policy. He explains a “continuing shift in national involvement between public purpose and private interest”.<sup>206</sup> Hence, eras of public commitment are generally followed by periods of private interest, especially when people become submerged by their personal interests focusing more on privatization and personal achievement. Nonetheless, private interest causes dissatisfaction, as achievement is not accessible for everyone mainly the deprived ones. In this way, people change asking for more public responsibility. It is in this development of history that both private interest and public purpose change.

The United States became the primary working example of capitalism with a market-economy system that does not automatically provide social assistance to all citizens. The Social Security system is actually a selective institutional program as only those who work in covered employment are qualified to receive benefits that are mainly determined according to the person’s record of contributions. Hence, to cover those outside the market system, the U.S. government intervenes in the marketplace economy and plays a fundamental role in preserving the social welfare of the citizens. For instance, under the Social Security Act, the federal government provides services to unemployed people through job training programs. State and local governments function the same way as schools, for example, are run by local people nominated to serve on school panels. Although the main source of the social welfare system is government intervention, not all Americans share the same viewpoint. Historically, people have challenged government intervention in the social and economic systems. In order to understand the social welfare policies and programs in the United States, we need to analyze the fundamental social values and beliefs that have shaped the social welfare system.

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<sup>206</sup> Schlesinger, Arthur M. *The Cycles of American History*. Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 27.

## 2. Ideologies of the social welfare system:

The social welfare policy is based on ideologies, which are ideas that influence both the design of the American thinking and the social welfare system. Understanding the social values and beliefs helps to clarify some of the inconsistencies in policies and explain why the system looks the way it does today. Hence, American social welfare is traditionally designed to help those who are in need and do not have any income. The ideology of poverty goes with the theory of condemning the victim and asserts that poverty is a cultural fate passed on from one generation to another. Since the 1960s, social scientist William Julius Wilson argued that because of economic exclusion and misery, urban ghettos produced a culture that did not conform to the American ethics, beliefs, and values of the American dominant culture. For this, Wilson holds both the individual and the institutions as responsible for changing the social conditions of the underclass, and assumes that social welfare has to intervene in finding a solution to the related problems.

In the previous context, most Americans support the idea of supporting the underclass, as long as they deserve the help and must, for instance, be seen as trying hard, willing to work, and appreciative of the different job prospects. The principle of deserving and undeserving people goes back to the early colonial period (1700s) when laws considered widows, orphans, elderly people, and people with a physical disability as deserving help because they were simply in need and went through circumstances beyond their control. Today, the view is still relevant, mainly in political speeches and in decision-making in the House of Representatives as with the approval of the 1996 welfare reform legislation. Lawmakers were concerned with the value of self-sufficiency and who should receive social welfare and who should not.<sup>207</sup> Those who are able to hold a job and earn enough to support themselves and their families but still poor are considered unworthy of public assistance.

The distinction between deserving and undeserving individuals reappeared by the end of the 1980s when the social responsibility culture of the 1960s declined to pave the way for individualism and self-sufficiency to

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<sup>207</sup> Segal, Elizabeth A., and Keith M. Kilty. "Political Promises for Welfare Reform." *Journal of Poverty*, vol. 7, no. 1-2, 2003. 51-67.

become the trademark. Public concern for social services disappeared blaming their personal failure for their social problems. The viewpoint of social welfare as a “hand-out” rather than a fundamental right controlled the political landscape. During these years of retrenchment, conservatives seized the dominant public view and the aspiration to transfer responsibility for social welfare from the federal government to localities.

The same distinction between deserving and undeserving people made a full return during the 1990s. For instance, poor women who depended on public aids were viewed as undeserving, and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) was a resulting legislation that systemized the conviction. This perception reinforced beliefs in personal failure as the ultimate cause of poverty and deprivation. The inconsistent beliefs about social welfare policy would set the stage for political struggles, mainly between conservatives and liberals, in the next ten years.

Although by definition social welfare implicates the general public, Americans have always argued about who should be responsible for their well-being. It is, in fact, the belief that the government should intervene in assisting people who are in need that splits the public opinion and afflicts the development of social welfare policy. On the one hand, conservatives, who emphasize individualism and the worth of each person over and above the collective society, strongly believe in individual responsibility and perceive social issues such as poverty, mental illness, and family breakdown as problems that should be tackled by individual efforts. Liberals, on the other hand, strongly believe in social responsibility and the fact that these social problems should be addressed by government intervention.

### **3. Historical background of the social welfare in the United States:**

Today’s social welfare policies have been structured by major historical events and fashioned by changing social values and beliefs. Studying the historical context of social welfare policy in the United States helps us better understand today’s social welfare system. In spite of the intervening purpose in



preserving the status quo and sustaining control for the majority, the social welfare system has seen dramatic changes since the colonial times reflecting variations, political changes, and changing values and beliefs.

a. The Great Depression and the New Deal (1925–1940):

The economic depression represented the major concern during the 1930s when the stock market crash of October 1929 unexpectedly ended the nation’s resilient devotion to the market system and the affluence of the 1920s or the “Roaring Twenties”. The gross national product considerably fell from \$103 billion in 1929 to \$56 billion in 1933.<sup>208</sup> Millions of families were bankrupt because of the extensive unemployment of workers. Existing social services and relief groups of the 1920s were no longer able to meet with the huge social needs and demands of millions of people. The private charitable organizations lacked the skills and resources to cope with the significant social and economic turmoil. “As a result of the Depression, many people came to realize that the fortunes of individual Americans were interdependent, and many adopted the belief that it was the duty of the federal government to prevent new depressions.”<sup>209</sup>

In the depths of the severe economic deprivation, the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt with fresh ideas was considered as a relief. Roosevelt, in fact, became a great leader with his beliefs that coincided with the widespread values in the Great Depression.<sup>210</sup> Roosevelt had a genuine concern for others and considered that the economic crisis was the result of different factors that had to be addressed through the federal government. His New Deal policies were intended to setback the economic troubles of the country.

The Social Security Act of 1935 marked the beginning of the modern

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<sup>208</sup> US Census Bureau. “Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970.” Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, 30 July 2015, [www.census.gov/library/publications/1975/compendia/hist\\_stats\\_colonial-1970.html](http://www.census.gov/library/publications/1975/compendia/hist_stats_colonial-1970.html).

<sup>209</sup> Gronbjerg, K. *Poverty and social change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Gronbjerg, Street, & Suttles, 1978. 46.

<sup>210</sup> McElvaine, R. S. *The Great Depression: America 1929–1941*. New York: Times Books. 1993. 329.

welfare state in the United States with a very new ideological viewpoint of the federal government's role. While other minor federal actions were implemented during the early 1930s, the keystone of the Social Security Act was agreed from three main acts: the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA).<sup>211</sup> FERA was the primary federal economic assistance agency to be set since the Freedman's Bureau after the Civil War. Poverty was so critical that the federal government had to directly provide relief to local public agencies over which individuals would obtain assistance. During the Great Depression, millions of economically stable employees found themselves without work and with terrible conditions that were out of their control. The CCC and the WPA represented the crucial policies of the New Deal program and developed in 1933 to provide jobs for the unemployed young men who later worked on conservation projects, including reforestation and flood control. Indeed, the WPA plans helped provide 8 million jobs mainly in the domains of heavy construction involving the building of post offices, schools, and government buildings.<sup>212</sup>

The Great Depression came to finally challenge the old American conception that poverty only resulted from individual idleness and unworthiness. Roosevelt's New Deal changed public attitude toward social welfare policy and programs. The global failure of the economic system reduced the struggle of the voting public to direct provision of social welfare services.<sup>213</sup> The Social Security Act created the two main social security programs: On the one hand, social insurance including Old-Age Insurance and Unemployment Insurance is a collectively funded program for employees and their dependents economic providing resources at the termination of employment due to retirement, disability, or death. On the other hand, public assistance, including Old-Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children, and Aid to the Blind, is a government-funded effort to aid people who are considered

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<sup>211</sup> Axinn, J., & Stern, M. *Social welfare: A history of the American Response to Need*, 7th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 2008. 89

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> Dobelstein, A. W. *Politics, Economics, and Public Welfare*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. 1980. 54

poor through general public revenue.

The social insurance program had an increased edifice, as costs were firstly low and then progressively increased. The design of the program made it more tolerable to the taxpaying community ensuring that there was no discredit related to receiving aids. Employees had actually “paid” for these benefits with their payroll taxes. The public assistance program, however, did not receive much public support due to the vast poverty of people who needed urgent economic support during the Great Depression.<sup>214</sup> From 1935 to the present, almost all social welfare programs have been enacted accounting for most of the coverage, recipients, benefits, and expenses. The Social Security Act also contained the Maternal and Child Health Act, which would later shape the fundamental amendment of today’s child welfare support. The Great Depression also strengthened the role of the federal government in child and family welfare policy.

The concept of social responsibility and social change became more important during that period. For the first time, people became aware of the significant role of the federal government in defending the social welfare system. Before the 1930s, the federal government had played a minor role in social welfare policy mostly leaving the market system free. The Great Depression utterly changed the federal role suggesting a new accepted concept of social responsibility. The federal government was so entrenched in the provision of social welfare in the years to come that conservatives hardly opposed it.

b. World War II and the postwar era (1940–1960):

The challenging World War II forced President Roosevelt to abandon a number of the New Deal social reforms. Yet, the war abroad helped employ millions of Americans through either deployment in the armed services or services in war-related industries and technologies. World War II, hence, perpetually expanded the social role of the federal government after the 1930s. Federal aids for housing, mortgages, and transportation also helped postwar

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<sup>214</sup> Derthick, Martha. *Policymaking for Social Security*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution. 1979. 199

families leave cities for newly better developed suburban areas.<sup>215</sup> “New Deal spending in the years 1937 through 1941 averaged \$9.2 billion a year. By the years 1947 to 1950, however, federal expenditures averaged \$37.8 billion. A four-fold increase in government spending had occurred almost unnoticed”.<sup>216</sup>

Straight after the war, Congress passed the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the GI bill. It was a support for readjustment and funded provisions for education and training, home and business mortgages, and employment services intended to help the returning veterans familiarize themselves with civilian life.<sup>217</sup> The addition of disability insurance to the Social Security Act to cover workers who became disabled and their families represented the development of social welfare policy during the 1950s.

c. Social and welfare reform (1960–1990s):

The 1960s was a period of social welfare policy expansion in reaction to the “rediscovery” of poverty and the demographic changes, as two major social welfare policy plans were passed in 1964: the Civil Rights Act and the War on Poverty. The latter was launched by President Lyndon Johnson as an effort to lead his own New Deal programs. The progressive nature of the War on Poverty was evident in child welfare efforts. During the 1960s, the Food Stamp program, child nutrition services, and the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) were enacted. Medicaid and the Child Health Act met health needs, and social opportunities were expanded through the Head Start programs and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These programs represented a significant expansion of care for low-income children.

In 1964, Congress passed the Food Stamp Program to address the rising need to diminish hunger in the United States. Further legislation was enacted in 1965 such as the Older Americans Act, a national network to manage services

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<sup>215</sup> Ehrenreich, John H. *The Altruistic Imagination: A History of Social Work and Social Policy in the United States*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 1985. 77.

<sup>216</sup> Berkowitz, Edward D., & McQuaid, Kim. *Creating the Welfare State*, 2nd ed. New York: Praeger. 1988. 147.

<sup>217</sup> Axinn, June., & Stern, Mark J. *Social Welfare: A history of the American Response to Need*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon 2008. 88.

for the elderly. Moreover, Head Start was established in 1965 as a result of the Economic Opportunity in order to prevent poverty by offering services for poor nursery children and their families. The services comprised medical care, food, and school provisions.<sup>218</sup> The Social Security Act was extended by the addition of two major health care programs, Medicare and Medicaid that target the elderly, the poor, and people with disabilities. Advocates of health care insurance had spent 30 years pushing for a health care system. While Medicare expanded the safety net of the Social Security Act for the elderly and employees who may become disabled, Medicaid provided health services for the poor.

By the late 1960s, the rising numbers of single mothers and poor minorities in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program encouraged more disciplinary measures. Conservatives assumed that the original goals of the program have changed from income support for the deserving poor including widows and orphans to funding women whose lifestyle threatened the country's ethics.<sup>219</sup> And since the late 1960s, Conservatives started to view government suspiciously. Between 1970s and 1980s, modern conservatism settled in thanks to the presidency of Ronald Reagan who strongly defended privatization and free-market economy. The Reagan administration emphasized three central objectives: transferring authority from the federal level to state and local levels, depending on the private companies to support social welfare, and cutting federal programs and expenditure for social welfare plans.<sup>220</sup> Conservatives argued that this decentralization would help the federal government budget, ignored the original role of the federal government.

During the 1980s, the federal government took resources away from social welfare services under the guise of "less government" as a better government. The measures specifically affected poor women who relied on

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<sup>218</sup> Gustavsson, Nora. S., & Segal, Elizabeth. A. *Critical Issues in Child Welfare*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 1994. 14.

<sup>219</sup> Abramovitz, M. *Regulating the Lives of Women*, Revised edition. Boston: South End Press. 1996. 71.

<sup>220</sup> Rochefort, David A. *American Social Welfare Policy: Dynamics of Formulation and Change*. Boulder, CO: Westview. 1986. 30.

government protection and benefits against economic difficulties.<sup>221</sup> Under the Reagan administration, Congress enacted the Family Support Act of 1988 to reform the AFDC program, known also as “welfare reform.” While social welfare services at the federal government were being repealed and social problems were being overlooked, the conservative government invested billions in supporting corporates, as with the \$7.5 billion bailout of Continental Bank in 1984 and the \$100 billion poured between 1989 and 1993 for settling the savings and loan scandals.<sup>222</sup>

The 1980s were characterized by retrenchment policies with less government support for poor people. The Reagan administration clearly gave priority to private interests rather than social welfare programs. As a result, economic inequalities between those with high incomes and those with low incomes grew, causing a significant gap between the rich and the poor. For instance, from 1980 to 1990, household incomes increased by more than 20 percent for the highest fifth, compared with a rise of seven percent for those in the bottom fifth.<sup>223</sup>

Under the presidency of Bill Clinton in the 1990s, a number of social welfare acts including the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 were acted, although they had previously been vetoed by President George H. W. Bush in 1988 and 1990. Clinton declared: “Social Security...reflects some of our deepest values - the duties we owe to our parents, the duties we owe to each other when we’re in different situations in life, the duties we owe to our children and our grandchildren. Indeed, it reflects our determination to move forward across generations and across the income divides in our country, as one America.” The FMLA was the first federal legislation to oblige employers to guarantee unpaid maternity leave, or for sickness of a dependent or family member. Further enacted legislations under Democrats’ authority included the Brady Bill and the Anti-Crime Bill - two bills that had been reversed during

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<sup>221</sup> Segal, Elizabeth. A. *Welfare Reform: Help for Poor Women and Whildren?* Affili. 1989. 42-50.

<sup>222</sup> Congressional Quarterly. *Hill votes more funds for thrift bailout.* 1993, CQ Almanac. 150. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>223</sup> DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B. D., & Smith, J. C. “Income, poverty, and health insurance coverage in the United States: 2007.” *Current Population Reports*, 60-235. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

both Reagan and Bush administrations.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) was the result of years of debate about how to emphasize economic self-reliance and parental responsibility among underprivileged families instead of the provisions of the public child welfare system. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program affected the lives of millions of poor families representing a key change in the federal government's role toward needy children.

#### **4. American health care policy:**

Like any social issues, health care has historically been a major national concern. It was not until the mid-1800s that public contribution to the health care system began, when the existing few hospitals were simply aid organizations for the poor and mainly linked to almshouses.<sup>224</sup> With the massive changes brought by industrialization and immigration, urban cities of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century became overcrowded pushing people to live in unhealthy environments. Although public health gradually became an important part of the social reform program at the turn of the 20th century, most policies were pointed at government and local intervention. The Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921 was the first federal legislation to address the health care system in the United States, providing resources for improving the care conditions of mothers and young children.<sup>225</sup> Today, the health care system in the United States remains confusing, as it is not supplied to recipients in a definite and clear structure. Americans do not enjoy a fully universal health care program; instead, they have to go through a combination of services that are generally unequally accessible and extremely expensive.

Public debate on the national healthcare coverage reveals how the economic difficulties can impact social welfare policy. The 1992 presidential election restored the national debate on health coverage and with the election of Bill Clinton, the federal government developed an inclusive health care

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<sup>224</sup> Katz, Michael B. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*. New York: Basic Books. 1986. 61.

<sup>225</sup> Axinn, June., & Stern, Mark. J. *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need*, 7th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 2008. 30.

system. Political interest groups pressured against President Clinton's proposals for a comprehensive national health insurance. Although he won the elections, they tended to block passage of any legislative initiatives for health care reform. With a Republican control of Congress in 1995 and 1996, the effort shifted from national health care insurance to increased amendments and cost restriction of current programs. Eventually, President Clinton and Congress reached a compromise to adjust existing health care coverage policies with the passage of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Employees who lose or quit their jobs became able to acquire individual coverage from their former insurer. HIPAA was mainly directed toward persons who are already covered. Yet, the national concern of health insurance for those without any health care assistance remains unsolved.

In an attempt to tackle the problem of the uncovered people, Congress passed the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) in 1997 - a federal-state program that tends to provide health insurance for low-income children. In spite of the program's efforts, the number of low-income people who lack health insurance has considerably grown in recent years. With the election of George W. Bush, the role of the federal government in the healthcare shifted to private sector leaving state and local governments in struggle with the system. According to experts, health care is a domain in which the marketplace has been unsuccessful, since workers who work full time do not enjoy a suitable health care coverage for themselves or their families.

The election of Barack Obama, a strong advocate of a comprehensive national healthcare system, as president in 2008 indicated that most Americans are once again pledging the federal government to provide an equitable healthcare insurance. Public support for government-sponsored health coverage has increased not only in reaction to national concern about the economic disparities between the working class and the poor class who do not enjoy any health coverage but in reaction to the economic outcome for corporations' prosperity. Businesses are generally reluctant to fund healthcare for their workers because they assume it is expensive and affects their economic effectiveness. If the federal government guarantees health coverage for workers, corporations will not assume the responsibility of health insurance.



## 5. Major health care programs:

### a. Medicare:

After remaining particularly unaffected by enactment until 1956, the Social Security system started a steady evolution as more and more aids were added such as the Disability Insurance benefits in 1958. Further benefits were added to widows and widowers in 1967. The 1972 amendments offered natural cost-of-living benefits. In 1965, Congress passed the Medicare program, which is health coverage for individuals who are qualified to obtain Social Security benefits through hospital services and care.<sup>226</sup> The Medicare program is composed of two distinct plans: Hospital Insurance and Supplementary Medical Insurance. Hospital Insurance is a social coverage program involving inpatient hospital services, practiced nursing facilities for those who have been released from the hospital, health centers, and clinic care. Supplementary Medical Insurance is government-funded; still participants pay a monthly percentage (\$96.40 in 2008, with extra costs for higher revenues) and are responsible for co-payments for services.

Medicare commonly pays 80 percent of the cost of services under Part B, while the participant is responsible for the residual 20 percent. Taxation for Part A of Hospital Insurance is evaluated in the same way as for the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program. As a result, the extension of the Social Security and the establishment of Medicare entailed further tax revenues; hence increasing recurrently the basic payroll tax throughout the years. Between 1949 and 1962 the payroll tax rate rose progressively from 2 percent to 6 percent. The extensions in 1965 led to additional rate growths, with the coalesced payroll tax rate rising to 12.3 percent in 1980. Therefore, the top Social Security tax burden increased from only \$60 in 1949 to reach \$3,175 in 1980. Although the payroll tax burden was increased, the Social Security additional benefits enacted by Congress led to critical funding crises during the 1980s. Ultimately, Congress passed several trivial changes in Social Security benefits, along with a rise in the payroll tax

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<sup>226</sup> "Social Security Administration." Annual Statistical Supplement, 2007, Apr. 2008, [www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html](http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html).

rate to 15.3 percent by 1990. Between 1980 and 1990, the top Social Security payroll tax burden more than doubled to reach \$7,849.

In 2003, Congress extended the Medicare program to involve prescription drug coverage. Medicare reform was the major public change, which became a law in December 2003. The objective was to help the elderly pay for the high cost of prescription drugs. The program, however, was a complex mixture of public and private options and limited coverage that experts worried it would “make it harder, not easier, for the nation’s senior citizens to navigate health care in this country”.<sup>227</sup> The different options within Medicare reflected the difficulties in finding agreement among Democrats and Republicans before passing it. It was launched in 2006 and gradually developed to cover over 27 million recipients.<sup>228</sup>

Moreover, the rising cost of Medicare including health insurance and medical expenses represented another key health care concern. Although the program is comprehensive, it does not cover all the expenses such as long-term care. In this case, many elderly opt-out to for extra health coverage through the private insurance Medigap. Yet, the federal government passed legislation to adjust Medigap in 1990 involving regulations that force businesses to apply coverage without discrimination or overcharging payments. In 2003, Congress passed legislation that further extended the scope of Medicare. The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 adjusted Title XVIII of the Social Security Act arranging alternatives for private-sector health policies in Part C. The law greatly developed benefits enabling recipients to receive medicine insurance from Medicare.

The Medicare program officially began in 2006, when private corporations started to provide prescription drug coverage. Subscribers had to pay a once-a-month percentage and make co-payments for aids and were responsible for a low annual deductible sum. The plan for benefits was tremendously complex and changes each year to continue with inflation. In 2008, the plan refunded 75 percent of drug costs (after a \$275 deductible

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<sup>227</sup> Dallek, G. “A Prescription for Confusion.” *Washington Post National Weekly Edition* 21(8): 2003. 22.

<sup>228</sup> Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), 261 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. (2008). Monthly contract summary report. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services.

amount had been met), up to \$2,510 a year. As insurance was not accessible for costs that exceeded \$2,510 before, the program then funded 95 percent of drug expenses over \$4,050.<sup>229</sup> Estimates, hence, placed the expense of the program to the federal government to be \$635 billion over the first 10 years. In addition, the private plans, which use appealing repayment rates to induce private coverage companies to contribute, have cost the federal government \$10 billion per year more than would the government-operated Medicare plan.<sup>230</sup> With the costly prescription drugs and the rising numbers of American senior people who needed health care coverage, the Medicare plan gradually became more central to the federal government.

b. Medicaid:

Medicaid is the American largest public health insurance program providing health and durable care coverage to 52 million low-income people in 2004. It is also one of the greatest domestic federal funding programs, with expenditures comprising more than \$205 billion in 2007. The part of Medicaid funded by the state from own-source income encompasses 16 percent of overall expenses, making it the second greatest spending constituent. Medicaid is a jointly financed program whereby states combine federal benefits and the consistent level, or Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), expanding between 50 percent and 11 percent, relying on the state.

Throughout its history, the redistributive character of Medicaid has always been misunderstood. Between 1971 and 1996, the U.S. Congress committees claimed an average of 11 hearings per year on Medicaid and healthcare reform. Likewise, they requested many audits by the United States Government Accountability Office (USGAO). In one of the most noticeable reports, which were released in 1994, the USGAO recommended that some states were relocating a large proportion of own-source spending on Medicaid with federal dollars, by “illusory accounting practices.” The report indeed gave

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<sup>229</sup> “Social Security Administration.” *Annual Statistical Supplement*, 2007, Apr. 2008, [www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html](http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html).

<sup>230</sup> Whelan, David. “Unfilled Prescription.” *Forbes*, *Forbes Magazine*, 16 July 2012, [www.forbes.com/forbes/2008/0421/040.html#105a70de2c02](http://www.forbes.com/forbes/2008/0421/040.html#105a70de2c02).

evidence that, for instance, the state of Michigan made more than \$271 million in one unconventional deal.

Therefore, Medicaid manages to examine the outcome of a specific support on state taxation, in addition to the settings that regulate that outcome as assessments about the spending of federal Medicaid assets affect the whole state tax effort. Then, a conditional fund with an equivalent requirement is intended to reduce states' ability to refund federal reserves to taxpayers. In that case, states continue to practice extensive caution in the outlay of federal Medicaid funds despite equivalent supplies and misunderstanding. For this reason, due to its redistributive nature, there is an important level of adjustment to which states integrate Medicaid's objectives.

Medicaid is influenced by state government ideology since there is interaction between ideology and the degree of federal Medicaid funds. For instance, liberal states experience superior tax efforts and states guaranteeing the redistributive objectives of the Medicaid program divert less money to tax reduction. Research suggests that the requirement and nature of Medicaid outlay depends relatively on population age and range.<sup>231</sup> Therefore, states with a considerable elderly population would depend more on federal taxes to offset the expenses of healthcare and high percentages of poverty. Studies also indicate that states with racially diverse populations provide fewer aids while they may demand less federal funds.<sup>232</sup> Studying fiscal federalism enhances the insight into the system of taxation in the American states, and the outcomes offer considerable proof that grants-in-aid and redistributive programs such as Medicaid employ downward pressure on state tax efforts. While the level to which states consent ideologically with the aims of Medicaid rather controls its negative effect, a share of federal taxes apparently returns to state taxpayers in the form of lower taxes in the most liberal state.

The 1965 Social Security Amendments similarly generated the Medicaid programs, which would offer medical assistance for persons with low incomes and resources. Medicaid provides financial assistance to poor families,

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<sup>231</sup> *Twenty years of Medicare and Medicaid: Covered populations, use of benefits, and program expenditures.* Marian Gornick, Jay N. Greenberg, Ph.D., Paul W. Eggers, Ph.D., and Allen Dobson, Ph.D. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4195077/>

<sup>232</sup> Alesina, Alberto, and Edward L. Glaeser. *Fighting Poverty in the United States and Europe: A World of Difference.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. 65.

elderly, blind, disabled people and poor children, representing a fundamental public medical coverage program. In 2005, it covered more than 26 million dependent children, composing 46 percent of the total Medicaid recipients. These children accounted for only 15 percent of the Medicaid services costs.<sup>233</sup> As employment-centered health insurance has failed for children, Medicaid insurance has become more significant.

Since the 1960s, State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has provided health care insurance for needy children. Nevertheless, millions of children, whose families couldn't afford the high costs of health insurance, were still unprotected. The work benefits of these families did not comprise health insurance coverage, as it was too expensive. The increasing number of these people was a major national concern and led to a public debate on the efficiency of the national health coverage. During his administration, President Clinton's attempts to address the issue were met with strong resistance from conservatives. Clinton proposed health insurance for children because he believed it was an imperative contribution to child welfare. In 1997, Congress passed the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) - a federal-state legislation whereby states experienced more flexible services within extensive federal standards. Indeed, the flexibility involved functioning SCHIP as an annex of Medicaid or as a separate program. States had to offer all Medicaid services to all eligible recipients if they wanted to choose to add SCHIP to Medicaid.

By 2002, 16 states had used the extension to the Medicaid programs, 16 used separate SCHIP programs, and 19 had used a combination of the two methods.<sup>234</sup> In 2006, the number of dependent children who subscribed to the program doubled since 2002 topping nearly 7 million. All of them were able to receive health care insurance through SCHIP with collective state and federal expenditure reaching \$7 billion.<sup>235</sup> When President Obama took office in 2008,

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<sup>233</sup> "Social Security Administration." *Annual Statistical Supplement*, 2007, Apr. 2008, [www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html](http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html).

<sup>234</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office. *Long-term Care*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing office. 2002

<sup>235</sup> US Census Bureau. "Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008." *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008*, 26 Sept. 2015, [www.census.gov/library/publications/2007/compendia/statab/127ed.html](http://www.census.gov/library/publications/2007/compendia/statab/127ed.html).

he attempted to reauthorize and extend the program until 2013 with boosted health care coverage to comprise an extra 4 million dependent children. Under Medicaid, the federal government provides state funds for covering the expense of health care and services for low-income families and their dependents.<sup>236</sup>

If medical costs would deplete the financial resources of a person or family to the point that they would become impoverished, they are eligible for Medicaid coverage in many states. Typically, people “spend down,” or pay for medical care until their finances reach a prescribed level. When this point is reached, Medicaid covers the rest of the costs. Unlike Medicare, the Medicaid program varies from state to state controlled by the CMS under the HHS whereby each state plans and manages its own program in coordination with federal criterions. Most of the expenses including 23 percent of Medicaid go to the elderly, while other 43 percent of the costs go to people with disabilities, and 17 percent of the costs go to children.<sup>237</sup> Hence, Medicaid is a fundamental safety net for poor senior people, people with disabilities, and poor children.

## **II. Conservative theory and politics of welfare:**

### **1. Opposing the New Deal and inventing a new one:**

When the Social Security Act was passed in August of 1935, conservatives were concerned that federal social welfare policy would rescind individual responsibility and self-reliance. With the far-reaching Democratic control of Congress in 1934, the Social Security Act of 1935 was easily enacted leaving conservatives without a convincing argument against the new measures. In fact, *The New York Times* stated at the time that “there is every indication that Mr. Roosevelt will have his way from beginning to end.”<sup>238</sup> The

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<sup>236</sup> “Social Security Administration.” *Annual Statistical Supplement*, 2007, Apr. 2008, [www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html](http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2007/index.html).

<sup>237</sup> US Census Bureau. “Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008.” *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008*, 26 Sept. 2015, [www.census.gov/library/publications/2007/compendia/statab/127ed.html](http://www.census.gov/library/publications/2007/compendia/statab/127ed.html).

<sup>238</sup> Special to *The New York Times*. “CONGRESS FACES A HEAVY PROGRAM; More New Deal Legislation Is Expected to Bear on Finance and Industry. SOCIAL LAWS PREDICTED Old-Age Pensions Will Be Proposed - Other Measures on Power and Defense.” *The New York*

new anti-statist conservatism confronted the old-age insurance constituent on the basis that the federal government lacked the constitutional authority to pass the liberal programs and provide pensions. In this respect, the early conservative coalition with businessmen was deficient. Whereas the businessmen were backed by all the political elites, it lacked the organizational capacity to produce new ideas and to take on “the establishment” until the 1980s.<sup>239</sup> Indeed, the counter-mobilization to the Social Security Act of 1935 was mainly based on the anti-statist ideology. Businessmen desperately adhered to the *laissez-faire* doctrine because it had always served their interests. Old right conservatives were not only defending the free market as an economic tradition, but also the old constitutional mode of governance. Therefore, they objected to the expansion of the government because they claimed that any given intervention was simply unconstitutional.<sup>240</sup>

As post-World War II era witnessed prosperity, conservatives extremely opposed the addition of any new program to the Social Security that would expand social welfare coverage, emphasizing individual responsibility and private well-being. Conservative thinkers such as Russell Kirk, Richard M. Weaver, and Friedrich A. Hayek engaged in writing to persuade Americans of the risks of the New Deal social programs and the benefits of resuming circumstances before its consent. For instance, Hayek sold a million copies of *The Road to Serfdom* becoming a reference to conservatives. Then, by the 1960s, Milton Friedman and William F. Buckley became significant national figures who efficiently communicated their beliefs to large audiences. In brief, and following World War II, anti-statist old-right conservatives had to construct and articulate the movement from the ground up in reaction to the influential New Deal liberals. They needed to establish conservative think tanks and universities, wherein thinkers and policy experts could advance and spread the ideology. On a more public level, grassroots groups such as White

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*Times*, 2 Jan. 1935, [www.nytimes.com/1935/01/02/archives/congress-faces-a-heavy-program-more-new-deal-legislation-is.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1935/01/02/archives/congress-faces-a-heavy-program-more-new-deal-legislation-is.html).

<sup>239</sup> Brian J. Glenn, “Conservatives and America Political Development.” *Political Science Quarterly*. 2010-11. 611-638: The Academy of Political Science - CONSERVATIVES AND THE STATE: THE ORIGINAL CONFLICT. 616.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 616.

Southerners, religious groups, and middle-class whites joined a conservative coalition against the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

Barry Goldwater and L. Brent Bozell<sup>241</sup> denounced both New Dealers and moderate Republicans for permitting “socialism” to assist “all other considerations to man's material well-being.”<sup>242</sup> Goldwater's *Conscience of a Conservative* challenged the New Deal order allowing conservatives to follow his lead. It affected concerns splitting the nation: the balance between states' rights and civil rights, the growth in taxation, and the development of the labor movement and the welfare state. Goldwater's new ideas matched with libertarians and even many liberals who appreciated his modern-day resentment to the religious Right and his lenient outlook toward homosexuality and abortion.<sup>243</sup> In an interview for the 2006 documentary film *Mr. Conservative: Goldwater on Goldwater*, made by CC Goldwater and co-produced by film producer Tani L. Cohen, first shown on HBO on September 18, 2006, Madeline Albright, President Bill Clinton's former secretary of state, seizes the film's most fundamental contention: “Today, he looks liberal to me.”<sup>244</sup>

Conservatives still lacked the organizational capacity until the early 1970s to generate not only policies, but also thorough perceptions that should reach the mass public for overall grassroots support. Even with an ample array of both journals and magazines of public interest, this lack of organizational capacity meant that conservatives were outgunned in opposing the so-called Establishment they so resented. Then, by the late 1970s, conservatism

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<sup>241</sup> Leo Brent Bozell III (July 14, 1955) is an American conservative writer and activist who created the Media Research Center, Parents Television Council, and CNSNews.com. Bozell was president of the Parents Television Council from 1995 to 2006. Today, he serves on the board for the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights and on the board of directors in the American Conservative Union. Bozell's editorial was managed by Creator's Syndicate nationwide where his publications appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Washington Times, New York Post, Los Angeles Times, and National Review.

<sup>242</sup> Goldwater, Barry M., and C. C. Goldwater. *The Conscience of a Conservative*. Princeton University Press, 2007. 3.

<sup>243</sup> Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater's Early Senate Career and the De-legitimization of Organized Labor. *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 3 (Dec., 2008). 678-709 Oxford University Press on behalf of Organization of American Historians. 678.

<sup>244</sup> Solomon, Deborah, “Goldwater Girl”, *The New York Times* (interview with CC Goldwater), August 27, 2006. Archived from the original on April 25, 2009, retrieved January 1, 2007



developed in large coalitions with elite actors who were talented enough to articulate principles in opposition to the New Deal. The election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency provided anti-statist conservatives with their ultimate prospect for change, leading to the rise of a new conservatism.

When dealing with American labor history, the development of a confident cultural conservatism within the working class was clearly represented in the furious 1970 New York City clash between unionized construction labors and anti-Vietnam War campaigners. The rise of the socially conservative Ronald Reagan Democrat played an important role in the 1980 election, stressing how the “culture wars” of the 1970s and 1980s undermined the New Deal dispute. In fact, historians started to talk about the death of the New Deal, revealing how conservative’s counter-offensive against liberalism and labor unions only represented the white working class's new backing for Republican positions on social and cultural issues.

Conservative policies are driven by re-election and achieving more benefits to their well-to-do electorate, who typically support expanding private market provision. However, the fundamental structures of the health care system have always conflicted with the conservative goals. What is more interesting is that the elevated tax burden policies became highly unpopular amongst the middle-income electorate. Throughout the last decades, American conservatives employed a strategy of marketization via compensation in order to win the votes of the vital middle-class group to whom the private market-based healthcare system represented a substantial welfare loss.<sup>245</sup> They also intended to inspire and economically support the growth of private health care through Private Health Insurance (PHI) and withdrawing from the public healthcare system.<sup>246</sup>

While left-wing parties support large social policies that typically involve a redistribution of income from the rich to the poor as well as the expansion of social programs, right-wing parties favor private healthcare

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<sup>245</sup> Kenneth R. Hoover, “The Rise of Conservative Capitalism: Ideological Tensions within the Reagan and Thatcher Governments,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1987. 245-268.

<sup>246</sup> Carsten H, “Marketization via Compensation: Health Care and the Politics of the Right in Advanced Industrialized Nations”. Cambridge University Press. *British Journal of Political Science*. 2011. 907-926.

because it is generally tilted towards high-income groups who typically represent the central conservative electorate. According to Pierson, right-wing administrations desist from tax cuts because it simply threatens their prospects of re-election. Conservatives believe that health-care reform or any form of welfare specifically targets the so-called undeserving “poor, blacks, immigrants, etc.” This is a recurring pattern in American history where large sections of Right-wing populists painted those who have no health care as “undeserving.” Today, Tea Party participants charge the current government with various forms of totalitarianism, they contend that this administration has no right to impose taxes or make policy.

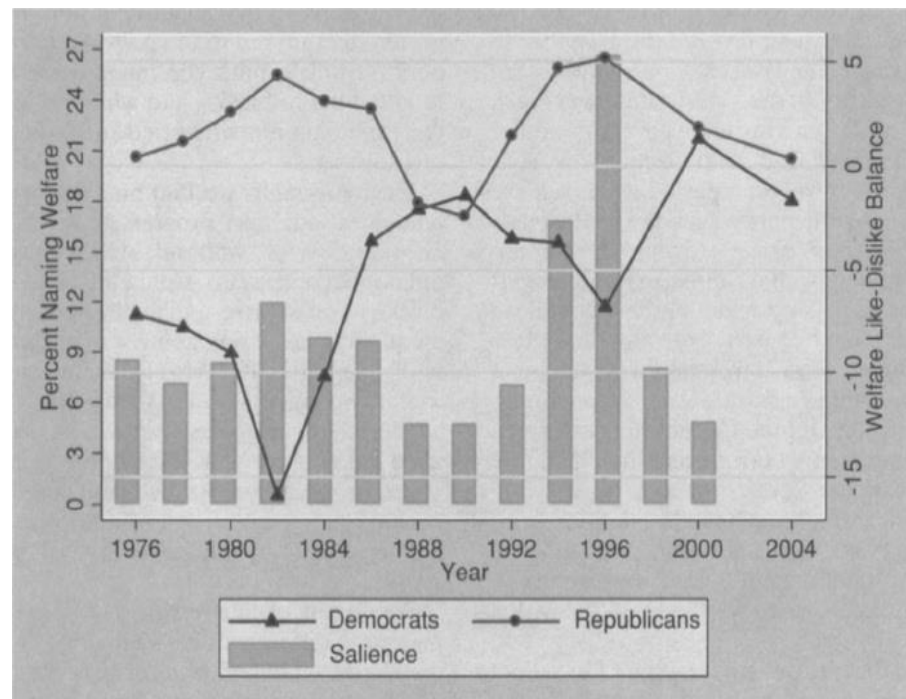


Figure 2: Welfare as a Reason to Like vs. Dislike the Democratic and Republican Parties Comparison of Party Balances and Issue Salience over Time<sup>247</sup>

Ultimately, the progressive revisionist thesis promised greater public

<sup>247</sup> Joe Soss and Sanford F. Schram , “A Public Transformed? Welfare Reform as Policy Feedback”, *The American Political Science Review*, American Political Science Association. 2007. 111-127.

support for efforts to help the disadvantaged and for the Democratic Party. One way reform might generate the first of these effects would be to strip the taint of “welfare” away from anti-poverty efforts. As we have seen, welfare preserved negative implications for large segments of the public in the post-reform era: it remained associated with dependence, laziness, and aid to blacks. One critical question, then, is whether the quieting of welfare disputes weakened the relationship between disdain for welfare and resistance to helping the poor. In the subsample of the GSS that contains the welfare preference question, two items measure willingness to help the poor: a 5-point scale indicating opinion to the idea that government “should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans” and a 7-point scale indicating opposition to the idea that government should “reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor.” To test whether these policy preferences have become less tied to welfare attitudes, we use a regression analysis that includes controls for respondents' sex, age, education, family income, marital status, party identification, liberal-conservative identification, and support for individualism. For the first measure, we find a significant relationship to welfare opposition in the 1984-1991 period.

In spite of its persistent association with welfare, the public's eagerness to invest in the poor could have increased as welfare became a less important subject. Opposition to advancing “the standard of living of all poor Americans” essentially improved considerably in the years following the welfare reform.

Therefore, in the post-reform era, feelings toward the poor have somewhat developed calmly, and efforts to assist the poor became linked to “welfare.” Prior to welfare reform, critics argued that Democrats worked hard under intolerable difficulties accordingly to their connection with “permissive” welfare. By signing a sturdy reform bill, President Clinton cleared the way for Democrats to achieve more support among Americans especially those who had opposed liberal public aid. Between 1976 and 2004, the Republican Party showed a net positive assessment on this question; the Democratic Party showed a net negative as it suffered a considerable drawback on welfare in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Nevertheless, at the end of the 1980s, we see

equivalent changes in partisan gain and issue salience. Prior to the Family Support Act and in the middle of the greatly controversial “new consensus” in welfare policy, public awareness of welfare declined and the Republican benefit on this question faded away.

When Clinton re-exposed the issue during his 1992 campaign, welfare reappeared on the public agenda and the Republican Party quickly reestablished its benefit. The welfare issue reemerged with Clinton's campaign in 1992; then expanded distinctly in 1994; peaked in 1996, and finally faded in the years following reform. Hence, while bipartisan legislative action reduced the effect of the welfare question shortly after 1988, it did not avert the issue's revival or the reinstatement of partisan benefit. PRWORA changed fundamental political dynamics in a more essential and resilient way as the electorate's predilection for welfare expenditure and support to minorities became less foretelling of partisanship.

The 1994 election marked a political revolution for Republicans who, for the first time in more than 40 years, took control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Inspired from the Reagan administration, the Republican “Contract with America” called for withdrawal of social welfare programs, pledging to shrink federal control of social welfare services with an attempt to overturn the accountability to state and local governments. The Republican agenda was revealed in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), signed into law by President Clinton in August of 1996, representing a radical shift in public assistance. Following 1996, welfare opponents became as numerous after 1996 as in the AFDC era. They no longer identified themselves with the Democratic Party or wanted to vote for Democratic candidates. Since 1935, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program had guaranteed cash assistance to any family with a very low income. Moreover, the new legislation repealed the 60-year old Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, which had guaranteed cash assistance to poor families.

## 2. Goldwater Conservatism and the Election of 1964: Revolt against welfare:

In the 1964 presidential election, the animating axioms of many historians and political scientists were shattered. Senator Barry Goldwater's nomination by the Republican Party contravened the proposition that neither of America's major parties could abandon electoral pragmatism for an intense ideological campaign. The presumptive realities of pragmatic "brokerage" parties, an electorate unreceptive to an "issues" appeal and the acceptance of the welfare state's egalitarian politics were important elements in establishing "the end of ideology" theme in American social thought. America's welfare state, developed during the New Deal and subsequently extended and refined in Fair Deal, Modern Republicanism, New Frontier and Great Society programs, appeared as a permanent and revered institution. Its acceptance was attested to, submitted Walter Rostow, by "a consensus among a substantial majority of the population that government should continue to perform a wide range of economic functions."<sup>248</sup>

Historians concluded that Americans no longer thought that government was best which governed least: *laissez-faire* economics "survives more as a tradition than actuality." The "searing ordeal" of our Great Depression "purged the American people of their belief in the limited powers of the federal government and convinced them of the necessity of the guarantor state." The New Deal symbolized "the crossing of a divide from which, it would seem, there could be no turning back." It has become so significant a part of "the American Way that no political party which aspires to high office dares now to repudiate it."

When in the Congressional elections of 1934 Republicans castigated Roosevelt's programs as "socialistic" and "un-American," they became the first party since 1866 which failed to argument its Congressional strength after losing the presidential election. Senator Goldwater's presidential nomination in

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<sup>248</sup> Annunziata, Frank. "The Revolt against the Welfare State: Goldwater Conservatism and the Election of 1964." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 2, Choosing the President and the Vice President, 1 Apr. 1980. 254-265. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4.254](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4.254).

1964, however, constituted a direct assault upon the welfare state and an attempt to govern the United States on a pre-New Deal basis. Goldwater's role in the American political tradition was to question the legitimacy of the New Deal. His political language functioned not to reinforce in people's minds the reassuring primal symbol of government as protector.<sup>249</sup> What distinguished Goldwater from his Republican predecessors was not his ideology, rhetoric or even political philosophy, but what Hans Morgenthau called his "unwillingness to put that philosophy into practice."<sup>250</sup>

Dwight Eisenhower's electoral sweep in 1952 helped Goldwater defeat the Democrats' Senate Majority Leader, Ernest W. McFarland of Arizona. When questioned after his victory about what "kind" of Republican he was, Goldwater replied: "Well, I am not a me-too Republican... I am a Republican opposed to gigantic bureaucratic, centralized authority." When the administration's specific proposals, however, belied his rhetoric, Goldwater complained that concessions to "the New Deal philosophy of government" were being made. Eisenhower's "Modern Republicanism" advocated a shift in party strategy away from denunciations of a "dead Roosevelt" to positive alternatives. Goldwater's ideas on political decentralization and economic individualism placed him in the "Old Guard" wing of the Republican Party. He served on the Senate Labor Committee on Public Welfare and its subcommittees on Labor (1955), Veteran's Affairs (1955); Aging (1959), Education (1960), Migratory Labor (1960-62) and Railroad Retirement (1963).

Along with Senators William Knowland and John Bricker, he fought to halt welfare state incursions. In a Senate speech of April 8, 1957, he protested President Eisenhower's budget request, charging that while twenty years of New Deal - Fair Deal experiments in socialism had made many Americans susceptible to the doctrine of federal paternalism, Republicans had to repudiate that approach and unshackle the free enterprise system.

It is equally disillusioning to see the Republican Party plunging headlong into the dismal state experienced by the traditional Democratic principles of Jefferson and Jackson during the days of the New Deal and Fair Deal. As a result of those economical and political misadventures, that great

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<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

party has now lost its soul of freedom; its spokesmen are peddlers of the philosophy that the Constitution is outmoded, that state's rights are void, and that the only hope for the future of the United States is for our people to be federally born, federally housed, federally clothed, federally supported in their occupations and to be buried in a federal box in federal cemetery.<sup>251</sup>

Goldwater implored Americans to return to authentic entrepreneurial capitalism, individualism, and the Constitution "as it was written one hundred and eighty years ago, not as it is being interpreted today." The nation had to understand that government regulation and supervision only aggravated social problems. Indeed, the federal government should disengage itself from reform programs begun during the New Deal. "The government must begin to withdraw from a whole series of programs that are outside its constitutional mandate - from social welfare programs, education, public power, agriculture, public housing, urban renewal and all the other activities that can be better performed by lower levels of government or by private institutions or by individuals. I do not suggest that the federal government drop all of these programs tonight."<sup>252</sup>

When Goldwater talked about "welfarism", he received cheers from right-wing audiences (and was chosen by 38 percent of the electorate) but was generally seen as too extremist. He achieved the nomination in 1964 because he persuaded convention delegates that he could obliterate the welfare state. He expressed one facet of a very persistent theme in American political thought that of "anti-governmentalism."<sup>253</sup> For Richard Hofstadter, Goldwater personified the "revolt against the whole modern condition as the old-fashioned American see it against the world of organization and bureaucracy, the welfare state, our urban disorders, secularism, the decline of American entrepreneurial

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<sup>251</sup> Annunziata, Frank. "The Revolt against the Welfare State: Goldwater Conservatism and the Election of 1964." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 2, Choosing the President and the Vice President, 1 Apr. 1980. 254-265. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4). 256.

<sup>252</sup> Annunziata, Frank. "The Revolt against the Welfare State: Goldwater Conservatism and the Election of 1964." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 2, Choosing the President and the Vice President, 1 Apr. 1980. 254-265. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27547569?refreqid=search-gateway:a802bd52dd5542e731ed7e5adef270c4). 256.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

bravura, the apparent disappearance of individualism and individuality and the emergence of unwelcome international burdens.”<sup>254</sup>

After 1964, others like Milton Friedman kept writing slowly developing an antistate economic theory. Conservative economists and critics began writing important books about the costs and bureaucracy of the welfare state that received some mainstream attention and normalized the questioning of welfare. And although George Gilder was first treated as a crank when he revealed to the general public the “evils” of welfare and the need to “wean” people from the welfare state as a first step in righting the moral and behavioral wrongs of America, the election of Reagan gave credence to Gilder's ideas and served as a base from which more mainstream writers could call for “an end to welfare.”

Barry Goldwater declared: “federal intervention in education is unconstitutional” and “the alleged need for federal funds (for education) has never been convincingly demonstrated.” Barry Goldwater would have never backed the Bush Administration's much-advertised educational lead, the “No Child Left Behind Act,” which engages the federal government in decisions and subsidy. During the 1960s, Barry Goldwater clearly opposed federal tax and other associated expenditure programs. Confronted with the Bush Administration's tax cuts and its neglect for consequent deficits, Barry Goldwater furiously reacted: “While there is something to be said for the proposition that spending will never be reduced so long as there is money in the federal treasury, I believe that as a practical matter spending cuts must come before tax cuts. If we reduce taxes before firm, principled decisions are made about expenditures; we will court deficit spending and the inflationary effects that invariably follow.”<sup>255</sup>

### **3. Reaganism and the rise of privatized social security:**

Ideological conviction fueled by persistent support for change had

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<sup>254</sup> Hofstadter, Richard. “The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt.” *The American SCHOLAR Reader*, 2017. 333–350. 41-42.

<sup>255</sup> Hofstadter, Richard. “The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt.” *The American SCHOLAR Reader*, 2017. 333–350. .



motivated the conservative revolution.<sup>256</sup> It involved budget cuts and program consolidations rather than the entire reform program proposed in the former New Federalism plan. The achievement of the New Federalist proposal largely depended on freeing the obstacle of genuine structural transformation. This also depended on the conceptual influence that has invigorated the conservative movement, which suffered from inner conflicts between traditionalists and libertarians.

The political controversy over income security is still at debate in the United States. During Reagan's presidency, the main question was whether the federal government should finance welfare in the 1981 New Federalism proposal. The latter was initially anticipated as a far-reaching shift in the disposition of federal relations including distinctive budgetary, the change of unconditional aid programs into block aids, sizeable reductions in regulatory action, the return of income sources to the state, and the creation of enterprise sectors to assist economic growth.<sup>257</sup> When completely achieved, the conservative New Federalism was to challenge the New Deal and the Great Society in the federal system.

During the Reagan era, a new generation of conservative think tanks sponsored speakers, writers, and studies, which launched a reinterpretation of the whole Great Society, and of AFDC in general, as the source of a "practice and ideology" of dependency, with increasing emphasis on the danger of welfare use for families. Soon hard-right commentators joined with less conservative writers in characterizing the poor as an "under-class," created not by the pressures of poverty but in large part by drug abuse, crime, and illegitimacy, behaviors themselves glibly associated with "long-term welfare dependence."<sup>258</sup> Therefore, when Charles Murray and Lawrence Mead hit the bookstores and airwaves in the mid-1980s with full-blown arguments that social welfare policy itself created antisocial behavior among almost all

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<sup>256</sup> Structural reforms were much more popular than the cuts in antipoverty programs. Cf. John Robinson and John Fleishman, "Ideological Trends in American Public Opinion," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 472. March 1984, 56-60.

<sup>257</sup> Richard Williamson, "1980: The Reagan Campaign-Harbinger of a Revised Federalism," *Publius*, 11. 1981. 149-50.

<sup>258</sup> Davis, Ann. "Charles Murray and the underclass: The developing debate". *The British Journal of Social Work*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998. 288-290.

recipients, in addition to creating a permanent underclass, and that welfare programs had to be abolished or made almost totally punitive and work-oriented for the benefit of the poor, the basis for today's attack on welfare was complete.”<sup>259</sup> A cohesive right-wing argument had been crafted and was presented as a “new consensus” that welfare had failed.

The new arguments pushed far into the mainstream of both political parties so that by the early 1990s the policy discussion, if not the political rhetoric, shifted away from talking (except in select circles) about “bad people.” Instead, the Right presented itself as being the political force with the real sympathy for those who endured the bad system that created their poverty, who only needed help to break the “habit of welfare,” to attain freedom from bureaucracy, and to have a chance to participate in a rejuvenate. When Goldwater talked about “welfarism”, he received cheers from right-wing audiences (and was chosen by 38 percent of the electorate) but was generally seen as too extremist.

Mead, however, argued for government-imposed work programs and other policies to force people to accept employment on any terms. Since welfare, especially “long-term welfare dependence of the under- class,” had become a coded way to talk about people of color, “welfare reform” became an acceptable way to do something about black people without being so explicit (although both Murray and, especially, Mead were clear that blacks were the main group needing improved behavior). Right-wing writers and politicians presented themselves as the true protectors of families (and women), by getting them off welfare and by not offering them the temptation to opt-out of the work and family ethic. In Marvin Olasky's words, the way to “renew American Compassion” was by ending the welfare state.<sup>260</sup> Given its tradition of charity; a key step in this progression was convincing the Christian Right to join the assault on welfare. Here Newt Gingrich himself was pivotal, because years ago he made it his explicit goal to “capture the moral high ground” by showing how “no one has been more harmed by the Great Society than the poor,” thereby demonstrating his, and the current Right's, “ability to take an issue,

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<sup>259</sup> Charles Murray, *Losing Ground*. New York: Basic Books, 1984. 227-228.

<sup>260</sup> Kiernan, Bernard P., et al. “The Conservative Illusion.” *The Conservative Illusion* | VQR Online, 1983, [www.vqronline.org/essay/conservative-illusion](http://www.vqronline.org/essay/conservative-illusion).

rotate it in three-dimensional space, and in the process of doing that, change the character of the debate.’?’ In short, welfare, the welfare state, and specifically AFDC now serve as the designated enemy for a vision of the anti-welfare society where social spending is so doubtful that it can never again be claimed as a sign of social progress.

In 1978, conservative economist Michael Boskin from Hoover Institution maintained that the government’s social security system dissuaded private investments and was incapable to deal with the old age assistance in the American population. He proposed to transfer social security to private institutions and create the Individual Retirement Accounts. Martin Feldstein, a prominent NBER economist, supported the proposal and insisted that social security accounts be transformed completely into private savings accounts. Both supply-side advocates and fiscal conservatives advanced social welfare reform plans to form new employment motivations and decrease social spending. At the Hoover Institution, Martin Anderson established a “New Federalism” proposal to restructure Federal and state accountability for welfare programs in 1978. Claiming that state and local governments were rather accustomed to local labor markets and community values, they would handle income preservation whereas the federal government would assume full responsibility of health care and social security.

After his election, Ronald Reagan brought conservative economists Anderson, Boskin, and Feldstein to the White House working for the Economic Advisory Committees. Though the House Democrats did everything to block the radical plans of privatizing social security mainly Anderson's “New Federalism” plan, Reagan used executive orders to achieve most of the conservative economic objectives. Residual parts of Great Society programs were finally eliminated or changed into bloc allowances and OMB audit measures were implemented to limit state-operated welfare programs. The ERTA produced Individual Retirement Accounts and the White House delivered an executive order fostering the unemployment “trigger” at which unemployment aids were prolonged beyond the usual 26-week coverage and shrinking eligibility policies.

Hence, considerable cuts in federal support clearly marked the Reagan program. Many cuts targeted federal connections while other few cuts have

been substituted by state-based platforms. Richard Nathan declared, “These cuts fell on one group, the so-called working poor, made up primarily of household and their children living on a combination of welfare.”<sup>261</sup> Although the cuts were significant, they were substantially smaller than formerly suggested by the Reagan administration. In fact, in his first budget plan, Reagan proposed cutting “human capital” programs by almost 40 percent and Congress approved only 23 percent of cuts.<sup>262</sup> These concepts also operated as the prototype for future policy reforms, such as eliminating AFDC and relocating revenue maintenance programs from federal government to state and local governments in the 1990s. For instance, cuts targeted food stamps of 51.3 percent cut; Congress enacted a 13.8 percent decrease. The most remarkable cut, however, targeted the Women, Infants, and Children program by proposing a 63.6 percent cut in Congress.<sup>263</sup>

Ronald Reagan’s conservative welfare policy actually reflected the political internal conflicts that would later form the income-security policy of the 1980s. Indeed, the conceptual history of the New Federalism simply started with the California Welfare Reform Act of 1971. It is revealing for future policy commands that the California Reform Act clearly intended to substitute the complete federalization of AFDC. As Reagan became president and recommended his New Federalism trade-off of the federal share of AFDC to the state and local government, his proposal became the cornerstone of the fundamental revolution in federal relations. Libertarians assumed that the fight between states to reduce welfare would achieve the policy objective of plummeting tax rates. Ronald Reagan's administration reacted to the rising welfare turns and to tension from federal welfare supervisors to increase assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).<sup>264</sup> The reform meant to reduce entitlement and expand the profit levels to those depending on the rolls and was scheduled to increase by 9.8 percent; a cut of 28.6 percent was

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<sup>261</sup> Richard Nathan and Fred Doolittle, “Reagan's Surprising Domestic Achievement,” *Wall Street Journal*, 18 September 1984. 28.

<sup>262</sup> Lou Cannon, *Reagan*. New York: Putnams, 1982. 174-86.

<sup>263</sup> D. Lee Bawden and John Palmer, “Social Policy: Challenging the Welfare State” in *The Reagan Record*, John Palmer and Isabel Sawhill, eds. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Press, 1984. 185-86.

<sup>264</sup> Lou Cannon, *Reagan*. New York: Putnams, 1982, 174-86.

planned by the Reagan administration, and Congress passed a 14.3 percent reduction. However, the New Federalism program was more affected by an ideological division rather than an unpredictable issue. The ideological nature of the split mirrored classic pressures between conservative libertarians and conservative traditionalists. Robert Carleson and David Stockman were the two key actors in the New Federalism ideological tensions.

These disputes over the fundamental question of federalizing AFDC essentially reflected differences in a larger level of concern. In determining policy inclinations revealed in discussions with Reagan White House staff members, John Kessel uncovered splits between “unalloyed conservatives” and “domestic conservatives”. While the first think national defense is the only appropriate federal action, the second advocate several new domestic program proposals.<sup>265</sup> President Reagan has designated his perspective as “libertarian,” although his opinions reveal a mixture of libertarian and traditional ideologies.<sup>266</sup> Reagan’s economic programs seemed to be libertarian with traditionalist positions. The cross-cut comes in the area of federal programs for the poor. The safety net is acknowledged; still decentralization of social accountability is reinvigorated. Whereas a libertarian would resist the federalization of Medicaid and AFDC, a traditionalist would federalize both in bare-bones procedure, the New Federalism suggested as one for the other at the federal level. Whatever the influence of libertarians and traditionalists on the achievement of the New Federalism, these ideological distinctions within conservatism itself have been less obvious than the deliberate flexibility of the Republican White House in proceeding its program.

Reagan created a form of New Federalism in regards to budgetary priorities that included the decentralization of regulatory roles, tax cutbacks and the establishment of several social welfare programs into block allowances. Robert Carleson, the former president's assistant for human and executive secretary of the Cabinet Council on Human Resources, played a crucial role in the New Federalism discussion, advancing contentious proposals in the Reagan administration regarding Social Security reform, housing policy,

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<sup>265</sup> John Kessel, “The Structures of the Reagan White House,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 28:2. May 1984, 235-36.

<sup>266</sup> Lou Cannon, *Reagan*. New York: Putnams, 1982, 194.

food stamp programs, and Medicaid.<sup>267</sup> “Income earned belongs individually to the ones who earn it. It does not belong to the state, nor does it belong by segment of the population.” Welfare should be provided only to those “because of advanced age or permanent and total disability, are unable to support themselves.”<sup>268</sup> Carleson favors a locally controlled welfare. “A welfare system must be designed and administered at the level of government in order to tailor the assistance to meet the needs of the community's truly needy.”<sup>269</sup> This consideration follows the libertarian's distress of the menace to individual freedom presented by majoritarian democracy.

Liberals claim that there are numerous scopes to unequal opportunities. In a response to Robert Carleson's article “Social Responsibility,” George McGovern quoted: “Regrettably, it is a philosophy rooted in the Horatio Alger fiction that achievement is but a matter of will; it is scornful of all that science tells us about the physical, psychological, environmental, economic, and social factors that can inhibit the realization of human potential.”<sup>270</sup> On the one hand, Robert Carleson wanted to devolve AFDC as he never trusted the federalization of Medicaid.” Carleson believed that the unconditional assistance programs had swept away capital and political resources that ought to benefit a general reorganization of federal charges. Budget cuts, program partnerships, and decentralization of the aid programs are necessary to control the federal budget. On the other hand, Stockman had a distinctive vision making a distinction between these approaches and the requirement national minimums in the areas of health and income security on the federal level should affect itself with “foreign policy, the social systems we run nationwide - Social Security, Medicare and me entitlements - that embody all those fundamental commitments that have been made.”<sup>271</sup> Stockman held, indeed, a traditional conservative position about society and how the state must

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<sup>267</sup> See Robert Pear, “3 Key Aides Reshape Welfare Policy,” *New York Times*, 2. 12.

<sup>268</sup> Robert Carleson and Kevin R. Hopkins, “Whose Responsibility Is Social Responsibility?: The Reagan Rationale,” *Public Welfare*, 8 1981, 9, 13-14.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>270</sup> George McGovern, “Whose Responsibility Is Social Responsibility?: An Opposing View,” *Public Welfare*, 8. 1981, 9.

<sup>271</sup> James Reston, “Discussing the Bugs in the Machinery,” interview with David A. Stockman, *New York Times*, 12 April 1984, 12.

guarantee welfare to its dependent citizens especially in difficult circumstances. Economic programs that targeted the distribution of benefits in the marketplace, though, were dependent on the budget cuts and/or delegation to the states.

Nevertheless, the Reagan deficits suggested that any effort to adjust benefits at the federal level would involve reducing radically advantages to those whose entitlements were anyhow weak. Stockman assumed that a reasonable federalized Medicaid would dismiss many marginal receivers protected under federal programs, just as the estimate of Medicaid budget was fiscally unmanageable considering the important deficits. Actually, this dilemma challenged the New Federalism debates in mid-1982. Richard Williamson, the president of the negotiations, commented in a reflective examination that “certain administration officials, whose enthusiasm for the New Federalism initiative had dissipated.” He also believed that the Office of Management and the Budget were responsible for the failure to accomplish the Medicaid-for-AFDC changeover.<sup>272</sup> The problem of income security represented the crucial point in political debates as it was impossible between both Republican and Democratic governors and the Reagan administration to achieve an agreement.

Finally, the slogan which best sums up the presidency of Ronald Reagan is its constant contest against “big government,” as government became “too cumbersome, too intrusive, imposing too many regulations;” unnecessarily interfering in individual liberties. Reaganites maintained that the government should be reduced in order to end the distress of the American society, reinstate freedoms, and “make America great again”<sup>273</sup>. In fact, the clear attack on “big government” has become the all-encompassing political formula used in conservative mass media; a routine summons so much repeated that it became accepted as an American cliché. Hence, the Reagan administration simply expresses a resurgent conservatism, or a conservative

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<sup>272</sup> Richard Williamson, “The 1982 New Federalism Negotiations,” *Publius*, 13:2. Spring 1983, 27-28.

<sup>273</sup> A slogan that is used by Donald Trump during his 2016 presidential campaign.

ideology *defined* as a righteous campaign to defeat the evils of “big government.”<sup>274</sup>

American modern conservatism played an important role in the development of the federal government, at times supporting its considerable growth and at others obstructing it. From this vision, the relationship between conservatives and the state was perceived as reciprocal and vibrant as conservatives themselves have shaped the state. Following the failure of Reagan to stop the growth of the state, conservatives at least in theory came to acknowledge a number of liberal goals, such as education for all, welfare programs for the elderly, and saving the environment. Yet, they always opposed the state’s direct provision of services to achieve their goals. Modern conservatives rather believed in the free market and the privatization of Social Security along with many other services conventionally offered by public workers.<sup>275</sup> In the 1990s, modern conservatives undertook the liberal goals, hence establishing a new form of statist conservatism that calls for free market-based processes to serve their proper ends. With their rise, conservatives finally succeeded in supporting elite actors and building political coalitions that would generate mass public support for them. Since the 1990s till today, conservatives advanced their serious market-based policy alternatives.

Today conservatives strongly believe that privatizing segments of the Social Security system is one of the most important restructuring ideas. They propose that, instead of federal government intervention in collecting contributions, each person could allocate a share of his or her contributions to a private system. Conservatives assume that such a system would motivate more individual responsibility and enable workers to earn greater benefits. They defend privatization by arguing that a part of the contribution an individual would pay into the Social Security system would improve the performance of the investment.

The controversial 2000 election, which gave a multitude of popular votes to Democrat Al Gore but then gave the electoral victory to George W.

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<sup>274</sup> Jim Hightower quoted in Sean P. Cunningham, *Cowboy Conservatism: Texas and the Rise of the Modern Right* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. 174.

<sup>275</sup> Brian J. Glenn “Conservatives and America Political Development,” *The Academy of Political Science, Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 125, No. 4 Winter 2010-11. 611-638.



Bush, deepened the bitter political division of the 1990s.<sup>276</sup> Amid the return of the Republican Party to the presidency, the concepts of limited government and lower taxes were strengthened. Yet, the tragic events of September 11, 2001, with the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center buildings and the Pentagon, shocked the nation. The huge impact of the 9/11 crisis revealed the willingness of Americans and the government to react. Although President Bush supported small government, he established federal relief efforts on a major scale after the events including repayment to families of those who died in the attacks, monetary allowances for emergency cases, and economic provision for corporate airlines and airports. As a result of 9/11, the cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was formed with 180,000 federal employees to offer an agency accountable for the national network of security organizations and institutions. Moreover, the failure of the federal government and particularly the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to react effectively to the Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005 questioned the efficiency of the American social welfare system. Hurricane Katrina also exposed how long-lasting social and economic disagreements are deteriorated by natural disasters as the poor people of New Orleans, mostly African Americans, were unable to rebuild their lives.

By the late decade, the major national concern was the economy. Fueled by easy-to-get loans in 2006, the housing market fell and banks with substantial coverage of the housing market experienced harsh financial impact. In 2007, President Bush established the Federal Reserve Board and mortgage funding efforts through the Federal Housing Administration to control the negative financial effects. Then, by 2008, the federal government had become genuinely engaged in the sphere of private corporations and banks.<sup>277</sup> The Housing and Recovery Act of 2008 enabled the Treasury Department to take possession of the government-subsidized but privately managed mortgage agencies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Along with government bailouts of additional financial companies, the measure shifted the federal government's

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<sup>276</sup> Gerald M. Pomper, "The 2000 Presidential Election: Why Gore Lost", *Political Science Quarterly*, Summer 2001, volume 116, issue 2, 201 <https://www.uvm.edu/~dguber/POLS125/articles/pomper.htm>

<sup>277</sup> "President Bush's Speech to the Nation on the Economic Crisis." *The New York Times*, 25 Sept. 2008, [www.nytimes.com/2008/09/24/business/economy/24text-bush.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/24/business/economy/24text-bush.html).

role from an outside watchdog to an inside operative in the financial trade sector. Amid the tax cuts formerly established during the early years of the Bush presidency, the strategies will expand federal expenditure and further deepen the national deficit.

The similar economic interventions initiated by President Bush would later continue under the new administration of Barack Obama with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The federal law allocated \$787 billion to fund employment, infrastructure, education, energy proficiency, and even environmental actions. Throughout the presidency of George W. Bush, Conservatives were concerned about the high cost of medications for seniors who although had fixed incomes, gradually became unable to pay for their medical treatments.<sup>278</sup> In 2003, House representatives developed legislation to change the Medicare program and expand its coverage to include prescription drugs, creating a new program for elderly people. In fact, the different amendments of Medicare and its high costs especially for seniors reveal how the legislation represented a controversy in American politics.

Today, the Tea Party is in a long-lasting conservative opposition to the Social Security revealed before. The Obama administration's effort to pass comprehensive health reform started during the period when millions of older Americans had seen the worth of their homes and incomes fall among the Great Recession of 2008-09.<sup>279</sup> Health care reform was represented by conservative leaders as a menace to Medicare and an expensive new right that would push reliable citizens and corporations to pay higher taxes to afford health insurance to younger, less well-to-do, and frequently "undeserving" people - involving illegal immigrants, it was maintained. The menace of "death panels" was also evoked to frighten older Americans. The social features and established positions of Tea Party supporters, it is not surprising that they furiously challenged health reform - and that they remain determined to push the GOP to dismantle the Affordable Care Act of 2010.

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<sup>278</sup> Thomas A. Russo Aaron J. Katzel, "The 2008 Financial Crisis and Its Aftermath: Addressing the Next Debt Challenge" Group of Thirty, Washington, DC 2011. 28 [https://group30.org/images/uploads/publications/G30\\_2008FinancialCrisisAftermathDebtChallenge.pdf](https://group30.org/images/uploads/publications/G30_2008FinancialCrisisAftermathDebtChallenge.pdf)

<sup>279</sup> Jacobs, Lawrence R., and Theda Skocpol. 2010. *Health Care Reform and American Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press. 71.

### **III. The U.S. system of taxation and the Conservative approach:**

#### **1. Historical perspective of the US tax system:**

##### **a. From the colonial times to the Civil War:**

The federal, state, and local tax systems in the United States have been distinct by substantial changes over the times in reaction to shifting circumstances, mainly in the role of the federal government. The different sets of taxes collected, their comparative shares, and the amounts of the profits gathered are distinct from what they used to 50 or 100 years ago. Most of the changes relied either on particular historical events, such as a war or the passage of the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution that conceded the Congress the power to impose a tax on personal income, or simply on social and economic changes and how the government played its role.

For most of the American history, individual taxpayers hardly had any important interaction with the federal tax system as most of the Federal government derived its tax revenues from excise taxes, tariffs, and customs duties. Prior to the Revolutionary War, the colonial government had simply a partial need for revenue, whereas every colony had larger duties and hence larger revenue requirements, which they collected through diverse types of taxes. For instance, while the middle colonies often levied a property tax and a “head” or poll tax on each adult male, the southern colonies essentially taxed imports and exports. The New England colonies elevated revenue mostly through overall real estate taxes, tariffs, and other taxes based on occupation.<sup>280</sup>

The British Empire imposed strict laws on the colonists. These laws later generated confrontations between the colonists and the British government. The conflicts united the colonists transforming them into revolutionaries. They eventually resulted in the colonies’ independence from England. From 1754 to 1763, Native-American warriors supported the French military in fighting British and colonial forces during the French and Indian

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<sup>280</sup> Chaffin, Robert J. “The Townshend Acts crisis, 1767-1770”. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*. Jack P. Greene, and J.R. Pole, eds. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1991; reprint 1999. 126.

War.<sup>281</sup> As England needed revenues to fund its wars against France, it imposed a series of taxes on the American colonies. In 1765, the English Parliament enacted the Stamp Act, which was the first tax levied directly on the American colonies, and then Parliament levied a tax on tea.<sup>282</sup> Although colonists were compelled to pay these taxes, they were not represented in the English Parliament. This led to the American Revolution under the famous “taxation without representation is tyranny” and created a determined caution concerning taxation as part of the American culture.

Protests against the acts of Parliament united colonists who decided to meet in secret and organize street mobs and protests in opposition to the new taxes. The insurgent colonists would name themselves the Sons of Liberty, who later belonged to the Whig Party. For instance, nearly 300 colonists joined the resistance group in Boston.<sup>283</sup> They were printers, carpenters, blacksmiths, businessmen and even doctors who explained to people why the taxes were unjust. The Sons of Liberty united the colonists and persuaded riots of protest by putting pressure on the British officials who were supposed to collect the stamp tax.<sup>284</sup>

In May 1773, the British parliament passed the Tea Act which aimed to maintain the financial status of the East India Company which was in debt with more than 18 million pounds of unsold tea. The colonists opposed the act as it forbade them buying tea from anyone other than the East India Company. The colonists planned an angry mob at the Old South Meetinghouse in Philadelphia in response to the Tea Act condemning the act as an attack “upon the liberties of America which every American was in duty bound to oppose.”<sup>285</sup> Disallowing three East India Company ships to unload their tea, colonists threw 342 cases of tea into the ocean on December 16, 1773. The Boston Tea Party caused the destruction of \$16,000 worth of tea leaves.

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<sup>281</sup> Gunderson, Cory Gideon. *The Boston Tea Party*. ABDO & Daughters, 2004. 12.

<sup>282</sup> Thomas, Peter D. G. *The Townshend Duties Crisis: The Second Phase of the American Revolution, 1767–1773*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. 10.

<sup>283</sup> Gunderson, Cory Gideon. *The Boston Tea Party*. ABDO & Daughters, 2004. 15.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

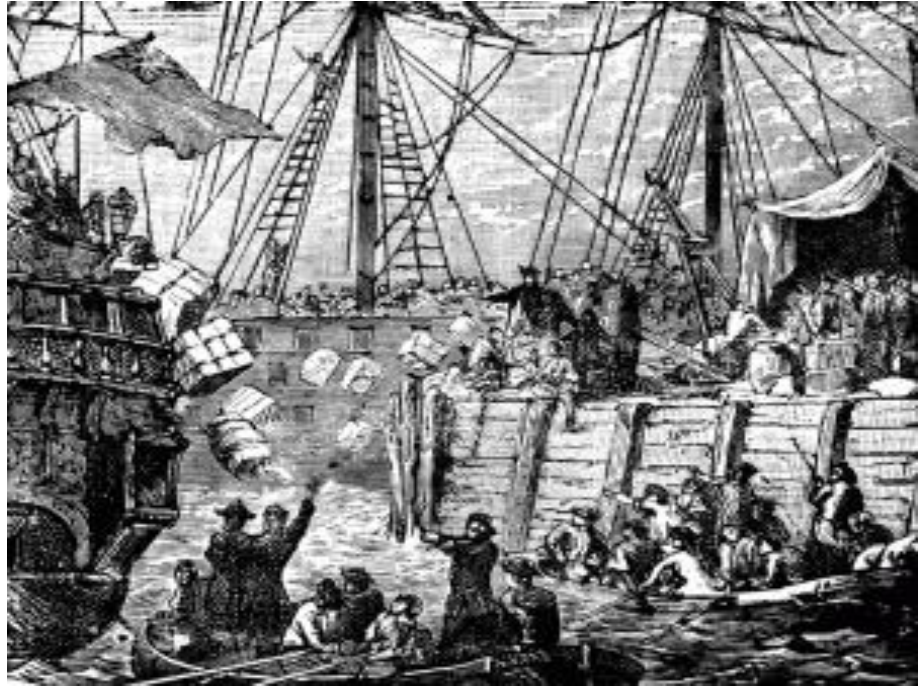


Figure 3: A group of angry Bostonians disguised as Mohawk Indians and armed with tomahawks boarded the British ships at Griffin's Wharf in Boston harbor and threw the tea.<sup>286</sup>

The Founding Fathers were aware of a government's authority to tax since taxation of the American Colonies by England was a compelling influence behind the American Revolution. Thus, they decentralized taxation and delivered most public revenue collection to districts, which depended mainly on property taxes.<sup>287</sup> During conflicts, such as the War of 1812, federal taxes were momentarily upraised to fund the war or reimburse the resulting debts. Also, for instance, the Civil War affected the growing rate of both excise tax and tariffs, helping initiate the passing of the first national income tax. Yet, during prosperous times, the federal government reduces taxes in response to public opposition to high tax rates.<sup>288</sup>

The national tax system during that time was primarily founded on

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<sup>286</sup> "16th December 1773 - The Boston Tea Party." Dorian Cope Presents On This Deity, [www.onthisdeity.com/16th-december-1773-%E2%80%93-the-boston-tea-party/](http://www.onthisdeity.com/16th-december-1773-%E2%80%93-the-boston-tea-party/).

<sup>287</sup> Chaffin, Robert J. "The Townshend Acts crisis, 1767-1770". *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*. Jack P. Greene, and J.R. Pole, eds. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1991; reprint 1999.

<sup>288</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "The Tariff Issue on the Eve of the Civil War", *The American Historical Review*, 1938. 50-55.

excise taxes then became essentially regressive. The incentive for the contemporary federal income tax lies on the Populist movement of the late 1800s. In fact, the Populists invigorated the income tax as a means to not only initiate a progressive tax centered on the ability to pay, but also to defeat the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of capitalists. In other words, the tax became an instrument of social justice.

During the Civil War, Congress enacted the Revenue Act of 1861, which reinstated previous excise taxes and levied a tax on personal incomes. The income tax was imposed at 3 percent on all personal incomes that were higher than \$800 a year, paving the way to a new Federal tax system based on excise taxes and customs duties. In 1862, the Federal Government needed more revenues, as the Union's overall debt grew by \$2 million daily after the war.<sup>289</sup> On July 1, 1862, the Congress enacted new excise taxes on goods such as iron, leather, drugs, patent medicines, tobacco, tea, and alcohol. The 1862 law passed further reforms to the Federal income tax that sanctioned key elements of American taxation.<sup>290</sup> For instance, the Federal Government taxed high incomes up to \$10,000 and more at a 3 and 5 percent rate. A further regular deduction of \$600 was passed along with a range of deductions for housing, repairs, and losses. To guarantee an appropriate collection, taxes were "withheld at the source" by employers. The need for Federal revenue declined sharply after the war and most taxes were repealed. By 1868, the main source of Government revenue derived from liquor and tobacco taxes. The income tax was abolished in 1872. From 1868 to 1913, almost 90 percent of all revenue was collected from the remaining excises.<sup>291</sup>

Before the enactment of the income tax, most people managed their affairs and earned profits accumulating wealth without any type of government interference. In fact, the income tax had profoundly transformed this relation, providing the government with the necessary legal scope to intervene in

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<sup>289</sup> Terrell, Ellen "History of the US Income Tax." *History of the US Income Tax*. Business Reference Services, Library of Congress, [www.loc.gov/rr/business/hottopic/irs\\_history.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/hottopic/irs_history.html).

<sup>290</sup> President Abraham Lincoln signed the Revenue Act, which involves the first federal income tax, on August 5, 1861. By Jack and Claire Nisbet Posted 9/14/2011 HistoryLink.org Essay 9914 [http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file\\_id=9914](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=9914)

<sup>291</sup> Historical Highlights of the IRS <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/historical-highlights-of-the-irs>

individual or business' economic life. Congress acknowledged the natural intrusiveness of the income tax into the taxpayer's personal affairs and offered people some level of safety by keeping tax returns information confidential. Under the Constitution, Congress was able to levy direct taxes as long as these were imposed according to every State's population. Hence, as soon as the Federal Government passed a flat rate on Federal income tax in 1894, it was rapidly contested in 1895 and the U.S.<sup>292</sup> Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional because it was a direct tax not apportioned according to the population of each state. From 1896 until 1910 the Federal government revenues depended largely on high tariffs. Through the War Revenue Act of 1898, it sought to fund the Spanish-American War by the sale of bonds and taxes on beer and tobacco.<sup>293</sup>

Finally, the income tax debate opposed southern and western Members of Congress who represented agricultural and rural areas to those in the industrial northeast. The debate brought about a Constitutional amendment for an excise tax to be imposed on business income and to permit the Federal government to levy tax on individuals' legal incomes regardless of the population of every State. The U.S. Constitution limited "direct" taxation on individuals through the federal government. The latter depended on indirect taxation including tariffs and excise taxes. From the beginning of the nation up to the early 1900s, tariffs or taxes on imports were the main source of U.S. internal revenues. For instance, in 1900 over 60% of internal profits came from alcohol excise taxes amid another 20% from tobacco excise taxes. Finally, in 1913, the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment was approved establishing the legal foundation of the federal income tax.

That, subject only to such exemptions and deductions as are hereinafter allowed, the net income of a taxable person shall include gains, profits, and income derived from salaries, wages, or compensation for personal service of whatever kind and in whatever form paid, or from professions, vocations, businesses, trade, commerce, or sales, or dealings in property, whether real or personal, growing out of the ownership or use of or interest in real or personal property, also from interest, rent, dividends, securities, or the transaction of any lawful business carried on for gain or

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<sup>292</sup> Curtis, S., ed., *The Power of Cities in International Relations*. New York, Routledge, 2014. 141.

<sup>293</sup> Weisman, Steven R. *The Great Tax Wars: Lincoln - Teddy Roosevelt - Wilson: How the Income Tax Transformed America*. Simon & Schuster, 2004. 177.

profit, or gains or profits and income derived from any source whatever.<sup>294</sup>

By 1913, 36 States had validated the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. In October, Congress enacted a new income tax law with rates ranging from 1 percent to 7 percent for taxpayers with incomes of \$500,000.<sup>295</sup> Congress tackled the lawfulness of the income tax by adjusting the law in 1916 and removing the word “lawful” from the definition of income. As a result, all incomes became subject to tax, even if it was earned by illegal methods. As a result, those who broke laws linked and escaped to pay taxes were imprisoned on tax evasion charges. Throughout the next decades, public support and political proposals to make the federal income taxation constitutional gradually increased.

Yet, taxation hasturned into an important political concern in the United States, as political leaders have consistently used it to endorse their agendas by introducing different tax reforms and business lobbies have tended to exert political pressure in order to decrease their stake of the tax burden, sometimes revealing the manifestation of power in the United States. While the income tax intended to push for equal redistribution of wealth, conservatives preferred measures to prevent more taxation. “...virtually none of the income tax proponents within the government believed that the income tax would become a major, yet alone the dominant, permanent source of revenue within the consumption-based federal tax system.”<sup>296</sup> Efforts to reform the tax system have generated drastic and abrupt changes in tax policy, usually driven by political features rather than financial concepts.

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<sup>294</sup> Revenue Act of 1913, Section II, B., 38 Stat. 114, 167.

<sup>295</sup> “THE STATUTES AT LARGE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FROM MARCH, 1913, TO MARCH, 1915, CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS OF THE TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS, AND RECENT TREATIES, CONVENTIONS, AND EXECUTIVE PROCLAMATIONS.”  
<https://www.givemeliberty.org/Docs/TaxResearchCD/TaxActs/IncomeTax1913.Pdf>,  
EDITED, PRINTED, AND PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF CONGRESS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE,  
[www.givemeliberty.org/docs/TaxResearchCD/TaxActs/IncomeTax1913.pdf](http://www.givemeliberty.org/docs/TaxResearchCD/TaxActs/IncomeTax1913.pdf).

<sup>296</sup> Brownlee, W. Elliot. *Federal Taxation in America: a Short History*. Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996. 45.



b. The impact of the two World Wars:

The World War I era significantly increased the need for revenue and Congress reacted by enacting the 1916 War Revenue Act.<sup>297</sup> The act raised the lowest tax rate from 1 percent to 2 percent and the top rate to 15 percent on taxpayers with incomes in excess of \$1.5 million. The 1916 Act also levied taxes on estates and excess business profits. As a result, the 1917 Federal budget was roughly equal to the overall budget for all the years between 1791 and 1916. Between 1916 and 1917, while a taxpayer required \$1.5 million in taxable revenue to face a 15 percent rate, a taxpayer with only \$40,000 faced a 16 percent rate and the individual with \$1.5 million had to face a tax rate of 67 percent.<sup>298</sup>

In 1917, another revenue act was passed to further raise the bottom rate to 6 percent and the top rate to 77 percent, increasing federal revenue from \$761 million in 1916 to \$3.6 billion in 1918 that is almost 25 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Although only 5 percent of the population paid their income taxes in 1918, the income tax-funded one-third of the total war expenditures. During the 1920s, the economy boomed as revenues from the income tax increased, allowing Congress to cut taxes five times. It eventually restored the bottom tax rate to 1 percent and the top rate down to 25 percent and reduced the Federal tax burden as a portion of GDP to 13 percent. In October of 1929, the stock market crashed marking the beginning of the Great Depression. As the economy plunged, government revenues also fell. In 1932, the Federal government collected only \$1.9 billion, compared to \$6.6 billion in 1920. Faced to an increasing budget deficit that reached \$2.7 billion in 1931, Congress passed the Tax Act of 1932, which severely increased tax rates once again, and while this had improved the government's finances, it weakened the national economy. By 1936, whereas the lowest tax rate became 4 percent, the top rate reached 79 percent. Eventually, by 1940 the frequent tax increases upraised the Federal government's tax burden to 6.8 percent of GDP.

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<sup>297</sup> Revenue Act of 1916, section 201, Ch. 463, 39 Stat. 756, 777. Sept. 8, 1916.

<sup>298</sup> Williams, Larry. R. *Confessions of a Radical Tax Protestor: An Inside Expose of the Tax Resistance Movement*. Wiley, 2011. 43.

The Social Security Act was enacted in 1935 in order to provide outlays identified as “unemployment compensation” to employees who lost their jobs following the difficult economic situation during the Great Depression.<sup>299</sup> Additional parts of the Act offered public aid to the elderly, the disadvantaged, the handicapped, and children.<sup>300</sup> The programs were funded by a 2 percent tax, one half of which was deducted from a worker's salary and one half collected from bosses on the employee's behalf. The tax was imposed on the first \$3,000 of the worker's wage.

Prior to World War II, the need for more defense spending led to the enactment of three significant taxes between 1940 and 1941 that would not only increase individual and corporate taxation, but would also fundamentally transform the nature of the income tax in the United States. For instance, taxpayers with incomes of \$500 were charged 23 percent of bottom tax rate, whereas taxpayers with incomes above \$1 million faced a maximum rate of 94 percent. As a result, the tax changes improved federal profits from \$8.7 billion in 1941 to \$45.2 billion in 1945. In spite of an economy stirred by war and conflicts, federal taxes as a portion of GDP increased from 7.6 percent in 1941 to 20.4 percent in 1945. In fact, the number of income taxpayers grew dramatically from 4 million in 1939 to 43 million in 1945.<sup>301</sup>

During the 1950s tax policy was gradually perceived as an instrument for improving federal revenue and for altering the motivations in the economy, but also as an instrument for alleviating macroeconomic activity. As the American economy faced several trouble cycles, policymakers eagerly recognised the new economic procedure of raising or lowering taxes and spending to regulate demand and thus flatten the business cycle. In fact, the income tax experienced many drastic changes since the main restructuring of 1954, certain years marked especially significant changes. For instance, the Tax Reform Act of 1969 decreased income tax rates for both individuals and

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<sup>299</sup> Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. Oxford University Press. 1999. 270-271.

<sup>300</sup>McJimsey, George. *The Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. University Press of Kansas. 2000. 108.

<sup>301</sup>Tassava, Christopher J. “The American Economy during World War II.” EHnet, [eh.net/encyclopedia/the-american-economy-during-world-war-ii/](http://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-american-economy-during-world-war-ii/).

private organizations.<sup>302</sup> By the late 1960s and through the 1970s, the United States underwent continuing and growing inflation rates, eventually reaching 13.3 percent in 1979. In spite of frequent legislated tax cuts, the tax burden grew from 19.4 percent of GDP to 20.8 percent of GDP. The high tax burden along with a rising inflation and a large regulatory burden caused difficult economic conditions, paving the way for the Reagan tax cut recognized as the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981.<sup>303</sup>

c. The Growth of Direct Taxation:

Rather than depending on rises in excise taxes and tariffs to fund World War I, Woodrow Wilson changed the income tax structure put down just a few years earlier. In order to increase further income and urge social justice, the top marginal rate rose drastically from 7% in 1915 to 67% in 1917.<sup>304</sup> Corporate taxes also became an essential revenue source, comprising over one-quarter of internal income collections in 1917. In 1916, the estate tax was formed unnecessarily to engender large profits as another device of progressive taxation.

The Great Depression, however, triggered an important drop in federal revenues. In 1932, tariffs were boosted in an effort to enhance federal income. Prior to World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt submitted progressive taxation as a crucial part of the New Deal. Still, the most substantial measure passed during this era was the old-age insurance. The Great Depression ultimately encouraged policymakers in the U.S. to endorse similar legislation. Rather than financing Social Security programs through rises in revenue or other taxes, the funding instrument was a separate tax, divided equally between employers and employees. As Social Security is a separate tax, taxpayers viewed their old-age payments as privileges and resist efforts to depreciate the

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<sup>302</sup> General explanation of the Tax reform act of 1969, H.R. 13270, 91st Congress, Public Law 91-172. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. December 3, 1970. 105.

<sup>303</sup> Niskanen, William A. "Reaganomics." Reaganomics, by William A. Niskanen: The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics, Library of Economics and Liberty, [www.econlib.org/library/Enc1/Reaganomics.html](http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc1/Reaganomics.html).

<sup>304</sup> IRS (Internal Revenue Service). 2002. "Personal Exemptions and Individual Income Tax Rates, 1913-2002." Statistics of Income Bulletin Data Release, June 2002.

program. Social Security is called the “third rail” of American politics

World War II generated another critical situation involving further revenues from higher taxes on corporations and high-income households. Roosevelt went so far as to declare that: “In this time of grave national danger, when all excess income should go to win the war, no American citizen ought to have a net income, after he has paid his taxes, of more than \$25,000.”<sup>305</sup> Between 1939 and 1942, personal indemnities were reduced by half indicating that the income tax extended the middle class for the first time. The taxable income rate declined from \$5 million in 1941 to \$200,000 in 1942, while the top minimal tax rate reached 94% in 1944.<sup>306</sup> These changes formed a historical shift in the structure of federal taxation:

Under the new tax system, the number of individual taxpayers grew from 3.9 million in 1939 to 42.6 million in 1945, and federal income tax collections over the period leaped from \$2.2 billion to \$35.1 billion. By the end of the war, nearly 90 percent of the members of the labor force submitted income-tax returns, and about 60 percent of the labor force paid income taxes. ... At the same time, the federal government came to dominate the nation’s revenue system. In 1940, federal income tax had accounted for only 16 percent of the taxes collected by all levels of government; by 1950 the federal income tax produced more than 51 percent of all collections. The installation of the new regime was the most dramatic shift in the nation’s tax policies since 1916.<sup>307</sup>

However, between the end of World War II and the 1980’s, changes to the tax system remained largely small. As the Medicare and Medicaid programs were established in 1960s and more people were receiving benefits, the Social Security tax rate intermittently increased from 2% (1% each for employers and employees) to 6.13% by 1979.<sup>308</sup> The post-World War II era marked the significant role of government in the American entire economy. In

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<sup>305</sup> Brownlee, W. Elliot. *Federal Taxation in America*. University of Cambridge Press: Cambridge. 1996. 91.

<sup>306</sup> “Historical Income Tax Rates and Brackets, 1862-2013.” Tax Foundation, 10 Apr. 2018, [taxfoundation.org/us-federal-individual-income-tax-rates-history-1913-2013-nominal-and-inflation-adjusted-brackets](http://taxfoundation.org/us-federal-individual-income-tax-rates-history-1913-2013-nominal-and-inflation-adjusted-brackets).

<sup>307</sup> Brownlee, W. Elliot. *Federal Taxation in America*. University of Cambridge Press: Cambridge. 1996. 96-97.

<sup>308</sup> Sue Kunkel. “Social Security & Medicare Tax Rates.” FICA & SECA Tax Rates, [www.ssa.gov/oact/progdata/taxRates.html](http://www.ssa.gov/oact/progdata/taxRates.html).

fact, total government spending and investment increased progressively from less than 18% of GDP in 1946 to over 22% by the mid-1970s.<sup>309</sup> For instance, the top peripheral federal tax support on individual income in the United States collapsed quickly from 70% to 28% throughout the 1980s.<sup>310</sup> Taxation has obviously been used to encourage political and economic programs. While most Americans assume that federal income tax is the largest, the federal social insurance taxation is indeed the largest one.

For instance, a greater proportion of the respondents to the 2001 survey (29.8 percent) esteemed the federal income tax to be “the worst tax, that is, the least fair” among other taxes.<sup>311</sup> Nonetheless, the local property tax matched or exceeded the federal income and was rated as the worst by larger percentages of the public. Respondents further selected the state income tax, the social security tax, and state sales taxes as the worst form of taxation throughout the whole period. Today, government expenditure represents a major share of the overall U.S. economy - in 2010 government expenses and assets at all levels included about 20% of the entire economic productivity.<sup>312</sup> Due to expanded military actions and increased public services, the role of government has become more significant leading to a growing system of taxation.

## **2. The Right turn in economic policy and the rise of fiscal conservatism:**

Business elites played a significant role in the growth of the new conservative economic policies. Conservative business policy organizations (BPOs) comprised six leading conservative organizations: The Business Roundtable, AEI, COCUS, NAM, the Heritage Foundation, and the Hoover

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<sup>309</sup> Schuyler, Michael. “A Short History of Government Taxing and Spending in the United States.” Tax Foundation, 16 Jan. 2017, [taxfoundation.org/short-history-government-taxing-and-spending-united-states/](http://taxfoundation.org/short-history-government-taxing-and-spending-united-states/).

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>311</sup> Cole, R. L., et al. “Public Opinion on Federalism in the United States and Canada in 2002: The Aftermath of Terrorism.” *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2002. 123-148.

<sup>312</sup> Schuyler, Michael. “A Short History of Government Taxing and Spending in the United States.” Tax Foundation, 16 Jan. 2017, [taxfoundation.org/short-history-government-taxing-and-spending-united-states/](http://taxfoundation.org/short-history-government-taxing-and-spending-united-states/).

Institution. Early 1970s, these organizations developed reports and pamphlets supporting a new policy paradigm, increased publicity campaigns, engaged in consensus building, lobbied Congress and the White House and anticipated key decision-making positions.<sup>313</sup> Specific think tanks such as the Shadow Open Market Committee, the Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation (IRET) and Data Resources, Inc. (or DRI) assisted the BPOs in establishing key policy proposals and introducing them in the national agenda. Conferences, interlocking personnel and coordinating groups like the Carlton Group (see below) brought them together. Moreover, the corporate elite controlled the panels of all social, regional and industrial factions that formed policy divisions and political pressures under business coalitions.<sup>314</sup>

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the United States faced a significant transformation in the decision-making.<sup>315</sup> By passing the Revenue Act of 1978 and implementing monetarist policies by the Federal Reserve Board in the beginning of 1979, the U.S. government adopted a series of new economic policies. The new conservative policy pattern has predominated into the late 1990s. The Federal Reserve Board depends on controlling money supply to regulate inflation, with the dissolution of AFDC and many new work incentives in the early 1990s.

The roots of this new political pattern lie in the breakdown of conventional Keynesian policies to control the 1970s recession and the business organization for new conservative policies. Though these policies were emphasized following the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, the monetarist and supply-side tax policies were originally implemented during the Carter administration between 1978 and 1979. This “right turn”, in fact, took almost a decade of controversy about how and why within the business

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<sup>313</sup> Jenkins, J. Craig, and Craig M. Eckert. “The Right Turn in Economic Policy: Business Elites and the New Conservative Economics.” Springer Link, Kluwer Academic Publishers-Plenum Publishers, June 2000, [link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1007573625240](http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1007573625240).

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>315</sup> Hall, Peter A, “The movement from Keynesianism to monetarism: institutional analysis and British economic policy in the 1970s.” In Seven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen and Frank Longstreth (eds.) *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*: 90-113. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 1992. 91.

mobilization, the corporate elite being the key designer.<sup>316</sup> Moreover, entrepreneurs, smaller manufacturers and ultraconservative Sunbelt elites, who were major funders of “new right” business organization, challenged the liberal “Eastern establishment,” resulting in the emergence of conservative economic policies.<sup>317</sup> The corporate elite, which dominated the boards of the leading business organization, advanced the major conservative policy proposals, namely Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982.<sup>318</sup>

The main concept motivating the new conservative economics was that the Keynesian-welfare state had generated a fundamental capital deficiency and hence inflation as well as economic “stagflation”.<sup>319</sup> In order to address these issues, conservative politicians supported the following key proposals: (1) adopting a monetarist policy of regulating the growth of money supply; (2) removing progressive tax rates to encourage investment, funds and employment opportunities; (3) establishing cost-benefit analysis and market solutions; and (4) restructuring the welfare system. These political changes revealed the rise of conservative ideology advanced by the conservative business corporations. While a wider business mobilization strengthened this procedure, the business elites and policy experts were the main designers of the new policies.

While the ultraconservatives at COCUS, NAM, Heritage and Hoover advanced supply-side and “workfare” proposals, moderate conservatives at the Business Roundtable and AEI established the monetarist, fiscal conservative and deregulation ideas. These ideas were reinforced in the early 1970s and numerous changes were implemented in the late 1970s even before Reagan’s presidential victory in 1980. Popular support for conservatives has helped

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<sup>316</sup> Clawson, Dan and Mary Ann Clawson, “Reagan or business? foundations of the new conservatism.” In Michael Schwartz (ed.), *The Power Structure of American Business*: 201-217. New York: Homes & Meier. 1987.

<sup>317</sup> Blumenthal, Sidney. *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*. New York: Times Books. 27

<sup>318</sup> Maitland, Ian “House divided: business lobbying and the 1981 Budget.” *Research in Corporate Social Performance and Policy*, 1983. 1-25. 5.

<sup>319</sup> In economics, stagflation is a state of affairs in which the inflation rate is high, the economic development rate slows, and unemployment remains gradually high. It represents a problem for economic policy, since actions proposed to reduce inflation may aggravate unemployment, and vice versa.

accelerate these changes. In fact, the business elite coalition was greatly stable in the period between 1978 and 1984 showing no internal conflict or countervailing authority. And even with the election of President Clinton, these conservative policies continued through the 1990s. Sunbelt elites became stronger on the ultraconservative panels, dominating 60% of direct firms fortune, 64% leading firms with \$1 billion or more in assets, and 76% controlling the national economic sector.<sup>320</sup>

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Fiscal conservatives have claimed that debt is a tool to corrupt politics; and that large expenditure and national debt menaces the ethics of the citizens, generating an insecure environment of entrepreneurship. Conservatives used fiscal conservatism<sup>321</sup> as a political strategy to reduce the size of government institutions as Grover Norquist declared: “My goal is to cut government in half in twenty-five years, to get it down to the size where we can drown it in the bathtub.”<sup>322</sup> Conservatives believe that government welfare programs should be reduced, hence allowing for lower tax rates and a smaller government. This principle of a smaller government goes hand in hand with fiscal conservatism. The purpose is to create a wider economic liberalism that tends to diminish government intervention in the economy or simply apply *laissez-faire* strategies. In fact, two schools of thought have influenced economic: Libertarian “rights and classical liberal realism; both contend that free-market capitalism is the best ethical ideology. Kathleen G. Donohue further declares:

To the vast majority of American classical liberals, however, *laissez-faire* did not mean no government intervention at all. On the contrary, they were more than willing to see government provide tariffs, railroad subsidies, and internal improvements, all of which benefited producers. What they condemned was intervention in behalf of consumers. In the 1970s, policy specialists at numerous conservative BPOs developed conservative policies. In 1971, COCUS and NAM

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<sup>320</sup> Jenkins, J. Craig, and Craig M. Eckert. “The Right Turn in Economic Policy: Business Elites and the New Conservative Economics.” Springer Link, Kluwer Academic Publishers-Plenum Publishers, June 2000, [link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1007573625240](http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1007573625240).

<sup>321</sup> Fiscal conservatism stands for the economic and political philosophy that supports restriction of progressive taxation and spending.

<sup>322</sup> Aberbach, Joel D., and Gillian Peele. *Crisis of Conservatism?: the Republican Party, the Conservative Movement and American Politics after Bush*. Oxford University Press, 2011. 260. See also President Reagan’s speech to governors in 1987 at Reagan, Ronald (1989). Reagan, Ronald. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Ronald Reagan, 1987. GPO, 1989. 292.



hired Norman Ture, an economist for the NBER, to advance a new basis for conservative economics to neutralize the predominant Keynesian policies at that time.

In a number of his essays, Ture<sup>323</sup> maintained that progressive taxes and social welfare spending were the main source of inflation, generating impediments to investment, funds and employment, thus leading to slow economic development. He proposed some strategies to produce new investment motivations: an expansion in the capital profits regulation; enhanced devaluation of fixed capital reserves; and decreased progressivity of revenue taxes.

Robert Mundell, an economics professor at the Institute for International Economics at Columbia University, and Arthur Laffer, Chief Economist in the Office of Management and the Budget (OMB) were also important conservative sources who reacted to the collapse of President Nixon's economic program and Keynesian fiscal policies during the 1974 crisis. Both Mundell and Laffer developed the anti-Keynesian scheme that tended to reduce revenue taxes as they could promote a better economic growth free of inflation. The conservative policy specialists proposed two different and infrequently opposing fiscal policy claims: (1) the supply-side notion that cut tax rates would help enhance investment, reserves and employment and thus offset incomes wasted from tax cuts;<sup>324</sup> and (2) the fiscal conservative claim that austerity should be implemented to regulate stagflation guiding to a durable policy of balanced budgets and dependence on spontaneous stabilizers.<sup>325</sup> In 1976, the House Republicans authorized Paul Craig Roberts, a former Hoover Fellow and the Minority Economist for the House Budget Committee, Norman Ture, who later became Director of Tax Studies at the Heritage Foundation, and Alan Sinai, the Director of DRI, an economic think tank to study the supply-side outcomes of tax rate cuts. The three experts conveyed positively that tax cuts could powerfully improve new investments,

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<sup>323</sup> 1972a White Paper on Long Range Tax Policy and Balanced Growth. Washington DC: Chamber of Commerce of the U.S. 1972b Tax Policy, Capital Formation and Productivity. New York: National Association of Manufacturers. 1977.

<sup>324</sup> Laffer, Arthur and R. David Ranson "The prototype wedge model: a tool for supply-side economics." *American Council for Capital Formation*. Washington, D.C. 1979.

<sup>325</sup> Stein, Herbert. "The real reasons for a tax cut." *The Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 1978. 20.

referring to the 1963 Kennedy tax rate reductions. They contended that such cuts would counterbalance the loss in tax revenues. Later, Republicans briefly embraced this “Kemp-Roth” plan as their major party proposal.<sup>326</sup>

The new conservative economic concepts became fundamental in the Congressional fight over President Jimmy Carter's 1978 tax strategies. In January 1978, the White House revealed a proposal advanced by Charles Schultz, Chairman of the CEA, to expand personal and capital profits taxes and generate a new Tax-based Incomes Plan (or TIPs) for income and price limit. By equalizing this with former promises to approve austerity actions, Carter wanted to preserve business provision for this fusion of Keynesian and fiscal conservative plans. Nevertheless, the strong tax lobby of Business Roundtable, NAM, COCUS, and the American Council on Capital Formation (ACCF) displayed a campaign in Congress for another supply-side platform of capital profits cuts and investment tax credits. The business industry lobby firmly overpowered the White House when Congress implemented the Revenue Act of 1978, causing the 10% investment tax credit to be perpetual.<sup>327</sup>

The election of Ronald Reagan stimulated a new series of conservative tax reforms. House Republicans firstly passed ERTA, which was founded on two plans advanced by the conservative BPOs: (1) an Accelerated Cost Recovery System (or ACRS) to expand the devaluation of fixed capital investments; and (2) the Kemp-Roth plan to decrease the gradual personal revenue taxes. NAM established the initial, using Ture's reports to shape the ACRS and, tying it to tax generalization. By the end of 1979, BPOs-NAM, Business Roundtable and the Carlton Group gathered to consolidate business lobbying to implement the ACRS.<sup>328</sup> The conservative lobbying group expanded to comprise other organizations such as the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), Patton Boggs & Blow to enhance business support and the Kemp-Roth tax rate reductions. Following Ronald Reagan's initial victories, he became the frontrunner for the Republican Presidential nomination, coordinating an Economic Advisory Committee. The latter

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<sup>326</sup> Roberts, Paul Craig. *The Supply-Side Revolution: an Insider's Account of Policymaking in Washington*. Harvard University Press, 1984. 27-33

<sup>327</sup> Kuttner, Robert, *Revolt of the Haves*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1980. 230-49.

<sup>328</sup> Ehrbar, A. F. “The battle over taxes.” *Fortune*, 1982. 105:58-63.

intended to balance representatives from both the austerity and supply-side factions and endorse Reagan's economic program.

### **3. From the “Reagan Revolution” to the Bush Tax Cuts:**

The 1981 tax cuts essentially denoted two variations from former tax policy beliefs, one explicit and anticipated and the second by inference. It affected marginal tax rates and motivations as the main factors in how the tax system influences economic activities. On the one hand, the second policy variation was the change from income taxation with regard to taxing supplies, rushing cost recovery on the business part. On the other hand, the individual part experienced an important change in the passing of many supplies to diminish the taxation of individual savings.

With absolute support of the Reagan Administration, the passing of the tax cuts in 1981 by the Federal Reserve Board transformed monetary policy so as to carry inflation under control. The Federal Reserve's activities affected the collapse in inflation leading the economy to fall into a deep recession in 1982.<sup>329</sup> Besides, federal spending levels became abruptly much higher in inflation-regulated terms. All these factors caused historical high budget deficits, which later led to a tax increase in 1984 particularly on the corporate part.

Shortly after the passing of the 1981, 1982, and 1984 tax changes the income tax required a fundamental restoration. Following the 1982 economic collapse, policymakers from both parties recognized the complexity of the tax system and were persuaded that lower marginal tax rates were crucial for a durable economy.<sup>330</sup> A new and broadly held philosophy of tax policy developed that the income tax would be greatly improved by repealing these various special provisions and lowering tax rates further. Thus, in his 1984

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<sup>329</sup> Weisman, Steven R. “REAGANOMICS AND THE PRESIDENTS MEN.” *The New York Times*, 24 Oct. 1982, [www.nytimes.com/1982/10/24/magazine/reaganomics-and-the-presidents-men.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1982/10/24/magazine/reaganomics-and-the-presidents-men.html).

<sup>330</sup> EDWARD COWAN, Special to *the New York Times*. “REAGAN'S 3-YEAR, 25% CUT IN TAX RATE VOTED BY WIDE MARGINS IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE.” *The New York Times*, 30 July 1981, [www.nytimes.com/1981/07/30/business/reagan-s-3-year-25-cut-in-tax-rate-voted-by-wide-margins-in-the-house-and-senate.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1981/07/30/business/reagan-s-3-year-25-cut-in-tax-rate-voted-by-wide-margins-in-the-house-and-senate.html).

State of the Union speech, President Reagan called for a sweeping reform of the income tax so it would have a broader base and lower rates and would be fairer, simpler, and more consistent with economic efficiency.<sup>331</sup>

The Tax Reform Act of 1986, which was the eventual outcome, caused the top tax rate down to decrease from 50 percent to 28 percent and the business tax rate to fall from 50 percent to 35 percent. Tax brackets were also reduced compared to the private exonerations that were increased, thus discharging millions of taxpayers of any Federal income tax burden. Nonetheless, the Act also generated new individual and business Alternative Minimum Taxes, which later became more complex, redundant, and economically damaging.

Although it changed some of the tax burden from personal to corporate, the 1986 Tax Reform Act was not projected to raise or lower taxes. In fact, much of the expansion in the tax on corporates was the product of an upsurge in the tax on corporate capital formation. It succeeded in simplifying the tax system for individuals through the elimination of income averaging, the deduction for state taxes and the deduction for consumer benefit. The 1986 tax act symbolized the last but one chapter of an unusual evolution in tax rate reductions. Between 1964 and 1986, the maximum individual tax rate was cut from 91 to 28 percent. Still, the progressivity of the taxation system in the United States essentially rose during this period as the tax base expanded more and well-to-do taxpayers gradually chose to receive their income in taxable forms. Hence, the 1986 tax act was a provisional reversal in the progress of the tax system.

Between 1986 and 1990, the Federal government increased the overall tax burden as a part of GDP from 17.5 to 18 percent. Following his election, President Bill Clinton supported the fact that Congress has to enact another major tax increase in 1993 through which the top tax rate rose to 36 percent. The tendency toward lower marginal taxes had undoubtedly been

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<sup>331</sup> Tax Reform for Fairness, Simplicity and Economic Growth, The Treasury Department Report to the President Volume 1 Overview, Office of the Secretary Department of the Treasury November 1984. 275. Vii <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/Documents/Report-Tax-Reform-v1-1984.pdf>

overturned.<sup>332</sup> The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 represented a major new benefit to lower-income families providing a modest tax cut through the Per Child Tax credit.<sup>333</sup> Although the tax system had previously offered tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax credit, the 1997 Per Child Tax credit established new individual tax credits and mainly refundable credits that are basically outlay programs in federal tax policy.

The general stasis of the federal tax system ended in the 1980s with the passage of several important tax reforms. In 1980, Ronald Reagan was elected president on the basis of a smaller government and lower taxes program. As it had strong bi-partisan support in the Congress, the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 was a key change in the development of federal income tax policy. Strongly advocated by Republican Jack Kemp and Senator Bill Roth, it included a 25 percent reduction in individual tax sets bringing the top tax bracket down to 50 percent. The 1981 Act clearly shifted the notion of economic devaluation, instituting instead the Accelerated Cost Recovery System that significantly reduced the hindrance facing business investment. Besides, the 1981 Act also established a 10 percent Investment Tax Credit to urge further capital foundation. Indeed, the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA) passed the largest tax cut in American history. The supply-side drive behind ERTA's severe decrease in tax rates, mainly on high-income households and capital meant that larger incentives would inspire better investment and better economic performance. In theory, the consequent tax revenue growth would largely counterbalance the revenue decreases as a result of the tax cuts, which would increase federal revenues and tackle the rising federal budget deficit at the same time. ERTA resulted in a reduction in the top tax rate from 70% to 50%, endorsed numerous corporate tax cuts, and filed several tax parameters to inflation (such as personal exemptions and

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<sup>332</sup> Rosenbaum, David E. "THE CLINTON TAX BILL; CLINTON PROPOSAL FOR TAX INCREASES PASSES FIRST TEST." *The New York Times*, 14 May 1993, [www.nytimes.com/1993/05/14/us/the-clinton-tax-bill-clinton-proposal-for-tax-increases-passes-first-test.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=C1D6F94605DE50D350706C8CB36B3816&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/1993/05/14/us/the-clinton-tax-bill-clinton-proposal-for-tax-increases-passes-first-test.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=C1D6F94605DE50D350706C8CB36B3816&gwt=pay).

<sup>333</sup> A taxpayer who wrongly received the credit due to uncontrolled or deliberate disrespect of rules or regulations would not be entitled to claim the EITC for a succeeding period of two years. Joint Committee on Taxation, General Explanation of Tax Legislation Enacted in 1997, December 17, 1997, JCS-23-97. 278.

deductions).<sup>334</sup>

Study implies that ERTA brought about the biggest reduction in federal profits of any tax bill since World War II and the federal budget deficit continued to exasperate.<sup>335</sup> Then in 1982, a further significant tax increase was passed repealing some of the ERTA revenue-reducing supplies, mainly enhanced devaluation reductions for companies, and closing some corporate dodges in the tax code.<sup>336</sup> Other Social Security reforms were passed in 1983 extending Social Security taxes and introducing taxation of several federal aids.

The Reagan Administration maintained further tax reforms, resulting in the enactment of the Tax Reform Act of 1986.<sup>337</sup> It was the most far-reaching review of the American tax code since the 1950s, decreasing top income tax rates essentially from 50% in 1986 to 28% in 1988, and lowering further top corporate tax rates from 46% to 34%.<sup>338</sup> The “Reagan revolution” was an important turning point in U.S. tax as the scope of the federal government was dramatically reduced and taxes were cut considerably. However, regardless of the major tax cuts, total federal revenues increased by 76% from 1980 to 1988, that is almost the same way as national GDP which increased by 83%.) While the share from social insurance taxes increased by 38%, the portion of revenues from both individual and corporate taxation fell by 9% and 16% separately, leading to a significant decrease in the general evolution of the federal tax system.<sup>339</sup>

The Reagan Administration did not succeed to control the rising federal

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<sup>334</sup> Scott Greenberg John Olson Stephen J. Entin, “Modeling the Economic Effects of Past Tax Bills”, September 14, 2016, <https://taxfoundation.org/modeling-economic-effects-past-tax-bills/>

<sup>335</sup> Tempalski, Jerry. “Revenue Effects of Major Tax Bills.” Office of Tax Analysis Working Paper 81, December 1998.

<sup>336</sup> Martin, Cathie J. *Shifting the Burden: The Struggle over Growth and Corporate Taxation*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago. 1991. 45.

<sup>337</sup> Petska, Tom, and Mike Strudler. 1999. “The Distribution of Individual Income and Taxes: A New Look at an Old Issue.” Paper presented at the 1999 American Economics Association conference, January 3-5, 1999, New York, <http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/article/0,,id=112309,00.html>.

<sup>338</sup> January 29, 2019 The Real Lesson of 70 Percent Tax Rates on Entrepreneurial Income Scott A. Hodge <https://taxfoundation.org/70-tax-rate-entrepreneurial-income/>

<sup>339</sup> “Personal Exemptions and Individual Income Tax Rates, 1913-2002.” <https://www.irs.gov/>, [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/02inpetr.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/02inpetr.pdf).

deficit budget, which tripled throughout the 1980s.<sup>340</sup> During his presidential campaign and in order to partially increase further federal revenue and reduce budget deficits, President George Bush promised “no new taxes” and granted a tax plan in 1990 that would raise the top marginal tax rate to 31%. Later in 1993, President Bill Clinton restored further progressive taxation by establishing the 36% and 39.6% individual tax rates. In 1993, the corporate tax bracket rose to almost 35%.<sup>341</sup>

By 2001, due to the interaction of growing real incomes and a progressive tax rate structure, the overall tax revenue had created an estimated budget surplus of \$281 billion, with a coalesced 10-year estimated surplus of \$5.6 trillion.<sup>342</sup> Therefore, during President George W. Bush's administration, the Congress ceased future tax rates increases by enacting the Economic Growth and Tax Relief and Reconciliation Act of 2001. In fact, the top tax rate would ultimately fall from 39.6 percent to 33 percent the following years. The 2001 tax cut would simply be a continuation of former tax policy trends, as it increased for instance the Per Child Tax credit from \$500 to \$1000 per child.<sup>343</sup> Despite the increasing benefits of the 2001 tax cut and the early signs of a recovery, President Bush called for and the Congress eventually enacted an economic stimulus bill. The bill included an extension of unemployment benefits to assist those workers and families under financial stress due to the downturn. The bill also included a provision to providing a temporary but significant acceleration of depreciation allowances for business investment, thereby assuring that the recovery and expansion will be strong and balanced.

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<sup>340</sup> Worstall, Tim. “Reagan's Tax Cuts Didn't Blow Out The Deficit And The Debt - That Was Volcker And Interest Rates.” *Forbes*, *Forbes Magazine*, 4 May 2017, [www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2017/05/04/reagans-tax-cuts-didnt-blow-out-the-deficit-and-the-debt-that-was-volcker-and-interest-rates/#2129140b4d6c](http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2017/05/04/reagans-tax-cuts-didnt-blow-out-the-deficit-and-the-debt-that-was-volcker-and-interest-rates/#2129140b4d6c).

<sup>341</sup> Rosenbaum, David E. “THE CLINTON TAX BILL; CLINTON PROPOSAL FOR TAX INCREASES PASSES FIRST TEST.” *The New York Times*, 14 May 1993, [www.nytimes.com/1993/05/14/us/the-clinton-tax-bill-clinton-proposal-for-tax-increases-passes-first-test.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=C1D6F94605DE50D350706C8CB36B3816&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/1993/05/14/us/the-clinton-tax-bill-clinton-proposal-for-tax-increases-passes-first-test.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=C1D6F94605DE50D350706C8CB36B3816&gwt=pay).

<sup>342</sup> Fraser. “Fiscal Year 2001.” *FRASER*, 7 Feb. 2001, [fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/54/item/19040](http://fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/54/item/19040).

<sup>343</sup> Horney, James R., and Chye-Ching Huang. “Only a Few of the 2001 and 2003 Tax Cut Provisions Benefit Families with Modest Incomes: But a Superficial Treasury Analysis Obscures This Fact.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 11 Oct. 2017, [www.cbpp.org/research/only-a-few-of-the-2001-and-2003-tax-cut-provisions-benefit-families-with-modest-incomes-but](http://www.cbpp.org/research/only-a-few-of-the-2001-and-2003-tax-cut-provisions-benefit-families-with-modest-incomes-but).

Interestingly, the depreciation provision also means that the Federal tax on business has resumed its evolution toward a consumption tax, once again paralleling the trend in individual taxation.

The most recent significant tax legislation was the \$1.35 trillion tax cut enacted in 2001 during George W. Bush's administration. The main requirements of this act comprised reducing individual income tax rates across-the-board, planning to end the estate tax in 2010, and enhancing employees' contributions for retirement benefits. In fact, the tax rates fell from 39.6% in 2001 to 38.6% in 2002 but ultimately fell to 35.0% in 2006.<sup>344</sup> The Bush Administration tax cuts decreased the total progressiveness of the government income excise since well-off taxpayers received an inconsistent portion of the overall tax cuts. A slightly minor tax cut was enacted in 2003 pushing for arranged tax rate reductions and decreasing the highest tax bracket on capital profits and shares. Later, the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 established several extensive tax credits such as a payroll tax credit of \$400 per employee and an extended tax credit for university tuition.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Kessler, Glenn, and Juliet Eilperin. "Congress Passes \$1.35 Trillion Tax Cut." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 27 May 2001, [www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2001/05/27/congress-passes-135-trillion-tax-cut/3cf7c8bc-6593-4ea6-bf3d-79541dc5c667/?utm\\_term=.d40644671537](http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2001/05/27/congress-passes-135-trillion-tax-cut/3cf7c8bc-6593-4ea6-bf3d-79541dc5c667/?utm_term=.d40644671537).

<sup>345</sup> Hersenhorn, David M. "Recovery Bill Gets Final Approval." *The New York Times*, 13 Feb. 2009, [www.nytimes.com/2009/02/14/us/politics/14web-stim.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/14/us/politics/14web-stim.html).



## **Chapter Three: The Rise of the Right since the 1960s**

## I. The factors behind the rise of modern conservatism:

### 1. The break between old and new conservatism:

The Right is a fundamental part of the U.S. political tapestry, with numerous individual blueprints and strands all through. Chip Berlet points out to the historical stages through which the pre-war and postwar Right has gone by: from the Old Right's clear defense of imbalanced access to power to the postwar blending themes of economic liberalism, social conservatism, and anticommunist activism to the New Right's hostile attempt to control the Republican Party by avoiding the nativist argument and radical language of the Old Right.<sup>346</sup>

The origins of different contemporary right-wing movements and academic streams in the United States stem from multiple historical and ideological foundations that are usually embedded in the initial beliefs of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant supremacy, Eurocentrism, male privilege, heterosexual norms, and Christian superiority. In 1937, the first hints of a conservative coalition of Republicans and anti-New Deal Southern Democrats took shape around issues of increased federal power, opposition to industrial unions, and welfare spending. This cooperation across the aisle was sparked by FDR's controversial "court-packing" scheme.<sup>347</sup> In response, a small group of senators from both parts who had been meeting privately to strategize against what they considered excesses of the New Deal created what became known as the *Conservative Manifesto*. This document was written primarily by Josiah Bailey (D-N.C.) and Arthur Vandenburg (R-Mich.), with input from other powerful senators in both parties. The manifesto consisted of a statement of principles and a ten-point list of demands, including a balanced budget, tax reduction, a new labor policy, maintenance of states' rights and local self-government, and reliance upon the "American form of government and the American system of free enterprise." The story of the manifesto itself reveals the limits as much as

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<sup>346</sup> Sara Diamond's *Roads to Dominion* is a valuable overview for general background on various sectors of the Right and Right-Wing Movements in the U.S. New York: Cuilford, 1995.

<sup>347</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 14.

the potential of such a coalition at the time, as many critics of Roosevelt in both parties refused to sign it.<sup>348</sup>

Opposition to New Deal liberalism and the Democratic Party in the South remained an elite phenomenon that had limited political appeal. Effective resistance to the New Deal would require an issue on the ground that could more strongly engage political contest in the South, and a political discourse that was able to link the issue to a condemnation of the New Deal project as a whole. The issue of race became increasingly salient in the immediate postwar era, and Charles Wallace Collins became one of the central figures in the development of a language of opposition. On November 8, 1944, one day after Franklin Roosevelt was elected to his fourth presidential term, southern attorney Charles Wallace Collins retired from his legal practice to write a book that would, he states, “rationalize and strengthen the position of the orthodox Southerner and . . . arouse him to action in the face of organized hostility to Southern States.” Finally published in 1947, Collins’s book *Whither Solid South? A Study in Politics and Race Relations* became both manifesto and blueprint for the states’ rights - soon nicknamed the “Dixiecrat” - Revolt.<sup>349</sup>

In his book, Collins outlined what he saw as the dual dangers of “Negro equality and State capitalism,” which he saw as having been promoted by liberals in both parties under the auspices of the New Deal. He viewed civil rights advancements and increased federal power as distinct political projects, but ones that were becoming fused to the mutual benefit of black activists and New Dealers.<sup>350</sup> He wrote,

There is a strong left-wing movement in this country toward stateism [sic] the aim of which is to centralize all governmental power in the executive branch of the Federal Government under a system of national planning. . . The Negro race objectives have been caught up by this

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<sup>348</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 14.

<sup>349</sup> Charles Wallace Collins, *Whither Solid South? A Study in Politics and Race Relations*. New Orleans: Pelican Press, 1947. vii. References to his major role are available in Numan Bartley, *The New South*. 36; and Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932–1968*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 141.

<sup>350</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 22.

movement and are now an important part of the ‘liberal’ legislative program.<sup>351</sup>

Collins’s writings demonstrate how southern elites began to link racism to free-market conservatism in theory initiating the first steps to break with the Democratic political order in practice. This process of forging new political identifications and severing old ones involved ideas, long-term strategies, and improvised tactics. Viewing the complex matrix of theory, strategy, and implementation of the Dixiecrat Revolt and its aftermath in massive resistance through one of its central figures, we see that there was nothing automatic or natural about the political changes that came to pass in the 1960s. Indeed, they constituted a dynamic and highly contingent process.

Racial identifications have become linked to political grievances and aspirations when political actors, in widely varying circumstances, have successfully developed credible language through which they made these links.<sup>352</sup> In the case of modern conservatism, race has been both an open and coded signifier for popular mobilizations against redistribution, regulation, labor protections, and myriad other aspects of neo-liberal opposition to “big government.”<sup>353</sup>

Opposition to civil rights, intended primarily to bring in southerners, shaped the very character of modern conservatism itself. As issues of civil rights and black liberation became more acute in the following years, conservatives had a formula in place to interpret these issues for anxious whites, and paint themselves not as defenders of the elite, but of social order generally. In order for this politics to be successful, conservatism had to move beyond being identified with northern economic libertarians, traditionalists, or southern segregationists. Its appeal had to credibly speak to the main themes and concerns in politics in order to transform them. This southern racialization of the GOP was a necessary component of the subsequent rise of the Right, but

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<sup>351</sup> Collins, Charles Wallace. *Whither Solid South?: A Study in Politics and Race Relations*. UMI, 1992. ix–x.

<sup>352</sup> J.T. White, *The National Cyclopedic of American Biography*. 1980. vol. 51. 296-298.

<sup>353</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 7.

not a wholly sufficient one. Goldwater's huge loss in the general election demonstrates that while conservatives had found a workable racial language for southern successes and Republican Party control, they had yet to be embraced by American voters.<sup>354</sup>

After World War II, moderate conservatives tended to dissociate themselves from the fascist movements and create an electoral union that would retrench communism abroad, reinstate traditional ethics, and defy Roosevelt's New Deal. They launched their own revolution against the social and liberal political system established since Franklin D. Roosevelt's era. A number of conservative thinkers who appeared developed their new ideology around social conventionalism, economic libertarianism, and militant anticommunism, out of which militants had shortly created a political movement.<sup>355</sup> Jerome L. Himmelstein wrote: "The core assumption that binds these three elements is the belief that American society on all levels has an organic order-harmonious, beneficent, and self-regulating-disturbed only by misguided ideas and policies, especially those propagated by liberal elite in the government, the media, and the universities."<sup>356</sup>

Frank Meyer, M. Stanton Evans, and William F. Buckley, who had written for the Libertarian journal *Freeman* attempted to put together an effective union that would emerge as the influential *National Review* in 1955.<sup>357</sup> William F. Buckley Jr., whose *National Review* was the reliable journal of fusionist conservatism denounced the isolationist discourse of the John Birch Society. According to Himmelstein, the main Libertarian inspiration came from "leaders of the Old Republican Right like Herbert Hoover and Robert Taft; neoclassical economists like Friedrich Hayek, Ludwig

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<sup>354</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 7.

<sup>355</sup> Himmelstein, Jerome L. *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism*. Univ. of California Press, 1992. 14.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.* Himmelstein's discussion of the practical issues of joining the three elements into a unique conservative movement is particularly constructive and insightful; see pages 43-60.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-44.

von Mises, and Milton Friedman; and a variety of iconoclastic individualists and objectivists like Albert Jay Nock and Ayn Rand.”<sup>358</sup>

The 1960s cultural and institutional changes had isolated numerous middle-class and working-class whites from the larger political venture of liberalism.<sup>359</sup> Douglas Massey claimed, “Liberals increasingly turned to the courts and executive branch to force working-class whites and local political bosses to accept whatever changes they mandated from above.”<sup>360</sup> While the old conservatism has always been linked with tradition and stability, the new conservatism is different in this respect as it has been an ideology that desires to change or claims to have the power to fix today’s culture and politics.<sup>361</sup>

In 1964, Barry Goldwater became a confirmed conservative. His 1964 presidential campaign was the turning point for the Right. Most important Goldwater advocates were mainly Far Right activists, but had always been Republican Party partisans, on behalf of a fluent intransigent wing far to the right of many who typically voted Republican. This intransigent wing suffered from an image trouble that was especially revealed by the shocking defeat of Goldwater in the general election. The reactionaries knew that they had to face their image if ever they sought to control the Republican Party. This implied inventing a “New Right” that would detach itself from the controversial Old Right. The New Right would use new technologies; rising media and direct mail to create a new image.

As the fall wore on, Goldwater was increasingly cast in the media and by the Johnson team as a frightening radical who would be quick on the nuclear trigger and out to destroy such cherished New Deal programs as Social Security. Members of Goldwater’s staff felt that the flagging campaign needed to heighten the contrast between him and Johnson in a way favorable to

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<sup>358</sup> Bellant, Russ. *The Coors Connection: How Coors Family Philanthropy Undermines Democratic Pluralism*. South End Press, 1991. 125.

<sup>359</sup> Thompson, Michael J. *Confronting the New Conservatism the Rise of the Right in America*. New York University Press, 2007. 2.

<sup>360</sup> Massey, Douglas S. *Return of the "L" Word A Liberal Vision for the New Century*. Princeton University Press, 2009. 27.

<sup>361</sup> For an argument of this facet of conservatism, see Claus Offe, “Ungovernability: On the Renaissance of Conservative Theories of Crisis,” in *Observations on “The Spiritual Situation of the Age,”* ed. Jurgen Habermas. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987. 67-88.

Goldwater by playing up backlash fears of racial transgression and social breakdown. While Goldwater did not mind looking like a conservative extremist, he did not want to be seen as a racial extremist. But it was too late for that - race and conservatism had become elements of the same political logic in the Goldwater campaign.

Goldwater used his first term in the Senate and political actions to lead an anti-union Right movement within the Republican Party. He became the leading enemy of the trade union movement, generating a conflict in 1958 between conservatives and labor leaders. Goldwater assumed that these “racketeers” employed the New Deal state to achieve a monopoly over rank-and-file unionists and the country's economy. Notwithstanding a forceful, labor-powered movement against him, he not only gained reelection but also acquired a national support of Americans hostile to the New Deal.<sup>362</sup>

During his political victory in the 1964 presidential campaign, Goldwater gained further importance becoming the leading spokesman for the anti-union Right who used his great fame to carry dissatisfied unionists into the national attention. He introduced into conventional political discourse the conservative assumption that organized labor unions were corrupt and un-American because they challenged the American value of individualism. His crusade against unions helped conservatives gain important positions in their movement against the liberal New Deal. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, local governments across the South established right-to-work legislation, comparable to the 1946 Arizona law.<sup>363</sup> Barry Goldwater's rise illustrated the politics of this evolving counterattack nurturing the image of an empathetic capitalist.

The rise of the modern Right has become naturalized in much academic and popular literature as a “backlash” against the excesses of the 1960s, particularly in regard to the welfare state. In turn, the story goes, conservatives were thus granted the opportunity to assert basic American values of

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<sup>362</sup> Shermer, E. T. “Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater's Early Senate Career and the De-Legitimization of Organized Labor.” *Journal of American History*, vol. 95, no. 3, 2008. 678-709.

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid.*

patriotism, family, hard work, independence, and governmental fiscal responsibility; in doing so, they reclaimed the political field. Versions of the backlash account from across the political spectrum have abounded over the years. Kevin Phillips's *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1968) made the case, in the wake of both sixties-era protests and Nixon's presidential triumph, that stoking white populist resentment toward both liberal elites and the black poor could make the GOP the dominant party in years to come.<sup>364</sup>

But, what had been for Phillips an intentional strategy (he had been a campaign adviser for Richard Nixon who became president in 1968) came to be understood twenty years later as altruism of recent political history for Thomas and Mary Edsall. Their 1991 book *Chain Reaction*, which exercised strong influence over rising Democratic star Bill Clinton, claimed that sixties-era black politics reached a "combustion point" that set off (to continue their atom-splitting analogy) a fission process of self-reproducing effects, including tax revolt, opposition to rights claims of other disadvantaged groups, the emergence of anti-government conservatism, and finally the presidential election of Ronald Reagan. Backlash, the ideological cornerstone and justification for modern conservatism, masks what was a long-term process whereby various groups in different places and times attempted to link racism, antigovernment populism, and economic conservatism into a discourse and institutional strategy through linguistic appeals, party-building, social movement organizing, and the exercise of state power. In the process, the very interests and self-understanding of these groups were continually under construction as they moved from coalition to collective political identity. As opposed to being entrenched and traditionalist (or reactionary, depending on one's politics), the Right that developed is better viewed as contingent, mobile, and highly adaptive, constantly responding to changing conditions on the ground.

By the end of the 1960s, energized conservatives claimed to speak for a majority. With the benefit of two decades of prior experience in reframing issues of race and economics, they were successful to a great degree in getting

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<sup>364</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 3.



many voters from across classes, regions, and occupations to understand their resentments and desires, as well as their social, cultural, and economic experiences in opposition to racially egalitarian policies, to Great Society programs for the poor, to liberal elites generally, and to the state itself.<sup>365</sup> A Few weeks after Ronald Reagan's victory in the California Republican primaries, Russell Kirk, conservatism's foremost thinker, asked the following: "New Direction in the U.S.: Right?" in the *New York Times Magazine*. By 1968 it was a matter of who would represent the conservative ideology, taking the movement and the party into the next decade. The evolution from a party of values to a party of figures was the new classiness intended to make the GOP the majority party in the United States.

There have always been efforts to restructure the New Deal and enclose the social liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Apart from the powerful electoral conservative coalitions, other several factors had actually helped the successful rise of the American Right since the 1970s: a right-wing religious renaissance, economic reform, race antipathy and prejudice, reaction and social stress, and a sponsoring network of conservative organizations. According to Jean Hardisty, these circumstances have existed in the U.S. history long before the 1970s.<sup>366</sup> Although they sometimes overlie to some extent, they can be different, each representing a particular feature. The very fast rise of the Right is due to several factors which they not only overlap, but underline each other. This shared support explains the special strength of today's Right.<sup>367</sup>

Indeed, conservatism has been rising after World War II in many political and cultural fields restructuring American life. It has experienced crucial changes, especially since the election of Ronald Reagan until his presidential terms in the 1980s, then to the 1994 Contract with America to the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Although the Right lost specific legislative or electoral campaigns, its strategists have become competent in instructing,

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<sup>365</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 5.

<sup>366</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 10.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

recruiting, and mobilizing supporters. A group of right-wing think tanks today controls the American public discourse on many concerns ranging from welfare to taxation and to immigration. As Goldwater briefly says, “I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue”. With the Tea Party in mind, Farber believes that American conservatism established a set of beliefs that, however, collapsed under Bush. Today, American politics is enduring a destructive politics of opposition, a refusal to compromise on anything, as compromise is weaker than ever before.

## **2. The welfare fear:**

Whereas resistance to the welfare state has barely ever been the Right’s interest in the United States, it has generally been a common ideological matter. In examining the issue over welfare, Lucy A. Williams has shown how fear of welfare and nostalgia played a key role in the development of right-wing populist movements, and how race and gender helped endorse the stereotype of the undeserving welfare beneficiary. Indeed, the Right used welfare as a division concern, which might drive the electorate away from their conventional adherences. And as Jean Hardisty has commented, “several different forms of prejudice can now be advocated under the guise of populism.”<sup>368</sup> Thus, scapegoating became the classic instrument in political and democratic domains with either economic or social heritages.

Conservatives efficiently slowed the growth of Social Security in its early periods. Using the same fervent traditions of federalism, their power controlled the expansion of complete social security to old-age insurance. Significant sections of the Social Security Act were created with the conceivable actions of a conventionally conservative Supreme Court. Conservatives influenced the Social Security establishing a new welfare state with conservative norms. The surprising growth of the conservative state activism when it was once thought futile is specifically noteworthy, since it

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<sup>368</sup> Jean V. Hardisty “The Resurgent Right: Why Now?” *Public Eye*, vol. 9, nos.3 and 4. Fall/Winter 1995. 1-13.

shows the significant role of misinterpretation in American policy development.

By the early 1960s, conservatives had resolved to the idea that the benefits out of the Social Security exceeded the program's taxes and hence liberals would never be able to stop its growth. To prevent this, conservatives strongly defended their idea that any type of increase in welfare benefits would automatically involve tax increases. During the national dialogue prior to the enactment of Medicare in 1963 and 1964, conservatives Wilbur Mills and Robert Kerr proposed to increase spending on Social Security benefits so as to crush the system of massive national funding. This conservative ruse succeeded later in creating congressional gridlock on Social Security in 1964, pushing Medicare to be raised by an overwhelmingly liberal Congress. Ironically, conservatives helped in expanding the state.

Being the main financial support of the conservative movement, the big business group played a vital role in the rise of conservative policies in government. Many in the corporate world vigorously backed the extension of Social Security's old-age aids owing to the approach these were related to their own company allowances. Eventually, large businesses have gradually come to see welfare to education as an important provider to their effectiveness in a global economy, and have pushed not just to safeguard the federal responsibility but, in some circumstances, to increase it.

Since the 1970s, several elements have facilitated the unification of the Right under the new concept of welfare anxieties, pauperism, and “dependency”. Conservatives have joined the popular opposition to welfare proposing how resilient society would become if the “welfare state” were only eliminated. First, the collapse of the Soviet Union was one of the most significant milestones in American political history, promoting at the same time the conservative idea. The change has given more reliability to the capitalist philosophy and how it could achieve without any form of socialist concerns such as welfare. Irrespective of the rising incapacity of international capitalism to offer the United States the same level of economic security that it did after World War II, fundamental capitalists would contend that all the difficulties result from socialism and from people who have gradually become

reliable on its “welfare benefits.” Nowadays, elitists and fundamental capitalists maintain that an original social order is required in order to eliminate the risks produced by welfare.<sup>369</sup> “We can have a hegemonic anticommunism - without having to prove that anyone ever had a party membership card. Anybody who still dares to demand a responsive, dependable government or a redistributive tax system is automatically labeled a “politically correct collectivist,” a “domestic socialist,” who is therefore responsible for the growth of the welfare-maintained underclass. We can limit free speech-not by outlawing Communist parties but by stopping social welfare professionals from legislative advocacy if they receive any public funding, as so many do in a privatized delivery system.”<sup>370</sup>

Second, the outstanding growth in immigration over the last decades has reinstated nativism, in common with radical nationalism and capitalism, all resisted social welfare for immigrants. Books like *The Path to National Suicide: An Essay on Immigration and Multiculturalism* and journals like the Heritage Foundation's *Policy* clearly blame immigration as the source of the American problems because they ask for welfare profits and rights. “We can still let some in, but only if they leave family behind and if they expect nothing - except the chance to work at any wage, under any conditions.” Whereas some nativists consider immigrants as the origin of troubles, others suppose they should only speak English and demand no economic or social security from the government. Throughout economic declines, fear of immigration becomes the main concern, with the attempt to restrict welfare for immigrants as a cornerstone to “economic recovery.”

Third, women's new status since the feminist movement of the 1960s has provided an additional motivation for alliance of right-wing factions.” Over the last sixty years, women have insistently confronted the conventional order. However, from Right-wing perspective and Religious Right specifically;

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<sup>369</sup> The Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review* was filled with positive estimations about how all this would work during 1990.

<sup>370</sup> Newt Gingrich has even alleged that newspapers which oppose culminated capital gains taxes are “socialist”.

feminism is the enemy.<sup>371</sup> Actually, the Religious Right observes that feminists celebrate women's right to raise children without men and that they properly find the fundamental policy of that privilege in both General Relief and AFDC<sup>372</sup>. Radical capitalists and more specifically fundamentalist Christians have accredited economic problems to women's pursuit of jobs with reasonable wages, albeit child care is typically regarded as a received benefit and the glass ceiling is perceived as consequent from women's "choices." They consider that when women benefit from welfare, both the conservative family and the "requirements" of the workplace are in trouble. Thus, women on welfare advocate all women who are demanding their right to "child care" without men, then from the government.

Ultimately, the accomplishment of African-American social economic and political involvement has also been a stimulus of combining different factions of the Right, most considerably by stimulating the racist Right. As said by Jill Quadagno, mutual resentment to Johnson's Great Society was merely transmitted into the prevalent anti-welfare, anti-immigration arguments. Nowadays, old racist rhetoric that minorities claim and get too many rights is being used again to condemn the government's welfare "excessive and divisive" programs. Hence, so as to comprehend the impact of today's right-wing program we need to appreciate how overt the racist rhetoric is dominant in the evolving distress that "we have given it all away.'?"

During the 1990s, however, certain factions of the New Right started to challenge this liberal character claiming to review immigration policies. In mid-1990s, conservative media targeted in the 1994 vote on Proposition 187, emphasizing the idea that immigrants represent a threat to the "American way of life." In fact, the anti-immigration Proposition 187 won voter support on the 1994 California ballot sending the signal that immigrants would be among those to be removed out of the culturally composed universe of commitments. It also denied illegal immigrants education, social services, and healthcare.

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<sup>371</sup> Clarkson, Frederick. *Eternal Hostility: the Struggle between Theocracy and Democracy*. Common Courage Press, 1997. 125-138.

<sup>372</sup> Hardisty, Jean. "Constructing Homophobia: Colorado's Right-Wing Attacks On Homosexuals." Political Research Associates, 19 Mar. 1993, [www.politicalresearch.org/1993/03/19/constructing-homophobia-colorados-right-wing-attacks-on-homosexuals/](http://www.politicalresearch.org/1993/03/19/constructing-homophobia-colorados-right-wing-attacks-on-homosexuals/).

Moreover, in 1994, Republicans drafted a congressional legislation depriving legal immigrants from federal programs that included housing aids, Medicaid, free childhood vaccinations, funded school lunches, and numerous other federal welfares.<sup>373</sup>

The national debates tackled the bigoted evidence that misguided welfare policies were emerging as a lodestone for illegal Hispanic immigrants. Conservatives portrayed immigrants as “welfare schemers” and “embezzlers of public funds” and as responsible for stealing jobs and deteriorating social problems such as crime, thus serving an extended phase of scapegoating immigrants through eras of economic crisis. Throughout the last decades, conservatives tried to grind down liberal cultural strategies such as multiculturalism on the basis of equality. Yet, since the 1990s, the New Right coalition started to maintain a more decisive, fearless defense of the white culture against multiculturalism, hence launching a public debate on the racial and ethnic structure of the United States. Conservative intellectuals such as John O'Sullivan and Peter Brimelow established an “ideological war” aimed at fighting illegal immigration and contesting the national doctrine of America as a nation of immigrants. They claimed that according to Census Bureau, the majority of the U.S. population will become “non-white” by the year 2050 as recent black and Hispanic immigrants will significantly change the American national. Patrick Buchanan has exploited the question of immigration to connect between the Far Right who supports cultural conservatism and a racial-nationalist agenda and the New Right, which is rather concerned with liberal free-market policies and limited government.<sup>374</sup>

The New Right's defense of conservative welfare reform supports the notion of a multicultural American identity. Yet, the perception of inequality as a social inevitable fact becomes the basis for conservatives' opposition to government welfare policies. They argue that it is impossible to eliminate given that inequality is simply an unavoidable effect of differences in individuals' accepted or inborn skills. Conservatives condemn government

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<sup>373</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 178.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

welfare policies as producing “dependency,” which offends the Protestant idea that individuals are held responsible for their own achievement. In this manner, conservatives make New Deal and Great Society welfare rights and provisions problematic.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the New Right denounced the Great Society heritage as an excessively generous mode of social enterprise. Conservative scholars such as Charles Murray and Irving Kristol rebuked welfare policies for substituting the free market system with less efficient government contributions.” In addition to exploiting the economic argument, conservatives exploited the racial implication underneath the Reagan dispute to “welfare state liberalism.” In fact, conservatives who tended to implicitly influence voters resented Democratic welfare policies that generally targeted minorities as radicalized stereotypes about welfare, drugs, and delinquency justified government. For instance, the Reagan administration frequently referred to welfare cheating in order to get more benefits.” And despite the fact that two-thirds of welfare beneficiaries were white, Blacks and Hispanics were stereotyped as welfare abusers.

Shortly after the midterm elections of 1994, ultraconservative welfare reform became politically achievable pledging to “end welfare as we know it.” Newt Gingrich defended that the new welfare legislation “Contract on America” provided sympathy towards the underclass: “By creating a culture of poverty, we have destroyed the very people we are claiming to help. Caring for people is not synonymous with care-taking for people.”<sup>375</sup> According to conservatives, the “underclass” is no longer abusing welfare programs such as AFDC rather programs are abusing poor people.<sup>376</sup> Thus, the 1994 Personal Responsibility Act (PRA) became law in the form of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWOA) signaling the final defeat of the Democrats on welfare and their failure to defend the poor. However, the act efficiently eliminates the entire system of welfare programs and established

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<sup>375</sup> DeParle, Jason. “Rant, Listen, Exploit, Learn, Scare, Help, Manipulate, Lead.” *The New York Times*, 28 Jan. 1996, [www.nytimes.com/1996/01/28/magazine/rant-listen-exploit-learn-scare-help-manipulate-lead.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1996/01/28/magazine/rant-listen-exploit-learn-scare-help-manipulate-lead.html).

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*

the New Right values on work, race and responsibility.<sup>377</sup> Having won the contest on values and culture, the New Right reinforced its grasp, and it became difficult to dissuade conservative voters about the role of government spending towards the poor.

The 1994 Personal Responsibility Act (PRA) became law in the form of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWOA) signaling the final defeat of the Democrats on welfare and their failure to defend the poor. However, the act efficiently eliminates the entire system of welfare programs and established the New Right values on work, race and responsibility.<sup>378</sup> Having won the contest on values and culture, the New Right reinforced its grasp, and it became difficult to dissuade conservative voters about the role of government spending towards the poor.

The anti-welfare dispute played a historical and crucial role for the Right as conservative experts, politicians and academics have been referring to welfare as the incarnation of all American evils since three decades.<sup>379</sup> Opposition to welfare has actually become not only a unifier for the Right but a concern that immerses right-wing ideology into conformist social and economic view. I try to study how welfare has been a significant brook of fear for many conservative views. I likewise examine how it acted as a source of a common rival, and a shared concern merging different right-wing blocs.<sup>380</sup>

However, I first need to assert that the ancient penchant to offer welfare programs to the poor people has been the foundation of partitions between Left and Right in the United States. When declaring “War of Poverty”, advocates of

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<sup>377</sup> Clines, Francis X. “CLINTON SIGNS BILL CUTTING WELFARE; STATES IN NEW ROLE.” *The New York Times*, 23 Aug. 1996, [www.nytimes.com/1996/08/23/us/clinton-signs-bill-cutting-welfare-states-in-new-role.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=142B98A4395943C383F2745D0F2ED5AA&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/1996/08/23/us/clinton-signs-bill-cutting-welfare-states-in-new-role.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=142B98A4395943C383F2745D0F2ED5AA&gwt=pay).

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>379</sup> John Salvi, who was accused of killing workers in the Brookline abortion clinics, wrote a commonly confused declaration that seemingly linked welfare with his issues and the sin of abortion. Ap. “Clinic Shooting Suspect John Salvi Captured - The Boston Globe.” *BostonGlobe.com*, 1 Jan. 1995, [www.bostonglobe.com/metro/1995/01/01/clinic-shooting-suspect-john-salvi-captured/5xfDlnGIUssY3LSnPp5xwO/story.html](http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/1995/01/01/clinic-shooting-suspect-john-salvi-captured/5xfDlnGIUssY3LSnPp5xwO/story.html).

<sup>380</sup> See Lucy Williams's article “The Right's Attack on Aid to Families with Dependent Children”. *Public Eye*, vol. 10. 3-4, Political Research Associates, Fall/Winter 1996.



American welfare state, essentially liberals and leftists, declared that it would merely be temporary due to a firm capitalist hostility to it. In fact, it was this specific lack of accuracy that increased the Right's dreads of welfarism and how it was only a leftist trick to turn America into a socialist country.<sup>381</sup> Besides, the Left was not able to preserve and secure welfare as a vital social achievement paving more the way to conservative opposing views and campaigns that turned later into dominant political ideologies.<sup>382</sup>

From being simply an issue, opposition to welfare has become an essential strategic system into which right-wingers find accuracy and significance. Today, it provides the most important vision that supports a commonly attractive conservative rhetoric since the post-cold war era. I deduce by recognizing the extent to which the conservative uprising on welfare reform has become employed in 1996 during the signature of the welfare legislation by the Clinton administration.<sup>383</sup>

By 1997, the New Right's welfare reform has been made official in the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, or PRWOA. The passage of this reform bill has broken the AFDC federal rights and has compelled states to refute eligibility for lots of block grant funds to mainly newcomers and to single mothers.<sup>384</sup> It is important to consider how the passage of the welfare reform bill has enabled different factions of the Right to come together more powerfully than any other time, creating an original consensus around welfare that proposes a further firmly reserved "fantasy" for all of the Americans, not just the poor.

Right-wing opposition to welfare has particularly emerged as both a uniting enemy and an important block concern in the effort to bring into

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<sup>381</sup> For the best synopsis of how this effected in history, see Katz, Michael B. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse a Social History of Welfare in America*. Basic Books, 1998.

<sup>382</sup> Even though it was an excerpt of John Birch Society conspiracy theory, *The Tragedy of American Compassion* is a notable source of this argument. Olasky, Marvin N. *The Tragedy of American Compassion*. Regnery Gateway, 2008. esLowi's former book *The End of Liberalism* helped to demonstrate how this collapse of liberalism made conservatism legitimate. Lowi, Theodore J. *The End of Liberalism*. Norton, 1979.

<sup>383</sup> Wagner, Heather Lehr. *The History of the Republican Party*. Chelsea House, 2007. 93.

<sup>384</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 44.

disrepute the New Deal and the Great Society's heritage. In fact, I analyze how resistance to welfarism has become a fundamental key player for the latest right-wing rise.

### **3. The rise of right-wing movements:**

Although conservatives were dissatisfied with the Republican Party, they needed the latter to deliver their ideology to the nation. Conservatives, thus, formed a movement intended to capture the GOP. Facing the birth of the New Deal Coalition in the mid-1960s, conservatism used its wide range of organizations, and individuals and ideas ranging from unreserved reaction to pure libertarianism.<sup>385</sup> Yet, it was not until the 1970s that conservative criticism of liberalism became “the basis of an effective political movement by creating ... a network of publications, think tanks, and political action committees that have come to rival and often outperform their powerful liberal counterparts.”<sup>386</sup>

However, in the 1960s, only a few conservative movements achieved their aims or even survived. It is only recently that social and political movements of the Right have started to play a significant role. Contemporary American conservatism, which experienced its shaping chapter during the sixties, is today a victorious chase of an ideological and planning agenda.<sup>387</sup>

During the twentieth century, the “red menace” was the main scapegoat for the political Right, and state cooperation with right-wing sabotage movements was common. The rise of anticommunism had always followed economic and social clash with right-wing populism. Shortly after the downfall of communism in Europe, factions of the political Right maintained that the

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<sup>385</sup> Two perceptive articles on liberalism in twentieth-century America are Gary Gerstle, “The Protean Character of American Liberalism,” *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4. October 1994. 1043–73; and Michael Kazin, “The Agony and Romance of the American Left,” *American Historical Review* 100, no. 5 December 1995. 1488-1512.

<sup>386</sup> See Brinkley, Alan. “The Problem of American Conservatism.” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 99, no. 2, 1994. 414-15. 409.

<sup>387</sup> Schoenwald, Jonathan M. *A Time for Choosing: the Rise of Modern American Conservatism*. ACLS History E-Book Project, 2003. 9.

communist threat was part of a “New World Order” conspiracy. Anticommunist activism extended well through many intertwining organizations such as *Reader's Digest*, the Hoover Institution, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Foreign Policy Research Institute, the Reserve Officers Association, Crusade for Freedom, and the American Legion. “Specific constituencies were networked by groups that carried on the themes of the McCarthy period after the congressional witch hunt was discredited in elite circles. These groups included the reactionary John Birch Society (JBS) and the Far Right's Liberty Lobby.”<sup>388</sup> Throughout this era, all Far Rightist groups tried to mobilize in opposition to the civil rights movement. In addition, they contended that the main menace of communism was internal rebellion, rather than external incursion. Ultraconservative organizations such as the Liberty Lobby and the John Birch Society had clearly accused elites of backing the communist ideology in order to dominate Wall Street.<sup>389</sup>

Over the next twenty years, many of the conservatives who would later control American politics established a consistent philosophy throughout books, articles, and lectures. In fact, they founded the platform for the outstanding rise of the conservative movement in the following years. During the 1960s, conservative activists formed organizations, magazines and book-publishing corporations. Although Goldwater lost the presidential elections in 1964, his notable campaign reinforced the conservative movement politically, familiarized thousands of young conservatives to politics, and restructured the Republican Party from a middle-of-the-road party largely controlled by Easterners into a more conservative party essentially controlled by the South and West.

Teles studied how conservatives in the 1970s and 1980s formed a network that developed conservative legitimate notions, university curriculums, and fostered potential justices with different approaches. These comprised the creation of charitable foundations, the founding of fellowships

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<sup>388</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 20.

<sup>389</sup> This section is an edition from an outline of Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons's *Too Close for Comfort: Right-Wing Populism, Scapegoating, and Fascist Potentials in U.S. Political Traditions*. Boston: South End Press, Forthcoming. 1997.

and professorships, and the formation of qualified organizations.<sup>390</sup> Historian and journalist Rick Perlstein wrote about the grassroots activists behind Barry Goldwater's crusade in 1964. Though he lost the election, the activists left behind a vivacious network creating new tactics for future campaigns. In his book *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism*, Jonathan M. Schoenwald examined how the other extremist parts of conservatism increasingly integrated in the conventional Republican Party in the early 1960s. He also studied the main sponsors who backed conservative think tanks and politicians mainly oriented in the fight against government economic regulations and high rates of taxation during the 1970s.<sup>391</sup>

The efforts to connect campaign contributions to different parts of the business community were made for the 1968 election.<sup>392</sup> Among those who donated \$10,000 or more, it was found that Republicans received far more than Democrats from oil, insurance, and manufacturing, while Democrats received more from real estate and entertainment directors. Both parties did equally well in the investment, electronic, computer, and legal groups.<sup>393</sup> The highest corporations in diverse trade organizations, industrial companies, oil firms, and defense businesses donated tremendously to Republicans.

When Richard Nixon became president in 1968, the emerging New Right appointed conservative activists such as Howard Phillips who integrated the Office of Economic Opportunity with a mission to annihilate social programs supposedly controlled by liberals. Conservatives in Congress and reactionaries gathered in a “Defund the Left” campaign aimed at destroying social welfare programs. They asked corporate funders for contributions to put up a network of conservative think tanks and organizations that would face the dominance of liberal think tanks in domestic and foreign policy issues. In the mid-1970s, a significant and strong network of state and nationwide think

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<sup>390</sup> Teles, Steven Michael. *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement: the Battle for Control of the Law*. Princeton Univ. Press, 2008. 17

<sup>391</sup> Zelizer, Julian E. “Reflections: Rethinking the History of American Conservatism.” *Reviews in American History*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2010. 367-392.

<sup>392</sup> Alexander, Herbert E. *Financing the 1968 Election*. Lexington, MA: Heath Lexington Books, 1972. 176-87.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

tanks, journals, and media emerged. However, right-wing activists and grassroots community was necessary for corporate businesses to react to the rhetoric and convey votes.

Business played a crucial role as an active interest group in this narrative from the anti-New Deal American Liberty League through the Coors-funded Mountain States Legal Foundation. Instead of running for government offices, both Buckley and Schlafly wanted to mobilize the conservative grassroots within the American society. Buckley had created the Young Americans for Freedom, which sought to mobilize for Goldwater's presidential nomination in 1964. However, Goldwater's main legacy originated from the Republican change towards the South to profit from the anti-civil rights backlash against the Democrats. Goldwater soon related to Reagan, who opened his presidential campaign in December 1979 with a speech in Neshoba County, Mississippi, where the three civil rights workers had been murdered in 1964, stressing states' rights. Considerably, it was taxation, religion and anti-communism that pulled Reagan to the Right. During his presidential bid in California, Reagan delivered his famous speech called 'A Time for Choosing' in Los Angeles that would celebrate his solemn entry into politics as a candidate. By the 1980s, the Christian Right played an important role reinforcing his electoral weight.<sup>394</sup>

Between 1968 and 1972, a number of grassroots conservative organizations had become mature, though they were often rejected by the GOP establishment. The downfall of extremism helped increase the authority of the GOP gaining more party adjuncts. Russell Kirk and other ideologues recognized the fact that conservatives had to prioritize more important issues rather than ideological controversies. Groups such as Americans for Constitutional Action, the Free Society Association, the American Conservative Union, and Young Americans for Freedom fought beyond the

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<sup>394</sup> Schoenwald, Jonathan M. *A Time for Choosing: the Rise of Modern American Conservatism*. ACLS History E-Book Project, 2003. 263.

new theoretical boundaries in order to keep conservatism fundamental within the American political landscape.<sup>395</sup>

Yet, because of these independent organizations, the evolution from the grassroots politics of 1964 to a politics of fundraising, information broadcasting, and personal training went as efficiently keeping the conservative ideology dynamic and appropriate to the post-1968 era. Following their formation in the 1960s, groups such as FSA, ACA, the ACU and YAF all acted genially toward each other, never explicitly challenging each other's leadership or programmatic agendas. The groups would teach a new generation of conservatives and prepare them for various political moments in the GOP.

The counterattack against New Deal liberalism allowed conservative activists, who had been deliberately joining the movement since the Cold War, to create an essential readjustment in American politics. They assimilated into the Republican Party proposing new thoughts and policies, which became more effective from 1981 to 1986 and then from 1995 to 2007, hence hindering liberalism from returning. Conservatism reshaped public debate and produced strong electoral support for their basis in key sections of the country through direct mail groups, cultural movements, and populist and civil rights organizations. These latter were linkers between political elites and average citizens overcoming the social and cultural divisions adopting a wide range of issues from race to national security. From the perception of 2010, the political confusion of conservatism reflects the limits of the rise of the Right-wing in American history.

Conservative thinkers such as Russell Kirk, Richard M. Weaver, and Friedrich A. Hayek engaged in writing to persuade Americans of the risks of the New Deal social programs and the benefits of resuming circumstances before its consent. For instance, Hayek sold a million copies of *The Road to Serfdom* and became a reference to conservatives. Then by the 1960s, Milton Friedman and William F. Buckley became significant national figures who efficiently communicated their beliefs to large audiences. In brief, and following World War II, anti-statist old-right conservatives had to construct

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<sup>395</sup> Schoenwald, Jonathan M. *A Time for Choosing: the Rise of Modern American Conservatism*. ACLS History E-Book Project, 2003. 255.

and articulate the movement from the ground up in reaction to the influential New Deal liberals. They needed to establish conservative think tanks and universities, wherein thinkers and policy experts could advance and spread the ideology. On a more public level, grassroots groups such as White Southerners, religious groups, and middle-class whites joined a conservative coalition against the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

Nonetheless, conservatives still lacked the organizational capacity until the early 1970s to generate not only policies, but also thorough perceptions that should reach the mass public for overall grassroots support. Even with an ample array of both journals and magazines of public interest, this lack of organizational capacity meant that conservatives were outgunned in opposing the so-called Establishment they so resented. Then, by the late 1970s, conservatism developed in large coalitions with elite actors who were talented enough to articulate principles in opposition to the New Deal. The election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency provided anti-statist conservatives with their ultimate prospect for change, leading to the rise of a new conservatism.

The methods and concepts of the New Right essentially depended on the old Conservative movement. Since the 1970s, conservatives tended to avoid the expression “right-wing movements” as it affects the relation between modern conservative movements and postwar right-wing movements. Hence, they rather used the term “right” in order to avert any type of discord between early right-wing movements of the 1940s and 1950s, knowing that many right-wing groups during the Reagan era were simply archaic and quickly disappeared. Throughout the 1990s, they merely involved either a small group of organizations or a network of associated entities. In this way, the phrase “conservative movement” is rather used.

Along with new elite actors and political concepts, modern conservatives developed an enlarged structure of backed organizations, think tanks and public-interest law companies. While conservatism was still regarded as an outsider movement, these new instruments offered conservatives access to information, systematic facility, and the capacity to manage action through the same tools that once been used by the supporters of the liberal state.

In the development phases of Social Security, conservatives had been widely outnumbered as they needed the resources to confront liberal plans and advance their own new options. Things began to change since the early 1970s when different conservative think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, and Cato Institute clearly criticized liberal programs, and functioned as places for managing deliberate tactics to weaken them. For example, organizations like John M. Olin Foundation<sup>396</sup> and Bradley Foundation<sup>397</sup> funded law firms, academic investigation, and interest groups.<sup>398</sup> These organizations inspired the reproduction of old lessons throughout distinctive parts of the new conservative movement, which has now become powerfully entrenched in Washington. While conservatives continue to hold a self-image as insurgents, they are increasingly well-institutionalized insiders, as can be seen in our third set of case studies focusing on Social Security and education.

We speak about a different network of people and institutions that comprises organizations, think tanks, policy-discussion groups such as the Council on Foreign Relations and CEO, presidential directives, and dedicated media passages. Most of those who work in this broad policy-planning system are business lawyers, top-level managers, and academic specialists who are usually indifferent from policymaking.<sup>399</sup>

The Southwest and West established a group of think tanks, such as the

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<sup>396</sup> The John M. Olin Foundation was a conservative American grant-making foundation created in 1953 by John M. Olin, president of the Olin Industries chemical and munitions manufacturing businesses. Unlike other foundations, it was accused to spend all of its resources within a generation of Olin's death, for fear of mission drift after a while and to protect donor intention. It had spent over \$370 million in funding conservative think tanks, media, and law courses at prominent American universities.

<sup>397</sup> The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, established in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a benevolent foundation with more than \$800 million U.S. dollars in assets. It has an affirmed mission to “restore, strengthen, and protect the principles and institutions of American exceptionalism.” The foundation funded mainly “constitutional order, free markets, civil society, and informed citizens.” It tends to offer between \$35 million and \$45 million per annum to a range of causes, counting cultural organizations, community-based nonprofit groups in Milwaukee, and conservative groups. It has been mainly active in sustaining education reform efforts, including school choice. Around 70% of the Foundation's charitable are aimed at national groups while 30% of the Foundation's charitable is Wisconsin-based.

<sup>398</sup> See Teles, Steven Michael. *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement: the Battle for Control of the Law*. Princeton Univ. Press, 2008. 135-264.

<sup>399</sup> Domhoff, G. William. *The Power Elite and the State: How Policy Is Made in America*. A. De Gruyter, 1990. 230.



Heritage Foundation, that shortly influenced the political life; replacing the old traditional strategy of organizations like the Brookings Institution.<sup>400</sup> These right-wing foundations had funded Ronald Reagan during the presidential elections. For *Washington Post* journalist Thomas Edsall (1984) and political scientist David Vogel (1989), traditional conservatives decided to join the modern conservatives in a more right-wing position since an important business community ultimately got itself together in mid-1970s. It succeeded in using think tanks and lobbying after being defeated on many circumstances between 1960s and 1970s by liberals and Democrats.

The Goldwater defeat had served to expose the party to political beginners, mainly in the South and West, allowing new activists to play a part in the democratic process. Later on, with Reagan's total victory, conservatism stood up stronger than in 1964. By 1980, with Reagan as a "true" conservative, the conservative revolution was complete. The "movement" assessment is significant for understanding the process by which the Right organized to affirm its notoriety within the Republican Party. Indeed, conservative elite and grassroots activists represent an important factor in elucidating the extensive change in American politics over the last five decades.<sup>401</sup> Yet, capitalism's development since the 1970s, the emergence of self-confident business leaders, and the internal conflicts within the Democratic Party all have facilitated the process.<sup>402</sup> As an assertive political movement, the Right captured the nation through re-forming the federal government according to conservative ends. Phillips-Fein argues that the prevailing political movement structure stresses the narrative of collective action as a crucial element in the change in strategy and politics over the last five decades. It

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<sup>400</sup> Peschek, Joseph G. *Policy Planning Organizations: Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn*. Temple Univ. Pr., 1987. 134-35.

<sup>401</sup> McGirr, L. "Now That Historians Know So Much about the Right, How Should We Best Approach the Study of Conservatism?" *Journal of American History*, vol. 98, no. 3, 2011. 765-770. 767.

<sup>402</sup> See, for example, Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies*, New Haven, 2010.

focuses on the influence of networks, capitals, and the connection between economic and political leaders and the grassroots.<sup>403</sup>

#### **4. The role of big business:**

Serious menace to capitalism has infrequently been an issue in U.S. politics, and beyond its basic union, capital includes countless rival interests. Previously, capitalist interests have tried to organize themselves into sections along with industry, area, type of business, and other aspects. As some writers have claimed, changing sectional conflicts and coalitions within the corporation elite helped forming right-wing politics, and this is very obvious in the expansion of the New Right.

Liberal thinkers assume that capitalist support to right-wing movements has been beneficial to either part. In order to understand this connection, Matthew N. Lyons has used a business conflict analysis. According to Lyons, this alternative approach initially recognizes the capitalist class dominates politics and society as a whole under a private enterprise system.<sup>404</sup> Further interests as well as populist movements for social change do play a big role in defining the relation.

Between the 1930s and the 1970s, business groups were mainly revealed according to their resistance or support to Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal system.<sup>405</sup> Embedded in Roosevelt's principles, the New Deal was strengthened and continued until the 1970s. The system involved labor unions and big corporate in abolishing distinct forms of bigotry. Until the 1970s, the succeeding administrations implemented Keynesian procedures of effective government interference in the economy, involving social welfare programs and significant military spending. On the one hand, the policies were efficient

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<sup>403</sup> McGirr, L. "Now That Historians Know So Much about the Right, How Should We Best Approach the Study of Conservatism?" *Journal of American History*, vol. 98, no. 3, 2011. 765–770. 767.

<sup>404</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 11.

<sup>405</sup> Peter Viereck, "The Revolt Against the Elite" and "The Philosophical 'New Conservatism'-1962" in Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right*, New York: Double-day, 1963), 135-154, 155-173.

as corporates provided a safe and confident labor force, a considerable consumer environment, and a judicial defense against financial crises. On the other hand, the system covered an international consumer trend based on innovative notions that endorsed the massive development of American capitalism.

Many corporations started to resist the New Deal system through a “nationalist” alliance that was mainly founded in the Midwest, and then in the Sun Belt. The coalition comprised several companies, which commonly opposed labor unions, and corporate nationalists that enjoyed government subventions. While they profited from protectionist policies, they ironically contended state power that would intervene in the capitalist autonomy to fund welfare programs.

In the mid-1950s, Clarence Manion<sup>406</sup> became the advocate for small entrepreneurs who were decisively hostile to any adaptation with compelled and bureaucratized labor unionism. Manion hosted a weekly radio show that incited American listeners to reject the liberal programs. Manion raised funds for his group For America, which involved mainly small entrepreneurs who demanded the repeal of the liberal policies and pressure on labor unions. These small business owners became the main pillar of the Goldwater revolt. Along with politicians and corporatists, Goldwater's crusade became an essential part of a leading a struggle against labor unions' power and authority.<sup>407</sup>

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, Samuel Ricketts Boulware of General Electric became extremely invested in defending Arizona's right-wing unit of corporate leaders. Both Goldwater and Reagan acknowledged Boulware as the founder of modern conservatism. In 1971, Goldwater praised Boulware for “the great inspiration that you provided for me as you so stubbornly, rightly and forcefully fought with the union that was trying to take

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<sup>406</sup> Clarence Manion (July 7, 1896 – July 29, 1979) was a famous American conservative radio talk show host and Ex-Law Dean at Notre Dame Law School. He used to host the radio show Manion Forum which would later air on television.

<sup>407</sup> Shermer, and Elizabeth Tandy. “Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater's Early Senate Career and the De-Legitimization of Organized Labor.” OUP Academic, Oxford University Press, 1 Dec. 2008, [academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195](http://academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195). 699.

over your company.”<sup>408</sup> Big businesses led a counterattack to stop unions’ strength by either establishing private welfare systems. For instance, Boulware of General Electric created an efficient program intended to force, undermine, and remove unions’ power.

During their anti-elitist movement, business nationalists essentially maintained different ultraconservative organizations that helped establish McCarthyism into more degenerate conspiracy theories. McCarthy’s supporters involved Robert Wood (head of Sears Roebuck) and Southern businessmen such as H. L. Hunt and Clint Murchison; multinationalist business leaders played an important role in pushing for the Senate censure that ended McCarthy’s Red-hunting movement.<sup>409</sup> Thus, antielitism did not merge with right-wing anti-elitism but also with middle- and working-class hostility toward the wealthy and the dominant. Created in 1958, the John Birch Society was the most prominent organization, whose initial leadership involved national oil executives Fred C. Koch (Rock Island Oil) and J. Howard Pew (Sun Oil). The organization strictly contested the New Deal tradition, the welfare state and the United Nations.<sup>410</sup>

In 1964, capitalists seized Barry Goldwater’s presidential campaign to control the Republican Party. The 1964 race not only condemned President Lyndon Johnson’s campaign to end segregation and his total support to the civil rights movement, but also federal government intervention in the economy through welfare programs. In *A Choice Not an Echo*, Phyllis Schlafly argued that a hostile faction of “kingmakers” had warily chosen Republican presidential candidates since the 1930s in order to preserve their own wealth

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<sup>408</sup> Shermer, and Elizabeth Tandy. “Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater’s Early Senate Career and the De-Legitimization of Organized Labor.” OUP Academic, Oxford University Press, 1 Dec. 2008, [academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195](http://academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195). 699.

<sup>409</sup> Harrington, Michael. *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. Penguin Books, 1981. 202.

<sup>410</sup> Bell, Daniel and Kristol, Irving, “Editorial - What Is the Public Interest?” *PublicInterest* 1. Fall 1965. *National Affairs*, 4. [www.nationalaffairs.com/public\\_interest/detail/editorial-what-is-the-public-interest](http://www.nationalaffairs.com/public_interest/detail/editorial-what-is-the-public-interest). Goodman, Walter. “IRVING KRISTOL: PATRON SAINT OF THE NEW RIGHT.” *The New York Times*, 6 Dec. 1981, [www.nytimes.com/1981/12/06/magazine/irving-kristol-patron-saint-of-the-new-right.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/06/magazine/irving-kristol-patron-saint-of-the-new-right.html).

and authority.<sup>411</sup> Goldwater was able to assemble conservative fervent activists by only backing Sun Belt national capitalists such as Roger Milliken, Jeremiah Milbank Jr., and Henry Salvatori, who then apparently became the major sponsors of the New Right.<sup>412</sup> Although Goldwater lost the elections, his campaign strongly helped the rise of the New Right.

In 1964, Boulware appointed Ronald Reagan as a spokesman for General Electric's trademark of antigovernment and anti-unionism and later supported Goldwater's political aspirations. Well-funded media campaigns were a key factor in the enormous politicization of evangelical Christians since the 1970s, the prominence of abortion rights and gays and lesbians as right-wing targets, or the ultraconservative Right's change from overt racism toward implicit modes of racism and cultural chauvinism. Underneath the populist rhetoric of right-wing movements and mainly the Tea Party, lies a fundamentally elitist and business scheme of reinforcing multinational corporations. Indeed, the conservative furious reaction of the last four decades has been a real dividend for big businesses. These latter have benefited from the colossal tax cuts at the expense of large federal outlays for military industries and other industries.

Serious menace to capitalism has infrequently been an issue in U.S. politics and beyond its basic union, capital includes countless rival interests. Definite strategies that are relevant for one segment of a corporation may be futile or even risky for another, and these questions are important in determining daily political conflict. Previously, capitalist interests have tried to organize themselves into sections along with industry, area, type of business, and other aspects.

Business significant deals over middle-class employees have been rigorously enhanced by a number of conservative movements together with social service cuts, clashes with unions, and anti-immigrant campaigns. Liberal thinkers assume that capitalist support to right-wing movements has been

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<sup>411</sup> Schlafly, Phyllis, and Ron Paul. *A Choice Not an Echo: Updated and Expanded 50th Anniversary Edition*. Regnery Publishing, 2014. 40.

<sup>412</sup> Kristol, Irving. *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea*. Elephant Paperbacks, 1999. 31.

beneficial to either part. In order to understand this correlation, Matthew N. Lyons has used a business conflict analysis. According to Lyons, this alternative approach initially recognizes the capitalist class dominating politics and society as a whole under a private enterprise system.<sup>413</sup> Further interests as well as right-wing populist movements for social change do play a big role in defining the relation. Therefore, capitalists will unite with social movements against any serious radical menace to its system of regulation.<sup>414</sup> As some writers have claimed, changing sectional conflicts and coalitions within the corporation elite helped forming right-wing politics, and this is very obvious in the expansion of the New Right.

## **5. The New Right union:**

Between 1960s and 1980s, the emergent control of “anti-New Deal businesses” centered in Sun Belt capitals was a significant element that helped move the business union severely to the right. While the Sun Belt anti-New Deal influence was expanding, dissatisfaction with the New Deal specifically outside the U.S. was pulling many national businesses to the New Right.” The New Right businesses perceived Japanese and Western European economic expansion a menace to their industrial power, and hence sought a protectionist policy by joining Sun Belt ultraconservatives. Both factions shared similar goals to end military spending; to eliminate welfare programs, to limit labor union influence, and to reduce taxes. Throughout the 1970s, the Sun Belt was important in the development of a durable network of lobbies, think tanks, media institutes, political committees, and religious Right organizations. On the one hand, these dissimilar groups were essential to the upsurge of the New Right, as they were obtaining an enlarged backing of millions of dollars a massive funding from Sunbelt businesses such as Nelson Bunker Hunt.<sup>415</sup> On

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<sup>413</sup> Farber, David R. *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism: A Short History*. Princeton University Press, 2010. 296.

<sup>414</sup> Boggs, Carl. “The New Populism and the Limits of Structural Reforms.” *Theory and Society*, vol. 12, no. 3, 1983. 343-363.

<sup>415</sup> Son of H. L. Hunt who gave \$10 million to Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) in 1970 and other important sums over the next decade to the Campus Crusade for Christ.

the other hand, capitalists helped form and lead groups for their own goals. For instance, Richard Viguerie immersed grassroots propaganda and demands for funds with direct-mail, becoming a key right-wing instrument for fund-raising. Rather than attacking the New Deal system, the New Rights sought support amongst white middle-class people by underlining social issues such as abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), means of transportation, and homosexual rights.<sup>416</sup> However, the “tax revolt” of the late 1970s was a more effective device of mobilization, whereas preventing race-issue targets, which functioned and fueled white anger against welfare programs assisting minorities mostly Blacks and Hispanics.<sup>417</sup>

The political mobilization of big corporate in the mid-1970s provided conservatives larger access to money and instruments of political authority. The election of Ronald Reagan was the end result of a decade-long business mobilization against the liberal plans that had restricted their gains in the 1960s and 1970s with the growth of the bargaining influence of employees. Consequently, a widespread position expresses a key change in the balance of authority in the United States since the rise of conservatism. In recent years, while those on the bottom half of the economic range including the working and middle classes suffered a significant economic deterioration, those that fall in the top fifteen percent of the income distribution enjoyed a severe increase in economic power.

The business-labor compromise started to produce an inflexible government spending making labor fees hard to cut. Moreover, new regulatory agencies that recoiled in the late 1960s and early 1970s obtained extensive business disdain. As government expenditure and regulation increased in social demands, the degree of private investment decreased. As big businesses faced economic and political crisis towards government spending, they had to act. Businessmen had forcefully rejected liberalism and its state intervention policies in the 1970s and adopted conservatism rather than industrial policy and corporatism. The conservative movement became the only refuge for big

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<sup>416</sup> On the middle-class revolt of the 1970s, see Davis, Mike. *Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class*. Verso, 2018.

<sup>417</sup> On the tax revolt, see Ferguson, Thomas, and Joel Rogers. *Right Turn: The Decline of the Democrats and the Future of American Politics*. Hill and Wang, 1986. 102.

businesses through which they wanted to manipulate the political process and increase their level of political organization focusing on limited government. They tried not only to influence particular parts of legislation but also to restructure political debate over support to big business.

In fact, big businesses concentrated their efforts of political mobilization on a number of major sections. First, big businesses used influential lobbying of Congress in determining legislation and established the Business Roundtable, an organization that represented the vast majority of large corporations in 1972. Second, business campaign contributions to conservative candidates became more ideological and more cautiously synchronized. In the 1970s, the campaign introduced Political Action Committees and a large resource for corporations to support their interests with the government. Finally, big business poured major corporate money to conservative research organizations in order to expand the conservative network of policy-oriented research and discussion organizations that would influence key government policies. They significantly funded supply-side economics theory, which became fundamental to the ideology of the Reagan administration, as well as to the analysis of the free market, conservatism and the role of religion. Political “think-tanks” incredibly expanded targeting government policies and providing a wide range of justifications for conservative principles, suggestions for public policy issues. Conservative thinks-tanks became a main source for candidates in the Reagan administration and offered an efficient borderline between powerful big businesses and influential conservative ideologues. The most important aspect of the political mobilization of big businesses in the 1970s and 1980s was specifically its powerful disposition as they were clearly able to change and systematize American politics.

The fact that it was beneficial for big businesses to use a new way of political mobilization involves that the ensuing agreement was a considerable development with a better-synchronized political action. The big business approach and the conservative reaction to political and economic issues in the 1970s were simply to *limit* the role of government. The result was that liberal reforms rarely obtained support during the Reagan administration. Instead,



Conservative policies both demanded and motivated widely-based capitalist movement through big business mobilization.

In brief, big businesses moved from corporate liberalism to corporate conservatism, as changing social circumstances made conservatism more equivalent to their interests. This redistribution of interests also included an important number of mobilization resources, power, and eagerness on the part of an already structured capitalist class. As a final point, conservatism gained support from corporatism as a result of the profound antistatist prejudice of American business.

Further to the right, the Council for National Policy was a powerful club within the ultraconservative Right that has worked to make the Republican Party more socially conservative. Founded in 1981 by Tim LaHaye, the evangelical minister, political organizer, and author of the *Left Behind* books<sup>418</sup>, the CNP led secret discussion meetings in order to assemble a large group of top right-wing evangelicals, secular activists, government officials, retired military and intelligence officers, journalists, intellectuals, and business leaders.<sup>419</sup> In the 1980, Sun Belt businesses were among the members that dominated the CNP. In its militant aspect, the CNP involved key Christian Right leaders such as Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, and Tim LaHaye; New Right leaders such as Edwin J. Feulner (Heritage Foundation), Paul Weyrich (Free Congress Foundation), Howard Phillips (Conservative Caucus), and Richard Viguerie; government leaders such as Senator Jesse Helms and Representatives Jack Kemp and Dick Armey; and many other well-known figures.

Larry Pratt of Gun Owners of America became later a member helping to initiate the militia movement. The movement was closely related to the Christian Right; stressing on a traditionalist approach to social policy issues and direct opposition to the “liberal” government. Founded in 1989 by Pat Robertson, the Christian Coalition attempted to unite the propaganda funds of

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<sup>418</sup> Ansell, Amy. *Unraveling the Right: The New Conservatism in American Thought and Politics*. Westview, 2001. 90.

<sup>419</sup> Sources for this debate of the CNP involve: Russ Bellant, “Secretive Rightwing Group: The Council for National Policy,” *Cooert Action* 34. Summer 1990, 17.

right-wing media with grassroots activists to produce a strong mass organization that is likely to dominate the Republican Party. Accordingly the coalition developed open relations with a number of the multinational capitalists who control the major parties.

Political sociologists and corporate-liberal historians of the 1960s and 1970s attempted to clarify the slightly reformist inclinations within the power elite throughout the Progressive Era and the New Deal. However the conservative policy changes that made tax cuts for the rich in the 1980s created new problems.<sup>420</sup> According to Edsall, the revival of corporate influence was as much political as economic since the two fields are “irrevocably linked.”<sup>421</sup> When explaining the liberalism of the 1960s, Edsall rejects a unique economic theory. He declares:

Just as the shift to the left in public policy in the early 1960s resulted from fundamental alterations in the balance of power-ranging from rapid postwar economic growth, to the cohesiveness of the liberal-labor coalition, to the political vitality of the civil rights movement-the shift to the right over the past decade has resulted from complex, systematic alterations in the terms of the political and economic debate and in the power of those participating in the debate.<sup>422</sup>

Edsall considers that problems within the Democratic Party such as the decline in organized labor and in voting audience by low-income people helped the rise of conservatism. Meanwhile, the Republican Party was transformed and cohesive as the invigorated corporate community and the New Right decided to work together harmoniously. The 1970s economic issues and the opposition among the Democrats gave the sophisticated Republicans the opportunity they were looking for. Piven and Cloward (1982/85) suggested that a new class war erupted in the 1980s intended to reduce the social wage provided by the welfare state in order to wane the trading power of individual workers and devastate labor unions. Piven and Cloward predicted that a coalition of minorities, women, environmentalists and the elderly would unify

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<sup>420</sup> Domhoff, G. William. *The Power Elite and the State: How Policy Is Made in America*. A. De Gruyter, 1990. 257.

<sup>421</sup> Edsall, Thomas Byrne. *The New Politics of Inequality*. Norton, 1985. 33.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*

to withdraw these cuts.<sup>423</sup> To his acclaim, Edsall also comprehends that there was a class war within the conservative political program:

Perhaps one of the most substantial achievements of the policy changes in the Reagan administration has been to consistently weaken the governmental base of support provided organized labor in its dealing with management-through sharp reductions in unemployment insurance, through the complete elimination of the public service job program, through the weakening of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and through appointments of persons hostile to organized labor both to the National Labor Relations Board and to the Department of Labor.<sup>424</sup>

Following the labor unions, social activism and the wars eras, Reagan's conservatism finally succeeded in representing corporate lobbies' long time ambitions. Throughout the 1980s, Reagan used the state to support, control, and fund the corporate sector. Through the Federal Reserve Board, actions increased and were exploited to regulate inflation by laying off jobs and cutting the ability of organized labor protest.<sup>425</sup> More specifically, both the state and conservative remained very close during the Reagan years.<sup>426</sup>

In other words, it was not the middle class, the elitist liberals of the Democratic Party, or the revival of corporate organizations like the Chamber of Commerce that shoved the right change, but rather the decline of labor unions and the liberal social movement in general. Following a long decade of conservative rule under Reagan and Bush, the American middle-class power was in the burden as never before. The southern and nationalist sections of the capitalist class had merged into one, and the struggles between the internationalists and nationalists had somewhat become trivial.<sup>427</sup> Although the unions and the labor movement tried to resist, people were feeling powerless to

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<sup>423</sup> Domhoff, G. William.. "Review: The New Class War." *Social Policy*, 1983. 53-59.

<sup>424</sup> Edsall, Thomas Byrne. *The New Politics of Inequality*. Norton, 1985. 34

<sup>425</sup> Lublin, Joann. "Federal Deregulation Runs into a Backlash, Even from Business." *Wall Street Journal*. December 14, 1983: I.

<sup>426</sup> Himmelstein, Jerome L. *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism*. Univ. of California Press, 1992.

<sup>427</sup> Friedland, Roger. *Power and Crisis in the City: Corporations, Unions and Urban Policy*. Schocken Books, 1983.

fight back. During the 1990s, conservatives were using demagogic topics such as abortion and “affirmative action” to control the political landscape.

The redistribution of wealth was distorted as never before. Business leaders earned 38 times as much as school teachers and 41 times as much as blue-collar employees in 1962, but by 1988 they were earning 72 times as much as the school teachers and 93 times as much as the blue-collar employees.<sup>428</sup> Racial clashes and violence considerably increased within the poor minority communes. Meanwhile, conservative economists were condemning Keynesianism. Since American elites suffered from problems of organizing, hopes for social equality were undermined early 1990s.

The New Right rise significantly paved the way for the victory of Ronald Reagan during the 1980 presidential elections. The Reagan administration cut taxes for both individuals and corporations while it raised the reversed social security tax.<sup>429</sup> While welfare programs for lower classes were progressively reduced signaling the end of the New Deal era, the federal government continued to fund the largest Keynesian deficit expenditure in American history. The Reagan administration’s anti-New Deal policy captured a large range of capitalist sponsors whose massive economic growth continued to grow during the 1980s.<sup>430</sup>

However they strongly broke out in the late 1980s and early 1990s, focusing on the clash between neoconservatives and paleoconservatives who supported traditional isolationism and old-style cultural nationalism.<sup>431</sup> In fact, several ultraconservatives were skeptical of George Bush’s Eastern establishment character as he was not very close to the New Right. More visibly, the origin of this conflict was the downfall of the Soviet Union in early

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<sup>428</sup> *Business Week*. “Bring CEO Pay Back Down to Earth.” *Business Week* May 1, 1989. 146.

<sup>429</sup> The argument of Reagan administration actions is based on Ferguson and Rogers, *Right Turn: The Decline of the Democrats and the Future of American Politics* chap. 4. Diamond, Sara. *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States*. The Guilford Press, 1995. 212-227.

<sup>430</sup> Ferguson, Thomas. *Golden Rule: The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money-Driven Political Systems*. University of Chicago Press, 1995. 244-245.

<sup>431</sup> On the paleocon-neocon dispute, general fragmentation of the right-wing alliance, and causes behind them, see Diamond, Sara. *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States*. The Guilford Press, 1995. chap. 12.

1989. Prior to that, anticommunism and the role of the United States in the Cold War were the fundamental questions that used to bring different right-wing blocs together. Business conflicts related to monetary policies, economic nationalism and the rising international markets in the late 1980s had in the long term intensified the right-wing division.

The revival of economic nationalist reaction following the Reagan administration was the fundamental perspective through which paleoconservatives started to attack neoconservatives. For instance, part of Pat Buchanan's opposition to President George Bush in the 1992 Republican primaries was based on the revival of the very old Midwestern isolationist and nativist Right. Buchanan's campaign program was simply anti-New Deal isolationism that denounced not only welfarism and "the tax burden on American business" but also the U.S. military intervention and its "vast permanent armies on foreign soil." According to Paleoconservatives, Bush was close to liberals who represented the evil Eastern elite that had infiltrated the Right. Buchanan said of Bush: "He is a globalist and we are nationalists. He believes in some Pax Universalis; we believe in the Old Republic. He would put America's wealth and power at the service of some vague New World Order; we will put America first."<sup>432</sup>

After hopelessly trying to recruit Pat Buchanan as its candidate, the U.S. Taxpayers Party (USTP) split from the New Right and took Howard Phillips for president in 1992 and 1996. The USTP reconciled many intersecting political groups, involving Phillips's Conservative Caucus, the American Independent Party<sup>433</sup> and Randall Terry<sup>434</sup> of Operation Rescue.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> The text of Buchanan's December 10, 1991, Speech announcing his candidacy, Patrick J. Buchanan, "Why I Am Running for President," Human Events, December 28, 1991, in Berlet, Chip. "Battling the New World Order." Research, [www.researchforprogress.us/rwpop/nwo.html](http://www.researchforprogress.us/rwpop/nwo.html).

<sup>433</sup> The American Independent Party (AIP) is a Far -Right political party in the United States that was created in 1967 by former Governor George Wallace of Alabama. Wallace had carried five states in the 1968 presidential election campaigning on a segregationist "law and order" policy against Richard M. Nixon and Hubert H. Humphrey. From 1992 until 2008, the party became the California member of the national Constitution Party. The decision to leave the Constitution Party led to a leadership clash during the 2016 election.

<sup>434</sup> Randall Allen Terry (born 1959) is an American anti-abortion militant and political candidate. Terry created Operation Rescue - an anti-abortion organization Operation Rescue. The organization became chiefly famous in 1987 for denying access to abortion clinics. Terry, who led the group until 1991, has been arrested more than 40 times. On March 20, 2009, the

The USTP dogma was a type of militarized Christian libertarianism, entrenched in both the John Birch and “states rights” (segregationist) traditions of rigid resentment to any kind of federal government intervention. Its leaders supported formation of armed guerrillas and death to abortion contributors.”

Howard Phillips forcefully sought to deconstruct “the post-Civil War legacy of neo-Marxist welfare-state liberalism and moral decadence.” He stressed more particularly the repeal of the income tax, the Federal Reserve, Social Security, the Voting Rights Act, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The USTP even called for removing public schooling because it teaches “atheism,” “humanism,” and “sexual promiscuity.” In defense of economic nationalism, the USTP condemned the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as a profit to “multinational megaliths” at the expense of American national small corporations. Even though it advocated a strong military; they called to decrease federal police forces. The USTP was backed by several CNP members including William Cies from the Birch Society, William Ball from the Ball Corporation and Richard Viguerie.

## **II. Populism and American conservatism:**

### **1. Historical background of populism in the United**

#### **States:**

Resentment is the classic reaction generally linked with populist movements. The modern survey of the role of resentment in politics goes back to Nietzsche’s handling of resentment in his book *On the Genealogy of*

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White House declared that President Barack Obama was to speak at the May 17 Commencement of the University of Notre Dame. Terry believed Obama supports abortion rights and affirmed that Notre Dame, being one of the foremost Catholic universities in the nation, should not invite Obama.

<sup>435</sup> Operation Save America (formerly Operation Rescue National) is a fundamentalist Christian conservative organization based in Concord, North Carolina, a suburb of Charlotte, that opposes human induced abortion and its legality, Islam, and homosexuality. In 1994, Flip Benham became the director of the organization, then called Operation Rescue National. Benham replaced Keith Tucci, who had replaced Randall Terry Terry, Tucci and Benham have all been convicted of crimes related to their protest activities. Rusty Thomas is the current national director, having taken over when Flip Benham stepped down.

*Morality*. Through his division between nobles, slaves, and priests, Nietzsche underlines the hierarchical element essentially included in the popular feeling of anger. When populist<sup>436</sup> resentment, especially on the right, basically mobilizes into a political movement, anger felt toward elites changes into contempt. The People's Party in Texas promoted itself as the party of small landowners and other manufacturers in American republicanism.<sup>437</sup> In his empirical study of the Texas Populist voters, *The People's Party in Texas: A Study in Third Party Politics* (1933), Roscoe C. Martin noted that albeit the People's Party was a farmer party in a rural state, "Populist strongholds were found in sections which were not favorable to farming."<sup>438</sup> Martin claimed that the third party "found its greatest strength among the classes" most affected by economic diversity. It "offered a haven to all who had been buffeted and treated unkindly in the game of life, or better said, in the game of politics."<sup>439</sup> Using some of the thoughts and facts provided by Martin, historian James Turner recognized "the impact of economic distress on socially isolated farmers" as "the primary cause" of Populism's upsurge.

Though the development of the Populist Party varied fairly from state to state, the study on Populism over the last century has predominantly focused on the impact of the traditional republicanism of the American Revolution as cultured across the consensus of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln. Populism, associated with American republicanism, echoed with Texas electorates who championed the People's Party as the main opposition to the Democratic Party in Texas by the mid-1890s.<sup>440</sup> Conservatives resisted contests from the Republicans' authority in the 1870s and 1880s. Along with radical third parties, Old conservatives controlled state politics in the 1880s.

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<sup>436</sup> Populism is a term often used in the field of politics and changes in meaning from context to context. The term was first raised in the context during the unrest of agrarian movements in the United States.

<sup>437</sup> Miller, Worth Robert. "Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas: The Populist-Reform Democrat Rapprochement, 1900-1907." *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 52, no. 2, 1986. 163. 256.

<sup>438</sup> Martin, Roscoe Coleman. *The People's Party in Texas: a Study of Third Party Politics*. University of Texas Press, 1970. 62.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>440</sup> The People's Party secured 25 percent of the vote in the 1892 gubernatorial election, 36 percent in 1894, and 44 percent in 1896.

From a historical perspective, the Tea Party is the descendant of former prominent revolts of right-wing populism. Moreover, populism emerged against the principle of evolution in the schools, as this challenged the fundamentalist; that is, the literalist's word-for-word elucidation of the Bible. With the reversal of Prohibition and the setbacks of the eminent Scopes "monkey trial," right-wing populism rests essentially undeveloped for decades on the national level. For instance, right-wing populism played a significant role in imposing Prohibition, the ban on the sale of alcohol in the United States between 1919 and 1933. Nonetheless, "demon rum" described the dysfunctions because of immigration, urbanization, and industrialization that proliferated in the United States in the early twentieth century. I argue that right-wing populism, which has been the single most important political change in the United States, got far less attention than other movements.<sup>441</sup> A more than one-century old conservatism in the United States is very much linked to a wide range of populist revolts such as the 1930s populism, the first Red Scare subsequent to the Bolshevik Revolution, the 1920s Ku Klux Klan (KKK), and businesses' conflict against labor unions in the early 1900s.<sup>442</sup>

The 1960s revived the American right-wing populism. The traditional worldview of conservatives became threatened by the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the gay movement, the antiwar movement, and the legalization of abortion and the ban of prayer in public schools. In the 1970s populist traditionalists joined the free-market absolutists in the conservative movement that became influential by the end thanks to the election of Ronald Regan as president in the early 1980s. These conservatives would control American politics for the next decades.<sup>443</sup>

Free-market absolutists rose, particularly among conservative business elites, in resistance to the policies of New Deal liberalism. It has shaped the economic thinking of the conservative movement that has functioned since the

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<sup>441</sup> Chapter Title: Digital media and the rise of right-wing populism in Schroeder, Ralph. *Social Theory after the Internet: Media, Technology, and Globalization*. UCL Press, 2018.

<sup>442</sup> Cowie, Jefferson, and Nick Salvatore. "The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the New Deal in American History." *International Labor and Working-Class History*, vol. 74, no. 01, 2008, 3.

<sup>443</sup> Boggs, Carl. "The New Populism and the Limits of Structural Reforms." *Theory and Society*, vol. 12, no. 3, 1983. 343-363.



1930s to control the Republican Party and adjust the path of social policy in the United States away from Roosevelt's New Deal liberalism. Notwithstanding its significant role in the conservative movement's ascendancy of American politics since 1980, free-market absolutism found itself constantly unsatisfied with the compromises of former conservative leaders. This reaction coincided with the bitterness among right populists, like evangelical Christians, that the Republican Party indulge in their visions in electoral campaigns but hardly carried on their concerns once in power.

Populism has been a particularly significant political change in recent American history. A number of populist movements have since then secured important electoral victories, even taking control of state governments. Populist activists within the Tea Party movement commonly identify themselves with the conservative radical legacy of the 1960s. The influence of online populism generates the receptiveness of politicians and governments to the demands of civil societies - which involve citizens or people and social movements. Populists became challengers or counter publics, denouncing established parties, their policymakers and their traditional media, thanks to digital media.<sup>444</sup> As a populist movement, the Tea Party used digital media to convey a message online that is less perceptible in conventional media or offensive in mainstream media. The power of populism today reflects how new technologies allowed the Tea Party movement to become counter publics that reform the political agenda in media. Populism has been defined as a principle that 'juxtaposes a virtuous populace with corrupt elite and views the former as the sole legitimate source of political power.' According to Mueller, populists assert that they are the only genuine and righteous people whose opinions are underrepresented. In the case of right-wing populism, Mueller defines populism as anti-elitist and 'anti-establishment'.

With the case of the Tea Party, populism does not only involve the economically disadvantaged groups. Their populist agenda aims to fight the threats of a rising liberal state. They also embrace a strict anti-immigration agenda. The Tea Party has gained more traction with anti-immigration policies, while also focusing more firmly on the corruption of elites. In this matter, the

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<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*

power of populism lies on both the economic and social conditions that give rise to populist movements and parties, which outline ‘the people’ in limited terms and condemn elites.<sup>445</sup>

While American populists have usually been proficient at using the mass media, right-wing populists only used direct mail and magazines or recently email.<sup>446</sup> They always had a critical outlook to the mainstream media, and the Tea Party preserved a conspiratorial approach towards the establishment-controlled traditional media, pushing the movement’s supporters to turn to alternative media and social media. The Tea Party stands in a long line of right-wing populism in the United States of World War II. As an ideology, populism has risen and declined in the post-war period, although it has been as strong as left-wing populism.<sup>447</sup> The Tea Party’s rhetoric was powerfully populist.

## **2. Right-wing movements and paranoid politics:**

The New Right is very different from early right-wing in terms of populist and evenly revolutionary discourse. The New Right also combines neoliberalism with social conservatism, which tends to mobilize new factions of voters around an extensive array of social issues in order to avoid extremist rhetoric. Right-wing extremism and paranoid politics are well-established parts of the American political landscape. While these phenomena have their roots before the 20th century, focusing exclusively on this period provides ample examples of the two in action. While right-wing extremism, by definition, can only exist within right-wing movements, the paranoid style that births them is a tendency that exists across the political spectrum. Consider the Populist movements around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Populists were concerned with protecting agrarian economic interests and a rural way of life

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<sup>445</sup> Judis, John B. *The Populist Explosion: How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics*. Columbia Global Reports, 2017.

<sup>446</sup> Kazin, Michael. *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*. Cornell University Press, 2017. 259–60

<sup>447</sup> Claggett, William J.m., et al. “The Evolution of Mass Ideologies in Modern American Politics.” *The Forum*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2014. 233-56

from the ever-encroaching influences of urbanization and industrialization. Populist movements were marked by a paranoid style of politics. Their paranoia was directed primarily towards Catholics.<sup>448</sup> The Second Ku Klux Klan, whose principal goal was the preservation of traditional Protestant morality, provides a third example of paranoid politics. In addition to enforcing law and order consistent with these values, they sought to counter the perceived threat from Catholic immigrants and Jews. Unlike the previous two movements, its paranoid style helped to lead to right wing extremism.

Although McCarthyism was more than a simple movement, it was a reaction to America's perceived decline on the world stage and dominated policy formation and political discussion at midcentury. Yet, it is another example of paranoid politics merging with right-wing extremism. Joseph McCarthy and his followers identified Communism as the alien presence - similar to immigrants, Catholics, Blacks and Jews of the aforementioned periods - that would ultimately infect, corrupt, and destroy the American state. This logic meant that those who were opposed to McCarthyism or perceived as susceptible to communist influence were additional targets for censure. Robert Welch and the John Birch Society institutionalized McCarthyism by using a relatively small cadre of mainly wealthy business leaders to advance their program. Birchers also eventually argued that the conspiracy predated the rise of Communism. The candidacies of Barry Goldwater and George Wallace would witness the combination of paranoid racial politics with the emerging New Right. Race, paranoid politics, and right-wing extremism all united in these campaigns. These latter mobilizations were, at least in part, fueled by whites' anxiety over Blacks' increasing assertiveness and increasing civil rights success during the latter stages of insurgency. These campaigns also promised to enforce law and order, similar to the Klan of by gone years.<sup>449</sup>

History suggests that right-wing movements have at least five things in common. First, these movements typically follow on the heels of major social and economic change that threatens to dislodge dominant groups from positions of influence and privilege to which they've become accustomed.

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<sup>448</sup> Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform*. Knopf, 1972. 76.

<sup>449</sup> Bell, Daniel. *The Radical Right*. Doubleday, New York: Doubleday, 1963. 120.

Religious Fundamentalism, second, is another important feature of right-wing extremism. Christian fundamentalism generally centers on a literal interpretation of the Bible. A product of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many fundamentalists support Biblical exegesis that calls for the maintenance of the nuclear family and traditional gender roles. This serves as the cultural touchstone of the right wing. Third, the movements frequently construct the world in morally absolute terms. These good-versus-evil narratives justify a crusade against the violation of the aforementioned order and can continue despite logical inconsistencies. Fourth, as a logical extension, many movement adherents prefer to maintain social arrangements that support their dominance. They invoke a bygone past during which their economic and/or social comfort went unchallenged.<sup>450</sup> Fifth, conspiracies are central to right-wing extremism insofar as the displaced group requires a target on which to pin its decline. For the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, Jews, Catholics and immigrants “conspired to undermine” the morals of white Protestants; members of the John Birch Society and followers of McCarthy feared some American elites had sold out the country for Communism.

Citizen activism played a role in conveying George Wallace’s political message to people. Although they were not professional politicians, these campaign supporters helped Wallace reach the primaries, the election, and, most notably, the perception of the electorate. In *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics*, Edward Carmines and James Stimson claim that citizen activists represented were the secret behind significant ideological and political changes.<sup>451</sup> Carmines and Stimson indicate how American voters are particularly inert in terms of political information and usually ignore candidates’ positions on key issues, and how citizen activists play the role in producing political knowledge. The authors state that citizens “choose to bypass both costs and errors by simply looking to someone in their

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<sup>450</sup> Bell, Daniel “The Dispossessed;” Lipset and Raab, *The Politics of Unreason*; Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*. For a different analysis of the McCarthy phenomenon as it relates to “classical” right-wing movements, see Micheal Paul Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Spector*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967.

<sup>451</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 89.

personal environments, someone whose views they know (often, probably without wishing to) for evidence of the relevant facts.”

Wallace’s campaign supporters used to hold local press conferences and invite local citizens to raise funds by selling Wallace buttons and other advertising kits. In this way, citizen activists were essential to the success of Wallace’s campaigns. Many campaigners who ran the Wallace campaign were mainly adherents of conservative groups that appeared in the late 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>452</sup> Though they were isolated, radical, and often rejected by the major parties, these organizations triggered a lot of interest among political critics as they start to have a rigorous impact on the American political life in the late 1960s. While Wallace denied any link with these groups, he would have never been influential without their support. Thru the whole Wallace campaign, they were able to provide tools to form political opinions among the electorate.<sup>453</sup>

George Wallace’s political success was enabled by far Right groups since his first gubernatorial electoral victory. He had lost in his first run for governor in 1958 when he ran as a relative racial moderate and his opponent had the backing of the White Citizens’ Councils and the Ku Klux Klan. Realizing his strategic error, Wallace ran as a hard segregationist in 1962, and successfully worked to get both Council and Klan support.<sup>454</sup> During the 1964 primaries, pro-Wallace mailings went out to conservatives in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Maryland from the racist, anti-Semitic Christian Nationalist Crusade; Wallace was reported to have also gotten support from the John Birch Society, the White Party of America, and the National States’ Rights Party. With the exception of the Birchers, these groups were small. The White Party, for instance, was described by American National Socialist Party head George Lincoln Rockwell as just “a bunch of disgruntled [Nazi] party members who swiped my mailing list and defected.” But given that Wallace had no campaign infrastructure in any of these states, these groups, through pamphleteering and

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<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>453</sup> Luttwak, Edward. *The Pentagon and the Art of War: The Question of Military Reform*. Published by Institute for Contemporary Studies, Simon and Schuster, 1986. 134-135.

<sup>454</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 89.

other forms of local organizing, provided voters with a clear connection between Wallace and racism, giving them indications on how to vote.

Social scientists, looking for a way to explain the new Wallace phenomenon, began referring to it as a racial “backlash” by white workers who, while liberal on economic matters, were conservative about issues of race and authority. Wallace’s emblematic character was the white southerner who confronted the federal government. But as this representational figure extended, it became the general “Middle American” as the incarnation of the signifier *America* - the white middle-class male from every region who is pushed around by an offensive federal government, menaced by crime and social chaos, separated against by affirmative action, and surrounded by growing moral dishonor.<sup>455</sup> Through its vicious antagonism, this lately constructed identity began to make the Right appear no longer as the defender of privilege, but rather as representative of the whole American people.

Given that the presiding assumption among scholars like Myrdal, and later Seymour Martin Lipset, Richard Hofstadter, and others, that racism was the irrational response of an uneducated sector of society, it is no wonder that observers of the Wallace campaigns would see them as evidence of a working-class backlash. If racism was the result of ignorance, then his support had to come from a population that was least educated. Detailed electoral analysis of the Wisconsin primary, however, shows that Wallace’s votes, reflecting the old base of McCarthy’s support, came as much from middle-class suburbanites and farmers as from working-class neighborhoods.<sup>456</sup>

However, the very components that powered the Wallace phenomenon in 1964 kept him too far outside the mainstream to be a major contender for the Democratic nomination, and he did not have enough clout to make Barry Goldwater, the Republican presidential nominee, openly embrace him or consider asking him to be his vice presidential candidate. Nevertheless, Wallace had hit on themes that would serve him well during the tumult that

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<sup>455</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 79.

<sup>456</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, “Beyond the Backlash,” *Encounter*, 23. November 1964. 1; Lipset, *Political Man*, New York: Anchor Books, 1963. 119-123.

erupted in that decade.<sup>457</sup> A broad historical political realignment in the following decade could not be achieved handily. Americans who had believed in the principle of a strongly interventionist government and had benefited from it materially would have to support a conservative agenda. In order to create a hegemonic populism of the Right, a new form of political subjectivity had to be constructed that would oppose both political elites - seen as corrupt and irresponsible with their power - and groups perceived as calling for “special rights” and acting as parasites on the social body. For modern conservatives, this would mean building on the legacy of the Dixiecrats, Goldwater, Wallace, and Nixon, while drawing, as we have seen, on elements the Right claims to oppose.

Had the 1960s system been outmoded by contemporary politics, with direct participation considered as less important than fundraising and ensuring support? Had post-war conservatism been favored with voter activism limited to merely what the GOP found suitable? In fact, the conservative movement became more entrenched, self-possessed, and judicious, especially toward extremists. A newly rearranged movement was precisely what the Republican Party had been aspiring to. Yet, the movement’s culture, which was embedded in grassroots participation, has never completely disappeared. Organizations that relied on activism for media attention had only vanished knowing that they would certainly have more control in a growing and invigorated movement.<sup>458</sup>

By the end of the 1960s, a large majority of Americans became persuaded that the country had lost its ethical keystones due to excessive support of free speech, civil rights movement, student protests and the government’s surrender to African Americans’ radical demands. In fact, the conservative movement and the GOP have later rebuilt their political identity around these beliefs. With the remarkable results of the 1966 election, the GOP had known that the liberals had actually helped the party with the Great Society

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<sup>457</sup> Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 92.

<sup>458</sup> Shermer, and Elizabeth Tandy. “*Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater’s Early Senate Career and the De-Legitimization of Organized Labor.*” OUP Academic, Oxford University Press, 1 Dec. 2008, [academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195](http://academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195). 678-709.

system. A number of the Ultra-conservative movements came together during the rise of the New Right in the 1970s and split in the 1980s and 1990s. They did not only denounce Wall Street's dominant financial system but also the elitist administration. For instance, the 1992 presidential campaign of Pat Buchanan showed how a number of capitalists were able to infringe the law and support a violent populist conservatism that rose thanks to Reaganism. However, the successful presidential campaign of Bill Clinton demonstrated that moderate conservatism still resisted tempting influential capitalist support.

### **3. The Right-wing populist discourse:**

Populist language undertakes a consistent perception of *the people* and their right to self-governance. Populism itself is inherently democratic; as populist movements are generally motivated by democratic instincts to submerge on their extreme apprehension for homogeneity. When speaking, political leaders who use populist discourse do not focus on disparities amongst groups; rather show group members as entirely equivalent to each other, and totally different from other groups. Furthermore, populist leaders not only identify themselves with those they represent but are also supposed to change popular will straight to governance. In fact, it is this reflection of people's will in those who speak on their behalf, which makes populism a broadly powerful concept. When shifting from left to right, populism has preserved its character so that politicians on the right could rebuild a consistent view of *the people* and express popular anger against the elitist left.

Populist discourse assumes a homogeneous notion of *the people* and their right to self-rule. As such, it has the greatest purchase as an active political force in moments of crisis when popular sovereignty, and national identity itself, are open to new interpretations. Populism has an egalitarian as well as an intolerant legacy, but even populist movements driven by democratic impulses have ultimately foundered on their excessive concern for homogeneity. Political actors who employ populist language deemphasize differences among the group on whose behalf they claim to speak, depicting group members as wholly equivalent with each other, and utterly different than



those outside the collective identity. Moreover, populist leaders claim an immediate identification between themselves and those they represent. As tribunes of the people, they are meant to translate popular will directly into governance. The actual content of popular sovereignty is not distinct.<sup>459</sup> What is crucial is that the people see themselves reflected in those who speak on their behalf. This is why populism is such a broadly used term; it can describe figures as diverse as Pat Buchanan or Jesse Jackson. In the shift from left to right, populism has retained its character to the degree that activists and politicians on the right have been able to re-construct a coherent notion of *the people* and articulates a form of popular resentment against the difference and elitism it imagines on the left.

The Wallace movement built on the politics of both the Dixiecrat Revolt and the Goldwater insurgency, and, in a populist idiom, helped push modern conservatism toward eventual political hegemony. Wallace was the first to articulate these diverse political positions together in a convincing way for a public beyond southern segregationists and economic conservatives, and he was able to do so in part because he entered the political arena at a time when the United States was undergoing enormous social, political, and then economic transformation. Wallace's symbolic figure was the white southerner under attack from the federal government. But as this symbolic figure was extended it became the more general "Middle American" as the embodiment of the signifier *America* - the white middle-class male from every region who is pushed around by an invasive federal government, threatened by crime and social disorder, discriminated against by affirmative action, and surrounded by increasing moral degradation. Through its sometimes violent antagonism, this newly constructed identity began to make the Right appear no longer as the defender of privilege, but rather as representative of the whole American people.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 78.

<sup>460</sup> In Kazin's words, "As a metaphor, Middle America evoked, simultaneously, three compelling meanings: the unstylish, traditionalist expanse that lay between the two coasts; an egalitarian social status most citizens either claimed or desired; and a widespread feeling of being squeezed between penthouse and ghetto - between a condescending elite above and

George Wallace frequently spoke about the “average citizen” and “the common man” so as to assert a majoritarian alliance in the American electorate and to allow himself authority as a tribune of the people; yet he declared that these “average” Americans were not represented by their political leaders. According to him, these Americans were the outsiders, the despised, those who were detached from centers of authority. The people he tried to bring together into a mutual identity were mainly poor white southerners, farmers, small business holders, and estranged conservative suburbanites from crossways regions. He represented a wide range of positions on states’ rights, individual liberties, economic libertarianism, law and order, and anticommunism.

While Wallace supporters saw themselves as average citizens, they perceived their enemies as the real outsiders in the country. And in order to make outsiders feel insiders, Wallace had to use populist rhetoric to connect the liberal center to the Right. Therefore as his rhetoric developed, he attracted bureaucrats, “permissive” judges, the wealthy, activists, insurgents, welfare beneficiaries, and lawbreakers as threats to the nation to create a central unity among the groups he declared to represent. In joining together this new antigovernment populist movement, one specific figure first came to stand for Wallace’s national issue - the white southerner. As examined in earlier chapters, liberals in the mid-twentieth century commonly illustrated racial dominance as a typically southern fact, and many southern segregationists maintained to only be concerned with defending the “southern way of life.” Like Goldwater, Wallace claimed that the questions he tackled were central to people. Yet, his political views were only related to the South because he believed it was *the most* American that could only steer the fight to defend the nation. Wallace assumed that America’s racial problem was neither a uniqueness of a region nor a remnant of the past, but an essential feature of American politics. Populism was the main expression of the conservative insurgency, typically opposing intellectuals and favoring a conspiratorial theory of history.

Wallace used a new economic rhetoric by declaring that he stood up

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scruffy demonstrators below.” Kazin, Michael. *The Populist Persuasion an American History*. Cornell University Press, 2017. 253.

“for the working man” and the “middle class” in general. He asserted that welfarism and its “liberal giveaway programs” marginalized the political identity of the white American. Then, he did not only assail tax loopholes for the wealthy, but also tax-free foundations, which he claimed were encouraging chaos. By employing this new tax language he related the very rich, federal officials, activists, and lawbreakers. According to Wallace the wealthy funded the crime, insurgence, and idleness of the poor at the expense of the taxed average citizen. In the 1972 National Press Club, Wallace declared: “Middle America is caught in a tax squeeze between those who throw bombs in the streets and engage in disruptive and destructive protest while refusing to work on the one hand, and the silk-stocking crowd with their privately controlled tax-free foundations on the other hand.”<sup>461</sup>

Moreover, Wallace spoke about the “average citizen” and “the common man” in order to claim a majoritarian bloc in the American electorate and to grant himself authority as a tribune of the people; yet he claimed that these people were not represented by their political leaders. Rather, he said that his Americans were the outsiders, the scorned, those who were distant from centers of power. The people he attempted to bring together into a common identity were poor white southerners, working-class urban ethnics, farmers, small business owners, and alienated conservative suburbanites from across regions. The positions he claimed to represent were also heterogeneous: states’ rights, individual freedoms, law and order, anticommunism, economic libertarianism, and Protestant Christianity.<sup>462</sup>

Yet in order for Wallace supporters to see themselves as average citizens, their enemies had to be cast as the *real* outsiders; not people with whom they simply had political disagreements, but parasites on the national body. In other words, in order to make his outsiders insiders, Wallace had to rhetorically connect the liberal center to those he described as unproductive and decadent. Thus as his rhetoric evolved, he invoked bureaucrats,

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<sup>461</sup> “Speech by George C. Wallace, Governor of Alabama, to National Press Club.” Washington, D.C., December 6, 1971, Microfilm, George Wallace, Governor’s Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

<sup>462</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 79.

“permissive” judges, the ultra-wealthy, protesters, rioters, welfare recipients, and criminals alike as threats to the nation to establish a fundamental unity among the groups he claimed to represent. In linking together this new antigovernment populist identity, one particular figure first came to stand for Wallace’s national subject - the white southerner. As discussed in earlier chapters, liberals in the mid-twentieth century at the time generally depicted racial domination as a purely southern phenomenon, and many southern segregationists claimed to only be interested in protecting the “southern way of life.” But for Wallace, it was not enough merely to say that the South had a unique heritage that had to be protected from northern intrusion in its affairs. Like Goldwater, he asserted that the issues he addressed were of paramount importance to the entire nation. But his politics were simultaneously southern and national because he insisted that the South was the most American region: that only this region could lead the struggle to safeguard the nation’s historic virtues. While liberals claimed that true American identity resided in Gunnar Myrdal’s racially inclusive creed to which the South was an anomaly. Wallace, through an inversion, made the South the guardian of the nation’s soul. He understood that America’s racial problem was neither a peculiarity of a region nor a relic of the past, but a fundamental aspect of American politics. Populism was the main expression of the conservative insurgency, typically opposing intellectuals and favoring a conspiratorial theory of history.

According to Kazin, the conservative movement only seized the David-and-Goliath rhetoric effectively in the mid-1960s, when the white middle class rebelled against the liberals New Dealers and started to accept conservatism “as the champion of any citizen harassed by arrogant but inept bureaucrats, slovenly and unpatriotic protestors, and criminal minorities.” At that time, the Arizona senator Barry Goldwater used the populist language to fight New Dealers, Fair Dealers, and labor unions. During the 1950s, he succeeded in persuading Americans to turn against the labor union movement. In *Conscience of a Conservative*, Goldwater and Bozell dedicated a whole chapter entitled “Freedom for Labor,” to the criticism of labor unions and how they were damaging the working class. They noted, “Graft and corruption are symptoms of the illness that besets the labor movement, not the cause of it. The

cause is the enormous economic and political power now concentrated in the hands of union leaders.” They suggested, “The evil to be eliminated is the power of unions to enforce industry-wide bargaining!”<sup>463</sup>

Following the Wallace movement in 1964 and Republican victory in the 1966 midterm elections, a new racial coalition has come to replace the old Republican Party partition. For the middle class, votes were gained by using social and economic distress with housing regulations and new union policies that were moving blacks to white neighborhoods and to white job places. For southern white tenants in the Sunbelt (a term Phillips coined), Conservative principles of private business, lower taxation, and limited government intervention endorsed by Goldwater simply acquired more votes for Nixon. The main objective was to merge these parts into a new-shared political identity, distinct by what it opposed.

By emphasizing on welfare beneficiaries, Wallace differentiated between the working poor and the “undeserving poor,” a difference that basically dominates the Republican rhetoric in the subsequent decades. In order to reach Democrat electorates, Wallace defended “the working man” so as to captivate this identity into a wide middle class. Likewise, in his attempt to attract Republican support, he criticized loopholes for the wealthy. Wallace blamed the federal government for providing foreign aid to Third World governments caused economic decline and inflation. As he assumed on *Meet the Press*, the Democrats sometimes blame big business, and the Republicans sometimes blame labor . . . but the blame for inflation is on the Government of the United States. They have brought about inflation running these multi-billion dollar deficits, putting this money into circulation that devalues the dollar in a man’s wallet, giving this money overseas by the billions and billions of dollars, and the day of reckoning is here. I think that what they ought to do is cut down on federal spending, and one way you can start is cutting HEW.

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<sup>463</sup> Shermer, and Elizabeth Tandy. “Origins of the Conservative Ascendancy: Barry Goldwater's Early Senate Career and the De-Legitimization of Organized Labor.” OUP Academic, Oxford University Press, 1 Dec. 2008, [academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195](http://academic.oup.com/jah/article/95/3/678/980195). 678-709.

All these bureaucrats go around and draw up these busing decrees.<sup>464</sup>

The populist discourse of contemporary conservatism jellied in the presidential campaigns and administration of Richard Nixon and thus was finally blocked in national central institutions. While the Dixiecrat Revolt, the Wallace movement and the Goldwater presidential candidacy Wallace had all failed to reach Democratic voters, Nixon succeeded.<sup>465</sup> Yet, he used George Wallace's populist rhetoric by saying that unlike the protesters, rioters, or welfare recipients, working people "are good people. They're decent people; they work and they save and they pay their taxes and they care."<sup>466</sup> Nixon was relatively able to distinguish himself from the aggressive racist populism used in George Wallace's campaign. As Jonathan Rieder explains, "If Wallace offered rollback, Nixon suggested containment." While he failed his political campaign, Wallace succeeded in providing a new setting for the Right political discourse.<sup>467</sup>

Phillips's *The Emerging Republican Majority* settled the political foundation on which the politics of Nixon's majoritarianism was created. "The emerging Republican majority," he wrote, spoke clearly . . . for a shift away from the sociological jurisprudence, moral permissiveness, experimental residential, welfare and educational programming and massive federal spending by which the Liberal establishment sought to propagate liberal institutions and ideology.<sup>468</sup> Democrats among these groups were principally alienated from their party by its increasing identification with the Northeastern Establishment and ghetto alike."<sup>469</sup>

With Nixon, political issues that connected race, populism, and

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<sup>464</sup> *Meet the Press*, NBC-TV, August 22, 1971, Microfilm Transcript, George C. Wallace, Governor's Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

<sup>465</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 106.

<sup>466</sup> Text of speech from *The Essential America*, Electronic Reserves, [www.wwnorton.com/college/history/essusa/ereserves/ch34.htm](http://www.wwnorton.com/college/history/essusa/ereserves/ch34.htm).

<sup>467</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 116.

<sup>468</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 139.

<sup>469</sup> Phillips, Kevin. *The Emerging Republican Majority*. Princeton University Press, 2015. 471.

conservatism had become resilient in American politics particularly concerning gender in conflicts over abortion and the anticipated Equal Rights Amendment.<sup>470</sup> The antigovernment reaction coincided with the rise of the Right as the politics of state alienation was a fundamental principle of modern conservatism, instituted by the Dixiecrat Revolt, the Goldwater movement, the Wallace campaigns, and Nixon silent majority's rhetoric. Nonetheless, antistatism also had origins in the leftist social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The Civil Rights Movement, the feminist movement, the antiwar and student movements, and the antinuclear movement fostered national politics as they've proved the imperialist state.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan's victory in the presidential elections revealed an era of conservative political rule centered on antigovernment rhetoric. In order for conservatives to confirm power, various parts of antigovernment organizations had to be connected together into a new consistent politics. The connections were successful late 1970s as people with different political leanings had started to share a common sense of hostility toward the state. In his presidential farewell speech in January 1989, Ronald Reagan evaluated the historic political makeover he had invested in. "They called it the Reagan Revolution and I'll accept that," he said, "but for me it always seemed more like the Great Rediscovery: a rediscovery of our values and our common sense."<sup>471</sup> According to Reagan, the contemporary Right came to control the Republican Party and the political center in the United States through common sense. They were able not only to fully govern institutions, but also to outline the very prospect of reliable politics.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Left became unable to efficiently convince the middle class towards a rising conservative movement against state-interventionist capitalism. The middle class became more hesitant following the failure of state capitalism in Western Europe.<sup>472</sup> After having

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<sup>470</sup> Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism*. Yale University Press, 2009. 139.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>472</sup> This analysis explains the role of employees and their movements. In the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, increasing wages helped to preserve worker devotion to welfare state capitalisms. Union fight, along with radical political movements, and recognized Socialist and communist parties were frequently critical elements in campaigns for pro-worker social circumstances. In

relied on the state for so long to defend the social and economic change, a pro-middle class started to disappear as former left and unions lost control. Conservatives grasped the opportunity to blame the leftist political movements and labor unions of seizing the state for their “evil interests”. The use of popular antagonism towards social and economic troubles simply became a key factor in the success of the New Right, developing their economic discourse around all these principles.

Through the 1990s, both Republicans and Democrats politically failed to provide optimistic solutions to the discontent of people. According to the conservative thinker Kevin Phillips, the fact was that “frustration politics has built to a possibly scary level precisely because of the unnerving weakness of the major parties and their prevailing philosophies.” As a reaction to the growing distress, the right-wing movements used the populist discourse as a key organizing strategy to unite the different conservative factions especially the Christian Right. According to Kevin Phillips, a conservative thinker, both Democrats and Republicans were unable to propose optimistic solutions for distressed people during the 1990s. So, in response to a new world system, populist discourse emerged as the main organizing strategy of different sectors of radical Right-wing populist movements mainly the Christian Right. In the 1990s, neither the Republicans nor the Democrats proposed optimistic solutions for distressed people.

Therefore, we denote two forms of right-wing populism ranging from economic libertarianism that rejects “big government” as “the cause of all economic and social woes”<sup>473</sup> to chauvinistic and racist censoring towards immigrants and asylum seekers particularly when it comes to voting perception.<sup>474</sup> In fact, right-wing movements have constantly used chauvinism,

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the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, declining incomes increased workers’ dissatisfaction. The Right seized the workers’ discontent with weakened state capitalisms and with their leftist supporters to weaken worker resistance to private capitalism.

<sup>473</sup> Lucy A. Williams, “The Right’s Attack on Aid to Families with Dependent Children,” *Public Encyclopedia* vol. 10, nos. 3 and 4. Fall/Winter 1996. 18.

<sup>474</sup> This section is adapted from a draft of Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons’s *Too Close for Comfort: Right-Wing Populism, Scapegoating, and Fascist Potentials in U.S. Political Traditions*. Boston: South End Press, 1997.



scapegoating, and conspiracy theories as political tools to react against global liberation and social corporatism.

Today, the populist Right represents itself as the protector of “the people” by tackling and offering “solutions” that echo with the general concerns according to the right-wing implications. And instead of evaluating the role of large-scale corporations in the market economy, conservatives blame immigrants. The Right made use of the welfare debate as a block issue, which could drag voters away from their conventional adherences. And as Jean Hardisty has commented, “several different forms of prejudice can now be advocated under the guise of populism.”<sup>475</sup> As a result, scapegoating became the typical tool in political and electoral spheres with either economic or social origins.

### **III. Third Party existence in the United States:**

#### **1. Ross Perot’s third party in the US as an example:**

One of the most notable features of the 1992 Texas billionaire H. Ross movement was its capacity to organize and rally thousands of grassroots activists. In the 1992 presidential election, approximately one out of five votes cast went to Ross Perot. Many commentators noted that his unexpected rise to the national political scene explained the rise of third-party’s ability to mobilize.<sup>476</sup> His huge personal fortune helped him influence a large number of devoted supporters and electorate.<sup>477</sup> The grassroots activists stepped forward the candidate’s call on the “Larry King” show and led an impressive campaign in all fifty states.

In fact, thousands of citizens volunteered in response to Perot's requests to run state campaign headquarters and distribute petitions during the spring

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<sup>475</sup> Hardisty, Jean. “The Resurgent Right: Why Now?” Political Research Associates, 19 Nov. 1995, [www.politicalresearch.org/1995/11/19/the-resurgent-right-why-now-2/](http://www.politicalresearch.org/1995/11/19/the-resurgent-right-why-now-2/).

<sup>476</sup> McCann, James A., et al. “Heeding the Call: An Assessment of Mobilization into H. Ross Perot's 1992 Presidential Campaign.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1999. 1-28.

<sup>477</sup> Rosenstone, Steven J., et al. *Third Parties in America: Citizen Response to Major Party Failure*. Princeton Univ. Press, 1996. 243.

and summer of 1992. All of the trappings of a nationwide political campaign recoiled as billboards, badges, and cushion stickers emerged, and political meetings were proficiently coordinated. As Aldrich observed, “Perot developed what might have been the most effective campaign organization of the three general election candidates, even though his candidacy was brand new and even though - or perhaps because-it lacked the history and permanence of a major political party organization.”<sup>478</sup> However, up to the present time there has been somewhat little academic research dedicated to this exceptional electoral movement. As Rosenstone and Hansen have indicated, activist campaigns can have a strong effect on citizens’ involvement by their direct contact with them. Those contacted directly were more prone to vote, increasing more participation in local campaigns for third-party candidates.<sup>479</sup>

Involvement in a third-party movement is unique but also explains how third-party activism is based on a simple “push-pull” concept, through which some elements motivate activists toward the independent candidate by “pushing” them away from the major parties, and “pulling” supporters toward Perot’s candidacy, for instance. Academics maintain that third-party movements arise in reaction to push factors, as the electorate becomes more skeptic, dissatisfied with the performance of the major parties, and excluded from the major-party candidates.<sup>480</sup> These are basically negative aspects, which inspire support for independent candidates as they leap from discontent with the major party options, though they may not be a source of long-lasting commitment. Zaller and Hunt argue that much of the initial support for Perot in the ballots, for instance, matched a “none-of-the-above” expression of frustration with the chief nomination candidates in the two leading parties.<sup>481</sup>

The features controlling the movement shifted as the circumstance changed from clarifying the decision to react to the call of Perot to actually

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<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> Brown, Clifford W., et al. *Serious Money: Fundraising and Contributing in Presidential Nomination Campaigns*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995.

<sup>480</sup> Chressanthis, George A., and Stephen D. Shaffer. 1993. “Major-Party Failure and Third-Party Voting in Presidential Elections, 1976-1988.” *Social Science Quarterly* 74: 264-273.

<sup>481</sup> Zaller, John, and Mark Hunt. “The Rise and Fall of Candidate Perot: Unmediated versus Mediated Politics - Part I.” *Political Communication*, vol. 11, no. 4, 1994. 357-390.

working for Perot in the campaign when the major parties suffered from internal conflicts. The third-party literature focuses on voting as an outcome of rebuff of the major parties, whereas the involvement literature stresses the different strategies and resources of mobilization and activism that are usually linked to widespread dissatisfaction. The “negative” reaction was significant to Perot's initial success in rallying a large number of motivated citizens in 1992. In fact, since then, there were numerous studies about rising levels of skepticism among Americans, as opinion polls recurrently find citizens favoring political reforms and eager to a number of new options during elections. Alongside this milieu, thanks to his unprecedented mobilization strategies, Ross Perot quickly became a key player in the presidential contest in 1992. The electoral support for Perot also influenced House members, particularly marginal House Republicans, on the North American Free Trade Agreement vote results. This explains how, under certain circumstances, house members generally react to Independent political candidates and movements in their districts when making a decision on legislation.<sup>482</sup>

Indeed, on November 17, 1993, NAFTA passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 234 to 200.<sup>483</sup> Discussed under advanced supplies that ban congressional revisions, NAFTA passage is one of the major legislative achievements of the Clinton Administration. Furthermore, the NAFTA vote symbolized Perot's initial meaningful effort to use the impact out of his convincing general election to change the results of the legislation vote before passing in Congress. The vote outcome was a culmination of a yearlong battle to prevent congressional passage of the trade bill, in which Perot served as a forthright opponent of many policies defended by the Clinton administration.<sup>484</sup> During the critical campaign, Perot broadcasted and justified

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<sup>482</sup> Holian, David B., et al. “Constituency Opinion, Ross Perot, and Roll-Call Behavior in the U.S. House: The Case of the NAFTA.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 3, 1997. 369-392.

<sup>483</sup> Foley, Stephen. “NAFTA Secretariat.” NAFTA Secretariat, web.archive.org/web/20130412160000/http://www.nafta-secretariat.org/en/view.aspx?conID=775.

<sup>484</sup> Wattenberg, Martin P. *The Decline of American Political Parties: 1952-1996*. Harvard University Press, 1999. 187.

his opposition to NAFTA. Rallying in Washington, he appeared on Capitol Hill contending NAFTA along with Republican House members at his side.

Although public opinion concerning NAFTA and the presidential candidate changed engendering congressional action, Perot's character and the trade bill position were popular among respondents who voted for him in 1992. Their reaction affected the trade pact as 65% of Perot supporters opposed NAFTA, compared to 60% of Clinton voters who advocated for the bill. Yet, Perot supporters did not only go to the polls in 1992 to challenge the bill, but also to express their concern with the national trade issues and exert pressure on House representatives of their specific districts.

While Independent candidates and movements have become more influential in the recent decades, they have quickly waned or simply been assimilated in major parties, as in the case of John Anderson who was appointed by the Wallace movement in his presidential race in 1980. In the case of the Texas billionaire, however, he did not only end with the 1992 election, but later embodied a change in the future of independent candidates.<sup>485</sup> In fact, Martin P. Wattenberg (1994) draws a persuasive case of independent candidates to reveal that major parties have become far less prominent to the American typical electorate. The average voters are more and more showing their disinterest to the Democratic and Republican parties. Consequently, since the 1970s, they have increasingly tended to theorize issues in terms of candidates and rather express neutral views toward the major parties.<sup>486</sup> In this context, Ross Perot seized the new trend and maintained that average voters had to completely disregard the major parties in order to solve the nation's problems. His attack on the trade bill was his leading unlimited struggle to affect the establishment from outside.

Although Democrats and Republicans still played an important role in the vote outcome, the outcome of Perot's electorate was substantial enough to be handled by House representatives, revealing how independent voters' power

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<sup>485</sup> Foley, Stephen. "NAFTA Secretariat." NAFTA Secretariat, [web.archive.org/web/20130412160000/http://www.nafta-secretariat.org/en/view.aspx?conID=775](http://web.archive.org/web/20130412160000/http://www.nafta-secretariat.org/en/view.aspx?conID=775).

<sup>486</sup> Wattenberg, Martin P. *The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics*. Harvard University Press. 150.

was able to influence decision making in the United States. Throughout the twentieth century and up to the present, political science research has considerably focused on the role of different factors on American presidential elections. The election outcomes are, hence, determined by the state economy, the positions of the candidates of either major parties or independent movements on issues, and to what extent candidates' campaigns are efficient. The prevalent economic concern in the early 1990s led many researchers to assume that the national economic issues explained the defeat of George Bush's the 1992 presidential elections.

Instead, others believe that this transition of authority occurred only because the Democratic Party was not able to suggest a New Democrat label, which was moderate enough to attract Democrats who had hitherto supported Reagan and Bush. Moreover, the rise of strong Independent candidates, such as Ross Perot, showed that the electorate was dissatisfied with Washington and likely to end with the status quo. The effect of the economy and the impact of issues and ideology are the primary elements that explain the 1992 election. Yet, the general liberal-conservative issue dimension also played an important role in voters' perception.

In fact, the chief and most common element about the 1992 election was the "it's the economy, stupid" philosophy. The significance of the economic situation as a major determinant in polling has been well acknowledged by political scientists, who suggested that the general electorate assesses the previous economic record of the major parties and tend to support the one who has the best economic performance.<sup>487</sup> The third piece of folk-wisdom regarding the 1992 presidential election is that it was influenced by a horde of alienated voters turned off by Washington, fed-up with politics as usual, disgusted with partisan gridlock, and seeking to overturn the status quo. The angry-voter hypothesis seems to be a favored one in anecdotal coverage of the election. For example, Germond and Witcover titled their 1993 account of the election *Mad as Hell: Revolt at the Ballot Box, 1992*. This interpretation

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<sup>487</sup> Fiorina, Morris P. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. Yale University Press, 1981. 83.

has also been fueled by in-creased turnout in 1992. Allegedly these angry voters were inspired to vote by the availability of an anti-status quo choice, and may have provided the basis for Perot's support.

Not surprisingly, party identification had the expected implications for the two major-party candidates: both were the choice of significantly more than 50% of their own partisans, though Bush had a significantly higher defection rate than Clinton (29.5% versus 21.1%). The Perot results are also as expected: he drew more strongly from independents than from partisans; and we see-in line with Bush's weak hold on voters-that Perot did better in an absolute sense among Republicans than Democrats.

## **2. Before the Tea Party: the rise of the conservative Republican base 1964 - 2008:**

The Republican Party experienced an internal division between the old moderate Republicanism and the new firm conservatism symbolized in Reaganism. The disintegration between the two factions extended to other divisive problems during the 1960s, paving the way to new political potentials as increasing numbers of electorates, who were alienated from the established political system, became independent.

Goldwater would lose the presidential elections, but would for the first time highlight the Republican platform in 1964. In fact, these ideals would become the manifesto for the Republican Party later on and would push Ronald Reagan to run for the presidency.<sup>488</sup> In the example of the modern Right, the change in the course of political control had begun long before the Reagan Revolution. Still measured by such institutional gauges as control of Congress, the presidency, and the courts, by effective legislative or policy proposals, or even by conservative dominance of the Republican Party, the modern Right failed as in the three decades before 1980. The Dixiecrat Revolt, the Goldwater candidacy of 1964, the presidential campaigns of George Wallace, and Nixon's

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<sup>488</sup> Lutz, Norma Jean. *The History of the Republican Party*. Chelsea House Publishers, 2000. 78.

effort to build a New Majority within two presidential terms all failed in institutional terms. Nevertheless, these political events have been crucial in yielding conservative victory, marking a resilient and stable political development that would begin early 1980s. Along with a completely new racial discourse, these episodes represented the fundamental shift.<sup>489</sup>

The modern Right succeeded in building a common and consistent political identity linked by opposition to welfare, neoliberal economics, and “family values”. Conservative politicians articulated these subjects into an organizational bloc opposing the New Deal. The new political identity was so dominant that diverse factions came to share a sense of collective opposition to the prevailing political system.<sup>490</sup> The modern Right status evolved as a majoritarian unifier that involved the Silent Majority, the Forgotten Americans, and Middle America. These groups represented people who felt they were marginalized by the federal government, victimized by affirmative action, and conceded by cultural disgrace. They condemned the liberal state as an immoral coalition of liberal elites, ethnic minorities, women, poor people, and anyone asking for “special rights.”<sup>491</sup>

I do not intend to shorten the rise of the modern Right to a historic factor or a fundamental exigency of the political circumstance. It is actually produced and shaped by both, so we need to examine other events to understand how the modern Right arose. In this chapter, I examined the connotation and outcomes of different speeches and writings in relation to the

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<sup>489</sup> The term “associative chain” was invented by Victoria Hattam. It develops on Ernesto Laclau’s concept of chains of equivalence, which depicts the way that different political basics are connected together in a merged political sense. Hattam uses the term “association” to propose a procedure that engages intuitive calls at work in the construction of such connections. Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* New York: Verso, 1996. Victoria Hattam, *In the Shadow of Race: Ethnic Politics in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

<sup>490</sup> According to Michael Kazin’s, “As a metaphor, Middle America evoked, simultaneously, three compelling meanings: the unstylish, traditionalist expanse that lay between the two coasts; an egalitarian social status most citizens either claimed or desired; and a widespread feeling of being squeezed between penthouse and ghetto-between a condescending elite above and scruffy demonstrators below Kazin, Michael. *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*. Cornell University Press, 2017. 253.

<sup>491</sup> See King and Smith’s “racial orders” theory in Rogers Smith and Desmond King, “Racial Orders in American Political Development,” *American Political Science Review* 99. 2005: 75-92.

definite political perspectives in which they developed, mainly the arbitrating political party. The flexibility of language plays a key role in reshaping political realisms on the ground.<sup>492</sup>

Reagan's 1980 movement was structured by Trent Lott in Philadelphia, Mississippi, a town infamous as the place where civil rights laborers James Cheney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman were assassinated in 1964. Reagan deliberately promised his supporters he would defend "states' rights." Reagan succeeded in combining racism, conservatism and anti-statist populism in a majoritarian discourse, hence founding the modern Republican system. The emergence of the Right was the unavoidable return to first ideologies. In this approach, the narrative of the upsurge of the Right fails to reveal a key element of the Right's ultimate victory.

Although President Reagan secured a major victory in the 1984 elections, the Republican Party was losing power in Congress. Support among Republican governors as well as congressional Republicans weakened significantly. Hence, in its 1986 report on "Federalism and the States", the National Governors' Association vetoed Reagan's clear objective of folding further federal responsibilities back to the states without financial backing.<sup>493</sup> The removal of the state tax deduction was abandoned from the tax reform bill at the persistence of both Republican and Democratic congressmen and senators. Albeit the Republican majority in Congress, the Senate Budget Committee instantly cancelled the president's budget in 1986 following a national criticism over the negative impact domestic priorities had suffered. The effort toward an inclusive New Federalism was ultimately hindered owing to deep political and ideological divergences within conservative statuses. Reagan has drifted substantial deficits through overseas imports that have weakened the value of the dollar carrying with it the dislocation of regular profit making and industries across the country.<sup>494</sup> Businessmen, small

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<sup>492</sup> See, for instance, Shafer, Byron E., and Richard Johnston. *The End of Southern Exceptionalism: Class, Race, and Partisan Change in the Postwar South*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

<sup>493</sup> Kincaid, John. "The State of American Federalism: 1986." Cross Ref Listing of Deleted DOIs, vol. 17, no. 3, 1987. 1.

<sup>494</sup> The Federal Reserve Board data states that the annual net acquisition of United States resources by foreigners has more than tripled in the period 1980-85. Cf.



entrepreneurs, and manufacturers, who were always linked to the Republican Party, have been confronted with a rising international competition.

In his study of the historical process, Donald Critchlow assumed that “conservatives gained control of the Republican Party by defeating its liberal eastern wing.”<sup>495</sup> Republicans symbolized the worries of the white middle-class and religious electorate through lower taxes, national defense, protection of family values, and control of social morality. “Republicans battled Republicans for control of their party, and conservatives battled liberals for control of government. But ultimately, the Right did ascend to political power against all odds” in an era when the “tensions and contradictions of modern American conservatism” can be seen to “have a parallel in the limitations of liberalism in the postwar period”.<sup>496</sup>

In 2006, political journalist Thomas Edsall declared “Although the Republican Party has dominated American politics over the past 40 years, it has not achieved a political realignment. Instead, the GOP has developed the capacity to eke out victory by slim margins in a majority of closely contested elections, losing intermittently but winning more than half the time. It is likely to continue this pattern for the foreseeable future. Conservatives have, furthermore, created a political arena in which winning Democrats are likely to find themselves forced to move to the right.”<sup>497</sup>

Through the branding strategy, conservatism succeeded in holding back liberal urges beyond its own. The branding process also helped in deepening division between the major political parties. Political scientist Nicole Rae wrote: “The traditional American party was almost defined by its peculiarly non-ideological character, observing that as early as 1989, the parties had entered a “new world of American politics in which the Democratic Party has become a more consistently liberal party, and the Republican Party more

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<sup>495</sup> Critchlow, Donald T. *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History*. Harvard University Press, 2007. 1-2.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-5.

<sup>497</sup> Edsall, Thomas Byrne. *Building Red America: The New Conservative Coalition and the Drive for Permanent Power*. Basic Books, 2006. X.

consistently conservative, than has been the case in any previous period of American history”.<sup>498</sup>

The conservative values that Ronald Reagan defended assured him the nomination and eventually helped him win the presidential elections. The Republican program supported economic development, reinstating America’s military force, and resisting the Soviet Union. Following Reagan’s successful appeal to voters, the Republican Party sought to follow suit and embrace more conservative strategies that echoed with the aspiration of most American people in the 1980s.<sup>499</sup> Thanks to his acting experience, Reagan was known as the “Great Communicator” for his talent to convey his political views and unite Americans. In fact, his political stance was so influential that many Democrats voted Republican, and were identified as *Reagan Democrats*. His conservative ideals eventually became the ideals of the Republican Party, as summarized in his inaugural speech:

. . . We have every right to dream heroic dreams. Those who say that we’re in a time when there are not heroes, they just don’t know where to look. You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond. You meet heroes across a counter, and they’re on both sides of that counter. There are entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea who create new jobs, new wealth, and opportunity. They’re individuals and families whose taxes support the government and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education. Their patriotism is quiet, but deep. Their values sustain our national life . . .<sup>500</sup>

Reagan had created a new heritage in the Republican Party that now declared its conservatism while condemning the Democratic “liberal, tax-and-spend” policies. The American business magnate Ross Perot ran an independent presidential campaign in 1992 and a third party campaign in 1996,

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<sup>498</sup> Rae, Nicol C. *The Decline and Fall of the Liberal Republicans from 1952 to the Present*. Oxford University Press, 1989. 3.

<sup>499</sup> Lutz, Norma Jean. *The History of the Republican Party*. Chelsea House Publishers, 2000. 80.

<sup>500</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981,” in *Schneider, Gregory L. Conservatism in America since 1930: A Reader*. New York University Press, 2003. 344-345.

and eventually established the Reform Party. His campaigns were among the most influential presidential performances by a third party of an independent candidate in American history. Perot focused on economic issues mainly the deficit reduction and appealed more to Republicans than to Democrats, taking votes away from President George Bush.<sup>501</sup>

With a strong public support, the Republicans in Congress rapidly started efforts to pass laws intended to change the U.S. welfare system and decrease the budget deficit. Their recurrent confrontation with Democrats usually resulted in either a gridlock over the budget between 1995 and 1996 or incomplete cessations of the government. Today, the modern Republican Party is known for its conservative programs of limited federal government and control of states and local authorities in problems such as education.<sup>502</sup>

Moreover, Republicans believe in cutting taxes, both to stimulate economic development and to offer people better financial autonomy. They resist government regulation of the economy and excessive government-funded social programs. Republicans generally resist efforts to control gun possession. In terms of social concerns, Republicans are usually more conservative, specifically in issues regarding school prayers and same-sex marriage.<sup>503</sup>

In fact, social changes had undeniably played an essential role in the victory of Republicans in the 1994-midterm elections. Newt Gingrich has used the middle class resentment to influence voters and to strengthen the New Right's evaluation of economic outcomes in the world since the 1970s. Growing numbers of people were enormously unhappy with some state capitalist economic and social policies, forcing them to adopt the New Right's program of private capitalism.

When a new Republican majority overtook Congress, it was due in large part to the architect, Newt Gingrich. He scouted out candidates, helped develop the "Contract with America," and capitalized on the dissatisfaction

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<sup>501</sup> Lutz, Norma Jean. *The History of the Republican Party*. Chelsea House Publishers, 2000. 85.

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*, 93

<sup>503</sup> Lutz, Norma Jean. *The History of the Republican Party*. Chelsea House Publishers, 2000. 98.

with President Clinton's leftward drift in government. It was also due to ideas that he maintained and along with several others, adopted from Reagan's 1985 state of the union address, in the form of a Contract with America.<sup>504</sup> The Republican gains in 1994 came from conservative and moderate districts with liberal Democratic incumbents. The pattern of Republicans replacing Democrats too liberal for their districts had been going on since at least 1978 and 1994 was the culminating election. In short, the Republican victory was the result of a long-term trend, especially prominent in the Southern and Border States and in the Mid-west, wherein conservative constituencies and Republican representatives were matched and sorted.

The very existence of the conservative Tea Party raised questions about how a conservative social movement succeeded in bringing to get her ideology with an activism based on challenging authority. In fact, we suggest how conservatism not only explains the relative lack of conservative social movements, but also how a conservative social movement like the Tea Party might be. Late 2008, while two presidential terms had left President George W. Bush extremely unpopular, a failed McCain campaign left high-ranking Republicans without a visible leader.<sup>505</sup> Experts started to question whether the Republican Party might be in an enduring decline.<sup>506</sup>

Over the past decades, the U.S. party system has experienced an ideological shift as both congressional conservative Democrats and liberal have nearly disappeared and the number of moderates at the elite level increasingly diminished.<sup>507</sup> Consequently, while Democratic identifiers have been moving to the left, Republican identifiers have been moving to the right.<sup>508</sup> At the mass level, citizens have grown more ideologically divided. Since the 1980s, the

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<sup>504</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 29

<sup>505</sup> Balz, Dan, and John Cohen. "Poll Finds Americans Pessimistic, Want Change: War, Economy, Politics, Sour Views of Nation's Direction." *Washington Post*, 4 Nov. 2007.

<sup>506</sup> Packer, George. "The Fall of Conservatism." *The New Yorker*, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/05/26/the-fall-of-conservatism](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/05/26/the-fall-of-conservatism).

<sup>507</sup> Sinclair, Barbara. 2005. *The New World of U.S. Senators*. In *Congress Reconsidered*, 8th edition, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington, DC: CQ Press).

<sup>508</sup> Abramowitz, Alan I. 2010. *The Disappearing Center: Engaged Citizens, Polarization, and American Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

growing polarization improved among citizens since the 1980s especially at the level of Republican identifiers. As shown in Table 4, the percentage of Republican identifiers participating in two or more activities - usually members who were politically active - diminished during the 1980s but then increased in the 1990s and over the recent decades. Hence, the percentage of Republican identifiers participating in more than three activities roughly doubled, rising from 11 percent in the 1980s to 19 percent in the last decades. The considerable growth among the GOP's activist base would pave the way to the rise of the Tea Party movement.

<b>Campaign Activities</b>	<b>52-60</b>	<b>62-70</b>	<b>72-80</b>	<b>82-90</b>	<b>92-00</b>	<b>02-08</b>
0	13%	16%	21%	28%	22%	13%
1	141	42	39	40	39	37
2	224	22	23	21	26	31
3+	22	20	17	11	13	19

Table 4: The percentage of Campaign Activism among Republican Identifiers by Decade <sup>509</sup>

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<sup>509</sup>“ANES Guide - ANES: American National Election Studies.” ANES | American National Election Studies, [electionstudies.org/resources/anes-guide/](http://electionstudies.org/resources/anes-guide/).

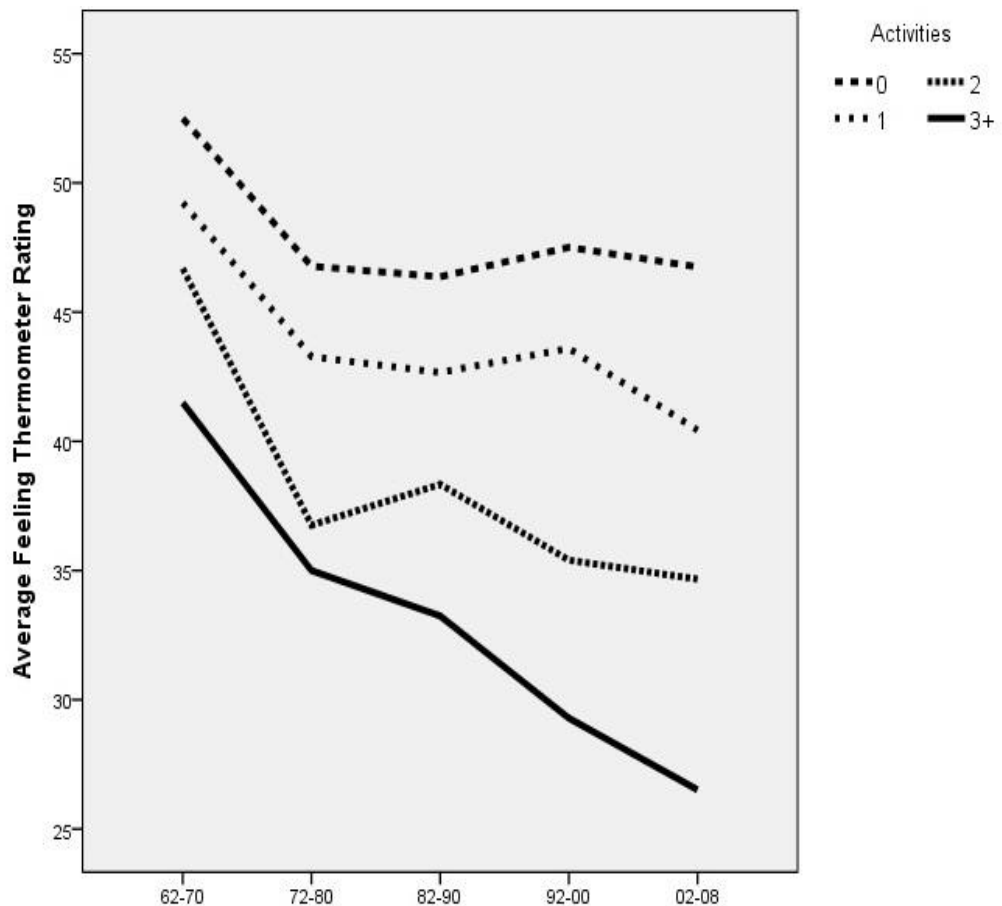


Figure 4: Average Feeling Thermometer Evaluation of Democratic Presidential Candidate among Republican Identifiers over the last decades  
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The data in Figure 4 show that Republican identifiers have gradually become more conservative with more negative evaluations of Democratic presidential candidates over the last decades. The survey also shows that Republican identifiers have responded positively to calls from conservative organizations and media figures to participate in protests against Democratic presidents and their progressive policy agendas. Table 5 compares the social characteristics and political attitudes of active Republican identifiers - mainly those who were active in more than two electoral campaigns in 2008 - with the social characteristics and political attitudes of the general electorate.

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<sup>510</sup> “Time Series Cumulative Data File (1948-2016) - ANES: American National Election Studies.” ANES | American National Election Studies, [electionstudies.org/data-center/anes-time-series-cumulative-data-file/](https://electionstudies.org/data-center/anes-time-series-cumulative-data-file/).

	<b>Active Republicans</b>	<b>Overall Electorate</b>
<b>Social Characteristics</b>		
White	92%	75%
Male	50%	45%
College Graduates	44%	29%
18-29 years-old	16%	21%
50 and older	50%	43%
Income \$75K or more	55%	37%
Weekly Churchgoer	50%	33%
<b>Political Attitudes</b>		
Conservative	83%	42%
Very Conservative	59%	26%
Oppose Health Care Reform	74%	37%
Pro-Life on Abortion	58%	42%
Oppose Gay Marriage	83%	61%
Favor Reduced Gov't Role	75%	41%
Negative Rating of Obama	69%	29%
Positive Rating of Palin	84%	46%

Table 5: Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Active Republicans vs. Overall Electorate in 2008<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>511</sup>“ANES Guide - ANES: American National Election Studies.” ANES | American National Election Studies, [electionstudies.org/resources/anes-guide/](http://electionstudies.org/resources/anes-guide/).

**Chapter Four: The emergence of the Tea Party  
movement: A new turning point in American  
conservatism**



## **I. The Tea Party and the revival of the conservative movement:**

### **1. Origins of the Tea Party mobilization:**

#### a. Economic conditions:

The government is promoting bad behavior. This is America! How many of you want to pay for your neighbor's mortgage that has an extra bathroom and can't pay their bills? President Obama, are you listening?

Rick Santelli, CNBC Squawk Box, February 19, 2009<sup>512</sup>

The Tea Party's name derives from an angry outburst by CNBC's Rick Santelli, who was furious about the White House's home-loan modification programs. Michelle Malkin, a right-wing blogger, was among the early agitators for protest. However, the movement remained unclear until February 19, 2009 when CNBC correspondent Rick Santelli delivered what has been known as the "Santelli rant". During one of his regular reports from the Chicago Board of Trade and as a reaction to the Obama administration's \$75 billion plan, Santelli - who called himself an "Ayn Rander"<sup>513</sup> - erupted:

The government is promoting bad behavior.... I'll tell you what, I have an idea. You know, the new administration's big on computers and technology - how about this, president and new administration? Why don't you put up a website to have people vote on the Internet as a referendum to see if we really want to subsidize the losers' mortgages; or would we like to at least buy cars and buy houses in foreclosure and give them to people that might have a chance to actually prosper down the road, and reward people that could carry the water instead of drink the water?<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>512</sup> "1 Million Attend Tea Parties in 50 States - WND." WND, 25 Apr. 2009, [www.wnd.com/2009/04/95230/](http://www.wnd.com/2009/04/95230/).

<sup>513</sup> Ayn Rand (born Alisa Zinovyevna Rosenbaum; February 2 1905 – March 6, 1982) was a Russian-American writer and theorist. She is famous for her two best-selling novels, *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*, and for advancing a philosophical system she called Objectivism. She moved from Russia to the United States in 1926. In the 1960s, she turned to non-fiction to advocate her thinking. She published and released her own several collections of essays until her death in 1982.

<sup>514</sup> Malzew, Jurij. *The Tea Party Explained: from Crisis to Crusade*. Open Court, 2013. 48

The clip became an Internet sensation, and a movement was born. Anti-tax protests were organized in various cities in mid-April 2009, during the debates over the stimulus bill and the bank bailout and designed to stop spending and excessive taxation in the spirit of the Boston Tea Party of 1773 - a protest by American colonists against the British government. Town hall meetings proposed to discuss the Democrats' health-insurance reform plan, turned into uproar between politicians and angry protestors asking about socialism. According to the DC Fire Department, the attendance was estimated to be around 87,000 in 2010 and approximately the same in 2009.<sup>515</sup>

Owing to Sarah Palin's popularity, George W. Bush's at the very end, the percentages in polls that strongly disapprove of Obama's leadership, the Tea Party movement has become a serious electoral force as its followers make up more than 25 percent of the electorate. The degree to which self-identified independent voters turned over health care from support to opposition because of town-hall protests was astounding. Moreover, in December 2009, Rasmussen polls revealed that if the Tea Party were a real party it would beat the Republicans; among voters not associated with either major party that was the most popular.<sup>516</sup>

The economic interventions, which had already begun by the federal government in 2008 under President Bush with the billion-dollar bailouts of the financial and auto industries, continued then under the new presidency of Barack Obama with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This public law earmarked \$787 billion to invest in jobs, infrastructure, energy efficiency, science unemployment assistance, and funds to aid state and local governments.

We suggest how the economic condition characterized by popular negative views and unemployment, triggered the Tea Party protest. For instance, the growth of gross national product has stopped between December 2007 and June 2009, attaining its lowest level in 2009 (The National Bureau

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<sup>515</sup> Montopoli, Brian. "Glenn Beck 'Restoring Honor' Rally Crowd Estimate Explained." CBS News, CBS Interactive, 31 Aug. 2010, [www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/).

<sup>516</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 7.

of Economic Research 2010). Throughout the same period, the unemployment rate increased from 5% to 10% and only a few Americans were optimistic about the economic circumstances.<sup>517</sup> The popular negative insight has for that reason provided the movement the opportunity to emerge successfully. The media have also played a role by showing the Tea Party mobilization as a reaction to the uneasy economic conditions.<sup>518</sup>

In the first weeks of the Obama administration, Republicans remained strongly hostile to him and his new political programs.<sup>519</sup> The expression “Porkulus”<sup>520</sup> rapidly became the sarcastic shorthand among conservatives for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, generally known as the Stimulus. It was difficult for any efficient counter-movement to unite with the Republican Party in such confusion. The chance, however, presented itself on February 19, 2009 when CNBC reporter Rick Santelli from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, bursted into a tirade against the Obama’s mortgage plan: “The government is rewarding bad behavior!”

Then, he invited America’s “capitalists” to a “Chicago Tea Party.” Through social media such as Twitter and Facebook, conservative bloggers and Republican activists seized the opportunity presented by the Santelli rant to organize protests under the “Tea Party” name.<sup>521</sup> The first protests that took place on February 27 attracted small crowds in a number of cities nationwide.

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<sup>517</sup> Gallup, Inc. “U.S. Economic Optimism Plummets in March.” Gallup.com, 12 Apr. 2011, [www.gallup.com/poll/147056/Economic-Optimism-Plummets-March.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/poll/147056/Economic-Optimism-Plummets-March.aspx). (Page consultée le 1 août 2011).

<sup>518</sup> Zernike, Kate. “With No Jobs, Plenty of Time for Tea Party.” *The New York Times*, 27 Mar. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/03/28/us/politics/28teaparty.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/28/us/politics/28teaparty.html).

<sup>519</sup> Gallup, Inc. “In First 100 Days, Obama Seen as Making a Bipartisan Effort.” Gallup.com, 24 Apr. 2009, [news.gallup.com/poll/117874/first-100-days-obama-seen-making-bipartisan-effort.aspx](http://news.gallup.com/poll/117874/first-100-days-obama-seen-making-bipartisan-effort.aspx).

<sup>520</sup> “Porkulus” is a combination of both terms ‘pork’ and ‘stimulus’ invented by Rush Limbaugh in January 28, 2009 to mock the economic stimulus bill - The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 - ‘for all the pork-barrel projects he saw in it.’

<sup>521</sup> Conservatives engaged in the original February 27<sup>th</sup> Tea Parties were addressed through the conservative top online networks Conservatives on Twitter and Smart Girl Politics. Old anti-tax activist groups including American Spectator, the Heartland Institute, and Americans for Tax Reform asked members of Congress to stay in session to raise the suspension on offshore drilling. Campaigners used networks structured around a number of Facebook pages and Twitter “hashtags”. For instance, users used the Twitter keywords to tag the subject of their online comments - which helped activists from diverse conservative networks to connect and join forces.

In the following months, local Tea Party groups began holding larger events that received significant Conservative media attention. By 2010, self-proclaimed Tea Party activists and supporters were becoming influential in many electoral races all over the country - initially in Republican primaries, and then in the November mid-term elections.

In their study, Burghart and Zeskind explain that the link between unemployment in a region and the number of adherents was not significant.<sup>522</sup> In fact, Tea Party supporters do not seem to have been directly affected in their “lifestyle” by the economic recession and most of them seem to have had minor economic difficulties. Thus, compared to the general population, supporters are less likely to have lost their jobs and 32% of them are retired.<sup>523</sup> Activists were more likely to have an income above \$50,000, a college degree and are aged between 30 to 49 years. However, their socio-demographic characteristics did not prevent them from being concerned with economic problems such as unemployment and the increased state intervention in the health system.<sup>524</sup> Moreover, the inadequate democratic representation of politicians has engendered a feeling of anger among the majority of supporters.

Operating through Americans for Prosperity and FreedomWorks, free-market absolutists mobilized rapidly to exploit the 2008 financial crisis to promote their long-term targets of reducing taxes, undoing the American welfare state, involving Social Security and Medicare, and defeating labor unionism. The protesters saw in the economic crisis a momentous opportunity for a crucial victory in their long-lasting resistance to Keynesian economics. They quickly created national networks,<sup>525</sup> mostly based on social media, which organized and coordinated with conservative mass media across the

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<sup>522</sup> Burghart, Devin et Leonard Zeskind. 2010. *Tea Party Nationalism: A critical examination of the Tea Party Movement and the Size, Scope, and focus of its National Factions*. Kansas City: Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights. 77.

<sup>523</sup> Zernike, Kate, and Megan Theebrenan. “Poll Finds Tea Party Backers Wealthier and More Educated.” *The New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15poll.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15poll.html).

<sup>524</sup> Becker, Bernie. “Tea Party Members Issue Own 'Contract' for America.” *The New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15contract.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=F455A24A645CA6A78B6E3B863FE66E5D&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15contract.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=F455A24A645CA6A78B6E3B863FE66E5D&gwt=pay).

<sup>525</sup> Rosenthal, Lawrence, and Christine Trost. *Steep: the Precipitous Rise of the Tea Party*. University of California Press, 2012.

country. Tea Party groups proposed financial and political backing to the new organizations, and facilitated the promotion of a number of local leaders.

b. Anger and fear:

The election of Barack Obama as president in 2008 was a crucial factor in the emergence of the Tea Party movement. Obama was not only the first African-American president, but also considered as the most progressive Democratic president since Franklin D. Roosevelt. Obama's racial heritage, his determined policy agenda, and the coalition of liberals, young people, and racial minorities that backed him in 2008 all triggered the reaction of economic and social conservatives who gradually became upset about having a black progressive president. Obama's presidency has simply stirred racial fear and anger among white conservatives; the reaction would later be braced by right wing politicians, media critics, social media activists and websites. For instance, the prevalent support by right-wing talk show commentators and websites of claims that Obama was actually a Muslim and may not have been born in the United States took advantage of the reaction.<sup>526</sup>

In 2009, the enduring anger of Democratic "cultural elitism" combined with intense opposition to particular policies such as the economic stimulus and health care reform had motivated millions of individuals who responded to calls for action by conservative organizations and media figures during 2009-2010. They all protested under the Tea Party pennant. According to the populist right, the liberal elite has long been connected to the pushing force of the poor, the working poor, welfare receivers, and minorities. This view reminds of the typical American populist left, called also producerism,<sup>527</sup> where the populists perceived themselves as oppressed by economic elites such as bankers and monopolists.

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<sup>526</sup> Stolberg, Sheryl Gay. "In Defining Obama, Misperceptions Stick." *The New York Times*, 19 Aug. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/08/19/us/politics/19memo.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/19/us/politics/19memo.html).

<sup>527</sup> Rosenthal, Lawrence, and Christine Trost. *Steep: the Precipitous Rise of the Tea Party*. University of California Press, 2012

In 2008, for right-wing populists and mainly the emerging Tea Party movement, the election of an African American president and the notion of authority in the hands of the liberal Democratic Party changed the vice-like effect they had felt in their alleged coalition of the liberal elite liberals with the “working poor, as one Tea Party supporter reveals, “The people I was looking for [as a policeman] are now running the government.”<sup>528</sup>

We argue that the Tea Party is a new manifestation of long-lasting threads in American conservatism. The revolt of grassroots Tea Partiers against Democrats’ social programs such as the Affordable Care Act coincides with significant recognition toward long-standing federal social programs like Social Security and Medicare, to which Tea Partiers are rightfully eligible. Yet, their opposition targets alleged federal government “handouts” to “undeserving” people, a description profoundly influenced by racial and ethnic categorization. More largely, Tea Partiers’ fears relate rather to racial, ethnic, and demographic changes in American society.<sup>529</sup> For instance, Martin Gilens has reported about the relation between racial stereotyping and opposition to segments of Social Security, mainly “welfare” for poor mothers.<sup>530</sup>

We consider that the Tea Party corresponds to this context for a few reasons. The collapse of the financial system along with a sustained rise in immigration from Latin America and Asia, court victories for gay rights, and the election of the nation’s first Black president all represent the social change that has frequently inspired a right-wing movement that employs paranoid politics. The Tea Party movement is also disposed to conspiratorial discourse, and much of its literature depicts rivals as folk devils.<sup>531</sup> The Tea Party upsurge expanded in the first weeks of the administration of President Barack Obama.

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<sup>528</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016. 34.

<sup>529</sup> Martin Gilens (1999) proposes that the explanation of welfare covers programs that support the working-age and the poor with near cash remuneration. A pattern of a near cash profit is the Food Stamps Program. Gilens, Martin. 1995. “Racial Attitudes and Opposition to Welfare.” *Journal of Politics* 57: 994-1014.

<sup>530</sup> Gilliam, Franklin D., and Shanto Iyengar. “Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 44, no. 3, 2000. 73.

<sup>531</sup> Cohen, Stanley. *Folk Devils and Moral Panic: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*. Martin Robertson, 1980. 65.

Tea Party symbolism embraced three overlapping conservative political forces: grassroots activists, right-wing media, and free-market support and funding organizations. While they consider their own benefits as genuine, Tea Partiers oppose government spending on people they perceive as undeserving, such as illegal immigrants, low-income people, and minorities. They perceive President Obama as “acting in the interest of the undeserving at the expense of hardworking Americans.”<sup>532</sup> For instance, Glenn Beck has identified ACORN<sup>533</sup>, the Service Employees International Union or SEIU and the health-care bill as threats laying the foundation for a “modern-day slave state”. As to progressives, he has said that, “back in Samuel Adams’s day, they used to call them tyrants.”<sup>534</sup>

The movement was driven by fears on the right that Obama and the Democrats would restructure US policies, by reducing regulations, raising taxes, and enlarging social programs, as well as resentment at the bank bailouts and stimulus package generated by the financial crisis.<sup>535</sup> The rise of the Tea Party was partly a response to the more self-confident and noticeable use of industrial policy by the US.<sup>536</sup> It is anticipated that nearly a quarter of the US population supports the movement or assesses it positively.<sup>537</sup>

Tea Partiers see themselves as the “real Americans” who have worked hard all their lives, deserved what they possess, and perceive liberals, unions, and often minorities as forces trying to take away what they have earned and

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<sup>532</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. “The Tea Party.” *The Tea Party - Political Science - Oxford Bibliographies*, 21 Mar. 2019, [www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756223/obo-9780199756223-0096.xml](http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756223/obo-9780199756223-0096.xml).

<sup>533</sup> The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) is an alliance of American and international organizations supporting people with either low or moderate incomes. The association deals with a wide range of social problems such as voter registration, affordable housing, and health care.

<sup>534</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 156.

<sup>535</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

<sup>536</sup> Schrank, Andrew, and Josh Whitford. “Industrial Policy in the United States: A Neo-Polanyian Interpretation.” *Politics & Society*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2009. 521–553.

<sup>537</sup> Barreto, Matt A., et al. “The Tea Party in the Age of Obama: Mainstream Conservatism or Out-Group Anxiety?” *Rethinking Obama Political Power and Social Theory*, 2011. 105–137. 1-29.

redistribute it to the “undeserving poor” through liberal social policies. This reaction led to a deep union between right-wing populists and the free-market absolutists, but this time with a level of radicalness only seen earlier on the fringes of the conservative movement. In other words, Tea Parties’ reaction against the liberal social programs met as never before with the free-market absolutists’ objective of ending the welfare state. This union held the Tea Party together until the 2016 Trump campaign.

c. The Tea Party and the idea of “taxed too much”:

Kouichi Shirayanagi, a Graduate Assistant at Missouri School of Journalism who lives in California that I have met during my trip to the United States, kindly accepted to reply to several questions. Kouichi, firstly, identifies “the Tea Party as a rising grassroots movement gathering people who think they are taxed too much, giving the impression that the whole American society hates taxes.” In this regard, I have asked him about his personal opinion regarding the level of taxation in the United States, he simply replied “I don’t hate taxes! And in this way, I don’t agree with the Tea Party. In California, for instance, most of the people in reality don’t complain about taxes. Here in California, I tell you the difference as there are a lot of schools that are funded by local school boards. And people will vote for raising taxes for better school services. You can convince people to vote for that. In another part of the country, this may not happen.”

Taking into consideration the major support the Tea Party enjoyed, I have asked Kouichi about the real aspirations of the Tea Party. He replied that “Most importantly, the Tea Party believes in a limited role of the federal government, a free market, lower taxes, fiscal responsibility, and more commitment to states’ rights. These are actually fundamental conservative and libertarian values that are likely to preserve traditional American political culture.” He confirmed that “their three major themes were resumed for the return of moral values, a strong defense of the country and a government based on lower taxation. Beyond these areas of political preference, Tea Party activists were pointed by their exaltation of the foundations of the American



nation, first and foremost the Constitution.” Kouichi further explained how “conservative commitment to individualist principles is commonly regarded as patriotic by the Tea Party members and that these themes have met a wide echo, sometimes giving the impression that the entire country switched in opposition to the Obama administration.”

The protest movement was in fact inspired by populist hostility to elites and political machines. The method of the tea parties’ organizing, marked by great spontaneity, remained largely uncontrollable for a traditional conservative movement. Nevertheless, the Tea Party opposes any social policies that might profit minority groups. I questioned Kouichi about the Tea Party’s influential role and shared positions in the age of Obama. He maintained that “the Tea Party embodies a right-wing movement, yet with different conservative organizing tools, opposing the social and generational changes in America over the last decades.” According to Kouich, “the movement reveals the principles of Andrew Jackson - free market absolutism, self-reliance, and individualism. They are anti-elitist opposing federal taxes and regulations that menaces the American values of small businesses and entrepreneurial spirit.” He added that “Tea Party supporters overall defend what we call supply-side economics<sup>538</sup> of Ronald Reagan's Presidency and Reaganomics. They use the Laffer Curve<sup>539</sup> theory to show that lower taxes result in higher tax revenues. However, Laffer warned that it all relies on how high taxes are.”

The Tea Party movement did more than support candidates. Its defense of smaller government, reduced deficits, and lower taxes stirred more conservatives mainly those who grew disenchanted with the unchecked spending of the Bush administration. The Tea Party created an enthusiasm that

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<sup>538</sup>Amadeo, Kimberly. “Decide for Yourself Whether Supply Side Economics Works.” The Balance, 6 Apr. 2019, [www.thebalance.com/supply-side-economics-does-it-work-3305786](http://www.thebalance.com/supply-side-economics-does-it-work-3305786).

<sup>539</sup> The Laffer Curve is a theory that affirms that lower tax rates enhance economic growth. It supports supply-side economics, Reaganomics, and the Tea Party’s economic policies. The theory was first developed by Arthur Laffer in 1979, who explained how variation in tax rates influences government profits in two ways. One is instantaneous, which Laffer defines as “arithmetic.” Every dollar in tax cuts transforms directly to one less dollar in government income. The other impact is longer-term, which Laffer defines as the “economic” effect functioning in the opposite direction, hence making lower tax rates profitable to taxpayers who should then spend it. The theory generates more business activity helping worker hiring and better consumer demand.

would endorse conservative political involvement.<sup>540</sup> They were contemptuous of Republican politicians who would compromise in order to preserve their electability as they are of Democrats who warn of the dangers of radically cutting government. The Tea Party's role has been about finding ways to lash their elected officials to the mast - be it through Grover Norquist's no-tax pledge or the threat of primary challenges. Ultimately, the Tea Party has emerged as a potent force in US politics, transforming the American political landscape. The Tea Party burst onto the scene in early 2009, prompted by the election of President Obama and Democratic majorities in the House and Senate.<sup>541</sup>

## 2. Who are the Tea Parties?

### a. Major groups of the Tea Party:

The Tea Party movement involves at least six major constituents such as 1776 Tea Party, Resist Net (Patriot Action network), Tea Party Express, Tea Party Nation, and Tea Party Patriots, and a core membership of approximately 300,000. Groups included former House majority leader Dick Armey's FreedomWorks, the Tea Party Nation, Tea Party Patriots, and Tea Party Express. By the end of 2010, Tea Party Patriots had approximately three thousand "chapters".<sup>542</sup> The Tea Party offered a setting for those dissatisfied with the government's social policies especially those who had no previous movement activities to become politically engaged. Although Tea Party members primarily identified themselves with the Republican Party, the movement involved a considerable number of Independents.<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>540</sup> Armey, Richard K., and Matt Kibbe. *Give Us Liberty: A Tea Party Manifesto*. New York: William Morrow, 2010. 23.

<sup>541</sup> Ashbee, Edward. "Bewitched-The Tea Party Movement: Ideas, Interests and Institutions." *The Political Quarterly*, vol. 82, no. 2, 2011. 157-64.

<sup>542</sup> Rauch, Jonathan. "Is There an Excuse for George Nethercutt?" *Reason.com*, Reason, 12 Aug. 2000, [reason.com/2000/08/12/is-there-an-excuse-for-george](http://reason.com/2000/08/12/is-there-an-excuse-for-george). (Accessed August 20, 2009).

<sup>543</sup> Zernike, Kate. *Boiling Mad: inside Tea Party America*. Times Books, 2010.

At the grassroots level, Tea Parties are represented in small-interrelated networks and gathered at the inventiveness of local and regional activists, who usually use online organizing tools. For instance, the website MeetUp, where people identify with one another and organizedirect rallies, has been very broadly used by Tea Partiers. It was able to provide us give us some sense of the phenomenon's breadth and depth. In July 2010, sixteen Tea Party groups in Florida and in Texas, registered more than 500 members on MeetUp. Almost 350 Tea Party MeetUp groups listed more than 100 members, who participated in about twenty events nationwide, including meetings, seminars, candidate campaigners, book meetings, and other unplanned events. The MeetUp results are in accordance with an October 2010 *Washington Post* survey, which uncoveredthe number of 650 Tea Parties, many of which were not essentially active.<sup>544</sup> Hence, we understand that the grassroots Tea Party phenomenon was real, inspite of the small level of media attention it enjoyed. With a network of well-funded national advocacy organizations, the small Tea Party groups had a direct and important impact on the political scene in the United States. Since 2009, local tea party groups all operated differently from message coordination to campaign spending.<sup>545</sup> The Tea Party Movement comprises several groups operating without any central structure.<sup>546</sup>

b. Tea Party figures:

Sarah Palin has become a controversial media figure who was able to mobilize activistsbehind conservative candidates. Although Palin made headlines with her famous "Mama Grizzly"<sup>547</sup> metaphor, she supported as many men as women. The Tea Party and Palin united to endorse seventeen primary candidates including four Senate and ten House contenders. Both

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<sup>544</sup> "Gauging the Scope of the Tea Party Movement in America." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 24 Oct. 2010, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/23/AR2010102304000.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/23/AR2010102304000.html).

<sup>545</sup> Good, Chris. "A Guide to Tea Party Infighting." *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 22 Sept. 2010, [www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2010/09/a-guide-to-tea-party-infighting/63389/](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2010/09/a-guide-to-tea-party-infighting/63389/).

<sup>546</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 13.

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

supported opposing gubernatorial candidates in Oklahoma; senatorial candidates in Arizona, California, and New Hampshire. Palin's favorite candidates had all won except those nominated in Idaho's First Congressional District. Palin proved to be more rebellious than the Tea Party itself as she often openly criticized the GOP establishment candidates.

The New Hampshire Tea Party Coalition displays forty groups on its website (2011), ranging from nationwide leading conservative groups such as Americans for Prosperity, Cornerstone Action, and New Hampshire Right to Life. Drew Cline and James Pindell from the New Hampshire Union League provided evidence that the Tea Party Movement in New Hampshire was efficiently structured. Cline assumed that the Tea Party Movement affected the conservative political life more than any other movement such as the Free Staters.<sup>548</sup>

c. Supporters of the Tea Party:

The data from the 2008 American National Election Study reveals the social characteristics of Tea Party supporters as predominantly white, older, well educated, wealthier, more conservative and more religious than the electorate as a whole. They opposed government intervention in economy, the liberal health care system, gay marriage, and abortion. On the feeling thermometer level, they disliked Barack Obama favoring Sarah. Given the conservative attitudes of this political group and its realignment with the Republican Party, the Tea Party movement succeeded in engaging and mobilizing large numbers of anti-Obama protesters. While millions of individuals may have engaged in Tea Party protests or given money to Tea Party organizations or candidates since the movement first's emergence in 2009, the active members undoubtedly constituted only a small part of a larger group of Tea Party sympathizers.

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<sup>548</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 14

	<b>Tea Party Supporters</b>	<b>Non-supporters</b>
<b>Social Characteristics and Attitudes</b>		
Age GT44	70%	59%
White	85%	75%
Male	63%	45%
Married	62%	49%
Income \$75,000+	31%	24%
College Grad	27%	30%
Born Again/Evangelical	52%	33%
Weekly Churchgoer	50%	36%
Believe Bible Actual Word of God	49%	28%
Gun Owner	43%	29%
<b>Political and Racial Attitudes</b>		
Republican Id or Lean	86%	32%
Conservative Id	85%	29%
Dislike Obama	84%	27%
Like Palin	77%	19%
Birther	44%	22%
Oppose Ending DADT	67%	31%
Oppose Clean Energy	74%	21%
Oppose Health Care Reform	81%	33%
Oppose Stem Cell Research	66%	29%
Oppose Economic Stimulus	87%	41%
Disagree Blacks Victims	74%	39%
Disagree Blacks Gotten Less	77%	42%
Agree Blacks Need Try Harder	66%	36%
Agree No Favors for Blacks	80%	48%

Table 6: Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Tea Party Supporters vs. Non-Supporters<sup>549</sup>

In 2010 the Tea Party enjoyed major electoral victories in the U.S. House and Senate beating both official Republican and Democratic representatives. The results were not surprising, given the extensive backing the movement experienced. According to data from a 2010 University of Washington study, 27% of the adult population, or 63 million Americans,

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<sup>549</sup> ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010 “2010-2012 Evaluations of Government and Society Study (Survey 1-4) - ANES: American National Election Studies.” ANES | American National Election Studies, [electionstudies.org/data-center/2010-2012-evaluations-of-government-and-society-study/](http://electionstudies.org/data-center/2010-2012-evaluations-of-government-and-society-study/).

strongly support the Tea Party movement.<sup>550</sup> The people who attended meetings, participated in Tea Party websites, and are the most dedicated primary voters are generally white, middle class, and late middle-aged. They are “corporate leaders and small business owners. They are stay-at-home moms, traders, electricians, tradesmen, real estate brokers, and veterans.”<sup>551</sup> CNN reported the following diverse background and opinions of the protestors:

“Stop out-of-control spending and stop government takeover and intrusion in our lives. They’re here to protect us and beyond that, get out of our way,” said Wojnas, who participated in a rally in front of the Georgia state capitol in Atlanta. “The importance of these tea parties is to let our elected officials know that there are a lot of people out there who are unhappy. They’re not Republicans, they’re not Democrats, they’re everyday Americans who are concerned about our taxes,” said T.J. Welsh, one of the coordinators of Jacksonville protest, Florida.

As Steinhauser maintains, “The people protesting across the country are typically proponents of the free market and individual freedom. They are hardworking Americans that are tired of seeing big business and big government working together at the expense of the taxpayers and small businesses. They are fed up with the two major political parties and angry about the bailouts, debt, and growing government control over their lives.”<sup>552</sup>

“Whether it is their tax dollars, the cars they drive, the food they eat, their guns, how they educate their children, or their relationships with their doctors”<sup>553</sup>, Tea Party protestors represent what Grover Norquist defines as the Leave Us Alone Coalition. “They do not want the government to give them something. Or take something from others. On the key issue that motivates their vote, they want one simple thing from the government: They just want to

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<sup>550</sup> Parker, Christopher S. “Research.” WISER: Multi-State Survey of Race & Politics, [depts.washington.edu/uwiser/racepolitics.html](https://depts.washington.edu/uwiser/racepolitics.html).

<sup>551</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 206.

<sup>552</sup> Aaron Cooper, Jim Acosta, Ashley Fantz, and Jason Hanna, “Nationwide 'Tea Party' Protests Blast Spending.” CNN, Cable News Network, [edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/15/tea.parties/](http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/15/tea.parties/).

<sup>553</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: The Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 206.

be left alone.”<sup>554</sup>

Nationwide surveys published a reliable picture of Tea Party supporters as older, white, and middle class is the classic profile of a Tea Party participant.<sup>555</sup> Between 80 and 90 percent of supporters are white, 75 percent are over 45 years old; and 60 percent are men. Given the inconsistent number of older white males, Tea Party supporters are surprisingly found to have rather higher incomes than mainstream Americans. Most of Tea Party participants are conservative Republicans who have been politically engaged in the past. A few polls have implied that the Tea Party attracts a significant number of independent voters.<sup>556</sup> Polls led by Quinnipiac and Greenberg Quinlan Rosnerin March 16-21, 2010 involve the related follow-up question, and discover that three quarters or more of Tea Party supporters are Republicans or tend to be Republicans. “Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? (If Independent) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?” (Republican \_ Independents leaning Republican, 74%; Democrat\_ Independents leaning Democrat, 16%; Independent, 5%; Other, 5%; Don’t know/no answer, 0%.)<sup>557</sup>

In June 2010, a Gallup poll revealed that 62 percent of Tea Partiers considered themselves to be conservative Republicans.<sup>558</sup> A further CBS News/New York Times survey found that 43 percent of Tea Party supporters declared to have worked for a candidate or funded a campaign.<sup>559</sup> Then, in April 2010, fourteen months after the first Tea Party rallies, a New York

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<sup>554</sup> Norquist, Grover Glenn. *Leave Us Alone: Getting the Governments Hands off Our Money, Our Guns, Our Lives*. Harper, 2009. 3.

<sup>555</sup> Zernike, Kate, and Megan Thee-brenan. “Poll Finds Tea Party Backers Wealthier and More Educated.” *The New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15poll.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/15/us/politics/15poll.html).

<sup>556</sup> Gallup, Inc. “Voters Rate Economy as Top Issue for 2010.” Gallup.com, 8 Apr. 2010, [news.gallup.com/poll/127247/Voters-Rate-Economy-Top-Issue-2010.aspx](http://news.gallup.com/poll/127247/Voters-Rate-Economy-Top-Issue-2010.aspx).

<sup>557</sup> See also Greenberg et al. 2010, 2: “86 percent of Tea Party supporters and activists identify with or lean to the Republican Party.”

<sup>558</sup> Newport, Frank. “Tea Party Supporters Overlap Republican Base.” Gallup.com, 2 July 2010, [news.gallup.com/poll/141098/tea-partysupporters-overlap-republican-base.aspx](http://news.gallup.com/poll/141098/tea-partysupporters-overlap-republican-base.aspx).

<sup>559</sup> *CBS News/New York Times Poll*, April 5-12, 2010: “Have you ever been active in a political campaign-that is, have you worked for a candidate or party, contributed money, or done any other active work?” (Yes, 43%; No, 56%; Don’t know/No answer, 1%).

Times/CBS poll found that 18 percent of Americans defined themselves as “supporters” of the movement. Other polls put the proportion at 30 percent. Who were they? They were almost uniformly public, more likely to have a college or advanced degree, and more likely to describe themselves as fairly or very well off. This didn’t make them affluent by many standards, but they were more prosperous than the other Americans in the survey - less likely to have annual family incomes under \$50,000. The Tea Party supporters were generally disapproving of the president and Congress, and they were pessimistic about the economy and the direction of the country by margins rarely if ever seen in previous polls. 53 percent described themselves as “angry” about health care, about government spending, about government “not representing the people.” 65% of Tea Party supporters are middle-class involving small business people. More 37% are college graduates or beyond. Almost half (47%) are members of the Christian right. They perceive taxes, regulations, and the new healthcare reform as threats to their American lifestyle.

As shown in figure 5, 37 percent are college graduates compared to 25 percent of Americans generally. They have high household incomes, with 56 percent making more than \$50,000 per year.

WHO ARE THE TEA PARTY SUPPORTERS?					
Men	59%	Northeast	18%	Republican	54%
Women	41%	Midwest	22%	Democrat	5%
		South	36%	Independent	41%
Age <45	23%	West	25%		
Age 45 +	75%	H.S. or less	29%	Liberal	4%
Age 65 +	29%	Some college	33%	Moderate	20%
		College grad	37%	Conservative	73%
White	89%	<\$50K	35%	Evangelical	39%
Black	1%	\$50K+	56%	Protestant	61%
Asian	1%	Over \$100K	20%	Catholic	22%
Other	6%	Gun in household	58%	Other	6%
				None	7%
				Attend religious services weekly	38%

Figure 5: A chart representing Tea Party supporters<sup>560</sup>

<sup>560</sup> Montopoli, Brian. “Tea Party Supporters: Who They Are and What They Believe.” CBS News, CBS Interactive, 14 Dec. 2012, [www.cbsnews.com/news/tea-party-supporters-who-they-are-and-what-they-believe/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/tea-party-supporters-who-they-are-and-what-they-believe/).



The majority of Tea Party supporters (78 percent) have never attended a meeting or donated to a group or a movement. 39 percent of them declare they are evangelical who attend religious services on a weekly basis more than Americans overall. The remaining 61 percent declare themselves as Protestant, while 22 percent say they are Catholic. More than half (58 percent) are likely to keep a gun in the household.

Most of them are full members of the Republican Party, who aspire to pull it back to pure conservatism. They see the election of President Obama as a real threat to the white supremacy, their religion, values, and way of life.<sup>561</sup> As shown in Figure 6, more than half (54 percent) describe themselves as Republicans, and another 41 percent declare they are independents. Only five percent say they are Democrats. Thus, most of them (three in four) identify themselves as conservative, and 39 percent say they are very conservative. Sixty percent confirm they always or usually vote Republican.

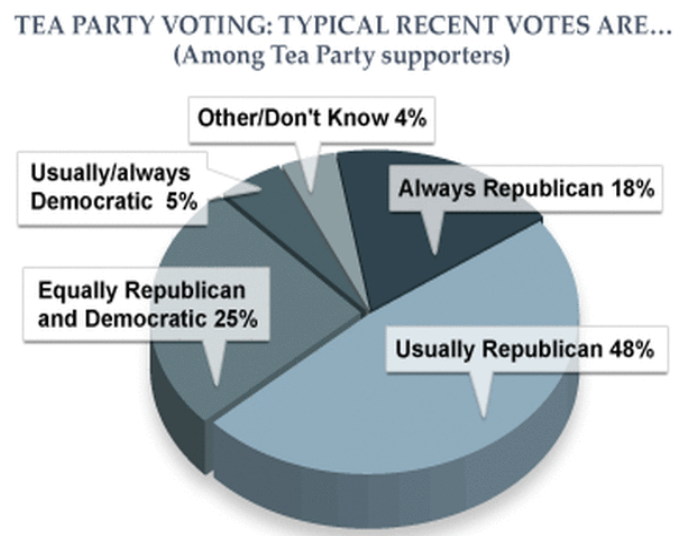


Figure 6: A profile of Tea Party voting<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>561</sup> Amadeo, Kimberly. "The Tea Party Movement's Effect on the Republican Party." *The Balance*, 19 Dec. 2018, [www.thebalance.com/tea-party-movement-economic-platform-3305571](http://www.thebalance.com/tea-party-movement-economic-platform-3305571).

<sup>562</sup> Montopoli, Brian. "Tea Party Supporters: Who They Are and What They Believe." *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, 14 Dec. 2012, [www.cbsnews.com/news/tea-party-supporters-who-they-are-and-what-they-believe/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/tea-party-supporters-who-they-are-and-what-they-believe/).

The Tea Party supporters were generally disapproving of the president and Congress, and they were pessimistic about the economy and the direction of the country by margins rarely if ever seen in previous polls. 53 percent described themselves as “angry” about health care, about government spending, about government “not representing the people.”

In their political activism, Tea Party supporters differed from other Republican identifiers. Table 7 compares Tea Party supporters with other Republicans on a number of measures of political activism. Indeed, Tea Party supporters were significantly more active than nonsupporters. They were also much more likely than non-supporters to be registered to vote to contact a public official to express an opinion on a particular issue. Finally, they were more eager than nonsupporters to contribute with money, attend a political meeting or rally, and show the movement’s related yard signs or stickers.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Tea Party Supporters</b>	<b>Other Republicans</b>
Registered to Vote	92%	75%
Contacted Public Official	44%	20%
Contributed with Money to Campaign	22%	9%
Attended Rally/ Meeting	24%	7%
Showed Sign/ Sticker	25%	11%

Table 7: Political Activities of Republican Tea Party Supporters vs. Other Republicans<sup>563</sup>

Eventually, Tea Party supporters constituted 45 percent of all Republican identifiers. Hence, the rise and influence of the Tea Party movement on the Republican Party is strengthened by the larger political activism of its supporters in comparison with other rank-and-file Republicans. Looking to the 2012 presidential and congressional primaries, Tea Party supporters involved an important faction of overall Republican voters in numerous states and congressional districts.

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<sup>563</sup> Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010

## II. The rise of the Tea Party:

### 1. The events

February 27, 2009, demonstrations of the Tea Party took place simultaneously in Chicago and Washington DC.<sup>564</sup> The protesters wore the colors and the clothes of the American Revolution opposing the bill passed by the House of Representatives. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 sought to meet the economic challenges by establishing federal funding programs across the country.<sup>565</sup> The protesters also denounced the funding of financial institutions “too big to fail” that was at the expense of the American taxpayers. The activists denounced the complicity between the state and big enterprises, which became immunized against bankruptcy at the expense of the American taxpayers.

April 15 saw the first tax-day protests, organized by the same groups. The idea was supposed to end wasteful spending and excessive taxation in the spirit of the Boston Tea Party of 1773 - a protest by American colonists against the British government. Beck headed up Fox’s all-day coverage; live from the Alamo in San Antonio, featuring Texas Governor Rick Perry and a bevy of secessionists. Between tax day and September 12 came the hot summer of health care. Town hall meetings intended to discuss the Democrats’ health-insurance reform plan, turned into shouting matches between politicians and angry people asking about socialism and Obama’s birth. In June in Delaware, a wild-eyed regular talk-radio caller cowed Congressman Mike Castle and an entire roomful of health-care advocates into reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to prove they were American enough. The attendance at which CBS News estimated to be around 87,000 in 2010 and roughly the same in 2009, according to the DC Fire Department.<sup>566</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> Schilling, Chelsea, et al. “Join More than 40 Nationwide Tea Parties - WND.” WND, 28 Dec. 2016, [www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=90055](http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=90055).

<sup>565</sup> Wade, Christian M. 2009. “Tax protesters converge on Federal Courthouse.” *The Tampa Tribune*. Tampa Bay, Florida, February 28: 4.

<sup>566</sup> Montopoli, Brian. “Glenn Beck ‘Restoring Honor’ Rally Crowd Estimate Explained.” CBS News, CBS Interactive, 31 Aug. 2010, [www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/)

The Tea Party were usually covered by the liberal media and politicians as small and irrelevant but out of control, populist movement, whereas it was popular and widespread. “There were over 700 events posted on [taxdayteaparty.com](http://taxdayteaparty.com) and other sites by April 15<sup>th</sup>. The site administrators of many of them had to stop posting events taking place in small cities and towns due to the sheer volume of submissions.”<sup>567</sup> It was estimated that there were a quarter to half a million people in the streets on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, an impressive turnout in the history of American conservative movements, especially when we know that the highly contested numbers of the million-man march of 1995 were reported to be as low as 400,000.<sup>568</sup> As the Christian Science Monitor also reported: By some estimates, over half a million Americans took to the streets to protest taxes and Washington spending - the largest single-day turnout of protesters in the U.S. since 750,000 people marched in Los Angeles in support of rights and protections for immigrants on March 25, 2006.<sup>569</sup>

The controversial town hall meetings of the summer of 2009 revealed another potential domestic instability. Lawmakers carrying out routine sessions in their legislative districts were faced by dozens of angry, sometimes threatening citizens, motivated by talk radio and Internet organizers into denouncing the White House healthcare proposals as a socialist menace. Most of the protests were rather small, but were covered across the cable news channels, launching the debate over health care and condemning Democrats.

The four events of focus surrounded Glenn Beck’s “Restoring Honor” rally that occurred on the National Mall on Saturday, August 28, 2010. On Friday the 27<sup>th</sup>, the day before Beck’s rally, a conference titled “Defending the American Dream” was held at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington D.C. This event was hosted by Americans for Prosperity (AFP), a conservative group that overlaps with the Tea Party in both membership and

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<sup>567</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 211.

<sup>568</sup> Janofsky, Michael. “Federal Parks Chief Calls 'Million Man' Count Low.” *The New York Times*, 21 Oct. 1995, [www.nytimes.com/1995/10/21/us/federal-parks-chief-calls-million-man-count-low.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1995/10/21/us/federal-parks-chief-calls-million-man-count-low.html).

<sup>569</sup> Jonsson, Patrik. “Arguing the Size of the ‘Tea Party’ Protest.” *The Christian Science Monitor*, The Christian Science Monitor, 18 Apr. 2009, [www.csmonitor.com/USA/2009/0418/p25s03-usgn.html](http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2009/0418/p25s03-usgn.html).

goals. The summit featured sessions about and for Tea Party activists and a speech by congressional Tea Party Caucus leader Michele Bachmann. So, this was event #1. AFP offered a shuttle service to Beck's rally the following day.

This event featured Beck and other Tea Party icons such as Sarah Palin, and drew approximately 87,000 people to the Lincoln Memorial and reflecting pool.<sup>570</sup> The rally was not officially connected to the Tea Party but drew many Tea Party members, featured important figures in the movement, and was immediately followed by two Tea Party events that were attended by many of the same people. The first, hosted by Bachmann, took place on the other side of the mall immediately after Beck's event concluded. This much smaller event was geared toward Tea Party activists, and featured the costumes, flags, and protest signs commonly associated with Tea Party rallies.

Tea Party protestors adopted the Gadsden flag of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century - a spiral snake warning "Don't tread on me" revealing the movement's link to the 1773 Boston Tea Party that launched the War of Independence. Others commented that the label "tea" stood for "taxed enough already."<sup>571</sup> The final event of the weekend occurred in a park overseeing the U.S. Capitol Building. Tea Party Patriots organized one of the largest national events which featured the costumes and signs that symbolized the movement for many people, as well as speeches by leaders of this national Tea Party group and associated local organizations.

The events symbolized what was questionably the culmination of Tea Party activism; and included Tea Party leaders, organizers, and ordinary members. Therefore, I argue that the voiced and visual broadcastings at the assemblies and summits in Washington D.C. in August 2010 undoubtedly seized the entire movement in an extremely rigorous and powerful structure. Further events were protest meetings organized by the Tea Party, while the AFP summit presented training and networking forums along with the

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<sup>570</sup> Montopoli, Brian. "Glenn Beck 'Restoring Honor' Rally Crowd Estimate Explained." CBS News, CBS Interactive, 31 Aug. 2010, [www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/glenn-beck-restoring-honor-rally-crowd-estimate-explained/).

<sup>571</sup> Cohen, Tom. "5 Years Later, Here's How the Tea Party Changed Politics - CNNPolitics." CNN, Cable News Network, 28 Feb. 2014, [edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html).

movement related networks. Glenn Beck's event, for instance, featured both a Tea Party protest and a rally event.<sup>572</sup>

## 2. Behind the Tea Party:

Taking into consideration that the Tea Party was an expression of popular anger, the nature and network evolution remained unclear until recently. Notwithstanding connections with former conservative struggles, the Tea Party has innovated organizational elements. A number of Republican elites, mainly those who have been endorsing lower taxes since the 1970s, have helped in the rise of Tea Party events.<sup>573</sup> These Republican leaders have always advanced a policymaking foundation in Washington, but did not succeed in joining themselves to an activist grassroots group.<sup>574</sup> Today, the movement has three powerful forces supporting it: unlimited corporate money; an ideologically committed press, radio, and cable television equipment willing to advertise; and elected officials who support it publicly and whose votes are powerful.

Journalists tended to indicate the financial and organizational links between organizations such as FreedomWorks and Americans for Prosperity and the conservative movement.<sup>575</sup> For instance, FreedomWorks is a conservative lobbying organization founded in 1984, funded in part by Steve Forbes and headed by former Republican Congressman Dick Armey of Texas, who was a featured speaker at the September 12 rally. Thus, although the involvement of the Koch brothers in these organizations is obvious, the

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<sup>572</sup> The assertion that the Restoring Honor rally was not a protest is controversial. Contributors did not bring political signs, but the event involved a number of spokespersons from the media and different conservative political groups. The event took place at the National Mall, a place well-known for hosting rallies including the famous 1963 March on Washington For Jobs and Freedom, where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

<sup>573</sup> Glenn, Brian J., and Steven M. Teles. *Conservatism and American Political Development*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

<sup>574</sup> Mayer, Jane. "The Koch Brothers' Covert Ops." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations).

<sup>575</sup> Zernike, Kate. "Tea Party Passion, Shaped Into an Election Force." *The New York Times*, 25 Aug. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/08/26/us/politics/26freedom.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=74A5B87B1ADC4228C63E787EEB807095&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/26/us/politics/26freedom.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=74A5B87B1ADC4228C63E787EEB807095&gwt=pay).

involvement of the activists in the network remains unknown. *The Washington Post* research on this subject is the only until recently. The newspaper systematically contacted more than 500 affiliated groups in the movement to investigate on their beliefs, the number of members and their goals.<sup>576</sup> However, although this study provides a more comprehensive overview of the organization, it is merely a regular image of the movement.

The September 12 rally, the culminating event of the Tea Party movement was organized chiefly by FreedomWorks and supported by nearly thirty conservative organizations, ranging from the well-known Club for Growth, Competitive Enterprise Institute to the Ayn Rand Center for Individual Rights. It was also promoted heavily on the Fox News channel, especially by the hard right's new man of the moment, Glenn Beck.

Founded by former Congressman Dick Armey, FreedomWorks assists the Tea Party movement by advising the movement grassroots activists where to locate rallies and events. It also hosts training seminars mainly in Washington and helps organize rallies and events. FreedomWorks was influential in expediting the nationwide Tax Day protests in 2009 by collaborating with organizers turning their website into a center for locating rallies. National Tea Party Federation serves as an umbrella group that assists tea party activists from the different movement groups in organizing forum discussions and responses to anti-tea party attacks. This is the only organization that connects the movement together, comprising big national organizations, and local and regional groups.

Both Brenden Steinhauser and Freedomworks were crucial in the transition of the movement from localized anti-tax, anti-stimulus protests to more national ones. After Santelli's on-air criticism, Steinhauser authored a ten-step program for organizing Tea Party protests across the country and posted it to his website, which later saw a considerable increase in traffic.<sup>577</sup> Freedomworks called supporters and asked them to organize their own Tea

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<sup>576</sup> "Gauging the Scope of the Tea Party Movement in America." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 24 Oct. 2010, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/23/AR2010102304000.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/23/AR2010102304000.html).

<sup>577</sup> Judis, John B. "Tea Minus Zero." *The New Republic*, 19 May 2010, [newrepublic.com/article/74820/tea-minus-zero](http://newrepublic.com/article/74820/tea-minus-zero).

Parties by declaring a nationwide tour. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009, FreedomWorks held the first “official” Tea Party with the collaboration of the free market oriented organization Sam Adams Alliance and Americans for Prosperity.

The September 12, 2009 rally organized by FreedomWorks in Washington, D.C. was the key event to mark the emergence of the Tea Party as a national movement. Although Tea Parties have tried to portray the movement as a spontaneous one supported by grassroots small donations, the truth revealed much more. For instance, according to an NPR article, FreedomWorks receives 15-20 percent of its funding from corporations while Americans for Prosperity is funded by David and Charles Koch, two famous libertarians whose opposition to Obama policies formed their ideological network under the name “Kochtopus.”<sup>578</sup> Thus, both FreedomWorks and Americans for Prosperity have been recognized for the large public relations and coordinating work behind Tea Party rallies.<sup>579</sup>

We describe how Tea Party reactions and attitudes played a part in the representation of US social policy. Arun Gupta wrote that the reactionary outburst of the movement was not new; rather the latest expression of an old sort. The Tea Party was an unstructured, politically confused umbrella label for many threads of opposition to Obama, supported by grassroots lobbying factions and conservative media who wanted to oppose the trend and change the Republican Party.

The *Atlantic* and *Think Progress* had reported that the Tea Party movement is led by these corporate Republican-affiliated front groups and think tanks: FreedomWorks, the free-market group Americans for Prosperity, and the online-oriented free market group DontGo Movement. These organizations prepare the press releases and talking points, plan the ideas for the signs and assign the conference calls. Americans for Prosperity operates through philanthropies such as the ultraconservative Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and the multibillionaires Koch Family Industries. This

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<sup>578</sup> Mayer, Jane. “The Koch Brothers' Covert Ops.” *The New Yorker*, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations).

<sup>579</sup> “Spontaneous Uprising? Corporate Lobbyists Helping To Orchestrate Radical Anti-Obama Tea Party Protests.” *Think Progress*, [thinkprogress.org/spontaneous-uprising-corporate-lobbyists-helping-to-orchestrate-radical-anti-obama-tea-party-dabd014bbfb/](http://thinkprogress.org/spontaneous-uprising-corporate-lobbyists-helping-to-orchestrate-radical-anti-obama-tea-party-dabd014bbfb/).



conservative protest movement had three powerful forces supporting it: bottomless amounts of corporate money; an ideologically dedicated press, radio, and cable television equipment willing to advertize its existence; and elected officials who are willing to support it publicly and whose votes can we absolutely relied upon.

With respect to the Tea Parties and especially the townhall meetings, a key influential corporate is the Koch Industries of Kansas. Fred Koch founded the company in 1940 and then created the John Birch Society<sup>580</sup> in the late 1950s. Today, David and Charles Koch donate millions to conservative and libertarian groups and antiregulatory propaganda from the Cato Institute to *Reason* magazine.<sup>581</sup> Founded by billionaire David Koch, Americans for Prosperity is listed as an advocacy group spends millions in hosting activist training events and teaches a large number of members across the nation. The foundation played an important role in backing the 2010 election campaign by announcing plans to run about \$4.6 million in TV ads in Democratic-held congressional districts. In a speech for campaign finance reform, President Obama condemned the group's secret funding. Tea Party Patriots is the movement's biggest membership group providing a network for leaders to coordinate on practically every front. As an advocacy organization, the group holds conference calls and a website where activists can connect, share ideas, and organize events and rallies. Organizers estimated total membership to reach 15 million.

Media Matters for America, the group directed by David Brock, launched a far-reaching website that trails the complex relationships between donors, nonprofit groups, and the activist organizations to which they give

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<sup>580</sup> The John Birch Society (JBS) was founded by famous businessman Robert W. Welch, Jr. (1899-1985) who established an organizational body of chapters nationwide in 1958. The society promotes anti-communism and limited government and has been depicted as radical right. Following increased membership and influence, conservatives such as William F. Buckley, Jr. and National Review tended to make the JBS recognized as a radical fraction of the conservative movement.

<sup>581</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 8.

money.<sup>582</sup> Campaign for America’s Future, the labor-funded advocacy group that tried to maintain a public option about the health care bill, formed a useful flow chart outlining the connections.

Tea Party Express is a political action group that has funded nationwide bus tours, attracted thousands to rallies, and raised and spent money for the victory of Republican candidates such as Sharron Angle in Nevada and Joe Miller in Alaska during GOP primaries. The Tea Party Express's rallies comprise an important share of the movement's media coverage as successful election campaigns have brought more favorable press.

The Tea Party movement does not have any unified or official organization as many conservative leaders and organizations tried to strengthen and exploit the Tea Party fervor. National leading organizers draw their resources from numerous conservative business elites, whose policy interests mainly comprise cutting government size and spending or totally reforming extensive social privileges in the United States. The *Tea Party Express* and *Tea Party Patriots* are the two advocacy organizations that are most closely connected to the Tea Party label.<sup>583</sup> The Tea Party Express (TPE) is a project run by the Republican political action committee group “Our Country Deserves Better,” which has sponsored conservative candidates like Senator Scott Brown in Massachusetts and Sharron Angle in Nevada during Republican primaries.<sup>584</sup> Tea Party Patriots (TPP) run a website which has linked to Tea Party activism. The TTP website lists a large number of registered Tea Party groups that coordinate local actions under the guidance of Jenny Beth Martin.<sup>585</sup>

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<sup>582</sup> See “Media Matters for America | Funding Sources, Staff Profiles, and Political Agenda. Activist Facts Activist Facts.” Activist Facts, [www.activistfacts.com/organizations/media-matters-for-america/](http://www.activistfacts.com/organizations/media-matters-for-america/).

<sup>583</sup> Tea Party Nation (TPN) is a for-profit group well-known for organizing the February 2010 “national convention” introducing Sarah Palin as the chief speaker. The TPN grassroots authenticity has constantly been controversial. The next TPN convention, which was scheduled for July 2010 and supposed to be a “unity” convention by campaigners, was called off a month earlier.

<sup>584</sup> “Tea Party Express Spent Almost \$600,000 To Support Miller In Alaska Primary.” Talking Points Memo, 21 Sept. 2010, [talkingpointsmemo.com/muckraker/tea-party-express-spent-almost-600-000-to-support-miller-in-alaska-primary](http://talkingpointsmemo.com/muckraker/tea-party-express-spent-almost-600-000-to-support-miller-in-alaska-primary).

<sup>585</sup> Comments and quotes from Martin come from an interview with two of the authors on March 11, 2010.

However, as for October 2010, the Tea Party Patriots website provided no information relative to the national movement's leadership and no record regarding the Board of Directors. Tea Party Patriots functions under the slogan "Fiscal Responsibility, Limited Government, Free Market," which is similar to the FreedomWorks slogan of "Lower Taxes, Less Government, More Freedom." In fact, Jenny Beth Martin admits that FreedomWorks was decisive in the group's original promotion and a key funder for their national rallies. FreedomWorks funding for Tea Party Patriots during 2010 has restricted the freedom of their action.<sup>586</sup> In fact, leaked emails have proposed that FreedomWorks controlled major aspects of TPP messaging during early months.<sup>587</sup>

Nonetheless, Tea Party Express, Tea Party Patriots, and FreedomWorks are not the only Tea Party-linked conservative groups. We refer to other national advocacy right-wing organizations such as Citizens for a Sound Economy, Newt Gingrich's American Solutions for Winning the Future; and the American Liberty Alliance, an organization run by Eric Odom. Along with think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, these organizations have been backed by a small number of far-right businessmen, particularly the libertarian Koch brothers, sons of Fred Koch, one of the leading founders of the John Birch Society.<sup>588</sup> Hence, these organizations, which helped promote the Tea Party, are very tied to business conservatism.

Billionaires David and Charles Koch have been extremely active in funding conservative free-market political campaigns.<sup>589</sup> The Koch brothers established a network of wealthy conservative contributors who donated hundreds of millions of dollars to many libertarian anti-government political

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<sup>586</sup> During their first year of foundation, TPP raised almost \$900,000 thanks to donations. Later, TPP received a million-dollar donation from an anonymous donor. The sources of this money remain unclear as they came either from FreedomWorks or independent donors.

<sup>587</sup> Roth, Zachary. "FreedomWorks Says Jump, Tea Partiers Ask How High." Talking Points Memo, 11 Aug. 2009, [talkingpointsmemo.com/muckraker/freedomworks-says-jump-tea-partiers-ask-how-high](http://talkingpointsmemo.com/muckraker/freedomworks-says-jump-tea-partiers-ask-how-high).

<sup>588</sup> Mayer, Jane. "The Koch Brothers' Covert Ops." *The New Yorker*, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/08/30/covert-operations).

<sup>589</sup> Mayer, Jane. *Dark Money the Hidden History of the Billionaires behind the Rise of the Radical Right*. Anchor Books, a Division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2017.

groups. Theda Skocpol and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez report that<sup>590</sup> the Koch network has operated to infiltrate and seize the Republican Party in order to pull its political-economic agenda to the right.<sup>591</sup> Today, the Republican Party is closely tied to Americans for Prosperity, as candidates need to adopt extreme free-market policy agenda before seeking support from the Koch network.<sup>592</sup> The network has vast financial resources that sometimes exceed those of the Republican Party itself. It basically operates in controlling the actions of Republicans in Congress and whether they meet the agenda of the network. Thus, the Koch network has played a key role not only in the rise of the Tea Party but also in pulling Republican candidates and officials to ultra-conservative economic positions.

The business network and their agenda share several similar interests such as cutting taxes, undoing government regulations, weakening the influence of the labor unions, and challenging environmental conventions about climate change. In their study of the Koch network, Hertel-Fernandez and Skocpol<sup>593</sup> contend the limited interpretation that links its political goals merely with the interests of Koch Industries or any other business donor in the network. Driven by a profound hostility towards the state, the political activism of the Koch Network goes beyond ‘mere corporate self-interest’ that actually target other goals far beyond the limited scope of their business interests. Although the interests of conventional business and the Koch network are intertwined, ‘the Koch network promotes a much more sweeping ideologically inspired free-market agenda’.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>590</sup> Skocpol, Theda. “Who Owns the GOP?” *Dissent*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2016, 142-148.

<sup>591</sup> Jane Mayer's book exposes the modes in which right-wing billionaire donors were able to challenge the Republican Party and pull its members and officeholders toward extreme right-wing programs that are in conflict with the US Chamber of Commerce and do not meet the requirements of the American public.

<sup>592</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez. “The Koch Network and Republican Party Extremism” *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2016. 681-699.

<sup>593</sup> Hertel-Fernandez, Alexander, and Theda Skocpol. “Five Myths About the Koch Brothers - And Why It Matters To Set Them Straight – BillMoyers.com.” BillMoyers.com, 10 Mar. 2016, [billmoyers.com/story/five-myths-about-the-koch-network-and-why-it-matters-to-set-them-straight/](http://billmoyers.com/story/five-myths-about-the-koch-network-and-why-it-matters-to-set-them-straight/).

<sup>594</sup> Hertel-Fernandez, Alexander, and Theda Skocpol. “Five Myths About the Koch Brothers - And Why It Matters To Set Them Straight – BillMoyers.com.” BillMoyers.com, 10 Mar. 2016, [billmoyers.com/story/five-myths-about-the-koch-network-and-why-it-matters-to-set-them-straight/](http://billmoyers.com/story/five-myths-about-the-koch-network-and-why-it-matters-to-set-them-straight/).

### 3. Media coverage of the Tea Party:

Former conservative grassroots movements have been entrenched in social networks traditionally connected to churches and dedicated to an agenda different from free-market absolutism. In this reiteration of conservative mobilization, Republican leaders depended on influential conservative media bases, steered by Fox News. Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph Cappella designate the channel as the right-wing media “echo chamber” that not only serve to mobilize conservatives, but to outline their narrow-minded community.<sup>595</sup> Thus, I try to understand Fox News’ role as a conservative support organization promoting right-wing social representation. While Tea Party protesters are socially conservative, the foundation of the Tea Party is very different from the church-linked networks noticeable in grassroots conservative mobilizations since World War II.

Although conservative media may have been a source of external support to the Tea Party, it should be noted that the involvement of media figures within the movement has directly assisted the social movement’s mobilization. Glenn Beck has repeatedly mentioned the 9/12 group in his show, making sure that several events between September 12, 2009 and April 15, 2010 were organized by groups with the same name.<sup>596</sup> Moreover, the support of Glenn Beck was clearly accepted among activists, who overwhelmingly were positive about his role as a facilitator. Indeed, the Tea Party is the result of a popular anger driven by both conservative media and organizations. In early 2009, conservative media helped infrequent grassroots conservatives helped create a vibrant identity, share information, and form a new political force for the Tea Party protests.

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<sup>595</sup> See Jamieson, Kathleen Hall., and Joseph N. Cappella. *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment*. Oxford University Press, 2010. See also Media Matters for America (<http://mediamatters.org>), a media-watchdog group devoted to examining and covering right-wing media.

<sup>596</sup> A review of the events reveals that in September 2009, 12 events were labeled “9/12 Project”, a number that increased to 19 in April 2010.

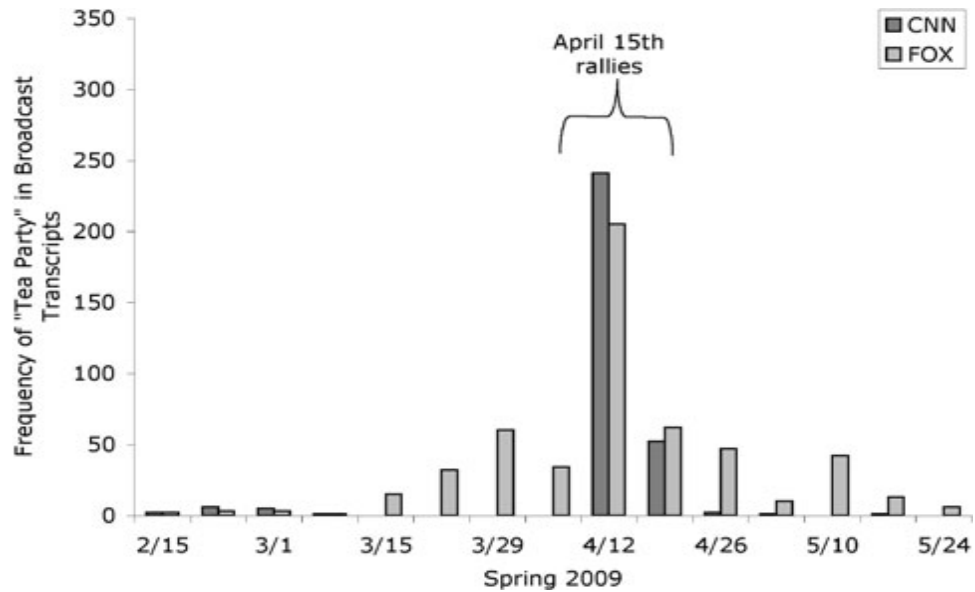


Figure 7: Week-by-week media coverage of the Tea Party on Fox News and CNN, from February 15 to May 24, 2009<sup>597</sup>

The conservative media have played a fundamental role in shaping the common principles and the shared identity around which Tea Partiers have joined. In fact, Fox News strongly assisted the making of this conservative identity with talk radio and the conservative blog sphere; hence becoming the major source of political information for Tea Party advocates. Consistent with the CBS/New York Times national poll, 63 percent of Tea Party activists watch Fox News, compared to 11 percent of all respondents. Among all American respondents, only 11 percent of Tea Party supporters declare getting their news from one of the Big Three networks, compared to more than a quarter who reported watching network news.<sup>598</sup> Thus, Fox News helped to create and maintain the Tea Party mobilization more than any other media network.

<sup>597</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

<sup>598</sup> "Polling the Tea Party.", *The New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2010, [archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/04/14/us/politics/20100414-tea-party-poll-graphic.html?bl](http://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/04/14/us/politics/20100414-tea-party-poll-graphic.html?bl).

Figure 8 compares drifts in Tea Party coverage by Fox News and CNN throughout the first months of the Tea Party emergence.<sup>599</sup> CNN's coverage spears at the main national event in April 2009, and falls to almost zero before and after this event. Moreover, Fox News presents substantial and rising coverage in the lead-up to the April events. While media coverage slightly falls after the noticeable events of April 15, the Tea Party preserves an important coverage on Fox News regardless of political episodes.

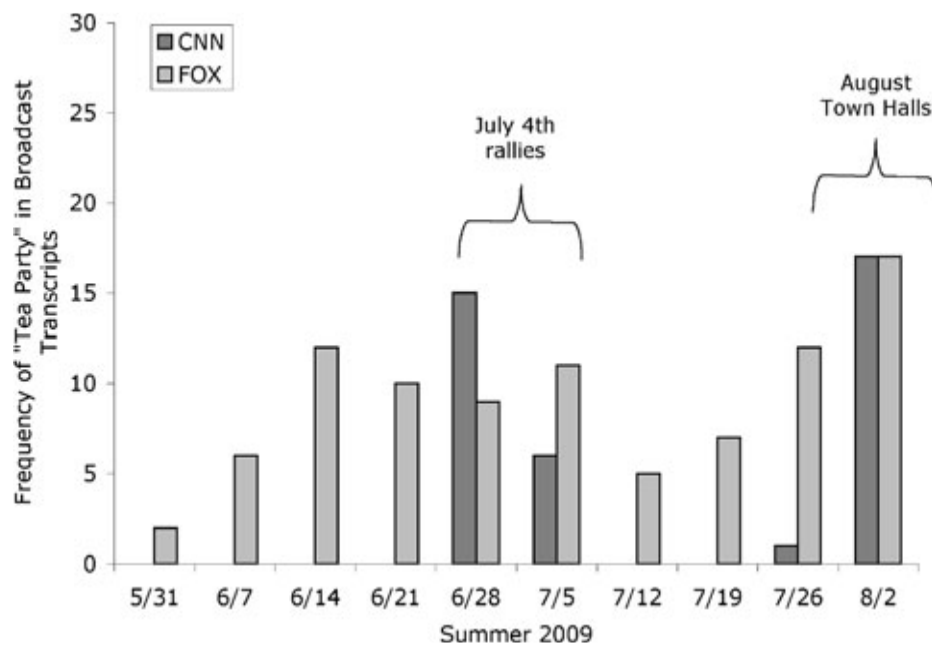


Figure 8: Week-by-week coverage of the Tea Party on Fox News and CNN, May 31 through August 2, 2009<sup>600</sup>

Consider Figure 8, Fox coverage predicts Tea Party events in the early months of the Tea Party's activity, and maintains coverage between peak events mainly those before the July 4 protests and before the Tea Party participation in Congressional town hall meetings through August 2009. Scholars have identified how conservative media inspires the coverage

<sup>599</sup> Figures 3 and 4 show that peak CNN coverage of Tea Party activity is actually slightly higher than Fox News coverage; this is maybe due in part to the slightly more limited transcripts provided by Fox News compared to CNN. Three regular Fox News shows are not included in the transcripts available by either Lexis Nexis or Factiva: "Huckabee," "Fox and Friends Weekend," and "Red Eye with Greg Gutman."

<sup>600</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

delivered by more mainstream channels.<sup>601</sup> Therefore, the anticipatory coverage on Fox has also increased Tea Party coverage on outlets like CNN. Fox News has plainly motivated its audiences by relating the Tea Party to their own conservative identity.

In 2009, Fox News named the forthcoming Tea Party events as “FNC [Fox News Channel] Tea Parties.”<sup>602</sup> Famous Fox News hosts Glenn Beck, Neil Cavuto, Sean Hannity, and Greta Van Susteren have all attended Tea Party to transmit their shows. The September 12, 2009 rally in Washington, the major Tea Party event, was co-funded by Glenn Beck’s “912 Project.” For instance, the 9/12 variation has charted the 115 Tea Parties registered on the Tea Party Patriots website, such as the “Wyoming 912 Coalition” or “Daytona 912.” In 2010, FreedomWorks managed a membership initiative that included a picture of Glenn Beck and a connection celebrating long-time links between the pro-business faction and the conservative media’s mobilization efforts. Generally, Fox News provided much of what the roughly interrelated Tea Party groups needed in terms of a united affiliation and communications foundation.

Indeed, conservative media in general has reformed the American political typical debate and helped reiterate and reinforce conservative perspectives.<sup>603</sup> As far as Fox News is concerned, it was more than an editorial channel; it rather served as a “national social movement organization,” as defined by sociologist Debra Minkoff in analyses of liberal identity movements. According to Minkoff, marginalized groups classically take refuge in a national organization, which can provide them with “an infrastructure for collective action” by raising “the diffusion of collective identities” and nurturing “at least a minimal degree of solidarity and integration.”<sup>604</sup> In the Tea

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<sup>601</sup> See Dreier, Peter, and Christopher R. Martin. “How ACORN Was Framed: Political Controversy and Media Agenda Setting.” *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 8, no. 03, 2010. 761-792.

<sup>602</sup> “Hosting the Party: Fox Aired at Least 20 Segments, 73 Promos on ‘Tea Party’ Protests -- in Just 8 Days.” *Media Matters for America*, 15 Apr. 2009, [www.mediamatters.org/research/2009/04/15/hosting-the-party-fox-aired-at-least-20-segment/149199](http://www.mediamatters.org/research/2009/04/15/hosting-the-party-fox-aired-at-least-20-segment/149199).

<sup>603</sup> Jamieson, Kathleen Hall., and Joseph N. Cappella. *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment*. Oxford University Press, 2010. 83.

<sup>604</sup> Minkoff, Debra C. “Producing Social Capital.” *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 40, no. 5, 1997. 606-619.



Party example, Fox News served as the perfect resourceful body by fostering its name and providing a suitable setting for its leaders. Dispersed conservative people who felt hopeless after the 2008 elections not only found a venue wherein they were able to connect and act collectively, but also regained pride and power. Eventually, and thanks to the support of conservative media, corporate lobby could exploit new grassroots networks to escort their now influential existence as the Tea Party became able to intervene considerably in the 2010 GOP primaries.

### **III. The ideology of the Tea Party:**

#### **1. The Tea Party and the social support policy:**

Throughout the last two decades, Democrats failed to gain the political support of poor and working class whites. In fact, the lack of attention poor and working class whites received from Democrats became central to Howard Dean's 50-state approach that tended to gather the support of all Americans, across many different walks of life after the 2008 Democratic primary elections.<sup>605</sup> Although Republicans' political positions contrast with the economic interests of the poor and working class whites, the Tea Party was able to draw the attention of the latter. Thomas Frank<sup>606</sup> and Joe Bageant<sup>607</sup> report that the need for a new political strategy along with Democrats' failure to gain poor and working class whites' support led them to look elsewhere. Furthermore, it was not only the election of Obama that sparked the Tea Party, but also the changing demographics and the new political debates in America over the last four decades.

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<sup>605</sup> Martin, Roland. "Commentary: Dean's 50-State Strategy Is a plus for Obama." CNN, Cable News Network, 29 Oct. 2008, edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/10/28/martin.election/index.html.

<sup>606</sup> Frank, Thomas. *What's the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. Owl Books, 2005. 65.

<sup>607</sup> Bageant, Joe. *Deer Hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America's Class War*. Scribe Publications, 2009. 22.

In fact, the white population has considerably declined from 83% in 1970 to 63% in 2010,<sup>608</sup> while the African American, Hispanic, and Asian populations have increased, triggering strong political debates about civil rights and immigration in the United States. Towards all these significant changes, the Tea Party has allegedly opposed the evolution of economic and social projects that would target minorities including the LGBT community.<sup>609</sup> For instance, Tea Party websites persistently called the health care bill or Obamacare a socialist takeover of America. And shortly following its passage, the Tea Party explicitly positioned itself as a counter movement in American politics that wants to take their “country back.”

Since Obama took office, the rise of the Tea Party has made the GOP even louder in their opposition. The Republicans fight against every Democratic policy including the stimulus bill, jobs programs, aid to local governments, health care, unemployment benefits, expanding access to food stamps and Head Start, action on global warming and immigrant rights because they claim that these are part of a government spending “not representing the people.”

Yet, the health-care reform, which was passed, is fundamentally similar to past Republican healthcare plans. Obama has actually lowered taxes for most Americans. Still, the issue is the idea of public policy itself according to people in the Right. In other words, any version of progressive taxation, policy, and regulation, of social “justice” and the “common good” violates a supreme model of absolute individual rights.

Examining the healthcare issue, Tea Party respondents were asked about “their overall impression of the healthcare law passed by Congress.” Only 35.1 percent expressed their favorable impressions about the reform, while 50.1 percent had unfavorable impressions.<sup>610</sup> Former Republican House

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<sup>608</sup> “The White Population: 2010 Census Briefs.” United States Census Bureau, Sept. 2011, [www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-05.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-05.pdf).

<sup>609</sup> Zeskind, Leonard. “Tea Party Protest the NAACP in Los Angeles - Little Talk about Fiscal Issues ★ IREHR.” IREHR, 25 July 2011, [www.irehr.org/2011/07/25/tea-party-protest-the-naacp-in-los-angeles-little-talk-about-fiscal-issues/](http://www.irehr.org/2011/07/25/tea-party-protest-the-naacp-in-los-angeles-little-talk-about-fiscal-issues/).

<sup>610</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012.173.

member Dick Armey wrote an Op-Ed in the *Wall Street Journal* attacking the health care plan. William Kristol, who led the Project for the Republican Future, issued new approach memos to Republican representatives and activists about substituting the welfare state with free-market plans.<sup>611</sup> Theda Skocpol writes in *Boomerang* about the health care reform effort: Right-wing government haters could argue that this set of reforms would hurt businesses, individuals, and health providers, interfering with their “liberties.” Proclaimed threats of possibly raising taxes and governmental inefficiency could be spiced with pronouncements that big, intrusive government would destroy our freedom and the quality of the best health care system in the world. Designed to get around and through the antigovernment and fiscal legacies of the Reagan era, the Clinton Health Security proposal - in its ultimate irony - gave new life to the outcries of “governmental tyranny” that Barry Goldwater had once presented so ineffectively.<sup>612</sup> When they forcefully defend American values and individualism, Tea Party supporters overtly oppose minority policies, such as the expansion of social programs, especially those targeting the poor such as the health care reform.

## **2. Race relations in the Tea Party ideology:**

Many Americans believe hard work to be a keystone of the American Dream.<sup>613</sup> However the Tea Party contrast of the “freeloader” against the “hardworking taxpayer” hides racial connotations that distinguish it from a mere restatement of the established American doctrine. Racial resentment fuels Tea Party anxieties about the rapid social and cultural changes, and hence reinforces the Tea Party’s opposition to Obama as the first African American president in American history.<sup>614</sup> In this regard, the Tea Party also fears

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<sup>611</sup> O’Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 29.

<sup>612</sup> Skocpol, Theda. *Boomerang: Clinton's Health Security Effort and the Turn against Government in U.S. Politics*. W.W. Norton & Co., 1996. 178.

<sup>613</sup> Bell, Daniel. “Editorial - What Is the Public Interest?” *National Affairs*, [www.nationalaffairs.com/public\\_interest/detail/editorial-what-is-the-public-interest](http://www.nationalaffairs.com/public_interest/detail/editorial-what-is-the-public-interest).

<sup>614</sup> Franke-Ruta, Garance. “Carter Cites 'Racism Inclination' in Animosity Toward Obama.” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 16 Sept. 2009, [voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/09/15/carter\\_cites\\_racism\\_inclination.html](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/09/15/carter_cites_racism_inclination.html).

immigration as much as religion, economic deficits and government expenditure. Brader et al. reveal how the immigration concerns are related to the cultural identity of the immigrants in question.<sup>615</sup> In meetings and interviews, Tea Party activists who talk about immigration frequently refer to the security of the US border with Mexico, recommending that the crucial question stands with Latino immigration.

The passage of Arizona's SB1070<sup>616</sup>, which should allow racial profiling of Latinos based on the notion that they could be undocumented immigrants, had become a central debate in American politics. Governor Jan Brewer defended the law by accusing the federal government of not controlling undocumented immigration. The Tea Party strongly supported the state's right to restrict illegal immigration, considered as a threat to American society. During the 2010 elections, Tea Party leader Sharon Angle's campaign featured ads such as "At Your Expense" or "Illegals sneaking across our borders putting Americans' jobs and safety at risk".<sup>617</sup> Both ads portrayed dark-skinned actors as illegal immigrants and compared them with white Americans. Angle's ad brings to mind Jesse Helms's ad "White Hands" the "Willie Horton" campaign ad run by George W. Bush in 1988.

Tea Party organizations sought to depict immigration as a menace to America in the 2010 election campaign. The Tea Party Nation sent its roughly 35,000 members emails asking them to post stories stressing the victimization of Americans by illegal immigrants. The group particularly asked for stories about undocumented immigrants taking the jobs of members, committing crimes, or challenging business by offering cheap labor

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<sup>615</sup> Brader, Ted. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 52, no. 4, 1 Oct. 2008, pp. 959–978. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25193860?refreqid=search-gateway:83b3cee93f810f2363dc512b2e4f9187](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25193860?refreqid=search-gateway:83b3cee93f810f2363dc512b2e4f9187).

<sup>616</sup> The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, presented as Arizona Senate Bill 1070 and hence frequently proposed as Arizona SB 1070, is a 2010 legislative Act in the U.S. state of Arizona. It was the largest and firmest anti-illegal immigration measure voted for in the United States. The law received international consideration spurring significant controversy.

<sup>617</sup> Sharronangle. "Sharron Angle TV Ad: 'Best Friend.'" YouTube, YouTube, 14 Sept. 2010, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb-zZM9-vB0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb-zZM9-vB0).

to contestants.<sup>618</sup> The Americans for Legal Immigration PAC (ALIPAC) helped two Tea Party groups, Voice of the People USA and Tea Party Patriots Live, in organizing events in support of Arizona's SB1070. The ALIPAC indicated that the American "state and federal budgets are being overwhelmed. Schools, hospitals, law enforcement, and public services are being strained while the taxpayers incur more costs and more debt. Our nation's very survival and identity are being threatened along with our national security". ALIPAC is backed by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), an organization that has close ties with white supremacist groups.

According to a New York Times/CBS News poll, 82 percent of self-identified Tea Party supporters considered illegal immigration a "serious problem".<sup>619</sup> In one of the interviews with Tea Party supporters about immigrants, one respondent said, "I don't know really, but maybe nervous. I see what they have done. Here they come, they have no insurance. They are draining state governments. We have to provide for them because they are here." Other Tea Party respondents contested illegal immigrants and Hispanics, "Nevada has grown to be heavily Hispanic in the last 15 years. And Good Lord, education reflects that. You know, the education standards they are just plummeting because - yeah, I mean, the Hispanic children - everybody needs to be educated, but if they weren't here illegally, our kids would be in better shape. It's wrong for the American people."

The racially charged actions at many of the Tea Party's events and rallies revealed an imminent aspect of racism that relies on stereotypes surrounding mainly blacks in the U.S. today. African Americans are depicted as opposed to American ideals of a good citizen such as hard work, individualism, self-reliance and virtue.<sup>620</sup> The importance of American ideals in racial resentment associates the "language of American individualism" to

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<sup>618</sup> Hayworth, J. D., and Joe Eule. *Whatever It Takes: Illegal Immigration, Border Security, and the War on Terror*. Regnery Publishing, 2014. 30.

<sup>619</sup> Archibold, Randal C. "Immigration Bill Reflects a Firebrand's Impact." *The New York Times*, 19 Apr. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/20/us/20immig.html?\\_r=1&mtref=undefined&gwh=63C82FA5B36256514EBA4B2102AB245E&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/20/us/20immig.html?_r=1&mtref=undefined&gwh=63C82FA5B36256514EBA4B2102AB245E&gwt=pay)

<sup>620</sup> Kinder, Donald R., and Lynn M. Sanders. *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals*. University of Chicago Press, 1996. 102.

terms of prejudice. The language condemns idleness and preference for welfare placing blacks in opposition to the standards of American society.

Actually, the Tea Party has been charged with racism since its emergence. A 2010 report by the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights (IREHR) records the immersion of white supremacy groups in the Tea Party since the movement's first events on April 15, 2009. Additional watchdog groups, such as *teapartytracker.org*, have highlighted actions of racism and extremism within the Tea Party's events and rallies. Much of the anger in the Tea Party erupted during the health care debate especially when representatives had to vote on the health care reform in March 2010. The Tea Party's racist stance on the healthcare reform was strongly condemned on a national stage. In July 2010, the NAACP consistently decided to "condemn extremist elements within the Tea Party", which requested the movement's frontrunners to "repudiate those in their ranks who use racist language" (NAACP, 2010).<sup>621</sup>

Though the NAACP made it clear it was not accusing the whole Tea Party membership as racist, Mark Williams, a prominent Tea Party leader of the Tea Party, released a mocking note in response to the NAACP decision. Williams contested the work ethic of African Americans and described them as lazy and "unwilling to compete for jobs like everybody else." He declared: "The racist tea parties also demand that the government stop the out of control spending."<sup>622</sup> Nonetheless, Mark Williams' reaction can never reflect the general views of the Tea Party, particularly when one considers the racially alleged past of the leader himself.

I refer to the national survey that measured racial resentment among Tea Partiers to answer the question. Christopher Parker found out that "support for the Tea Party remains a valid predictor of racial resentment." For example, Tea Partiers would agree with the assumption that blacks should try harder to become "as well off as whites," and would disagree with the idea that

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<sup>621</sup> "NAACP Starts 'Tea Party Tracker' To Monitor Right Wing Racism." News One, 10 May 2012, [newsone.com/712735/naacp-starts-tea-party-tracker-to-monitor-right-wing-racism/](http://newsone.com/712735/naacp-starts-tea-party-tracker-to-monitor-right-wing-racism/).

<sup>622</sup> Barreto Amílcar Antonio, and Richard L. O' Bryant. *American Identity in the Age of Obama*. Routledge, 2015. 160.

“generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.”

As previously mentioned, many Tea Party supporters are extremely worried about the new societal changes in America and how they become “marginalized” by the US government. According to Greenberg Quinlan Rosner’s study, only five percent of Tea Partiers report having voted for Obama in 2008.<sup>623</sup> Thus, it is no chance that the Tea Party arose a few weeks after the election of the country’s first black president. Alleged as the “other”, 59 percent of Tea Partiers are skeptic about Obama’s nationality.<sup>624</sup> Besides, Obama ran his election campaign based on a program of change that definitely attracted not only the youth but also racial and ethnic minorities. While Obama’s “change” campaign symbolized hope and pride for his supporters, for Tea Partiers, it represented profound fears.

Other critics<sup>625</sup> have claimed that the Tea Party is a movement fuelled by a reaction against Blacks, Latinos, and other racial-ethnic minorities perceived as a threat to “traditional” American values. Others<sup>626</sup> assert that the movement only symbolizes Whites’ anxiety in a progressively diverse population. In fact, the Tea Party’s racial harmony and strong opposition to the nation’s first Black president, as well as its eminent use of racially indicted rhetoric in public meetings, implies how both racial anxieties and support for the movement are two intertwined concepts.

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<sup>623</sup> Greeberg, Stanley B., et al. “Special Report on the Tea Party Movement The Tea Party - an Ideological Republican Grass-Roots Movement - but Don’t Mistake It for a Populist Rebellion.” *Democracy Corps*, 19 July 2010, [www.democracycorps.com/wp-content/files/Tea-Party-Report-FINAL.pdf](http://www.democracycorps.com/wp-content/files/Tea-Party-Report-FINAL.pdf).

<sup>624</sup> “Polling the Tea Party.” *The New York Times*, 14 Apr. 2010, [archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/04/14/us/politics/20100414-tea-party-poll-graphic.html?bl](http://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/04/14/us/politics/20100414-tea-party-poll-graphic.html?bl). “Have you supported the Tea Party movement either by donating money [2%] or attending a rally or meeting [13%], have you done both [5%], or have you done neither [78%]?” Respondents reporting Don’t know/no answer equal 2%.

<sup>625</sup> Rich, Frank. “Welcome to Confederate History Month.” *The New York Times*, 17 Apr. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/18/opinion/18rich.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=7197AF362993DC6C4DE2D3EC9DC17BF3&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/18/opinion/18rich.html?mtref=www.google.com&gwh=7197AF362993DC6C4DE2D3EC9DC17BF3&gwt=pay).

<sup>626</sup> Hitchens, Christopher. “Glenn Beck’s Rally Was Large, Vague, Moist, and Undirected-the Waterworld of White Self-Pity.” *Slate Magazine*, Slate, 30 Aug. 2010, [slate.com/news-and-politics/2010/08/glenn-beck-s-rally-was-large-vague-moist-and-undirected-the-waterworld-of-white-self-pity.html](http://slate.com/news-and-politics/2010/08/glenn-beck-s-rally-was-large-vague-moist-and-undirected-the-waterworld-of-white-self-pity.html).

According to another analysis racial resentment drives Tea Party voters to vote. Florida State University sociologist Daniel Tope declares: “At least to some degree, the Tea Party movement is an outlet for mobilizing and expressing racialized grievances which have been symbolically magnified by the election of the nation’s first black president.”

The study, just published in the journal *Social Science Research*, finds this acrimony appears to be aimed specifically at blacks rather than also targeting Latinos. While that’s somewhat surprising, “The findings suggest that, among conservatives, racial resentment may be a more important determinate of membership in the Tea Party movement than hard-right political values.” In 2010, along with his research team, Tope conducted a telephone survey of 961 American adults. “Our study focuses on self-reported Tea Party movement membership rather than the more commonly assessed ‘support for’ or ‘agreement with’ the movement,” they state, “because self-identification as a member implies a greater degree of commitment to, and investment in, Tea Party movement ideals.”

Respondents replied to questions such as “Do you consider yourself a member of the Tea Party?” Roughly 12 percent replied by yes, confirming the former Gallup’s outcomes that 11 percent of Americans describe themselves as “strong supporters” of the movement, with another 13 being “moderate supporters.” Racial resentment was evaluated by answers to five statements. Respondents suggested whether they approved or disapproved claims that “generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class” and “It’s really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well-off as whites.”

As far as the Latinos’ immigration is concerned, respondents agreed on a one-to-five level of measurement with the fact that “Latinos take away economic resources that should go to others, like jobs and welfare” and “Too many Latinos will vote in upcoming elections.” Furthermore, respondents answered the following question “What is the most important problem facing our country today?” by referring to their political ideology on a scale of one-to-five - that is from very liberal to very conservative.



Those who used the term “government” in their answers such as “big government” or “government spending,” were either very conservative or members and supporters of the Tea Party. However, researchers noticed that racial resentment was a “distinct factor” motivating membership, one which was “largely independent” from ideological anxieties. They affirm: “Conservatives who were more racially resentful were substantially more likely to claim Tea Party movement membership.”

“The minority of conservatives who consider themselves to be Tea Party movement members tend to be more racially resentful, white, male, less-educated, and live in counties that have experienced recent black population growth,” the researchers report. “Individuals were more likely to claim Tea Party movement membership if they resided where the black population expanded.”

Both popular hostility toward illegal immigration from Latin America and resentment toward blacks were important incentives for the Tea Party movement since 2010. In five experiments, Robb Willer, a Stanford professor of sociology, found that the perception of “decline of whiteness” among a number of white Americans has driven popular support for the Tea Party political movement. Willer shows that threats to the racial status of white Americans are likely to be the most important motivation.

In a new study, Stanford sociologist Robb Willer found that popular support for the Tea Party derives in part from perceived threats to the status of whites in America. For instance, white people who revealed a gloomy picture of President Barack Obama were more likely to be supporters of the Tea Party.<sup>627</sup> In another research paper, Robb Willer reports that the election of Obama as the first African American president along with economic and demographic changes in 2008 stirred the rise of the Tea Party.<sup>628</sup> In brief, white people perceived these trends as threatening their “racial standing” in the United States. Willer’s analysis of a supposedly threatened whiteness differs

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<sup>627</sup> Willer, Robb, et al. “Threats to Racial Status Promote Tea Party Support Among White Americans.” SSRN, 28 Apr. 2016, [papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2770186](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2770186).

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*

from previous research in that it underlines the role of a dominant group status in spawning a threat from minority groups.<sup>629</sup>

Willer, Feinberg, and Wetts led five survey-based, online experiments comprising 1,329 applicants. In one survey involving strictly Tea Party supporters, increased Tea Party support was increased when whites' status in America was stressed. In line with the previous one, the fifth survey showed that white Americans who expressed concerns about their "racial standing," related more to the Tea Party due particularly to their opposition to immigration, welfare, and big government spending - issues that are associated with racial resentment.<sup>630</sup>

However, even as these studies find the Tea Party in relation to racial resentment and extremism, the movement supporters maintain that they are only pursuing their conservative values based on small government and limited government spending - positions that do not support minorities or people of color by their political nature. In fact, this stance is as old as ideological conservatism that generally avoids charges of racism.

### **3. The Tea Party and the Religious Right:**

A few months after Barack Obama became president, the American Family Association (AFA) invited its members with e-mails supporting events called "TEA parties." Opposition to Obama had merged rapidly amid the far right, and the AFA - which despised Obama because of his political support for legal abortion, gay rights and other social concerns - quickly adhered to the cause. The acronym TEA stood for "taxed enough already," and the movement was primarily composed of secular far-right activists angry with government spending, the national debt and healthcare reform.

In the previous chapter, we exposed how the late nineteenth-century American conservatism has close ties with symbolism and populism as a

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<sup>629</sup> Parker, Clifton B. "Perceived Threats to Racial Status Drive White Americans' Tea Party Support, Stanford Scholar Says." Stanford News, 9 May 2016, news.stanford.edu/2016/05/09/perceived-threats-racial-status-drive-white-americans-support-tea-party-stanford-scholar-says/.

<sup>630</sup> *Ibid.*

politically genuine language. The Tea Partiers adopt a brand of populism that may resound in the absence of coherent analysis of America's economic decline coming from the administration at the origin of the bank bailouts and NAFTA.<sup>631</sup>

Analysts believed that the Tea Party phenomenon would quickly decline. However, members of Congress found themselves facing disruptive mobs at town hall meetings. The Tea Partiers had launched a number of the events and were awakening populist protest against what they believed rising socialism in the United States. The Tea Party quickly became become a uniting movement for a large number of conservatives who were unhappy with the Democratic politics.

Facing the Obama presidency, the Religious Right considered that the new right-wing populism came at the right time. Religious Right groups such as the Family Research Council (FRC) that were obsessed with social issues joined the AFA and continued to support Tea Party events. It was a new conservative effort to form a coalition between the Religious Right and the anti-government libertarian movement. Both Tea Partiers and the Religious Right held special sessions on issues like healthcare reform, the deficit and bank bailouts.

In February, an old Religious Right member who has been active in the Christian Coalition and the FRC told journalist Sarah Posner that the Tea Party movement had to adopt the Religious Right concerns. Allen Hardage, who was a former member of the Christian Coalition in the 1990s declared: "You cannot restore this country to the Founding Fathers' vision and exclude the fact that they understood our rights and ability to grow as a nation from our reverence to God." Hardage criticized Tea Party activists who wanted to avoid social issues in their meetings: "I find it quite offensive," he said. "I want no part of any faith that I can compartmentalize. That faith is worthless ... It's a matter of obedience to God's word."

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<sup>631</sup> The North American Free Trade Agreement is an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States, creating a trilateral rules-based trade bloc in North America. The agreement was put into force on January 1, 1994. It replaced the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

Bill Berkowitz, a journalist who has covered the Religious Right groups Berkowitz told Church & State: “I think that the Religious Right is hopeful that at least some aspects of the Tea Party movement will embrace its social agenda, but that's no slam dunk. My guess is that the Religious Right will try to organize its own Tea Party supporters and insinuate its issues into that wing of the movement like the AFA did last year at this time.” For instance, during the Nashville meeting, activists clearly called for the Christian Right’s support. Pastor Scarborough, a Texas minister who has been an old member of the Religious Right and a founder of a group named Vision America, was among the speakers. His racist keynote addressed during the event created a controversy. He told the crowd, “God has ordained that you are not a nation if you don't have borders. If this country becomes 30 percent Hispanic we will no longer be America. We don't want to become like the U.K. where in places you have Sharia. English is our language. We are Americans. We're not Hispanic-Americans or African-Americans; we are Americans.”

Yet, analysts agreed that, although the Religious Right joined the Tea Party, the movement was not religious. David Waters, a journalist on *The Washington Post's* Website Feb. 10, declared that the Tea Party movement “is an anti-government movement, not a pro-God movement.”<sup>632</sup> Waters maintained that an early February national Tea Party rally in Nashville was largely secular. He called to attention that although a number of sessions opened with prayers in reference to America's “Judeo-Christian” heritage, “Fiscal conservative reformers such as Ross Perot and the late John B. Anderson might have been more at home than such Christian Right warriors as Pat Robertson and the late Jerry Falwell.”<sup>633</sup>

Alabama's notorious “Ten Commandments” former chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, Roy Moore also spoke at the event. In 2003, Moore was removed from his position after he challenged a court order to take out a 2.5-ton Commandments monument from the courthouse. Since then, he has become a popular figure of the Religious Right. During his lecture in

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<sup>632</sup> Boston, Rob. “Strange Bedfellows.” Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Apr. 2010, [www.au.org/church-state/april-2010-church-state/featured/strange-bedfellows](http://www.au.org/church-state/april-2010-church-state/featured/strange-bedfellows).

<sup>633</sup> Boston, Rob. “Strange Bedfellows.” Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Apr. 2010, [www.au.org/church-state/april-2010-church-state/featured/strange-bedfellows](http://www.au.org/church-state/april-2010-church-state/featured/strange-bedfellows).

Nashville, Moore used quotes from Patrick Henry to condemn Obama of reversing America's Christian heritage. The event also invited Sarah Palin, a pro-Religious Right and an evangelical Christian. Two months before the 2008 presidential elections at the Values Voter Summit, Palin has turned into a conservative female leader, defeating John McCain. Although she decided to quit as Alaska governor, she was a political link between the Religious Right and the Tea Party movement who later made her book *Going Rogue* a best seller.

In fact, Palin needed both conservative factions, secular and religious, for the Republican presidential nomination in 2012. As a political strategy, she tried to build a bridge between the Religious Right and the Tea Party movement to establish an alliance considerable enough to ensure the GOP nomination.

In the meantime, a number of the far right activists attempted to capture the Tea Party layer by glorifying its figures, activities and events. For instance, Ned Ryun, son of former right-wing Kansas congressman Jim Ryun, founded American Majority, which has become a national rightwing organization intending to unite Tea Party activists. Established in Purcellville, Va., the group is linked to the Home School Legal Defense Fund (HSLDF), an organization led by Religious Right attorney Michael Farris. Today, American Majority has offices in six states and plans to open more.

As the Tea Party started as a decentralized movement, it has involved all types of far-right groups and activists that embrace fundamentalist positions in American politics. Religious Right leaders hold xenophobic views toward Obama, whom they accused of secretly being a Muslim and a socialist. Yet, other far-right groups like the FRC attempted to promote a diversified image by engaging African-American and Hispanic representatives at their meetings. By doing so, they also wanted to guarantee more votes because they knew that the radical views common among the Religious Right could dissuade many voters.

In Massachusetts, Tea Partiers played a significant role in the unexpected victory of Scott Brown in the midterm elections. In Florida, the

movement helped Mario Rubio to reach the Republican nomination for a U.S. Senate seat. Indeed, polls have demonstrated Rubio rushing into a powerful lead of more than 30 points. Rubio became “the First Senator from the Tea Party.”<sup>634</sup> In Texas, Governor Rick Perry, who embraced the Tea Party message by running on a fervent anti-Washington program, effortlessly won the GOP nomination in 2012, beating U.S. Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison and Debra Medina.

Journalist Posner declared: “It's tempting to dismiss some of the more outlandish stunts of TEA party activists as fringe crackpots, especially because so much of its rhetoric is based on conspiracy-laced paranoia like Obama-as-Manchurian candidate and secret socialist plots to take over America. But the movement taps into the fears of a great many conservatives and even moderates - both secular and religious.” He further concluded: “Because of the energy and motivation of the Religious Right to mobilize activists and recruit candidates to run for office, a Religious Right-Tea Party alliance shouldn't be underestimated.”<sup>635</sup>

#### **4. Analyzing the Tea Party discourse:**

The rhetoric Tea Party websites use in their official posts strictly varies with the major structure of conservative thought. Moreover, interviews with Tea Party adherents imply an association with the discourse used online. While Tea Party supporters avoided any open racist discourse, but plainly avowed resentment for minority groups and examined whether groups like immigrants or homosexuals should enjoy equal opportunities in America. Besides, quantitative analysis of public opinion survey finds very obviously that Tea Party supporters share similar negative attitudes towards Blacks, immigrants, and minorities. Thus, we found out that the support for the Tea Party accounts for conservatism.

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<sup>634</sup> Leibovich, Mark. “The First Senator From the Tea Party?” *The New York Times*, 6 Jan. 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10florida-t.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10florida-t.html).

<sup>635</sup> Boston, Rob. “Can the Mad Hatters of the Religious Right Get an Invitation to the Tea Party?” *Questia*, [www.questia.com/magazine/1G1-225249941/can-the-mad-hatters-of-the-religious-right-get-an](http://www.questia.com/magazine/1G1-225249941/can-the-mad-hatters-of-the-religious-right-get-an).

Tea Partiers are against abortion and gay marriage, two positions that support traditional family relationships.<sup>636</sup> On various occasions, the movement attacked Obama depicting him as Hitler, a socialist and communist. Recurrent calls by the movement leaders such as Sarah Palin to “take back our country,” as well as references to the “real America” in which “hardworking, patriotic” Americans demonstrate how secular absolutism is habitually linked to right-wing fundamentalism. Such a right-wing discourse is commonly found in small towns, in the Midwest and South, which are largely white and working class. This is mainly accredited to a more social fundamentalism, one on which the typical American lies.<sup>637</sup>

In 2010, the NAACP has accused of Tea Party with supporting racism. In fact, other Tea Party leaders censured Tea Party Express leader Mark Williams for writing an openly racist letter mocking the NAACP. Activists may be best known for their many caricatures of President Obama, frequently portraying him as a monkey, African “witch doctor,” or even Hitler. Indeed, another report released by Democracy Corps states that 90% of Tea Party members think President Obama to be a socialist and perceive him as the “defining and motivating threat to the country and its well-being.”<sup>638</sup> Moreover, the fact that the movement possibly protects members of white nationalist groups reveals the clear chauvinism of the movement.<sup>639</sup> Yet, beyond this assumption, we believe there is something more profound in the rise of the Tea Party that is more aligned with studies of paranoia, conspiracy theories, and out-group distrust.

At public rallies, Tea Partiers discourses inspired by Hofstadter’s “paranoid style of American politics,” depicting the person of Obama as a

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<sup>636</sup> “American Values Survey: Religion, Values, and the Midterm Election.” Public Religion Research Institute, Sept. 2010, [www.prrri.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/September-2010-American-Values-Survey.pdf](http://www.prrri.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/September-2010-American-Values-Survey.pdf).

<sup>637</sup> Thierry Devos and Mahzarin R. Banaji, “American = White?,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2005, Vol. 88(3), 447-466.

<sup>638</sup> Greeberg, Stanley B., et al. “Special Report on the Tea Party Movement The Tea Party – an Ideological Republican Grass-Roots Movement – but Don’t Mistake It for a Populist Rebellion .” Democracy Corps, 19 July 2010, [www.democracycorps.com/wp-content/files/Tea-Party-Report-FINAL.pdf](http://www.democracycorps.com/wp-content/files/Tea-Party-Report-FINAL.pdf).

<sup>639</sup> Burghart, Devin, and Leonard Zeskind. “The Tea Party Movement in 2015 \* IREHR.” IREHR, 23 Sept. 2015, [www.irehr.org/2015/09/15/the-tea-party-movement-in-2015/](http://www.irehr.org/2015/09/15/the-tea-party-movement-in-2015/).

menace to what they perceive as their own country.<sup>640</sup> Some would go further by defining Obama as a “socialist” or “Marxist,” while others would simply say that Obama “does not like America.” Tea Party activists transposed images of Stalin and Hitler onto Obama’s face. “Obama was a Muslim”; “Obama was a commie”; “Obama was a cosmopolitan globalist”; “Obama was a black nationalist”. The question of removing undesirable elements from the discourse revealed questions about whether the Tea Party is a racist group and how extreme its members may be. I investigated Sarah Palin’s Facebook page and it turns out that her camp spends a lot of time “scrubbing”<sup>641</sup>

Signs such as “Parasite-in-Chief”, exposing Barack Obama standing at the presidential lectern or “TREASON” that were displayed during the protests or “Obammunism Is Communism” led us to question how extreme is the Tea Party? In fact, many posters reproduced the widely circulated image of Obama as the Joker character played by Heath Ledger in last year’s Batman film *The Dark Knight*. On Pennsylvania Avenue, a group of marchers chanted “No You Can’t!” Other attendees carried a sign that said “Bury Obamacare with Kennedy,” which had been printed by a group called the American Life League, a leading Catholic anti-abortion rights group. As a result, what follows are some examples of the signs that were held by the protesters:

- At a Madison, Wisconsin, tea-bag rally: “Obama is the anti- Christ!” “Obama’s Plan-White Slavery.”
- In Chicago: “The American Taxpayers Are the Jews for Obama’s Ovens.”
- Philadelphia: “Barack Hussein Obama—The New Face of Hitler.”
- Fresno, California: “Impeach Osama Obama a.k.a. Hussein.”

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<sup>640</sup> Hofstadter, Richard, et al. “The Paranoid Style in American Politics.” *Harper's Magazine*, 1 Nov. 2012, [harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/](http://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/).

<sup>641</sup> “Scrubbing” or “Data scrubbing” also called data cleansing, is an Internet term that refers to the process of modifying or deleting data in a database that is erroneous, incomplete, inappropriately configured, or replicated. In the context of the Tea Party websites and pages, scrubbing refers to whitewashing in social media communities.



- In Columbia, South Carolina, an elderly man held a large sign that read, “Barack Obama Supports Abortion, Sodomy, Socialism, and the New World Order.”

- At a Washington, D.C., protest, one man held a sign that read, “Stand idly by while some Kenyan tries to destroy America? WAP!! I don’t think so!!! Homey don’t play dat!!!”

Since its rise, the Tea Party movement strongly implemented the language of national identity. Leaders and representatives portrayed it as a movement of, by, and for the American people, associated with national values, and a direct descendant of significant moments in U.S. history. For instance, at one of the first “Tax Day” rallies in 2009, Mark Meckler, co-founder of Tea Party Patriots carried his daughter to the stage to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and engaged the crowd in the American hymn (Harrington Report, 2009).<sup>642</sup> Later in 2009, Michele Bachman alleged that the Washington D.C. Tea Party protest involved “thousands of American people - moms, dads, grandparents all united by a love of what makes America great” and stated “It was about the American people and what mainstream America believes and supports and wants from their Congress”.<sup>643</sup>

In one of Tea Party Express bus tours during 2009 and 2010, Sarah Palin declared: “The soul of this movement is the people - everyday Americans who grow our food and run our small businesses, and teach our kids, and fight our wars”.<sup>644</sup> Claims such as these revealed how true Americans overwhelmingly composed the Tea Party - people from all walks of life, getting involved in politics for the sake of their beloved nation.

The message resounded: By the end of the following year, the movement was apolitical force. The movement was made up essentially of first

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<sup>642</sup> GFFmatt. “Official Sacramento Tea Party Patriots Rally 4.15.10 (Short Film).mp4.” YouTube, YouTube, 19 Apr. 2010, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=96kkWEOU6rw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96kkWEOU6rw).

<sup>643</sup> Kleefeld, E. (2009, November 5). Bachmann celebrates Capitol Hill Tea Party in fundraising e-mail. Talking Points Memo. Retrieved from <http://tpmdc.talkingpointsmemo.com/2009/11/bachmann-celebrates-capitol-hill-tea-party-in-fundraising-e-mail.php>.

<sup>644</sup> Vogel, Kenneth P. “Palin: ‘Tea Party’ the Future of Politics.” POLITICO, 7 Feb. 2010, [www.politico.com/story/2010/02/palin-tea-party-the-future-of-politics-032628](http://www.politico.com/story/2010/02/palin-tea-party-the-future-of-politics-032628).

time activists who boosted the candidacy of many novice politicians into congressional office and also inspired numerous local contests.<sup>645</sup> Generally speaking public speeches and the way leaders shape their messages are key elements to understand why movements thrive or fail. In addition, cultural symbols used by politicians are key elements in forming consensus among movement supporters, seizing media attention, and drawing funds from sponsors.<sup>646</sup> Thus, the rise of the Tea Party movement raised theoretically significant questions about how the theme of national identity operated in Tea Party discourse.

Moreover, the Tea Party offered a prospect to investigate both the nature and origins of an infrequent conservative social movement. The contexts under which conservatives become involved in activities are related to protests and rallies. As one of the greatest conservative social movements in American history, the Tea Party is a case study of a new form of political action with which conservatives are familiar. In this section, I focus on the discourse of the Tea Party movement and study the use of national narratives, symbols, and themes in a conservative social movement.

Beck's founding father's brand is inspired by worship to Mormonism, where admiration for the founders and the United States Constitution as the basic components of orthodox creed. Mormon Church President Wilford Woodruff (1807–1898) asserted that George Washington and the signers of the Declaration of Independence appeared to him in the Mormon Temple in St. George in 1877, and asked that he accomplish Mormon temple decrees on their behalf. Mormons also consider that Joseph Smith predicted in 1843 that the U.S. Constitution would “hang by a thread” and be protected by faithful Mormons; this notion was revived in the 1960s by Ezra Taft Benson, who referred to Smith's 1843 prophecy from the clergy while delivering a speech at the Church's Quorum of Twelve Apostles.

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<sup>645</sup> “How the Tea Party Fared.” *The New York Times*, 4 Nov. 2010, [archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/11/04/us/politics/tea-party-results.html](http://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/11/04/us/politics/tea-party-results.html).

<sup>646</sup> Klandermans, Bert. *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research across Cultures*. JAI, 1988. Gamson, W. (1988). 219-244.

Indeed, many key elements of Beck's rhetoric are inspired by a Mormon vocabulary, such as his Twitter-published September 19 appeal: "Sept 28. Let's make it a day of Fast and Prayer for the Republic. Spread the word. Let us walk in the founders steps."<sup>647</sup> This invitation to fasting and prayer may undeniably have been an assumption of the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, but it is likewise entrenched in the traditional Mormon custom of keeping personal, familial, and communal fasts to tackle divine contests.

When addressing his audience, Beck tends to interrupt his lectures with tears, a distinctive aspect of a Mormon approach of maleness. Sociologist David Knowlton has expressed, "Mormonism praises the man who is able to shed tears as a manifestation of spirituality."<sup>648</sup> In the Mormon culture, men use crying as an affectionate reaction that shows power and a demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

## **5. The Tea Party and the conspiracy theory:**

In his essay, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, historian Richard Hofstadter assumed the far right wing to practice a type of politics in line with the *paranoid style*. According to him, there was no other way to describe the "heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and the conspiratorial fantasy" associated with the Goldwater movement.<sup>649</sup> He explains that the political paranoid sees the conspiracy to be "directed against a nation, a culture, a way of life whose fate affects not himself but millions of others.... His sense that his political passions are unselfish and patriotic, in fact, goes far to intensify his feeling of righteousness and his moral indignation."<sup>650</sup> Thus, we consider that the emotional responses that characterize the Tea Party movement during its first months of mobilization resulted in a "heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy".

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<sup>647</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 113.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid*, 114.

<sup>649</sup> Hofstadter, Richard, et al. "The Paranoid Style in American Politics." *Harper's Magazine*, 1 Nov. 2012, [harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/.3](http://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/.3).

<sup>650</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

In this case, Hofstadter identifies the conservative as a person who uses a conservative paranoid *rhetoric* of conservatism especially when he acts “in the name of upholding traditional American values and institutions and defending them against more or less fictitious dangers, consciously or unconsciously [he] aims at their abolition.”<sup>651</sup> Moreover, the conservative “believes himself to be living in a world in which he is spied upon, plotted against, betrayed, and very likely destined for ruin.”<sup>652</sup> Then, he usually contends a way of life and institutions he would like to change and forces his representatives to urge Constitutional amendments that involve eliminating the welfare for the “undeserving people” and reducing taxes. Hofstadter thinks that such a reaction is a result of a changing social system in which members of a group believe their social or cultural identity is threatened or declining.

In fact, we suggest that the Tea Party movement is likely to adopt a right-wing ideology or pseudo-conservatism, as defined by Richard Hofstadter, generally marked by skepticism and resentment of other groups. For this, we review right-wing extremism in American history. I turn to the content analysis of Tea Party websites to demonstrate how Tea Party discourse resonates with conservative ideology.

The Tea Party is a movement in contemporary American politics that embraces some of the elements of paranoid politics. Since the paranoid mode of politics is an old style in American history, social and political movements have always used one or more of the elements we have previously underlined. Yet, the Tea Party remains a unique case of study in terms of how the movement combines the above-mentioned elements of paranoid politics with those of right-wing extremism. Combined together, I reveal how the Tea Party’s unique paranoid style plays a role in changing America.

Like others on the right, Simpson sees Obama’s election itself as a plot of ACORN, which “registered millions of felons, illegal aliens, and dead citizens to vote.” In the months before the 2008 election, Simpson wrote, “It is not inconceivable that this presidential race could be decided by fraudulent

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<sup>651</sup> Adorno, Theodor W. *The Authoritarian Personality*. Norton, 1969. 675-676.

<sup>652</sup> Hofstadter, Richard, et al. “The Paranoid Style in American Politics.” *Harper's Magazine*, 1 Nov. 2012, [harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/chapter-2](http://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/chapter-2).

votes alone.”<sup>653</sup> Beck identifies “progressivism” as a leftist conspiracy and provides a prospectus and a historical critique to explain the dangerous projects behind the 2008 economic collapse, in particular. Beck’s version of the history of progressivism is based largely on Ronald Pestritto’s *Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism*. This view presents progressivism as a betrayal of U.S. constitutional principles, and its proponents as advocates of elite control over an ever-expanding state. As Glenn Beck illustrates it, this historical argument is a version of a classical New Left critique of early twentieth century progressivism as a force for autocratic control of state policy. Beck’s analysis leads his viewers toward the alternative of an unregulated “free market,” presided over by a theocratic version of the founders’ republic.

According to Tea Party websites, leftists seize the power to break capitalism and replace it with a socialist state. “The Left” which includes everyone from the Democratic Leadership Council is an all-powerful army that applies the plan for domination called “Cloward-Piven strategy” (or “the strategy of forcing political change through orchestrated crisis.”) The expression was named after antipoverty and voting-rights activists Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, who on May 2, 1966 published an article for *The Nation* called “The Weight of the Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty,” Horowitz further declares: “The Cloward-Piven strategy seeks to hasten the fall of capitalism by overloading the government bureaucracy with a flood of impossible demands, thus pushing society into crisis and economic collapse.”<sup>654</sup>

Beck identifies “progressivism” as a conspiracy and provides a prospectus and a historical critique to clarify the dangerous projects behind the 2008 economic collapse, in particular. This vision presents progressivism as a betrayal of U.S. constitutional principles, and progressive politicians as supporters of elite control over an ever-expanding state.

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<sup>653</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right-- and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 136

<sup>654</sup> G. Williamson. *Thoughts of an American Taxpayer*, Volume 1. Xlibris Corporation. 98.

## **IV. The Tea Party and the Republican Party:**

### **1. The role of the Tea Party in the elections:**

The Tea Party's anti-establishment position had increasingly been used to illustrate its relationship with the Republican Party, especially during the period between May and October 2010. In addition, since the recovery strategy ultimately seeks to influence future reforms, the primaries were a unique opportunity for the movement to be active. With the support of groups linked to the movement, conservative candidates have better improved their chances of being elected. In short, by preserving an independent image while having a real impact on the election, the Tea Party was able to substantially increase its mobilization; and as a result enhanced informal meetings between May and October 2010.

Garry Wills remarked: "The sense of betrayal by one's own is a continuing theme in the Republican Party." A Fox News poll in September 2015 revealed that 62 percent of Republicans felt "betrayed" by their own party's officials. As their positions on debt, health care reform and bailouts had particularly a conservative orientation, much of their exasperation owed to the Republican Party not efficiently defending fiscal responsibility and individual liberty, or not reliably denoting the political center-right as it claimed to do. The decline of conservative values since the 1994 Republican revolution until the Bush administration intensified the feeling of animosity among conservative and libertarian electorates.<sup>655</sup> Although Tea Party activists share the same anti-Obama attitude, the Republican Party is mainly at the origins of mobilization. The emergence of the Tea Party seems to be closely linked to the Republican Party.<sup>656</sup> The "common enemy" of the Republicans and the Tea Party made it dependent on the other: "Having lost a significant amount of political power in

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<sup>655</sup> O'Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 100.

<sup>656</sup> Moreira, Hannah. 2010. *Determining the Effect of the Political Opportunity Structure on Collective Action: Grassroots mobilization during the 2009-2010 health care debate*. PhD thesis. Department of Political Science. Haverford College. 55.

Washington, the Republican Party used grassroots mobilization to attempt to block another Democratic victory.”<sup>657</sup>

Protesters actually expressed their dissatisfaction with the Republicans. Some event organizers in 2009 refused the presence of politicians at rallies.<sup>658</sup> The latter were accused of having dumped millions of Americans when they had proclaimed themselves fiscally conservative.<sup>659</sup> In short, the Republican Party was not fully able to organize this unified faction against Obama given that the Tea Party was maintaining virulent speeches against the Republicans.

Tea Party-supported candidates won 31 percent of the vote in the 2010 Republican gubernatorial primary elections, and Tea Party candidates ranged from 17 to 30 percent of the vote against Republican House members. Only one of the nine Tea Party nominees who opposed Republican representatives won. For instance, gubernatorial candidate Sam Rohrer led a significant performance in some districts alongside Tea Party groups, mainly in the eastern part of the state.<sup>660</sup> Attorney General Tom Corbett won the primary gubernatorial election because he was induced by the Tea Party to take more violent positions against tax increases and in favor of spending cuts to tackle the state’s budget deficit. Hence, the influence of the Tea Party was more obvious in the general election as Toomey was the only candidate with overt Tea Party backings to win, though Tea Party groups rallied turn-out for Republican candidates in many counties, particularly in Bucks County, where former congressman Mike Fitzpatrick defeated Democratic candidate Patrick Murphy.

The conservative resurgence under the Tea Party banner has had important ramifications for the balance of power within the Republican Party.

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<sup>657</sup> Moreira, Hannah. 2010. *Determining the Effect of the Political Opportunity Structure on Collective Action: Grassroots mobilization during the 2009-2010 health care debate*. PhD thesis. Department of Political Science. Haverford College. 56.

<sup>658</sup> “MSN | Outlook, Office, Skype, Bing, Breaking News, and Latest Videos.” MSNBC, NBCUniversal News Group, 15 Apr. 2009, [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30227452/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30227452/).

<sup>659</sup> O’Hara, John M. *A New American Tea Party: the Counterrevolution against Bailouts, Handouts, Reckless Spending, and More Taxes*. Wiley, 2011. 17.

<sup>660</sup> Rossomando, John. “Tea Party Candidates Falter in Pennsylvania, Analysts Say.” Newsmax, Newsmax Media, Inc. Newsmax Media, Inc., 19 May 2010, [www.newsmax.com/politics/teaparty-pennsylvania-kentucky-randpaul/2010/05/19/id/359565/](http://www.newsmax.com/politics/teaparty-pennsylvania-kentucky-randpaul/2010/05/19/id/359565/).

Far-right elites who have been promoting a low-tax, anti-regulation agenda since the 1970s were quick to connect themselves with the Tea Party protests and to claim grassroots support for their own ideology and policy goals, including privatization of Social Security and Medicare. In 2010, Tea Party-linked candidates were mainly successful in Republican strongholds. The more extreme views of Republicans who won elections in 2010 propelled the GOP further rightward, extending a long-term trend of rightward-tilted polarization in US politics.<sup>661</sup>

As previously mentioned, following an important failure in the 2008 elections, Republicans took advantage of the favorable environment provided by the Tea Party to win the midterm election of 2010. Old, rich, and white people who were most charmed with Tea Party crusade and discourse represented the major electorate. The economic turmoil and high levels of unemployment had also helped the Tea Party gain more influence in both grassroots terrain and in the House. Poll trends indicate that voters turned right in the 2010-midterm elections thanks to Tea Party activism, which enabled primary candidates to overhaul and defeat numerous official Republican candidates. Republican incumbents like Bob Bennett in Utah, Charlie Crist in Florida, Lisa Murkowski in Alaska, Sue Lowdon in Nevada, and Mike Castle in Delaware lost the race to Tea Party insurgents.<sup>662</sup> On the one hand, a number of Tea Party candidates continued to win in the general 2010 election in Republican states.

Although most incumbents survived, striking partisan shifts occurred. Republicans enjoyed the largest gains of either party since 1948 as they took a net total of sixty-three seats from Democrats as reported in table 8. All but nineteen states saw at least one Republican claim a Democratic seat, with the biggest swings coming in the heart of the Rust Belt as six seats switched in New York, five switched in Ohio and Pennsylvania, and four switched in Illinois. Several states thought to be shifting from red to purple saw a crimson

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<sup>661</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. "The Tea Party." *The Tea Party - Political Science* - Oxford Bibliographies, 21 Mar. 2019, [www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756223/obo-9780199756223-0096.xml](http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756223/obo-9780199756223-0096.xml).

<sup>662</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016. 36.



resurgence as Democrats lost four seats in Florida, three in Virginia, and two each in Arizona and Colorado.

	Before Election	After Election	losses	Incumbent Defeats
Governors* Democrats	26	20	11	2
Republicans	24	29	6	0
Senate Democrats**	57	51	6	2
Republicans	41	47	0	0
U.S. House Democrats	256	193	66	54
Republicans	176	242	3	2

Table 8: Results of the 2010 Elections<sup>663</sup>

Across the nation, a number of Tea Party candidates won the Republican nominations in the U.S. Senate, House, and gubernatorial races. The November 2010 midterms were as much on the Tea Party as on President Obama, specifically as the push-pull relationship between the Republican establishment and the Tea Party persisted. In some states, Tea Party contenders won support from local Republican groups, whereas in others they triggered a reaction from the Republican Party. A number of longstanding Republicans, who had lost to Tea Party candidates in their relevant primary races, preferred to run the general election as independents or simply endorsed their earlier rivals in the general election. As a result, the Tea Party label counted less than the influence of an individual nominee.

Moreover, Rand Paul who was a very close nominee to the Tea Party securely won the Senate race in Kentucky, and in Florida Tea Party candidate Marco Rubiowon a three-way Senate race that comprised the Republican governor, Charlie Crist. Nevertheless, Tea Party's candidate Joe Miller from

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<sup>663</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 3

Alaska made the most astounding result in the Senate race by winning the Republican nomination.

Whereas these challenges represented roughly the most prominent individual illustrations of Tea Party impact, Republicans gained nearly 60 seats during the 2010 midterm elections and were able to take control of the House and decrease the Democratic majority in the Senate. This election enhanced the Republican Party's power enough to discuss the expansion of the Bush tax cuts for two more years. In spite of the Democrats' objections, they comprised cuts to those earning \$200,000 or more. Tea Party members say these are principally small entrepreneurs.<sup>664</sup> A research finds a strong link between tea party membership and anti-black feelings.<sup>665</sup> A Gallup poll reported that the movement "remains a powerful force, given their higher interest in the election, and higher motivation to vote." It found that 73 percent of self-identified Tea Party Republicans were more determined to vote in the mid-term election than Democrats or mainstream Republicans.<sup>666</sup>

In a major shift, Republicans won 63 seats in the House, with dozens of tea party-supported newcomers subscribing to the GOP caucus. Such a performance was attributed to the awareness and excitement spawned by the Tea Party, and throughout the next years the Republican Party attempted to carry Tea Party activists and supporters into the Republican conventional arena and to prevent crucial losses as in 2010.

The Tea Party movement gained more influence on December 17, 2010, when CNN declared it would cohost a Republican presidential primary contest in Tampa alongside the Tea Party Express during Labor Day week 2011.<sup>667</sup> Following the announcement, CNN's political manager portrayed the

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<sup>664</sup>Amadeo, Kimberly. "The Tea Party Movement's Effect on the Republican Party." *The Balance*, 19 Dec. 2018, [www.thebalance.com/tea-party-movement-economic-platform-3305571](http://www.thebalance.com/tea-party-movement-economic-platform-3305571).

<sup>665</sup> Jacobs, Tom. "Racial Resentment Drives Tea Party Membership." *Pacific Standard*, 29 Oct. 2014, [psmag.com/social-justice/racial-resentment-drives-tea-party-membership-93419](http://psmag.com/social-justice/racial-resentment-drives-tea-party-membership-93419).

<sup>666</sup> Newport, Frank. "Tea Party Republicans Highly Motivated to Vote in Midterms." Gallup.com, 24 Oct. 2014, [news.gallup.com/poll/178814/tea-party-republicans-highly-motivated-vote-midterms.aspx](http://news.gallup.com/poll/178814/tea-party-republicans-highly-motivated-vote-midterms.aspx).

<sup>667</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 68.

Tea Party as “a fascinating, diverse, grassroots force that already has drastically changed the country’s political landscape”.<sup>668</sup> Tea Party activists were seemingly engaged in altering the whole landscape of the Republican nomination treat, ridding the list of the moderate candidate Dick Leinenkugel in favor of Ron Johnson who embraced much of the Tea Party ideology.<sup>669</sup>

## **2. The Republican Party: more to the right:**

In one of the interviews I have conducted in 2014 about the rise of the Tea Party movement with Brooke Nappier, a Republican activist, she declared that “it is interesting to have a third party in a country where we have a two-party system and where the other voices and opinions are not heard. It is important to have another opinion, different from the larger opinion. Yet, the main problem with the Tea Party is that they still don’t have a clear leadership, and I don’t know if they are going to have a leader or just remain grassroots movement.” And when asked about the impact of this on the Republican Party, she confirmed that “the Tea Party is having an edge on the Republican Party as the movement does not have the same funding or the same organization as the larger Republican Party. I think believe that, although the Tea Party can get larger votes for the Republican nominations, they’re pulling the Republican leadership to the right.” Brooke maintained that “by restructuring GOP primaries and improving voter attendance during Obama’s presidency, the movement invigorated conservatism, and dragged the Republican Party to the far right.” Although Christine O’Donnell from Delaware lost the Senate race in the 2010-midterm elections by a large margin as she suffered from a national media derisive campaign owing to her opinions mainly those shared on a comedy show, her nomination underlines how Tea Party played a role in ideologically “purifying” the Republican Party.<sup>670</sup> When asked about the role of conservative figures such as Sarah Palin, Jim DeMint, and other Tea Party

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<sup>668</sup> “GOP Presidential Candidates Debate Wednesday.” CNN, Cable News Network, 7 Sept. 2011, edition.cnn.com/2011/POLITICS/09/07/republican.debates/index.html.

<sup>669</sup> Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes: Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 97.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

candidates in the movement, she asserted that they “did not only targeted President Obama and the Democratic Congress but also the Republican establishment itself.” “They purged the GOP of moderate candidates such as Arlen Specter, Charlie Crist, and Mike Castle, hence reshaping the leadership of the Republican Party.”

The Tea Party frequently challenged the choice of the GOP establishment backing challengers to sitting Republicans, as when it privileged J. D. Hayworth over John McCain. Because of its grassroots nature and the engagement of newly-born activists,<sup>671</sup> the Tea Party backed candidates who dissented incumbents in firmly Democratic districts and had almost no chance of success. Tea party resentment over Obamacare and the stimulus bill was reflected in a conservative campaign offensive in the 2010-midterm elections.

Division between the Republican populist right and the capitalist class marked the rise of “The Campaign to Fix the Debt”, which was formerly created in early 2012 following the 2011 discussion on raising the debt ceiling. The organization reconciled an important number of former senators and congressmen and more than 150 CEOs of some of the biggest US multinational companies, with a \$50 million-budget. Their core principles shaped the bedrock of the anticipated “grand bargain” of shutting corporate tax gaps while cutting the general tax level in response to reforming Medicare, Medicaid and the Social Security. Whereas these federal allowances collected the backing of Obama, the Democrats and establishment Republicans, leaders of the Tea Party did not accept this “bargain,” generating a government shutdown.

Supporting head-to-head politics over federal spending, the Republican-led House enforced a rightward change on fiscal matters that brought about more severe policies, more struggles between the parties and rising public resentment with dysfunction in Congress.<sup>672</sup> Tea Party-endorsed Republicans’ refusal to approve federal spending concessions caused a series of showdowns with Obama and Democrats. The Tea Party wanted to support concessions that

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<sup>671</sup> Rasmussen, Scott W., and Douglas E. Schoen. *Mad as Hell: How the Tea Party Movement Is Fundamentally Remaking Our Two-Party System*. Broadside Books, 2011.

<sup>672</sup> Cohen, Tom. “5 Years Later, Here's How the Tea Party Changed Politics - CNNPolitics.” CNN, Cable News Network, 28 Feb. 2014, [edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html).

involved shrinking government to lower deficits in programs such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.<sup>673</sup> Tea party Republicans were able to challenge concessions with Democrats, which were already propelled by Joe Boehner, confirmed the GOP division between the conventional leadership and more extremist factions.

In December 2012 Jim Demint, one of the most prominent figures of the Tea Party in the U.S. Senate, resigned to lead the Heritage Foundation and in February 2013 Republican strategist Karl Rove established the Conservative Victory Project, an important super political action committee (PAC) whose ultimate objective was to interfere before the election and avoid the nomination of unconvincing or unelectable nominees. Tea Party organizations condemned Karl Rove and his super PAC<sup>674</sup> of spending 175 million in the 2012 election in order to impede what they believed to be the aspirations of the Republican mainstream. As the split between Republicans and the Tea Party became an irrevocable crack, a humiliation that involved the intervention of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to bring the two factions back together.

Yet, working-class populism is also antagonistic to capital as senator Ted Cruz of Texas, a key Tea Party leader openly declared: “Big business is very happy to climb into bed with big government. Republicans are and should be the party of small business and of entrepreneurs.” The battle between capital and a working-class is obvious on the Tea Party’s readiness to fold up the Federal government. The 2013 government shutdown clearly ended the troubled coalition between the Tea Party and the capitalists.

During the 2013 budget crisis, leaders of the “business lobby,” involving the National Association of Manufacturers, Business Roundtable, Fix the Debt, National Federation of Independent Businesses, National Retail Federation, and the US Chamber of Commerce, Business Roundtable started to debate began to discuss “helping wage primary campaigns against Republican

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<sup>673</sup> Cohen, Tom. “5 Years Later, Here's How the Tea Party Changed Politics - CNNPolitics.” CNN, Cable News Network, 28 Feb. 2014, [edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/tea-party-greatest-hits/index.html).

<sup>674</sup> Bash, Dana. “Cruz Angers GOP Colleagues - Again.” CNN, Cable News Network, 26 Feb. 2014, [politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/02/26/cruz-angers-gop-colleagues-again/](http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/02/26/cruz-angers-gop-colleagues-again/).

lawmakers who had worked to engineer the political standoff in Washington.”<sup>675</sup>

The Tea Party’s initial success raised funds for the primary races led the Chamber of Commerce to lead the mobilization for establishment Republicans. Scott Reed propelled “Vote for Jobs,” aiming at Senate and House elections to endorse candidates like Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and beat Tea Party insurgents.<sup>676</sup> In a public statement, the Chamber maintained “Americans need leaders with the courage to govern on issues that matter, not those who refuse to acknowledge the unsustainable rate of federal spending or consider pragmatism to be an antiquated concept.”<sup>677</sup>

In a 2010 Pew poll, they had rejected compromise by similar margins. They thought nothing of mounting primary challenges against Republican incumbents, and they made a special point of targeting Republicans who compromised with Democrats or even with Republican leaders. In Congress, the Republican House leadership soon found itself facing a GOP caucus whose members were too worried about “getting primaried” to vote for the compromises necessary to govern - or even to keep the government open. Threats from the Tea Party and other purist factions often outweigh any blandishments or protection that leaders can offer.

Later, in a 2013 Pew Research poll, more than 70 percent of Tea Party members disapproved of Republican leaders in Congress. Tea Party representatives in the House and the Senate revealed their impact especially when they used the menace of a government shutdown as a negotiation instrument in their enduring crusade against the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The health care reform, known as Obamacare, was Obama’s legislative achievement, and, since its passage in 2010, Republicans had voted more than 40 times to abolish, defund, or suspend it. In

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<sup>675</sup> Lipton, Eric, et al. “Business Groups See Loss of Sway Over House G.O.P.” *The New York Times*, 10 Oct. 2013, [www.nytimes.com/2013/10/10/us/business-groups-see-loss-of-sway-over-house-gop.html?pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/10/us/business-groups-see-loss-of-sway-over-house-gop.html?pagewanted=all).

<sup>676</sup> Confessore, Nicholas. “Fund-Raising by G.O.P. Rebels Outpaces Party Establishment.” *The New York Times*, 20 Dec. 2017, [www.nytimes.com/2014/02/02/us/politics/rebel-conservatives-lead-way-in-gop-fund-raising.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/02/us/politics/rebel-conservatives-lead-way-in-gop-fund-raising.html).

<sup>677</sup> “2014 Elections: Big Opportunity.” U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 22 Sept. 2014, [www.uschamber.com/2014-elections-big-opportunity](http://www.uschamber.com/2014-elections-big-opportunity).

fact, DeMint used his authority at the Heritage Foundation to lead the campaign engaging on an off-road communication tour during the August congressional leave to reinforce for it. During September 2013, the Democratic-led Senate rejected many bills that projected government spending in favor of the PPACA, and Ted Cruz conveyed a 21-hour speech against the PPACA in the Senate.<sup>678</sup>

House Republicans supported a number of reforms that would have sponsored privileged federal agencies. Business leaders, usually strong supporters of the Republican Party, insistently condemned the Tea Party and the strategies that led to the blackout. 250 chambers of commerce and trade organizations signed an open letter endorsing the funding of the government. In an attempt to find the way between Congress, the Tea Party and the Heritage Foundation's PAC, John Boehner was unable to make a compromise bill to reinforce the government and increase the debt ceiling.

The 2014 elections were exceptional in terms of the profound connection of social forces within the GOP. Although it was professionals, managers, and small entrepreneurs who initially led the Tea Party, right-wing millionaires such as the Koch brothers and their Club for Growth have funded the Tea Party since its rise in 2009. Indeed, both capitalists and the Tea Party wanted to reduce corporate taxes, cut welfare, and abolish any type of regulation on capital.

Throughout the first Republican race in March 2014, John Cronyn of Texas well beat Tea Party candidate Steve Stockman by a margin of 59% to 19%, reflecting the strong coalition of the Republican Party with the capitalist class. In the next primaries in May, Republican candidate Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia gained 87.5% of the election, while those supported by the Chamber of Commerce hardly won in North Carolina (45.7% for Thom Tillis

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<sup>678</sup> Filibuster, in legislative procedure, is a parliamentary method used in the United States Senate by few senators to suspend or avoid parliamentary action by talking so long that the majority of senators either grant concessions or remove the bill. Unlike the House of Representatives, in which rules control talking time, the Senate permits unrestricted discussion on a bill. Speeches can be entirely inappropriate to the concern.

versus 43.6% for two Tea Party nominees) and lost to Ben Sasse, a moderate Tea Party candidate in Nebraska.<sup>679</sup>

Senator McConnell used the federal spending argument to defeat his Tea Party contender by 60.2% to 35.4%. In the Idaho Republican race, Mike Simpson defeated Tea Party's Bryan Smith 61.6% to 38.4%. According to *the Washington Post*, the Chamber of Commerce was "the biggest winner in primaries that spend more than \$12 million in races around the country and came through with an undefeated record."<sup>680</sup> During the 2014 primaries, Chamber-backed candidates were usually successful, but there were significant blunders for capital's battle to control Republicans. Tea Party contenders were routed in Kansas, Tennessee, and South Carolina, returning establishment Republicans committed to immigration reform and preserving the federal government in commission. Nonetheless, the Chamber strikingly failed in Mississippi and in Virginia.

The major defeat for the Chamber and establishment Republicans, however, came in Virginia on June 10, 2014 when a newcomer Tea Party candidate university professor David Brat defeated Republican House majority leader Eric Cantor by 60% of the vote in the Republican primary election.<sup>681</sup> Although the incumbent had outspent his rival approximately 40 to 1 and held a large lead in opinion polling before the primary, he eventually lost by more than 11 points to Brat.<sup>682</sup> The vote was broadly perceived as a dismissal of Cantor's support for the immigration reform. Brat effectively mobilized working middle-class voters with his criticism of "crony capitalism" and "the collaboration of public and private elites at the expense of workers and small

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<sup>679</sup> "2014 Election Results Senate: Map by State, Live Primary Voting Updates." POLITICO, [www.politico.com/2014-election/primary/results/map/senate/#.XKnk6ZLJxdh](http://www.politico.com/2014-election/primary/results/map/senate/#.XKnk6ZLJxdh).

<sup>680</sup> Hamburger, Tom. "The Biggest Winner in Primaries: U.S. Chamber of Commerce." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 21 May 2014, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2014/05/21/the-biggest-winner-in-primaries-u-s-chamber-of-commerce/?noredirect=on](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2014/05/21/the-biggest-winner-in-primaries-u-s-chamber-of-commerce/?noredirect=on).

<sup>681</sup> Martin, Jonathan. "Eric Cantor Defeated by David Brat, Tea Party Challenger, in G.O.P. Primary Upset." *The New York Times*, 11 June 2014, [www.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/us/politics/eric-cantor-loses-gop-primary.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/us/politics/eric-cantor-loses-gop-primary.html).

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*



businesses.”<sup>683</sup> Brat condemned Cantor for “being too close to Wall Street and his “business support for immigration reform as a ploy for cheap labor and demonized the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable.”<sup>684</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce and other business groups succeeded in backing establishment Republicans that have clearly won most of the primaries, hence increasing their majority in both the House and the Senate in November 2014. Thomas Donahue, president of the Chamber of Commerce confidently asserted that “voters made it clear: They want a Congress with the courage to lead and the ability to govern,” and promised to follow the Chambers’ agenda of “comprehensive tax reform, immigration reform, domestic energy production, regulatory reform, and international trade.”<sup>685</sup>

In the November 2014 midterms, the GOP won comfortably the majority in the U.S. Senate preserving control of the House. Republicans not only won both chambers of Congress but also gained several state tenures, along with conserving or seizing state legislatures. Conservatives perceived the outcome as a revival of the party’s traditional authority, while Tea Party members perceived it as a maturing development of the movement. Tea Party challenges at the primary level had sketched many of the ensuing Republican candidates to the right, and the Tea Party newcomers of 2010 midterm’s elections had then become congressional veterans.<sup>686</sup>

Although Republicans started gradually to be in proportion to Tea Party views, they were surprised in September 2015 by the removal of House majority leader John Boehner. Indeed, Tea Party activists had already warned of a second government blackout over the federal funding of the health care

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<sup>683</sup> Lind, Michael, et al. “Why Big Business Fears the Tea Party.” *POLITICO Magazine*, 15 June 2014, [www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/06/why-big-business-fears-the-tea-party-107842#.VGTM2DTF-So](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/06/why-big-business-fears-the-tea-party-107842#.VGTM2DTF-So).

<sup>684</sup> Post, Charlie. “WHITHER THE REPUBLICAN PARTY? The 2014 Election and the Future of Capital’s “A-Team”.” *The Brooklyn Rail*, 12 Dec. 2014, [brooklynrail.org/2014/12/field-notes/whither-the-republican-party](http://brooklynrail.org/2014/12/field-notes/whither-the-republican-party).

<sup>685</sup> “Americans Vote for a New Direction, Says U.S. Chamber.” U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 5 Nov. 2014, [www.uschamber.com/press-release/americans-vote-new-direction-says-us-chamber](http://www.uschamber.com/press-release/americans-vote-new-direction-says-us-chamber).

<sup>686</sup> “Americans Vote for a New Direction, Says U.S. Chamber.” U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 5 Nov. 2014, [www.uschamber.com/press-release/americans-vote-new-direction-says-us-chamber](http://www.uschamber.com/press-release/americans-vote-new-direction-says-us-chamber).

association Planned Parenthood<sup>687</sup> and as Boehner to navigate between the factions of the Republican Party, he decided to resign. His successor Kevin McCarthy, who was severely rejected by the Tea Party, disclaimed his candidacy and was replaced by Wisconsin representative and 2012 vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan. The latter had formerly obtained a promise of support from the Tea Party movement and more precisely from House Freedom Caucus.<sup>688</sup>

The failure of Republican representatives to pass bills that echoed Tea Party beliefs fueled further resentment among mainstream conservatives. Polling organization Gallup revealed how the Tea Party considerably lost popular support in October 2015.<sup>689</sup> Widespread discontent with the GOP establishment became clear, as a number of inexperienced political candidates outstripped establishment politicians throughout the contest for the 2016 Republican presidential selection.



Figure 9: Gallup poll: Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement or neither<sup>690</sup>

<sup>687</sup> Planned Parenthood, in full Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc. is an American organization that was established in 1942. It promoted education and personal liberties in the domains of birth control, family planning, and reproductive health care. Clinics managed by Planned Parenthood offer reproductive health care services, including abortion, sex education, prenatal care, infertility services, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.

<sup>688</sup> David. "Paul Ryan Wins Backing of Majority in Freedom Caucus for House Speaker." *The New York Times*, 21 Oct. 2015, [www.nytimes.com/2015/10/22/us/politics/paul-ryan-house-speaker-freedom-caucus.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/22/us/politics/paul-ryan-house-speaker-freedom-caucus.html).

<sup>689</sup> Norman, Jim. "In U.S., Support for Tea Party Drops to New Low." Gallup.com, 26 Oct. 2015, [news.gallup.com/poll/186338/support-tea-party-drops-new-low.aspx](http://news.gallup.com/poll/186338/support-tea-party-drops-new-low.aspx).

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid.*

Donald Trump and Ben Carson were constantly defeating mainstream Republican candidates including those with Tea Party support, such as Rand Paul and Ted Cruz. As the swarming field grew very limited during the 2016 primary race, Trump's entry became more prominent. His uniquely nativist and chauvinistic rhetoric charmed mainstream conservatives, who found in his language an invigorating refusal of political correctness.<sup>691</sup> Ultimately, Trump was able to defeat all establishment Republican contestants and was nominated as the Republican candidate for presidential elections in July 2016.

While Trump was steadily polling behind Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton during the final weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign, establishment Republicans such as Paul Ryan and Ted Cruz decided to dissociate themselves from Trump's controversial views and provocative language. Indeed, Republicans worried that Trump's explicit opinions during state and local contests might be in favor of Democrats. However, Republicans largely won the election maintaining clear majorities in both the House and the Senate. For instance, former Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio effortlessly won reelection to his U.S. Senate and Wisconsin Tea Party senator Ron Johnson won the election against Senator Russ Feingold. Following the victory of Trump in the presidential race, the GOP would eventually control the White House and both houses of Congress for the first time since 2007.<sup>692</sup>

Like the Cruz supporters in the Tea Party, mainstream Republicans were concerned that Trump's deviation from the very foundations of modern conservative beliefs was affecting the GOP.<sup>693</sup> In fact, Trump does not only share the main American conservatism's hostility towards health care but also expresses his support for government welfare. Moreover, he mockingly

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<sup>691</sup> According to supporters of Donald Trump, his language was an inspiration and a refreshing rejection of political establishment. His words have radicalized both the left and right, with countless effects on the future of policy in the United States.

<sup>692</sup> "Wisconsin U.S. Senate Results: Ron Johnson Wins." *The New York Times*, , 1 Aug. 2017, [www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin-senate-johnson-feingold](http://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin-senate-johnson-feingold).

<sup>693</sup> Heilbrunn, Jacob. "Opinion | The Neocons vs. Donald Trump." *The New York Times*, , 19 Jan. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2016/03/13/opinion/sunday/the-neocons-vs-donald-trump.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/13/opinion/sunday/the-neocons-vs-donald-trump.html).

disapproved of neoconservatism's foreign affairs such as those dealing with the invasion of Iraq and war on terror.<sup>694</sup>

However, Trump's criticism of free-trade agreements was crucial to his persistent campaign during the primaries. Trump used the economic distress of the white middle class throughout the last four decades as his central question, a debate that apparently charmed the white electorate. In fact, a study<sup>695</sup> published in December 2015 exposed that sweeping rates of suicide and substance abuse such as alcohol, heroin, and prescription opioids have increased the death rate for white people between forty-five and fifty-four, with a high-school degree or less.

Trump's hard-hat populism clearly appealed to the "poorly educated"<sup>696</sup> demographic, considered as the Joe-the-Plumber<sup>697</sup> populists. White working-class has caught up in the polls and in the primary voting and the hard-hat populist base has expanded. In tackling immigration, Trump declared he would use unique processes to keep both Muslims and Mexicans outside the country's borders. In doing so, he merely confirmed how the populist-establishment debate over immigration formed the basic standoff in the Republican election race. Thus, the support of the white working class to Trump was meaningful in its own right, recalling the repositioning of working-class voters from the French Communist Party to the anti-immigrant National Front in France during the 1990s.

In fact, the matter of why the white working-class electorate has reliably voted against its own interests by their support to conservatives has been the most confusing question. In his book *What's the Matter with Kansas?*, Thomas Frank notably examined this question. White working class's rejection

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<sup>694</sup> Stokols, Eli, et al. "Trump Crosses the 9/11 Line." POLITICO, 14 Feb. 2016, [www.politico.com/story/2016/02/trump-9-11-debate-219273](http://www.politico.com/story/2016/02/trump-9-11-debate-219273).

<sup>695</sup> Chen, Victor Tan. "The Lonely Poverty of America's White Working Class." The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company, 17 Jan. 2016, [www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/01/white-working-class-poverty/424341/](http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/01/white-working-class-poverty/424341/).

<sup>696</sup> "Donald Trump: I Love The Poorly Educated." NBCNews.com, NBCUniversal News Group, [www.nbcnews.com/video/donald-trump-i-love-the-poorly-educated-630186051563](http://www.nbcnews.com/video/donald-trump-i-love-the-poorly-educated-630186051563).

<sup>697</sup> Macaray, David. "Remembering Joe the Plumber." The Huffington Post, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 21 July 2016, [www.huffingtonpost.com/david-macaray/remembering-joe-the-plumb\\_b\\_7843822.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-macaray/remembering-joe-the-plumb_b_7843822.html).

of the Republican ideology simply discarded in favor of Trump. Henceforth, we wonder about the particular ideology that kept the white working class inside the Republican sphere since Reaganism? We deduce that prior to Trump, the white working class was far unhappier with the failure of the Republicans than with the achievement of liberals and the Democratic elites.

Working-class and poor people mainly those earning less than \$50,000 a year were overrepresented among “non-voters.” The Census Bureau revealed that over 75% of all Americans earned less than \$50,000 in 2010, while only 36% of those who voted earned less than \$50,000.<sup>698</sup> On the one hand, Republicans simply won majorities in both houses of Congress thanks to voter preference among professional, managerial and wealthy electorate. On the other hand, working-class and poor electorate has become deeply isolated from the Republican Party due to its consistent politics of neoliberalism and austerity.

Conflict between the Tea Party and conventional corporate interests has restructured the capital's favored party. The 2014 midterm elections saw the considerable increase of Republican seats in the House of Representatives and hence their seizure of the Senate. The significant changes in the party's Congressional representation were the outcomes of little changes in the popular election. While in the House of Representatives, Republicans won 52% of the vote obtaining 57% of the seats; they won only 51% of the popular vote in the Senate holding 54 seats - regardless of a persistent decline in voter participation. Indeed, in 2014, voter participation stroke to its lowest levels since 1942, with only 36.4% of all eligible voters turning out in 2014, compared with 40.9% in the 2010 midterm election.<sup>699</sup>

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<sup>698</sup> Choma, Russ. “Money Won on Tuesday, But Rules of the Game Changed.” OpenSecrets News, 10 Aug. 2015, [www.opensecrets.org/news/2014/11/money-won-on-tuesday-but-rules-of-the-game-changed/](http://www.opensecrets.org/news/2014/11/money-won-on-tuesday-but-rules-of-the-game-changed/).

<sup>699</sup> “2014G.” United States Elections Project, [www.electproject.org/2014g](http://www.electproject.org/2014g).

### **3. The Tea Party Insurgency and its impact on American politics:**

In the last few decades, the US political setting has changed significantly. The role of local political parties in choosing candidates, mobilizing constituency members and conveying opinion has declined. Organized interest groups along with Media transmit the message of political parties and candidates to the voters. The different financial supports have dramatically changed the relations between political bodies, candidates and voters.

The rise of local chapters of interest group organizations in the last two decades simply implies that American people no longer find the traditional parties to be suitable vehicles for chasing their political worries. They focus on changing state and national policies and electing local candidates. This is explained by the increased mobility of grassroots activists who generally represent the middle class. Their participation is enhanced areas with established Republican Party organizations thanks to a large network of political grassroots and issue activists who are politically concerned.

Today, the Republican Party still relies heavily on the engagement of the volunteers. The bloc recruiting typically uses pre-existing networks of people who share common beliefs through media and direct mail. The Republican Party would need to strengthen its base by attracting newcomers and organized groups. In spite of Tea Party's request to block Obama's Executive Order on immigration, Democrats and Republicans pushed through the \$1.1 trillion expenditure plan and retained the federal government. The Tea Party's influence declined in the next Congressional season. It is, indeed, the failure of the middle-class working groups in the United States to act autonomously that has helped the rise of the Right. The lack of a left-wing movement has made the Tea Party and other right-wing populist factions the only real alternative to a bipartisan neoliberal consent.

Political breakdown has afflicted Congress, too. In October 2015, House Republicans were hardly able to elect a speaker. In the fall, when Congress tried to agree on a budget framework proposed to keep the government open through the election, conservatives had repealed the deal,

thus degrading the new speaker and triggering another political crisis. As of this writing, it is not clear whether hard-line conservatives will cause more gridlock, but if they do, party leaders can do nothing about it. Today, the shutdown crisis in both federal and state levels reflects the essential reality that there are only individual politicians who follow their own political and ideological interests.

When Paul Ryan took the gavel as the new House speaker in October 2015, he declared that Americans “look at Washington, and all they see is chaos. What a relief to them it would be if we finally got our act together.”<sup>700</sup> He further said: “Donald Trump is a chaos candidate, and he’d be a chaos president.” The Republican primary term would, in fact, determine Donald Trump as the party’s most convincing presidential candidate for the general election in 2016. Sadly for former Florida governor Jeb Bush, a moderate Republican, Trump’s supporters liked the fact that he only disagreed with the establishment. Indeed, Republican primary electorate had firmly rejected Jeb Bush’s pro-immigration, pro-free-trade version of conservatism on the side of vociferous nationalism, border walls, adultery, and a range of other demonstrations of “American Greatness.”<sup>701</sup> Consequently, Bush was not able to end in the fourth place in any primary, regardless of \$130 million poured in his campaign reserves. He eventually dropped out after pulling in just 8 percent of the ballot in South Carolina. Trump won the state with 32.5 percent.<sup>702</sup>

The new Republican Party under Trumpism<sup>703</sup> looks like the European far-right anti-immigrant parties that have campaigned at the verges of anti-immigrant resentment and national supremacy as with Marine Le Pen’s French National Front, the Northern League in Italy, the UK Independence Party in Britain, or even the Freedom Party in the Netherlands. Yet, these populist

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<sup>700</sup> Gorman, Michele. “Paul Ryan Accepts Gavel, Becomes New Speaker of the House.” *Newsweek*, 28 Apr. 2016, [www.newsweek.com/paul-ryan-new-speaker-388332](http://www.newsweek.com/paul-ryan-new-speaker-388332).

<sup>701</sup> Nguyen, Tina. “Jeb Bush: Please Clap for a Republican to Challenge Trump.” *The Hive, Vanity Fair*, 15 Mar. 2019, [www.vanityfair.com/news/2019/03/jeb-bush-calls-for-republican-primary-challenger-2020](http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2019/03/jeb-bush-calls-for-republican-primary-challenger-2020).

<sup>702</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>703</sup> Trumpism suggests the nontraditional political viewpoint and attitude adopted by US President Donald Trump and his supporters. The term Trumpism can also be used to openly refer to an extremist or eccentric declaration made by Donald Trump.

parties have never sustained free-market ideologies, considered as the basis of the Republican ideology and the *prerequisite* of American conservatism. Today, we question the future of the Republican Party. What kind of battle royal would rather count? We observe the rise to a uniquely new political drive in the American politics and thus since the crises over slavery that gave rise to the Republican Party 160 years ago.

In his special way, Donald Trump has demonstrated that the major political parties no longer have logical boundaries or enforceable standards. Yet, Trump didn't cause this political chaos. The chaos simply caused Trump. What we are witnessing today is not a brief ripple of chaos but a chaos syndrome. Chaos syndrome reflects a declining political system with weakened conventional institutions, political parties, leaders, and committees that have traditionally prevented politicians in the system from pursuing narrow self-interests. Today, intermediaries have caused politicians, activists, and even voters turn to become more individualistic affecting the system and producing chaos in both campaigns and the government.

Although Tea Partiers shared some of the Republican base policies, their attitude was evidently and madly anti-establishment. Tea Parties have been busy attacking and disheartening political elites and parties whom they accused of obstructing the people's will and protecting and expanding big government. They greatly developed ideological polarization with the rise of social media and the radicalization of the Republican Party by supporting insurgencies in presidential races and on Capitol Hill. The political system's defense against outsiders and insurgents is clearly collapsing. Trump, a political outsider, only took advantage of the opportunity to show up.

Yet, the American political chaos is becoming self-increasing. The governmental dysfunction actually fuels public anger, which spurs political disruption hence causing more governmental breakdown. Overturning this spiral episode would need understanding it. Trying to overturn political disorders would most likely create more insurgencies. The establishment politicians would have to be able to govern through them. There is nothing new about insiders losing control and outsiders taking power in American politics. In fact, insurgencies have considerably altered people's participation in the



political system. In 1964, to the shock of Republicans, insurgent Barry Goldwater won the Republican nomination because he excited the parties' activists.

Although there was a working majority in Congress in 2011, the political system was failing. All through intense private negotiations, President Obama and Republican House Speaker John Boehner attempted to settle a budget agreement limiting growth in the major social programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security by hundreds of billions of dollars as well as reducing defense and nondefense open expenditure by more than \$1 trillion.<sup>704</sup> Although the package was planned to set for a long-term fiscal stability, it fell apart causing further polarization. The public has become stridently divided across partisan and ideological lines. And even when Republicans and Democrats attempt to find agreement, it is threatened by radical factions funded by outside money.

In his article published in *The New York Times*, Matt Bai explained that, while Democrats tried to find the rank-and-file support to pass the bargain, Boehner was unable to get the accord of conservatives in his own caucus. "What's undeniable, despite all the furious efforts to peddle a different story is that Obama managed to persuade his closest allies to sign off on what he wanted them to do, and Boehner didn't, or couldn't."<sup>705</sup> The budget compromise Boehner and Obama tried to reach an agreement on has been passed with hard majorities in Congress then signed into law. With a real problem of disorganization, a considerable majority was not able to gather and affirm itself. Boehner's 2011 failure was actually part of a rising political shutdown. Two years later, the House's conservative bloc shut down the government with the involvement of Ted Cruz, in a manner that shocked Republicans. When Jay Leno asked Boehner why he had allowed a "very predictable disaster," he simply replied: "When I looked up, I saw my

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<sup>704</sup> Calmes, Jackie. "Obama to Call for Broad Plan to Reduce Debt." *The New York Times*, 10 Apr. 2011, [www.nytimes.com/2011/04/11/us/politics/11deficit.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/11/us/politics/11deficit.html).

<sup>705</sup> Bai, Matt. "Obama vs. Boehner: Who Killed the Debt Deal?" *The New York Times*, 28 Mar. 2012, [www.nytimes.com/2012/04/01/magazine/obama-vs-boehner-who-killed-the-debt-deal.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=E464F350E47E74D0A6EB2CDDFD32DF4E7&gwt=pay](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/01/magazine/obama-vs-boehner-who-killed-the-debt-deal.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=E464F350E47E74D0A6EB2CDDFD32DF4E7&gwt=pay).

colleagues going this way. You learn that a leader without followers is simply a man taking a walk.”<sup>706</sup>

Boehner had confirmed that far right minority factions and veto groups have become more dominant as leaders are no longer able to organize. Following this “disaster”, Boehner finally gave up and resigned at the end of October 2015.<sup>707</sup> In March 2016, Ohio Governor John Kasich reacted at the Fox Republican presidential debate in Detroit: “The people want change, and they keep putting outsiders in to bring about the change. Then the change doesn’t come ... because we’re putting people in that don’t understand compromise.”<sup>708</sup>

Since their emergence, the Tea Party was able to nominate and support candidates in their own races through online fund-raising and messaging of candidates, parties and activists. Today, Trump can reach millions through Twitter without needing to go through traditional networks. Finding no pattern for what he identified as Trump’s takeover of an entire political party, Jon Meacham, a presidential biographer and a former Executive Editor and Executive Vice President at Random House, went so far as to declare that George W. Bush “was truly the last of a kind of president.”<sup>709</sup> Commenting on the change Trump was carrying, Bush himself declared, “I’m worried that I will be the last Republican president.”<sup>710</sup>

Glenn Beck, who became the new star at the Fox News Channel, created his own brand of Tea Party calling for his fans to join “9/12 groups,” which were to return the country to the unity of purpose it felt in the days after

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<sup>706</sup> Baby, Berkus. “John Boehner Admits Republicans Caused Shutdown on ‘Tonight Show’ w/ Leno.” YouTube, 21 Feb. 2014, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kt6JmOhW\\_Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kt6JmOhW_Y).

<sup>707</sup> DeBonis, Mike, and Paul Kane. “House Speaker John Boehner to Resign at End of October.” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 25 Sept. 2015, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2015/09/25/boehnerresigns/?utm\\_term=.a9a97a77746b](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2015/09/25/boehnerresigns/?utm_term=.a9a97a77746b).

<sup>708</sup> “Transcript of the Republican Presidential Debate in Detroit.” *The New York Times*, 4 Mar. 2016, [www.nytimes.com/2016/03/04/us/politics/transcript-of-the-republican-presidential-debate-in-detroit.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/04/us/politics/transcript-of-the-republican-presidential-debate-in-detroit.html).

<sup>709</sup> Baker, Peter. “It’s Now Donald Trump’s America. But George Bush’s Stamp Endures.” *The New York Times*, 1 Dec. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/12/01/us/politics/trump-bush-praise-history.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/01/us/politics/trump-bush-praise-history.html).

<sup>710</sup> *Ibid.*

the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. In fact, the Tea Partiers adopted a brand of populism that resounded in the absence of coherent analysis of America's economic decline coming from the administration at the origin of the bank bailouts and NAFTA. They might have been the same people who voted for Bush twice, but this time, their agenda is more economic than social. Many liberals and leftists rejected the Tea Party as a temporary response to the recession, high unemployment, home foreclosures, bankruptcies, and an African-American president who had expanded the government's subsidies to the financial, real estate, and automobile industries. Far from being a political eruption, E.J. Dionne, a columnist at the *Washington Post* has argued, the movement also menaces the unity of the Republicans: "The rise of the Tea Party movement is a throwback to an old form of libertarianism that sees most of the domestic policies that government has undertaken since the New Deal as unconstitutional. It typically perceives the most dangerous threats to freedom as the design of well-educated elitists out of touch with "American values."

Party regulars stood powerless in the face of a growing insurgency. They certainly needed to organize a coalition against it, yet were incapable of doing it. Democrats took advantage of the Tea Party's extremist views and discourse to win in challenging states like Nevada, Colorado and Delaware. Thus, as the GOP lost three major Senate seats, we can assume that Tea Party's mobilization had both supported and hurt Republicans in 2010. More generally, the circumstances that helped mobilize conservative Tea Parties in 2009 and 2010 had later generated gridlocks for the Republican Party.

Due to its significant popularity among confirmed GOP officials, the Tea Party represented a challenge for Republican challengers to Democrats in 2012. With the support of conservative business groups, the Tea Party was able to defeat Republican representatives and nominees who were somewhat moderate or prone to cooperate with Democrats. During the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, Republicans were persuaded that any concessions with the Democrats would threaten any possible victory in GOP primaries. Furthermore, several Tea Party-backed nominees won seats in 2010 thanks to their commitment to GOP,

which funded national right-wing policy debates. Radical discourse and resentment beliefs dominated the GOP ideology in 2011 and 2012.<sup>711</sup>

As Tea Party-backed Republicans held positions in government, their concessions with Democrats clearly deceived their grassroots base. For instance, Tea Party activists were “greatly dissatisfied” with Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown’s decision to in favor of financial reform six months after his election. In July 2010, the Greater Boston Tea Party protested against Brown reminding him “there are consequences when the Constitution is disregarded.”<sup>712</sup>

Nevertheless, newly-elected Tea Party representatives had considerably strengthened the 2009-10 Republican tactic of absolute opposition to the Obama agenda. The confusing structure of Tea Party involvement had somehow produced a political sphere where rational agreement was advanced among GOP officeholders or between Republicans and Democrats in Congress. Our findings suggest that the Tea Party should be more regarded as a new vibrant alternative to conservative activism and the Republican Party than a simple grassroots movement. Its uncontrolled structure of protesters, sponsors, and political figures changes old established positions about federal public services, government spending, and most importantly, taxation.

However the echoes of the impulsive and extreme Tea Party mobilization at a critical moment in US political history had then settled new public debates and gridlock politics throughout the last years. The era of Obama will forever be associated with the rise of the Tea Party movement. To be more effective and well organized, Conservatives had to move from classical theory to social and political activism, with which mainstream Americans could associate. American politics have never seen, at least over its modern history, a conservative street-protest movement. Over the last decades until 2009, the American right fulfilled the organization in a classical way, via mimeograph brochures, books, e-mails and text messages leaving the streets to

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<sup>711</sup> Baker, Peter. “It’s Now Donald Trump’s America. But George Bush’s Stamp Endures.” *The New York Times*, 1 Dec. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/12/01/us/politics/trump-bush-praise-history.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/01/us/politics/trump-bush-praise-history.html).

<sup>712</sup> Quotes extracted from a Greater Boston Tea Party e-mail to members.

the left. Throughout the modern history of the United States, it was the Democratic Party, which used to have a populist wing within its party. Therefore, we speak of originality in the American political life as the Tea Parties have all the characteristics of a popular social movement, brought on by anger over the economic crisis and distrust of government-at all levels, and in both parties: The summer's furious town-hall meetings, and the large September 12 rally on Washington's National Mall that drew tens of thousands of people to protest America's descent into "socialism". With a totally new brand of fervor and activism, the Tea Party helped the GOP achieve key elements of its agenda.<sup>713</sup>

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<sup>713</sup> Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party: The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-Whiteness of the New Republican Right -- and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. OR, 2010. 19

## **Conclusion and discussion**

During my 2014 fellowship program in the United States, I had the chance to meet President George W. Bush at a very special dinner organized by the George W. Bush Presidential Center on Friday march 14<sup>th</sup> in Dallas, Texas. In response to a brief question regarding the rise of the Tea Party movement, he told me “we have to look back to the 1990s when Ronald Reagan was no longer appreciated by the American people. Anyone who stays too much in power ends unpopular. There’s always been a Tea Party movement in American history. To understand the Tea Party’s chronicle, you have to go back to the 1990s”. Indeed, the thesis comes to the conclusion that the US political setting has changed significantly in the last few decades. The role of local political parties in choosing candidates, mobilizing constituency members and conveying opinion has declined. Organized interest groups along with Media transmit the message of political parties and candidates to the voters. The different financial supports have dramatically changed the relations between political bodies, candidates and voters. The rise of local chapters of interest group organizations in the last two decades simply implies that American people no longer find the traditional parties to be suitable vehicles for chasing their political worries. They focus on changing state and national policies and electing local candidates. This is explained by the increased mobility of grassroots activists who generally represent the middle class.

Ideological organizations that protest against the Establishment often have an impact on the electorate far better than the political parties. Throughout the last three Republican conventions, conservative groups have pulled the party far to the right. Right wing groups have found this method more engaging, hence becoming more organized on the local level especially during electoral campaigns than groups on the left. In the last ten years, right wing groups have worked on strengthening their national organizations. Hence, the advantageous context out of these factors was a “catalyst” in the rise of conservative movements in general and the Tea Party in particular. Tea Party groups’ members were geographically concentrated and aspired to donate large amounts of time and energy to different campaigns that gave to the whole

movement more importance and influence. Tea Party crowds were identified by their conservative traditional and common clothes inferring the idea that those who dress differently do not belong to them.

Indeed, conservatism has been rising after World War II in many political and cultural fields restructuring American life. It experienced crucial changes, especially since the election of Ronald Reagan until his presidential terms in the 1980s, then to the 1994 Contract with America to the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Studying the Right from the bottom up involved the idea that Republican policymakers, elite funders, and well-funded think tanks and organizations were all key elements that explained the political emergence of the Right. This concept can also be applied to recent right-wing manifestations such as the Tea Party movement, which attributes its rise to right-wing backers such as the Koch brothers and media figures. Yet, although these funders definitely helped the movement's rise and visibility in different ways, we should never disregard the fact that popular conservatism has constantly been an ideology entrenched within the nation.

The political prospects of the Tea Party mobilization had influenced the development of the movement. Even though the Right lost several legislative or electoral campaigns, its policymakers have become experienced in training, engaging, and rallying supporters. Today, right-wing think tanks seem to control the American public debates on many issues ranging from welfare to taxation and immigration. The Tea Party conservatism adopts a new discourse that actually resonates with many branches of the American public life: it seeks to diminish the role of the federal government; eliminate the New Deal welfare, reinforce the free market in economic life; and construct social life based on associations and community. The situation has worsened because the government has, instead of protecting individual freedoms and personal choices, tried to decrease or eradicate poverty through government-based redistribution. It is, in fact, this "rational prudence" that has permitted conservative ideology to become "mainstream".

The 2012 election illustrates the deep division in American society between the liberal states (e.g., the Northeast, West Coast, and some Western and Midwestern states) and the highly conservative Southern and rural areas. A

breakdown of the state and country votes highlights the vastly different voting patterns between urban and rural voters, young and old voters, religious and non-religious voters, white and minority voters, and women and male voters. These patterns reflect differing visions of American society and where it should be going.

The Tea Party, as the contemporary right-wing movement, consistently shares with former groups the main beliefs of right-wing extremism. Old and new share their penchant for preserving the status quo and resentment to social, demographic and political change, trying to lead politics into a campaign of good versus evil, or “White” versus the “Other”, which they describe as the “enemy.” Although the Tea Party is identified as the conservative wing of the Republican Party, conservatism is not their only drive. Tea Party supporters are mostly worried about the redistribution of wealth such as Social Security or health care for all and spending on public education in a new and ‘socialist’ America.

Structural features of the American welfare state militate against a major expansion of government, per se. In fact, we outlined social welfare expenditure since its creation in the United States in the second chapter. I suggested that the existing welfare expenditure is about 50 times larger than it was at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and about five to seven times what it was throughout the New Deal. This, too, is mainly a critical matter as to whether the welfare expenditure level is great or insufficient, but in either case social welfare expenditure has now replaced defense expenditure as the key fiscal point in the U.S. As a matter of fact, the Tea Party argues that the American present social welfare is “excessive” or “unproductive” or comes at the expense of something else. Both defense and social welfare expenditure comprise 72 percent of the overall public spending budget.

As in other realms, such as education, conservatives strongly defend the idea of a pluralistic mix of private and public services as an overriding feature of U.S. social welfare. They believe that private social welfare institutions coexist alongside those of the public sector. U.S. social welfare has a noble tradition of voluntary citizen groups taking the initiative to solve local problems. Today, private voluntary groups provide valuable services to AIDS



patients, the homeless, immigrants, victims of domestic violence, and refugees. Social welfare has become a big business. During the last thirty years, the number of human service corporations - for-profit firms providing social welfare through the marketplace - has increased dramatically. For many welfare professionals, the privatizing of social services is troubling, occurring as it does at a time when government has reduced its commitment to social programs. Yet, human service corporations will likely continue to be prominent players in shaping the nation's social welfare policies. As long as U.S. culture is democratic and capitalistic, entrepreneurs will be free to establish social welfare services in the private sector, both as nonprofit agencies and as for-profit corporations. The mixed welfare economy of the United States, in which the voluntary, governmental, and corporate sectors coexist, poses serious questions for social welfare policy.

In the second chapter, I revealed how ideological distinctions influence the tax effort in the U.S. Ideological difference between both Democrats and Republicans within one state affects the connection between electoral evolutions and revenue collections. Ideological differences across states explain the implementation of new taxes, among liberal states implementing the income tax more quickly than their conservative counterparts. While previous analyses in the area of taxation have supported partisanship impact on spending and tax burdens across the United States, latest analyses have clarified that Democrats proclaim a larger stake of income for government revenue than Republicans. Also, the influence of Democrats on tax effort is conditional on levels of institutional jurisdiction and is significantly greater under a united government.

Eventually, American conservatism has consistently opposed the liberal establishment seeking new changes in American political and cultural life. In the third chapter, we revealed the different factors that helped the rise of conservatism, from Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan in the second half of the twentieth century to the early twenty-first century. Before the 1950s, conservatism was always an unbalanced political force, which necessitated a constant process of creating alliances on definite issues and in crucial campaigns. In his book *The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities throughout*

*American History*, Patrick Allitt summarized all the period as following: “Conservative intellectuals challenged nearly all the liberal verities of the 1950s and 1960s. Powerful conservative think tanks served up a steady stream of policy proposals, and politicians from both major parties took notice. New media outlets began to approach the news from an openly conservative vantage point, and by the 1990s some politicians were disavowing liberalism because even use of the ‘L word’ appeared to cost them popular support.”<sup>714</sup> Reagan’s administration began to remove welfare programs.

In his 2007 survey, Kenneth Cosgrove claimed that the Conservatives have used the brand strategy as the tool “to build their movement from 1964 until the present.”<sup>715</sup> Moreover, according to Cosgrove, the brand strategy was ideal. He declared: “The brand strategy has become a key part of the Conservative movement’s success because the movement was developing at exactly the same time that consumer marketing techniques were improving and as an ethos of consumerism was taking hold across the country. For a new movement to present its candidates, using the same techniques to that being used to sell other kinds of products, was an entirely logical occurrence.”<sup>716</sup> I also argued how the U.S. society has been pulled to the right since the late 1970s in the most continuous political reaction since the Reconstruction era after the Civil War. The rise of conservatism as a leading political influence in the United States, particularly since the late 1970s, is incontestable, focusing on dislocating the influence of liberal establishment and seeking new changes in American political and cultural life.

From an intellectual movement in the 1950s, conservatism emerged as a political movement in the 1960s and 1970s to develop into a governing movement in the 1980s with Ronald Reagan. The latter reinforced conservative Republican influence with tax cuts, a significantly augmented military budget, sustained deregulation of the economy, and calls to traditional family values, and conservative virtue. During the 1960s and 1970s, conservatives started to

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<sup>714</sup> Allitt, Patrick. *The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities throughout American History*. Yale University Press, 2010. 4.

<sup>715</sup> Cosgrove, Kenneth M. *Branded Conservatives How the Brand Brought the Right from the Fringes to the Center of American Politics*. P. Lang, 2007. 1-2.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

effectively control politics as conservative organizations grew in numbers, financial funding was settled, and new magazines were formed, attracting young activists in colleges and universities. In 1980 Republicans nominated, and then elected, Ronald Reagan, the most prominent conservative politician in the history of American politics.

Both corporate elite and class fraction arguments are relevant to explaining the adoption of the new conservative economics. The corporate elite, international corporations threatened by export competition, smaller Sunbelt entrepreneurs, independent industries and those threatened by the new regulation joined forces to develop this “right turn” in economic policy. They dominated the boards of the moderate and ultraconservative BPOs that developed a new conservative economic policy paradigm and brought it to the attention of national policymakers. At the same time, the corporate elite also dominated the corporate liberal boards which support Keynesian and interventionist policies. The key difference was the greater presence of corporate elites with upper class “Yankee” backgrounds and firms protected by governmental regulation. At least between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, these business coalitions were relatively stable and political competition among them did not create cross-pressures or countervailing power, thus militating against the corporate pluralism thesis. There may have been a broader business mobilization in terms of conservative campaign contributions and the mobilization of industrial lobbies and trade associations but these business elites were the central architects of this “right turn”.

The late 1970s and early 1980s may represent a unique political period. At least after 1975, social protest was relatively minimal and, although the middle-class environmental and women's movements challenged some corporate prerogatives, they did not resort to unruly protest as much as the civil rights and underprivileged people's movements of the 1960s. This quiescence may well have facilitated the coalition between the moderate conservatives and ultraconservative business elites by reducing the pressure to consider liberal social reforms. It may also have facilitated conservative voting trends, thus strengthening conservative politicians who would be more receptive to the new conservative economic proposals.

We argued that lower class protest and electoral instability in the 1930s facilitated the dominance of corporate liberal business elites and thus led to liberal social reforms. Something similar may well have occurred during the “activist” 1960s when Keynesian tax cuts and the War on Poverty were launched. Moderate conservatives seem to have allied with corporate liberals in supporting social reforms that responded to these political pressures from below. By the late 1970s, relative quiescence allowed moderate conservatives to align with ultraconservatives, thus ushering in an era of conservative reform. This points out to the need to synthesize corporate elite theory with political process theories of social movements as well as the class fraction ideas about business divisions.

The 1980s became known as the “Reagan Era” and his conservative politics as “Reaganism”. The Reagan era also marked a “military Keynesianism” reflecting the interests of Sunbelt defense contractors. Although there may have been a multiplier effect from the Reagan era defense buildup, defense contractors were not more represented in the ultraconservative camp.

Reagan would later influence a generation of prominent conservative politicians, academics, activists, and writers. In the 2010s, conservative politicians and Republican leaders claimed their devotion to the President Reagan's “ideological legacy” on social, economic and foreign policy issues. There have always been efforts to enclose the New Deal and enclose the social liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the 1970s, a Christian Right, exceptionally concerned with economic issues such as interventionist economics or with social ones such as abortion and gay rights, became gradually dynamic. However, the evangelicalism that further reinforced it had long been strengthening an impressive foundation and the 1960s had seen the actions of the Religious Right groups such as Christian Crusade and the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade strengthen. It was the Reagan administration that has motivated a broad study of conservatism’s rise.

Nevertheless, divisions within conservatism deepened and became more visible after Republicans took control of Congress in 1994. The divisions had started since the 1980s in a number of key political battles. For instance, in

1982 and 1983, social conservatives directly protested against the Reagan administration for failing to take their questions seriously or to appoint traditional conservatives into the administration. While the midterm elections were in the beginning addressed as the achievement of the Reagan Revolution, Republicans faced numerous political problems. For instance, House Republicans conflicted over the federal spending in 1996 forcing a shut-down of the federal government. Division covered the tensions that existed within the GOP although conservatism's reputation was particularly contested under George W. Bush administration. By the time George Bush was elected, the conservative coalition has come apart due to its divergences. Bush ended his terms with two crucial wars and a lack of regulation in the free-market that drove the US economy to crisis in 2007 - 2008. With the Tea Party in mind, Farber believes that American conservatism established a set of beliefs that collapsed under Bush.

George Nash acknowledged that there were many blocs within conservatism. In his classic work *Why Americans Hate Politics* (1991), journalist E. J. Dionne tried to identify the different questions that brought these factions together and argued that there was a "fusionist consensus" that created a long-lasting alliance between social traditionalists and free-market conservatives. Dionne declared that anticommunism became the "fusionist consensus. Although the Right lost specific legislative or electoral campaigns, its strategists have become competent in instructing, recruiting, and mobilizing supporters. A group of right-wing think tanks today controls the American public discourse on many concerns ranging from welfare to taxation and to immigration.

Both corporate elite and class fraction arguments were relevant to explaining the adoption of the new conservative economics. The corporate elite, international corporations threatened by export competition, smaller Sunbelt entrepreneurs, independent industries and those threatened by the new regulation joined forces to develop this "right turn" in economic policy. They dominated the boards of the moderate and ultraconservative BPOs that developed a new conservative economic policy paradigm and brought it to the attention of national policymakers. At the same time, the corporate elite also

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There are many topics that I could not address in this study, such as the role of business forces in promoting (and, in some cases, opposing) anti-immigrant racism or the contradictory relationship between capitalist interests and paramilitary rightists such as the Aryan Nations or the militia movement. Business conflict certainly does not explain everything about right-wing politics, but it offers a useful analytic tool, and there is much work to be done in this area, as capitalist factions continue to reconfigure and shift their political leanings. I would like to study this question in a further research analysis. Moreover, the challenge today is to move beyond the typical decades-long studies of conservatism in relationship with larger changes in the American society and relate it to economic and political elites as conservatives were forced to change from being a resistance movement to coping with the difficulties of governance. While conservatives demand the removal of the federal government during their campaigns at the grassroots level, they call for more government once they are in charge of government and significant shares of the coalition.

The evidence presented in Chapter Four of the study shows that the Tea Party movement did not abruptly emerge on the American political landscape in 2009 in reaction to the liberal policy agenda proposed by President Obama and the Democratic representatives. It was rather the normal development of a rising conservatism among the activists of the Republican Party during the previous decades. By 2009, a large conservative base of Republican activists

was ready for mobilization with the support of important conservative organizations and different media networks.

Even though more than five percent of voting age Americans have doubtfully ever participated in a Tea Party rally or given money to a Tea Party organization, more than one-fifth of the Americans supported the Tea Party movement.<sup>717</sup> This base of American Tea Party supporters tremendously comprised white, male, rather older and more religious electorate. We found that the active Republican identifiers actually do share the same characteristics.

Indeed, Tea Party supporters remarkably identified with the Republican Party's ideology and politics as they were much more conservative than the general public and moderate Republicans on different economic and social issues. Besides, Tea Party supporters clearly revealed higher levels of racial resentment with a negative view about President Obama compared with the overall public and moderate Republicans. Our analysis exposed that racial resentment toward Barack Obama, together with conservatism, were the most significant factors of political support for the Tea Party movement.

Tea Party supporters remained greatly motivated to resist and remove Obama political agenda. Since they made up roughly half of Republican identifiers and the majority of active Republicans, the Tea Party movement clearly became able to influence Republican congressional and presidential primaries in 2012. Republican presidential candidates had to make further efforts to attract Tea Party supporters. However, it was even more difficult for the same Republican contenders to attract the other faction of more moderate voters in the general election

The Tea Party movement has reshaped conservative Republican ideology by mobilizing grassroots in innovative methods. Basically, the Tea Party enabled the *rebranding* of conservatism and provided activists with an ideal criterion of backed mobilization. The elusively "revolutionary" attitude hit during a time of economic confusion. Though the Tea Party still opposes the Obama administration, this common representation has enabled free-market

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<sup>717</sup> This is according to the October, 2010 wave of the ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey.

supporters and conservative media to mobilize grassroots and block a liberal Democratic agenda.<sup>718</sup>

Far from being a political eruption, E.J. Dionne, a columnist at the *Washington Post* has argued that the movement also menaces the unity of the Republicans: “The rise of the Tea Party movement is a throwback to an old form of libertarianism that sees most of the domestic policies that government has undertaken since the New Deal as unconstitutional. It typically perceives the most dangerous threats to freedom as the design of well-educated elitists out of touch with “American values.””<sup>719</sup>

With the Tea Party rise, supporting the wrong candidates had disastrous effects on the Republican Party. Nonconformist candidates, who did not have personal attachments to the establishment leaders, were able to operate as meddlers, but couldn’t build an independent power base. The personal attachments of the mavericks with the Tea Party worked against the Republican Party and its leading power.

Yet, the motivation of the Republican Party to reward devotion and commitment to the Party rather than any other group made it easier for the Party to dishearten extra-Party connections as leadership in the Republican Party was delegated onto a limited number of elected officials such as key Senators and Governors. In his address to the Democratic meeting, New York Governor Mario Cuomo blamed the Republican Party of maintaining policies which “divide the nation - into the lucky and the left-out, into the royalty and the rabble.”

Following the Watergate scandal, the Republican Party was very concerned with reinstating the Party and with renovating its image rather than changing the programs. Hence, it greatly emphasized on winning elections and on promoting itself. For instance, the Party formally opposed the Equal Rights Amendment, but claimed it stood for equal rights for women.

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<sup>718</sup> Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

<sup>719</sup>Columns, Syndicated. “How Obama Changed the Right.” Oregonlive.com, Oregonlive.com, 21 June 2010, [www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2010/06/how\\_obama\\_changed\\_the\\_right.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2010/06/how_obama_changed_the_right.html).



The Republican Party has used modern technology to generate a vastly sophisticated direct mail process and money to recruit and train candidates during electoral campaigns. Moreover, it directed important financial base and permanent staff to party organizations to expand voter registration efforts. This wide range of resources has helped the Republican Party to increase state parties of the Republican Party which are joined together by a common ideology. The Tea Party constantly reflected a set of common interests and how the Republican Party responded to its emergence determined the future of the party. Today, in spite of everything, the Republican Party still relies heavily on the engagement of volunteers. The bloc recruiting typically uses pre-existing networks of people who share common beliefs through media and direct mail. In order to survive, the Republican Party would need to renew itself by recruiting new supporters and keeping the devotion of old ones.

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## Index

### A

- Aberbach, Joel D., and Gillian Peele.  
*Crisis of Conservatism?*  
*the Republican Party, the Conservative  
Movement and American Politics after  
Bush.* ..... 143
- Adorno, Theodor W. *The Authoritarian  
Personality.*.....275, 313
- Alesina, Alberto, and Edward L.  
Glaeser. *Fighting Poverty in the  
United States and Europe*  
*A World of Difference.* ..... 106, 313
- Allitt, Patrick. *The Conservatives  
Ideas and Personalities throughout  
American History.* ..... 305, 313
- Anderson, Virginia.....43, 313
- Armey, Richard K., and Matt Kibbe.  
*Give Us Liberty*  
*A Tea Party Manifesto.* .....232, 314

### B

- Bafumi, Joseph, and Robert Y. Shapiro.  
*A New Partisan Voter.* .....18, 314
- Bageant, Joe. *Deer Hunting with Jesus  
Dispatches from America's Class War.*  
.....256, 314
- Balz, Dan, and John Cohen. ....220, 314
- Barany, Darren. ....314
- Barreto Amílcar Antonio, and Richard L.  
O' Bryant. *American Identity in the  
Age of Obama.* ..... 261, 315
- Barreto, Matt A., et al. .... 27, 230, 315
- Bawden, D. Lee and Palmer, John.....315
- Begbie, Harold. *The Conservative Mind.*  
.....41, 315
- Behrens, Robert. *The Conservative Party  
from Heath to Thatcher  
Policies and Politics 1974-1979.*..55, 315
- Bell, Daniel ..... 195, 315
- Bell, Daniel. *The Radical Right.* 195, 315
- Bellah, Robert N. *Habits of the Heart  
Individualism and Commitment in  
American Life.*..... 60, 62, 315
- Bellant, Russ.....315
- Berkowitz, Edward D., & McQuaid,  
Kim. *Creating the Welfare State*.....98,  
316
- Berlet, Chip Berlet and Lyons, Matthew  
N. *Too Close for Comfort  
Right-Wing Populism, Scapegoating,  
and Fascist Potentials in U.S.  
Political Traditions.* .....316

Bierce, Ambrose, and S. T. Joshi. *The Devil's Dictionary, Tales, & Memoirs*. ..... 316

Boggs, Carl. .... 181, 192, 316

Brinkley, Alan. .... 169, 316

Brown, Clifford W., et al. *Serious Money*  
*Fundraising and Contributing in Presidential Nomination Campaigns*. ..... 209, 316

Bullock, Charles S. *Key States, High Stakes*  
*Sarah Palin, the Tea Party, and the 2010 Elections*. ..4, 234, 235, 258, 280, 282, 316

Burghart, Devin et Leonard Zeskind. 2010. *Tea Party Nationalism*  
*A critical examination of the Tea Party Movement and the Size, Scope, and focus of its National Factions*. ..... 227

Cannon, Lou. *Reagan*..... 317

Carleson, Robert and Hopkins, Kevin R. .... 317

Chaffin, Robert J..... 130, 132, 317

Chressanthis, George A., and Stephen D. Shaffer. .... 318

Claggett, William J.m., et al. .... 193, 318

Clarkson, Frederick. *Eternal Hostility*

*The Struggle between Theocracy and Democracy*. ..... 318

**C**

Cohen, Nancy. *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865-1914*. ..67, 318

Cohen, Stanley. *Folk Devils and Moral Panic*  
*The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*. ..... 229, 318

Cole, R. L., et al. .... 140, 317

Cosgrove, Kenneth M. *Branded Conservatives How the Brand Brought the Right from the Fringes to the Center of American Politics*... 305, 317

Cowie, Jefferson, and Nick Salvatore. .... 191, 318

Critchlow, Donald T. *The Conservative Ascendancy*  
*How the GOP Right Made Political History*. ..... 216, 318

**D**

Dallek, G. .... 104, 319

Davis, Ann..... 120, 319

Davis, Mike. *Prisoners of the American Dream*  
*Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class*..... 182, 319

DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B. D., & Smith, J. C..... 100, 319

Derthick, Martha. Policymaking for Social Security. ....97, 319

Dobelstein, A. W. Politics, Economics, and Public Welfare. ....96, 319

Dochuk, Darren..... 320

Domhoff, G. William. The Power Elite and the State  
*How Policy Is Made in America...*2, 176, 185, 320

Dreier, Peter, and Christopher R. Martin. ....255, 317

## E

Edsall, Thomas Byrne. *Building Red America*  
*The New Conservative Coalition and the Drive for Permanent Power...*217, 320

Edsall, Thomas Byrne. *The New Politics of Inequality*. .... 185, 186, 320

Ehrenreich, John H. The Altruistic Imagination  
*A History of Social Work and Social Policy in the United States*.....98, 320

Erskine, Hazel.....32, 320

Farber, David R. The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism  
*A Short History*. ....181, 320

Farmer, Brian. American Conservatism

*History, Theory and Practice*. 36, 37, 38, 62, 69, 74, 320

## F

Ferguson, Thomas, and Joel Rogers.  
*Right Turn*  
*The Decline of the Democrats and the Future of American Politics...* 182, 321

Ferguson, Thomas. *Golden Rule*  
*The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money-Driven Political Systems*..... 187, 321

Fiorina, Morris P. Retrospective Voting in American National Elections. ....213, 321

Flanders, Laura. *At the Tea Party*  
*The Wing Nuts, Whack Jobs and Whitey-whiteness of the New Republican Right - and Why We Should Take It Seriously*. .... 8, 47, 321

Fletcher, Bill Jr. .... 78, 321

Frank, Thomas. What's the Matter with Kansas?  
*How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*..... 256, 321

Frederickson, Kari. The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932–1968.....321

Freeman, Joshua B. Working-Class New York  
*Life and Labor Since World War II, ..*321

## G

- Gilens, Martin. .... 322
- Gilliam, Franklin D., and Shanto  
Iyengar. .... 229, 322
- Glenn, Brian J. .... 322
- Glenn, Brian J., and Steven M. Teles.  
Conservatism and American Political  
Development. .... 245, 322
- Goldwater, Barry M., and C. C.  
Goldwater. *The Conscience of a  
Conservative*. .... 110, 322
- Greenleaf, W. H. The Rise of  
Collectivism ..... 323
- Gronbjerg, K. Poverty and social change.  
..... 95
- Gunderson, Cory Gideon. *The Boston  
Tea Party*. .... 130, 131, 323
- Gustavsson, Nora. S., & Segal,  
Elizabeth. A. *Critical Issues in Child  
Welfare*. .... 99, 323

## H

- Hackworth, Jason. *The Neoliberal City  
Governance, Ideology and Development  
in American Urbanism*. .... 323
- Hall, Peter A, ..... 141, 323
- Hardisty, Jean V. .... 324
- Harrington, Michael. *The Other America  
Poverty in the United States*. .... 179, 323

- Harvey, David. *A Brief History of  
Neoliberalism*. .... 324
- Hattam, Victoria. *In the Shadow of Race  
Ethnic Politics in the United States*. ... 324
- Himmelstein, Jerome L. *To the Right  
The Transformation of American  
Conservatism*. .... 156, 186, 324
- Hobbes, Thomas, and A. D. Lindsay.  
*Leviathan*. .... 55, 324
- Hofstadter, Richard. .... 118, 324
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform*.  
..... 194, 324
- Holian, David B., et al. .... 324
- Huntington, Samuel. *The Soldier and the  
State  
The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military  
Relations*. .... 37, 325

## J

- Jamieson, Kathleen Hall., and Joseph N.  
Cappella. *Echo Chamber  
Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative  
Media Establishment*. . 252, 255, 325
- Jensen, Carsten. .... 325
- Judis, John B. *The Populist Explosion  
How the Great Recession Transformed  
American and European Politics*. . 193,  
325
- Karagiannis, Nikolaos, et al. *The US  
Economy and Neoliberalism*

*Alternative Strategies and Policies*.... 48,  
50, 326

## K

Katz, Michael B. *In the Shadow of the  
Poorhouse a Social History of Welfare  
in America*..... 168, 325

Kazin, Michael. *The Populist Persuasion  
An American History*..... 193, 214, 326

Kincaid, John. ....216, 326

Kolozi, Peter. *Conservatives against  
Capitalism  
from the Industrial Revolution to  
Globalization*.....40, 326

Kristol, Irving. *Neoconservatism  
The Autobiography of an Idea*..... 180

Kuttner, Robert, *Revolt of the Haves*.  
..... 145, 327

## L

Laclau, Ernesto. *Emancipation(s)*..... 327

Laffer, Arthur and R. David Ranson 144,  
327

Lerner, et al.....86, 327

Lipset, Seymour Martin. .... 327

Lowi, Theodore J. *The End of  
Liberalism*. .... 168, 327

Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal  
to the New Right*

*Race and the Southern Origins of  
Modern Conservatism* .... 12, 153, 154,  
155, 156, 159, 160, 196, 200, 203,  
205, 206, 327

Luttwak, Edward. *The Pentagon and the  
Art of War  
The Question of Military Reform*.....196

Lutz, Norma Jean. *The History of the  
Republican Party*...214, 217, 218, 219,  
328

Machan. Tibor, ed., *The Libertarian  
Alternative*. ....328

Maitland, Ian ..... 142, 329

Malzew, Jurij. *The Tea Party Explained  
from Crisis to Crusade*..... 224, 329

Martin, Cathie J. *Shifting the Burden  
The Struggle over Growth and  
Corporate Taxation*..... 149, 329

Massey, Douglas S. *Return of the* ....157,  
329

Mayer, Jane. *Dark Money the Hidden  
History of the Billionaires behind the  
Rise of the Radical Right*..... 251, 329

McElvaine, R. S. *The Great Depression  
America 1929–1941*..... 95, 329

McGirr, Lisa. .... 328, 330

McJimsey, George. *The Presidency of  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. ... 136, 328

Meeropol, Michael. *Surrender*

*How the Clinton Administration Completed the Reagan Revolution.* 329

### M

Micklethwait, John, and Adrian Wooldridge. *The Right Nation*

*Conservative Power in America.* .61, 330

Minkoff, Debra C.....256, 330

Moreira, Hannah. Determining the Effect of the Political Opportunity Structure on Collective Action

*Grassroots mobilization during the 2009-2010 health care debate*..... 330

Muller, Jerry Z. Conservatism an Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present. ....73, 330

Murray N. Rothbard,.....34, 329

Murray, Charles. *Losing Ground*..... 331

Musgrave, Richard A. Public Finance in Theory and Practice. .... 331

### N

Nash, George H. The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945. .... 33, 34, 53, 54, 331

Nickerson, Michelle and Darren. *Sunbelt Rising*  
*The Politics of Place, Space and Region*  
..... 331

Norquist, Grover Glenn. *Leave Us Alone*

*Getting the Governments Hands off Our Money, Our Guns, Our Lives.* 238, 331

Novak, Michael. The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism. ....331

### O

Olasky, Marvin N. The Tragedy of American Compassion. .... 168, 331

### P

Paul, Lucas. ....332

Pechman, Joseph and Okner, Benjamin. *Who Bears the Tax Burden?* .....332

Peschek, Joseph G. *Policy Planning Organizations Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn.* ..... 176, 332

Philip Norton and Arthur Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism* ....55, 332

Phillips, Kevin. The Emerging Republican Majority..... 206, 332

Piven, Frances Fox., and Richard A. Cloward. *The New Class War.*..54, 332

Polanyi K. The Great Transformation  
*The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*.....332

### R

Rae, Nicol C. The Decline and Fall of the Liberal Republicans from 1952 to the Present..... 217, 333

Raskin, Marcus G. <i>Liberalism</i> <i>The Genius of American Ideals.</i> ..... 61	American Cultural and Intellectual History. .... 59, 334
Rasmussen SW, Schoen DE <i>Mad as hell</i> <i>How the Tea Party movement is</i> <i>fundamentally remaking our two-party</i> <i>system.</i> .....39, 333	<b>S</b>
Robin, Corey. The Reactionary Mind <i>Conservatism from Edmund Burke to</i> <i>Sarah Palin.</i> ....1, 2, 29, 196, 197, 198, 333	Schlafly, Phyllis, and Paul, Ron. A <i>Choice Not an Echo</i> <i>Updated and Expanded 50th</i> <i>Anniversary Edition</i> .....335
Rochefort, David A. American Social Welfare Policy <i>Dynamics of Formulation and Change.</i> .....99, 333	Schlesinger, Arthur M. The Cycles of American History. .... 92, 335
Rogin, Micheal Paul. The Intellectuals and McCarthy <i>The Radical Spector.</i> ..... 334	Schneider, Gregory L. The Conservative Century <i>from Reaction to Revolution.</i> .....336
Rosenstone, Steven J., et al. <i>Third</i> <i>Parties in America</i> <i>Citizen Response to Major Party</i> <i>Failure.</i> .....209, 334	Schrank, Andrew, and Josh Whitford. ..... 230, 335
Rossiter, Margaret W. Women Scientists in America <i>Struggles and Strategies to 1940.</i> 37, 334	Schroeder, Ralph. Social Theory after the Internet <i>Media, Technology, and Globalization.</i> ..... 191, 335
Rothbard, Murray Newton. The Betrayal of the American Right. ....32, 334	Schultze, Charles Louis. Setting National Priorities <i>the 1973 Budget. D.C.</i> ..... 87, 335
Rubin, Joan Shelley, and Scott E. Casper. The Oxford Encyclopedia of	Schumpeter, Joseph Alois. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy ..... 42, 336
	Scruton, Roger..... 44, 336
	Segal, Elizabeth A., and Keith M. Kilty. ..... 93, 334
	Shafer, Byron E., and Richard Johnston. <i>The End of Southern Exceptionalism</i>



*Class, Race, and Partisan Change in the Postwar South*. .....215, 336

Shapiro, Edward S. ....40, 335

Shermer, Elizabeth Tandy. .... 335

Skocpol, Theda, and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez. ....251, 336

Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. .... 229, 230, 253, 254, 279, 310, 336

Skocpol, Theda. ....251, 335

Skocpol, Theda. *Boomerang Clinton's Health Security Effort and the Turn against Government in U.S.* 258, 335

Smith, M. A., and Mark A. Smith. *The Right Talk How Conservatives Transformed the Great Society into the Economic Society*. ....231, 337

Smith, Rogers. and Desmond King,.. 337

Soss, Joe and Schram , Sanford F. .... 336

Stein, Herbert. .... 144, 337

**T**

Tempalski, Jerry..... 148, 337

Tholfsen, TR. Ideology and Revolution in Modern Europe

*An Essay on the Role of Ideas in History*. .....337

Thomas, Peter D. G. The Townshend Duties Crisis

*The Second Phase of the American Revolution, 1767-1773*. ....337

Thompson, Michael J. Confronting the New Conservatism the Rise of the Right in America. .... 157, 337

**V**

Vigurie, Richard. The Establishment vs. the People .....338

**W**

Wagner, Heather Lehr. The History of the Republican Party ..... 168, 338

Walls, Stephanie M. Individualism in the United States

*A Transformation in American Political Thought*. ....338

Wattenberg, Martin P. *The Rise of Candidate-Centered Politics*. Harvard University Press. .... 212, 338

Weisman, Steven R. *The Great Tax Wars Lincoln - Teddy Roosevelt - Wilson How the Income Tax Transformed America*. .... 134, 338

Williams, Larry. R. Confessions of a Radical Tax Protestor

*An Inside Expose of the Tax Resistance  
 Movement.....* 136, 338

Williams, Lucy. .... 339

Williamson. G. Thoughts of an  
 American Taxpayer ..... 338

**Z**

Zaller, John, and Mark Hunt. .... 210, 339

Zelizer, Julian E..... 171, 339

## Résumé de thèse

Le 16 décembre 2009, quelques semaines avant les primaires qui devaient désigner le candidat officiel des partis démocrate et républicain aux États-Unis, quelques habitants de Boston se sont inspirés de la Révolution américaine dans leurs habits. En effet, les drapeaux qu'ils portaient symbolisaient un serpent à sonnette noir sur fond jaune, ayant comme slogan « *Don't Tread on Me* » (Ne marchez pas sur moi), en s'inspirant du *Boston Tea Party* de 1773. Le rassemblement public, qui était initialement et principalement structuré dans la demeure du représentant Républicain Ron Paul, a été organisé conjointement avec une campagne de collecte de fonds lancée par des activistes. Cette campagne permettrait de collecter six millions de dollars de fonds sur Internet en une seule journée, grâce à des dons individuels de 50 dollars (Sinderband, 2007). Un an plus tard, un groupe de candidats républicains a balayé la majorité démocrate aux élections de mi-mandat de novembre 2010 et a remporté 60 sièges supplémentaires à la Chambre des représentants, célébrant ainsi l'un des plus grands triomphes républicains de ces cinquante dernières années (Zernike, 2010). Loin d'être un mouvement anodin en 2009, le mouvement *Tea Party* est considéré par beaucoup comme ayant eu un impact significatif sur cette victoire. La cristallisation du débat sur la réforme de santé avait conféré au mouvement un pouvoir et une influence inattendus. Aujourd'hui, ils représentent un nouveau mouvement conservateur, pourtant bien établi dans le pays.

Le but de cette thèse est d'analyser la montée des idées et des politiques de la nouvelle droite depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale aux États-Unis. Au lieu de considérer la droite contemporaine comme fondamentalement sans rapport avec l'économie et la société des États-Unis, on analyse les nombreuses manières dont le nouveau conservatisme s'inspire profondément dans les débats politiques américains. On considère trois grandes questions : Ces questions sont les suivantes : (1) Existe-t-il une nouvelle droite et, dans l'affirmative, en quoi consiste-t-elle et pourquoi est-elle qualifiée de « nouvelle »? (2) Quel est le rôle des idées dans la formation de la politique

gouvernementale ? Et (3) quelles sont les implications du nouveau conservatisme sur l'avenir de la démocratie américaine ?

Après l'échec des néoconservateurs sous l'administration Bush et la victoire de Barack Obama en tant que premier président noir de l'histoire américaine, les commentateurs ont déclaré la fin du conservatisme aux États-Unis. Cependant, l'émergence du *Tea Party* en tant que mouvement populaire influent a tout simplement prouvé le contraire. Dès son apparition, le *Tea Party* était simplement considéré comme un groupe raciste, craignant l'autorité croissante d'un président noir. La thèse vise donc à révéler que les éléments entourant la réaction du mouvement du *Tea Party* étaient en réalité plus profonds, allant au-delà d'une simple réaction raciste et remontant à des décennies d'un mouvement conservateur de longue date enraciné dans la vie et la politique américaines.

La thèse vise également à examiner les sources de soutien du mouvement *Tea Party* dans la sphère politique américaine. Entre les événements émergents de 2008 et les élections à mi-parcours de 2010, le mouvement *Tea Party* est devenu une force de mobilisation importante qui a suscité un intérêt considérable pour la politique américaine. On explique l'origine de la naissance du mouvement *TeaParty* qui est apparu à ce moment-là, tout de suite après l'élection d'un président démocrate en 2008. Ainsi, afin de comprendre les origines du mouvement, on met en évidence les facteurs qui ont contribué à l'émergence de ce phénomène politique.

Le premier chapitre présente un aperçu du conservatisme américain en explorant spécifiquement les valeurs et les idéologies économiques conservatrices. En outre, le chapitre examine les effets de l'idéologie sur le conservatisme américain, y compris son rôle dans la détermination de la politique de sécurité sociale. Une compréhension de la politique de protection sociale implique la capacité de saisir les conditions économiques qui inspirent les décisions politiques. On présente ainsi une étude historique du mouvement conservateur américain, de ses motivations et de sa philosophie. Ceci est important compte tenu de son succès dans la détermination de la vie politique américaine.

La rhétorique du *Tea Party* crée une pédagogie culturelle privilégiant certaines formes de capital culturel, telles que le pouvoir symbolique et les privilèges. On essaie d'examiner le conservatisme à travers l'idéologie de l'individualisme et du capitalisme. Bien que le *Tea Party* soit un mouvement très particulier et irrégulier, les principes fondamentaux sur lesquels le *Tea Party* se conforme sont assez similaires aux idéologies de la nouvelle droite. Ses idéaux découlent principalement de l'agenda politique néolibéral des grandes entreprises et de la stratégie élaborée par le parti républicain dans les années 1960, qui sera examinée plus en détail dans le premier chapitre.

On démontre à quel point le néolibéralisme est au cœur de l'agenda politique de la droite américaine, qui se réfère avant tout à la règle du « marché libre ». On explore, ensuite, la relation historique entre les idéologies néolibérales et le conservatisme. En considérant l'individualisme comme une valeur préservée pour le conservatisme en général et pour le *Tea Party* en particulier, nous examinons comment la conviction individualiste conservatrice américaine est enracinée dans l'idée du gouvernement limité. On examine ainsi les écrits d'économistes et de commentateurs conservateurs tels que Milton Friedman, George Gilder, Laurence Mead et Charles Murray qui parlent de l'État providence, en particulier après 1964 ; et comment ils ont développé des théories économiques anti-étatiques.

Le *Tea Party* s'oppose à toute tendance de redistribution de la richesse en faveur des pauvres ou des marginalisés et pense que la réforme de santé ou toute forme de protection sociale ciblent spécifiquement les soi-disant pauvres, Noirs, et immigrants. Dans le deuxième chapitre, on tente de révéler que cette idée est un modèle récurrent dans l'histoire des États-Unis, où des populistes de droite ont décrit ceux qui n'ont pas accès à la sécurité sociale comme indignes et ayant souvent agi contre les intérêts de la population. On analyse également le fait que les populistes de droite ne sont pas particulièrement préoccupés par le déficit budgétaire.

Depuis l'élection d'Obama, l'émergence rapide du *Tea Party* a renforcé les républicains dans leur résistance à l'aide sociale. Depuis 2009, le *GOP* conteste chaque réglementation sociale et économique démocratique concernant le projet de loi de relance, l'aide aux gouvernements des États, les

droits du travail, la réforme des soins de santé, les allocations de chômage, le réchauffement climatique et les droits des immigrés. Les conservateurs voient généralement tout cela comme un simple vol d'argent (Flanders, 2010). Le *Tea Party*, en particulier, affirme que les programmes de protection sociale américains actuels sont «excessifs» ou «improductifs» ou se font au détriment de quelque chose d'autre.

La première partie du deuxième chapitre vise à définir et retracer l'historique de l'évolution de la sécurité sociale aux États-Unis. La définition de la sécurité sociale a été utilisée pour exposer la croissance des dépenses de l'État et des collectivités locales, ainsi que la subvention de ressources financières clés (à la fois pour les personnes favorisées et pour les pauvres). On s'interroge également sur la méthode utilisée par les États-Unis pour financer leurs programmes de protection sociale. Dans les pays scandinaves en particulier et dans les pays d'Europe occidentale, le renforcement de l'État providence a été principalement financé par une imposition renforcée. Aux États-Unis, l'aide sociale est généralement financée par la dette.

Lorsque Barry Goldwater a publié *The Conscience of a Conservative* en 1960, il relança le mouvement conservateur américain, qui allait gagner de l'influence au cours des décennies suivantes entamant ainsi la révolution Reagan des années 1980 (Goldwater, 1960). Le livre, qui développe l'idéologie conservatrice de Goldwater par opposition à celle des républicains et des démocrates de l'ère post-dépression, a résisté à la méfiance morale de ce qu'on appellera à présent l'«*Establishment*» républicain. Dans son livre, Goldwater a traité un certain nombre de sujets : les droits des États, les droits civils, les syndicats, l'éducation, la fiscalité et les dépenses publiques, l'État providence et la menace soviétique. (Robin, 2011)

En effet, le conservatisme américain était à l'origine d'une discipline responsable des classes dirigeantes entre les écrits de Burke et de Maistre. Il est, ensuite, devenu audacieux, populiste et idéologique. Etant présents depuis le début, ceux-ci ont été vus comme des vertus du conservatisme contemporain (Robin, 2011). Ainsi, la plupart des conservateurs considèrent que le conservatisme a évolué en réaction à la Révolution française (Robin, 2011). Cependant, les efforts politiques qui ont poussé le conservateur vers ses

considérations les plus profondes - les réactions contre le New Deal, la Grande Société, le Mouvement pour les droits civils, le féminisme et les droits des homosexuels - ont été tout sauf cela.

Que ce soit en Europe ou aux États-Unis, le conservatisme a été un mouvement frontal de changement agité et persistant, avide d'exploration idéologique, rebelle dans ses positions et populiste dans ses attitudes. Le reflet de cette forme profonde du conservatisme définit le conservatisme américain. Bien que le conservatisme soit une idée de réaction contre les mouvements de libération des années soixante et soixante-dix, la réaction a rarement été comprise. En réformant l'ancien régime et en absorbant le nouveau, le conservatisme cherche aujourd'hui à transformer un ancien régime en un mouvement puissant et idéologique apportant du dynamisme à la population. Alors que les conservateurs s'opposent aux objectifs de la gauche, principalement en ce qui concerne l'autonomisation des sociétés des classes inférieures et moyennes, ils tournent souvent vers la gauche pour apprendre de nouvelles stratégies, un nouveau discours ou même de nouveaux médias.

Le conservatisme américain s'est toujours opposé à l'« *Establishment* » libéral en quête de nouveaux changements dans la vie politique et culturelle américaine. Bien que l'agenda politique de la droite ait été au centre des préoccupations de l'administration Reagan, l'idéologie a fouillé dans les engagements clés de la Grande société en matière de politique économique et sociale. Une analyse conventionnelle maintient toujours que le conservatisme américain est un phénomène irrégulier allant à l'encontre de la pensée et de la politique démocratique libérale dominante (Domhoff, 1990). Des commentateurs tels que Sam Tanenhaus, Andrew Sullivan, Sidney Blumenthal et John Dean ont affirmé que les conservateurs avaient gagné en influence sous les administrations Reagan, Bush et même Clinton, grâce à la mobilisation de différentes sources, dont la technologie des médias. L'idéologie s'est vue capable de faire appel aux électeurs de son système de valeurs, de convertir positivement son agenda politique en une proposition législative s'opposant à d'autres propositions, principalement celles de gauche, et de dissimuler efficacement son fanatisme et de devenir modéré.

Au cours des années 1970 et 1980, la nouvelle droite a dénoncé le patrimoine de la Grande Société comme un mode d'entreprise sociale excessivement dépensier. En fait, l'élection de Reagan a donné plus de crédibilité à une nouvelle génération de groupes de réflexion de droite, d'écrivains, et de commanditaires d'études constituant un soutien essentiel pour que les autres écrivains de droite défendent leurs idées expliquant comment la protection sociale a uniquement profité aux pauvres (Gilder, 1981).

Des analystes conservateurs tels que Charles Murray et Irving Kristol ont réprimandé les politiques d'assistance sociale en vue de remplacer le système de marché libre par des contributions gouvernementales moins efficaces. On montre ainsi comment, au début des années 90, la perception de l'inégalité en tant que fait social inévitable devient la base de l'opposition des conservateurs aux politiques de protection sociale du gouvernement. Les théories conservatrices ont soutenu la rhétorique de la nouvelle droite en l'aidant à devenir une force politique indéniable. Les conservateurs condamnent les politiques sociales du gouvernement comme génératrices de « dépendance », ce qui contredit l'idée protestante selon laquelle les individus sont tenus responsables de leurs propres accomplissements. De cette manière, les conservateurs rendent problématiques les droits et les prestations de sécurité sociale du New Deal et de la Grande société.

Aujourd'hui, toute perception de l'influence de la droite américaine est construite autour d'une reconnaissance historique des peurs divergentes vis-à-vis de la protection sociale. Cette peur a bien été utilisée de différentes manières par des éléments distincts de la droite afin de gagner plus de pouvoir. On examine alors les origines de cette crainte, ses auteurs et leur lien avec les capitalistes radicaux établis, qui craignent que la limitation de la richesse ou une aide supplémentaire pour les « éléments non productifs » ne détériorent le pays. Même en période de grande crise économique, les capitalistes radicaux ont affirmé les menaces prévisibles d'un grand gouvernement, quelle que soit la vigueur des revendications populistes.

La dernière section du chapitre fournit un bref aperçu du contexte économique, politique et social du système fiscal américain. On tente de définir le concept d'imposition et présenter un aperçu de l'histoire de la fiscalité aux



États-Unis. Enfin, on discute certains termes de base, y compris la progressivité fiscale et les distinctions entre plusieurs formes d'impôts.

On a également montré comment les distinctions idéologiques influençaient l'effort fiscal aux États-Unis. La différence idéologique entre les démocrates et les républicains influait sur le lien entre les évolutions électorales et les recettes fiscales. Alors que des analyses antérieures dans le domaine de la fiscalité avaient corroboré l'impact de la partisanerie sur les dépenses et le fardeau fiscal aux États-Unis, les dernières analyses ont montré que les démocrates réclamaient une plus grande part des revenus du gouvernement que les républicains. En outre, l'influence des démocrates sur l'effort fiscal dépend des niveaux de juridiction institutionnelle et est nettement plus importante.

On constate alors que les changements d'imposition des entreprises et de redistribution entre revenus des gains en capital et revenus du travail et entre impôts des entreprises et impôts des particuliers sont fortement influencés par les politiques partisane. La mesure dans laquelle les entreprises s'engagent dans le financement électoral - évaluée par la mise en place de comités d'action politique des entreprises - est également influente.

Le troisième chapitre tend à révéler les différents facteurs qui ont contribué à la montée du conservatisme. On soutient que la société américaine a été tirée vers la droite depuis la fin des années 1970 dans la réaction politique la plus continue depuis la période de reconstruction après la guerre civile. On aborde le contexte historique de lequel la nouvelle droite est issue, les faits politiques qui décrivent les actions sociopolitiques et culturelles des conservateurs d'aujourd'hui, ainsi que les formes d'implications culturelles qui rendent la rhétorique et la représentation de droite contemporaines si marquées. En effet, dans sa tentative d'élucider les faits actuels dans un langage populaire, le mouvement conservateur a apporté à la scène politique de nouveaux symboles formant un virage à droite dans le développement d'une politique qui est devenue progressivement bipartite.

Nous avons fait valoir que la protestation de la classe inférieure et l'instabilité électorale dans les années 1930 ont facilité la domination des élites

commerciales libérales des entreprises et ont ainsi conduit à des réformes sociales libérales. Les conservateurs modérés semblent s'être alliés aux entreprises libérales pour soutenir les réformes sociales répondant à ces pressions politiques venant d'en bas. À la fin des années 1970, le calme relatif a permis aux conservateurs modérés de s'aligner sur les ultraconservateurs, ouvrant ainsi la voie à une ère de réforme conservatrice. Cela souligne la nécessité de synthétiser la théorie de l'élite des entreprises avec les théories des processus politiques des mouvements sociaux ainsi que les idées de la fraction de classe sur les divisions commerciales.

Partant d'un mouvement intellectuel des années 1950, le conservatisme est devenu un mouvement politique dans les années 1960 et 1970, avant de se transformer en gouvernement au pouvoir dans les années 1980 avec Ronald Reagan. Ce dernier a renforcé l'influence républicaine conservatrice avec des réductions d'impôts, un budget militaire considérablement augmenté, une déréglementation durable de l'économie et des appels aux valeurs familiales traditionnelles et aux vertus conservatrices. Au cours des années 1960 et 1970, les conservateurs ont commencé à contrôler efficacement la politique alors que leurs organisations devenaient de plus en plus nombreuses, que les financements étaient réglés et que de nouveaux magazines étaient créés, attirant de jeunes militants dans les collèges et les universités. En 1980, les républicains ont nommé, puis élu, Ronald Reagan, le politicien conservateur le plus en vue de l'histoire de la politique américaine.

Les arguments de l'élite des entreprises et des fractions de classe sont pertinents pour expliquer l'adoption de la nouvelle économie conservatrice. L'élite des entreprises, les entreprises internationales menacées par la concurrence à l'exportation, les petits entrepreneurs de l'industrie de l'énergie solaire, les industries indépendantes et les entreprises menacées par la nouvelle réglementation ont uni leurs forces pour développer ce «virage à droite» de la politique économique. Les ultraconservateurs ont mis au point un nouveau paradigme de politique économique conservatrice et l'ont porté à l'attention des décideurs nationaux. Parallèlement, l'élite des entreprises a également dominé les conseils d'administration des entreprises libérales, qui soutiennent les politiques keynésienne et interventionniste. La principale différence était la

présence accrue d'élites d'entreprises issues de la classe supérieure «*Yankee*» et d'entreprises protégées par la réglementation gouvernementale. Au moins entre les années 1970 et les années 80, ces coalitions d'entreprises étaient relativement stables et la concurrence politique n'a pas créé de pressions croisées ni de contre-pouvoir, plaidant ainsi contre la thèse du pluralisme des entreprises. Il se peut qu'il y ait eu une mobilisation plus large des entreprises en termes de contributions de campagne conservatrices et de lobbys industriels et d'associations professionnelles, mais ces élites commerciales ont été les principaux artisans de ce «virage à droite».

La fin des années 1970 et le début des années 1980 pourraient représenter une période politique unique. Au moins après 1975, la protestation sociale était relativement minime et, bien que les mouvements écologistes et féministes de la classe moyenne aient contesté certaines prérogatives des grandes entreprises, ils n'avaient pas autant recours à la protestation indisciplinée des mouvements pour les droits civils et les populations défavorisées des années soixante. Cette quiescence pourrait bien avoir facilité la coalition entre les conservateurs modérés et les élites des affaires ultraconservatrices en réduisant la pression pour envisager des réformes sociales libérales. Cela pourrait aussi avoir facilité les tendances de vote conservatrices, renforçant ainsi les politiciens conservateurs qui seraient plus réceptifs aux nouvelles propositions économiques conservatrices.

À la fin des années 1970, une droite chrétienne, particulièrement préoccupée par des questions économiques telles que l'économie interventionniste ou des questions sociales telles que l'avortement et les droits des homosexuels, est devenue progressivement dynamique. Cependant, les années 1960 ont témoigné de la montée des groupes de droite religieuse tels que le *Christian Crusade* et le *Christian Anti-Communism Crusade* renforçant l'évangélisme.

La deuxième partie du chapitre est consacrée à la montée du populisme et à la manière dont il a été l'un des éléments qui ont contribué à la montée et à la force du conservatisme. Les mobilisations de la droite populiste en faveur d'un agenda totalitaire moral, tel que le rigoureux combat conservateur idéologique contre le traité de libre-échange nord-américain (ALENA) entré en

vigueur le 1er janvier 1994, sont apparues comme une opposition extrême au statu quo qui s'est théoriquement glissé dans un véritable mouvement anticapitaliste de base. On remet en question les différentes approches d'un mouvement politique qui soutient explicitement les politiques en faveur des riches se faisant passer pour un défenseur démocrate libéral populiste du « peuple ».

On examine également la manière dont la droite religieuse américaine adopte une approche populiste pour mobiliser un certain nombre de politiciens et en renvoyer d'autres, et comment elle utilise une stratégie composite similaire pour se fondre dans le parti républicain, tirant ainsi le centre politique à l'extrême droite. Aujourd'hui, ces stratégies attirent même les politiciens conventionnels qui, pour attirer les masses, iraient plus loin même en sanctionnant les actes de discrimination. On observe que le développement d'un mouvement populiste de droite était principalement basé sur la peur et la nostalgie menant à la création de boucs émissaires des bénéficiaires de l'aide sociale en tant que cause de tous les problèmes économiques et sociaux. En effet, afin de comprendre les origines du mouvement *Tea Party*, on examine le développement de la polarisation partisane-idéologique au sein de l'électorat américain et en particulier le conservatisme croissant de la base activiste du parti républicain.

Depuis les années 1970, les conservateurs ont délibérément commencé à s'unir autour d'une base d'intérêts commune. La réapparition de très anciennes craintes vis-à-vis de l'aide sociale dans sa vision généralisée était un élément important de cette nouvelle union. Ce dernier impliquerait l'option d'abroger les profits créés par le New Deal et d'achever tous les efforts du « mouvement progressiste ». On observe les différentes préoccupations conservatrices afin de comprendre comment elles ont été traditionnellement divisées et comment elles ont été aujourd'hui fusionnées dans une vision composée unique. Le fondement de cette vision historique inclura certainement les immigrants et les minorités concernant le lien étroit qui existe entre la question de la sécurité sociale et celle des relations raciales. On essaie de comprendre comment les théoriciens de droite ont non seulement perçu la protection sociale comme étant une source d'échec économique, mais l'ont également utilisé de nombreuses manières

différentes comme une source de peur et d'influence. Cette peur a également contribué à la montée significative du conservatisme au cours des dernières décennies.

Ensuite, on examine la relation entre les divers aspects organisationnels, idéologiques et politiques qui ont défini la droite aux États-Unis au cours de ce siècle. Comment les groupes et mouvements de droite ont-ils profité de la guerre froide pour arriver à considérer le gouvernement comme le nouvel adversaire dissident ? En fait, les différentes opinions soulignent la nécessité d'expliquer la relation entre le conservatisme actuel et les mouvements de droite du passé. Avec de telles questions à l'esprit, cette thèse tend à élucider le fait que la droite moderne est semblable et distincte de groupes d'extrême droite et de précédents courants de conservatisme dans l'histoire politique américaine.

On essaie de révéler les divers aspects organisationnels, idéologiques et politiques qui ont défini la droite américaine. Des organisations ultraconservatrices telles que le *Liberty Lobby* et la *John Birch Society* ont profité de la guerre froide pour construire le gouvernement en tant que nouvel adversaire dissident. On examine les outils de mobilisation pour les programmes d'assistance sociale en faveur des minorités, principalement les Noirs et les Hispaniques.

On explore aussi la relation entre les intérêts des entreprises et les mouvements de droite au cours des dernières décennies de l'histoire américaine. On examine ici le rôle des entreprises dans ce développement. Les penseurs libéraux supposent que le soutien capitaliste aux mouvements de droite a été bénéfique pour l'une ou l'autre partie. Par conséquent, on explore la montée du mouvement conservateur depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le renforcement des idées et des politiques de droite au cours des dernières décennies est significative dans la politique américaine ; malgré les divergences d'opinion sur la pertinence du terme «nouvelle droite».

On soutient que la droite politique est composée d'un réseau d'intersections culturelles, sociales et politiques. Les différentes parties de la droite en termes d'idéologie, de dévotion et de stratégie comprennent les

institutions d'élite, les principaux dirigeants, les réseaux d'information et les mouvements sociaux qui façonnent, suspendent et restructurent les coalitions au fil du temps en fonction de nombreux facteurs. Ces différentes fractions se défient parfois pour des questions telles que le matérialisme commercial, l'intrusion fédérale dans les affaires privées et la manière dont Hollywood est la nouvelle Babylone (Ansell, 1998). Une telle perception de la droite suppose une variété de valeurs qui s'étendent le long de nombreuses séquences et remet en question la notion de droite « extrémiste » ou « radicale ». On étudie non seulement les différents facteurs qui ont contribué à la montée très rapide et à la force particulière de la droite américaine d'aujourd'hui depuis les années 1970, mais également l'évolution du processus stratégique et organisationnel par lequel les conservateurs se sont développés grâce au reaganisme depuis les années 1970 pour devenir le pouvoir influent aujourd'hui au Congrès, aux campagnes présidentielles et dans les médias.

Ayant conçu dès le début une alliance positive entre la droite et les entreprises, on expose à quel point les relations entre les deux groupes ont été exceptionnelles. En utilisant une enquête de conflit d'affaires telle que proposée par Ronald Cox, on essaie de souligner à quel point les conflits politiques de droite des dernières décennies ont souvent correspondu aux divergences entre les partis capitalistes. Ronald Cox révèle comment l'interaction de la droite avec les intérêts du monde des affaires a mené à la victoire de Ronald Reagan aux élections présidentielles en 1980 et à nouveau en 1984 (Lowndes, 2008). On comprend que cette interaction était en fait à l'origine de la fragmentation de la coalition de droite à la fin des années 1980 et au début des années 1990.

Les campagnes médiatiques financées par les grandes entreprises n'expliquent pas suffisamment d'autres facteurs, tels que l'énorme politisation des chrétiens évangéliques depuis les années 1970, la prédominance du droit à l'avortement et des homosexuels et lesbiennes comme cibles de droite, ou le changement de la droite ultra-conservatrice contre le racisme implicite et le chauvinisme culturel. Le troisième chapitre fait également valoir que la société américaine a viré à droite depuis la fin des années 1970. Des efforts ont

toujours été déployés pour restructurer le New Deal et clôturer les mouvements de libération sociale des années 1960 et 1970.

Dans son enquête de 2007, Kenneth Cosgrove a affirmé que les conservateurs avaient utilisé la stratégie de marque comme un outil « pour bâtir leur mouvement de 1964 à nos jours » (Cosgrove, 2007). En outre, selon Cosgrove, la stratégie de marque était idéale. Il a déclaré : « La stratégie de la marque est devenue un élément clé du succès du mouvement conservateur, car ce dernier évoluait au moment même où les techniques de marketing grand public s'amélioraient et où la philosophie de la consommation s'imposait dans tout le pays. Il était tout à fait logique qu'un nouveau mouvement présente ses candidats et utilise les mêmes techniques que celles utilisées pour vendre d'autres types de produits » (Cosgrove, 2007).

Nous avons également expliqué comment la société américaine était orientée vers la droite depuis la fin des années 1970 dans la réaction politique la plus continue depuis la période de reconstruction après la guerre civile (Foner, 1988). La montée du conservatisme en tant qu'influence politique dominante aux États-Unis, en particulier depuis la fin des années 1970, est incontestable. Elle consiste à dissiper l'influence de l'« Establishment » libéral et à rechercher de nouveaux changements dans la vie politique et culturelle américaine.

Les années 1980 sont connues sous le nom de « *Reagan Era* » et sa politique conservatrice sous le nom de « *Reaganism* ». L'ère Reagan a également marqué un « keynésianisme militaire » reflétant les intérêts des sous-traitants de la défense de *Sunbelt*. Bien que la constitution de la défense de l'ère Reagan ait pu avoir un effet multiplicateur, les sous-traitants de la défense n'étaient pas davantage représentés dans le camp des ultra-conservateurs. Le nationalisme plus agressif de la politique étrangère et la montée en puissance de l'armée reflétaient les idées idéologiques chez les Reagan.

Reagan allait plus tard influencer une génération d'éminents politiciens conservateurs, universitaires, militants et écrivains. Dans les années 2010, les politiciens conservateurs et les dirigeants républicains ont revendiqué leur

dévouement à « l'héritage idéologique » du président Reagan sur les questions de politique sociale, économique et étrangère. Des efforts ont toujours été déployés pour clôturer le New Deal et les mouvements de libération sociale des années 1960 et 1970.

Néanmoins, les divisions au sein du conservatisme se sont approfondies et sont devenues plus visibles après que les républicains eurent pris le contrôle du Congrès en 1994. Les divisions avaient commencé depuis les années 1980 dans un certain nombre de batailles politiques clés. Par exemple, en 1982 et 1983, les conservateurs sociaux ont directement protesté contre l'administration Reagan pour ne pas avoir pris au sérieux leurs questions ni nommé de conservateurs traditionnels au sein de l'administration. Alors que les élections de mi-mandat étaient à l'origine considérées comme une menace à la révolution Reagan, les républicains étaient confrontés à de nombreux problèmes politiques. Au sein du Congrès, les républicains se sont opposés aux dépenses fédérales en 1996, ce qui a contraint le gouvernement fédéral à se mettre en cessation de paiement. La division couvrait les tensions qui existaient au sein du GOP bien que la réputation du conservatisme ait été particulièrement contestée sous l'administration de George W. Bush. Au moment où George Bush a été élu, la coalition conservatrice a éclaté en raison de ses divergences. Bush a mis fin à ses termes avec deux guerres cruciales et un manque de réglementation sur le marché libre qui ont conduit l'économie américaine à la crise en 2007-2008.

George Nash a reconnu qu'il y avait de nombreux blocs dans le conservatisme. Dans son ouvrage classique *Why Americans Hate Politics* (1991), le journaliste EJ Dionne a tenté d'identifier les différentes questions qui réunissaient ces factions et a affirmé qu'il existait un « consensus fusioniste » qui a permis de créer une alliance durable entre les socialistes et les conservateurs qui prônent le libre marché. Dionne a déclaré que l'anticommunisme était devenu le « consensus fusioniste ». Bien que la droite ait perdu des campagnes législatives ou électorales spécifiques, ses stratégies sont devenues compétentes pour instruire, recruter et mobiliser des sympathisants. Un groupe de groupes de réflexion de droite contrôle



aujourd'hui le discours public américain sur de nombreuses préoccupations allant du bien-être à la fiscalité et à l'immigration.

On conclue que de nombreux facteurs ont aidé les conservateurs à unir la droite sous la nouvelle vision des craintes d'aide sociale, du paupérisme et de la « dépendance ». Cependant, le nouveau statut des femmes depuis le mouvement féministe des années 1960 a offert une incitation supplémentaire à l'union des factions de droite. Ainsi, on essaie de montrer comment la notion de complot est devenue la base du mouvement conservateur, accusant à chaque fois le socialisme du New Deal selon différents points de vue, notamment social, moral, religieux et économique. Le thème avait également correspondu à l'idéologie libertarienne et l'avait soutenue, à savoir que le communisme ne faisait que nuire au système traditionnel du marché libre. Cela avait abouti à des coalitions pro-Reagan significatives autour des questions de dépenses gouvernementales et d'impôts.

L'élection du démocrate Bill Clinton à la Maison Blanche en 1992 a mis fin à douze ans de contrôle républicain. Sous le président Clinton, plusieurs lois importantes qui avaient été rejetées par les administrations républicaines pendant de longues années ont été finalement adoptées. Après avoir été opposé à deux reprises par le président George W. Bush en 1988 et en 1990, la loi sur le congé familial et médical (FMLA) a été adoptée et promulguée en janvier 1993. Bien que sa couverture soit minimale et bien inférieure à ce que les activistes avaient espéré, la FMLA a marqué pour la première fois de son histoire le gouvernement fédéral ayant chargé les employeurs de garantir les congés sans solde aux travailleurs après la naissance ou l'adoption d'un enfant, ou pendant la maladie d'un membre de sa famille ou à sa charge.

La victoire de 1994 aux élections de mi-mandat ou aussi connue sous le nom de « révolution républicaine » symbolisait toutefois l'infiltration provisoire d'extrémistes de droite qui continuent aujourd'hui d'être une force importante dans le paysage politique américain. En fait, les conservateurs d'aujourd'hui s'engagent pour contester et remodeler les « vérités » bien établies de l'institution démocratique libérale américaine (Ansell, 1998). Les élections controversées de 2000, qui donnèrent une pluralité de votes populaires au démocrate Al Gore mais donnèrent le vote électoral et, par

conséquent, la présidence à George W. Bush, marquèrent le début du siècle. La division amère de la politique électorale qui a influencé les années 1990 est devenue plus profonde au cours de la nouvelle décennie. Avec le retour de la présidence au parti républicain, les idées du gouvernement limité et de responsabilité individuelle ont été renforcées. La réduction des impôts était le point de ralliement de la présidence Bush.

Durant les premières années de la première administration du président George W. Bush, le public s'inquiétait du coût élevé des médicaments pour les personnes âgées. Beaucoup de personnes âgées à revenu fixe n'étaient plus en mesure de financer leurs traitements médicaux et le problème nécessite donc une intervention économique et sociale. En 2003, les politiciens ont réagi en adaptant le programme Medicare et en élargissant la couverture des prescriptions médicales comprenant des médicaments. En créant un programme innovant pour les personnes âgées, la législation a simplement prouvé la fluidité du système de protection sociale (McInnis-Dittrich, 1994).

En outre, après l'adoption du plan de sauvetage des banques et de la consommation (*American Recovery Reinvestment Act ARRA*) en février 2009, l'inquiétude vis-à-vis des gouvernements a continué d'augmenter dans les médias et dans l'opinion publique. Alors que les experts et les analystes politiques ont convenu de diagnostiquer la fin d'un grand cycle politique de réinvention du conservatisme américain par Ronald Reagan, un mouvement de protestation populaire a émergé à partir de l'hiver 2009. Un sondage *New York Times / CBS News*, entre autres, a indiqué que la majorité des Américains sont devenus mal à l'aise à l'égard un gouvernement élargi. Les médias conservateurs ont indiqué de manière indifférente que « le capitalisme était mort » et utilisaient parfois les mots de Milton Friedman pour affirmer que les Américains étaient « tous des keynésiens maintenant » (O'Hara, 2010). Des millions d'Américains ont commencé à s'organiser sous l'étiquette du mouvement *Tea Party* en 2009 pour protester contre un gouvernement irresponsable, les dépenses dans le plan de relance, le projet de loi sur le budget bloqué, le programme massif d'octroi de prêts hypothécaires, l'intrusion du gouvernement dans le système de santé (O'Hara, 2010).

L'incapacité du *GOP* à réduire le gouvernement au cours des trois dernières fois où il a eu le pouvoir est précisément ce qui motive la colère de la base du *Tea Party* - une force montrant une capacité remarquable à mener le Parti républicain par le nez. Ce sont principalement des gens qui ont gardé le silence sur la croissance rapide du gouvernement au cours du premier mandat de George W. Bush, parce que leurs dirigeants avaient déclaré « qu'elle était nécessaire pour la sécurité nationale » ou de réaliser la vision de Karl Rove d'une « majorité républicaine permanente ». Mais leur colère a augmenté au second mandat en proportion inverse de la popularité de Bush. Le programme *Troubled Assets Recovery Program (TARP)*, suivi de la victoire d'Obama, les a poussés à bout.

On n'a malheureusement pas pu aborder un nombre d'autres sujets dans cette étude, tels que le rôle des forces commerciales dans la promotion (et, dans certains cas, l'opposition) du racisme anti-immigrés ou la relation contradictoire entre les intérêts capitalistes et les droits paramilitaires. Les conflits d'affaires n'expliquent certes pas tout sur la politique de droite, mais ils constituent un outil analytique utile. Il reste encore beaucoup à faire dans ce domaine, car les factions capitalistes continuent de reconfigurer et de modifier leurs tendances politiques. On souhaite étudier cette question dans une analyse de recherche ultérieure. De plus, le défi consiste aujourd'hui à dépasser les études classiques du conservatisme, qui ont duré plusieurs décennies, en relation avec les grands changements de la société américaine et à les relier aux élites économiques et politiques, les conservateurs ayant été forcés de passer du mouvement de résistance à la gestion des difficultés de la gouvernance. Alors que les conservateurs exigent la destitution du gouvernement fédéral lors de leurs campagnes au niveau local, ils demandent plus de gouvernement une fois qu'ils sont en charge du gouvernement et des parts importantes de la coalition.

En fin de compte, le conservatisme américain s'est toujours opposé à l'« *Establishment* » libéral à la recherche de nouveaux changements dans la vie politique et culturelle américaine. Dans le troisième chapitre, nous avons révélé les différents facteurs qui ont contribué à la montée du conservatisme, de Barry Goldwater à Ronald Reagan de la seconde moitié du vingtième siècle au début du vingt et unième siècle. Avant les années 50, le conservatisme était

toujours une force politique déséquilibrée, ce qui nécessitait un processus constant de création d'alliances sur des questions précises et dans des campagnes cruciales. Dans son livre *The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities Throughout American History*, Patrick Allitt résumait ainsi cette période : « Les intellectuels conservateurs ont contesté presque toutes les vérités libérales des années 1950 et 1960. De puissants groupes de réflexion conservateurs ont formulé un ensemble de propositions politiques, et les politiciens des deux principaux partis en ont pris bonne note. Les nouveaux médias ont commencé à aborder les informations d'un point de vue ouvertement conservateur et, dans les années 90, certains politiciens désavouaient le libéralisme car même l'utilisation du mot « L word » semblait leur coûter un soutien populaire. » L'administration de Reagan a commencé à supprimer les programmes d'aide sociale.

Depuis sa première apparition au début de 2009, le mouvement *Tea Party* a attiré l'attention des observateurs politiques, des journalistes, des candidats et des élus. Dans le quatrième et dernier chapitre, on étudie les motivations des membres du *Tea Party* dans les manifestations. On analyse l'émergence du mouvement *Tea Party*, son essor, sa nature, son bloc populaire et ses relations avec le parti républicain. Considéré comme un phénomène complexe, l'apparition du mouvement *Tea Party* dans les semaines qui ont suivi l'élection du démocrate Barack Obama à la présidence en 2008 a été le phénomène le plus surprenant de la politique américaine récente. De nombreux experts considèrent l'événement *Tea Party* comme une étape potentielle dans la transformation révolutionnaire dans la politique américaine.

Il est, ensuite, important de retracer dans son évolution de février 2009 à octobre 2010 les facteurs de son développement. En utilisant une perspective théorique basée sur les travaux de McAdam, Tarrow, Meyer et Minkoff, la présente recherche tend à expliquer l'évolution de ce mouvement conservateur social en observant trois facteurs clés : la division au sein des coalitions partisans, le rôle important joué par les alliés son expansion et la présence de défis inspirants. De plus, les opportunités politiques de mobilisation avaient potentiellement influencé l'émergence du mouvement.

Les premiers jours de l'administration Obama ont témoigné d'une vaste expansion du gouvernement à la fois en taille et en portée. Suite au passage du plan de rescousse des banques et de reprise de la consommation (*American RecoveryReinvestmentAct, ARRA*) en février 2009, divers groupes ont entamé de s'organiser pour protester contre « trop d'impôts, trop de gouvernement, et trop de dettes publiques. » On attribue généralement à une bloggeuse de Seattle, KeliCarender, l'organisation d'une des premières manifestations du *Tea Party Movement*. Carender a réussi de convaincre 120 personnes de participer à une manifestation contre le plan de relance économique de 787 milliards de dollars que Barack Obama devait promulguer le lendemain. Le 19 février 2009, Rick Santelli, journaliste de la chaîne financière *CNBC*, proposa sur *YouTube* de protester contre la décision du président de débloquer 75 milliards de dollars pour aider les propriétaires endettés à éviter la saisie de leur maison en organisant une « *Tea Party* » à Chicago (Hétu, 2010).

On essaie également de retracer la manière dont l'individualisme et le capitalisme jouent un rôle dans la rhétorique du *Tea Party*, qui remonte à « La stratégie du Sud » et à Ronald Reagan. On découvre que le mouvement *Tea Party* promeut le capitalisme et l'individualisme par le biais de sa forte opposition à l'aide sociale. En effet, le combat contre le plan de réforme du projet d'assurance-maladie a offert un nouveau souffle aux *Tea Parties* qui ont tenu des slogans tels que « Liberté : Tout le stimulus dont nous avons besoin » et « Pas de taxation sans délibération ». Lors des rassemblements publics où les sénateurs et les représentants venaient tâter le pouls de leur électorat, des « activistes » de droite ont instrumenté des polémiques intenses, voulant par ailleurs affirmer la colère des citoyens concernés devant un gouvernement jugé trop gaspilleur et un système politique trop complice de Wall Street mais aussi éloigné de l'Amérique des classes moyennes. Cependant, plusieurs médias libéraux ont pointé du doigt les montages dits d'« *astroturfing* », où des groupements d'intérêts bien identifiés et bien organisés se sont créés des façades associatives autour d'une cause spécifique dans l'environnement local.

Dans le cadre de cette recherche, il convient d'identifier les principales factions idéologiques du mouvement *Tea Party*. En effet, certains aspects du conservatisme américain ont été mis de côté pour permettre à une coalition de

militants qui ne s'entendent pas sur des questions sociales. Par exemple, on discerne les différences entre les conservateurs sociaux et les libertaires, deux groupes qui sont au cœur du soutien au mouvement conservateur. À l'évidence, des éléments communs ont favorisé le soutien de ces deux groupes et on estime que ces questions relativement abstraites ont joué un rôle clé dans le lancement de la mobilisation, les partisans du *Tea Party* étant politiquement actifs et extrêmement conservateurs.

En utilisant des indicateurs dérivés d'une base de données créée à partir d'articles du *New York Times*, la deuxième partie du chapitre tend à examiner l'idéologie, la structure et l'intensité de la mobilisation du *Tea Party*. Ainsi, il est probable que la mobilisation a évolué à travers certaines opportunités, puisqu'elle a radicalement changé au cours des derniers mois précédant les élections de mi-mandat de 2010. La combinaison de ces observations nous permet d'enquêter sur la fondation du mouvement, tout en identifiant la complexité de ce phénomène.

La deuxième partie du chapitre examine les facteurs et les opportunités qui ont facilité la mobilisation d'un mouvement social comme le *Tea Party*. En effet, ces facteurs sont des signes du pouvoir politique susceptible d'être ouvert aux demandes des activistes. Ensuite, on remet en question les caractéristiques du *Tea Party* en abordant la nature du mouvement conservateur étudié précédemment. On présente deux groupes idéologiques qui soutiennent la mobilisation, identifiant leurs différences et leurs similitudes. Ainsi, une compréhension de l'idéologie du mouvement nous permet d'aller au-delà de l'explication selon laquelle le *Tea Party* s'oppose simplement à Obama.

On explore le contexte politique entourant l'émergence de la mobilisation afin de répondre aux questions relatives aux origines des manifestants, à leurs revendications et à la pérennité du mouvement. Une première section devrait identifier deux formes de mobilisation qui ont eu lieu entre juillet 2009 et octobre 2010, soit par des réunions informelles, soit par des manifestations publiques. Ces deux types d'événements montrent que la mobilisation sert deux objectifs : informer les militants sur des questions économiques et sociales et démontrer ouvertement que le mouvement social existe.

Dans le même but, on traite l'impact des problèmes survenus entre 2009 et 2010, du parti républicain et de ses alliés. On cherche ici à déterminer l'impact favorable de ces facteurs sur la mobilisation se concentrant sur trois questions importantes liées au développement du *Tea Party* : l'économie, la réforme de la santé et les élections législatives. De même, le rôle du Parti républicain dans la mobilisation est un élément clé à étudier. Bien qu'il puisse y avoir une multitude de factions au sein d'un parti politique, celle qui existe entre les partisans de l'orthodoxie économique et l'instauration républicaine est essentielle à la compréhension de la relation avec le *Tea Party*.

En observant le cas de la droite religieuse et de son influence sur le parti républicain, on examine la stratégie par laquelle un mouvement social autonome est capable de mobiliser une base électorale et d'influencer un parti politique. Là encore, on revient sur les données du *New York Times* qui tendent à montrer comment, au fil des périodes, de plus en plus d'articles ont mentionné des termes anti-Establishment. En effet, on comprend que cette période intense marquée par des rassemblements a affecté la nomination de candidats politiques peu ou pas expérimentés.

Ensuite, on identifie les forces de soutien financier et les élus derrière cette manifestation conservatrice. D'un point de vue organisationnel, le *Tea Party* a été présenté comme « *astroturf* » une réaction populaire contre les impôts, le « *big government* » et l'aide sociale. Dans le cas du *Tea Party*, l'« *astroturfing* » désigne une désinformation populaire orchestrée par des techniques de propagande utilisées à des fins politiques qui visent à donner une fausse réaction d'un comportement impulsif ou d'une position populaire vis à vis d'un problème. Ce procédé de manipulation faisant référence à une marque de pelouse artificielle *AstroTurf* utilisée dans les stades, consiste donc à affecter un mouvement citoyen, venu de la base (dénommé « *grassrootsmovement* » en anglais américain).

En effet, des individus riches, les groupes conservateurs et les personnalités des médias ont tous joué un rôle dans les manifestations et l'influence possible du mouvement sur le long terme (Judis, 2010). On souligne la présence des médias et des alliés politiques qui ont manifesté leur soutien au mouvement *Tea Party*, chacun à leur manière. On se concentre sur le rôle des

médias dans la couverture médiatique en tant qu'outil principal pour la mobilisation et l'émergence du *Tea Party*, en particulier entre 2009 et 2010. Dans cette affaire, on étudie la relation entre la mobilisation et le nombre d'articles publiés sur le mouvement. Cependant, il est important de noter que le nombre d'articles n'explique pas seulement l'augmentation de la mobilisation. En effet, tout en divisant la mobilisation en protestation ainsi que les réunions avec le nombre d'articles, on se demande pourquoi et comment les réunions informelles étaient beaucoup moins évidentes pour les médias que les manifestations de rue.

Marqué par une ample spontanéité, le mode d'organisation des *Tea Parties* demeure en grande partie incontrôlable. Cette propriété charnelle consulte donc également le rôle progressif des médias et des technologies modernes dans la démocratie américaine. Une alliance de petites organisations militantes (*grassroots organizations*) a donc saisi le relais. Le 15 avril 2009, jour où les Américains remettent leur déclaration d'impôts, 750 manifestations différentes se tenaient à travers le pays. Ces rassemblements, forts de quelques centaines de personnes avaient été absorbés par une variété d'associations régionaux et locaux, employant des mesures d'organisation sur des sites *Web* de réseautage social « par la base » telles que les rendez-vous sur *Twitter*, les groupes *Facebook*, et les blogs vidéo à l'appui.

En août 2009, *FreedomWorks* et *60 Plus Association* ont joué un rôle important dans l'organisation des manifestations contre la réforme de santé. Les promoteurs de la réforme de santé ont qualifié les efforts de *FreedomWorks* comme *Astroturf* car ils utilisent des millions de dollars en financement pour soutenir le *Tea Party*. *Newsweek* a affirmé que l'organisation a publié des instructions et des tactiques sur le « comment faire propager les démonstrations ». A leur tour, les réseaux conservateurs ont accusé les médias nationaux du *mainstream* de favoritisme : totalement dominés selon eux par les élites libérales.

Le fameux événement du rassemblement *Tea Party* 12 Septembre a été organisé principalement par *FreedomWorks*, une organisation de lobbying conservateur fondé en 1984, financé en partie par Steve Forbes et dirigé par l'ancien membre du Congrès républicain Dick Armey du Texas, qui était un



conférencier vedette au rassemblement, et soutenue par près de trente organisations conservatrices telles que *Club For Growth*, *Competitive Enterprise Institute*, *Ayn Rand Center for Individual Rights*. L'événement ainsi que d'autres *town-hall meetings* ont été largement soutenu sur la célèbre chaîne télé *Fox News*, en particulier par Glenn Beck et comme il était prévu, ils remodelé le paysage politique américain.

*The Atlantic* et *Think Progress* avaient rapporté que le mouvement *Tea Party* est incontestablement mené par *FreedomWorks*, le *free-market* groupe *Americans for Prosperity* et *Dont Go Movement*. Ces organisations préparent les communiqués de presse et les points de discussion, le plan des idées pour les signes et les slogans, et attribuent les appels de conférence. *Americans for Prosperity* opère à travers les organisations caritatives comme l'ultraconservatrice *Lynde and Harry Bradley Fondation*, ainsi que les multimilliardaires frères Koch. Ainsi, ce mouvement de protestation conservatrice dispose de trois forces influentes qui le soutiennent : l'argent illimitée des entreprises; des médias idéologiquement engagés, et des responsables élus qui le soutiennent publiquement élu et dont les voix sont puissantes.

*FreedomWorks* est connue comme étant l'une des organisations conservatrices qui ont mis en place des groupes de base comprenant le soutien secret des entreprises et ce en matière de différentes questions sociales et économiques telles que la privatisation de la sécurité sociale, la déréglementation de l'industrie de l'assurance vie et le statu quo dans l'utilisation de l'Amérique des combustibles fossiles. *Scaife Fondation*, un autre bailleur de fonds de *FreedomWorks*, est l'un des principaux partisans de la droite américaine. En ce qui concerne les *Tea Parties*, les rassemblements publics sont généralement financés par les milliardaires frères Koch du Kansas. Fred Koch a fondé l'entreprise en 1940 et a ensuite créé la, à la fin des années 1950. Aujourd'hui, David et Charles Koch, ses deux *John Birch Society* fils qui dirigent l'entreprise, donnent des millions à des groupes conservateurs et libertariens ainsi que la campagne anti-régulation allant de *Cato Institute* au *Reason Magazine*. Ils ont également parrainé *Americans For Prosperity* en 2003, qui avait préconisé un gouvernement limité et s'était opposée à la

législation sur le changement climatique. Enfin, *Think Progress* est l'une des organisations qui ont fait des rapports détaillés sur la façon dont les rassemblements du Tea Party ont été organisés. *Media Matters for America*, le groupe dirigé par David Brock, a lancé un site Web de grande envergure visant à traiter les relations complexes entre les donateurs, les groupes à but non lucratif et les organisations militantes à laquelle ils donnent de l'argent.

Néanmoins, Il est difficile de suivre les sources de l'argent puisque nous constatons que les rassemblements ne sont pas pris en charge uniquement par des groupes conservateurs. Nous évoquons également *America's Health Insurance Plans*, or AHIP ou AHIP, l'énorme groupe de pression dirigé par Karen Ignagni, qui fait des apparitions fréquentes à la télévision pour discuter des soins de santé. Selon Lee Fang du *Think Progress*, AHIP a mobilisé 50.000 de ses employés pour participer aux rassemblements du *Tea Party* afin de bousculer contre l'inclusion d'une option d'assurance de santé publique dans la réforme. Bref, le site du Septembre 12 procure la liste de ses sponsors sur sa page d'accueil (*FreedomWorks* se classant la première). En effet, les agissements incités de ces groupes contestent la spontanéité de leur opposition à la politique d'Obama. En bref, la contribution des ressources fournies aux aux groupes locaux a facilité de nouvelles mobilisations du *Tea Party*, un processus commun aux mouvements sociaux. Dans de nombreuses localités de la deuxième vague de protestation, la mobilisation fut grande produisant d'autres groupes *Tea Party* qui avaient engagé la participation de beaucoup de citoyens.

La performance des militants conservateurs dans le Massachusetts, État typiquement libéral, a été remarquable. En effet, les efforts du *Tea Party* ont eu une influence primordiale au niveau national grâce à la victoire surprise de Scott Brown lors de l'élection spéciale au Sénat en janvier 2010. Après plusieurs mois de rassemblements divers à travers le pays, de réunions publiques (*town halls meetings*), et deux journées importantes de manifestation à Washington, c'est au tour de l'élection du jeune sénateur républicain Scott Brown dans l'Etat du Massachusetts de cristalliser toutes les requêtes et les protestations. En effet, Scott Brown a réussi à se détacher du siège de Ted Kennedy du Parti démocrate grâce à l'activisme ainsi qu'aux slogans des *Tea Parties*. En effet, la victoire de Scott Brown dans le Massachusetts a été

attribuée à la manière dont il s'est connecté aux leaders régionaux du *Tea Party*. Certains républicains ont déjà commencé à se congratuler des sièges qu'ils pourraient récupérer à la prochaine campagne électorale du mi-mandat.

Enfin, CPAC (*Conservative Political Action Conference*) a servi en 2010 d'une plate-forme idéale pour fournir des outils organisationnels afin de mieux mobiliser les partisans intéressés à influencer le processus politique. Sur cette circonstance, de nombreuses discussions avec les libertariens ont rapidement marqué un changement en moins d'une année. La volonté partagée par des milliers de personnes à prendre leur pays en main ("*Take back our country!*") à travers la mobilisation n'était pas exclusivement due à la montée du mouvement *Tea Party*. En réalité, les épreuves spécifiques, la division au sein du Parti républicain et ses alliés qui règne dans l'environnement politique ont été des occasions saisies par les militants, ce qui a stimulé la mobilisation et conservé la perspective telle qu'observée par la CPAC.

Le chapitre étudie également la montée du populisme avec le *Tea Party*. Dans un article du *New Yorker* paru en février 2009 Ben McGrath explique que mouvement des *Tea Parties* ne peut donc être que l'ultime réincarnation d'un populisme qui a connu des périodes favorables avant ça. (McGrath, 2010) Quand les figures des *Tea Parties* accusent la mainmise des nouveaux « barons voleurs » sur Washington, ils évoquent le discours de Franklin Roosevelt où il dénonce en 1936 les « monarchistes économiques ». Aujourd'hui, les *Tea Parties* nous rappellent pareillement le mouvement « nativiste » des années 1840 connu sous le nom des *Know Nothings*, qui dénonçait les idées de Marx et d'Engels importées par des immigrants socialistes, et accusait les immigrants irlandais de vouloir être loyaux au Pape.

Toutefois, le mouvement dispose autant d'aspects communs avec le *People's Party* des années 1890, un groupe de jeunes et de fermiers ensemble opposés au tripotage sur le chemin de fer, et aux satires de William Jennings Bryan. On suggère que le mouvement *Tea Party* adopte une idéologie de droite ou un pseudo-conservatisme, tel que défini par Richard Hofstadter, généralement marqué par le scepticisme et le ressentiment des autres groupes. Selon Richard Hofstadter, le mouvement a peu à peu commencé de marquer

un « filon paranoïaque » dans chacun de ses discours, typique de la controverse publique américaine. Une panique qui semble être parcouru de références à l'histoire des premières communautés puritaines de la Nouvelle-Angleterre qui étaient effrayées par la dissidence, ou encore les immigrants catholiques ignares des années 1930, sans oublier les communistes des années 1960.

Cependant le *Tea Party* se différencie assez clairement des moments populistes invoqués par McGrath, car contrairement aux épisodes de 1890 ou de 1936, les manifestants revendiquent non seulement plus de protection ou régulation, mais plus d'indépendance individuelle et plus de liberté pour les institutions locales à taille humaine face à la divulgation de surcharge de la bulle estimable. Là où Roosevelt déployait que, face à l'autocratie économique pratiquée par un groupe d'avantagés, seul l'appel au pouvoir gouvernemental structuré pouvait rétablir l'autonomie en résistant fortement contre les injustices, les leaders du mouvement actuels exigent que le gouvernement se retire autant que possible de leur vie quotidienne et dénoncent la tentative de « nationalisation » du système de santé. Pour Michael Tomasky, ce mouvement serait donc réellement inédit, donnant une version conservatrice de mouvements protestataires de masse qui jusque-là avaient tous été d'inspiration libérale. Bien que le mouvement *Tea Party* soit attaché à la politique américaine classique, il symbolise bien évidemment tout un phénomène original, que nul ne connaît jusqu'où il oserait tenir. Au fait, ce sont ces jugements, visant l'emploi de l'angoisse populaire par des groupes de pression et l'usage des médias conservateurs du Parti républicain dans les premiers mois, qui ont pu pourchasser les financements et les coalitions masqués.

Ces réflexions autour du rôle que joue un bon nombre d'associations affiliées, les rapports qu'elles maintiennent entre elles et leurs méthodes pour inciter et disposer les rassemblements de masse forment désormais un aspect très particulier du mouvement des *Tea Parties*. Les nouveaux systèmes de communion politique en ligne ont commencé avec *MoveOn.org* du flanc des démocrates lors de la fameuse affaire Lewinsky des années 1990, puis au moment de la campagne de John Kerry pour les élections primaires de 2004. Elles ont été ensuite rénovées lors de l'incontournable réussite des groupes de campagne électorale d'Obama en 2008. Aujourd'hui, ces techniques se

développent avec les *Tea Parties* et affirment leur efficacité. Ainsi, grâce aux différents réseaux sociaux et médias fédérateurs, le *Tea Party* est devenu une œuvre parfaite de la blogosphère. Le mouvement semble non seulement pouvoir encadrer des communications virales assez soigneusement afin de contrôler les messages, mais il a pu désigner ses propres boucliers figures ou journalistes émancipés tels que Sarah Palin, Glenn Beck ou encore Rick Santelli. L'univers solidement délocalisé des *Tea Parties* est incité par ce réseau d'organisations, qui en crée une coalition de manifestations centrales plutôt qu'une mobilisation organisée de haut.

Le mouvement des *Tea Parties* est indéniablement devenu plus populaire que les autres grands partis du pays. Selon David Brooks du *New York Times*, la décennie à venir pourrait bien marquer celle des hippies des années 1960, les féministes des années 1970, ou les conservateurs chrétiens des années 1980 (Brooks, 2010). Cependant, il pourrait facilement perdre cette popularité s'il voulait se transformer en une mouvance au sein des rangs du Parti Républicain. Le mouvement pourrait, même sans s'intercaler, continuer de former une influence évidente, incitant ainsi le Parti républicain à remettre en question son centre modéré.

Alors que le conservatisme est l'élément de soutien le plus puissant au mouvement *Tea Party*, l'hostilité raciale a également influencé leur soutien. La troisième partie de ce chapitre examine le ressentiment racial des activistes du *Tea Party* et décrit comment la rhétorique du *Tea Party* contemporain est enracinée dans la stratégie sudiste du républicain, essentielle pour comprendre les méthodes par lesquelles le *Tea Party* agit. On passe en revue l'extrémisme de droite dans l'histoire américaine. On analyse le contenu des sites Web du *Tea Party* pour démontrer comment le discours du *Tea Party* résonne avec l'idéologie conservatrice. En outre, on essaie d'examiner comment le *Tea Party* remet en question la légitimité de l'État américain. En fait, lorsque les participants au *Tea Party* accusent le gouvernement actuel de diverses formes de totalitarisme, ils soutiennent que cette administration n'a pas le droit d'imposer des taxes ou d'élaborer des politiques.

On considère comment des alliés et des personnalités politiques tels que Sarah Palin, Michelle Bachmann et John McCain ont donné de la crédibilité et

de la visibilité au mouvement, en créant à l'été 2010 un caucus chargé d'étudier les diverses demandes du mouvement. La crédibilité et la visibilité accordées au mouvement social par ces personnalités ne sont que des exemples du soutien des alliés extérieurs. Cependant, dans un tel phénomène décentralisé, d'autres acteurs sont susceptibles de jouer le rôle de soutien externe. Il y a donc lieu de croire que certains des candidats à la députation étaient également des alliés politiques. En fait, on discute plus en détail des relations entre le *Tea Party* et le Parti républicain dans la dernière partie du chapitre. La différence entre des candidats « extérieurs » et l'« Establishment » semble avoir atteint un objectif réalisable à court terme: élire des candidats partageant les idéaux du mouvement (Zernike, 2010).

Pendant que Barack Obama s'efforce depuis des mois à faire adopter ses projets sur la réforme du système d'assurance-maladie et que ce combat législatif est avec le temps devenu un test de son aptitude à administrer et à gérer les réformes ambitieuses qu'il a promises, le soixantième siège de Ted Kennedy a permis aux républicains de bloquer des propositions de lois par *filibuster* au Sénat. Cette victoire survient au moment où la Cour Suprême des États-Unis a remis un décret assez prodigieux, dans l'affaire *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, remaniant plusieurs décennies de mesures afin de limiter le pouvoir de l'argent dans les campagnes électorales.

La récente transformation des rangs du parti s'inscrit dans une ancienne traversée radicale datant depuis quarante ans. Centristes dans les années 1960, les républicains sont devenus conservateurs en 1980, ensuite ultraconservateurs à ce jour. Ils sont désormais absorbés par les libertariens du mouvement *Tea Party*, dont les consignes radicales ne font qu'accroître la crise économique. Nonobstant, le discours de cette ultra-droite attire une masse assez importante, appréhendant de perdre les principes fondateurs des États-Unis. Le reaganisme, encore remarquable depuis les années 1980, n'est donc plus divisé pour présenter des solutions à la crise actuelle. En 2010 comme en 2012, plusieurs représentants et sénateurs ultra-conservateurs avaient perdu face à des républicains centristes à la Chambre ont presque tous disparu depuis 1991.

Les conséquences de cette polarisation du GOP sont incontestables. Les républicains modérés ont tellement disparu que les démocrates modérés, se

retrouvant seuls, sont désormais impuissants face blocage institutionnel. Les élections présidentielles républicaines ont clairement exposé l'atmosphère qui règne désormais au sein du parti républicain. La douloureuse victoire d'Obama contre Romney en 2014, un centriste dans les années 1990 converti en conservateur en 2000, définit la résolution de l'ultra-droite d'écarter les modérés dans le Parti républicain.

Cependant, le Parti républicain considère cette radicalisation comme l'icône du conservatisme et serait même indispensable dans le schéma politique américain. En effet, comparé aux années 1990, le Parti républicain se radicalise face à tous les sujets. Ses leaders font tout pour soutenir l'attitude ultraconservatrice afin de maintenir le plus de sièges au Congrès, plutôt que de revenir au centre et aider à gouverner les institutions américaines. Les dirigeants conservateurs sont pointés du doigt suite à la déviation du parti de l'éléphant. Dans les années 1950, quand Joseph McCarthy s'était attaqué aux démocrates les accusant de communisme, les leaders républicains l'avaient condamné fermement. Aujourd'hui, quand le républicain Allen West en fait de même, les dirigeants du parti craignant clairement de provoquer la lueur de la base du parti contre eux (Blake, 2012).

Depuis les années 1980, le Parti républicain est dans une révolte permanente niant la conformité de son opposant politique, et exposant ainsi une obstruction d'esprit exceptionnelle. La plus récente montée des *Tea Parties* n'a fait qu'aggraver la situation quand on présume que les républicains pourraient incessamment gouverner un pays qu'ils ont déjà participé à mettre en difficulté.

De ce fait, le *Tea Party* était devenu un danger à la modernisation institutionnelle et idéologique du Parti républicain. À l'issue des primaires, la candidature de Mitt Romney a clairement souffert de l'exposition médiatique continue des conflits intérieurs au sein du GOP. Cette division qui existe aujourd'hui entre la base et l'« *Establishment* » lui ont rendu la tâche d'unir le parti plus difficile qu'elle ne l'avait été pour Obama, quand la même question s'était posée à la suite de sa victoire contre Hillary Clinton et les dangers d'une division chez les démocrates en 2008 (Persichino, 2013). Pour Barack Obama, les perspectives ont été ouvertes. En 2012, le fait que le parti républicain a dévié trop sur la droite, cela n'a pu que l'aider.

Les sénateurs élus étiquetés *Tea Party* ont donc été jugés, dans un Sénat à portée de main pour les républicains, sur leur capacité à préserver et à renforcer cette discipline ou cette cohérence. De fait, la capacité du Parti républicain à redevenir majoritaire au Sénat en 2012 a été fondée sur la volonté des sénateurs soutenus par les *Tea Parties* à se fondre dans le moule institutionnel et partisan et à jouer selon les règles strictes de l'institution; dans les deux chambres du Congrès, les élus des *Tea Parties* ont représenté un groupe significatif, mais dont le pouvoir est resté faible, vu leur absence d'ancienneté et donc leur rang peu élevé à la fois dans les commissions ou dans le leadership du Parti républicain. Par ailleurs, un chiffre dit à lui seul combien la majorité républicaine à la Chambre des représentants est plus le résultat d'un parti qui choisit ses électeurs que celui d'électeurs qui choisissent un parti : en 2012, à l'échelle nationale, les candidats démocrates ont en effet recueilli plus d'un million et demi de scrutins de plus que les candidats républicains. (Michelot, 2013)

Souvent, l'interaction entre un parti politique et un mouvement social est généralement complexe et contradictoire. On analyse l'interaction entre le *Tea Party* et le Parti républicain en termes d'opportunités, en montrant que les tensions internes de 2009 et 2010 pourraient expliquer l'effet du parti républicain sur la mobilisation des militants du mouvement. On montre à quel point les tensions au sein du parti ont favorisé de nouvelles idées, alors que les députés cherchaient à obtenir un nouveau soutien qui les conduira finalement à être élus. On montre également comment les tensions entre républicains modérés et républicains conservateurs ont contribué à nourrir la montée du *Tea Party*.

Une question clé posée dans cette étude est de savoir si le mouvement *Tea Party* est une nouvelle force dans la politique américaine ou s'il s'agit simplement de l'expression la plus récente, et peut-être même la plus forte, du changement de droite de longue date du Parti républicain - un changement qui être perçu comme faisant partie d'un développement plus large vers une polarisation partisane croissante dans la politique américaine (Bafumi, 2009).

Pour soutenir l'argument selon lequel la mobilisation du *Tea Party* a été facilitée par cette tension, une dernière section du chapitre fournit des liens



vers des données provenant à la fois du *New York Times* et de la mobilisation. En bref, le nombre croissant d'articles impliquant une tension entre le Parti républicain et le *Tea Party* au milieu d'une transformation de la mobilisation renforce l'idée qu'il y avait suffisamment de signes indiquant que les militants pourraient être efficaces, en particulier pendant les élections. On examine les facteurs auxquels les républicains avaient été confrontés en faveur de l'ouverture à une possible union avec le *Tea Party* (Karpowitz, 2011). Bien que l'ouverture au *Tea Party* ait offert une nouvelle perspective aux républicains, on questionne cette ouverture et les intérêts divergents des deux parties. Par conséquent, on discute des risques associés à cette ouverture. Bien que le *Tea Party* se soit concentré sur l'autonomie du Parti républicain, était-il favorable à l'adoption de ce type de relation à long terme ?

Dans le même but, on explore comment les républicains ont viré à la droite en raison des revendications écrasantes du *Tea Party* concernant l'immigration, la fiscalité et les problèmes sociaux. En fait, la montée du *Tea Party* a rendu les républicains encore plus énergiques dans leur opposition, devenant plus que jamais le «parti du non». Ils luttent contre toutes les politiques démocratiques, affectant le fonctionnement du Congrès américain et d'autres institutions.

Cette thèse conclut que le cadre politique américain a considérablement changé au cours des dernières décennies. Le rôle des partis politiques locaux dans le choix des candidats, la mobilisation des membres de la circonscription et la transmission des opinions a diminué. Les groupes d'intérêts organisés, ainsi que les médias, transmettent aux électeurs le message des partis politiques et des candidats. Les différents appuis financiers ont radicalement modifié les relations entre les instances politiques, les candidats et les électeurs. La montée des sections locales d'organisations de groupes d'intérêts au cours des deux dernières décennies implique simplement que le peuple américain ne considère plus les partis traditionnels comme un outil politique approprié à leurs préoccupations. Ils se concentrent sur l'évolution des politiques nationales et des états et sur l'élection de candidats locaux. Cela s'explique par la mobilité accrue des militants de base représentant généralement la classe moyenne.

Les organisations idéologiques qui protestent contre l'« Establishment » ont souvent un impact sur l'électorat bien meilleur que celui des partis politiques. Au cours des trois dernières conventions républicaines, des groupes conservateurs ont tiré le parti vers l'extrême droite. Les groupes de droite ont trouvé cette méthode plus attrayante et sont donc mieux organisés au niveau local, en particulier pendant les campagnes électorales, que les groupes de gauche. Au cours des dix dernières années, les groupes de droite ont œuvré au renforcement de leurs organisations nationales. Par conséquent, le contexte avantageux de ces facteurs a été un « catalyseur » dans la montée des mouvements conservateurs en général et du *Tea Party* en particulier. Les membres des groupes du *Tea Party* étaient concentrés géographiquement et aspiraient à consacrer beaucoup de temps et d'énergie à différentes campagnes qui donnaient plus d'importance et d'influence à l'ensemble du mouvement. Les foules de *Tea Party* ont été identifiées par leurs vêtements conservateurs traditionnels et communs, laissant supposer que ceux qui s'habillent différemment ne leur appartiennent pas.

En effet, le conservatisme a augmenté après la Seconde Guerre mondiale dans de nombreux domaines politiques et culturels restructurant la vie américaine. Il a connu des changements cruciaux, en particulier depuis l'élection de Ronald Reagan jusqu'à son mandat présidentiel dans les années 1980, puis dans le contrat de 1994 avec l'Amérique pour l'élection de Barack Obama en 2008. L'étude de la droite à partir de la base impliquait l'idée les bailleurs de fonds d'élite, les groupes de réflexion et les organisations bien financés étaient tous des éléments clés expliquant l'émergence politique de la droite. Ce concept peut également être appliqué aux manifestations de droite récentes telles que le mouvement *Tea Party*, qui attribue son ascension à des partisans de la droite tels que les frères Koch et des personnalités des médias. Cependant, bien que ces bailleurs de fonds aient certainement contribué de différentes manières à la montée en puissance et à la visibilité du mouvement, on ne doit jamais négliger le fait que le conservatisme populaire a toujours été une idéologie enracinée dans la nation.

Les perspectives politiques de la mobilisation du *Tea Party* avaient influencé le développement du mouvement. Bien que la droite ait perdu

plusieurs campagnes législatives ou électorales, ses décideurs ont acquis une expérience reconnue dans la formation, l'engagement et la mobilisation de leurs partisans. Aujourd'hui, les groupes de réflexion de droite semblent contrôler les débats publics américains sur de nombreuses questions allant de l'aide sociale à la fiscalité et à l'immigration. Le conservatisme du *Tea Party* adopte un nouveau discours qui rejoint en réalité de nombreuses sphères de la vie publique américaine: il cherche à réduire le rôle du gouvernement fédéral; éliminer le *New Deal*, renforcer le marché libre dans la vie économique; et construire une vie sociale basée sur les associations et la communauté. La situation s'est aggravée parce que le gouvernement, au lieu de protéger les libertés individuelles et les choix personnels, a tenté de réduire ou d'éliminer la pauvreté par le biais d'une redistribution fondée sur le gouvernement. C'est en fait cette « prudence rationnelle » qui a permis à l'idéologie conservatrice de devenir « dominante ».

Les élections de 2012 illustrent la profonde division de la société américaine entre les États libéraux (par exemple, le nord-est, la côte ouest et certains États de l'Ouest et du Midwest) et les régions très conservatrices du Sud et des zones rurales. Une ventilation des votes par état et par pays met en évidence les schémas de vote très différents entre les électeurs urbains et ruraux, les électeurs jeunes et âgés, les électeurs religieux et non religieux, les électeurs blancs et minoritaires, et les électeurs femmes et hommes. Ces schémas reflètent des visions différentes de la société américaine et de son avenir.

Le *Tea Party*, en tant que mouvement de droite contemporain, partage régulièrement avec les anciens groupes les principales convictions de l'extrémisme de droite. Anciens et nouveaux partagent leur penchant pour la préservation du statu quo et le ressentiment face aux changements sociaux, démographiques et politiques, en essayant de mener la politique dans une campagne du bien contre le mal ou du « Blanc » contre l'«Autre», qu'ils décrivent comme "l'ennemi." Bien que le *Tea Party* soit considéré comme l'aile conservatrice du parti républicain, le conservatisme n'est pas leur seul moteur. Les partisans du *Tea Party* s'inquiètent principalement de la redistribution des richesses, telle que la sécurité sociale ou les soins de santé

pour tous, et des dépenses consacrées à l'éducation publique dans une Amérique nouvelle et «socialiste».

Les caractéristiques structurelles de l'État-providence américain militent contre une expansion majeure du gouvernement, en soi. En fait, nous avons décrit les dépenses de protection sociale depuis sa création aux États-Unis dans le deuxième chapitre. Nous avons suggéré que les dépenses d'assistance sociale existantes sont environ 50 fois supérieures à celles du début du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle et environ 5 à 7 fois supérieures à celles du New Deal. C'est aussi une question essentielle pour savoir si le niveau des dépenses de protection sociale est élevé ou insuffisant, mais dans les deux cas, les dépenses de protection sociale ont maintenant remplacé les dépenses de défense en tant que principal enjeu budgétaire aux États-Unis. En fait, le *Tea Party* soutient que le bien-être social américain actuel est «excessif» ou «improductif» ou se fait au détriment de quelque chose d'autre. Les dépenses consacrées à la défense et aux affaires sociales représentent 72% du budget total des dépenses publiques.

Comme dans d'autres domaines, tels que celui de l'éducation, les conservateurs défendent fermement l'idée d'une combinaison pluraliste de services publics et privés comme une caractéristique primordiale du bien-être social américain. Ils estiment que les institutions privées de protection sociale coexistent avec celles du secteur public. La protection sociale américaine a une noble tradition selon laquelle des groupes de citoyens volontaires prennent l'initiative de résoudre les problèmes locaux. Aujourd'hui, des groupes de bénévoles privés fournissent des services précieux aux patients atteints du sida, aux sans-abri, aux immigrants, aux victimes de violence domestique et aux réfugiés. Le bien-être social est devenu une grande entreprise. Au cours des trente dernières années, le nombre de sociétés de services à la personne - des entreprises à but lucratif assurant la protection sociale par le biais du marché - a considérablement augmenté. Pour de nombreux professionnels de l'aide sociale, la privatisation des services sociaux est préoccupante, car elle se produit à un moment où le gouvernement a réduit son engagement en faveur des programmes sociaux. Cependant, les sociétés de services à la personne continueront probablement d'être des acteurs de premier plan dans l'élaboration des politiques de protection sociale du pays. Tant que la culture

américaine sera démocratique et capitaliste, les entrepreneurs seront libres d'établir des services de protection sociale dans le secteur privé, à la fois en tant qu'organismes à but non lucratif et en tant que sociétés à but lucratif. L'économie sociale mixte des États-Unis, dans laquelle coexistent les secteurs associatifs, gouvernementaux et des entreprises, pose de sérieuses questions à la politique de protection sociale.

Les preuves présentées au quatrième chapitre montrent que le mouvement *Tea Party* n'a pas émergé brusquement dans le paysage politique américain en 2009 en réaction au programme politique libéral proposé par le président Obama et les représentants démocrates. C'était plutôt le développement normal d'un conservatisme croissant parmi les activistes du parti républicain au cours des décennies précédentes. En 2009, une large base conservatrice de militants républicains était prête à se mobiliser avec le soutien d'importantes organisations conservatrices et de différents réseaux de médias.

Même si plus de cinq pour cent des Américains en âge de voter ont douteusement participé à une manifestation au *Tea Party* ou ont donné de l'argent à une organisation du *Tea Party*, plus d'un cinquième des Américains ont soutenu le mouvement du *Tea Party*. Cette base de partisans du *Tea Party* américain comprenait énormément d'électorats blancs, masculins, plutôt âgés et plus religieux. Nous avons constaté que les identifiants républicains actifs partagent effectivement les mêmes caractéristiques.

En effet, les partisans du *Tea Party* se sont remarquablement identifiés à l'idéologie et à la politique du Parti républicain, beaucoup plus conservateurs que le grand public et des républicains modérés sur différentes questions économiques et sociales. En outre, les partisans du *Tea Party* ont clairement révélé un niveau de ressentiment racial plus élevé avec une vision négative du président Obama par rapport au grand public et aux républicains modérés. Notre analyse a révélé que le ressentiment racial à l'égard de Barack Obama, ainsi que le conservatisme, étaient les facteurs les plus importants du soutien politique au mouvement *Tea Party*.

Les partisans du *Tea Party* sont restés très motivés pour résister et éliminer le programme politique d'Obama. Comme ils représentaient à peu près

la moitié des identificateurs républicains et la majorité des républicains actifs, le mouvement du *Tea Party* est désormais en mesure d'influencer les primaires républicaines au Congrès et à la présidence républicaine en 2012. Les candidats à la présidence républicaine devaient redoubler d'efforts pour attirer les partisans du *Tea Party*. Cependant, il était encore plus difficile pour les mêmes candidats républicains d'attirer l'autre faction d'électeurs plus modérés aux élections générales

Le mouvement *Tea Party* a remodelé l'idéologie républicaine conservatrice en mobilisant la base par des méthodes novatrices. Fondamentalement, le *Tea Party* a permis de redéfinir le conservatisme et a fourni aux militants un critère idéal de mobilisation soutenue. L'attitude insaisissable «révolutionnaire» a frappé en cette période de confusion économique. Bien que le *Tea Party* s'oppose toujours à l'administration Obama, cette représentation commune a permis aux partisans du marché libre et aux médias conservateurs de mobiliser la base et de bloquer un programme démocrate libéral. (Skocpol, 2016)

Loin d'être une éruption politique, E.J. Dionne, chroniqueur au *Washington Post*, a affirmé que le mouvement menaçait également l'unité des républicains : « L'essor du mouvement du *Tea Party* est un retour à une ancienne forme de libertarisme qui voit la plupart des politiques intérieures entreprises par le gouvernement depuis le New Deal comme inconstitutionnel. Il perçoit généralement les menaces les plus dangereuses pour la liberté comme la conception d'élitistes bien éduqués, déconnectés des « valeurs américaines ».

Avec la montée du *Tea Party*, soutenir les mauvais candidats a eu des effets désastreux sur le parti républicain. Les candidats non conformistes, qui n'avaient pas d'attachement personnel envers les chefs d'établissement, étaient capables de jouer le rôle de médiateurs, mais ils ne pouvaient pas se doter d'une base de pouvoir indépendante. Les attachements personnels des non-conformistes avec le *Tea Party* ont joué contre le Parti républicain et sa principale puissance.

Cependant, la motivation du parti républicain de récompenser son dévouement et son engagement envers le parti plutôt que tout autre groupe l'a

rendu plus facile pour décourager les liens extra-partis, le leadership du parti républicain ayant été délégué à un nombre limité d'élus tels que Sénateurs et Gouverneurs clés. Dans son discours à la réunion du parti démocrate, le gouverneur de New York, Mario Cuomo, a accusé le parti républicain de maintenir des politiques qui « divisent la nation - les plus chanceux et les laissés pour compte, la royauté et la canaille ».

Après le scandale du Watergate, le parti républicain était très préoccupé par la réintégration du parti et par la rénovation de son image plutôt que par la modification des programmes. C'est pourquoi il a beaucoup insisté sur la victoire aux élections et sur sa promotion. Par exemple, le parti s'est officiellement opposé à l'amendement relatif à l'égalité des droits, mais a affirmé qu'il défendait l'égalité des droits pour les femmes.

Le parti républicain a utilisé la technologie moderne pour générer un processus de publipostage très sophistiqué et de l'argent pour recruter et former des candidats lors de campagnes électorales. En outre, il a dirigé une base financière importante et un personnel permanent important vers les organisations du parti afin d'intensifier les efforts d'inscription des électeurs. Ce large éventail de ressources a aidé le parti républicain à renforcer les États parties au parti républicain, unis par une idéologie commune. Le *Tea Party* a constamment reflété un ensemble d'intérêts communs et la façon dont le Parti républicain a réagi à son émergence a déterminé l'avenir du parti. Aujourd'hui, malgré tout, le parti républicain compte toujours beaucoup sur l'engagement de volontaires. Le recrutement de blocs utilise généralement des réseaux préexistants de personnes partageant des convictions communes par le biais des médias et du publipostage. Pour survivre, le parti républicain devrait se renouveler en recrutant de nouveaux partisans et en conservant le dévouement des anciens.