

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of Arts and English Language



**British Conservatism and its Ideological Foundations:
A Historical Perspective**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

Abou Obeida Tarbakh
Nabil Berretima

Supervised by:

Dr. Adel Djeribiai

Board of Examiners:

Dr. Anad Ahmed

Dr. Adel Djeribiai

Dr. Adel Boulekhsaiem

President

Supervisor

Examiner

University of El-Oued

University of El-Oued

University of El-Oued

Academic year: 2023/2024

Dedication

We dedicate this modest work to
Our dear parents for their assistance and constant support;
Our whole families.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the help and advice of a number of teachers in the preparation of this dissertation. Dr. Adel Djeribiai, in particular, deserves our thanks for giving us the benefit of his long and varied experience. A similar vote of thanks goes to our respected teachers; Dr. Chaima Mennai, Dr. Afaf Megaa, and others for their assistance and for their time they devoted to benefit us (online or in classrooms).

Abstract

Britain has a significant political, economic and cultural heritage not only among countries of European continent, but also among the nations of the world. Despite the fact that United Kingdom is historically marked by its adherence to conservative values and thoughts which are shown in different socio-political and economic manifestations, the ideological framework poses challenges in conceptualising conservatism due to its reactionary natures and the adaptability in response to the existing shifts in societal and political dispositions. The present study aims to scrutinise and investigate the nature of conservatism in its ideological niche, and to explore chronologically its perspectives and the implications of historical contexts in shaping and outlining its framework. A descriptive-analytical methodology is adopted in which this research gathers mostly secondary data through the examination of historical and political texts and writings. The findings reveal that while the history has been experiencing a lot of shifts, the conservative strands have been shaping and been shaped to thoroughly conceptualise the conservative thoughts accordingly.

Keywords: Conceptualizing, Conservatism, Historical, Ideological, Reactionary.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full Name
NHS	National Health Service
UK	The United Kingdom
US	The United States

Table of Contents

Dedication	I
Acknowledgements.....	II
Abstract.....	III
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	IV
Table of Contents	V
General Introduction	1

CHAPTER ONE:

Conservatism is an Ideology

Introduction:.....	5
1.The Definition of Ideology	5
2. Conservatism is an Ideology.....	6
3. Conservatism and Counterrevolution Relationship	9
4. The Impact of Counterrevolution on Conservative Principles	13
Conclusion	15

CHAPTER TWO:

The Impact of British-European Historical Contexts on Conceptualizing British Conservative Thought

Introduction.....	16
1.The Origins of Conservatism.....	17
2. Perspectives on Conservatism	18
2.1. Traditional Conservatism	18
2.1.1. French Revolution and Reflections on Revolution in France.....	18
2.1.2. Why does Edmund Burke matter?	22
2.2. Traditional Conservatism Reforms	23
2.2.1. Why Does Benjamin Disraeli Matter?.....	24
2.2.2. One Nation Conservatism.....	26
2.3.The New Right	28
2.3.1. Emergence of the New Right.....	28

2.3.2. The New Right Rejections of some Conservative Principles	30
2.3.3. The New Right Relationship with Conservative Tradition.	32
Conclusion	34

CHAPTER THREE:

Dialectics of Change, Liberal Ideas, and Narrow-Mindedness in Conservatism

Introduction.....	35
1.Conservatism and The Conception of Change.....	35
2.The Relationship with Liberalism.....	38
3.Less Structured Ideology and Narrow -Mindedness: Conception or Misconception	40
Conclusion	41
General Conclusion.....	43
References.....	44

General Introduction

Background of the Study

Conservatism is one of the major intellectual and political types of thought in Western culture over the last three centuries. And mainly in the United Kingdom, it originated as a 'reaction' to the radical, liberal and, later, socialist movements during the early period of industrialisation in Britain and Europe. Conservatism remains a powerful ideological force in the United Kingdom today. However, this tendency requires further insights into its intellectual and historical roots which are traced back to the eighteenth century until its evolution in the early twenty-first century. Considerable attention, beside its historical experiences, is given to the political and historical analysis that contribute to conceptualise the conservative thoughts in its ideological framework as represented and practiced by particular individual thinkers.

Statement of the Problem

The conceptualisation of Conservatism as an ideology poses a number of challenges, due to its reactionary nature and lack of consistency. Consequently, to fully understand its ideological foundations and its implications in the British policies, it is necessary to conduct a historical and political analysis, tracing its trajectory. In this context, T. S. Eliot in *Literature of Politics*, 1955 (as cited in Corey,2011) pointed out:

"A political party may find that it has had a history, before it is fully aware of or agreed upon its own permanent tenets; it may have arrived at its actual formation through a succession of metamorphoses and adaptations, during which some issues have been superannuated and new issues have arisen. What its fundamental tenets are, will probably be found only by careful examination of its behaviour throughout its history and by examination of what its

more thoughtful and philosophical minds have said on its behalf; and only accurate historical knowledge and judicious analysis will be able to discriminate between the permanent and the transitory; between those doctrines and principles which it must ever, and in all circumstances, maintain, or manifest itself a fraud, and those called forth by special circumstances, which are only intelligible and justifiable in the light of those circumstances."

Thus, it is evident that there is a necessity to further studies to explore and investigate the nature of conservatism in Britain, as it should be carried out in its historical contexts, and its implications since then, until contemporary times on British's societal and political spheres.

Research Questions and Research Hypotheses

The study attempts to answer the following questions :

- To what extent is conservatism defined as an ideology?
- Has conservatism got a singular definition that remains consistent throughout history?
- To what extent have the historical contexts influenced the conceptualization of conservatism?
- Which has got a great impact on which, political history or conservatism?
- To what extent do the conservative ideological strands agree and disagree?

It has been hypothesized that:

- Conservatism may be generally and broadly considered as an ideology.
- Despite the fact that conservatism has got consistent core ideas and thoughts, some principles may vary reflecting the cultural, political and economic changes.
- Some historical milestones might have influenced the conceptualization of conservatism.
- Political historical contexts can have profound impact upon conservatism which seeks to resist and preserve existing order.

- The conservative strands may well agree on the importance of status quo and disagree on the extent of the state intervention and individual freedom.

Aims of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine conservatism as an ideology in a bit of depth. It involves investigating its various definitions and interpretations within British context, the influence of historical contexts on its conceptualization and the extent to which both historical contexts and conservatism react and reflect on the basis of reciprocity.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is to help better understand the current societal and political formulation of UK. Besides, it may dissolve a lot of complexities in terms of ideologies within the British policies or even beyond, given the fact that it has an international implication via several means. It might also be utilized as secondary data or literature.

Research Methodology

The case, which is under investigation in this study, involves historical and political subjects. Hence, the study of conservatism is bound to be analytical and historical at once. In fact, this study is descriptive-analytic in nature which plans to analyse the information obtained by identifying it in terms of different interrelated themes which in their turn are explained to show their effects on the situation under study. The instruments of the study based on secondary data; it has already existed in earlier researches, records and documents, but need to be carefully scrutinised.

The Structure of the Study

The structure of our study is thoughtfully divided into three chapters, each addressing a distinct aspect of British conservatism. **Chapter One: ‘Conservatism is an Ideology?’** begins by examining the concept of political ideology, providing substantial definitions to facilitate an investigation into the debate surrounding conservatism as an ideology. It sheds light on the nature of conservatism as a counterrevolutionary thought in contrast to other ideologies, such as socialism and liberalism. The chapter concludes by articulating the core themes and ideas inherent in traditional Conservatism. **Chapter Two: ‘The Impact of British-European Historical Contexts on Conceptualizing British Conservative Thought’** examines the significant influence of British-European historical events that generates variations of conservative thought and it demonstrates the analytical study through the evolution of conservatism in the UK. It starts with an emergence of Traditional Conservatism as a reaction on the revolution in France, highlighting the contributions of founding-thinker, Edmund Burke who also put this theory in practice. Then, Benjamin Disraeli's reforms that led to transitions and the transformation of the Burke's Traditional Conservatism to One-Nation Conservatism, and finally it addresses the emergence of The New Right or the modern conservatism. In **chapter three**, which is entitled with "**The Dialectics of Change and Conservatism relationship with liberal ideas**" we will discuss the most important dialectics in the political debate and analysis that are associated with British conservatism, which is very often characterised as a contradictory ideology in its adoption of some opposing conceptions: status quo and change, conservative values and liberal values, and well-structured ideology and narrow-mindedness.

CHAPTER ONE

Conservatism is an Ideology

Chapter One: Conservatism is an Ideology

Introduction:.....	5
1.The Definition of Ideology	5
2. Conservatism is an Ideology.....	7
3. Conservatism and Counterrevolution Relationship	9
4. The Impact of Counterrevolution on Conservative Principles	12
Conclusion	15

Introduction:

Many political figures argue that all people are born political thinkers. People embrace political ideas and concepts whenever they express their opinions or speak their minds. Furthermore, in everyday life they frequently use terms such as freedom, fairness, equality, justice and rights. In the same way, principles or thoughts that pertain to, for instance, conservative, liberal, fascist, socialist or feminist are unconsciously or consciously employed in some extents by people to describe their own views. Such terms are familiar, but when it comes to truly political sense they are hardly well understood. Generally, everyone knows for instance what "equality" means. But in the political context, it may confuse and be debatable, that implies a lot of critical questions. Similarly, words such as Conservatism, Liberalism, Fascism, Socialism or Feminism are commonly misused. So, in this chapter, we will examine Conservatism from the perspective of its key ideological foundation and its historical evolution in the United Kingdom. It is also necessary to observe that there are some principles or concepts which are so fundamental to be characterised. Even though it is a challenging task, we assume that it is possible to examine what conservatism is if we first discuss some of the problems of the standard definition of the word 'ideology' as far as conservatism is concerned.

1.The Definition of Ideology

The term 'Ideology' was coined in 1796 by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836). He used it to refer to a new or novel 'science of ideas' (literally, an idea-ology) that set out to uncover the origins of conscious thought and ideas. During the French revolution (May 5, 1789 – Nov 9, 1799), the term was employed as a pejorative term to describe opponents of the Napoleonic regime. In classical views, it was suggested that ideology has had a negative or pejorative connotation, associated with blinkered dogmatization, extremism and illusion, (McLennan, 1986). This is one of the major reasons why some conservatives reject the idea of defining conservatism an ideology. As the concept, ideology emerged in the writings of Marx and Engels as reference to the false ideas of the oppressive or ruling class.

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force in society, is at the same time the ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of mental production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production. (Marx and Engels, 1846)

Later, the concept moved to positive connotation as described in Lenin's writings where it was employed to represent the ideas of the oppressed class. The synthesis of those two contradictory aforementioned articulations of ideology, as presented by Kenneth Minogue, is that ideology is

'a form of social analysis which discovers that human beings are the victims of an oppressive system, and that the business of life is liberation.' (Minogue, 2017)

Although the term has known that evolution, now it tends to be used in a neutral sense to refer to a developed social philosophy or world-view which constitute a coherent and well-established set and collections of fixed values, principles, and ideas such as freedom, equality, order and justice that proposes a specific social desirable change and includes a 'blueprint' for a future idealised society.

An ideology is a set of ideas by which men posit, explain and justify the ends and means of organized social action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given social order (Seliger, 1976, p. 14).

Based on that definition to ideology, many writers agree that the most influential and successful ideologies have included, for example, socialism, fascism, feminism and radical forms of liberalism and nationalism. However, not all writers and politicians have included conservatism thereof, this basically provokes us to ask the question to which extent we can even describe conservatism an ideology in the British context.

2. Conservatism is an Ideology

Huntington in his book " Conservatism as an Ideology" states:

Conservatism does not ask ultimate questions and hence does not give final answers. But it does remind men of the institutional prerequisites of social order. (Huntington, 1957)

Based on the quote above, we are going to address a critical question about beliefs within Conservative thought as it is very different from the other political ideologies. This question is essential at the start of our study before we go deeply in conceptualizing what conservatism really means. Basically, at this moment our major concern is the extent to which conservatism can be regarded as an ideology?

In fact, the question is not so easy to answer owing to a lot of historical, political and ideological complexities and factors that pertain to conservatism.

Apart from what we mentioned earlier, that one of the problems associated with conservatism is that –some- conservatives themselves commonly deny that it is an ideology (Kirk, 1982,). However, for years, a number of different political philosophers and theorists have posited this question as to whether or not Conservatism is an ideology. Some of them claimed that it should not be labelled as an ideology since it is not always coherent due to its reactionary nature .That is, it exists as a reaction to radical political movements. And this, to some critics, articulated the lack of consistency which disqualifies it from being an ideology. In other words, the extent to which it has got a single coherent set of principles in and of itself, which necessarily implies that "*for an ideology to be an ideology, it requires a constant coherency of its values and principles*". Michael Oakeshott clearly suggests and argues that conservatism could be seen as "*more psychology than ideology*."

Now, what they mean by this? The term Psychology involves the state of mind or behaviour that is influenced and reflected by the life and area surroundings. To Michael Oakeshott, so is conservatism. This resulted from the tendency and disposition of reflections and reactions to different political movements and historical developments that occurred. Traditional conservatism, for example, existed as a reaction to the revolutions in Europe, in Britain and France as well as in the

United States. Before that time, Thomas Hobbes, who was not a conservative in its true sense because conservatism did not really emerge as an ideological framework back then, was writing during the period of the English Civil War (Aug 22, 1642 – Sep 3, 1651) and the English Revolution (1688–1689). It is evident that he was also very critical as shown in his writings that were reactionary to that period of time. Edmund Burke, also had a lot of pieces of writing as reactions to both France and the American Revolution which we will study next chapter. Yet, to claim conservatism as an ideology with key principles and ideas and what really conservatism seeks to do might still be misunderstood.

Other theorists tried to articulate principles to conservatism that are inferred from conservatives' actions and reactions. They argue that Conservative principles are therefore rationalisations of class interest, the defence of the status quo and existing property, rights, and there is little point in seeking any more logical coherence or long-term consistency in conservatism. As one recent critic has concluded 'Selfishness is the rationale of their politics, and they have no other rationale.' (Honderich, 1990)

So they come to this conclusion, the idea of conservatism is not necessarily categorized as an ideology because of the fact that it does not really reflect a number of common fixed key principles, and Conservative thought will be very different from one century to another, or even from one part of the world to another. And so often it is inspired by what come from outside its circle.

A counterclaim to what mentioned above, a number of people would disagree with this, of course this is not something that is universally accepted by everybody, by the argument that conditions "*it has not necessarily got any underlying principles is leading it being no more ideology*" is also just the case for other political ideologies! for example, liberalism, a number of principles within their frameworks have been flexible and to some extent adaptable. To clarify, Liberalism 200 years ago is very different to what liberalism is today. That is why neoliberalism even exists to try and accommodate. Therefore, the idea of modern liberalism is being too different to the political classical

liberalism that existed in the time of John Locke. In a similar way that conservatism reacted against radical political change, Neoliberalism reacted against radical political liberalism.

Secondly, we mentioned when we attempted to provide a comprehensive definition to ideology that there is little scholarly consensus on what ideology means. This makes conservatism, to some extents based on some definitions, a concrete ideology. Moreover, as we shall see later, that it formulates its own body of distinct common broad ideas and themes which appear fixed and consistent such as; reactionary and counterrevolutionary nature, pragmatic view, scepticism view of radical changes and often of human nature.

As a conclusion, as we move on in this study through the investigation of the varieties of conservatism and the principles that have varied in importance at different time, we are reaching a compromise to consider it as an ideology.

One of the most fundamental principles that gave birth to an ideologised conservatism is a counterrevolutionary view.

3. Conservatism and Counterrevolution Relationship

We are still investigating the meaning of conservatism in this part, we are looking for it in two opposing concepts; revolution and counterrevolution. Because it is impossible to define conservatism without relating it to counter-revolution conception.

Conservatives are often described as reactionaries and counter-revolutionists. in the sense of wishing to put the time back to allow the restoration of some previous institutional order or regime,

As O'Sullivan puts it in his introduction to the 'philosophy of imperfection':

conservatism as an ideology, then, is characterized in the first instance, by opposition to the idea of total or radical change, and not by the absurd idea of opposition to change as such, or by any commitment to preserving all existing institutions. (O'Sullivan, 1976)

British conservatives might be referred as counter-revolutionists in the more literal sense of reacting against claims made by their opponents, whose interests are essentially bound up with the status quo. In the seventeenth century, for example, they were reacting against the Puritan revolution and assault on the authority of the Church in general and bishops in particular, against the limits the parliamentary opposition to the Stuarts wished to place on royal authority, and against new sources of income and wealth which appeared to threaten their interests.

Eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century conservatism can be seen more generally as a counterrevolutionary attitude against the major upheavals and developments in the western world over that period. Here, there is a clear contrast with liberalism. Liberalism was a product of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the American and French Revolutions, as well as of industrial capitalism.

Edmund Burke (1729-97) played a leading reactionary role against some of the major developments of his time, most notably the ideas associated with the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. However, in many ways, he is a strange figure to be regarded as one of the founding fathers of British conservatism. He was for most of his life a significant Whig politician, regarding himself as a Whig to his death. Like all Whigs but what split Burke from his old Whig friends was the French Revolution because some Whigs greeted this with enthusiasm. Burke on the other side was horrified from the French revolution from the start, and wrote his *Reflections on the French Revolution* in response (1790). At the time this was regarded by his former colleagues as a betrayal of the principles he had formerly stood for. But Burke emphasized the distinction between conservative ideas behind the English Revolution of 1688 from the more radical ideas behind the French Revolution:

The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution [i.e. 1688] and do now wish, to derive all we possess as an inheritance from our forefathers. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to

inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformation we have hitherto made have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority and example. (Burke, 1975, p. 296)

This is significant for understanding some of values of conservative ideology. There is reference to the importance of inheritance from the past, and reverence for tradition and authority. There is a clear preference for gradualism over radical change. Reforms must be carefully made onto the existing political and social system .

Michael Oakeshott, an influential modern defender of conservatism, has written eloquently on what he calls the ‘conservative disposition’, and more particularly on the conservative attitude to change and innovation. ‘*To be conservative,*’ he suggests, ‘*is to prefer the known to the unknown, to prefer the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded . . .*’. Because the conservative enjoys the present and he is generally unwilling to change. ‘*Consequently, he will find small and slow changes more tolerable than large and sudden; and he will value highly every appearance of continuity.*’ Proposed innovations should be assessed cautiously. ‘*Innovation entails certain loss and possible gain, therefore, the onus of proof, to show that the proposed change may be expected to be on the whole beneficial, rests with the would-be innovator.*’ Innovations which appear to grow out of the present, which are in response to some specific defect, which are ‘*small and limited*’, and which are slow rather than rapid, should be preferred. ‘*The man of conservative temperament believes that a known good is not lightly to be surrendered for an unknown better.*’ (Oakeshott, 1962)

From those points of views, they showed counterrevolutionary thrust of conservative thought and disposition, from the French Revolution until today.

From Burke's point of view and other conservatives, counterrevolution implies disapproval, shock, fear which imposes on them a resistance to any radical change that tends to include unfamiliarity.

'Ever since Edmund Burke invented conservatism as an idea, the conservative has styled himself a man of prudence and moderation, his cause a sober—and sobering—recognition of limits. 'To be conservative,' as Michael Oakeshott declared, 'is to prefer the familiar to the unknown, to prefer the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant.' Yet the political efforts that have roused the conservative to his most profound reflections—the reactions against the French and Bolshevik revolutions.'

Considering all above, understanding the concept of counterrevolution and the other terms such as; reaction and response which are used interchangeably gives us a clearer sense of what conservatism is about. It is true that conservatism is an ideology of reaction and counterrevolution, originally against the French Revolution and other radical reforms. However, that reaction has not been defence of an unchanging old regime, this reactionary imperative presses conservatism in two rather different directions: First, to a reconfiguration of the old regime; and second, to an absorption of the ideas and tactics of the revolution or reform it opposes. Thus, what conservatism seeks to accomplish through that reconfiguration of the old and absorption of the new is to make privilege popular and to transform an old regime into a dynamic, which later termed as a new old regime.

As a conclusion, the conservative perspective on social change does not hold that any and all change is necessarily ruinous. It is possible to improve conditions of life, but the revolutionary road will not provide deliverance. Indeed, revolution becomes for the conservative something 'unthinkable', a horrific analogy in Scruton's (2001), 'murdering a sick mother out of impatience to snatch some rumoured infant from her womb'.

4. The Impact of Counterrevolution on Conservative Principles

Despite the claim that the main themes and key terms, that define conservatism, varied in importance at different times, there are some broad themes are commonly inferred as an outcome of reactions and response to French revolution in order to create a body of ideas or rather an ideology, that could be called conservative:

- Reactionary and revolutionary view;
- Pragmatic view;
- A pessimistic view of human nature;
- An organic view of society;
- A view of politics as a limited activity;
- A belief in patriotism and paternalism;
- Property and Economy;
- A valuing of tradition;
- A commitment to strong national institutions;
- An emphasis on law and authority.

Reactionary and Revolutionary View:

Conservatism as an ideology, is characterized in the first instance, by opposition resistance to the idea of total or radical change, and not by the absurd idea of opposition to change as such, or by any commitment to preserving all existing institutions;

Pragmatic View:

It refers to making decisions based on current situations, while maintaining elements of conservative policy. It espouses the idea that while tradition and customs are important, reforms and decisions are sometimes necessary to protect them, and to reflect on the needs and changes of the times.(Wikipedia);

Pessimistic View of Human Nature:

In contrast what liberalism and socialism view human nature, conservatism belief of human nature rooted in religious doctrine 'the fall of man', they see human nature is flawed, imperfect, greedy, irrational, selfish and power hungry. So, to their critics using human virtue, individually and especially collectively, to create a Utopia by political action will make things worse, not better;

Organic View of Society;

Conservatives argue that the society or the nation is developing according to its own laws gradually and organically and this organism is related to the structure which implies order, direction, hierarchy (conservatives see society in a much less egalitarian way. Conversely, liberal society would stress 'foundational' equality, or the notion that all individuals are born equal and are of equal worth);

View of Politics as a Limited Activity;**Patriotism and Parentalism:**

This is viewed by their love to their nation and a commitment to strong national institutions and traditions, while Parentalism sees the state and monarchy act like father to its subjects;

Property and Economy:

The conservative view of property is closely tied to its support for tradition and continuity. Rather than being something acquired by autonomous individuals, property is often something inherited by one generation from another, thus providing a degree of stability in a shaky, imperfect world. Indeed, inherited and bequeathed property is seen as a tangible expression of Burke's belief that the ideal society is a 'partnership between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are yet to be born'. Conservatism defends inequality and hierarchy. So, it is unsurprising that 'conservative economics' have got a procapitalist flavour. Indeed, Burke was a robust ally of Adam Smith, the father of laissez-faire economic theory;

Law, Freedom and Authority:

For conservatives, freedom is both possible and desirable, but only 'under the law'. Law, the rule of law, and its effective enforcement are key elements in establishing and maintaining order and, thereby, freedom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by examining definitions, relationships, and influences of the term "Ideology" in the political and social sphere, provided the understanding of the ideological foundation of conservatism in particular. It confirmed that conservatism is indeed a distinct ideology characterised by its preference for tradition, stability, and continuity, as opposed to radical change. This preference constituted the foundation of its arguments.

The relationship between conservatism and counter-revolution was also a key point. As counter-revolutionary sentiments have historically played a leading role in shaping conservative thoughts, this relationship emphasises the reactive nature of conservatism. This often arises in response to perceived threats to existing social systems and institutions. Principles of conservatism, such as reverence for tradition and scepticism towards rapid change, have been heavily influenced by counter-revolutionary attitude. These further solidify the ideological foundations of conservatism.

CHAPTER TWO

**The Impact of British-European Historical Contexts on Conceptualizing British
Conservative Thought'**

Chapter Two: The Impact of British-European Historical Contexts on Conceptualizing British Conservative Thought'

Introduction.....	16
1.The Origins of Conservatism.....	17
2. Perspectives on Conservatism	18
2.1. Traditional Conservatism	18
2.1.1.French Revolution and Reflections on Revolution in France.....	18
2.1.2.Why does Edmund Burke matter?.....	22
2.2. Traditional Conservatism Reforms	24
2.2.1.Why Does Benjamin Disraeli Matter?.....	24
2.2.2. One Nation Conservatism.....	26
2.3.The New Right	28
2.3.1.Emergence of the New Right.....	28
2.3.2. The New Right Rejections of some Conservative Principles.....	30
2.3.3. The New Right Relationship with Conservative Tradition.	32
Conclusion	34

Introduction

When we study any political ideology, we encounter a variety of perspectives, interpretations and changes over time which can often be conflicting. Similarly, British conservatism is encountered such problems. Yet, the subdivisions of conservatism are more significant and plausible than any other ideologies. It is a mistake to characterise conservatism as a static and straightforward ideology. It is therefore, a dynamic and evolving doctrine in accordance with circumstances that exist or coincide at a certain point of time. So, to begin with, traditional conservatism differs increasingly from the more modern variations of conservatism such as One Nation Conservatism as well as the New Right conservatism. In this regard, there are a number of key questions we should raise, and seek their answers while we examine the different variations and perspectives of conservatisms. The potential answers allow to conceptualise the ideological foundation of British conservatism through a historical perspective.

Here are some potential questions;

- What is the historical foundation of conservative tradition?
- To what extent do conservatives and conservative variations agree in their views?
- To what extent do conservatives and conservative variations agree in their views on pragmatism?
- To what extent do conservatives and conservative variations agree in their views of paternalism and the role of the state?
- To what extent do conservatives and conservative variations agree in their views on the hierarchy in the society?
- To what extent do conservatives and conservative variations agree in their views on tradition and experience?

1.The Origins of Conservatism

A lot of commentators and political philosophers argue that it is difficult to establish a particular starting point to the concept of conservatism. However, conservative thoughts came out as a response to the revolutions and radical changes that occurred in Europe in particular. Historically, in Britain, the calls that led to the English civil war (1642-51) produced defenders of royal power, monarchy, hierarchy and order. Such key defenders are: Thomas Hobbes (whose ideas are linked to the concept of conservatism while both liberals and Marxist claim that he is one of their ideological forebears.) and Sir Robert Filmer (a defender of the traditional kings rights).

By the second half of eighteenth century and after the American Revolution of 1775-1783 and also the Industrial Revolution (1760) which were the spirits of the Enlightenment era. All these watersheds called upon some sort of conservative thoughts.

In England, the early liberal politicians such as the Whig Party, were confident that the progressive principles as a result of The Glorious Revolution (1689) and the America's Declaration of Independence (1776) were intellectually and politically greeted with enthusiasm.

Later, The French Revolutions (1789) which seemed at first to prove and strengthen the views of Enlightenment that rejected French monarchy, and some religious assumptions that created a new republic established on a written constitution, liberty, equality and fraternity and other liberal ideas. Consequently, this was seen as a triumph of liberalism. But by 1792, it was obvious that this radical change of this revolution had resulted in horrific consequences which started to threaten the peace across Europe. This provoked a turning point in political theories. Hence, the savagery of French revolution paved the way to the new sort of political ideology called " Conservatism" that rejected and resisted such radical and rapid changes and warned its dangers. The term 'conservatism' was used by Edmund burke who is considered almost the founding father to state that one should be very cautious about radically changing old regime, long-lasting institutions and traditions. This began and

appeared in Edmund burke's writings " Reflections On Revolutions In France"(1790) which is the most influential work in the history of conservative thought.

2. Perspectives on Conservatism

2.1. Traditional Conservatism

2.1.1. French Revolution and Reflections on Revolution in France

As we explained in this study, that conservatism as ideas, and before it came to be as an ideology, appeared in the writings of Thomas Hobbes, in particular, "Leviathan", published in 1651 which established some key consistent ideas in relation to the role of state and human nature that later would develop into conservatism.

He argued the state should be stable and strong, ...*Without peace, he observed, humans live in 'continual fear, and danger of violent death,' and what life they have is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short' (Leviathan, 1651).*

What Hobbes calls the “laws of nature,” the system of moral rules by which everyone is bound, cannot be safely complied with outside the state, for the total liberty that people have outside the state includes the liberty to flout the moral requirements if one’s survival seems to depend on it. (Sorell, 2024).

Despite what we previously mentioned, the real emergence of conservatism is dated to the French Revolution (1787). And the origins and principles were grounded in reaction to this revolution.

This reaction clearly appeared in Edmund Burke's writings and reflections when he describes the French Revolution as the most horrific and tragic event.

It appears to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together; the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. (Burke, 1790) .

He added, *Everything seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts of follies. In viewing this monstrous tragi-comic scene, the most opposite passions necessarily succeed, and sometimes mix with each other in the mind; alternate contempt and indignation; alternate laughter and tears; alternate scorn and horror.*

Simultaneously, It also appeared in response to the claims of some radical movements at that time at first, liberalism and then socialism and nationalism which sought massive change and social reforms and even removal of social orders, institutions, traditions, and customs. In response to this, Edmund burke, who is considered a father and the founder of conservatism, stated,

Society is indeed a contract . . . but it is not a partnership in things . . . of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science, a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection . . . As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership between . . . those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born. (Burke, 1790) .

Consequently, to traditional conservatives, the radical interference in the natural course of social, slow and gradual development is considered fatal to that society. As to which Edmund and his colleagues saw that French revolution is driven by abstract principles and idealistic principles (liberty, equality and fraternity) Edmund believed that decisions should not based on abstract or utopian ideas, instead it should be pragmatic and based on, as he referred as "the prejudice " which is an accumulated wisdom of centuries including experience, tradition, customs, and social order that should be embraced and conserved and any improvements should be made with greatest caution. This emphasized the importance of " change to conserve" .This quote seems critical to understand in a way that these two terms technically appear contradictory in themselves and in the doctrine of conservatism as well. Thus, it implies that conservatism is not about conserving and maintaining but also a form of change. They believe and recognise that change is inevitable as Edmund Burke put it '

a state without the means of change...is without means of its conservation'. In other words, Conservatism is just the viewpoint that change has to be slow and gradual, and whenever change occurs, it must respect the traditions, traditionalism and order that existed in society beforehand. And this introduces the view of "organic society" which suggested that there must be changes within society, but these changes must conserve traditional values.

On the shadow of that, they also emphasise "the preservation of hierarchy and the authority" which they believe they are natural and necessary for a stable society. So, traditional conservatives believe that the most organic, most natural part of society, or at least the most natural state of society, is that of a hierarchical structure, where we have got people that are at the top of this hierarchy and people at the bottom as well.

For Edmund Burke, in order to play a role in maintenance of society we have '*to be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind. The interests of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it*' (Burke, 1790).

Now this obviously contrasts with socialism and egalitarianism and it definitely contrasts with anarchism because anarchism is almost a reaction to the concept of hierarchy.

In hierarchical society there are people who could be in the authority. There was a belief that government should act like a father, and the subjects act like the children. As such, the government should work in the best interest of its subjects. This idea of "Parentalism" makes reference to the fact that the government knows better, knows what people should want and should need. We should know this kind of concept of the relationship between the state and the people is very different to that of liberalism. within liberalism, there is the concept of government by consent, and limited government. The government should only be allowed to be legitimate unless it can only exist by

consent of the people that elect it and bring it into power and also there are a constitution and constitutionalism that try and limit, the government from progressing too far and infringing on rights. this viewpoint of the relationship between the government and the state within a liberal framework is totally different to that of conservative view.

In the modern conservatism, However, *the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 marked an abrupt end to the paternalist approach... Thatcher was determined to overhaul the view that the ruling class knew best.* (tutor2u, 2020)

Based on what has been said, the question would be. Do hierarchy and parentalism in conservatism reject freedom?

In fact, there is an emphasis placed on freedom when it comes to conservative thought. Hence, the key difference is that while there is an emphasis placed on freedom, traditional conservatism recognises that limits to freedom may be necessary to ensure a kind of freedom for all in contrast with liberalism that stresses individual freedom. Burke supposes that he loves 'liberty' as much as anyone in the revolution society. However, he cannot 'give praise or blame to anything which relates to human actions, ... in all the nakedness ... of metaphysical abstraction.' 'Circumstances' are what give reality to principles and schemes. It makes no sense, for example, to praise a government in the abstract, without knowing what type of government it is, or to congratulate a 'madman' on his 'liberty' from his restraints.

And he also suggests in order to ensure the right freedom we must be linked to these three fundamentals and he goes on to say that he must suspend his judgment regarding France's newfound liberty until he makes sure those fundamentals are present:

I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government; with public force; with the discipline and obedience of armies; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue; with morality and religion;

with the solidity of property; with peace and order: with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long.

These principles of pragmatism, tradition, hierarchy and authority, organic society, formed the conservative thought which offered a cautious and evolutionary approach to social and political life in the period of Edmund burke.

Oaskeshott (1962) restated the principles which supported traditional conservatism especially in his essays "On Being Conservatism". *To be conservative, then, is to prefer the familiar to the unknown, to prefer the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant, the sufficient to the superabundant, the convenient to the perfect, present laughter to utopian bliss.* '

2.1.2. Why does Edmund Burke matter?

Edmund Burke is a key thinker who was one of the first traditional conservatives. He wrote a number of things relating to conservatism such as: treatises and letters. The evils revolution or the reflections on revolution in France were letters, Edmund Burke had written, that has been fashioned and collected into a book.

He has not got a very positive outlook on the concept of revolutions. Basically, his conservative belief came out of his reactions to both the American Revolution and the French Revolution. Now what is really interesting is that Burke paradoxically supported the American Revolution. He supported the Americans' rights to freedom and freedom from taxation, which was one of the key reasons why the American Revolution took place and then was the formation of the United States of America. One of the reasons was that Parliament wanted to tax the colonies without giving them representation in Parliament. The colonists responded by saying the famous mantra, "no taxation without representation."

He believed it was an example of "changing to conserve" because the fundamental freedoms of man existed before the concept of monarchy. This is the conceptual belief that to conserve the monarchy, i.e. the English monarchy, George III is to support and defend the colonists calls. So again, the revolution itself was an example of changing to conserve. By contrast, his response to the French Revolution was completely different and this is allegedly due to the differences between the two revolutions. Some critics might argue that Edmund Burke's positions on America and France in terms of their revolutions is actually quite counterintuitive and contradictory.

But to evaluate his argument by suggesting that these two revolutions were obviously very different. Then, Burke argued against the French Revolution on the basis that it was destroying the traditional and existing institution while The American Revolution did not destroy the English monarchy. It simply broke away from the English monarchy. Furthermore, within the French Revolution, there was a heavy critique by Burke of the concept of equality which we are aware that this is the case because traditional conservatives believe that the most natural state of society is that of a hierarchy. therefore, equality for all is something that is opposing to the concept of hierarchy and the natural state of society.

From these aforementioned lines, we can see where Edmund Burke's philosophy comes from. And how his viewpoints were built upon. In the more modern era, specifically the late 18th and early 1900s, by examining another figure, specifically, Benjamin Disraeli and his conception of One Nation Conservatism and then exploring the concept of The New Right conservative thoughts which all trace back with their ideas to this traditional viewpoint that specifically relates to Edmund Burke.

2.2. Traditional Conservatism Reforms

As we have been talking about different theories within conservatism in the importance of its history. Here, we are going to pursue investigating the meaning of conservatism and its conceptualization in more modern theory. By more modern we mean in the sense of historical

evolution of conservatism, not necessarily that it's situated in the modern times. This theory is One Nation Conservatism.

2.2.1. Why Does Benjamin Disraeli Matter?

This theory of conservatism is associated most strongly with Benjamin Disraeli. Disraeli was a former prime minister for quite a long time. When we talk about recent history, the number of prime ministers in Britain have been quite controversial and their political lives as prime ministers were quite short compared to Disraeli's. He was a Prime Minister in 1868, and then between 1874 and 1880. Nearly later period of the Victorian era.

Thus, this quite a long period of time as Prime Minister was enough for him to be a pioneer and a founder or seminal father to the principles of new type or strand of conservatism in the legislation that he supported in his government and terms, such as the Employers and Workmen Act of 1875.

Before we start talking about a number of principles of his views to the society and the state. First, it is relevant to ask these questions:

- What is one nation conservatism?
- To what extent is it related to traditional conservatism?
- And to what extent do they agree?

One nation conservatism is a theory and a practice that came out of a response to the theories and ideas of socialism, class conflict, and also free market capitalism. So, we must not forget that capitalism was in its relative infancy during this period.

We must recall again that this example of conservatism is also being reactionary in nature. A reaction to quite violent and extreme political change, just like Edmund Burke's magnum opus on his reactions to the French and the American revolutions. The philosophy of Thomas Hobbes and Edmund Burke, which were influential, reappear in attempts to update the views of traditional

conservatism to the version of one nation conservatism as one way to conserve the conservative tradition.

In the time of Disraeli, there was a new threat to traditional conservatism, this new threat was socialism and the concepts of class conflict and the free-market capitalism that coincidentally existed as well. Both of them imposed to re-establish traditional conservative thoughts and simultaneously change in order to conserve.

In the following piece of speech, Disraeli emphasizes the value of tradition and the gradual change that England had known due to the absence of revolutions which guaranteed the order and stability in addition to the importance of the throne and the hierarchy and the concept of the Throne as a unifying symbol for "all classes and parties", Besides, the idea not having revolution is the cause of the continuous improvement and prosperity.

He talked about the value of tradition and the gradual change *... now nearly two centuries ago, England has never experienced a revolution, though there is no country in which there has been so continuous and such considerable change. .. Because the wisdom of your forefathers placed the prize of supreme power without the sphere of human passions.*

He also emphasized the importance of the throne and the hierarchy and the concept of the Throne as a unifying symbol for "all classes and parties" *Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and parties could rally, representing the majesty of the law, the administration of justice, and involving, at the same time, the security for every man's rights and the fountain of honour.*

And then he claimed the idea not having revolution is the cause of the continuous improvement and prosperity. *'...it is well clearly to comprehend what is meant by a country not having a revolution for two*

centuries. It means, ‘‘the unbroken exercise and enjoyment of the ingenuity of man’’ the continuous application of the discoveries of science to his comfort and convenience ‘‘the accumulation of capital, the elevation of labour, the establishment of those admirable factories which cover your district; the unwearied improvement of the cultivation of the land, which has extracted from a somewhat churlish soil harvests more exuberant than those furnished by lands nearer to the sun ‘‘the continuous order which is the only parent of personel liberty and political right.

And he re-emphasised the importance of the throne '...And you owe all these, gentlemen, to the Throne.'
(The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.)

2.2.2. One Nation Conservatism

One nation conservatism argues that society should exist together as part of one nation. Therefore, it puts the nation ahead of other virtues. It places emphasis on the concept of 'a nation'. It suggests that this nation is organic, flexible and interconnected. As such, when issues arise within one area of society, it impacts the rest of society. Furthermore, issues in one area of society ought to be dealt by the whole of society. On one hand, this is an important aspect of one nation conservatism. On the other hand, this view contrasts with the socialist class analysis and the concepts of dialectical materialism and historical materialism.

However, in the contemporary times this aspect has eroded and been completely rejected. Materialist conceptions of history refer to the concept of things existing as polar opposites, as "one and the other", or "yin and yang", for example. Marx would place an emphasis on the concept of the owner class versus the working class. As he highlighted the fact that we examine issues according to dialectics because we have got two, as he would describe as opposite ends of the coin, two sides of the same coin in conflict with each other and in balance with each other. The concept that history can be described as a conflict between two dialectics, between the bourgeois class versus the proletariat

class, the serfdom and the feudal class, between slavery and the slave owner, and then now between the capitalist, the owner, and the working class. One-nation conservatives argue that this view of Marx is believed to be rejected due to the fact that the concepts of historical materialism do not take into account the fact that society exists as a nation together and that this nation is interconnected.

Disraeli described this concept (one nation) as "the palace is not safe when the cottage is not happy" which significantly means when one area of society is not safe, then the rest of society is not. that is referred as the interconnectedness within one nation conservatism. Therefore, it emphasises that the authority should act like the father to its subjects and lower classes.

In Disraeli's novel 'Sybil' or 'Two nations' (1845), the gap between the rich class and the working-classes is portrayed. Disraeli laments that they were '*...as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were ... inhabitants of different planets.*' Disraeli argued that it was in the interests and duty of the ruling class to adopt a concept of "paternalism" and the focus on "the state welfare" towards those less fortunate. Parentalism and the state welfare could offer, for instance, the provision of a safety for the unemployed would alleviate the most severe forms of poverty. More importantly, it would prevent the emergence of revolutionary consciousness among those less fortunate people. In the next section we shall see whether these concepts 'paternalism and welfare state' were continually accepted or not and what were their implications on dynamic conservative thought.

Disraeli was also concerned about the impact of free market capitalism on society was a relatively new concept that was introduced by new revolutionary ideas from people like Adam Smith and David Ricardo. However, we must not also overlook that the concept of free market capitalism during this period of time was strongly associated with classical liberalism and not with conservatism ,as we move on into the 20th century and come to modern conservatism we tend to see liberalism is more associated with a mixed capitalist system and social democracy. Despite this, Disraeli

recognised that some aspects of the free market were not just important, but also inevitable, that they were always going to end up to be under the authority of the free market. However, Disraeli remained concerned about the impact of this new concept on society. He aimed to accept the free market while addressing its potential negative consequences for conservative society. His concept of 'changing to conserve' reflected his desire for societal adaptation in response to the evolving free market, But he then also wanted to ensure that they conserve the basic principles of society and not let them be corrupted by this new theory of free market capitalism.

As we progress in this study, we will notice a quite interesting aspect is that conservatives today are more likely to be aligned with the free market than that of non-conservatives, such as liberals and socialists. And this explains how "changing to conserve" would essentially allow for the changing and development of society and the economy, but conserving social values. This is just another example of the conservative understanding of changing to conserve, which is fundamentally a thread which runs through all the variations that we have already seen and what we will see.

2.3.The New Right

2.3.1. Emergence of the New Right

The New Right originally emerged in US in the 1970s in reaction to the "crisis" that engulfed countries like the UK by the mid-1970s. This crisis was supposed to be characterised by spiralling inflation, rising unemployment, unsustainable welfare spending, increasing crime rates, moral decay, and a growing sense that society was becoming ungovernable, largely due to union militancy. the New Right was imported into the UK as well. In UK, the New Right was well demonstrated and implemented especially by Margret Thatcher. They claimed that one nation conservatism had moved away from fundamental conservative principles due to the late one nation conservatism's excessive concessions to socialist policies and ideas. On the other hand, the New Right positioned itself as the revival of true conservatism.

However, it is also important to say, that there is a real debate on whether the New Right should be considered conservatives or not given the fact that they were also really influenced by the idea of classical liberalism, particularly in relation to their views on the economy and the state, and their emphasis on individual freedom, and a free market economy. In other words, it is defined by a combination of social conservatism and qualified support for economic liberalism. It is important to keep that in mind as well that the modern conservatism or New Right is a combination and an umbrella for neoliberalism and neoconservatism. Neoliberalism is really rooted in classical liberal thought which advocates for minimal state intervention in the economy and emphasises free markets and individual enterprise, while Neoconservatism, still shares some principles with traditional conservatism, particularly in its focus on traditional values, strong national defence, law and order. The question, then, that could arise from what we have just mentioned is that: As far as of the new right is concerned, are neoconservatism and neoliberalism compatible?

Ideologically speaking, it can be argued that they are not only incompatible but also opposed. As neoliberalism comes from a liberal tradition, whereas neoconservatism is from more of a traditional conservative thought. Neoliberalism supports decreasing the size of the state and level of state intervention, whilst neoconservatism supports a significance of the state role in defence of law and order. On the other hand, it can be argued that they are compatible and they did work together. So, one was focused on the economy and advocated for a decreased role in the economy, whereas the kind of increased state role was within other areas in law and order, or defence. If we take a Thatcher government as a case of study here, it states that if they spent less money in the economic sphere or less money on the welfare state, they should spend more money on law, order and defence. She prioritized such defence, law and order that every department had to cut back in terms of funding apart from these departments. If we see as well another aspect of tradition conserving principle that manifested in her support for anti-permissiveness in policy of Section 28 that can be seen very homophobic, which prohibited the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities and in schools.

As for, the neoliberalism was only limited to Thatcher's economic policy, crucially, in privatization, the key type of "laissez-faire" principle. She privatised state-owned industries that have been nationalised by the Labour government in the post-World War II period, including British Telecom, British Gas, British Airways. Also, deregulation, reduced a lot of regulation in the economy, which culminated in the Big Bang reforms in London's financial district in the 1980s. They Also massively reduced taxes.

2.3.2. The New Right Rejections of some Conservative Principles

Despite the fact that the New Right maintain these traditional conservative principles in terms of traditional values within society and the state responsibility in social order and defence, they also departed from a lot of key conservative traditions and conservative principles as we previously mentioned, the question then, whether they should be considered as conservatives at all. A key deviation was the support of atomism instead of an organic society. In contrast with traditional concepts in which society is viewed interconnected and organic the New Right effectively perceived society as a collection of individuals, i.e. every individual is pursuing their own interests that leads to the best outcome when maximum freedom is allowed without excessive state intervention. So, in terms of organic society, they see it as more just a collection of individuals. And Thatcher even spoke of the idea that there's no society at all.

I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand 'I have a problem, it is the Government's job to cope with it!' or 'I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!' 'I am homeless, the Government must house me!' and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first. (Thatcher, 1987)

Thatcher crucially rejects key notions of hierarchy and paternalism as well, which are key principles of previous conservative thought. The New Right also supports the view that humans are "rational beings in a meritocratic system" where individuals succeed based on their own efforts and talents that should not be interfered with. This was emphasised in the works of the American key thinker, Ayn Rand and her idea of "morality of a rational self-interest." To put this very simple, doing things that are moral and acting in moral ways, is something that is just based on the interests of the individual, and their selfish interests of the individual. This is a rational idea and view. It basically describes human nature as almost selfish. By stating so, Ayn Rand does not suggest to be dismissive that morality of rational self-interest is something pejorative in any particular way. Rand was just simply arguing and coming to the conclusion that rational self-interest and the concept of human nature is selfish was just a natural case.

The idea of "rational self-interest" starts to develop a number of implications and extensions of on some principles and political practices. We start from the basic point, the assumption of morality of rational self-interest in relation with political and social issues, and then we will talk about what this actually means for actual political discourse and policy prescriptions. So,

The concept of rational self-interest implies that there is a lack of a need for state intervention in the individual everyday life. So, in order for this successful implication of this rational self-interest, the influence of the state should be limited as far as possible which consequently brings about with it 'libertarian ideas'

The concept also represents a key rejection of the conservative principle of human imperfection and support for hierarchy and paternalism. Unlike traditional and one-nation conservatism, which value parentalism and tradition, the New Right is much more ideologically driven by the principles of freedom and individualism which marks a significant transformation in the conservative landscape, away from the cautious, gradual change and stability-focused approach of early

conservatism, to a more dynamic, market-driven, individualistic ideology. Consequently, as we argue that whilst the New Right maintains some conservative elements, its core beliefs and priorities represent a lot of a break from traditional conservative thought and conservative thought as a whole, in the meantime , it leaves the question in our minds whether they should be considered conservatives at all..

2.3.3. The New Right Relationship with Conservative Tradition.

When we evaluate the New Right in the UK and to what extent they agree with traditional principles of conservatism and the idea that this strand might not be considered conservative at all. We are aware that everyone might not agree with.

In terms of agreement, we can conclude that, although the New Right deviates from traditional conservative thoughts, it still claims its loyalty to the fundamentals of conservatism such as the reactionary disposition . Thatcher, for instance, in her 1977 conference speech, declared to embrace the idea that she was leading a reactionary project:

They say that a Thatcher Government—and I must say that I like the sound of that a little more each time I hear it—would be reactionary.

If to react against the politics of the last few years, which undermined our way of life and devastated our economy—if that's reactionary then we are reactionary—and so are the vast majority of the British people.

They believe, as we do, that Government is far too big; that it does not know all the answers; that it has downgraded the individual and upgraded the State. [...]

So, if you ask whether the next Conservative Government will cut controls and regulations and keep interference in people's lives to a minimum, my answer is 'Yes, that is exactly what we shall do'. The best reply to full-blooded Socialism is not milk and water Socialism; it is genuine Conservatism

Thatcher and her colleagues made efforts in their statements to introduce ideas and the principles that were distinctly conservative. They emphasised, for instance, the virtues of tradition. But when they did so, they were exposed to a lot of critiques about the contradictions and the paradoxes within the New Right practices. This reference to the principles of conservatism can be seen for example in the statement by Thatcher:

All this meant that when Keith [Joseph] and I were struggling to shift Britain back from the Socialist State, we were also acting as conservatives, with a small 'c'. We were seeking to re-establish an understanding of the fundamental truths which had made Western life, British life, and the life of the English-speaking peoples what they were. This was the foundation of our Conservative revolution. It remains the foundation for any successful Conservative programme of government.(Thatcher; 1996)

In other ways, the New Right conservative thought does not believe obviously that the state should have got no influence on people's lives at all. They understand that there are some basic aspects of the state that need to exist, for example: the state should provide armed forces, a police system and the judiciary. They could really probably limit everything else according to a New Right conservative except for these three things, therefore, these aspects of the state are necessary to maintain the protection of property rights. What we have noticed, there is a sort of dichotomy that exists because the New Right wants to see the reduction of the state in as much, as far as possible. But they also want to ensure that property rights are protected in so far as possible. It is in fact, like a balance between a limited state intervention in people's lives and enough state intervention to provide the kinds of protections for the armed forces or police and the judiciary and other related issues. We could also probably understand from the limited intervention of the state that there is generally an opposition to public spending on welfare state such as spending on NHS in the UK.

Macmillan reflected on where conservatism was situated in relation to two opposing bodies of ideas: collectivism and individualism. In *The Middle Way* in the 1960s, he stated that:

We do not stand and have never stood for collectivism or the destruction of private rights. We do not stand and have never stood for laissez-faire individualism or for putting the rights of the individual above his duty to his fellow men. We stand today, as we have always stood, to block the way to both these extremes and to all such extremes, and to point the path towards moderate and balanced views.

Quintin Hogg offered a similar description in *"The Case for Conservatism* (1947), to describe, based on Hegelian dialectics, conservatism as a synthetic philosophy:

The function of Conservatism is to present a synthesis, that is to say, not a compromise between two conflicting purposes and principles, since political compromise means a bargain struck in which each side for the sake of peace abandons part of what they logically claim, but a genuine reconciliation of the two conflicting principles based on a more profound analysis and a higher level of thought.

Conclusion

The study of conservative thoughts has proven to be an ongoing challenge due to its dynamic and evolving nature which vary over time and often in conflicts or coexistence to some extent with other movements. Conservative thinkers also have played a significant role in the development of the conservative ideology and movements under a variety of names and titles. In this study, there is a strong correlation between the historical importance of conservatism and the approaches to the difficulties encountered in arriving at meaningful generalisations about this thought.

CHAPTER THREE

Dialectics of Change, Liberal Ideas, and Narrow-Mindedness in Conservatism

Chapter Three: Dialectics of Change, Liberal Ideas, and Narrow-Mindedness in Conservatism

Introduction.....	35
1.Conservatism and The Conception of Change	35
2.The Relationship with Liberalism.....	38
3.Less Structured Ideology and Narrow -Mindedness: Conception or Misconception	40
Conclusion	41

Introduction

By examining the evolution of the dynamic conservative movement, it has become evident that its ideas are sometimes characterised by coherence and other times by contradictions and paradoxes. These paradoxes indicate the existence of significant dialectic within the conservative ideology, which has often been subjected to severe critiques from analysts, ideologists, and social scientists in this regard, G.W.F. Hegel identified dialectic as the tendency of a notion to pass over into its own negation as a result of conflict between its inherent contradictory aspects. Hence, in this study we have observed and spotted The most significant dialectical processes which are; the dialectic of change, the dialectic of the relationship with liberalism, and the dialectic of narrow-minded conservatives and less structured ideology.

1.Conservatism and The Conception of Change

Regardless to what conservatism is seen whether it is reactionary to defend the regime and the social order, or it is just a sceptical disposition to prevent the risks and the evils towards what changes and improvement could bring, the conservatives deposit the question how to manage the change. A recent study by O'Hara (2011) stressed that conservatives do not really reject all forms of political, social and economic changes but rather they believe that the change is inevitable . As a result, the conservatives formulated an approach to understand and identify the change that might be helpful to resolve existing discords without destabilizing the order and the change that attempts to remove the existing institutions and practices. As O'Sullivan (1976) puts it in his introduction to the 'philosophy of imperfection':

Conservatism as an ideology, then, is characterized in the first instance, by opposition to the idea of total or radical changes, and not by absurd idea of opposition to change as such, or by any commitment to preserving all existing institutions.

Thus, we should distinguish between the readiness of conservatives to accept the changes when necessary and any changes. For instance, if it attempts to adjust any discords in social orders and arrangements there must be a careful balance between the adjustment and the importance of the status quo that may be improved on, if this does not happen, it will create worse problems than the existing ones. The history has proven this, from the French to the Russian and Chinese revolutions which provide evidence of radical change to existing social arrangements producing evils in most instances. And the estimates of the society collapse of these changes surpassed those succeeded.

Based on that point of view, conservatism is not just a negative reaction to for example, the societal changes that the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution have brought. Burke, for instance, supported the calls of American colonist against George III and he called for the alleviating the penal laws against catholic in Ireland, his purpose of those supports is to maintain the British empire and the regime from collapse by accepting some arrangements that are significant on the other side to preserve the existing institution and prevent revolutions.

In this view, we can see that conservatism engagement in changes is positive in the way that it prevents further disruption and the collapse of established order. Some commentators see that this emphasis on obligations that were suggested by early conservatives was leading to divergence within conservatism until the marriage between conservatism and liberalism in Britain. Another heavy burden put on the conservative in this regard, is to show and advocate the benefits of the existing orders and institutions to the potential costs of the change and alterations. For instance Oakeshott (1962: 196) speaks of the benefits

'a world of fact, not poetic image ... a world inhabited by others besides ourselves who cannot be reduced to mere reflections of our own emotions'

An existing society with all its accumulated knowledge (prejudice) and complexity cannot simply be judged by abstract theories based on a priori assumptions of how society ideally should function, as Sir Walter Scott pointed out:

An established system is not to be tried by those tests which may with perfect correctness be applied to a new theory. A civilized nation, long in possession of a code of law under which, with all its inconveniences, they have found a means to flourish, is not to be regarded as an infant colony on which experiments in legislation may, without much danger of presumption, be hazarded. A philosopher is not entitled to investigate such a system by those ideas which he has fixed in his own mind as the standard of possible excellence (O'Hara,2011).

In those attitudes, the British conservatives do not prefer to assume how successful and beneficial the reforms will be, unlike liberals and socialists.

Another consideration should be respected in terms of changes. Quinton (1978) and O'Hara(2011) pointed out that there are two distinct changes; organic and artificial. Organic changes are those of bottom-up scale which are driven by voluntary decisions made incrementally by large populations, such as the increasing presence in twentieth-century Britain of women's role in the work force and a multi-ethnic society. While, the artificial changes and arrangements that are implemented by political leaders to which a general population must, often in a relatively short period of time, adapt.

Conservatives in Britain who in recent years have attempted to legislate against the grain by, for instance, suggesting that "major behavioral trends" such as the "permissive society" and mass migration ought to be reversed are therefore arguably reacting against organic change and thus acting in a manner that is "futile, wrong-headed and ultimately counterproductive". So, the sceptical attitudes towards artificial changes is the reason why some conservatives refuse to address

conservatism as an ideology as the bases of the ideologies are driven from the ruling class and politicians.

In the examination of British conservative origin in the shadow of Enlightenment, French revolution and the social transformation based on liberal and socialist ideas set British conservatism apart from its rival ideologies in some times in history and have had things in common in other times. And under this light, as we mentioned in the previous chapters, in order to conceptualise a conservative body of political thought, they must be scrutinised in comparison with, and in contrast to, the radical and ideological forces of that era.

At least five major schools of radical thought have competed [with conservatives since Burke] for public favour ... : the rationalism of the *philosophes*, the romantic emancipation of Rousseau and his allies, the utilitarianism of the Benthamites, the positivism of Comte's school, and the collectivistic materialism of Marx and other socialists (Kirk, 1995).

2.The Relationship with Liberalism

We mentioned in the previous section, some commentators see that the emphasis on obligations that were suggested by early conservatives was leading to divergence and deviation within and from conservatism until the marriage between conservatism and liberalism in Britain. In the British context, this relationship remains a very complex one. In the contemporary era, this relationship is often overlooked, otherwise the differences between classical liberalism and conservatism are often exaggerated in political discourse. In order to fully understand the emergence of a distinct body of conservative political thought, and a conservative ideology that constitutes a distinct political approach to social and political change, the relationship between classical liberalism and conservatism and the important combination between the two ideologies must also be examined. Although in the past the relationship was opposition and rivalry, some argue that the origins of

emergence of first conservatism were rooted to the Whig liberal values that had desire to preserve the Glorious Revolution values.

In Britain, where ideas of divine right had held little sway [...] what was being conserved was the orderly institutionalization of Whig ideas of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 [...] the England which Montesquieu [for whom Burke expressed great admiration] had described as the nation par excellence of constitutional liberty [...] [E]ven the most Tory Duke of Wellington recommended government "on liberal principles" and numbered The Wealth of Nations among his favorite books (Preece ,1980)

Burke and his colleagues were also obliged to accept and defend some liberal aspects. In fact, *English conservatives no less than English liberals accepted the important role for Parliament established in the settlement of 1689 – in their case more because they valued continuity than because they had confidence in popular self-government (Lakoff, 1998)*

Leading Tory thinkers of that time – Burke, the Marquis of Halifax, Lord Bolingbroke – all "wrote in the new liberal context expressed most completely by John Locke"

What the exponents of this emerging conservative tradition had in common was a "desire to reconcile liberty and authority"; they "admired ... the principles of the Lockean constitution" but were also "concerned to limit its potential excesses"

Due to Concerns shared by these British conservatives and Whig liberals through the time, the relationship has become more and more close. And this makes it possible to understand, as we discussed in the previous chapter, how the New Right has become mixed with conservatism, and liberalism, in Thatcher government in particular, which has been defined primarily by its emphasis

on individualism and negative freedom basically in economic policymaking and reconcile it with preserving the social order.

3.Less Structured Ideology and Narrow -Mindedness: Conception or Misconception

Despite the dominance of the conservative thoughts over the British political life over a long time, they are most criticized as they are portrayed as less structured ideology and its followers are narrow and closed-minded and to some extent stupid-minded as John Stuart Mill once described conservatives as the stupid,

“Conservatives are not necessarily stupid, but most stupid people are conservatives...”

because they seem to oppose all innovations and to reject all novel ideas. It is probably true that the most prosperous, most self-satisfied, and least curious members of any society have got a direct incentive to be conservatives. When conservatism is merely the defence of privilege by the privileged, it's neither impressive nor interesting.

The claims, basically, may have been based on the nature and the conception of conservatism as we have seen in this study. Throughout the political history of conservatism, there have been many fractions and diversity of views within the ideology itself, that assumes the inconsistency of the principles, the doctrine is built upon, and this might arguably show sign of lack structure. Some may also argue that reactionary and counterrevolutionary disposition towards the political and societal developments and the rejection of new ideas reflect the ignorance of its followers and their narrow-mindedness as they kill any chance of prosperity and improvement from its infancy in both political and societal issues. On the other hand, they say their closed-mindedness may manifest in their support to "what is old" in traditions, state (old régime, religion, social order and laws. And being stupid-minded as they reflect on recent issues without proposing any progressive agenda so as to bear any prospects and outlooks on reforms and improvements ,but just to preserve the status quo.

By contrast to what was claimed, a lot of commentators and conservative proponents believe that the misconception of lack of structure and close-mindedness seem contradictory in a way that variety of perspectives and diversity of views reflect the openness of its followers and their engagement in what they believe in the interest of the society and its stability, the good examples are the adoption of free-capitalist markets since the period of one-nation and then the individual liberty in the New Right (conservatism). But nevertheless, they still do not favour radical and rapid changes. But rather they prefer gradual and slow changes, so the idea of being close-minded is not the case but they are being pragmatic and cautious instead. Additionally, the argument that says conservative thoughts lack structure is also mistaken, many British conservatives appreciate long-time dominance and a stable framework that are rooted to traditions, traditional values, and social orders and practical governance which have not been changed a lot, and this which assumes its core principles consistent and well structured.

By considering the two opposing views and arguments on conservatism, it is important, first, to admit that the examination of the ideologies is very difficult. The British conservatism is even more complicated. It is true that conservatives are resistant to changes but the resistance refers to its ideological foundation which is to preserve the traditions, the values, the traditional institutions, and the social orders which certainly ensure the stability and slow changing. However, The diversity of conservative strands is an evidence of the adaptability, openness, changing and dynamic ideology.

Conclusion

The dialectics inherent in conservatism highlight an ideology that seeks to establish a balance between traditions and the inevitable change. At its core, conservatism upholds the values of stability and continuity, grounding societal structures in tradition. However, when these are encountered with evolving societal norms and pressing challenges, the conservative movement also responds to the need for adaptation and reform. Moreover, despite its historical opposition to liberal ideas,

conservatism shows a remarkable acceptance and adoption to some liberal ideas, particularly in areas such as economic policy and individual rights, in order to remain relevant and responsive to contemporary issues. This strategic combination highlights conservatism's ability to pragmatically adapt in the face of changing circumstances. Furthermore, while conservatism is often portrayed as less structured ideology and its followers as narrow-minded, they actually favour traditions and adapt in order to face the modern challenges.

Quintin Hogg(1947) described these observed paradoxes, based on Hegelian dialectics, conservatism as a synthetic philosophy:

The function of Conservatism is to present a synthesis, that is to say, not a compromise between two conflicting purposes and principles, since political compromise means a bargain struck in which each side for the sake of peace abandons part of what they logically claim, but a genuine reconciliation of the two conflicting principles based on a more profound analysis and a higher level of thought.

General Conclusion

The study acknowledges the difficulty in defining conservatism due to its adaptability and historical dependence. To understand its impact on British policies, the study have explored various interpretations of the meaningful generalisation of conservatism throughout British history.

After the descriptive analytical examination of conservatism, it is probably fair to say that an ideology that advocates order, stability, continuity and gradual change will always have some appeal and attractiveness. However, this ideology is likely to have particular appeal in an era of economic, social and cultural volatility. For this reason, it can be argued that traditional conservative values are more attractive than ever as the 21st century progresses.

One example of this, in most developed countries in the world, is the shift in the centralization and the priorities of state responsibilities. In the late twentieth century, it may have appeared that the state's primary focus was to promote individual liberty. In the UK, the first New Labour government (1997-2001) devoted much of its energies to devolving political power, introducing the Freedom of Information Act, and passing various laws that illegalized discrimination against members of minority groups. However, by the 2000s, the rise of terrorism and mass migration issues led to a change in focus and to put the clock back to the priority of order, stability, safety and security. By the end of the study, the analysis of many political and social variable associated with ideology of conservatism showed that the state's priorities, both in the UK or any part of the world, seem to have regained an authoritarian character that traditional conservative thinkers would have easily embraced. However, How will this renewed focus on order and security impact individual liberties in the long term? Will this trend towards authoritarianism persist in the face of contemporary challenges.

References

- Burke, E. ([1790]2011) '*Reflections on the Revolution in France*', Barnes And Nobles Inc.
- Corey, R.(2011), '*The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Sarah Palin.* ', Oxford University Press.
- Disraeli, B. ([1845] 1995), '*Sybil*', Hertfordshire: Wordsworth edition, 1980.
- Hobbes, T. ([1651] 2001) *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson. Verginia: Infomotions, Inc .
- Honderich, T. ([1990] 1991) *Conservatism*, London: Penguin.
- Huntington, S. P. (1957) '*Conservatism as an Ideology*', *American Political Science Review* 51 (2): 454-473.
- Kenneth Minogue .(2017) *Alien Powers: The Pure Theory of Ideology* .Routledge; 1st edition.
- Kirk, R. (1995) *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot*, 7th ed., Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc.
- Lakoff, S. (1998) 'Tocqueville, Burke, and the Origins of Liberal Conservatism', *The Review of Politics* 60 (3): pp 435-464.
- Marx, K. and Engels, F. ([1846] 1947) '*The German Ideology*', New York: International publishers.
- McLellan, D. (1995) *Ideology*, 2nd edn. University of Minnesota Press: Open University Press.
- Oakeshott, M. (1962) 'On Being Conservative', pp. 168-196 in *Rationalism in Politics: and other essays*, London: Methuen & Co.
- O'Hara, K. (2011) *Conservatism*, London: Reaktion Books.
- O'Sullivan, N. (1976) *Conservatism*, London: Dent & Sons.
- Preece, R. (1980) 'The Anglo-Saxon Conservative Tradition', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 13 (1): pp 3-32.
- Quintin, H (1947)"*The Case for Conservatism* . Penguin books
- Quinton, A. (1978) *The Politics of Imperfection: The Religious and Secular Traditions of Conservative Thought in England from Hooker to Oakeshott*, London: Faber and Faber.
- Scruton, R. (2001) *The Meaning of Conservatism*, 3rd ed., Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Seliger, M. (1976) *Politics and Ideology*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Sorell, T. (2024, May 17). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Leviathan-by-Hobbes>. Retrieved from Britannica.

Thatcher, Margaret. 1987. 'Interview for "Woman's Own" ("No Such Thing as Society")'.
' in *Margaret Thatcher Foundation: Speeches, Interviews and Other Statements*. London.

Thatcher, Margaret. 1996. 'Liberty and Limited Government' in *Margaret Thatcher Foundation: Speeches, Interviews and Other Statements*. London

The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Disraeli Outlines Conservative Party Principles.

tutor2u. (2020, Jun 19). Retrieved from
<https://www.tutor2u.net/politics/reference/paternalism-conservatism>.

Wikipedia .Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics>.

ملخص

تمتلك بريطانيا إرثًا سياسيًا واقتصاديًا وثقافيًا مهمًا ليس فقط بين دول القارة الأوروبية، بل أيضًا بين دول العالم. وعلى الرغم من أن المملكة المتحدة تتميز تاريخياً بتمسكها بقيم وأفكار المحافظين التي تتجلى في مختلف تجلياتها الاجتماعية والسياسية والاقتصادية، إلا أن الإطار الأيديولوجي يطرح تحديات في وضع تصور للمحافظين بسبب طبيعتها الرجعية وقابليتها للتكيف مع التحولات القائمة في المواقف المجتمعية والسياسية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تمحيص وتقصي طبيعة نزعة المحافظين في إطارها الأيديولوجي، واستكشاف منظورها الزمني وآثار السياقات التاريخية في تشكيل إطارها وتحديد معالمها. وقد اعتمد هذا البحث منهجية وصفية تحليلية يجمع فيها البحث بيانات ثانوية في معظمها من خلال فحص النصوص والكتابات التاريخية والسياسية. وتكشف النتائج عن أنه على الرغم من التحولات الكثيرة التي شهدتها التاريخ، إلا أن تيارات المحافظين ظلت تتشكل وتتشكل لتضع وتؤسس لتصورات شاملة للأفكار المحافظة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التصور المفاهيمي، والمحافظين، والتاريخية، والأيديولوجية، والرجعية

Résumé

La Grande-Bretagne possède un héritage politique, économique et culturel important, non seulement parmi les pays du continent européen, mais aussi parmi les nations du monde. Bien que le Royaume-Uni soit historiquement marqué par son adhésion aux valeurs et pensées conservatrices qui se manifestent dans différentes manifestations sociopolitiques et économiques, le cadre idéologique pose des problèmes pour conceptualiser le conservatisme en raison de sa nature réactionnaire et de sa capacité d'adaptation en réponse aux changements existants dans les dispositions sociétales et politiques. La présente étude vise à examiner et à étudier la nature du conservatisme dans son créneau idéologique et à explorer chronologiquement ses perspectives et les implications des contextes historiques dans la formation et la définition de son cadre. Une méthodologie descriptive et analytique a été adoptée, dans le cadre de laquelle cette recherche recueille principalement des données secondaires par l'examen de textes et d'écrits historiques et politiques. Les résultats révèlent qu'alors que l'histoire a connu de nombreux changements, les courants conservateurs se sont formés et ont été façonnés pour conceptualiser en profondeur les pensées conservatrices en conséquence.

Mots clés : conceptualisation, conservatisme, historique, idéologique, réactionnaire,