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QUESTION: IN NOT MORE THAN FIVE PAGES, DISCUSS THE IDEA OF CONSERVATISM.

Conservatism is a term derived from the Latin “conservare” which means to protect or preserve. Its application to politics began after the French Revolution in 1789 and became firmly established in its present-day political form in 1820. Conservatism is a political ideology that values the creation and maintenance of stable societies based upon a hierarchy of power lodged in a traditional class of leaders and deep respect for traditional values and institutions. Conservatism isn't suspicious of the power of the state nor does it seek to limit its power. Traditional institutions, such as government and religion, along with traditional values are to be respected. Consequently, conservatism is suspicious of change, and if change is required, it seeks an evolutionary approach rather than a revolutionary approach. Conservatism is a preference for the historically inherited rather than the abstract and ideal. This preference has traditionally rested on an organic conception of society that is on the belief that society is not merely a loose collection of individuals but a living organism comprising closely connected, interdependent members. Therefore, individuals that subscribe to the conservative school of thought favour institutions and practices that have evolved gradually and are manifestations of continuity and stability. The government's responsibility is to be the servant and not the master of existing ways of life and politicians must therefore resist the temptation to transform society and politics. According to Wikipedia, Conservatism is opposition to rapid changes, and supports keeping traditions in society.

The modern conservative school of thought can be traced to the 18th century British philosopher Edmund Burke and his 1790 work *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Burke found that humans were not just rational but also full of passion and prejudice and inherently unequal. However, according to Burke, despite the reality of unequal status and wealth, humans are interdependent. Society is 'organic,' or real, rather than just an abstraction created by the musings of philosophers. Burke believed that the state holds the wisdom accumulated by society over time and should be given a great deal of respect. An important aspect of Burke's conservatism is the suspicion of change. According to Burke, change should only occur if absolutely necessary in order to avoid a greater evil. For example, a country that has remained neutral in times of war would only change that policy of neutrality to avoid the greater evil of being invaded and conquered. Any proposed change should be reviewed carefully in light of the facts on the ground rather than through a prism of abstract theory. In other words, change should be based on pragmatism. Likewise, the process of change should not be guided by abstract theory but be based on tradition and previous practice. According to Burke, radical change is always dangerous and can seriously disrupt society.

In America, Conservatism presently refers to right-wing politics which advocate for the preservation of personal wealth and private ownership (Capitalism) with an emphasis on self-reliance and individualism. Conservatives tend to be more punitive towards criminals, ethnocentric and hostile towards minorities, including sexual minorities because of their strict application of orthodox religious beliefs. This was a result of an alliance between classical liberals and social conservatives of the 19th and early 20th Century. It entailed a myriad of

political ideologies including fiscal conservatism, economic liberalism, libertarianism, social conservatism, religious conservatism and bio-conservatism a small military, strong state government and a moderate central government. The U.S Republican Party, exemplified by Ronald Reagan and George Bush I, represented it.

There are seven variations to the conservative ideology. One is Cultural conservatism, which advocates for the preservation of the heritage or culture, including language traditions and cultural practices that are intentionally passed through generations. Social Conservatism, considered a sub-group of cultural conservatism, is the preservation of traditional social practices, including marriage ceremonies and heterosexual relationships. Religious Conservatives advocates for the conservation of religious teachings through example or by legal means, requiring the practice or reservation of a Christian ideal. Paleo-Conservatism is the ideology present in Bible Belt states including, among others, North and South Carolina, Kentucky and Georgia, which advocated for classical federalism, and preservation of religious heritage. It opposed illegal migration, authoritarianism, affirmative action programs and social democracy. Fiscal conservatism advocates for prudence in government spending and national debt. Neo-Conservatism is the new Conservative movement advocating for free trade, free market economics and foreign policies. Bio Conservatism advocates for a measured approach to the biotechnological transformation such as cloning, genetic editing and especially its potential in altering the social order.

Conservative political tenets vary by country. Whereas socialism and fascism imply certain universal principles, conservatism promotes more parochial continuation. British conservative Lord Falkland once said, "When it is not necessary to change, then it is necessary not to change," begetting the more common, "If it's not broken, don't try to fix it." More moderate conservatives might cautiously change any practice or policy that seemingly has worked successfully for so long. In the alternative, conservatism supports returning to "traditional" or inherited political platforms and tenets as an argument for change. Political conservatism can survive only where governments have been established long enough to secure social, economic, or political traditions. General characteristics include support for the "status quo"; cautiously considering or resisting change; and relying upon traditional values. Conservative ideology has been called "the right" or "right-wing" segment of a theoretical political continuum which radical, reformative, and "liberal" elements define on the left.

Perhaps nowhere has conservatism established deeper political roots than in the Western Hemisphere. Wherever the politics of tradition, wealth, and aristocracy have been a historic force, one will find a strong conservative presence in government. Examples include the Tories or Conservative Party of Great Britain, the Republican Party of the United States, the prior Gaullists of France, the largely dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Japan (which, despite its name, is conservative), and the Swatantra Party of India.

Similar polities exist in other countries. In Italy's May 2001 general election, the right-of-center

alliance known as the Casa delle Liberta (House of Freedom) prevailed over the center-left coalition which had ruled the country for the five previous years. In Switzerland, run for more than a century with the Liberals governing and the Conservatives in opposition a four-party coalition known as the "magic formula" now runs the government. Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has created a parliament. Its two main political forces are the conservative right's Yabloko and a loose coalition of liberal parties known as the Union of Rightist Forces (URF). Iran has suffered relatively bitter power struggles between conservatives and reformers since 1989.

The most consistent criticism of conservatism is that its resistance to change has resulted in it being outdated and out of touch with the real world. Liberals may argue that a demand for change is simply a corrective measure to bring forward a lagging conservatism that has been left behind. For example, the British public, through the media, expressed its wish for a more personable and approachable monarchy, especially during the time immediately following the death of Princess Diana (1961–1997). Conversely, a majority of the British public confirmed its continued belief in the monarchy, its heritage and tradition, and its maintenance as a British institution. In economic policy, the general conservative attitude toward a laissez-faire capitalism or free enterprise system has always been under attack by a concerted minority. The problem has been that both conservatives and liberals support such a system, and the dissenting minority is also comprised of both conservative and liberal elements of political following. This mingling with the opposition has manifested on other fronts as well—on issues such as abortion, affirmative action, foreign policy, social welfare, and taxation

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