

“Join me in this mission, we’re going to
make America great again”

Donald Trump and history politics during the 2016 presidential
election campaign

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<p>Yhdysvaltain presidentinvaalit ovat yksi seuratuimmista tapahtumista maailmassa. Vuoden 2016 presidentinvaalit tullaan muistamaan yhtenä kiistanalaisimmista vaaleista. Vastoin kaikkia odotuksia Donald Trumpista tuli Yhdysvaltain presidentti. Hänen kampanjan vaalitunnuksensa "teemme Amerikasta taas suuren" (<i>Make America Great Again</i>) ja "Amerikka ensin" (<i>America First</i>) lupasivat palauttaa vallan takaisin kansalle ja määrittellä uudelleen Amerikan roolin maailmassa. Trumpin kampanjapuheet olivat täynnä retoriikkaa, joista kaikuivat edellisten presidenttien ajatukset. Hänen nativistiset puheensa olivat täynnä keskusvallanvastaista ja rodullisesti kiihottettua kieltä. Poliittinen polarisointi oli jakanut maan kahtia, ja kaiken tämän keskeltä Trump nousi presidentiksi. Hänen voittonsa juonsi kulttuurilliseen ja poliittisiin muutoksiin, jotka alkoivat vuosikymmeniä aiemmin. Trumpin presidenttiyteen kulminoitui pitkän ajan kehitys.</p> <p>Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan, kuinka Donald Trump käytti historiapolitiikkaa presidentinvaali kampanjan puheissaan. Tutkielman ensisijaisen tarkastelun kohteena ovat kampanjapuheet, nämä lähteet ajoittuvat maaliskuusta marraskuuhun vuonna 2016. Tutkimusmenetelmänä hyödynnetään historiantutkimukselle ominaista kvalitatiivista lähdeanalyysia, lähdekritiistä tutkimusotetta historiapolitiikan viitekehyksen näkökulmasta. Tutkielma nojaa Jouni Tillin historiapolitiikan typologiaan sekä Pilvi Torstin määritelmään historiapolitiikasta. Politikoinnin ja politisoinnin määritelmät ovat hyödyllisiä tutkielman analyttisinä työkaluina, tarkastellessa kuinka Donald Trump hämärsi myytin, historian ja menneisyyden rajoja kampanjapuheissaan. Historiapolitiikka teoreettisena viitekehyksenä viittaa historian käyttöön poliittisena argumenttina, joka voi myös manifestoitua poliittisten motiivien kautta. Historian käyttö poliittisissa puheissa on tapa luoda yhteys menneisyyden ja nykyisyyden välillä. Tutkielma hyödyntää myös populismia, jota käytetään myös analyttisinä työkaluna poliittisia puheita tutkiessa. Tutkielma analysoi ensisijaisia lähteitä lähdekritiisesti asetettujen tutkimuskysymysten kautta, historiapolitiikan viitekehyksen sisällä. Aineistosta tutkittiin myös, kuinka populismi ilmentyi kampanjapuheissa. Tutkielmassa tarkasteltiin Trumpin kampanjan retoriikka ja yleisiä teemoja, jotta historiapolitiikan ulostulo puheissa saisi kontekstin.</p> <p>Aineiston analysointi paljasti, kuinka Trump hyväksikäytti konservatiivista populistista retoriikkaa, joka kietoutui historiaan. Hänen kampanjasanomansa vetosi valkoiseen työ- ja keskiluokan äänestäjiin, jotka kokivat jääneensä jälkeen yhteiskunnassa ja olivat poliitikkojen ylenkatsomia. Trump hyödynsi Richard Nixonin "Hiljainen enemmistö" (<i>Sileny Majority</i>) ja Ronald Reaganin "Teemme Amerikasta Suuren Taas" (<i>Make America Great Again</i>) -narratiiveja ja muokkasi niitä omaan populistiseen retoriikkaansa. Trump esiintyi ulkopuolisena, joka tarjosi yksinkertaisia ratkaisuja isoihin ongelmiin. Hän käytti kampanjassaan historiaa perustellakseen poliittista retoriikkaansa. Tutkielman keskeisin tulos on, että kampanjapuheissa historia politisoitiin, ja historia oli keskeisin narratiivi. Historiapolitiikan viitekehys antoi tutkielmalle alustan, jossa kampanjapuheita voitiin analysoida. Lisäksi se loi kontekstin historiankäytön motiiveille politiikassa. Trump uudelleenkäytti menneisyyden retoriikkaa ja kietoi sen populismiin.</p>					
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<p>The United States presidential elections are one of the most followed events in the world. The 2016 presidential elections will be remembered as one of the contentious elections ever. Donald Trump became the president against all odds. His campaign slogans "Make America Great Again" and "America First" promised to return the power to the people and redefine Americas' role in the world. Trump's campaign speeches were full of rhetoric that echoed the sentiments of the past presidents. His nativist speeches were full of anti-establishment appeals and racially heated language. The political polarization had divided the country, and amidst this Trump rose to presidency. His victory was rooted in the cultural and political changes that began decades earlier, and Trump's presidency was the culmination of long-term developments.</p> <p>The thesis examines how Donald Trump used history politics in his general election campaign speeches. The primary sources of the thesis consist of general election speeches, from March to November in 2016. The thesis utilizes qualitative content analysis, in which primary sources are critically examined and compared, within the framework of history politics. The thesis relies on Jouni Tilli's policy concept typology of history politics and Pilvi Torsti's definition of history politics. The definitions of politicization and engagement in politics are a useful tool for analysing how Donald Trump blurred the line between myth, history and the past in his speeches. The theoretical framework of history politics refers to history being used in politics; it can manifest through political motives. Using history in political speeches is away to create a connection between the past and the present. The thesis also employs populism, which is used as analytical tool, when examining the political speeches. The thesis employs source-based analysis of primary sources, through research questions, within the framework of history politics. As well as looks how populism is expressed in the campaign speeches. The thesis also examines the rhetoric and themes of the Trump campaign, in order to understand the wider context and the outcomes of history politics.</p> <p>The analysis of the primary sources revealed that Trump exploited the conservative populist rhetoric that intertwined with history. His campaign message was appealing to the white working- and middle-class voters, who felt like they had been overlooked and left behind by the politicians and society. Trump capitalized on Richard Nixon's "Silent Majority" and Ronald Reagan's "Make America Great Again" narratives and transformed it to fit his populist rhetoric. Trump presented himself as an outsider who provided simple solutions to big issues. He used history to justify the political rhetoric of the campaign. The most important result of the thesis was that history was politicized and used as the pivotal narrative in Trump's campaign speeches. The history politics framework provided the thesis platform from which the campaign speeches could be analysed, and it created a context for the motives of using history in politics. Trump reused the political rhetoric of the past and intertwined it with populism.</p>			
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1. Introduction

Every four years Americans choose a leader for their country, who they believe will uphold safety and security, and represent the United States in front of the whole world. The President of the United States sets the tone for the whole nation. Donald Trump's rise to presidency was in many ways a culmination of half a century of political change in the United States. The public discontent had grown into unprecedented heights during Obama's last years of presidency, and the political wave swept Trump straight into the White House. Against general belief, Trump managed to use the discontent to his benefit. The events that acted as a catalyst for the political change can be traced back to the 1970s. The economic difficulties, caused by economic inflation and stagnation, that many Americans faced made the pursue of American dream difficult. The economic problems, as well as social issues, were blamed on immigrants; they were stealing the jobs from Americans and posed a threat to the American way of life.¹The political platform was also transforming; the conservative ideology gave the impression that big government posed a threat to America's future. Trump was able to exploit the discontent that had been brewing since the 1970s. However, more than anything Trump managed to use the political polarization of the Republican and Democratic parties. The tug war between the two parties had dominated the US politics for many years. The country and its politics had become divided and polarized. The presidency of Barack Obama ignited a strong resistance from the right, and extended the divide even further. Throughout his presidential campaign, Trump was able to exploit the deep divisions of the American society, however he did not create them.

Language is pivotal in political speeches; it creates a framework of how we understand and view the world. Trump promised to "Make America Great Again", by raising the economy and bringing manufacturing jobs back to America. He also stated that he would "Build a Wall" to keep the Mexican immigrants out, more specifically the rapists, murderers and drug dealers, and stop them from taking jobs away from the American people. Trump embraced the Republican tradition of bringing one-liners and slogans into political debates, completely diminishing the opponents fact-based arguments. It can be argued that Trump was a continuation of Republican celebrity candidates getting into public office. Like Reagan and Schwarzenegger before him, Trump became famous through television.²Trump's slogans about race, immigration, the government and the economy caught the attention of many Americans;

¹ John L. Campbell, *American Discontent: The Rise of Donald Trump and Decline of the Golden Age* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2018),2.

² Ibid.,3.

he was putting thoughts into words. Trump, more than anything, realized how language worked and how it can be used for his own benefit. Trump fused the culture of celebrity with politics. He is a self-claimed billionaire tycoon, television star, supporter of the birther movement, and a self-promoter wrapped all in one.

It is important to bear in mind that the historical factors opened the path for Trump, creating an opportunity for him to win in the first place. Since the 1950s the message of conservative politics has gained more momentum and grown louder. The capital investments made by the right, have influenced, and transformed, the language of American politics.³ The conservatives have supported politics that were not sustainable. They have denounced decades of change, wanting to return the government and its economy of the 1890s, the cultural norms of the 1950s, and the ethnic makeup of the 1940s.⁴ Hence, when you control the language of politics you also control the message of politics. The United States presidential campaign in 2016 showcased a new form of campaigning; it pushed the limits of appropriation and used history politics for the benefit of the presidential candidates. In many ways the conservatives define themselves in relationship to liberalism. Moreover, Trump's candidacy revealed the deep racial, ideological and cultural polarizations that had been developing for decades. The polarization between conservatives and liberals reflected the ideological divide in America. In many ways the conservatives have tried, and succeeded, to convince the American people that conservatism provides a way for them to keep their families safe, their dreams alive, and most importantly their nation strong and safe.⁵

1.1 Research topic and sources

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze Donald Trump's general election speeches, and how Trump used history politics during his presidential election campaign in 2016. The timeframe of the thesis covers the general election period⁶, from March to November 2016, this is due to the availability of primary sources. Moreover, the general election campaign rallies provided much more rhetoric and bold statements than the primary elections did. Unfortunately, not all of the campaign speeches were available, there were total of 74 general election speeches that

³ George Lakoff, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant, Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2014), xii.

⁴ E.J. Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong, Conservatism From Goldwater to the Tea Party and Beyond* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016), 1.

⁵ David Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism, A Short History* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), 4

⁶ The general election period starts on the 21st of March, 2016 and extends to 7th of November, 2016

were analyzed in this thesis. All of these speeches, made by Trump, can be found on The American Presidency Project website⁷. The Trump campaign has never revealed the identity of the speechwriter, or writers, but Stephen Miller has been one of the top names circulating, however this remains unconfirmed. Therefore, this thesis will hold Donald Trump as the author of the speeches.

The thesis will examine how the conservative movement developed from the 1950's to the present day and explain the current dominant force behind the Republican Party. Despite the fact that Trump, and his election as the President of the United States, is a very on the nose subject, no-one is yet to analyze his speeches in a manner that would link it to the past. There are many studies on Trump, populism, on Trump's personality, how people voted in the elections, why people voted for Trump, the rise of Trump and so forth. However, there has not been a study that has analyzed Trump's campaign speeches within the framework of history politics. Given how much the American political landscape has changed over many decades, it is vital to consider the role of history and how it is being used in politics. Moreover, it is important to share light on how much history can affect, when used for political gains, peoples' opinions. The historical references and symbols are contested issues that have contributed greatly to the controversies over America's identity. These controversies play a powerful role in America's politics.

The United States is a presidential democracy with a two-party system. The president is both the head of the state and head of the government and leads the executive branch. The Democratic Party and the Republican Party dominate the politics of the American federation. Presidential elections are lengthy and accompanied by extensive campaigns. These campaigns follow specific political stages; the surfacing, the primaries, the nomination convention, and the general elections. The primary elections intensify the process, and at this stage the candidates from one party debate against one another. The debates are a platform for the candidates to publicly announce their opinions and central arguments of their campaign. The nomination convention elects the most successful candidate, who then emerges to represent the party as a whole. The most victorious candidates from each party then proceeds to the final round of general elections. At the elections registered voters can cast their votes for their preferred candidate. However, the public vote does not decide the outcome of the elections; it is decided by the Electoral College. This means that each state has the equivalent number of electoral votes to its total number of representatives in the US Congress, thus members in the

⁷ www.presidency.ucsb.edu

House in addition to its two senators. Hence, there are 538 electoral votes and in the 2016 elections Trump won 306 electoral votes to Clinton's 232. Despite the fact that Trump lost the popular vote, he won the Electoral College due to the "winner takes all" principle which in the electoral voting system is the process whereby the candidate, who wins the popular vote in the state, gains all the electoral votes.

Donald Trump rode his campaign on the fact that he did not offer the voters' detailed plans or promises about what he would do. Instead, he positioned himself as the most vocal, outspoken candidate who spoke for the forgotten and silent majority. Thus, as a candidate Trump appealed to prejudices and stereotypes, was uninformed on the details of policy, had wild disregard for facts, and made dreadful tweets and statements about almost anyone who criticized him. More than anything he demanded that his Democratic opponent, whom he called the devil, should be jailed and alluded that others might try assassinate her. Given the uniqueness of the 2016 Presidential election, it is important to place the campaign in historical context. Donald Trump's arrival to the political arena demonstrated that there was something amiss in the Republican politics. As Trump displayed the excess of his personality for all to see, how these were overlooked by so many American voters, raises the question of what in American politics, history, and culture allows such a candidate to be elected as the President of the United States.

1.2 Research questions

Of the many factors that influenced the election of Donald Trump, this thesis will focus on how Trump used history politics during the general election campaign. Many argue that Trump's status as a celebrity helped him to get elected, or what the WikiLeaks publication of embarrassing emails about Hillary Clinton made Trumps' victory possible. Others argue that Trump won due to the fact that the FBI director, James Comey, expressed his concerns publicly about Clinton's mishandling of classified information.⁸ Even though Comey withdrew his concerns just days before the election, the added damage to Clinton's reputation had been done. It was also suggested that Trump won because Clinton failed to interpret the national populist mood, overlooked the key states with significant blue-collar constituencies, such as Michigan and Wisconsin.⁹ Those who supported Trump's campaign stated that his victory was due to his brutally honest language, which appealed to the middle- and working-class workers, and due

⁸ Campbell, *American Discontent*, 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

his ability to read different crowds.¹⁰It can also be argued that Trump's outsider status and the exploitation of populist insurgency helped him to pave his way to the White House. When it comes to political trust, it is important to bear in mind that because the president is on the driver's seat, the presidency dominates all news coverage on current politics.

In the thesis, I will analyze how, and to what extent, Donald Trump used politics of history in his campaign speeches, during the general election period. Although the main focus is on history politics, the thesis will also examine the rhetoric and themes of the Trump campaign, because this allows us to understand the wider context, and the outcomes of history politics more completely. The thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

How, and to what extent, did Donald Trump use history politics during his presidential campaign?

How did Donald Trump present himself during his speeches?

How did Trump create a connection with his voters?

How did Trump frame his statements, and did he use rhetoric in his campaign?

Trump did not have many speeches with detailed proposals; nor were many policy statements displayed on his website.¹¹ His focus was on rallies, slogans, branding and demeaning his opponents, speaking off the cuff, and tweeting at all hours. At campaign appearances, and in Presidential debates, he made provocative and false statements, which pleased his supporters but led many government officials in a state of concern. The hypotheses of the thesis is that by analyzing speeches, within the framework of history politics, we can discover how Trump linked his campaign to the history of Conservative and Christian politics. The many slogans used by Trump will only reinforce the hypotheses and demonstrate how he managed to appeal to the Conservative voters.

1.3 Theory and Methodology

The thesis analyses primary sources, utilizing qualitative content analysis, in which primary sources are examined and compared critically, within the framework of history politics. George Lakoff argues that certain metaphors and images, as well as language evoke frames.¹² This is an important factor, especially when arguing in political debates; you do not want to use the opposing sides language. These frames are embedded with ideas and emotions. When analyzing

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See <http://www.donaldjtrump.com/>

¹² Lakoff, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant*, 2.

Trump and his speeches, it becomes more than evident that his speeches contain a certain frame; it expresses the language of his views, his idea of the world. The frame goes beyond language; it is also about the ideas. As Lakoff points out the language carries the ideas forward, it evokes the ideas.¹³The theoretical framework constitutes from history politics and how it can be used as a tool in politics. In order to understand the wider context of Trump's speeches, the thesis also examines how populism occurred in the campaign and in the speeches. Populism is a political logic, a way of thinking about politics, and it operates within the democratic context. Through populism, the rhetoric in Trump's campaign can be understood within the context of history politics. Populism cannot be defined according to one ideology, nor is there a definition to terms like 'the people' or 'the establishment.'¹⁴It is a style of rhetoric that claims legitimate power rests with 'the people' and challenges the power of the elite. In addition to using history politics for the analysis of primary sources, the thesis also utilizes the concept of populism and rhetoric for the source-based analysis. Trump's campaign was deeply induced with populist rhetoric.

Relying on Pilvi Torsti's definition of history politics, in which the use of history in politics can be studied through its manifestations and political motives, the thesis interprets the sources accordingly. Trump used the narratives of the past to further advance his campaign and to create a link between the past and the present. In many ways, Trumps' populism and use of history 'was not far from neoliberal, elitist idea of ruling class whose power derives from their wealth, fused with old fascist political myths of sacred leadership and populist ideas of popular sovereignty.'¹⁵ Trump created the images of immigrants clandestinely crossing the US-Mexican border, committing crimes, and accessing public services heighten anxiety among those who may already be concerned about nation's direction. Once aroused, that anxiety seeks political home¹⁶. On this occasion, the Republican Party and their candidate Trump provided a natural home for those anxieties. It became no mystery that the unskilled, native-born Americans whose wages and jobs were under threat, were those who forcefully opposed immigration.

¹³ Ibid., 3.

¹⁴ John B. Judis, *The Populist Explosion, How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics* (New York: Columbia Global Reports, 2016), 14-15.

¹⁵Frederico Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism in History* (California: University of California Press, 2017), 235.

¹⁶Marisa Abrajano, and Zoltan L. Hajnal, *White Backlash, Immigration, Race, and American Politics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015), 27.

The conservatives developed institutions that mirrored liberals' institutions, using these strategies to combat and provide alternatives to the government's actions. The conservatives used intellectual programs and grassroots movements to combat the liberal agendas. They also created networks in various academic institutions to create collective action amongst conservative activists. Thus, the conservative movement had ideologically motivated intellectuals and activists who were willing to do the groundwork for their movement. Their sophisticated strategy provided enthusiasm to the movement and created effectiveness in elections. The conservatives sought to undermine the very system they tried to mold with their own strategies and organizations. They set goals and developed various strategies to achieve them; building up an organizational infrastructure that would serve as a long-term political investment. The conservatives placed politics, ideas and strategies that would further their goals. By consistently creating a solid base, the conservatives could see the returns in the future.

When using history politics as a framework, it is important to understand what is meant by the process of history. Jeremy Black explains that history 'is only offered by narratives and interpretations that are alive to contrasting interpretations and to the problems of using evidence. This, however, is of scant interest to those who seek to use history to support the allegedly manifest destiny of their particular political interpretations.'¹⁷ Torsti points out that it is important to emphasize the idea of using history as a tool for understanding, not as a condition for historical culture.¹⁸ She also remarks that history politics can be appealed for political purposes.¹⁹ Pilvi Torsti's and Jeremy Black's definition of history politics creates a framework for the thesis, and by analyzing Trump's speeches within this framework we can have a better understanding of why Trump gained such a stronghold amongst the voters. Historical themes can be developed, and the divisive nature can be molded for political gains. Historical consciousness can evoke the past as a mirror to which the present can be reflected upon. The present can create a purpose for the past. Jeremy Black points out that 'politics is a key aspect of the context, content, and discussion in public and popular history. Moreover, the use of the past for political and social reasons is highly significant for the employment of history'.²⁰

¹⁷ Jeremy Black, *Clio's Battles: Historiography in Practice* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2015), 145

¹⁸ Pilvi Torsti, "Why Do History Politics Matter? The Case of the Estonian Bronze Soldier," in *The Cold War and the Politics of History*, ed. Juhana Aunesluoma and Pauli Kettunen (Helsinki: Edita Publishing, 2008), 22.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

²⁰ Black, *Clio's Battles*, 25.

1.3.1 Politicizing the use of history

History culture is everywhere, it embodies and influences our historical knowledge, which is defined by the relationship between the past, the present and the future.²¹ How we interpret the past and understand it can be used to affect the present and the future. History politics means both using history as a political argument and a struggle of what can be accepted as part of the historical narrative. Thus, history politics intertwines the different levels of explaining the past, influencing the future and the present-day politicizing. It can be argued that history politics operates in a place where all three levels are combined. This thesis relies on the policy concept typology defined by Jouni Tilli. According to Tilli, the phenomenon of politics is organized into four categories: *politicization*, *polity*, *policy* and *engage in politics*. The categorization is based on conceptual history's analysis on politics and political.²² The following paragraph will look at Tilli's categorization in more detail.

Politicizing does not have predestined content, but it rather rises different opportunities and options to question the existing interpretations. *Polity* consist of coordination of measures into a coherent policy or program. It also explains what happens in politics, it is a metaphoric state, the separation of branches like religion, economy and politics. On a state level polity can refer to any system that is connected to the use of power. *Policy* offers a framework from within decisions and actions are tied to. It aims to create stability and efficiency by predicting the future as accurately as possible. Party program, economic policy or Regan doctrine can be seen as different reflections of policies. *Engaging in politics*, refers to influencing people through rhetoric. On the political platform rhetoric is cleverly used to convey a specific message or image. In his campaign speeches Donald Trump created a vision for America. He promised people to bring back jobs and deport undocumented immigrants. Trump presented a specific image of the country in order to achieve specific goal: win the elections.

Politicization and engaging in politics can be used to analyze the boundaries of history and past, and what kind of rhetoric is deployed in the history politics. The thesis will analyze how Trump engaged in politics and how he was able blur the line between myth, history and the past. By revoking the rhetoric of the past Trump utilized history politics and portrayed history through his vision. Rhetoric can be analyzed within a wider context in relation to argumentation,

²¹ Jouni Tilli, "Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia," *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja*, Vol.107, No.3 (2009):280, <http://elektra.helsinki.fi/libproxy.helsinki.fi/se/h/0018-2362/107/3/tilojali.pdf> (accessed January 25, 2020)

²² Ibid.,281.

discourse analysis and the structure of narration.²³In history culture there are always key phrases that have a deeper meaning, rhetoric can be build around these phrases. Trump used phrases that had a strong connection to American political past, and he developed his presidential campaign around these phrases. Trump narrated the past in a manner that had a coherent story, the beginning, middle and end. In the beginning American workers had prosperity and comfort. Then globalism entered the arena with liberal policies, leaving the middle class in despair. Luckily, in the end Trump came to the aid of American middle- and working class, saving them and the nation from doom.

Pilvi Torsti points out that the forms of political use of history can be divided into six different categories and manifestations: *history teaching, public history culture, history publications, international and national juridical decisions, societal public speeches and comments, academic research of history*. Within these categories' history is applied to serve a purpose.²⁴ This thesis will focus on how politics of history can be used in societal public speeches and comments. Torsti states that societal public speeches and comments, like interviews and media appearances, are the most common form of politics of history. Typical expressions are simplistic rhetoric and slogans. Most importantly, the lexicon included extreme expressions that had historical charge; words and notions like “enemy” and “treason.”²⁵ Trump utilized social media in his campaign, by going around traditional media, Trump took full advantage of Twitter to express his arguments and statements. He strengthened his arguments with slogans that were known in the American political history. The actions and decisions made today are justified with the past actions. Speakers, and media figures like Trump, create a narrative of their choice, in which they use history for political gains. Moreover, choice indicates intentionality, a motive for history politics.

1.3.2 Driving motives of history politics

History politics can be used as a tool to create narratives and enhance political argumentation. It is a conscious interpretation of the past, full of intention. History politics can also be analyzed by focusing on its underlying motives. Torsti states that there are three main motives: *foreign policy motive, domestic policy motive, and universal 'good' motive*. There are many overlapping motives that intertwine and exist simultaneously.²⁶ The following paragraphs will now look in more detail the different history politics motives that Torsti has described.

²³ Ibid.,285.

²⁴ Pilvi Torsti. ”Historiapoliittikkaa tutkimaan: Historian poliittisen käytön typologian kehittäjä.” *Kasvatus & Aika* 2, No.2 (2008): 61-65, <http://elektra.helsinki.fi.libproxy.helsinki.fi/oa/1797-2299/2/2/historia.pdf> (accessed January 25, 2020)

²⁵ Ibid., 65.

²⁶ Ibid.,66-68.

Foreign policy motive: There are four kinds of subcategories for foreign policy motives. In the first motive, states or governments aim to emphasize their own position in relation to other states or governments. A common effort to show support to justice or democracy. The US has always declared to stand for democracy and freedom. Through different international organizations, NATO and UN most importantly, Americans expanded the democratic concepts. The second motive is state's efforts to promote its own current foreign policy aims. Trump's campaign underlined foreign policy that focused on border security, expanding the American military strength and nativist America First approach to trade. It must be noted that Trump administration had followed the nativist foreign policy line promised during the campaign. The third foreign policy motive emphasizes the unifying political connections between several states. The EU promotes unified foreign policy line and has implemented measures to control its external borders. The fourth foreign policy motive utilizes history in defining foreign policy changes and legitimacy. In America, the Trump administration has invoked the mid-twentieth century isolationist America First policy. The aim of the policy is to defend America's economic interests and secure American jobs.

Domestic policy motive, using history in domestic policy can either emphasize historical continuation or historical disconnection. Thus, the administration is motivated to either familiarize or separate domestic policy from the past. When diminishing certain historical events, or wiping them out completely, the administration separates it from the previous governments policy and society model. On the other hand, creating continuation with the past, the administration can strengthen their authority and maintain status quo.²⁷ In the US, the Tea Party movement had intentionally chosen to be named after the American revolutionists who objected the British taxation. They established a strong connection to the past and framed their cause in a manner that looked like they were fighting a glorious cause against President Obama's domestic policies.

Universal 'good' motive. Alongside domestic and foreign policy motives, history politics can be based on the universally good values. This refers to history politics that is based on common values and principles like equality, human rights and justice. However, this type of history politics has more symbolic value rather than direct political value. Countries and heads of state give recognition to the victims of genocides and those who suffered under oppression. The

²⁷ Ibid. 67.

strongest history politics motive is to acknowledge the victims, without any domestic or foreign policy gains. There is a notion that future generations should learn from the past, and not to repeat the mistakes.²⁸ Within the framework history politics, it can be suggested that by provoking fears on immigration, Trump created a link to the longstanding anxieties of immigration. The interest of the past served the need of the present. Following Pilvi Torsti's argumentation that historical consciousness is a complex connection between the interpretations of the past and perceptions of the present,²⁹ Trump's usage of the past was to create narratives that served a new historical purpose.

1.4 Disposition of the thesis

The thesis is constructed of introduction chapter, background chapter, main analysis chapters, effects of the campaign chapter and conclusions. The following chapters will analyse how Trump used history politics in his speeches and allow us to understand how past can guide our understanding of the present.

Chapter two will look at the development of conservatism from 1950s to the rise of Tea Party. This chapter explains, and shares light on, the influence behind Donald Trump's political rhetoric. It provides the reader with an understanding of the American conservative politics and its framing. The chapter progresses in a chronological order and focuses on the most influential conservative presidencies. It will also explain the importance of grassroots movements and what led to the rise of Tea Party. The chapter will demonstrate the influence behind Trump's slogans and rhetoric. It is important to understand how conservative framing developed and how it was established, and what was its connection to Trump. The concepts and context are the key, in understanding the history politics within Trump's speeches. Hence, the chapter ties Donald Trump's populist rhetoric to the context American politics and provides a focus for the thesis' topic.

Chapters three and four are the main analytical chapters of the thesis, in which the sources are analysed according to the research questions and within the framework of politics of history. Chapter three will analyse the midwestern and western campaign speeches, and the division of states is done according to the census bureau's division of states into four different regions³⁰.

²⁸ Ibid.,68.

²⁹ Torsti, "Why Do History Politics Matter,"23.

³⁰ https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf

Given the extent of the speeches, the chapter is divided into thematic subchapter that analyse history politics within specific themes. Chapter four analyses the southern and eastern campaign speeches and is also divided into thematic subchapters.

Chapter five looks at the consequences and effects of the campaign, and what made Trump such an appealing candidate that ultimately made him the President of the United States. In the final conclusions chapter, the results of the analysis are summarised, and the chapter will conclude to what extent politics of history was used in the campaign speeches, and how the findings from the analysis can be interpreted from the history politics perspective. It will also reflect back to the research questions and evaluate the answers that were presented. The chapter will look into further study of the topic, and whether or not it is possible. In the end, the chapter will conclude on how history politics was used in Donald Trumps' presidential campaign speeches.

2. American Conservatism from the 1950s onwards

The United States conservatism has a long history. However, the beginning of the organized conservative movement started in the 1930s. At first it was an elite led loose grouping of cooperating individuals and organizations, who believed in American exceptionalism. In their view individualism, limited state power and laissez-faire economics were the key aspects of American values. Conservatives oppose government led efforts to equalize economic inequality, but instead believe that inequality should be addressed by charity and private organizations. However, government should promote traditional values and beliefs, as well as enforce social order. In terms of foreign policy, America had to be protected from the foreign corruption. Thus, from the conservatives' point of view protectionism and non-interventionism were the right way to shield America. They did not want to impose American values, but instead believed that American exceptionalism and classical laissez-faire principles would radiate to the rest of the world. It is also important to bear in mind, that whenever immigration numbers in United States grew, white people moved their support to the Republican Party.³¹ It can be suggested that for a long time America did not need a specific conservative movement, because it was fundamentally a conservative nation.³² The United States patterned history with race was reflected in many ways in the conservatives' anti-immigration views.

The conservatives in the 1940s and 1950s were dedicated to preserve individual economic liberties.³³ The two-party system made the conservatives to rely on the Republican party to implement its objectives of traditionalism, anti-communism and libertarianism. From the 1950's onwards, the conservatives advocated developing party and electoral process to solve the problem of liberalism. They also wanted to implement change in America through private organizations.³⁴ The traditionalist and libertarian conservatives wanted to prevent the federal governments involvement in individual lives. The anti-communist conservatives, on top of fighting against communism, wanted to promote conservative values at home. More than anything the conservatives believed in the sanctity of the Constitution, and for many of them the separation of Church and State was difficult.³⁵

³¹ Abrajano, and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 14.

³² John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Right Nation, Conservative Power in America* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p.332

³³ Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 13.

³⁴ Jonathan M. Schoenwald, *A Time For Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

In the early 1950s the evangelical voters began to identify the Republicans as the party which would offer support to religious issues and religion itself, therefore they began to build relationships with the Republican politicians. The two different branches of conservatism emphasized different ideological aspects and the 1964 presidential elections taught the Republicans how to deal with the extreme conservatives. The conservative ideology underlined political action and provided the non-liberal Americans possibilities to express their opinions. Throughout the decades conservatives have had different approaches to foreign and domestic policies; William Buckley worried that conservatives did not have Christian approach to economic policies, whereas Barry Goldwater did not want to mix religion and politics. Ronald Reagan wanted to dismantle the power of the federal government but did not take on the task.

The conservative grassroots revolts can be divided into three stages; first, elite led revolt against the New Deal in the 1930s and the 1940s, second, libertarian mainstream conservatism surge in the 1960s, third, grassroots resistance in the 2000s dominated by the Tea Party and alt-right. Moreover, the past has started to play an important role in the public agenda, and the past is being glorified and transformed into something that is worth fighting for. The political legitimation of the past is linked to the collective memory. When looking at the conservative movement it is evident that the connection to the past is strong, stronger than the liberal movement has with the past. The Democratic victories at the national and state levels in the 1950s and 1960s ignited the conservative activity throughout the country.³⁶With the organizational and intellectual foundations laid ready in the 1950s, the conservative movement went head on to gain more momentum.

From 1930s to 1960s the federal government grew in size and influence. The New Deal programs helped to develop a wide range of vital welfare state services to American citizens, such as unemployment relief, health care and old-age pensions.³⁷The social changes in the 1930s caused a ripple effect in American society. The dividing issue between conservatives and liberals was the formers desire to have less government involvement in individual lives, whereas the latter wanted to increase the reach of the federal government. To many conservatives the New Deal represented socialism that threatened the core fabric of society, hence making them more dependent on the state for basic services.³⁸ From the conservatives'

³⁶ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 63

³⁷ Frank Lambert, *Religion in American politics: A short history* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 133.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 134.

perspective the individuals needed to be disciplined, not the market economy as Roosevelt had intended. However, the early conservatives were a divided group; they did not agree on the relationship between market economy, religious faith and social forms. Conservatives' viewed the New Deal programs as a destroying force to America, and saw them paving the way to fascism and communism. Conservatives were shocked to the core by FDR's transformation of balance of power between the state and the federal government. They saw the social programs as an attack on the very foundations of liberalism, and it was a sinister attack to the American tradition. From the 1930s onwards both liberals and conservatives reframed the issues of liberty and equality in their own respective disciplinary orders.³⁹Overall, the New Deal was a spark that caused the conservatives to fear big government and federal intervention, and brought about the conservative counter movement.

By the 1950s the US had transformed into a modern secular society. It can be argued that 'secularization was evident in the way that Americans thought and behaved and in the institutions that they built.'⁴⁰On the other hand, the 1950s saw revivalism that focused on religious economy. American Protestants were divided between fundamentalists and modernists, both sides claimed to represent America's heritage and moral conscience.⁴¹A conservative movement which pushed forward the anti-establishment agenda, were the neoconservatives. In their view Lyndon Johnson's Great Society had overreached government power, allowing social ills to emerge. The American society was in crisis because of the big government and uncontrolled culture. In neoconservative view it was the American duty to share and extend its values to the world. American exceptionalism, more over Manifest Destiny, dictated the US mission to spread liberty and democracy. By sharing ideological views with the new Christian Right, the neoconservatives helped to create new anti-establishment conservatism. American values and moral were on decline and there was not authority strong enough to put things back on track. The fundamentalists were the first evangelicals to be mobilized for the conservative cause.

In the 1950s the conservative movement raised its head and began to act against the big government liberalism. American conservatism became fueled with religious faith, devoted to social order and political liberty. Majority of conservatives wanted to protect the individual economic liberty. Their desire for order and security was a driving force that was embedded to

³⁹ Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 3.

⁴⁰ Lambert, *Religion in American politics*, 135.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 136.

American prosperity.⁴² Evangelicals had a strong base in the south, majority of them came from small-town and rural communities. The religious right moral agenda was mainly focused on education, family and sexuality. It is important to bear in mind that the Republican Party has not always been identical with conservatism. The ideological transformation to conservatism became reality in the early 2000s.⁴³ The disappearance of the party's internal diversity meant that the members became less racially and ethnically diverse. Before the conservative overtake Republicans and Democrats found more common ground on such issues as fiscal policy and pro-business sentiment. The following chapters will look how conservatism gradually grabbed a hold of the Republican party from 1950s onwards. The struggles of the 1950s and 1960s politics created forces that continue to distort and warp American politics.

2.1 "In God We Trust", the New Right

After the Second World War, suburban areas had grown substantially, turning into the centers of the middle-class voters. By nature, these suburban areas were leaning to the conservative side, preferring to vote the Republican party. At the same time the inner cities were inhabited by majority the non-whites. This division and growth in both areas created a political polarization. In many ways, the middle-class found itself isolated and forgotten. In 1953, politically moderate Republican war hero General Dwight D. Eisenhower became the 34th President of the United States. For Vice-President, he chose Californian Senator, Richard Nixon who had a reputation as a hardline anti-communist. President Eisenhower committed the US to free trade, international oriented business and defending its allies against the communist threat. However, Eisenhower's political moderation caused a reaction that led to the development of the New Right. The new strain of conservatism established networks and grassroots level mobilization to recruit likeminded individuals. The nature of American politics began to change, and the conservatist movement grew in momentum as the years passed. The long-term goal was to change and transform the Republican Party to fit the conservative ideology.

The prominent figures of the early conservatist movement were Senator Joseph McCarthy, William F. Buckley Jr, and Russell Kirk. Like any organization, the conservatist movement established a network that rallied like-minded individuals to join the movement at the grassroots level. The conservatists aimed to seize the Republican Party's presidential nomination and

⁴² Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 2-3.

⁴³ Geoffrey Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin: The Downfall of Moderation and the Destruction of the Republican Party; From Eisenhower to the Tea Party* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), xvi.

ultimately transform the party into an organ of conservative ideology.⁴⁴The conservatives wanted to win back their American culture, that they feared was somehow lost. The conservatives searched ways to halt the increasing and overly strong central government, weakened presence abroad, and restricted individual rights.⁴⁵The founding father of America's conservatism, Russell Kirk, published *Conservative Mind* in 1953. The work outlined six truisms that would guide the conservative thinking.⁴⁶His work laid the foundations for conservative intellectuals as well as politicians. Much of the mid 1950s was defined by the conservative opposition to liberalism, inspired by Kirk's work. It can also be argued that by the end of the decade, the evangelicals saw the country as a Christian nation, and the Republican party as their best ally to carry out the cause. The New Right brought together political strategists, and corporate backed think tanks. Their main base was composed of evangelical Christians. They adopted a more aggressive style of mass mobilization, and used skillfully television and new marketing technique to advance their cause.

The year 1958 saw the emergence of a new conservative movement; John Birch Society. Founded by Robert W. Welch, the Society aimed to battle communism, get America out of the United Nations and supported limited government. Welch believed that government-controlled economy was bad, and his strong opposition of the UN stemmed from the fear it would lead to one-world totalitarianism.⁴⁷ The Society had its roots in the 1950s national right-wing revival⁴⁸, and the Society itself became a strong advocate of right-wing conservatism. Even though the John Birch Society was a vital conservative organization of its era, and many conservatives within the Republican Party agreed with its beliefs, the conspiratorial aspects and Welch's erratic leadership repelled many.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, in the upcoming decades the Society embraced ideological inheritances that conveyed the concern for the cultural, social and political change. These concerns became an integral part of the conservative discourse and are pivotal even today. In the 1960s conservative activists transformed the direction of the Republican party towards right. The rightwing movement grew throughout the decade and expanded its influence in the 1970s. A complete validation came in the 1980s with Ronald Reagan's landslide victory in the presidential elections.

⁴⁴ Ibid., xvii-xviii.

⁴⁵ Schoenwald, *A Time For Choosing*, 17.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁷ Robert Wuthnow, *Red State Religion: Faith and Politics in America's Heartland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 227.

⁴⁸ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 75.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 127.

In 1964 Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater secured the GOP's presidential nomination. Goldwater was handsome, charismatic and candid. He successfully launched ideologically radical conservatism, that would inspire the Tea Party in the later decades. Goldwater's preaching had deep roots in the American conservatism against the New Deal during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. The 1964 presidential elections, most importantly Goldwater's road to presidential nomination, showed millions of Americans, in particular white southern voters, how and why they were conservative Republicans. Goldwater and his supporters pursued a Southern strategy that attracted the civil rights opponents. Goldwater's campaign created a conservative movement that mobilized the right-wing populists who refused to compromise with the moderate republicans. Barry Goldwater became the champion of the right-wing anti-communists. Conservatives gained consciousness that allowed them to make roots as a political force. The year 1964 saw also the debut of Ronald Reagan; he delivered an successful speech for Goldwater, and made him a force to be reckoned with in the Republican platform.

Despite Goldwater's momentum among the southern voters, the majority of the country, was still dominated by the liberals. Even though Goldwater was defeated, the elections marked a milestone for the conservative movement. Most importantly they learned, that in order to win the presidential elections all the fractions of the Republican party had to be behind the candidate. After Goldwater's great defeat, the conservatives made adjustments that were pushed even further under Nixon, Reagan, and both Bushes. This lead many conservatives frustrated, and they searched for groups that went further into the right. Thus, the campaign left the Republican party divided and scattered. Richard Nixon was able to mobilize both sides of the party and pay homage to both sides of the party. Nixon's relentless campaigning provided understanding to the South, but he also reminded the Republicans no to be racially unjust.⁵⁰

When looking at the populist aspects of the Republican party in the 1960s and 1970s, it must be noted that the rise of George Wallace, Governor of Alabama, was a reaction of the extreme right. Wallace, like Trump in the future, advocated the rights of the little men against the society's leviathans. Ordinary, white Americans were bearing the cost of government's preferential treatment of blacks, and, according to Wallace, became victims of disregard for law and order.⁵¹ Wallace expressed rhetoric, similarly to Trump, that was attractive to certain groups. However, in the long run Wallace's views proved to be too far on the right. Barry Goldwater's nomination in 1964 had inspired a grassroots movement. However, under the

⁵⁰ Herbert S. Parmet, *Richard Nixon and His America* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1990), 489-491.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 499.

pressures of national campaign the emotionally charged campaign, that championed for Goldwater, crumbled.⁵² To many democrats' new conservatism represented populism of the old, a paranoia, social dislocation and irrational expression of status anxiety.⁵³ Even though Goldwater lost the elections, the conservatives had attracted a great number of voters from the suburban areas. Despite the conservatist attraction, the movement was fractioned and this factor weighted heavily in the 1964 elections. Goldwater's defeat only put the anti-establishment conservatives to the back burner. They re-enssembled and constructed their networks and political institutions. With the aid of conservative media, intellectuals and institutions, the anti-establishment conservatives gained strength, evangelicals and neoconservatives joined their cause. All the conservative fractions felt like their traditional values, morality and authority were under a threat. Thus, they came together to defend the American culture, and economy as they had once known it. Their desire to curb the expanded, regulatory government eventually culminated in the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980.

2.2 Richard Nixon "Bring Us Together"

Between 1960 and 1970 the American state went through a fundamental institutional transformation. This period also witnessed a social and cultural transformation that threatened the core values of the conservatives. More importantly, the acts and regulations that were put in place, to help those in need within the society, undermined the economic freedom and well-being of the conservatives. Thus, change raised resistance and resentment amongst the right. The dramatic social and cultural changes were reflected on the American electorate, old alliances were crumbling in the more racially and socially diverse society.

Towards the end of the 1960s, the Republican party was gearing up for presidential elections. Richard Nixon was fighting for nomination, and at the Republican convention in Miami Beach he managed to capture it. Nixon's acceptance speech declared his devotion to represent the forgotten Americans, promote the private enterprise and guarantee justice for every American.⁵⁴ The end of the decade was filled with social unrest and race riots. These issues became an integral part of his campaigning; "law and order" became Nixon's campaign slogan. To Nixon law and order did not represent racism, but equal justice. He rounded out the candidate ticket with the Governor of Maryland, Spiro Agnew. With Agnew onboard, they brought together

⁵² Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt, Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011), 250.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 251.

⁵⁴ Parmet, *Richard Nixon and His America*, 509.

northern moderates with rightward-leaning southerners.⁵⁵ Nixon's nomination represented a turning point in American politics, and his 1968 national agenda seized the day in postwar politics. The middle-class majority was on the verge of being discovered, and the 1968 presidential elections were a race to win their votes. In October, 1968, Nixon declared that it would "be the great objective of this administration at the outset, to bring the American people together. This will be an open administration, open to new ideas, open to men and women of both parties, open to the critics as well as those who support us... We want to bring America together."⁵⁶

During his campaign, Nixon positioned himself as the champion of public morality; he would return the country back to its core values of strong families, public decency and most importantly religious faith.⁵⁷ "In Nixon, evangelicals and fundamentalists found a candidate who understood their dismay at the moral decline of the nation."⁵⁸ In 1968, the evangelicals had become part of Nixon's 'great, silent majority,' and "they looked to the Republican presidential candidate to save their country from secularization, moral disintegration, and social anarchy, and in the process return the nation to its traditional religious and moral values."⁵⁹ Nixon's message put a heavy emphasis on personal responsibility and stable families; key values to public morality. Despite the fact that Nixon had not been ideologically a consistent politician, he believed that the 'silent majority' needed a champion of public morality as their president, and this role was the most natural for him.⁶⁰ For Nixon, the evangelical support was crucial, and his campaign depended on their votes, especially in the South and suburban areas. The evangelicals needed a candidate who promoted traditional morality, and in their need they did not question Nixon's own beliefs. The conservatives in particular called for 'law and order,' and the return of the traditional values. After Nixon's victory in 1968, the Republican-leaning counties in the metropolitan South and West became known as the 'Sunbelt.' The term 'Sunbelt' was a cultural and political concept that consisted of regions that stretched from Virginia to California, including growing metropolitan areas such as Houston, Atlanta and Los Angeles.⁶¹ Nixon's campaign had gathered the different strands of Republicanism under one umbrella.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 509.

⁵⁶ Richard Nixon quoted in Parmet, *Richard Nixon and His America*, 529.

⁵⁷ Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party, The Making of the Christian Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 89.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 88.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 90.

⁶¹ Ibid. 93; Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 329.

These areas consisted mostly of white college educated workers who worked in defense industries, naturally favoring Republicans who supported a strong military. The voters were concerned with growing crime rates and responded to the politicians calls for ‘law and order.’ Nixon spoke of growing drug use and moral panic that was attached to race riots. America was fighting criminal forces whilst the law was broken. Nixon tied the social struggles of the era to conservative principle of personal responsibility. Nixon’s solution was to increase the police force and their infrastructure. Nixon’s vision was to produce order, so that there would be peace and progress at home as well as abroad.⁶² He framed the social and racial unrest of the 1960s in a manner that was appealing to concerned and angry white Americans, arguing that the respect for public authority and rule of law were on decline. Thus, they embraced Nixon’s message and call for ‘law and order.’ Nixon employed a rhetorical strategy that was constructed of moderate political identity, coded in a manner that could not be accused of being racist. Hence, his law and order strategy denied that race was the problem of lawlessness.

There was also a shift in the country’s religious orientation, and by the end of the 1960s evangelical congregations had grown in membership, bypassing the regular Protestants in political influence. Americans gravitated towards larger churches that also provided social services, such as marriage counseling. By the early 1970s the evangelicals in the South, West and Midwest were supporting the politically conservative Nixon and his policies.⁶³ Nixon’s strategy with his evangelical allies demonstrated that the political landscape was going through a fundamental transformation. In the 1968 elections Nixon focused on the ‘Silent Majority’ in the mid-west, maintaining a more moderate line in racial politics, a path that gained him presidency. However, Nixon’s tough talk about race, and his other actions gave the Democrats an opportunity to gain support where the moderate Republicans had failed.⁶⁴ He warned Americans of the decline of military might and national prestige, and criticized the governments excessive use of social programs. By using populist conservative framework, Nixon created politics that was built upon the votes of the middle-class.

The growth of the Sunbelt had shifted America’s religious landscape and its voting pattern. After taking the office, Nixon demonstrated his support to the religiously devoted by organizing Sunday morning White House church services.⁶⁵ It was his way to gather support and affirmation for his political decision-making; through manipulation the evangelicals basked in

⁶² Parmet, *Richard Nixon and His America*, 485.

⁶³ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 93-94; Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 328-329.

⁶⁴ Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 330-331.

⁶⁵ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 94.

the favoritism of Nixon, and they allowed him to use them. “By the 1970s, conservative white evangelicals were confronted with a perfect storm of secular power that they deemed a threat to their way of life and to the Christian nation they believed the United States once was and ought to be again.”⁶⁶ Throughout the 1970s the evangelicals became politically mobilized. Feeling like their values and institutions were under a threat, the evangelicals helped to bring about the Reagan Revolution.

In the 1972 elections, with an “American strategy,” Nixon urged the voters to maintain the respect of moral values, and follow the example of the devoted South. Hence, he replayed the 1968 campaign, hoping to gain the vote of the middle-Americans, he promised them to defend the ‘old values’, respect of law and order and hard work. ‘A demonstrative faith in God and free enterprise and a celebration of postliberal and post racial progress, Nixon believed, was the formula that would win him the Sunbelt’s silent majority.’⁶⁷ For the reelection campaign Nixon reached out to the evangelical and conservative voters in the suburban areas of the Midwest and Sunbelt. The culturally conservative base was central for the Republican party, as they would be in the future elections. The “law and order” theme would be central to Donald Trump’s presidential election campaign. Nixon continued to emphasize moral values, crime, and most importantly the “silent majority.” He did win the 1972 presidential elections with a large margin, gaining the votes of millions of southerners and blue-collar Democrats in the north.

As a policymaker Nixon was full of contradictions; he wanted to expand government initiatives in environmental protection, family planning and health care. His foreign policy caused more confusion when his declaration of getting out of Vietnam, turned into a series of negotiations.⁶⁸ The presidents’ policies led him to an unstable ground with GOP’s conservative base. On top of that, those who had embraced Nixon’s anticommunist rhetoric had hard time accepting his détente with the Soviet Union and opening to China.⁶⁹ By the end of his first term, Nixon also faced the social and economic challenges that had started in the 1960s. In the eyes of the conservatives and evangelicals’ family values and traditional social norms had reached a crisis that needed to be dealt with. Nixon’s campaigns deployed strategies which stroked the white Americans resentment towards liberals and African Americans. Thus, these strategies catered the Sunbelt and suburban areas, doused in populism, racial exclusion and class privilege.

⁶⁶ Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America, A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015),71.

⁶⁷ Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 332.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 338.

⁶⁹ David H. Bennett, *Party of Fear: From Nativism to the New Right in American History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 341.

Nixon's presidency emphasized the Southern Strategy, in which he leaned towards the conservatives whilst trying to keep the moderates onboard.

After the Watergate scandal and Nixon's fall, the conservatives initiated a grassroots movement that would regain their strength again. Watergate shook Americans faith in the government, causing a serious damage for the Republicans. Moderates and conservatives within the Party blamed each other for the scandal. Moderates saw Watergate as an expression of the conservatives' political approach, in which the ends justified the means. Whilst the conservatives saw the scandal as moderate expediency and lack of principle.⁷⁰

Nixon's presidency had created a base line for the right, and his coded racial populist slogans 'middle America', the 'Silent Majority', and the 'forgotten Americans', became part of the conservative lexicon. The political interest groups that championed issues like anti-United Nations or prayer in schools, contributed to the New Christian Right movement. Hence forth, by the end of the 1970s the New Christian Right had emerged. It had not been an instantaneous process, but a political mobilization that required cooperation between different conservative fractions.⁷¹ Moral Majority, a prominent Christian Right organization, fought for family values and school prayer. They opposed the Equal Rights Amendment and condemned communism. All of these were issues that Ronald Reagan embraced, and the Moral Majority supported him from early on.

2.3 Ronald Reagan "Let's Make America Great Again"

"You can't endorse me, but I endorse you."⁷² These were Ronald Reagan's words to evangelicals who had gathered to listen to him before the presidential elections in 1980. Gaining the support of the Christian Right was a big deal, and with that Reagan aligned himself to take back God's country. Reagan's skills and background, as an actor and politician, provided him with an opportunity to influence America and the way it remembered its past. Reagan loved to use patriotic notes in his speeches and he utilized the exceptionalist language throughout his political career. He was the conservatives answer to return the country to its affluent past. Reagan promised to end fifty years of failed federal programs, simplify bureaucracy so that American companies could thrive. More than anything, he promised to bring back prosperity

⁷⁰ Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin*, 342.

⁷¹ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 5.

⁷² Ronald Reagan quoted in Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America*, 98.

to America.⁷³ Donald Trump embraced Reagan's political rhetoric in his presidential campaign. Reagan knew how to frame issues and market his message to the American people.

In the 1980 campaign, Ronald Reagan was presented as someone who would bring back economic recovery and make America a global leader in the war against communism. Reagan believed in reducing the size of the government and in defeating communism. He emphasized that America was a country founded on the principles of freedom and liberty for all, he promised a new future for the country. Reagan was charismatic and an excellent orator; his work as an actor had given him a profound understanding of timing and delivery. He had established the boundaries of conservatism, and unlike Goldwater, Reagan stayed within the limits of the conservative ideology.⁷⁴ Reagan was an idealist who used rhetoric for his endeavors to spring things into action. He held core values that were important and promoted them, understanding that a vision should portray long-term and short-term solutions. Drawing inspiration from Goldwater, Reagan promised to restore the power of the states and local governments.⁷⁵ His ideas were framed in way that the Republicans could relate to.

For the Christian Right, Reagan represented an opportunity to achieve their long-term goals, and most importantly a chance to lead the nation back to morality. Throughout the campaign Reagan chose to strengthen his ties with the Christian Right, so much that at the end of the campaign he endorsed the teaching of creationism in public schools, stating that evolution was merely a theory.⁷⁶ Reagan's sweeping victory ,489 electoral votes to Jimmy Carter's 49, brought respectable conservatism into the national discourse. His victory was based upon the well-established organizational networks, strategies and ideas of the conservative movement that had been created decades earlier.

Ronald Reagan made conservatism popular and helped many conservatives to get elected. Reagan portrayed, in a convincing manner, conservatism as an optimistic and forward-looking faith in the American way of life.⁷⁷ But it was not his positive outlook alone that helped him to reach power; the anti-establishment conservative movement was a coalition that brought back the fusion between traditionalism and libertarianism.⁷⁸ The anti-establishment coalition that

⁷³ Bennett, *Party of Fear*, 345.

⁷⁴ Schoenwald, *A Time For Choosing*, 218.

⁷⁵ Tony Glenn Bates, *The Reagan Rhetoric: History and Memory in 1980s America* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 21.

⁷⁶ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 191.

⁷⁷ Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 160.

⁷⁸ Robert B. Horwitz, *America's Right: Anti-Establishment Conservatism From Goldwater to the Tea Party* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 112.

helped to bring Reagan to power, desired small federal government and individual self-reliance. Reagan pursued rollback agenda in federal government as well as in the fight against communism. Reagan's political alliance with the Christian Right signaled a power shift towards religious conservatives, to whom secular government represented the gravest threat to Christian values.⁷⁹ The Christian Right enthusiastically embraced Reagan's candidacy, and at the James Robinson's 1980 Religious Roundtable, in Dallas, Reagan promised to advocate Christian schools, reinstate school prayer, and most importantly to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.⁸⁰ Reagan promised Americans economic recovery and a global leadership on war against communism.⁸¹ Hence, at the core of Reagan's political philosophy was freedom, the individuals' right to work, and self-determination. Sovereignty and states rights were pivotal in his message to the American people. The evangelicals placed their allegiance on Reagan, whose leadership skills were far more impressive than Nixon's had been.⁸²

In his inaugural address in 1981, Reagan promised to return the power to the people: "Our government has no power except that granted it by the people. It is time to check and reverse the growth of government, which shows signs of having grown beyond the consent of the governed... All of us need to be reminded that the Federal Government did not create the States; the States created the Federal Government."⁸³ He argued that the government was responsible for all that was wrong with the society and the states: "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."⁸⁴ Reagan promised people that they would have work again, emphasizing that America would work again. In his speech, Reagan used words like 'work', 'sacrifice', 'save', 'freedom' and 'worthy'. By utilizing words linked to religion, Reagan linked the country with Christianity, thus bringing civil religion into politics.

Reagan's rhetoric promised the return of family values, order in schools, and economic stability. He declared that America would be proud and stand tall in the eyes of the world, and those who threatened American interests would face the consequences. A strong claim might be made that Reagan's rhetoric found its audience; after years of defeat, his new agenda was appealing to many. Those Americans who had faced the social upheaval and threat to traditional values were drawn into Reagan's agenda. His domestic, foreign and military policies gained a wide support among the American people. Decades later, Donald Trump would use this same

⁷⁹ Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America*, 72.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

⁸¹ Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 160.

⁸² Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 337.

⁸³ Ronald Reagan, January 20, 1981, Inaugural address

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

successful recipe. Americans wanted to forget the troubled past and celebrate the American way of life and its values. The New Right's hatred of the big government reflected the social and cultural struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. They resisted the idea of the welfare state, and instead reached for a moral community in America. It can be argued that their message had an underlying populist theme that capitalized the political upheavals, as well as on the social and economic setbacks of the previous decades.

The New Rights politics of resentment attacked the elites who were considered to be responsible for the problems of the nation. Their rhetoric was tied with Reagan's views on identifying the enemy and finding the patriotic America in the comfort of community. In the mid 1980s immigration became a focal point in American politics. Since the abolishment of the national origins quota system, in 1965, immigration from Latin America and Mexico had been steadily rising. Despite the fact that legal immigration had risen dramatically over the years, this was not the cause of concern among Americans. Rather, it was the illegal immigration of undocumented immigrants, which struck straight to the core of nativist fears. Echoing the themes of historic nativist patterns, Americans demanded better border control. Moreover, immigrants were seen as a threat to American jobs. It can be argued that immigration and immigration policies have always been a sore issue in American politics. A solution that would please both Republicans and Democrats is a difficult task.

Reagan's second presidential campaign lacked strong rhetorical theme and was led by the idea of 'morning in America.' Indicating that the country would be stronger and better under the leadership of Reagan. Reagan used populist rhetoric to advance policies that primarily benefitted the wealthy elites.⁸⁵ Like Nixon's victory in 1972, Reagan's second term victory was personal, rather than being a collective win for the Republican Party itself. Americans trusted Reagan's message because they trusted Reagan.⁸⁶ By the end of his second term, in 1988, more Americans identified themselves as conservatives than as liberals.⁸⁷ Reagan made the dreams and ideas of the conservative movement a reality; he transformed American politics, but also created a growing polarization of American people that would transform into full bloom during Donald Trump's campaign. Reagan made the conservative movement a force to be reckoned with. Reagan mastered the art of rhetoric, and even though his details varied according to context, at the core it was always about smaller government and lower taxes.

⁸⁵ Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons. *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (New York & London: The Guilford Press, 2000), 24.

⁸⁶ Bates, *The Reagan Rhetoric*, 14.

⁸⁷ Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism*, 6.

Reagan's administrations marked a division in public opinion; to the Democrats his politics were confusing and unfamiliar, whereas the Republicans viewed him as the heroic leader who brought a clear vision for their country. Thus, much of Reagan's appeal came from his ability to present himself as the savior who would restore America's self-respect, reputation and strength.⁸⁸ The Reagan era gave the Right a president that felt like truly their own. His presidency was a beacon of light to conservatism; he won the war against communism and restored grace to Republican presidency. Reagan's rhetoric and message were perfectly framed within the conservative framework, he constructed his texts and speeches in a manner that resonated with many Americans. Reagan was the embodiment of capitalism, and it had a long-term consequence to American political culture. Reagan opened America to material freedom, whilst staying true to morality and traditional values. In foreign affairs, Reagan followed his own path and intuition, he believed communism was irreversible and something that was beatable. He emerged from the Cold War victorious, all the forces of history worked in his favor. America had stood alongside liberty and freedom, and the strongest ideology had won.

2.4 "I want my country back!" the rise of the Tea Party and right-wing conservatism

The election of George W. Bush reflected the influence of the Christian Right. The new president elect not only promoted the evangelical causes, he was also a devoted Christian believer. Bush pushed Christian conservative agendas such as abortion and sex education. Even though the evangelicals conveyed their power through the Republican party, they were not able to dominate the national culture. The second term of President George W. Bush, and the election of Barack Obama, reinforced the process and the journey of the right. E.J. Dionne Jr. points out that 'the rise of cultural and religious conservatism, along with the emergence of the white South as the central pillar of the Republican Party, called forth a counter-realignment.'⁸⁹ Evangelical voters voted the Republican candidate in the 2008 presidential elections, mainly because they had tied their fortunes to the party and had no other options. To them the Republican party offered the opportunity and possibility to restore the nation's Christian identity with politics.⁹⁰ Hence, in American political culture religion matters. It has a constant presence, and even though a specific religion is not named, religion influences social policies.

⁸⁸ Godfrey Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 10

⁸⁹ Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 11.

⁹⁰ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 8.

The opposition to liberal and progressive policies had very deep structural and historical roots, and conservatism did not suddenly become fiercer because of the election of Obama. Dionne Jr. argues that today's conservatism was born when the first American conservatives and then the Republican Party adopted Barry Goldwater's worldview.⁹¹ The anti-establishment conservative movement has been changing the GOP since Ronald Reagan's victory. Gradually shifting the Party towards the right, into more religious and conservative path.

Across the United States, dissatisfied conservatives rallied to protest against the election of Barack Obama in 2009. What caused the ultimate surge against Obama and his administration was the governments' decision to bail out banks. People were outraged that, yet again, the rich and the powerful got away with their crimes whilst the ordinary people suffered the consequences. Rick Santelli, a reporter for CNBC in Chicago invited the capitalists to a Chicago Tea Party. The symbolism with colonial rebels throwing chests of tea into the Boston Harbor was obvious to everyone, and it resonated with people who felt like they were losing their country.⁹² What made their party symbolism so unique was the fact that they rallied behind the original American colonial rebels in mind. The authentic patriotism that opposed tyranny had visceral meaning to the people who supported the party. Many supporters felt that the United States, as they knew it, was slipping away. From that anger, the grassroots organization, known as the Tea Party movement, was created. It is important to bear in mind that the Tea Party, first and foremost, opposed president Obama's economic and domestic policies. Celebrated and popularized by the Fox News, the Tea Party⁹³, gained momentum in various cities across the country. Moreover, Fox News gave the grassroots activist movement energy and strong voice. It can be argued that 'they mounted colorful protests, established local groups and regional networks, and delivered powerful electoral punches in the GOP primaries' and they 'mobilized to keep Republican officeholders on the conservative straight and narrow.'⁹⁴The rise of the Tea Party was within the context of Liberal political threat. The network of conservative think tanks, foundations and right-wing media, provided the Tea Party with a powerful platform.

Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson point out that the Tea Party operates within a specific framework and various forces; 'grassroots activists, national elites pushing ideas and directing

⁹¹ Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 13.

⁹² Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

⁹³ Tea Party stands for Taxed Enough Already

⁹⁴ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party*, 5.

funds to very conservative candidates, and right-wing media cheerleaders.⁹⁵ Media, especially Fox news were strong advocates of the Tea Party movement, they helped to spread and reinforce the narrative that the Tea Party was a grassroots force aimed to reform the Republican Party. Furthermore, ‘the Tea Party is very much a reaction by older white conservative Americans who resent and fear what they think might be the political accompaniments of a nation transformed by rising younger cohorts with different experiences, values and social characteristics.’⁹⁶ How did the anti-establishment conservatism come to dominate the political climate and how did it capture the Republican Party? This could be explained with the fact that conservatism embodies a coherent set of values, sometimes conflicted values, that appreciate tradition, individual freedom and property. Most importantly, the conservative movement is deeply suspicious of the powers of the state. The Tea Party opposed government that promoted and aided economic equality.

The Tea Party spoke in the name of the dispossessed, aggrieved and persecuted people. Their promises to liberate the country and to “Take Back Our Country” was within the context of political struggle with the election of the first African American president. The Tea Party’s message reflected the Evangelical views of the late 1970s and early 1980s. They had also demanded “WE WANT OUR COUNTRY BACK!” and to stop wasting money on welfare schemes and big government spending.⁹⁷ It is important to understand that the Tea Partiers stood for limited government, and constitutional originalism. They saw government spending and taxation as a moral and economic issue. In the Tea Partiers eyes hard workers were being punished whilst the irresponsible were rewarded.⁹⁸ The desire to gain back the Christian values, that were in their eyes lost, was not a new idea and had roots in the past. In the conservative narrative, Obama represented liberal change that would change the place of the white Americans within the country. The Tea Partiers critique extended to president Obama when they questioned his birthplace and religion. The Tea Party represented suppressed racism that took on new enraged forms. The Tea Partiers aimed their reactionary populist anger towards the government; towards its expanding size and growing expenditure, over regulation and taxation. They were concerned that the increasing federal government control was extending to all aspects of life.⁹⁹ The Tea Party, consisting on the grassroot as well as in the astroturf level, utilized its networks in order to gain momentum. The astro level of the movement focused on

⁹⁵ Ibid., 190.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 204.

⁹⁷ Dochuk, *From Bible belt to Sunbelt*, 397.

⁹⁸ Horwitz, *America’s Right*, 159.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 158.

funding lobbying groups and campaigns of the Tea Party Republicans. The corporate money was aided by the right-wing media, most notably Fox News and various radio talk shows, to give the movement even stronger boost. The wealth, which aided the Tea Party, has been funding the conservative organizations and political ideas for decades.

The Tea Party, in all of its forms, pulled the Republican Party to the right side, and shifted the political discussions to what the government should and should not do. Instead of creating their own party, the Tea Partiers supported Republican candidates and added their own members to the ranks of the GOP. Many right-wing conservatives tried to benefit from the Tea Party by channeling their energy to political elections. Right-wing radios and television broadcasts spread the information how Tea Parties would “take back” the country.¹⁰⁰ In the end, the Tea Party became a highly organized right-wing pressure group that operated inside the Republican Party. More than anything, they truly paved the way for Donald Trump’s presidential candidacy. Modern conservatism can be seen as a well-organized discipline order that is fueled by religious faith.¹⁰¹ Hence, the Tea Party was initially a spontaneous grassroots movement that was co-opted by the libertarian elites. It expressed the sentiments of the mainstream Christian and libertarian conservatism, more than anything the party saw Donald Trump as their voice.

¹⁰⁰ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party*, 7.

¹⁰¹ Farber, *The Rise and Fall*, 1.

3. The rise of Donald J. Trump and *Make America Great Again* campaign

On 16th of June, 2015 Donald Trump descended the escalator of Trump Tower in New York City with his wife Melania. He announced that he was running for the president of the United States, and introduced his campaign slogan “Make America Great Again,” a rhetorical statement taken from Ronald Reagan. The United States presidential elections, and the political campaigns surrounding it, are intensely followed by the media, both nationally and globally. The election cycle of 2015-2016 was one of the most followed, as one of the Republican primary candidates came outside the established politics. Businessman Donald J. Trump, provoked people both left and right. Moreover, Trump challenged the status quo with his provocative comments. As the primary elections progressed, it became evident that his unconventional style appealed to many voters. By the time he progressed to the general elections, Trump had all eyes on him. The general election period starts on the 21st of March, 2016 and extends to the 7th of November, 2016. As a Republican Party candidate, Donald Trump represented someone who resisted change, favored tradition and committed to traditional values. The Republican Party kept promising policy changes and made promises to their supporters that they could not keep. Donald Trump’s arrival to the political arena demonstrated that there was something amiss in the Republican politics. Trump was the most uncanny candidate to run for the President of the United States, but his status as a celebrity, television star and billionaire builder appealed to the masses. Hence, his rise to top could be seen as part of a distemper that bred a mood of anti-establishment protest.

Trump’s campaign slogans, “Make America Great Again, “America First” and “Take Back Our Country”, were understood in all the sections of the conservative movement. Trump understood the implications that the usage of history had for the present, and he took a full advantage of it. The past becomes a validation for the present and, as such, a matter of great significance. Trump’s rise to the top mystified the Republican leaders, but at the same time it demonstrated the radicalization of the party. He used the Reagan legacy almost like a talisman that he dangled in front of the audience. Donald Trump is the creation of American political news media. Trump put Stephen Bannon, a white nationalist and former executive of Breitbart News, in charge of his campaign, signaling the direction what his campaign, and presidency would take.

Before starting his campaign, Trump had already established himself as someone who had challenged the legitimacy of the Obama presidency. In the summer of 2015, Donald Trump

took control of the Republican campaign. He visualized a different future for his country, and used actively the past as a tool to alter the perception of the present. Trump had belittled his opponents in the Republican primaries, and managed to steal the attention of the debates. Because of his controversial manner, Trump was indeed the one who raised the ratings of the debates. Even though he did not identify himself as a Republican and referred to his opponents as “the Republicans”, he still sought for their nomination and won it.¹⁰²

His attacks on Mexican immigrants, and the call for deportation of nearly 11 million immigrants, gained him a substantial following. Trump used the immigrant threat narrative to his own benefit; a narrative that was perpetuated by, both, the media and other politicians. The images of immigrants committing crimes and stealing American jobs imprinted in the anxious minds of concerned voters. He spoke for the less affluent supporters who were frustrated about the economic situation. Trump argued, “Together we can save American lives, American jobs, and American futures. Together we can save America itself. Join me in this mission, we’re going to make America great again.”¹⁰³ It can be suggested that Trump, as a populist leader, saw himself as a judge that stressed wide popular support for his claims and arguments. The working people, as a white “silent majority”, understood the references to the past and were able to relate to the message that Trump produced. By making America great again Trump channeled and fueled hostility against those who were perceived as the cause of decline; individuals that had liberal values and believed in co-operation. In many ways, Trump ‘proffered himself as both the embodiment of the nation and the personification of the spirit of capitalism. He wanted to be seen as a living myth.’¹⁰⁴

The past provides many opportunities for the present, and on many occasions the past is very much present in the public agenda. By looking at the past, Trump offered a vision for the future. He chose aspects of the past that were the most convenient to his goals and created historical consciousness that offered continuity from the past to the present. History can be made into ammunition in politics, and this ammunition is potent precisely because the past serves as the basis for ideas and practices for identification. Thus, past becomes a space of imagination where people can explore their connection and disconnection to the present. Trump used historical references and code words in order to create a link to the past. Why this issue is so important is because ‘we can often observe the concrete consequences of history being used

¹⁰² Salena Zito and Brad Todd, *The Great Revolt, Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics* (New York: Crown Forum, 2018), 143-144

¹⁰³ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁰⁴ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 235.

for political purposes.’¹⁰⁵ Present circumstances provided opportunities for restating narratives of the past.

Facts are not the only factor that influence people’s voting behavior. People make decisions based on their values, and whether the decision is about candidates or politics in general, the language invokes the core values. Trump’s statements ‘We will build the wall’, ‘American people and American security has to be first,’ draw the audience into his worldview. The relationship is set between Trump and his audience, within this framework Trump used language that allowed him to establish the tasks that they must do together. Trump was caught on audio tape, bragging about his aggressive pursuit of sexual contact with women. However, *Access Hollywood* tape did little damage to Trump’s campaign. The public perception about Trump remained intact.

The self-conscious political presentation of the past came to play a greater role in the United States from the 1990s onwards. The political emphasis on history demonstrated the existing cultural and political tensions. Today, Conservatism operates from the older white middle- and upper-class American base, who see any imposition by the government as demolition of capitalism. When Trump’s campaign gained momentum, his rise to the top mystified the Republican leaders, but at the same time it demonstrated the radicalization of the party. Trump was the reflection of the nation, it was a white lash against a changing country in part a white lash against black president, rebellion against elite. During the campaign trail, Trump gained endorsement from the former Alaskan governor Sarah Palin. She had been the first woman to gain a place in the Republican presidential ticket in 2008. More importantly she was socially conservative evangelical who had a devoted following. By gaining her endorsement, and praise, Trump essentially gained the support of the evangelical voters.

3.1 “I am the change agent. I am your messenger”, campaign in Midwestern states

In the midwestern states, Trump used history as a tool to create a sense of familiarity with present day politics. His argumentations about not being part of the system created a narrative that infused populism and rhetoric of the past presidents. By nominating Trump as their candidate, the Republicans had chosen someone outside the establishment, most importantly someone outside the conventional politics. As a non-politician, Trump was able to commentate

¹⁰⁵ Torsti, ”Why Do History Politics Matter?, 33.

on the existing political system, whilst using the situation to his benefit. He was able to present himself as a bystander in a politically corrupted race. Following populist worldview, Trump saw people as virtuous whilst the elite, establishment in this case, was seen as corrupt.

“So, I’m not part of the system. I ran against the system. I ran against the donors, because I’m largely my own donor. I’m running against myself. That’s sort of – never thought of it that way. And against the status quo, and the status quo, we have to get rid of, because it is not working, folks, because the country is a mess... the Republicans made history by choosing a nominee from outside of this very, very corrupt the system.”¹⁰⁶

Even though Trump stated he was an outsider, defending and fighting for the people, he still represented the core Republican ideology which opposed government spending and its extensive role. It can be argued that people supported Trump because he was not part of the system, a system that many people felt had failed them.¹⁰⁷ Trump had a strong personality, spoke his mind and did things with his own style. Trump declared that his rivals lacked enthusiasm. Trump evoked emotion, made an object out of it and presented it back to his audience as a sign of collective success.

“Our political system has failed the people and works only to enrich itself. I want to reform that system so that it works for you, everyone in this room. I believe true reform can only come from outside the system. I really mean that. Being a businessman is much different than being a politician because I understand what is happening. And we are going outside the establishment.”¹⁰⁸

The anti-establishment conservatism has its roots in the Midwest and West, the same region where Trump has his core support base. Since the 1980s the anti-establishment conservatism has had an affective alliance between anti-New Deal business, the Christian Right, neoconservatives, and libertarian conservatives, to all of them Trump was the right and only candidate.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Donald Trump can be seen as the latest incarnation of anti-establishment conservatism.

Trump tried to relate to his audience, claiming to be an outsider like them. His vision of white majoritarianism was unsustainable in a society that was racially diverse. Similarly, Trump’s emphasis on the virtue of producerism in a financialized economy had an unsteady platform. Despite this, his voters believed his calls of traditional past could be revived back to life. In Ohio, Trump pledged that “[w]e are going to turn this around. We are going to bring our jobs

¹⁰⁶ August 5, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

¹⁰⁷ Zito and Todd, *The Great Revolt*, 68.

¹⁰⁸ September 3, 2016 Remarks at Great Faith International Ministries in Detroit, Michigan

¹⁰⁹ Horwitz, *America’s Right*, 14.

back and protect our people. Driving through the city you see the shuttered homes and businesses, the dilapidated infrastructure. This is what our politicians have done to this city, this is what our politicians have done to America.”¹¹⁰ Following Torsti’s argumentation, it was evident that underlying motive behind Trump’s speech was to exploit history in redirecting foreign policy.¹¹¹ Through history he found justification to his argumentation. Trump’s speeches were targeted for those who had been mourning for a lost way of life. He addressed those who yearned to feel pride instead of shame, Trump provided them with an opportunity to join together with like minded people. In many ways Trump gave them respect and sense of security.

Trump echoed Reagan with his declarations of change and turning things around. Reagan had been the messenger of change, and with the aid of Reagans’ words, Trump wanted to be the change agent for the American people. His speeches represented different historical trajectories. Rising job insecurity and stagnating earnings caused frustration and fueled economic concerns. “Our campaign is powered by our love for this country and our love for our fellow citizens. It’s a campaign about rejecting the cynicism and elitism of our failed political establishment.”¹¹² Trump promoted social change that was stemming from the grassroot level. Within the populist discourse, the deep political divide between the people and the elite demonstrated how little the politicians understood the actual needs of the real people. In Iowa Trump spoke with the voice of the people, he stated his plans to return the power to the people.

“The White House will become the People’s House. We will tackle and fix the problems that have gone unsolved for years. We are going to fix our crumbling infrastructure, renegotiate our disastrous trade deals, free children from failing government schools, eliminate government waste, and create a fair, simple and efficient tax code that adds millions of new jobs. Prosperity will rise, poverty will recede, and wages will finally begin to grow – and they will grow rapidly. This is a campaign about big ideas designed to help everyday people.”¹¹³

Trump used populist rhetoric to legitimize his policy plans, whilst promoting authoritarian values that threatened the liberal norms. He promised to return jobs to Americans, and place high tariffs to foreign imports. In many ways Trump was trying to revive a bygone era. Trump’s use of rhetoric included all the aspects of conservatism, by stating that “I call you hardworking American Patriots and together we are going to save this country”¹¹⁴, he called upon the patriot

¹¹⁰ September 14, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Canton Memorial Civic Center in Canton, Ohio

¹¹¹ Torsti. ”Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,” 67.

¹¹² October 20, 2016 Remarks at the Delaware County Fairgrounds in Delaware, Ohio

¹¹³ September 13, 2016 Remarks at Seven Flags Event Center in Des Moines, Iowa

¹¹⁴ September 30, 2016 Remarks at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan

movements that operated on grassroots level to defend white Christian culture. ‘Trump combined messianic undertones typical of the American political tradition.’¹¹⁵ On this perspective, if the thought of the past can help, then it should put into work.¹¹⁶ Trump ran against the Republican establishment, moreover as the traitor of his own class, he managed to gather voters from a wide range; from the Tea Party to disaffected working-class. The conscious understanding of history politics was appealed for political purposes¹¹⁷, and in Trumps’ case it was a successful way to argue.

“Those who do not believe in our Constitution or who support bigotry or hatred will not be admitted for immigration into our country. Only those who we expect to flourish in our country, and to embrace a tolerant American society should be issued visas. To put these new procedures in place, we will have to temporarily suspend immigration from some of the most dangerous and volatile regions of the world, that have a history of exporting terrorism, nor for us! Not for us... To make America safe again, we must work together again.”¹¹⁸

From the early 1970s onwards the source of immigration shifted, immigrants from central and Latin America began to arrive in increasing numbers. Immigrants tended to gravitate towards low wage work, for example agricultural or construction work. This kind of work had been previously dominated by native workers, now became essential for immigrant workers. When appealing to the white middle-class masses Trump declared “on policy after policy, we are going to provide opportunity, prosperity and security for all Americans.”¹¹⁹ It can be argued that as the immigration grew, more and more Americans become aware of the cultural, demographic and economic changes that had taken place. For many that awareness prompted real anxiety and fear. Trump used those fears and anxieties to his own benefit, and in many ways added fuel to the fire. Thus, Trump’s connection to the past is ‘a societal phenomenon characterized by the interests and aims that directed the use of history in society.’¹²⁰

3.1.1 America First

Conservatism can be viewed as an attitude to social and political change that looks for support to the ideas, beliefs, and habits of the past. The contemporary American conservatism seeks to “take back our country”, it practices politics that is uncompromising, enraged and utopian. One of the themes that was raised in the midwest rallies was America First policy. In the early 1900s, America First movement thrived on the American exceptionalism, it perceived the United

¹¹⁵ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 234.

¹¹⁶ Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 136.

¹¹⁷ Torsti, “Why Do History Politics Matter,” 24.

¹¹⁸ August 15, 2016 Remarks at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio

¹¹⁹ September 13, 2016 Remarks at Seven Flags Event Center in Des Moines, Iowa

¹²⁰ Torsti, “Why Do History Politics Matter,” 24.

States as superior to other countries and championed the idea of economic protectionism. Trump referred to the idea of isolationism and economic protectionism that would safeguard the American future. Trump conveyed an image that economic nationalism would bind the country together. The desire to create a new future was obvious in Trump's speeches;

“When we were governed by an America First policy, Detroit was booming. Engineers, builders, laborers, shippers and countless others went to work each day, provided for their families, and they lived out of the American Dream.... When we abandoned the policy of America First, we started rebuilding other countries instead of our own. The skyscrapers went up in Beijing, and in many other cities around the world, while the factories and neighbourhoods crumbled in Detroit. Our roads and bridges fell into disrepair, yet we found the money to resettle millions of refugees at taxpayers expense.”¹²¹

Trump's America First slogan provided a sense of security, by rejecting the globalist ideology approach America had pursued since the Second World War. He had a vision for a completely different role for the US in an international setting. Trump wanted to redirect America and return it to its exceptional roots. However, Trump's exceptionalism was based on material principles rather than drawing power from idealism. Trump constructed a narrative that illuminated the golden days of the past, and how nationalistic policy had provided Americans with prosperity. He then painted a gloomy image of a declined nation in despair. Trump promised to end the struggle, and in Michigan he declared: “I will end the theft of American prosperity. I will fight for every last Michigan job. Because, when we win, it's going to be America First. ... I'm asking you to believe in America once again.”¹²²

During the civil war era, many whites in the Union states like Indiana, Ohio and Illinois were hostile towards bankers, elites and blacks in roughly equal measure. The unskilled workers, most notably the Irish and German Catholics, resented the New England elite gentlemen for asking them to fight to free the slaves, and suspected that the wealthy Yankees saw the emancipation as a source of cheap black labor. In the same spirit, by claiming that illegal immigrants were stealing American jobs, Trump harnessed the suspicions of the white working-class workers in the rust belt¹²³ area. In many of the midwestern rallies Trump's main agendas centered around individual rights and liberties. It is important to bear in mind that for many conservative Americans the Federal government represented something that should have

¹²¹ August 8, 2016 Remarks to the Detroit economic club, Detroit

¹²² October 31, 2016 Remarks at Macomb Community College South Campus in Warren, Michigan

¹²³ Rust-Belt refers to a region that is made up mostly of places in the Midwest and Great Lakes area. The term is linked to a location where manufacturing industries started to decline around 1980s.

limited political and financial power. Individuals, as well as states, should have extensive latitude to act freely without the restrictions of the Federal government. Therefore, it can be argued that for the conservatives the only legitimate form of government was weak, non-interfering and most importantly protected the individualistic property rights.

He also remarked that the American First policy had given them prosperity in the past, and it had allowed people to live their American Dream. However, a strong claim might be made that the underlying themes of American First policy are about protectionism, isolationism and nationalism. It refers to the non-interventionist movements and sends a clear message to the voters that America should keep it to itself. Trump's speeches also had an emphasis to the bygone era of the 1950s, a period when America was experiencing economic prosperity. Rules and regulations were destroying the country. "Just as we won, just as we won the Cold War in part by exposing the evils of communism and the virtues of free markets, so too must we take on the ideology of radical Islam."¹²⁴ Trump understood, as people who had grown up in the 1950s, that America was not at the top anymore. He wanted America to be the country of winners again. In Ohio Trump claimed that the reason for American decline was:

"Because our country doesn't win anymore. We don't win with trade, we don't win with our great military, we don't allow them to win, we don't win with ISIS. The world is laughing at us. We don't win at the borders. We don't win with taking care of our vets. We don't win with anything. We don't win anymore. We will start winning again like you've never seen before."¹²⁵

Trump had grown up in a time of affluence, an era that witnessed America emerging as the most powerful nation in the world. His narrative inclined that America would reborn once again, stronger than ever.

"we will build the wall, don't worry about it. We will build the wall. Law and order will be restored and the poorest places in our country will know safety and peace again. American values and cultures will be cherished – and I mean cherished and celebrated once again. But to achieve this new American future, we must break free from the bitter failures of the past, and reject the same insiders telling us the same old lies over and over, and over again."¹²⁶

Law and order was a plea for stability when things were breaking down. It can be argued that Trump used Nixon's strategy, a narrative that was familiar to conservatives and white middle class alike. Fear is a pivotal part of conservative framing, it is embedded in code words like 'law and order,' designed to raise anxiety and fear. Coded words are intended to create connections to the past. Conservative framing is well established, words affiliate people with

¹²⁴ August 15, 2016 Remarks at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio

¹²⁵ October 27, 2016 Remarks at the Champions Center Expo in Springfield, Ohio

¹²⁶ August 19, 2016 Remarks at the Summit Sports and Ice Complex in Dimondale, Michigan

specific feelings like, anger, fear or resentment. Thus, when Trump used ‘law and order’ it ignited reactions from people due to well established connections to the past. Nixon’s presidential campaign in 1968 had appealed to the middle-class voters who were angry about crime, did not care for liberal Supreme Court, and disliked the student dissidents on college campuses. It can be argued that there are many parallels to the Trump campaign, and his efforts to draw the connection to Nixon’s argumentation. Trump had created a framework that allowed the voters to find the connection with past and present. Hence, Nixon’s and Reagan’s terminology were used to blur the boundary between memory and present-day politics.

America’s shared values and political institutions were the basis of their civic nationalism, the core that defines their citizenship, rather than racial heritage. However, in practice race had been a reason to be excluded from nationhood. America’s changing cultural composition fed the fear of white Americans loss of numerical and cultural pre-eminence. Immigrants posed a threat to the national cohesion, and this can be viewed as a manifestation of racial prejudice and domination. Trump had several rallies in Michigan, a rustbelt state that became known in the 1980’s as one of the Reagan democrats. Each of the rallies had different emphasis, thus targeting different voters. The closer the election date came, the more rhetorical Trump’s speeches became. Trump put himself on the same level as his voters “[m]y campaign is about reaching out to everyone as Americans, and returning to a government that puts the American people first.”¹²⁷In his view Americanism should replace globalism, in order to restore America’s independence.

3.1.2 Either we win the election, or we lose the country

Trump attached Reagan to his campaign as often as he could, following Torsti’s argumentation on societal public speeches¹²⁸, it was evident that Trump used words that had strong historical charge.

“I understand and embrace the wisdom of Ronald Regan’s big tent within the party, big, big tent, remember? Ronald Reagan, great man, great guy. Remember he included Reagan Democrats and Independents and Republicans, a lot of people. We’re going to have the same thing. There a lot of Democrats perhaps in this room, are there a lot of Democrats? Raise your hands. I mean, I don’t think we need too many to be honest with you, but – so I embraced the wisdom that my 80 percent friend is not my 20 percent enemy, Ronald Reagan.”¹²⁹

¹²⁷ August 8, 2016 Remarks to the Detroit economic club, Detroit, Michigan

¹²⁸ Torsti. ”Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,” 65.

¹²⁹ August 5, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

Reagan's rhetoric and words had a profound impact on the American consciousness. The memory of prosperity, and better times, influenced how Trump's narrative can be interpreted. At the end of September, Trump appealed to the conservatives of the Reagan era; "[w]e are going to pass the biggest tax cut since Ronald Reagan. Every wasteful and unnecessary regulation will be eliminated. We will unleash the power of American energy."¹³⁰ Reagan had altered the fundamentality of tax structure, and his economic policies had cut from programs that helped low income Americans. Trump's promises of tax cuts would in reality aid the wealthy, and eventually decrease the social programs that many Americans valued. Trump also embraced other Reagan inspired policies and, in many ways, reflected the 1980's politics. It can be argued that Trump saw himself as the heir of Reagan, who identified with the common workingmen and women, advocating their agenda. Reagan had appealed to the hopeful Americans, claiming that America would have a great future because it had a greatness in the present and in the past. When rhetoric plays with memory, people think and believe in something that might have happened in the past. Reagan spoke about the greatness of a nation and many Americans thought they remembered that past. He said to people something that they wanted to hear; thus they chose to believe him. Trump chose the same narrative, promising the same prosperity that Reagan had given them. Reagan was able to connect imagery with belief and remembrance. His rhetoric carried a message that resonated with millions of Americans. It can be argued that Trump demonstrated historical continuation, he wanted to emphasize specific aspects of the past in a manner that reconnected with many people.

"We're going to show ourselves and the world again what a strong and growing American economy looks like. We are going to give major tax relief to every worker and small business in this country, bring thousands of new companies and millions of new jobs back to our shores – and unleash an American Energy Revolution. We will also be appointing justices who will defend our Constitution."¹³¹

To the conservatives, Constitution is the source of power and it defines the American nature, making America unique. Trump's promise to appoint a conservative Supreme Court judge was to the evangelical voters both calming and reinvigorating. Thus, Constitution creates a framework, in which people can pursue their hopes and dreams, to better their lives. Like Trump, conservatives claim the Constitution to their side. Trump's speeches mixed populist rhetoric with history politics. He sided with the people whilst using history to win over the voters. In Ohio, Trump stated that he would bring the change America needed: "the foundation for a new prosperity will be a rededication to the constitutional rule of law. A vote for me is a

¹³⁰ September 30, 2016 Remarks at the Suburban Collection Showplace Novi, Michigan

¹³¹ September 1, 2016 Remarks to the American Legion in Cincinnati, Ohio

vote for change, and a vote for me is really a vote for you. Together, we are going to make America great again.”¹³² Reagan and his rhetoric had impacted the American lives on a profound level, and by using his language Trump tried to persuade the Americans to connect with his message. Reagan had also supported issues that the evangelicals had deemed crucial, and Trump followed that lead.

In order to be considered as a strong, patriotic candidate Trump emphasised that he would be the one who would support and defend the Constitution, unlike the opposing candidates who would destroy it.¹³³ Trump reinforced the social and political polarization by claiming that “Either we win the election, or we lose the country.”¹³⁴ Trump connected Clinton’s campaign with globalism and claimed that she was part of the reason why America’s sovereignty had weakened. In Ohio Trump argued that “Hillary Clinton is trigger-happy. She's raced to invade, intervene, and topple regimes. She believes in globalism, not Americanism.”¹³⁵ Demonizing globalism was straight out of a populist playbook, and Trump framed Clinton to the side of the enemy.

“In addition to teaching respect for the flag, we also have to make sure we give our military the tools they need to defend that flag and to deter violence and aggression from our foreign adversaries. We will rebuild our depleted military, and pursue a state-of-the-art missile defense. We will do it based on those three famous words: Peace Through Strength.”¹³⁶

Trump utilized Reagan’s famous phrase ‘peace through strength,’ that suggested military power can maintain peace globally, and domestically. Trump’s foreign policy was motivated by Reagan’s example of rebuilding the military. He wanted to establish a link between his future administration and Reagan’s, indicating that both were attached to prosperous America. The statement was central to the America First foreign policy. It can be argued that Trump took Reagan’s rhetorical narrative to the heart. In his speeches Trump did not exclude anyone, he appealed to the Christian community in Michigan by stating that “Christian faith is not the past but the present and the future. Make it stronger. ... Our nation is too divided. We talk past each other, not to each other and those who seek office do not do enough to step into the community and learn what is going on. They don't know. They have no clue. I'm here today to learn. So that we can together remedy injustice, in any form.”¹³⁷ Trump used language that resonated

¹³² October 13, 2016 Remarks at the Renaissance Hotel in Columbus, Ohio

¹³³ August 5, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

¹³⁴ October 17, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

¹³⁵ September 8, 2016 Remarks at the Cleveland Arts and Social Sciences Academy in Cleveland, Ohio

¹³⁶ September 1, 2016 Remarks to the American Legion in Cincinnati, Ohio

¹³⁷ September 3, 2016 Remarks at Great Faith International Ministries in Detroit, Michigan

with the evangelical voters, God blessed conservative ideology, giving it strength to overcome all the obstacles.

It is important to bear in mind that religion has always played an important role in American presidential elections, and the 2016 elections were not an exception. Trump supporters cherished traditional values and social views. From their point of view the cultural and economic changes were transforming the country something unrecognizable. Hence, many felt like they were losing their country as they had always known it. Old traditional blue-collar jobs were disappearing, and the ethnic diversity of the country had changed profoundly. Trump's unyielding promises to fight for the people resonated with his core base, who were feeling discontent and with Trump found their outlet to voice their frustrations. Trump declared that: "I am fighting for everyone who doesn't have a voice. The forgotten men and women of America. I am your voice."¹³⁸ On different occasions Trump promised to be the defender of the people, and most importantly in Ohio he declared to fight for the people: "I will fight for you against the special interests, against the corrupt politicians, and against the powerful insiders. Let me be your champion. In all things, it's time to put Americans first – and start taking care of each other."¹³⁹ Trump promised to tackle the elitist corruption, and stand on the workers side. "Our campaign is taking on big business, big media and big donors – we're taking them on for YOU. So you can have the future you want. I'm not owned or controlled by anyone – my loyalty is to you, and no one else. I WILL FIGHT FOR YOU."¹⁴⁰ The populist notions of fighting for the people were central to Trump's campaign. Trump's core message rose from the new right policies of the 1980's. Trump was promising the voters that he would bring back the traditional manufacturing jobs and restore the former glory of the US. When approaching the election date, Trump tried to appeal all the voters with premise that he was willing to fight for them, no matter what.

"Our movement represents all Americans, from all backgrounds, and all walks of life. We are asking for the votes of Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and first-time voters. We are asking for the vote of every American who believes truth and justice – not money and power – should rule the day. We are fighting for every citizen who believes that government should serve the people – not the donors and special interests. We are fighting to unlock the potential of every American community, and every American family, who hope and pray and yearn for a better future."¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ September 1, 2016 Remarks at the Roberts Centre in Wilmington, Ohio

¹³⁹ September 14, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Canton Memorial Civic Center in Canton, Ohio

¹⁴⁰ September 28, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Waukesha County Expo Center in Waukesha, Wisconsin

¹⁴¹ October 31, 2016 Remarks at Macomb Community College South Campus in Warren, Michigan

Throughout the campaign Trump continually linked national decline to the absence of production. He blamed globalism for crumbling infrastructure, uncontrolled immigration and bad trade deals. It can be argued that Trump saw globalism as the main culprit for America's decline as a nation. Hence, he promised "I'm going to fight for every mom who lost her child to illegal immigration, and drugs and gang violence. I'm going to fight for every community whose jobs and dreams have been ripped out and shipped to other countries. I'm going to fight for every person in this country who believes government should serve the people – not the donors."¹⁴² The GOP had since the 1970s promised to protect the white voters' rights, emphasizing hard work and entitlement in racial terms. Trump had connected the white middle-class workers' job losses with the government policies that favored nonwhites and immigrants. He argued that illegal immigrants were taking the jobs away from the native workers, and reducing wages of the workers.

Trump's symbolic statements, and his relatability, separated him from the faceless elite politicians. He offered a different form of democracy; a non-corrupt, people first approach. Trump's focus on the midwestern states were Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. This was due to the fact that these states were part of the so called "flip-states", voting could tip either to Republican or Democratic side. Hence, it was crucial to have strong campaigns there, and most importantly actively enforce the message that was well framed.

"I call you hardworking American Patriots and together we are going to save this country. Government will start working again. Fixing things is what I do... To beat the system, you have to lift your voice, pound the pavement, and get out the vote. You have one magnificent chance to deliver justice for every forgotten man, woman and child in this nation. The arrogance of Washington, D.C. will soon come face to face with the righteous verdict of the American voter."¹⁴³

Trump embellished the dichotomous narrative in which the world was divided, yet in his speeches he tried to unify people under one clause. In Ohio he argued: "We will have One American Nation. We will be One American People. We are fighting to give every child, in every forgotten stretch of this country, the chance to live out their dreams in safety and peace."¹⁴⁴ Instead of selling well-crafted policy ideas to specifically targeted audience, Trump created narratives and packaged them in simple exaggerated claims that gained attention. "I will fight for every neglected part of this nation – and I will fight to bring us all together as One American People. Imagine what our country could accomplish if we started working together

¹⁴² October 17, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

¹⁴³ September 28, 2016 Remarks at the Rally at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa

¹⁴⁴ September 8, 2016 Remarks at the Cleveland Arts and Social Sciences Academy in Cleveland, Ohio

as One People, under One God, saluting One American Flag.”¹⁴⁵ Trump displayed characteristics that were similar to the leaders of nationalist movements. His self-centered boasting was perceived as being overly confident and independent. In many ways, Trump’s flaws and personal affairs were irrelevant to his campaign.

The Rust Belt area welcomed Trump’s promises to protect American manufacturing work and to reindustrialize the area. A strong claim might be made that these promises were crucial, especially in Pennsylvania and Ohio which were the key states determining the outcome of the presidential elections. Trump addressed those who felt like they had been ignored or patronized by the politicians, left behind by the changing culture that was racially diverse and urban. He pledged to the workers: “I will work for you and I will work for no one else. I will work for you. I will never lie to you. I will never put any other interests before you and I will never, ever stop fighting for you. Never. The government will work for the people again.”¹⁴⁶ Many Midwest states did flip to the Republican side and broke the industrial Democratic blue wall. The voters were feeling disconnected culturally, and wanted to take a stand for their beliefs, values and for their country.¹⁴⁷ Trump visited places that were overlooked by many candidates, he listened to the people who felt they had been overlooked and were not heard. In the Rustbelt area, Trump managed to construct a voter base that fit into the conservative framework. He drew in the evangelicals, women, college educated and ideological conservatives against all odds. Reagan holds a firm place in the American consciousness, and Trump made an effort to put himself in the same level in order to endure power.

3.2 “Securing borders”, campaign in Western states

On many occasions Trump’s vision of American society reflected the nativistic assumptions of the early twentieth century. He spoke the language that many conservatives understood loud and clear; societal opposition rather than detailed policy change. “We have to listen to the concerns that working people, our forgotten working people, have over the record pace of immigration and it’s impact on their jobs, wages, housing, schools, tax bills and general living conditions. These are valid concerns expressed by decent and patriotic citizens from all backgrounds, all over.”¹⁴⁸ Even though Trump rallied behind the forgotten people, immigrants were not included in that categorization, but rather the external, the other, the target of populist hostility and anger. Against the Great Recession, and economic downturn in general,

¹⁴⁵ September 13, 2016 Remarks at Seven Flags Event Center in Des Moines, Iowa

¹⁴⁶ August 19, 2016 Remarks at the Summit Sports and Ice Complex in Dimondale, Michigan

¹⁴⁷ Zito and Todd, *The Great Revolt*, 4.

¹⁴⁸ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

immigration became the primary target of right-wing populism. Trump attacked against illegal immigrants, who he perceived to be freeloaders, taking advantage of the American tax paid benefits. In Arizona Trump stated: “Our enforcement priorities will include removing criminals, gang members, security threats, visa overstays, public charges. That is those relying on public welfare or straining the safety net along with millions of recent illegal arrivals and overstays who've come here under this current corrupt administration.”¹⁴⁹ Hostility toward immigration and globalization ran deep among critical mass of American voters. Trump’s anti-immigration and protectionist trade policies gave him a unique opening with white working-class voters. He stated

“we have to listen to the concerns that working people, our forgotten working people, have over the record pace of immigration and it’s impact on their jobs, wages, housing, schools, tax bills and general living conditions. These are valid concerns expressed by decent and patriotic citizens from all backgrounds, all over. We also have to be honest about the fact that not everyone who seeks to join our country will be able to successfully assimilate. Sometimes it's just not going to work out. It's our right, as a sovereign nation to chose immigrants that we think are the likeliest to thrive and flourish and love us.”¹⁵⁰

By stating that America should choose immigrants who ‘love us’, Trump clearly indicated that the newcomers must not only integrate to society, but fully assimilate. The fear of whether or not immigrants would be able to assimilate to the white American culture, has always been amongst the native-born Americans. Trump framed his argument within that fear and doubt, that could give the supporters the validation to believe that Latin American and Muslim immigrants were too different and would not “thrive and flourish” in the American culture, much less “love” the native-born Americans. Hence, the cultures of the immigrants were not compatible with the American culture. However, many of the Latin American immigrants were at least partly assimilated to the culture, because of the dominating US culture and corporations across Latin America. It can be argued that immigrants of color will become part of society which is racially unequal and divided. Moreover, they will be subjected to face the charges that they refuse to assimilate to the American culture. The economic hard times are often blamed on the immigrants, serving as scapegoats in the face of hardship. Thus, by putting the blame on the immigrants, many conservatives found an explanation that seemed plausible and fitted their framework; an answer to a situation that seemed otherwise inexplicable. The narrative is fueled by politicians, and Trump embraced it whole heartedly, using the ideology that had been successful to many before him.

¹⁴⁹ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁵⁰ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

In Arizona, Trump spoke about immigration and how only the skillful should enter America: “To keep immigration levels measured by population share within historical norms. To select immigrants based on their likelihood of success in U.S. society and their ability to be financially self-sufficient... To choose immigrants based on merit. Merit, skill, and proficiency.”¹⁵¹ Trump’s remarks about screening, and allowing people in based on merit imposes loyalty tests. He made demands on those who seek to enter the country. Trump attacked illegal immigration, but he did not attack the nation for being a multicultural immigrant country. He wanted people to enter the country based on merit and skills, not on a need. Trump’s views reflected the populist perspective about tolerance, diversity and plurality. It can be suggested that ‘this illustrates the idea about the necessary role of the present situation in regard to the interest of the past.’¹⁵² The negativity against immigration reflected the 1920’s anti-immigration mood. The 1924 Johnson-Reed Act¹⁵³ main presumption was that non-white non-protestants were difficult to assimilate into the American society, hence constituting a threat to America. The quotas were eased in 1952 and in 1965 the Immigration Act eliminated the racist immigration quotas completely. As a result, immigration from Asia and Latin America grew substantially between 1970 and 1990. Many immigrants lacked skills, and education, and this was viewed as a problem by many native-born Americans. Trump is referring to the previous immigration laws as well as to the immigration flow that comes from Latin America. What he does not explain is the economic and political link between the US and Latin American countries. It is easier to resort to blaming immigrants for all the problems, rather than explaining the complex history behind the issue. “But to fix our immigration system, we must change our leadership in Washington and we must change it quickly. ... The truth is our immigration system is worse than anybody ever realized. But the facts aren’t known because the media won’t report on them.”¹⁵⁴ “The fundamental problem with the immigration system is our country is that it serves the needs of wealthy donors, political activists and powerful, powerful politicians.”¹⁵⁵

Trump declared that “ I will get this done for you and your family. We’ll do it right. You’ll be proud of our country again. We’ll do it right.... Americans losing their jobs to foreign workers, these are the problems we must now focus on fixing.”¹⁵⁶ Trump’s emphasis on racial fear and resentment was evident in his description of Mexican-American immigrants, his promises to

¹⁵¹ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁵² Torsti, “Why Do History Politics Matter?,” 34.

¹⁵³ The 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act set quotas for immigrants based on their ethnicity and nationality

¹⁵⁴ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

build a wall on the Mexican border and make Mexican pay for it, and his ban on foreign Muslims entering the country.¹⁵⁷ Trump, a man that has a hazy, self-regarding sense of history, grasped that the juxtaposition of us-against-them had deep roots in America. His usage of the past in the daily culture is a tool to draw strength from the conservatives history.¹⁵⁸ Trump promoted the idea of the border's necessity and its role to national security. A border without a wall was open to assaults and illegal aliens, hence everything should be done to block the flow. Trump emphasized the pivotal role that the border was playing for Americans; their lives and livelihood were at risk without a secure border.

Trump's wide support base indicated that the political core of the people is shaped by the deeply felt concerns about immigration and racial change. In many ways, Trumps' populism and use of history gave his followers the message they were expecting.¹⁵⁹ Trump created the images of immigrants clandestinely crossing the US-Mexican border, committing crimes, and accessing public services heighten anxiety among those who may already be concerned about nation's direction. Once aroused, that anxiety seeks political home¹⁶⁰. Trump framed the immigration problem in terms of job loss and presented the immigrants as murderers, drug dealers, rapists and prone to terrorism. He managed to tap the brewing undercurrent of racism in the American society. Trump effectively raised fear by connotating immigrants with negative issues; increased crime, declining economy, jobs lost, and cultural change. His intention was to create policies which would punish immigrants, limit the accessibility of social services and public services. Trump tapped into the support base of the Tea Party movement, who also shared the anti-Muslim and xenophobic racial ideas. Hence, Trump declared that: "America needs a turnaround. America needs a comeback. America needs a change."¹⁶¹

Trump emphasized his success as a businessman and bragged how good he was at deal making. In Nevada, Trump argued: "I am running to represent Americans – and we are going to make America Rich again. I am going to end illegal immigration, stop the massive inflow of refugees, keep jobs from pouring out of our country, renegotiate our disastrous trade deals, and massively reduce taxes and regulations on our workers and our small businesses."¹⁶² Trump not only opposed illegal immigration, but he supported the deportation of these immigrants who were in the country illegally. It must be noted that Trump's resistance against immigration was partly

¹⁵⁷ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁵⁸ Torsti, "Why Do History Politics Matter," 22.

¹⁵⁹ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 235.

¹⁶⁰ Abrajano and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 27.

¹⁶¹ October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada

¹⁶² Ibid.

economic and partly socio cultural. He argued how immigration impacted the declining wages and raising social costs, as well as causing crime. In Arizona he argued: “Immigration law doesn't exist for the purpose of keeping criminals out. It exists to protect all aspects of American life. The work site, the welfare office, the education system, and everything else. That is why immigration limits are established in the first place. Those who abuse our welfare system will be priorities for immediate removal.”¹⁶³ Trump brought the deportation of illegal immigrants to the center stage. Trump supporters appeared to favor harsher immigration restrictions than Republican voters on average.¹⁶⁴ Trump presented a plethora of issues and concerns that represented a threat to the American way of life. To many evangelical voters Muslim travel ban was welcomed, because to them being American meant being Christian.

Immigrants came to America, not because of liberals had created a plot against conservatives, but because they searched for opportunity, a better quality of life. “The borders around our nation are for the benefit of all people living here today – and when those borders are erased, it's often the lawful immigrants already here who are the first to suffer lost jobs and decreased security.”¹⁶⁵ Trump’s nativistic agitation against immigrants followed specific themes; drugs, crime, violence and economy. Claim that immigrants are taking the jobs of native-born Americans, and causing government crisis by corrupting voting, overloading education and welfare systems.¹⁶⁶ In the early 1900s many Americans believed that the immigrants arriving to the U.S. were not representing the appropriate races. At the core of the hatred was the Americans fear that immigrants would damage the U.S. economy. The immigrants arriving from Southern and Eastern European countries were perceived racially inferior compared to the white Anglo-Saxon protestant majority. Alarms were raised about their ability to assimilate into the prevailing American society.

Throughout the years immigrants have been blamed for destroying the moral fabric of the nation and for increasing the spending of the government, in particular the cost of crime and poverty.¹⁶⁷ Whether it was the Irish in the mid 1850s, or the Jews and the Chinese in the late 1800s, or Southern and Eastern Europeans in the early decades of the twentieth century, the immigrants have taken the blame of what has been going wrong in the country. Nativists

¹⁶³ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁶⁴ John B. Judis. *The Nationalist Revival, Trade, Immigration, and the Revolt Against Globalization* (New York: Columbia Global Reports, 2018), 67.

¹⁶⁵ October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada

¹⁶⁶ Joe R. Feagin “Old Poison in New Bottles, the Deep Roots of Modern Nativism” in *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse In the United States*, ed by Juan F. Perea, (New York University Press, New York and London, 1997) 13-14.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

questioned the immigrants' ability to assimilate into the Anglo-American culture. Immigrants were viewed as intellectually and racially inferior, and it was feared they would destroy the Anglo culture. The 1924 Immigration Act was the culmination of nativists desire to stomp out immigration from the undesirable countries.

3.2.1 Save America

In the western states Trump had a heavy emphasis on economy. Many of the speeches reflected Trump's view of the job situation, and how depleted the economy was. According to Trump it was important to "keep jobs from pouring out of our country, renegotiate our disastrous trade deals, and massively reduce taxes and regulations on our workers and our small businesses. ... We have the worst so-called recovery since the Great Depression."¹⁶⁸ In Trump's view, Clinton was making the economic situation even worse, and she did not have the peoples best interest in mind.

"Hillary Clinton wants to shut down the mines, and shut down shale, oil, and natural gas. We are going to end the war on American energy, and we are going to put the miners back to work. I have also made a center piece of my economic revitalization plan the largest middle class tax cut since Ronald Reagan –and the largest regulatory reform in American history. That is because I know how overtaxed and overregulated the working people of this country are."¹⁶⁹

Trump framed tax cut in a way that made him appear like a hero; cutting the taxes would allow people to have more money to use. Trump presented a prosperous worldview to his base, and he utilized history to draw in people's attention. Language can carry ideas, and evoke something that can resonate with many people. Reagan, and Goldwater, had spoken in the name of the American taxpayers, the producers of the old. Conservatives defended their hard workers, and Trump used Reagan to achieve a specific connection to a political era that was successful for the conservatives. Invoking the identities of the past, Trump used history to gather the support of loyal Republican voters. Reagan's message worked in a specific social and cultural setting, by using his message Trump tried to revive the memory of that past. This was a past many Americans could remember and cherish. Reagan's speeches carried power, many Americans had reacted to his message because he touched their belief system. By deploying Reagan's rhetoric Trump wanted to generate change in the present. Following Tilli's definition of the relationship between politics and history politics, it was evident that Trump engaged in

¹⁶⁸ October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada

¹⁶⁹ October 3, 2016 Remarks at the Pueblo Convention Center in Pueblo, Colorado

politics¹⁷⁰, conveying a specific message with history. He had a vision for America that was expressed through rhetoric.

“Together we can save American lives, American jobs, and American futures. Together we can save America itself. Join me in this mission, we're going to make America great again.”¹⁷¹ We are going to build a border wall, enforce our laws, and keep our people safe. I have a simple message for the cartels, the gang members, and the drug dealers preying on our citizens – your days are numbered, and your reign of crime will soon come crashing to an end. We are also going to end the government corruption.”¹⁷²

The ‘Make America Great Again’ slogan appealed to the lost era of entitled America. Trump created an experience in which people could share their opinions with other overlooked people, who felt they had been done wrong by officials and politicians. His speeches embodied the cultural and economic investment his followers had for the campaign. Trump’s campaign was built upon a desire, structured around the unending quest for the lost past. He was able to unify different conservative energies by attacking those who would thwart American greatness. Trump addressed the neglected concerns of middle class Americans, and framed it within the political framework that pitted the people against intransigent elite. Thus, igniting the call for political change. Trump played by the populist playbook when he claimed to represent the needs of American people: “My job is not to represent foreign countries. My job is to represent the citizens of the United States of America.”¹⁷³ Within the framework of history politics, it was evident that Trump created a narrative that allowed him to efficiently legitimize his politics. His argumentations hinted that America had been a great country in the past, and could be once again with his leadership. “I will get this done for you and for your family. We'll do it right. You'll be proud of our country again. We'll do it right. We will accomplish all of the steps outlined above. And, when we do, peace and law and justice and prosperity will prevail. Crime will go down. Border crossings will plummet. Gangs will disappear.”¹⁷⁴ Trump linked domestic terrorism to immigration and border security, he addressed anxieties that his supporters were feeling. Trump’s arguments gained backlash from media and political establishment, and were regarded as racist and bigotry.

“Remember: the Republican Party is the Party of Lincoln, the party of freedom, equality and opportunity. It is the Democratic Party that is the party of slavery, the party of Jim Crow, the party of oppression. Nothing makes me more honoured and proud than to be the nominee of Abraham Lincoln’s Republican

¹⁷⁰ Tilli, “Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,” 281.

¹⁷¹ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

¹⁷² October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada

¹⁷³ October 3, 2016 Remarks at the Pueblo Convention Center in Pueblo, Colorado

¹⁷⁴ August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

Party. Our party will fight to bring hope to every forgotten stretch of this country. Once again, we will be One American Nation. One United People. And we will have One Great Future.”¹⁷⁵

Trump made several references to Republican Party being the party of Lincoln, he used people’s understanding and awareness of the past to his own benefit. Trump intertwined history and politics in a true populist manner, thus he politicized history in a manner that fitted his frame of argumentation. Trump rallied the people who were overlooked or forgotten, he was the champion of the invisible people. He evoked one of the most heroic historical figures in American history, drawing a comparison of a struggle and bringing hope to people. Since the 1970s the Republican Party had promised to protect the white voters’ rights, emphasizing hard work and entitlement. Here it is important to understand that the Republican party of the 19th century was by no means the same party as it is today. When it was formed in 1856 the GOP was fiercely liberal, opposing slavery, seeking more open immigration (a fact that Trump failed, or deliberately, did not mention). In the same era Democrats were the party of conservatives, dominated by the southern slave holders. At the turn of the century GOP was shifting towards the more conservative line, and at the same time the Democratic Party begun to incorporate more liberal values. During the 1960’s Lyndon Johnson, and his “Great Society”, drove the racist southerners out of the Democratic Party into the GOP. During Ronald Reagan’s presidency the religious right of white evangelicals was integrated into the GOP, and later the extreme white conservatives, known as the Tea Party , emerged into the Party as well. With this process the liberal Republican Party turned conservative, and the conservative Democratic Party turned liberal.

Trump reached back into the Republican history for Richard Nixon’s rhetoric with his declarations of that “we’re going to take our country back” and “the silent majority is back”. Trump also said that “It’s about representing the forgotten men and women of this country. I’m here to represent everyone, but especially those who are struggling against injustice and unfairness.”¹⁷⁶ He spoke for the “silent majority” that could not defend itself, or even speak. Trump would be their voice and the people’s leader. Within the framework of history politics, Trump’s language had a domestic policy motive¹⁷⁷ that aimed to create historical continuation with the conservative past.

¹⁷⁵ August 30, 2016 Remarks at the XFinity Arena in Everett, Washington

¹⁷⁶ September 12, 2016 Address to the National Guard Association of the United States 138th General Conference & Exhibition at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland

¹⁷⁷ Torsti, ”Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,” 67.

3.2.2 Making government work for the people

In Colorado Trump said “Together, we're going to deliver real change that puts America first. You don't hear that term very much. We don't hear that term very much anymore, do we? America first, right? If I win, it's going to be America first every single time, that I can tell you. Believe me. We're going to end the government corruption and we're going to drain the swamp in Washington, D.C.”¹⁷⁸ The establishment was the enemy of American economy, Trump argued that Washington needed to be cleaned for all the corruption that was ruining peoples lives. Trump resurrected the America First slogan, an applicable isolationist term to keep America out of other countries problems. With scapegoating, Trump pinned the weakness of the country to political decision makers. America needed a course correction, and a foreign policy that would put its own interests first. Trump presented himself as someone who would lead the country back to prosperity. Through populist rhetoric Trump would bring change to the people. Populism contains core features that are consistent with the ideology; compassionate leader who opposes the ruling elite and embodies the peoples desires, the idea of political antagonists as enemies of the people, efforts to intimidate independent journalism, and radical nationalism.¹⁷⁹ Trump argued that “Government corruption spreads outward, like a cancer, and infects the operations of government itself.”¹⁸⁰

Following Pilvi Torsti’s argumentation that historical consciousness is a complex connection between the interpretations of the past and perceptions of the present,¹⁸¹ Trump’s usage of the past is to create narratives that serve a new historical purpose. Trump was able to produce the same content rally after rally, yet somehow he still appeared to have a serious conversation with his audience. In each rally Trump’s audience embraced his message.

“I am fighting for you. The government will work for citizens once again. The era of division will be replaced with a future of unity. We are going to do it by emphasizing what we all have in common. We will proudly promote our culture as Americans, the best in the world. It is time to break the failures of the past, and to fight for every last child in this country to have the better future they deserve. This is the change I am promising all of you: an honest government, a thriving economy, and a just society for each and every American.”¹⁸²

It can be argued that “[p]opulists are not greatly concerned with the subtleties of empirical observation but instead direct their attention toward reworking, even reinventing, reality in

¹⁷⁸ October 18, 2016 Remarks at the Norris-Penrose Event Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado

¹⁷⁹ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 20.

¹⁸⁰ October 29, 2016 Remarks at the Jeffco Fairgrounds Event Center in Golden, Colorado

¹⁸¹ Torsti, “Why Do History Politics Matter,” 23.

¹⁸² August 30, 2016 Remarks at the XFinity Arena in Everett, Washington

accordance with their varied ideological imperatives.”¹⁸³By creating their own narrative of the past, vision for the future is transformed to fit their perception. Thus, Trump claimed that America was not as it used to be and should be changed before it was too late. In Colorado he argued that “This is not the America that was handed down to us, and it's not the America we want for our children. And it's certainly not the America we want to pass down to our grandchildren. But this is the America we will have if we don't turn things around – starting today.”¹⁸⁴Trump rallied the middle- and working-class voters to his side with the promise to reverse the cultural changes of the 1960s. However, America had become an ethnically diverse nation, and the cultural changes were irreversible. By referring to the ‘America that was handed down to us,’ Trump refers to a past that has been destroyed, an era of economic sovereignty in which America was on top of the world.

Populists believe that their leader represents the people and is thus, justified to make all the decisions for the people. Hence, the leader personifies the people, being their voice and through the leader can the people participate in politics. However, the populist leader and the followers only represent a portion of all the people, and not expressing the will of everyone like the supporters would like to believe. But why is the role of the presidency so important? Because the American president represents its nation, he is the reflection of its people and its values. Trump argued

“This Election Day, you have one magnificent chance to deliver justice for every forgotten man, woman and child in this country. On November 8th, the arrogance of Washington D.C. will come face to face with the righteous verdict of the American voter. The failed and corrupt political establishment will be replaced with a new government of, by and for the people. I am going to fight for every last citizen in this land, and I am going to fight to bring us all together as Americans. Imagine what our country could accomplish if we started working together as One People, under One God, saluting One American Flag. You're going to look back at this rally for the rest of your life. You're going to remember this day. This is a movement like you've never seen before. We're going to make history together. You're going to look back at this election, and say this is by far the most important vote I've ever cast for anyone at any time.”¹⁸⁵

Trump urged people to come and vote, he framed the argument in a manner that made it seem America was on the verge of collapse. It is important to bear in mind that people vote according to their values, and who they identify with.¹⁸⁶ Nixon directed populism against cultural elite. In

¹⁸³ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, xvii.

¹⁸⁴ October 3, 2016 Remarks at the Pueblo Convention Center in Pueblo, Colorado

¹⁸⁵ October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada

¹⁸⁶ Lakoff, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant*, 17.

Nixon's lexicon liberal meant elitists who did not care about the hard-working straight, white Americans.¹⁸⁷ Trump utilized the historical continuation from Nixon's presidency to present, both viewing the establishment as something bad.

¹⁸⁷ Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *The Right Nation*, 69.

4. “I am not part of the system” , Trump’s campaign in Southern and Northeastern States

Trump’s speeches reflected the populist perception of how things were, and how they should be. It can be argued that politicians use history for different purposes, in Trump’s case he used history to uphold and deepen hostilities towards certain groups of people. Hence, history and politics become intertwined, despite the fact that many cannot see the direct link between these two topics. Trump’s speeches can be viewed within the framework of history politics; he refers to the past as something that is lost and needs to be discovered again, advising people to join him in this quest for better future. History’s relationship between the society, individual and the state is evident throughout Trump’s campaign. Trump’s rallies were dramatic, with the occasional fist fights and protests. His rallies were covered by cable news networks that allowed him to spread his message to a wide audience.

At the start of the campaign Trump voters identified themselves first with the candidate and only second with the Republican party. Over the past decades white voters have gravitated towards the Republican party and their negative views towards immigration. The flood of misleading stories grew during the elections campaign, fueling fake stories of the opposition. Trump galvanized the angry base by using conflict and outrage. American society and culture had been in the state of transformation since the mid 1950s. The new challenges were created by globalization, growing racial and ethnic diversity, gender roles, immigration and changes in the family structure. The voters responded to the changing American society by shifting their political party alignments, moving towards something that responded to their needs and beliefs.

Populism claims to understand the frustrations and the long-held prejudices within the society. A strong claim might be made that Trump utilized populist tendencies, which were able to thrive in a political crisis, or convey a vision of crisis in hand. However, whilst populism momentarily raises the participation of specific majority it also, at the same time, diminishes and limits the rights of ethnic, sexual and religious minorities. Speaking in the voice of populism, Trump argued

“I visited the crumbling cities and the struggling schools. I’ve seen our dilapidated airports, highways, bridges, and I’ve compared them to other countries where we see facilities so far superior to ours, it’s really not to be believed. Hard to imagine what’s happened to our country. America is getting

taken apart piece by piece. Auctioned off—and just rapidly –auctioned off to the highest bidder. We’re broke. We’re broke.”¹⁸⁸

Trump argued that America was falling apart because of the existing policies and the way the country had been governed. It was as if Trump wanted to turn back the clock, or at least stop it. He promised to keep the social programs and improve them, his way. Many conservative voters, and Tea Partiers in particular, believed that certain government programs were earned through hard work. People who were considered undeserving, like immigrants and low-income Americans, should not be given handouts by the government. Indicating a us versus them mentality. Trump declared that America First policy could be applied to economic and foreign policy. In both cases Americans would be protected and put first. He said that “[t]he beauty of “America First” is that it brings us all together.”¹⁸⁹At its core America First policy was economic nationalism. Trump deployed rhetoric that used history, thus structuring a narrative that was built around his core campaign slogans.

At the end of July, in Ohio, Trump accepted his Presidential nomination at the Republican convention. In his acceptance speech Trump drew attention to the Silent Majority, a concept that became known under president Nixon. Trump stated that

“[e]very day I wake up determined to deliver for the people I have met all across this nation that have been neglected, ignored, and abandoned... I have visited the laid-off factory workers, and the communities crushed by our horrible and unfair trade deals. These are the forgotten men and women of our country. And they are forgotten, but they’re not going to be forgotten long. People who work hard but no longer have a voice.”¹⁹⁰

Trump wanted to restore American manufacturing jobs, his most crucial promise in order to make America great again. It can be argued that Trump, like Nixon in the past, promised to give a voice to those people that had been overlooked and silenced. However, this promise had a racially coded message that signaled the white voters to choose him instead of the Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. Trump also promised to uphold the freedom and independence of the workers.¹⁹¹ By making this promise to the voters, Trump framed the argument by using key words that the voters could relate; freedom and independence. Following Tilli’s argumentation,

¹⁸⁸ June 7, 2016 Remarks on Presidential candidate Donald Trump after winning primaries in Montana, South Dakota, New Mexico, New Jersey and California in New York

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ July 21, 2016 Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio

¹⁹¹ July 21, 2016 Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio

Trump utilized key statements that acted as the core of his rhetoric.¹⁹² He used history that was integral part of the conservative past. At the same Republican convention he declared that

“our plan will put America First. Americanism, not globalism, will be our credo. As long as we are led by politicians who will not put America First, then we can be assured that other nations will not treat America with respect, the respect we deserve. The American People will come first once again. My plan will begin with safety at home – which means safe neighborhoods, secure borders, and protection from terrorism.”¹⁹³

Trump’s rhetoric separated America from the postwar consensus of extending and maintaining globalism. Instead, Trump turned towards foreign policy that emphasized isolationism and American exceptionalism. By choosing the narrative of exceptionalism, Trump defined America’s place in the international community. However, Trump’s promotion of American exceptionalism did not include the interventionist worldview. Trump’s history politics aimed to influence the traditional conservative voters who were drawn into his rhetoric. Within the history politics framework, Trump was able to intertwine different campaign themes with historical concepts. His speeches were filled with rhetoric and slogans, that can be seen as typical manifestations of history politics. Over the years, the Conservatives have managed to redirect the governments direction. Populist rhetoric was creatively altered and used by conservative politicians, most importantly Nixon and Reagan. This was the rhetoric Trump wailed to fit the conservative framework. It must be noted that a large portion of Trump’s general election campaign was focused on the ‘flip’ states¹⁹⁴, states that could ultimately go to the Republicans or Democrats. Thus, these states were pivotal to Donald Trump and his election campaign.

4.1 “Make America Safe Again”, campaign in Southern states

In Southern states, Trump’s emphasis was on security, change, political corruption and the forgotten workers. His speeches followed the same pattern, but in the South the speeches had a racial undertone that reflected the legacy of Nixon’s southern strategy. Trump conveyed an image of a leader who would return the power back to the people, in this battle of righteousness he was irreplaceable, unique and the country’s’ last straw for survival. Trump, like Reagan, believed in the power of people to transform history. The sense of emergency projected the us

¹⁹² Tilli, “Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,”286.

¹⁹³ July 21, 2016 Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio

¹⁹⁴ Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, and New Hampshire

versus them mentality, creating an air of urgency. Trump declared in Florida that “This is a conspiracy against you, the American people. This is our moment of reckoning as a society and as a civilization...I’m the only one who can fix it. I’m doing this for the people, and this movement is just right—and we will take back this country for you and Make America Great Again.”¹⁹⁵ Trump had created a narrative of a long historical battle against internal and external enemies. In order to pour hope for his supporters, Trump presented himself as the strongman, someone who would defend the nation from all threats. Because he was an outsider, the conventional politics would not hold him back in the battle of survival. Stating that Americans needed to ‘take back’ the country, had strong religious implications. To many evangelicals, it meant transforming the nation into a Bible-based republic.¹⁹⁶

As a Republican Party candidate, Donald Trump represented someone who resisted change, favored tradition and committed to traditional values. Trump made promises that people were longing to hear, and he presented himself as a savior, a person who was offering rescue from economic downturn and globalism. Trump argued that the cause was bigger than him: “it’s not about me. It’s never been about me. It’s about all the people in this country who don’t have a voice. I am running to be their voice. I am running to be the voice for every forgotten part of this country that has been waiting and hoping for a better future... I am fighting for real change.”¹⁹⁷ Following Torsti’s argumentation, it was evident that Trump’s speeches had an underlying domestic policy motive.¹⁹⁸ His claims to speak on behalf of the forgotten people utilized history, in a manner that allowed him to create a narrative that showcased historical continuation from the Nixon era to present day.

“It is time to vote for a New American Future. Together, We will make America strong again. We will make America proud again. We will make America safe again.”¹⁹⁹ Trump devoured the emotional responses from his audience, he focused on those rather than providing detailed descriptions about his policies. His speeches evoked national pride and bravado. Trump claimed to be the law and order candidate, following the parallel path of the Nixon rhetoric, he questioned the respect for the rule of law and separation of powers.²⁰⁰ It is important to bear in mind that the law and order references were also used by George Wallace, who had argued that the government had failed to protect its people amongst the chaotic racial riots. Thus, law and

¹⁹⁵ October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida

¹⁹⁶ Lambert, *Religion in American politics*, 215.

¹⁹⁷ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

¹⁹⁸ Torsti, “Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,” 67.

¹⁹⁹ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

²⁰⁰ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 10.

order can be seen as racist code words against African Americans who were fighting for their civil rights. Trump's speeches in the southern states used these code words, that had been embedded to the southern memory, appealing to peoples' sense of safety and security,

“Too many Americans are trapped in fear, violence and poverty. Our inner cities have been left behind, and I am going to fight to make sure every citizen of this country has a safe home, safe school and safe community. We must maintain law and order at the highest level or we will cease to have a country. I am the law and order candidate. ... I am also the candidate of compassion. But you can't have true compassion without providing safety for the citizens of the United States.”²⁰¹

Trump's remarks were a clear nudge to Nixon's law and order campaign against crime and drugs. The term was also used by Barry Goldwater during his 1965 presidential campaign. Goldwater had created a new alignment in the South, it was built on a backlash against the civil rights movement.²⁰² Nixon's law and order had similar racial undertone, placing the blame of the social unrests to the shoulders of African Americans. Most importantly, Trump tied the law and order slogan under the “Make America Safe Again” catchphrase. It can be argued that Trump recycled Nixon's rhetoric from the discorded era that was marked by anti-war protest and urban riots; an era that unravelled the longstanding cultural and social mores. It is important to understand that crime, and the threat of crime, can be used as a powerful proxy to other anxieties and fears. Trump, like Nixon before him, used fear as a pivotal element in his speeches. Following Torsti's argumentation, it was evident that Trump's domestic policy aimed to make America safer again.²⁰³ He framed the argumentation within Nixon's rhetoric, using code words that connected his narrative to the social unrests of the 1970s.

Trump's derogatory comments about immigrants and Muslims, reflected the way populism can use discrimination and intolerance when defining people. In his speeches, Trump managed to simultaneously include people, his supporters, whilst excluding the immigrants. In Texas, Trump stated

“Our nation should not accept one lost American life because our country failed to enforce its laws. ...hundreds of individuals who have been given visas and refugee admissions into this country have subsequently been charged with terrorism. We are admitting people here with no idea who they are or what they believe. Whether it's drugs, terrorism or violent crime, our government is utterly failing in its core mission to defend and protect the people of this country... I

²⁰¹ July 11, 2016 Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia

²⁰² Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 16.

²⁰³ Torsti, “Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,”67.

am here standing with you. The American people are here standing with you. And come November, your long awaited day of justice will finally arrive.”²⁰⁴

Populism appears attractive to those who consider themselves to be excluded from the political system. Trump exploited the old racial discomforts that had been brewing since the 1960s. The nostalgic appeals to gain back America that did not have intrusive government nor people cheating on welfare, echoed Reagan’s coded racial appeals. Promising to protect the borders Trump stated: “I will stop the drug inflow from our borders. These drugs come over the border and make their way into our urban and rural communities, and into our suburbs.”²⁰⁵ Trump painted a powerful image of an unsecure border that was open to narco trafficking, causing damage to the innocent lives of Americans who were losing their jobs, lives and livelihood. In rural areas opioid problems had brought many communities to their knees. The residents were angered by the incoming heroin from Mexico. Despite the fact that many of the rural areas did not have a big immigrant population, many residents blamed their drug problems on Mexico. Thus, Trump’s promises to build a wall to fix the drug problem found a ready audience. To many Americans Trump provided a simple solution to a big problem. Immigration and drug problems were issues that many candidates had not adequately addressed, or at least not as strongly as Trump did.

The ‘images of immigrants clandestinely crossing the US-Mexican border, committing crimes, and accessing public services heighten anxiety among those who may already be concerned about nation’s direction. Once aroused, that anxiety seeks political home.’²⁰⁶ On this occasion, the Republican Party and their candidate Trump provided a natural home for those anxieties. This gives us purchase on the fact that the unskilled, native-born Americans whose wages and jobs are under threat are those who most forcefully oppose immigration. By claiming that illegal immigrants were stealing American jobs, Trump harnessed the suspicions of the white working-class workers. He also presented Mexico and the immigrants coming from there as something that needed to be stopped. He, and only he was the right candidate to stop jobs going to Mexico, and by building a wall he would stop the immigrants from coming into the US. The perception of racial differences reflected American’s responses to Trump’s statements.

In his rally speeches Trump presented the immigrants in a same manner; a threat to American values, society and livelihood. Trump stated that “[t]he job of a public official is to serve and

²⁰⁴ September 17, 2016 Remarks at the Remembrance Project Luncheon at the Omni Houston Hotel at Westside in Houston, Texas

²⁰⁵ September 24, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Berglund Center in Roanoke, Virginia

²⁰⁶ Abrajano, and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 27.

protect the citizens of the United States. Not illegal immigrants, not foreign nationals seeking entry, but the people living here lawfully today”²⁰⁷. Nixon’s southern strategy appealed to white fear of black rise, shifting many Democrats to Republican side. Trump raised fears of undocumented immigrants crossing the border, bringing violence and drugs with them. Trump utilized Reagan’s foreign policy in his campaign speeches. Trump declared “[my] proposal is based on three crucial words: Peace Through Strength.”²⁰⁸ Reagan’s ‘Peace through strength’ rhetoric was central in the southern states, and he had been able to frame conservatism in a manner that made it appealing to the majority of Americans.²⁰⁹ Following Tilli’s argumentation, Trump capitalized on the prevailing political situation by injecting Reagan’s rhetoric of increasing military strength in a time of crisis.²¹⁰ Thus, he used history as a tool, allowing him to engage in politics in a manner that strengthened his position.

4.1.1 Forgotten Americans

People’s sense of vulnerability can foster the acceptance of populism; being powerless in a political sphere, sense of deprived community and a strong belief that economic opportunities are disappearing. To many people in the South and in the Midwest, Trump was a person who was defending their rights and gave them a sense of security. He spoke to them like a populist, addressing them like only he could understand their anger and frustration.

“Our campaign is about representing the great majority of Americans – Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Conservatives and Liberals – who read the newspaper, or turn on the TV, and don’t hear anyone speaking for them. All they hear are insiders fighting for insiders. These are the forgotten men and women in our society, and they are angry at so much on so many levels. The poverty, the unemployment, the failing schools, the jobs moving to other countries. I am fighting for these forgotten Americans.”²¹¹

Trump frequently used Nixon’s lexicon with ‘Silent Majority,’ ‘Middle America,’ and ‘Forgotten Americans.’ These phrases described people who were put between government officials and those using welfare benefits as well as criminals. Trump promised to return stability, invest in the nation’s infrastructure and return the country to the times of prosperity. In Texas he stated “We are going to declare our independence from failures of the past and create a New American Future. Once again, we will have a government of, by, and for the people. Americanism, not globalism, will be our credo. It’s going to be America First from now

²⁰⁷ August 24, 2016 Remarks at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson, Mississippi

²⁰⁸ October 23, 2016 Remarks at the Collier County Fairgrounds in Naples, Florida

²⁰⁹ Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin*, 364.

²¹⁰ Tilli, “Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,” 281-282.

²¹¹ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

on.²¹²” Trump repeated the same phrases and statements regardless of his location or audience. He, like Reagan before him, had created simple memorable slogans and lines that were easy to grasp and remember. Trump’s campaign statements reflected the populist resistance to openness and globalist political elite. He aimed to raise the American patriotism and protect their country from outside intruders. Trump argued that “[t]his is your chance to remove the special interests from their throne of power and to once again have a government of, by and for the people. No one will be left behind anymore.”²¹³ Trump declared that the job of the public officials was to protect the citizens of the US, and not the illegal immigrants.²¹⁴

Constitution is an integral part of American life, and in Texas Trump promised: “We are going to appoint judges who will support, defend and uphold the Constitution of the United States.”²¹⁵ “I have pledged to appoint judges who uphold the Constitution, to protect your religious liberty, and apply the law as written. We reject judges who rewrite the Constitution to impose their own person views on 300 million-plus Americans.”²¹⁶ Freedom and liberty are two of the most powerful words that can be used in American politics. Trump used language that weighted heavily with the conservative audience. He gained the support of the evangelical Christian voters because he promised them to appoint a judge to the Supreme Court, from a list they had approved. Even though they might not have shared the same values, they did share common interests and concerns for the future.²¹⁷ When faced with the two candidates, the evangelicals chose Trump over Hillary Clinton, who stood for everything that the conservative Right opposed. There was not a chance that they would have voted for someone they considered to be a villain of the story. Clinton simply had too much damaged baggage from the past that the evangelical could not overlook. Trump addressed the evangelicals by seeking resolution from God, and promising to find a united future: “Our nation today is divided. Nobody likes to say it, but we're living in a very, very divided nation. It will be our faith in God and his teachings, in each other, that will lead us back to unity.”²¹⁸ The Republican Party was revived in the late 1970s by the growth of religious right grassroots movement. This fueled the conservative activism to support Reagan and his presidential bid. Over the decades Republicans and the Party

²¹² August 23, 2016 Remarks at the Luedecke Arena in Austin, Texas

²¹³ August 24, 2016 Remarks at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson, Mississippi

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ August 23, 2016 Remarks at Luedecke Arena in Austin, Texas

²¹⁶ September 9, 2016 Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.

²¹⁷ Zito and Todd, *The Great Revolt*, 173.

²¹⁸ September 9, 2016 Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.

itself was pushed to the Right until it finally reached Donald Trump. Each wave of conservatism modified the Republican Party more towards the right-wing, and further away from moderation.

In Washington, DC, Trump linked the American First Policy to foreign policy. He declared that “[my]foreign policy will always put the interests of the American people and American security above all else.”²¹⁹ Trump emphasized that “America first will be the major and overriding theme of my administration.”²²⁰ Trump’s foreign policy would be based on American interests and American interests alone. He claimed that “[w]e will not apologize for becoming successful again, but will instead embrace the unique heritage that makes us who we are.”²²¹ What Trump meant by America First foreign policy was that America global leadership role was over, US would not be depended on other countries. Trump saw loss of control as a form of chaos, he, and only he, could bring stability and allow America flourish as an independent nation. Interventionist policy had caused the decline of American exceptionalism, and lost control of its destiny. History was a pivotal tool in Trump’s speeches, it allowed him to politicize the narrative of exceptionalism.²²² He challenged the prevailing assumptions about America First policy, framing it a manner that portrayed it as the only solution to Americas’ crisis.

Many of the southern speeches reflected Trump’s desire to present himself as an outsider; a non-politician who was defending the rights of the forgotten workers. Dionne Jr. suggests that ‘an outsider who broke all the rules of conventional politics could emerge so quickly, could so disrupt his party, and could, for a spell, so dominate its discourse spoke to the crisis within conservatism.’²²³ Trump had a wide platform that gave him opportunity to pursue his campaign. The right-wing evangelical Christian activism grew in the suburban areas of the South, Southwest, and Midwest. Their network became larger via religious television, radio, magazines and direct mail circulation. In Florida, Trump stated that: “I wasn't expected to win with evangelicals but once we got started and once they heard my message as opposed to other people's messages we really we won big with evangelicals. They're incredible people. Remember the Johnson Amendment. We're gonna get rid of that Johnson Amendment. Just remember that.”²²⁴ Christian’s fought to have a legislation that would acknowledge that America was a Christian nation, something that the Constitution failed to do. The Johnson Amendment forbade non-profitable organizations from endorsing candidates, thus religious

²¹⁹ April 27, 2016 Remarks on Foreign Policy, Washington, DC

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Tilli, “Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,” 282.

²²³ Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 38.

²²⁴ October 12, 2016 Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala, Florida

organizations and charities could not express favoritism towards political candidates. Trump's promises to override the legislation indicated a strong affiliation with the evangelical voters.

The anti-establishment spirit, Trump's vulgar, intemperate and unorthodox style struck voters as far more genuine than the highly cautious and controlled Hillary Clinton. As the brash and unpredictable Trump positioned himself as an agent of change, Clinton seemed like the establishment's candidate.

“Perhaps it is easy for politicians to lose touch with reality when they are being paid millions of dollars to read speeches to Wall Street executives – instead of spending time with real people in real pain. The disconnect in America is deep. There are two Americas: the ruling class, and the groups it favours, and then everyone else... We need to clean out the corruption in Government, and Hilary Clinton will never be able to do it... The decades of decay, division and decline will come to an end. The years of American Greatness will return. We are going to become, for the first time in a long time, one united country. We are going to make America Great Again – And Safe Again – For All Americans. We will dream big and bold and daring things once more.”²²⁵

Trump and his anti-political views were pitted against Clinton's conventional political discourse. Thus, Clinton appeared like the political insider, who represented continuation of the Obama era. The memories and perceptions linked to Nixon and Reagan were used to influence the present. However, altering the message can lead to completely different ideas and actions that are not accordance with the political past.

4.1.2 Our political establishment has no soul

The resentment against Washington and its exclusivity resonated with Trump's audience. Trump declared that “Hillary Clinton is an insider, supported by powerful insiders, attacking Americans who have no political power.”²²⁶ According to Trump, Hillary was part of the rigged system that allowed politicians to lose touch of reality, hence making them unable to connect with real people in pain.²²⁷ When Hillary had slandered Trump's supporters he said that

“Our support comes from every part of America, and every walk of life. We have the support of cops and soldiers, carpenters and welders, the young and the old, and millions of working class families who just want a better future. These were the people Hillary Clinton so viciously demonized. These were among the countless Americans that Hillary Clinton called deplorable, irredeemable and un-American. She called these patriotic men and women every vile name in the book – she called them racist, sexist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic. She called

²²⁵ July 11, 2016 Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia

²²⁶ September 12, 2016 Address to the National Guard Association of the United States 138th General Conference & Exhibition at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland

²²⁷ July 11, 2016 Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia

them a "basket of deplorables" in both a speech and an interview. She divides people into baskets as though they were objects, not human beings."²²⁸ Clinton's declaration that Trump supporters were a 'basket full of deplorables,' caused anger and made Trump defend his supporters harder. In order to protect his base, his statements demonstrated that he was willing to go to great lengths for his supporters. After all, Trump claimed to be one of them, part of the group. Hence, Clintons' accusations, being racist among many things, were against Trump himself. From the voters perspective one candidate was accusatory and somewhat elitist, and the other honest speaking and hopeful. Despite Trump's contradictory statements, many voters had more faith in Trump than in Clinton.

Trump's campaign was aimed to those who were the seen as the outsiders, the overlooked and forgotten people that did not live in metropolitan cities and elite environment. He made it evident that the cultural power was against the voters who were not highly educated. Trump cleverly framed the argument in a manner that sided him with the people and Clinton against the people. Clinton would always be part of the establishment, someone who would continue globalist policies and overlooking the best interests of the people and the nation. The people needed a leader who would be their champion.

"Above all else, you are Americans – and you are entitled to leadership that honors you, cherishes you and defends you. Every American is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in our country. Whether you vote for me, or whether you vote for someone else, I will be your champion in the White House. Hillary Clinton represents only the insiders, the donors and the special interests."²²⁹

Donald Trump took the conservative platform by a storm; he dominated the mainstream media with his outrageous statements and celebrity status. Trump was powerful enough to challenge Fox News and emerged from the confrontation stronger than ever. Fox News has a devoted audience and the network played a central role in organizing the Tea Party mobilization. The network broadcasted news without fact checking, giving substantial news coverage to the idea that President Obama had not been born in the US. Trump participated in the birther movement enthusiastically, and he became a regular face in the Fox News. The establishment was seen as an evil entity that was supported by the mainstream media. Trump pointed out that "the media can't report on the establishment because the media is the establishment. And they're all teamed

²²⁸ September 12, 2016 Address to the National Guard Association of the United States 138th General Conference & Exhibition at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland

²²⁹ September 12, 2016 Remarks at the US Cellular Center in Asheville, North Carolina

up against you, the American people.”²³⁰ He used scapegoating to divert the blame on someone, who he saw was responsible for the corruption.

In political sphere history ‘is only offered by narratives and interpretations that are alive to contrasting interpretations and to the problems of using evidence. This, however, is of scant interest to those who seek to use history to support the allegedly manifest destiny of their particular political interpretations.’²³¹ Torsti points out that it is important to emphasize the idea of using history as a tool for understanding, not as a condition for historical culture.²³² She also remarks that politics of history can be appealed for political purposes.²³³ Trump’s usage of the past in the daily culture was a tool to draw strength from the conservatives history. Trump and his followers echoed a message derived from the old rhetoric that disregarded ‘the rule of law and the separation of powers, had deep antagonism toward other candidates and independent journalism.’²³⁴ They wanted a country that believes, looks, thinks, talks, eats and drinks the same. They clearly wanted to go back to a country without diversity; a past that never existed except in the reactionary images of the imagined past.²³⁵ Trump used history to justify, challenge and legitimize his message to the voters. Hence, history can be used to position a community within its present by creating a link to the past.

Trump’s aggressive remarks against the media and Clinton conveyed an image of him as a strongman. In Florida Trump argued:” Reporters who work for these outlets like the Washington Post or the New York Times may think of themselves as journalists, but they're actually cogs for a corrupt political machine. That's the Clinton machine. The e-mail show the New York Times, the Boston Globe, Univision who I sued I sued Univision, and I was very happy with what they did.”²³⁶ Trump and his campaign statements were played on mainstream media over and over again. It can be argued that Trump’s media coverage gave him an advantage, compared to other candidates. As his campaign rallies became bigger, Trump generated even more coverage. Trump was a spectacle and no one could turn away from him. Trump’s campaign was full of nostalgia and it elaborated long-standing American themes like individualism and capitalist economy. He blamed the mainstream media whenever he could: “The establishment media doesn’t cover what really matters in this country, or what’s really

²³⁰ October 11, 2016 Excerpts of Remarks at Aaron Bessant Park in Panama City, Florida

²³¹ Black, *Clio's Battles*, 145.

²³² Torsti , ”Why Do History Politics Matter?”, 22.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 24.

²³⁴ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 244.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 245.

²³⁶ October 12, 2016 Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala, Florida

going on in people's lives. They will take words of mine out of context and spend a week obsessing over every single syllable, and then pretend to discover some hidden meaning in what I said."²³⁷ The mainstream media was the enemy, and Trump broke the traditional norms by calling any negative story about him 'fake news.' Trump's attacks were personal, racist and bigoted. He had thin skin and encouraged his supporters to attack protestors at the rallies. Trump tried to turn people against media, urging them not to believe the lies the liberal media was telling them. Trump's lack of political correctness defied the standards of political language. His manners and language struck a cord with many Republican and independent voters. Following Tilli's argumentation, Trump influenced people through his rhetoric.²³⁸ He had political goals that could be achieved by interpreting history in a way that fitted his narrative. History politics created a framework, from within Trump was able to efficiently convey his vision for America.

Trump was able to go around the independent press and communicate directly with his supporters via Twitter. He viewed the medias attacks against him as attacks against American sovereignty. The anti-democratic media elites conspired against the people by 'rigging' the system. Thus, liberal media was blocking the will of the people. It can be argued that Trump regarded the independent media as the enemy of the people.

"This is a struggle for the survival of our nation. This election will determine whether we are a free nation, or whether we have only the illusion of Democracy but are in fact controlled by a small handful of global special interests rigging the system. This is not just conspiracy but reality, and you and I know it. The establishment and their media enablers wield control over this nation through means that are well known. Anyone who challenges their control is deemed a sexist, a racist, a xenophobe and morally deformed. They will attack you, they will slander you, they will seek to destroy your career and reputation. And they will lie, lie and lie even more."²³⁹

His rhetoric and claims were designed to reassure the nation that he would bring tangible solutions. In Florida, Trump claimed that poor economic policies were leading the country to ruin, and that the political establishment had only ever defended its own interests.

"The political establishment that is trying everything to stop us, is the same group responsible for our disastrous trade deals, massive illegal immigration, and economic and foreign policies that have bled this country dry. The political establishment has brought about the destruction of our factories and our jobs, as they flee to Mexico, China and other countries throughout the world... It's a

²³⁷ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

²³⁸ Tilli, "Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,"282.

²³⁹ October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida

global power structure that is responsible for the economic decisions that have robbed our working class, stripped our country of its wealth, and put that money into the pockets of a handful of large corporations and political entities.”²⁴⁰

Trump’s argumentation referred to hedge fund guys and stateless multinational corporations, an element of society which did not produce capital for the people. His supporters saw these multinational forces as exploitative and part of the elitist corruption. Trump used words that resonated with his religious base, when he claimed that: “Our political establishment has no soul...This is a conspiracy against you, the American people. This is our moment of reckoning as a society and as a civilization.”²⁴¹America as a nation was under a threat, and the only way to save it was to “replace our failed and corrupt establishment with a new government that serves you, your family, and your country.”²⁴²The rising cultural fears of older white voters manifested in Trump’s speeches. These voters responded to the Reagan nostalgia eagerly and embraced Trump’s vision for the country. Trump ran against the establishment, and used both Nixon’s and Reagans rhetoric, transforming it to fit his more radical narrative. He gave voice to those less affluent Republicans whilst also catering to the hopes of the Tea Partiers. For Trump, history was a tool that could be used in political battles. Past was evoked in political disputes to provide an outcome that he desired. People supported him because he was not part of the system, and he promised to bring something new to political platform. Most importantly Trump promised to “drain the swamp”; clean Washington from corruption and lies. Trump appealed to the voters by saying that

“[o]ur movement is about replacing a failed and corrupt political establishment with a new government controlled by you, the American People. There is nothing the political establishment will not do, and no lie they will not tell, to hold on to their prestige and power at your expense. The Washington establishment, and the financial and media corporations that fund it, exists for only one reason: to protect and enrich itself. The establishment has trillions of dollars at stake in this election. As an example, just one single trade deal they’d like to pass, involves trillions of dollars controlled by many countries, corporations and lobbyists. ... This is a crossroads in the history of our civilization that will determine whether or not We The People reclaim control over our government.”²⁴³

The constitution and the declaration of independence had created a framework from within the American people could regard themselves as the integral part of the government.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida

²⁴² September 24, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Berglund Center in Roanoke, Virginia

²⁴³ October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida

4.1.3 Change is coming

Creating a specific image was crucial in the political narrative, Trump had built up an image of himself as the saviour, the outsider who would bring change to the country. This imagery was particularly important in the southern states, where many feared the traditional way of life was under a threat. In Mississippi Trump announced: “I am the change candidate. This is our moment to show the whole world that America is back, bigger and better and stronger than ever before.”²⁴⁴ Declining distrust towards politicians and the existing system gave Trump powerful ammunition to work with, moreover it was the driving force of his campaign. Trump repeatedly claimed that the system was rigged against the voters, his voters to be exact, and said that they should finally take action against it. In North Carolina he stated that “...change has to come from outside of our broken and corrupt system. We will never fix our rigged system by relying on the people who rigged it in the first place. We will never solve our problems by relying on the politicians who created our problems.”²⁴⁵ What made Trump an appealing candidate was the fact that he was not a politician, he was a self-made businessman, who did not need the support of other politicians. Trump represented the American dream, he was someone the voters could relate to. Trump argued that “It's the powerful protecting the powerful. The insiders fighting for insiders. I am fighting for you.”²⁴⁶ Trump's words had historical charge, and he was stepping away from the narrative that had failed America and replaced it with a new vision for the people. He wanted America to separate from the liberal administration, and instead return to a past in which the Republicans had created prosperity for the people.

“Decades of political failure and corruption will come swiftly to an end, and a New American Future will begin. The citizens of this country will be in charge once more. The special interests have had their day. That chapter in our history is closing. The history book is closing on the failed politicians of yesterday. A new chapter is beginning, and this chapter will be authored by you, the American people. This will be your time. You will be running the show. Not the donors, not the insiders, not the media executives. Once more, we will have a government of, by and for the people. All we have to do is cut our ties to the bitter failures of the past, and anything becomes possible. Change is coming.”²⁴⁷

Making America self-sufficient once again would, in Trump's view, create more jobs and allow the nation to utilize its own natural resources. “[W]e're going to take care of our miners, we're going to take care of our steelworkers, we're going to take care of natural gas. We're going to

²⁴⁴ August 24, 2016 Remarks at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson, Mississippi

²⁴⁵ September 6, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the Greenville Convention Center in Greenville, North Carolina

²⁴⁶ September 9, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the Pensacola Bay Center in Pensacola, Florida

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

have clean coal. We're going to also have all forms of advanced energy.”²⁴⁸ Trump’s speeches indicated that the country was in a dire need of rebuilding. The economic policies had failed the people, and it was time to put the country’s own interests first. “We are going to rebuild our country. Our country is going to be a country where you can be proud of again. We're going to use American steel, we're going to use American labor, we are going to come first in all deals.”²⁴⁹In 1970s and 1980s American manufacturing work began to disappear, the loss was felt especially in the Rust Belt Area. White evangelicals in the South also feared social and moral decline. Welfare spending rose, and many Americans blamed immigrants and African Americans for using welfare to get a free ride in the society.²⁵⁰The loss of jobs contributed to the general fear of American economic decline. Those Americans who grew up during Johnson’s and Nixon’s presidencies adopted a worldview that emphasized America should not take on multinational commitments abroad, the costs of those commitments were too great. Moreover, the nation should invest the resources to improve its own infrastructure and elevate the status of the working class. This was the view that Trump promoted and conveyed to his supporters.

Thus, the economic situation and policies regarding immigrants are linked together. The political core of many Americans is shaped by concerns about growing immigration and racial change. Within the framework of history politics, it can be suggested that by provoking fears on immigration, Trump created a link to the longstanding anxieties of immigration. He focused on the threat narrative of the undocumented immigrants, conveying them as the biggest problem in the American life. Racial issues were central in southern politics and contributed to the appeal of the right-wing populism. The interest of the past served the need of the present. Following Pilvi Torsti’s argumentation that historical consciousness is a complex connection between the interpretations of the past and perceptions of the present,²⁵¹Trump’s usage of the past was to create narratives that served a new historical purpose. For white Americans immigration was a central factor; it helped to determine how they voted, influenced their policy preferences from criminal justice to education.²⁵² Hence, the decision to vote for Trump was a pragmatic one. It became no mystery that the unskilled, native-born Americans whose wages and jobs were under threat, were those who most forcefully opposed immigration.²⁵³

²⁴⁸ October 12, 2016 Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala, Florida

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Judis. *The Nationalist Revival*, 56.

²⁵¹ Torsti, “Why Do History Politics Matter,” 23.

²⁵² Abrajano and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 206.

²⁵³ Ibid., 51.

Immigrants risk their lives in order to get to America, but many of them do not have proper documentation. Thus, conservatives have branded them as illegals and criminals, stigmatizing them because of their skin-color and the language they speak. However, in Trump's view: "People who want their immigration laws enforced, and their borders secured, are not racists. They are patriotic Americans of all backgrounds who want their jobs and families protected."²⁵⁴ It can be argued that national security can be seen pivotal to national sovereignty and public order, thus the government has the right to decide and control who can enter their country.²⁵⁵ Thus, illegal border crossing can be viewed as a threat to national security and the American way of life. Trump argued that "Every day our border remains open, innocent Americans are needlessly victimized."²⁵⁶ Trump supporters in general believed their own economic conditions to be poor and they saw immigrants as burden. Their views and skepticism towards the powers below and above fit the populist profile perfectly.

In southern states values, tradition and safety were the most important things. Trump portrayed himself as the champion of the silent majority, the forgotten people. He promised the people to defend them against special interests and the establishment. It must be noted that the term 'silent majority' was straight out of Nixon's rhetoric. Trump's promises created a link to the past by lifting the overlooked white-middle class to the centre of the stage. The populist approach to politics emphasized the us versus them mentality.

"But one thing I can promise you is this: I will always tell you the truth. I speak the truth for all of you, and for everyone in this country who doesn't have a voice... Our campaign is about representing the great majority of Americans – Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Conservatives and Liberals – who read the newspaper, or turn on the TV, and don't hear anyone speaking for them. All they hear are insiders fighting for insiders. These are the forgotten men and women in our society, and they are angry at so much on so many levels. The poverty, the unemployment, the failing schools, the jobs moving to other countries. I am fighting for these forgotten Americans."²⁵⁷

For Americans the ultimate power laid with the people, and the distrust towards government officials can be traced back to the Constitutional Convention era.²⁵⁸ The deep racial, ideological and cultural schisms, that divided the American society, were exposed by Trump's candidacy.

²⁵⁴ September 16, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the James L. Knight Center in Miami, Florida

²⁵⁵ Néstor P. Rodríguez, "Social Construction of the U.S.-Mexico Border," in *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States*, ed. Juan F. Perea (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997), 227.

²⁵⁶ September 17, 2016 Remarks at the Remembrance Project Luncheon at the Omni Houston Hotel at Westside in Houston, Texas

²⁵⁷ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

²⁵⁸ Gordon S. Wood, *The Idea of America: Reflections On the Birth of the United States* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011), 184-185

Race and ethnicity have become central issues in American politics, no other development has had a greater impact on the rise of partisan polarization over the past thirty years.²⁵⁹ Trump's campaign speeches that targeted immigration have a direct link between demographic changes and white peoples views. Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal point out that 'how whites perceive immigration, whether they think it is a widespread problem, and ultimately whether they buy into an immigration threat narrative at all,..., likely to be shaped by what they see, hear, and learn from various media outlets.'²⁶⁰When assessing Trump's attack on immigration, it is evident that the media outlets, supporting him, broadcasted this anti-immigration perspective, thus popularizing the negative approach to the subject. Trump used historical references and code words to create a link to the past. Why this issue is so important is because 'we can often observe the concrete consequences of history being used for political purposes.'²⁶¹ On many occasions, during his presidential campaign, Trump declared that he was doing it for the benefit of the people. Trump promised,

“This election is about every man, woman and child in our country who deserves to live in safety, prosperity and peace... we will vote to put this corrupt government cartel out of business. We will remove from our politics the special interests who have betrayed our workers, our borders, our freedoms, and our sovereign rights as a nation. We will end the politics of profit, we will end the rule of special interests, we will put a stop to the raiding of our country—and the disenfranchisement of our people...Join me in taking back our country, and creating bright and glorious new dawn for our people.”²⁶²

Trump did evoke images of America as a stable and patriotic nation without dissent and division. In North Carolina Trump declared: “We are one nation.”²⁶³The idea of homogenic nation reinforces, and promotes, the idea that immigrants and non-white people are not tolerated in the country. In Trump's view America should make its own decisions in international affairs and demonstrate that they would follow no one. 'For many Americans, world events were freighted with religious significance that bore upon American identity.'²⁶⁴The United Nations supported religious freedom, thus gaining the support of both religious liberals and conservatives. To many conservatives UN represented one world government, something that America should keep at arm's length. Trump had a sense to what people wanted to hear, he was

²⁵⁹ Alan I. Abramowitz, *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2018), xii.

²⁶⁰ Abrajano, and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 13.

²⁶¹ Torsti, "Why Do History Politics Matter," 33.

²⁶² October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida

²⁶³ August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

²⁶⁴ Lambert, *Religion in American politics*, 149.

like a salesman, adopting and selling sentiments to customers that were willing to buy everything he had for sale.

“And we are going to win back the White House. This election will decide whether we are ruled by a corrupt political class. You're seeing what's happening. Everybody's watching. Or whether we are ruled by the people. We're going to be ruled by the people, folks. That is going to be the choice. A failed political establishment has delivered nothing but poverty, nothing but problems, nothing but losses. Nothing but losses. We don't win anymore as a country. We're going to start winning again. I'm not a politician, I can say proudly. My only special interest is you. It's you. We're going to bring back the jobs that have been stolen from you. We're going to bring back the wealth that has been taken from our country. We're going to bring back the miners and the factory workers and the steel workers. We're going to put them back to work.”²⁶⁵

Aided by the recession of 2008, nationalist sentiments emerged to answer the calls of new fears and resentments. Trump appealed to Americans who felt their nation and future were put in jeopardy. He raised sentiments, which were deeply rooted in America's past.²⁶⁶ Trump viewed globalism like a battle that he needed to win; bring back work, defeat corruption and give power back to the people. Moreover, Trump spoke publicly the same way Americans would in their comfort of home, or in bars and among their friends. He voiced their opinions out loud for the whole world.

4.2 “It's a silent nation of jobless Americans”, campaign in Northeastern states

One of the key aspects in Trump's speeches in the northeastern states was economy and manufacturing. These states represented the core area of manufacturing labor. His speeches were designed according to the audience. When Trump talked about manufacturing work, most specifically work related to fossil fuels, he used Orwellian language that conservatives commonly utilized. This meant using words like healthy, clean and safe when talking about the nuclear power or coal plants.²⁶⁷ Hence, when Trump stated that America needed to produce its own energy, he used words like energy independence; giving back the sovereignty to the nation and its workers. In Pennsylvania, one of the pivotal coal producing areas, Trump stated that “the coal industry's decimated. The miners are out of work, they're totally out of work. I mean there will be no such thing as coal in this country pretty soon. And we're talking clean coal, we're talking clean coal.”²⁶⁸ Trump addressed those who shared the values he was speaking of, those who believed in the vision he was presenting.

²⁶⁵ November 7, 2016 Remarks at J.S Dorton Arena in Raleigh, North Carolina

²⁶⁶ Judis. *The Nationalist Revival*, 48.

²⁶⁷ Lakoff, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant*, 20.

²⁶⁸ August 12, 2016 Remarks at the Erie Insurance Arena in Erie, Pennsylvania

The American populism combined the notion of white silent majority with politics of resentment, identifying the producers and the workers with the people, and labelling those who do not work as antipeople.²⁶⁹ Producerism was pivotal to both Trump and to the GOP, America without work and production was in chaos. Economic prosperity was part of the American exceptionalism, he stated that the current state of the country was “a silent nation of jobless Americans.”²⁷⁰ Trump promised to restore the prosperity to the people, in a same manner that the Tea Party conservatives had. Trump pursued America First energy plan, which would ease regulation and push the use of fossil fuels. He tilted towards economic nationalism, which had been the defining landmark of Trump campaign. More on the energy politics, and to nudge his supporters, Trump said “And remember, every energy dollar that isn't harvested here in America is harvested instead in a foreign country – often foreign countries not very friendly to us. That not only means we are sending our jobs to those countries, but it means energy is being produced in foreign countries that lack our high environmental and conservation standards. That is just one more reason why we should pursue the safe and responsible production of America's vast energy reserves. We need an America-First energy plan. This means opening federal lands for oil and gas production; opening offshore areas; and revoking policies that are imposing unnecessary restrictions on innovative new exploration technologies.”²⁷¹ In Trump’s view by producing American energy he would be making America wealthy again.

Trump’s arguments about environment and regulations were framed perfectly within the conservative framework. It is important to bear in mind that framing specific issues can take decades to develop. However, when the frame is created, people associate specific words and issues within these frames. Trump believed that America’s natural resources were the key to prosperity, thus the new path for energy was in reality a return to the old.

“I will refocus the EPA on its core mission of ensuring clean air, and clean, safe drinking water for all Americans. I believe firmly in conserving our wonderful natural resources and beautiful natural habitats. My environmental agenda will be guided by true specialists in conservation, not those with radical political agendas. It will be a future of conservation, of prosperity, and of great success. It will be a future of new technology, new innovation, and new solutions.”²⁷²

Clinton’s comments about putting the coal miners and companies out of business reinforced the idea that Democrats saw coal as something evil;” [r]emember what Hillary Clinton said?

²⁶⁹ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 219.

²⁷⁰ September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

²⁷¹ September 22, 2016 Remarks at the Shale Insight TM Conference at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

²⁷² Ibid.

She wants to shut down the miners, just like she wants to shut down the steel mills. We're going to put our great miners and steel workers back to work. Energy reform is central to our plan as well.”²⁷³ Trump exploited these damaging comments to his belief. Trump promised to bring coal back to its dominant position in American energy system. Trump had stricken a gold mine when he declared to restore what the white Americans had lost.²⁷⁴ “We are going to unleash an American Energy Revolution. Oil, coal, natural gas, shale energy, and renewables.”²⁷⁵ Trump called for protectionism, controls on migration and infrastructure spending. He combined these demands with limited government, de-regulation and economic liberty. By choosing Indiana Governor Mike Pence as the vice-presidential nominee, Trump signaled to the religious right that he was reaching out to the religious community, ready to protect them. It can be pointed out that with his policy agendas, Trump was bringing together the different conservative fractions.

He wanted his audience to see himself as someone who only served the interests of the American workers, arguing that “we will only make great trade deals that put the American worker first.”²⁷⁶ He wanted them to understand that he funded his own campaign. Thus, he was a self-made man who could not be told what to do by someone else. Trump also wanted to limit the power of federal government “I will ask that savings be accomplished through common sense reforms that eliminate government waste and budget gimmicks – and that protect hard-earned benefits for Americans. We can also reduce the size of the federal bureaucracy through responsible workforce attrition – that is, when employees retire, they can be replaced by a smaller number of new employees.”²⁷⁷ His argumentation was framed in a manner that was motivated to separate the past administrations policies from his future vision.

White working-class voters identified with Republican ideas, embracing the economic and cultural themes of the Trump campaign. Trump proposed restrictions on trade and immigration, issues that struck a chord with many voters. Trump blamed bad trade deals for the decline of jobs in America, and seeing them as a threat to American sovereignty. In particular, Trump blamed Bill Clinton for bad trade deals and for abandoning Americanism, replacing it with globalism instead. In Trump’s view globalism had led to wealth leaving the US, all of this at the expense of the American workers. He also promised to re-negotiate trade deals that he

²⁷³September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

²⁷⁴ Edward Ashbee, *The Trump Revolt* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017),43.

²⁷⁵ September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania

²⁷⁶ September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

²⁷⁷ September 7, 2016 Remarks at the Union League of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

described to be harmful. In New Hampshire he argued: “We will start a negotiation on NAFTA, and if we don't get the deal we want, we will terminate NAFTA and get a much, much better trade deal...If a company wants to fire their workers and go to Mexico or another country and then they think they're going to ship their products back into the United States, we will charge them a tax of 35 percent.”²⁷⁸ In Trump’s view, being tied to trade deal that was harming American economy and posing a threat to the nation’s sovereignty, was something that needed to be gone. Trump, like Reagan before him, tried to answer the needs of white working class who had taken social and economic bashing. Since the 1970s this working class has lost many job opportunities and witnessed the disappearance of manufacturers in their regions. Trump’s position on economy and foreign policy drove a wedge between a longtime coalition of conservative businessmen and working-class people. His stand against neoliberal economics and neo-conservative foreign policy offended the Republican Party’s elite.²⁷⁹

Trump had become the voice of the overlooked middle American radicalism, and those white Americans who were left behind by globalization when the country’s industrialization had changed. On average Trump supporters were older and less educated, characterized as the descendants of white working-class voters who had departed from the Democratic Party in the 1960s.²⁸⁰ These voters were feeling left out and alienated from Washington, and their economic prospects were diminished in a country that favored the wealthy. Thus, Trump took a strong stand against globalism, and in New York he declared: “we must replace the present policy of globalism – which has moved so many jobs and so much wealth out of our country – and replace it with a new policy of Americanism.”²⁸¹ Most Republican presidents, from Nixon to Reagan and the two Bush presidencies had supported globalism. However, Trump differed from the previous Republican presidents, he opposed NAFTA and TPP agreements. Trump presented himself as the dealmaker, a navigator who would guide America away from bad trade agreements. Moreover, the use of the past for political and social reasons is highly significant for the employment of history²⁸².

4.2.1 Giving voice to the people

Trump asserted that he was the only one who could solve America’s problems and end the corruption in the country. Portraying himself in a positive light, Trump blamed previous

²⁷⁸ October 28, 2016 remarks at Radisson Armory in Manchester, New Hampshire

²⁷⁹ Judis, *The Populist Explosion*, 74.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁸¹ September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

²⁸² Black, *Clio’s Battles*, 25

administrations for leading the country down to a path that was destroying it. ” This is our one magnificent chance to reclaim our country for We The People.”²⁸³ Trump’s critique to democracy was within the populist framework, he wanted to return the power back to the people. However, Trump’s idea of the people excluded minorities, immigrants and people who could be viewed as cultural enemies. Trump understood how people talked and thought, and by using history he catered to the voters’ values. It is important to understand that people vote for their identity, for their values and most importantly they vote for who they identify with.²⁸⁴

“I propose a contract with the American voter which will end corruption and give government back to our great people. I want the entire corrupt Washington establishment to hear and heed the words I’m about to say, and I never loved this expression but now I love it because it’s become it’s become the hottest expression. If we win on November 8th, we are going to Washington, D.C. when we win, OK and we are going to drain the swamp.”²⁸⁵

His claim to ‘drain the swamp’ literally referred to Washington which was originally built on swamp. He would clean the capital from corruption and destructive policies. His words could be understood differently on either side of the political field. The accusations of rigged elections varied according to the context and audience, the further the election cycle progressed the more the claims became part of Trump’s narrative. His claims advanced the campaign, pleading the voters to turn up and take a stand against the establishment. Trump presented himself as an outsider, someone who wanted to repair the system. In New York, he stated:

“We will never be able to fix a rigged system by counting on the same people who rigged it in the first place. The insiders wrote the rules of the game to keep themselves in power and in the money... Because it’s not just the political system that’s rigged. It’s the whole economy... I am running for President to end the unfairness and to put you, the American worker, first. We are going to put America First, and we are going to Make America Great again. This election will decide whether we are ruled by the people, or by the politicians.”²⁸⁶

The core campaign slogan ‘Make America Great Again,’ offered a return to the past glory of conservatism. Trump re-used Reagan’s narrative of raising America back to its feet, making it great again. This was because the Reagan era, in general, can be viewed as a positive experience for the conservatives and middle class. However, the unspecified visions of past greatness did not provide any substantial policy views. His political base was among the Republican Party’s white middle- and working-class voters who had once supported Nixon.²⁸⁷ Trump forged a personal link between him and his audience, promising them a better economic situation, Trump

²⁸³ October 21, 2016 Remarks at the Newtown Athletic Club Sports Training Center in Newtown, Pennsylvania

²⁸⁴ Lakoff, *The All New Don’t Think of an Elephant*, 17.

²⁸⁵ October 28, 2016 remarks at Radisson Armory in Manchester, New Hampshire

²⁸⁶ June 22, 2016 Remarks at Trump SoHo in New York City

²⁸⁷ Judis, *The Populist Explosion*, 75.

said “[t]he largest tax reductions are for the middle class. Who have been forgotten. Called the forgotten man and woman. They have been forgotten.”²⁸⁸ In conservative view, taxation is seen more as a burden, rather than something that aid people’s lives in general. Trump’s pledges of tax reductions and deregulations followed the economic principles set by Reagan. However, Reagan’s economic principles created a division between the working class and the wealthy elite, setting a path for economic order that had long term consequences.

“Our campaign is about breaking-up the special interest monopoly in Washington, D.C. We're trying to disrupt the collusion between the wealthy donors, the large corporations, and the media executives. They're all part of the same political establishment.... I am not running to be President of the World. I am running to be President of the United States. I Am For America – and America First. Together, we will rebuild this country beyond our greatest dreams.”²⁸⁹

The America First policy gives priority to the country and its people,²⁹⁰ Trump echoed the views of the past Republicans, like Barry Goldwater and George Wallace. He portrayed himself as an indispensable figure, someone who would represent people and their best interests. Most importantly Trump drew the history of Nixon and Reagan. He was redirecting America’s path in the world with the aid of history. Trump’s willingness to relate with the common working men and women was also evident in his speeches in the northeast states.

“In many parts of our country, the hard times never seem to end. I've visited cities and towns in upstate New York where half the jobs have left and moved to other countries. Politicians have abandoned these places all over our country and the people who live there. Worse still, politicians have heaped scorn and disdain on these wonderful Americans. My opponent described tens of millions of American citizens as deplorable and irredeemable – how can Hillary Clinton seek to lead this country when she considers its citizens beyond redemption? The hardworking people she calls deplorable are the most admirable people I know: they are cops and soldiers, teachers and firefighters, young and old, moms and dads, blacks, whites and Latinos – but above everything else, they are all American. They love their families, they love their country, and they want a better future. These are the forgotten men and women of America. People who work hard but don't have a voice.”²⁹¹

The people needed a champion, and Trump stepped into that role like a true strongman and defender of the people. Trump used George Wallace’s narrative, when he described the people who represented the hardworking producers. He framed the argument within history political

²⁸⁸ October 22, 2016 Remarks on Proposals for the First 100 Days in Office at the Eisenhower Complex in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

²⁸⁹ September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania

²⁹⁰ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 204.

²⁹¹ September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

framework, reflecting the spirit of capitalism. Thus, Trump used language that was familiar to many conservative Americans. Trump portrayed Clinton as the embodiment of everything that was wrong with America. He, on the other hand, desired to restore and fix something that had been lost or broken. It can be suggested that Trump defended those workers who identified themselves as silent majority; white working-class people living in the Midwest. Where Trump took a stand with the Christians, Hillary decided to keep religion out of politics and instead, as Trump mentioned in his speech, judged the conservative Christians as basket of deplorables. Despite the fact that American's vote for the most religious person as their president. The contrast to Trump's message could not be clearer. Trump appealed to all conservatives with his message.

” Too many of our leaders have forgotten that it's their duty to protect the jobs, wages and well-being of American workers before any other consideration. I'm not running to be President of the world. I'm running to be President of the United States – and as your President, I will fight for every last American job. We are the nation that tamed the West, dug out the Panama Canal, won two World Wars, and put a man on the moon.”²⁹²

Trump's appeal to national identity and victorious past reflected the desire to evoke the American exceptionalism. In the core of American exceptionalism is the idea that the United States, among being the richest and most powerful in the world, is also the belief that it is morally and politically exceptional compared to any other country. It is the duty and destiny of the US to expand its power and beliefs throughout the world.²⁹³ To Americans their nation was the primary example of justice and peace. The narrative of American exceptionalism is one of the most important sources for politicians and their arguments concerning America's role in the world. American foreign policy has been defined by the concept of exceptionalism, giving the justification to spread the message of freedom to other regions. Trump believed in the greatness of the country, but claimed that it had been weakened because of globalism, bad economic trade deals and immigration. He stated that under his presidency US would prioritize its own interests, taking back the sovereignty. Americans view themselves as the God's chosen nation, the 'City upon a Hill,' a country that raised out of wilderness. The events and experiences the American people have gone through in the past, strengthened the idea that they were the God's chosen people.²⁹⁴ The exceptionalist mentality is evident in Trump 's speeches when he spoke about the nation's past.

²⁹² September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

²⁹³ Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*, 10.

²⁹⁴ Lambert, *Religion in American politics*, 17.

Trump appealed to voters by using language that they understood and were familiar with. He made them feel like their values and way of living mattered. Trump did not look down on the middle- and working-class people, he made them feel like he cared for them. Trump urged his supporters to vote “To beat the system, you have to lift your voice, pound the pavement, and get out the vote. ... You have one magnificent chance to deliver justice for every forgotten man, woman and child in this nation. The arrogance of Washington, D.C. will soon come face to face with the righteous verdict of the American voter.”²⁹⁵ Trump stated that “[p]eople are coming out that haven't voted in years. People are coming out, they literally they hadn't voted in years.”²⁹⁶ A strong claim might be made that Trump initiated a movement that sparked the infrequent voters to turn up and vote. There were many new voters who supported the Republican ticket, they formed an important part of the Trump coalition that ultimately proved victorious. Trump did stand out with his non-apologetic statements and optimistic rhetoric.

4.2.2 This is a movement like you have never seen before

“...we’re going to have a strong border, we’re going to have a wall, it’s going to be a powerful wall that Mexico’s going to pay for the wall.”²⁹⁷ “Mexico will 100 percent—you hear—100 percent pay for the wall, 100 percent.”²⁹⁸ By declaring to build a wall between Mexico and the US, Trump presented himself as someone who would reclaim the American sovereignty. With the remarks against Mexico and Mexican immigrants, Trump fused together populism with white nationalism. “I will stop the drug inflow from our borders. These drugs come over the border and make their way into our urban and rural communities, and into our suburbs.”²⁹⁹ By controlling borders and building a wall, Trump would start to fix the immigration system that was broken. Trump hampered on Mexican immigrants, who he claimed to be bringing drugs and crime to America. In many ways Trump reflected the mentality of the nineteenth century nativist Know-Nothing Party, who had fiercely resisted immigration. Trump appeared xenophobic and racist, a candidate who hailed a populist campaign.

By reinforcing the notion of an outside threat, Trump presented himself as the one who could defeat and resolve the threat. Trump elevated his arguments by using history in his argumentation. The populist angle incorporated nationalistic and isolationist views to Trumps’ campaign. Closer to the election date, Trump’s argumentation became even more

²⁹⁵ September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania

²⁹⁶ October 28, 2016 remarks at Radisson Armory in Manchester, New Hampshire

²⁹⁷ August 12, 2016 Remarks at the Erie Insurance Arena in Erie, Pennsylvania

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania

radical and urgent. In Maine, Trump stated that “Either we win the election, or we lose the country. A Trump Administration will secure and defend our borders. And yes, we will build a wall. A wall will not only keep out dangerous cartels and criminals, but it will also keep out the drugs and heroin poisoning our youth.”³⁰⁰ Increasing visibility of immigrants and their cultural presence, raised resentment that was similar in manner to that over century ago. Trump also declared war on drugs like Nixon did. “we will give people struggling with addiction access to the help they need. Congress has already taken the first step by passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This legislation is an important step. I would also expand incentives for states and local governments to use drug courts and mandated treatment. These can be a cost effective, appropriate, and humane response to addiction.”³⁰¹

When addressing the accusations made against him by several women, Trump portrayed the news like it was an attack against his supporters and their rights,

“The events never happened, never. All of these liars will be sued after the election is over but a simple phone call placed to the biggest newspapers or television networks get them wall-to-wall coverage with virtually no fact-checking whatsoever. Here is why this is relevant to you. If they can fight somebody like me who has unlimited resources to fight back, just look at what they can do to you. Your jobs. Your security. Your education. Your healthcare. The violation of religious liberty. The theft of your second amendment. The loss of your factories, your homes, and much more.”³⁰²

Reagan used news to repeat his messages in a continuous loop, expanding and increasing his audience. Trump’s use of history reminded people of past politics, a time when many American’s viewed life was affluent. Media was a tool that could be skillfully wielded. Trump’s arguments and statements were also blasted on news in a continuous loop, despite the fact that the aim was to damage his campaign, it had the opposite effect. Thus, Trump gained free media coverage, outshining his opponents with free campaign advertising. Trump found a willing audience in a time of transition and uncertainty.

The speech Trump gave in Gettysburg was his most cohesive statement of policy, and it was almost like a campaign manifesto. It reflected the different discourses between populism, mainstream Republicanism, strongman politics and paleo-conservative ideas. He reproduced themes that had defined conservatives, and the Republicans, since the early 1990s. Trump expressed commitment to drastic tax reductions, proposed school choice for the young.

³⁰⁰ October 15, 2016 Remarks at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor, Maine

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² October 22, 2016 Remarks on Proposals for the First 100 Days in Office at the Eisenhower Complex in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Trump's imperfection demonstrated his vulnerability, it made him more approachable and attractive candidate than regular politicians. In fact, Trump was the opposite of a stereotypical politician, and his unconventional approach to politics made him appealing to people. On the campaign trail Reagan was known for writing his own speeches, and Trump also claimed that he alone was responsible for his campaign speeches. However, there are rumors and speculations that this might not be the truth, but this cannot be verified. Trump used history intentionally to drive his message even further. He was motivated to link the present-day politics to specific moments in the past.³⁰³ Thus, history was a tool that cut ties with liberal politics and connected to conservative past.

In a populist manner Trump blamed Clinton for siding with the establishment, she did not have people's best interests in mind. Corruption and Clinton were equal matters, and she was presumed to be closely associated with big government. What made Trump associate Clinton with corruption, and make him call her crooked Hillary, was the Clinton Foundation. The foundation had raised many questions about Clinton's ethical standards. This gave Trump one more reason to link her with corruption. There were individuals who felt like they were disenfranchised and did not see news they wanted to see. Feeling ignored by the national press, these individuals turned to conservative media that catered to their need to the tee. Trump blamed the national media for corruption and bias, thus addressing those individuals who felt the same way as he did. In New Hampshire Trump stated:

“We are going to take on the special interests, the lobbyists, and the corrupt corporate media that have rigged the system against everyday Americans. We are going to create millions of new jobs for our people, trillions in new wealth for our communities, and rising wages for every working American. We are going to create a new government that serves you, your family, and your country. We are going to end the Clinton Corruption and restore dignity and honesty to government service. Hillary Clinton is an insider fighting only for herself and for her donors. I am an outsider fighting for you.”³⁰⁴

Despite the fact that Trump was a self-made billionaire, in many ways he was an outsider even amongst the upper class Americans. Throughout his campaign Trump had painted a dark vision for America. Claiming that the country was under siege by foreign and domestic enemies, America was on its last stand of survival.³⁰⁵ “This is a movement like you've never seen before. We're going to make history together. You're going to look back at this election, and say this is by far the most important vote I've ever cast for anyone at any time.”³⁰⁶ The signs, hats, t-shirts,

³⁰³ Torsti, “Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan,”67.

³⁰⁴ September 29, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the New Hampshire Sportsplex in Bedford, New Hampshire

³⁰⁵ Edward Ashbee, *The Trump Revolt* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017),43.

³⁰⁶ October 15, 2016 Remarks at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor, Maine

banners and symbols reaffirmed the sense of unity. The rallies were a symbol of rising tide. Trump evoked moral consciousness, and his audience was unified under the cause. For the white male voters, Trump was the identity politics candidate. Trump drilled to the people that Obama, and Clinton, had failed the American people both domestically and in foreign affairs.

“The guiding rule of the political class in Washington, D.C. is that they are looking out only for themselves, only for themselves with the exception of these few people. I feel guilty as I'm looking, they're staring me in the eyes. So I have to say with these exceptions. They will say anything and do anything and cling to their power and prestige at your expense. I'm running to change and reverse decades of failure and to work with the American people to create generations of success. I'm running... I'm running to restore honesty to our government and safety to our communities. We need safety... I want to go into our poorest communities and work on a national plan of revitalization, the inner cities.”³⁰⁷

His promises made a nod to the neoliberal agenda, by criticizing corporate offshoring and outsourcing, as well as tax inversions. Trump's campaign was about him and his personality. He had put himself at the front and center, emphasizing that an outsider without political experience would be America's best bet to change the country. Trump was a showman, subject of entertainment and identification. He earned a loyal following from his crowd. The explosion of harsh arguments was an expression of repressed opinions about different policies. Trump represented the angry white men, who were underrepresented in the Republican nomination process. His campaign was structured around right-wing populism that was committed to please the people. Trump legitimized his arguments and position through history, he interpreted the past in a manner that allowed his rhetoric to influence politics.³⁰⁸

Trump's speeches had a sense of urgency, claiming that country was in crisis and that they had to act before it was too late. The America First policy would focus on restoring the infrastructure domestically and bringing back on the nations exceptional nature that had been lost with globalist policies. Stability in the whole world would allow the US to concentrate its own affairs and regain its strength that had been slipping away over the decades. A strong claim might be made that Trump's rhetoric undermined America's primary foreign policy path for nearly a century; America's mission of spreading democracy across the globe was reaching its end. Trump would divert the foreign policy initiatives back to the US, and grow the power within. “Every day, I see people of different backgrounds working together for a common good, and we need to bring that spirit to every part of our country – and become One American Nation, united by our shared values and principles as American Citizens. We all have to walk a mile in

³⁰⁷ November 1, 2016 Remarks on Obamacare in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

³⁰⁸ Tilli, “Tiloja, linjauksia, retoriikkaa: historiapolitiikan ulottuvuuksia,”285.

someone else's shoes, see things through their eyes, and then get to work fixing our wounded country.”³⁰⁹

“I am not running to be President of the World. I am running to be President of the United States. I Am For America – and America First. Together, we will rebuild this country beyond our greatest dreams.”³¹⁰It was evident that America First was at the core of Trump’s foreign policy agenda. In the northeast states, the loss of manufacturing work and immigration were the key concerns for middle – and working-class Americans. Trump capitalized on those concerns and painted a grim picture of the nations state. On many occasions, Trump claimed that he empathized with the people who had lost so much. Conveying an image of a strongman, Trump argued to be the one who would end the elitist corruption. Most importantly, Trump was able to convince his audience of the inextricable link with the American past, present and future. Trumps’ campaign was against internationalism and globalism. His political outlook was isolationist, anti-elitist, protectionist and anti-globalist. Moreover, he framed his key arguments around American history, reminding people of the lost greatness that could be achieved once more with his leadership.

³⁰⁹ September 22, 2016 Remarks at the Shale Insight TM Conferencee at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

³¹⁰ September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania

5. *Make America Great Again*, the effects of the campaign

In the early hours of November 9th 2016, Trump stepped on a stage in a modest ballroom at midtown New York. He had just won the presidential elections, and addressed his supporters in a conciliatory manner:

“As I've said from the beginning, ours was not a campaign, but rather an incredible and great movement made up of millions of hard-working men and women who love their country and want a better, brighter future for themselves and for their families. It's a movement comprised of Americans from all races, religions, backgrounds and beliefs who want and expect our government to serve the people, and serve the people it will. Working together, we will begin the urgent task of rebuilding our nation and renewing the American dream... America will no longer settle for anything less than the best. We must reclaim our country's destiny and dream big and bold and daring.”³¹¹

Donald Trump was expected to lose the presidential elections to Hillary Clinton. Trump won the Electoral College with his 304 to Clinton's 227. Despite Hillary's poll lead before the elections, Trump's white voter base was able to carry him to victory. Trump became the first president elect who had neither held a public office nor served in a high government post, nor did he have any significant military experience. Despite all this, Trump defeated all other Republican candidates who had political experience, and then he ultimately defeated Clinton, who had substantial political experience. Trump and Clinton stood on different sides of the political spectrum. Most strikingly, they had contrasting views on America's role in the world. Throughout the campaign, Trump had painted a picture of a nation in steep decline, and he had been the only one who could save the country. Donald Trump's rise to presidency in the end was not a surprise. Trump had managed to capitalize the dissatisfaction expressed during Obama's presidency. The economical, racial, political and ideological trends were laid down decades before Trump decided to run for the president of the United States.

Trump won Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, and not forgetting Iowa and Ohio, giving him the victory in the elections. Trump had broken the Democratic blue-collar firewall. People had voted for candidate that would bring them the change they needed. To many voters Clinton represented the elitist big government and policies that had made things bad for many middle- and working-class people. The public discontent allowed Trump to emerge as the winner of the presidential race. As a candidate, Trump was unorthodox; promises to renegotiate various free-trade agreements, broadcasting his opinions and views on Twitter, stop immigration of Muslims

³¹¹ November 9, 2016 Remarks in New York City Accepting Election as the 45th President of the United States

who he perceived to be radical Islamic terrorists.³¹² His campaign was not short of racism, xenophobia, and misogyny.³¹³ However, Trump's ideas were easy to grasp and his messaging was clear to understand. Social media proved to be an important feature during the campaign, and especially Facebook and Twitter played a central role spreading the falsified news. Social media enabled Trump to facilitate anti-politics style, making statements outside the conventional political norms.³¹⁴ Trump brought right-wing populism to the front and center of the elections. His campaign speeches combined history politics and populist rhetoric, and he was the media spectacle everyone followed.

Trump's supporters trusted his arguments and claims, despite their accuracy. Many Trump voters, following the elections, believed that millions of people had voted Hillary Clinton illegally.³¹⁵ Clinton failed to gain the support of the white working-class, she had failed to understand the anger and resentment this voting base had toward Washington. To many voters Clinton was the quintessential embodiment of political insider, supporter of corporations and banks.³¹⁶ It can be argued that Clinton was detached from the working- and middle-class electorates. Clinton was accused for being dishonest, corrupt, part of the establishment and most importantly a woman. She was also blamed for being overly intellectual and stiff during her campaign.³¹⁷ Be as it may, the underlying fact was nevertheless that Clinton lost the elections and Trump won. The elections demonstrated how divided the country was; culture wars' polarization between the conservatives and the liberals. Trump was seen as an independent man who was not politically correct, and someone who could hold his ground. Trump made globalism look like a curse, it had pushed the country to a breaking point. The previous administrations commitment to globalist foreign policy had, according to Trump, led to uncontrollable illegal immigration, crumbling infrastructure and bad trade deals that had caused job loss in America. Thus. Trump blamed others for weakening American sovereignty and its status as an exceptional nation.

Ironically, even though many did not believe in Trump's victory, he dominated the media coverage during the presidential elections. His tweets and outrageous statements guaranteed for him to be the talk of the town. Instead of focusing on the politicians' policy proposals, the

³¹² Campbell, *American Discontent*, 1.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ashbee, *The Trump Revolt*, 37.

³¹⁵ Campbell, *American Discontent*, 6.

³¹⁶ Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes *Shattered: inside Hillary Clinton's doomed campaign* (New York: Broadway Books, 2017), 301.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 312.

mainstream media was dominated by sensational news. Trump benefitted tremendously from the conservative media infrastructure that was designed to channel energy for ideological purposes. Trump supporters had difficulties to trust mainstream media outlets and depending on the network media portrayed either positive or negative immigration narrative. Thus, media framed immigration in certain way, in order to fit the story, they want to convey. Because Trump's statements were controversial and provoking, he got a substantially more media coverage than his opponents. By opting to cover Trump and his rallies, his campaign reached a wider audience who were given the possibility connected with the issues that Trump was preaching. Trump's focus was less on the actual issues than on portraying a certain image. A greater focus is placed on fear and threats. Trump reactivated the backlash politics that reflected America's racial and cultural divide.

Moderation and like-mindedness are something that today's Republicans are missing and something that they desperately need. Conservatism operates from the older white middle- and upper-class American base, who see any imposition by the government as demolition of capitalism. It cannot be denied that the nation is deeply divided, even more so with the election of President Trump. The Christian Right, alt-right, paleoconservatives and the Tea Party, embraced his campaign. Moreover, Trump's campaign slogans, "Make America Great Again", "Make America Safe Again", "Make America Strong Again", "America First" and "Take Back Our Country", were understood in all the sections of the conservative movement. Trump understood the implications that the usage of history had for the present, and he took a full advantage of it. Trump and his followers echoed a message derived from the old rhetoric that disregarded 'the rule of law and the separation of powers, had deep antagonism toward other candidates and independent journalism.'³¹⁸ They wanted a country that believes, looks, thinks, talks, eats and drinks the same. They clearly want to go back to a country without diversity; a past that never existed except in the reactionary images of the imagined past.³¹⁹ Those who were anxious about immigration and the growing population of Latinos favored the Republican Party. It can be argued that who white Americans are politically at the core, is shaped by their attitudes towards immigration.³²⁰

Immigration is central factor helping to determine how they vote, a crucial determinant of their partisanship, and sharply influences their policy preferences on everything from criminal justice

³¹⁸ Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism*, 244.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 245.

³²⁰ Abrajano, and Hajnal, *White Backlash*, 15.

to education.³²¹ With this in mind, Trumps moral failings were overlooked by many of the conservatives; the decision to vote for him was a pragmatic one. It can be argued that despite his shortcomings, Trumps' campaign understood the importance of the Christian base. He run a parallel, systematic and well organized, campaign in the churches. In his campaign speeches he connected with the Christian base; he voiced their disconcerted and spoke against the arrogant liberals. However, considering that the majority of Trumps support base is white Christian middle-class, this leaves out the young Latin, Asian and African-Americans. The polarization of liberal versus conservative is not going anywhere because of the deeply held beliefs and economic grievances. At the same time, 'a conservatism defined by the events and arguments of over fifty years ago is losing a battle for the loyalty of the young.'³²²When examining the American identity it must be noted that American nationality had to be constructed from different ethnicities. This factor has made the absorbing of immigrants more easier than in most countries. Identity was not a given fact, '[t]he American nation had to be invented or contrived.'³²³

The mistrust against the administration, and the extensive media coverage of scandals and government corruption, fluctuates according to the support base; democrats display far more mistrust against the Trump administration than his own party. The bickering amongst the two parties has grown, and deadlock situations are commodity rather than exception. The economic anxiety, ideological differences, and cynicism towards mainstream media have affected the presidency so far, and it will be interesting to see how Trump's term will end, or whether it will continue to second term. Rise of public cynicism towards the government and presidency, was reflected in Trump's chosen path for foreign policy. Unlike the presidents before him, Trump diverged from the narrative of interventionist policy led by example. He wanted to restore the power that had been lost, make the country great again, and the only way to achieve this was to extricate America from its global commitments, and lead by example instead. Moreover, exceptionalism for Trump meant superior materialism, not idealism or democratic institutions. Trump's populism included two key elements; notion of people-centrism and anti-elitism. His populist appeal was spread across the ideological and partisan spectrum. Trump's language incorporated populist rhetoric that expressed emotions, especially anger. Trump's rise was a multi-causal occurrence.

³²¹ Ibid., 206.

³²² Dionne Jr, *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 17.

³²³ Wood, *The Idea of America*, 321.

Trump wanted people to see him as Reagan's heir, therefore his campaign followed Reagan's footsteps on many aspects. Trump concentrated on broad ideas and themes, repeating his arguments over and over again so that his audience was familiar with his ideas. The president is the most identifiable figure in American politics, and is the focal point of evaluations. When public trust is lacking and presidency only enjoys the support of a minority, governing runs into obstacles. It cannot be denied that the 2016 presidential elections were not a turning point in American political history. The president's own distrust towards federal government and his goals to dismantle it raises concern and alarm. The election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States demonstrated that his campaign was able to use the public's distrustful mood to his benefit, and not only that he was able to shape it, employ it and frame it accordingly. Distrust towards politicians and the federal government proved to be a useful political resource for his campaign. The political culture of discontent and distrust was something that the conservatives could use and develop during the elections.

The Christian Right has identified itself with the GOP from the early postwar era up until today. They believe that the nation's Christian identity can be restored through politics, and the Trump administration has given them more hope than any other administration before. The toughening of abortion laws in the Southern states reflects the changing political mood. However, whilst the Southern states head toward more conservative policies the Northern and Western states head in the opposite direction. During the last decades periodical changes have supported the increase in populist and xenophobic parties; many have experienced decline in their income, lost their job, and seen an influx of refugees and immigrants. Most importantly, the decline of existential security explains the cultural backlash and strong support for populist movements.³²⁴ Trump's promises to 'Make America Great Again', meant tax cut for the rich, decreasing medical coverage and deregulating the financial sector. These policies will certainly make America great for those who are wealthy enough to avoid paying income tax.³²⁵ Lower-income voters supported the economic policies that benefitted the rich. However, their vote was more than just economy. It was also about choosing a personality and the context it came with. With these presidential elections' generalizations flew out of the window. The inextricable tie between religion and politics is also important to bear in mind. Even though religion is not the main component in voters' decision it still affects their political orientation and political behavior. Why did people vote for Trump? It can be argued that voters were driven by

³²⁴ Ronald F. Inglehart, *Cultural Evolution, People's Motivations Are Changing, and Reshaping the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 174.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 211.

identification and resentment; many were unhappy and felt that the establishment was corrupted to the core. Trump provided emotional support by voicing his opinions out loud and expressing racist and xenophobic thoughts; many voters identified with him. Trump's rhetoric was his interpretation of the past.

6. Conclusions

The presidential elections of 2016 showed the reality of divided United States, and the campaign was one of the most negative presidential campaigns in modern American history. It was a reflection of frustrations come to reality. The polarized and negative politics contributed to the divisive attitudes that people were expressing during the campaign. The impressions of the Democratic and Republican Parties epitomized in the presidential nominee candidates. The liberal-conservative ideology correlated with party identification. Donald Trump's victory in the presidential elections of 2016 was decades in the making. Trump's victory was guaranteed by the socially conservative and economically nationalist Midwestern voters. He overcame the strong opposition from the Republican Party establishment and secured the Republican nomination. Trump exploited the fears and hatred expressed of the Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton. His campaign strategy had managed to tap into the shifting voting patterns. Most importantly, Trump's victory was rooted in the political and cultural changes that had begun decades earlier. Thus, Trump was the culmination of long-term developments, a reflection of divided party politics in America.

The thesis analyzed Donald Trump's campaign speeches within the framework of history politics and looked the populist rhetoric and themes of the campaign. The main aim of the thesis was to examine how, and to what extent, Trump used history politics in his campaign speeches. The primary sources were analyzed according to the set research questions, relying on source-based analysis that reflected the findings to the theoretical framework. Based on the findings, conclusions can be drawn on the usage of history politics in campaign speeches. The conservative politicians have used rhetoric to gain the support of their audiences. Their desire to reshape American politics made them give grand promises to their base, something that they simply could not keep. Thus, many conservative voters were disappointed by their politicians, but then came Trump, an outsider who spoke his mind and defended the people against the establishment. Trump mobilized mass opinion that cherished populist anti-elitist politics. In the end, Trump's speeches were well thought out and carried a consistent message, regardless of where the speech was being held.

Chapters three and four presented Trump's speeches in different states, and based on the examination it can be stated that Trump's speeches intertwined historical narratives with populist rhetoric. The rhetorical statements were the driving force in the speeches, creating a narrative that linked to the past. America's political history was utilized in Trump's campaign

to the fullest. His speeches consisted of key words, statements and rhetoric that created a connection to the past. The unmistakable nudges to the past helped Trump to strengthen his message and vision for America. Trump was able to manipulate the memory of the past and present himself as someone who would steer the country to the right path. Trump repeated his message and slogans over and over again, to the point where people were familiar with his straightforward arguments. He channeled the presidents of the past, bringing history to present day politics. Trump promised to turn back time when white Americans held a dominant position in the society. The calls for deporting undocumented immigrants, proposals to build a wall along the Mexican border and making Mexico pay for it, as well as banning Muslim immigration resonated with the Republican voters. His explicit statements evoked racial resentment, clearer than Nixon's and Reagans. In his speeches, Trump made claims that were exaggerated, false and embellished. The socially constructed narratives that Trump embraced in his campaign were the outcome of numerous voices. The success of Donald Trump was rooted in the Republican Party's failure. Instead of projecting the American vision to the world, the country would turn inwards and put its own needs before anything else. In an international setting, America would be driven by its own interests and goals, giving up its interventionist role. Guided by the rhetoric of the past, Trump wanted the US to lead with its America First policy.

In midwestern states Trump placed a heavy emphasis of being an outsider, someone not part of the establishment. Hence, he, in a true populist manner, sided with the people, conveying an image of a champion who would restore the sovereignty of the nation. In order to establish the narrative, Trump used history in his rhetoric; echoing Reagan's economic policies, Trump promised to rebuild and protect American economy. America First statements were conscious interpretations of the past nativist foreign policies, that invoked the isolationist view on America's economy. Trump's statements fitted Torsti's definition of history politics that had foreign policy motivation, in which history was used to legitimize a new vision for the country.³²⁶ In western states the speeches focused border security and immigration, Trump addressed the anger people were feeling. There were reasons for the anger and frustration, and Trump, in a populist manner, fed those emotions and claimed to represent the law and order. The speeches in southern states Trump promised that the forgotten men and women would have their voices heard again. Most importantly, his message reflected Nixon's southern strategy, as well as Reagan's coded racial appeals. In northeastern states Trump's core message emphasized

³²⁶ Torsti, "Historiapolitiikkaa tutkimaan," 67.

American exceptionalism and how important nation's sovereignty was. The speeches portrayed a vision of a nation in a need for change. His speeches influenced people through rhetoric that was framed within history politics. Trump benefitted from decades of conservative media criticism. What started as a unprecedented campaign turned into a unprecedented presidency. 'Trump's presidency will continue to be punctuated by scandals, reckless behavior, high staff turnover, volatile communication, and a dangerous tolerance for unethical behavior.'³²⁷The United States is racially diverse, but is becoming more and more racially divided, and this factor, more than anything, reflects to the presidential elections and party politics.

The second, third and fourth research questions connected the themes and rhetoric of the campaign to the context of history politics. Through those questions the speeches were linked to the outcome of history politics, and allowed a more profound examination of the campaign as a whole. It was evident that the driving force of Trump's campaign were the memorable slogans that had a connection to America's political past. Trump's optimistic slogans promised to bring back manufacturing work, secure borders, put conservative judges on the Supreme Court and most importantly he promised to fight for the people. His speeches navigated within different fractions of conservatism and appealed to the voters by using code words that they understood very well. Thus, Trump chose those historical narratives that fitted his campaign, and fused it with his populist rhetoric for a stronger connection with the voters. Trump offered simple solutions to people who wanted their voices to be heard, and his economic policies promised a bright future for both the working class as well as the rich. Most importantly, Trump promised to fight for the people and bring change that he, and the conservatives, perceived was necessary. It is important to bear mind that Trump did not create the moment or the anger, the xenophobia, the entertainment politics, the backlash against globalism; he was its pure manifestation absolute logical end point of American lives. magnification the end point and the beneficiary of the situation. He poured fuel to the flames of division, his brand of politics and American anger became one and the same He seized the opportunity of American division. Media outlets believed that Trump won because he spoke what people were thinking of, and that his voters were racist, angry and scared. However, this is only partly true, many of his voters supported his because they wanted to stand up for their beliefs and values.

³²⁷ Alessandro Nai, Ferran Martínez I Coma, and Jürgen Maier, "Donald Trump, Populism, and the Age of Extremes: Comparing the Personality Traits and Campaigning Styles of Trump and Other Leaders Worldwide," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol.49, No.3, September 2019, (609-643),638, <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.libproxy.helsinki.fi/doi/epdf/10.1111/psq.12511>

The political and cultural landscape in America is changing, and there are those who accept the change and those who reject the diversity. The country is more divided than ever, and the upcoming presidential elections will decide which way the country will head. Republicans are pulling the nation to the right whereas the Democrats are leading toward the left; there is no moderation in between them. The Republican Party represents a uniformly ideological party, the unprecedented transformation of a major party will undoubtedly change the political system in America. But to what extent remains to be seen. Conservatives have been winning elections, but on policy issues the moderates have proven to be more effective. After Obama's victory, the Republican politicians felt the pressure from their base to push the Party even further to the Right. With Trump's victory the conservatives within the GOP had gained the upper hand, turning a new leaf in the Party's history book. The conservative movement is aging, and nation is becoming increasingly non-white. There is no doubt that the demographic changes would not have an affect on the American politics. The declining white population is biting time by hiding behind history, but the white backlash will continue to be successful until the non-white population outnumbers them. Party identification in America is clearly rational as well as responsive. The Republican party has become more uncompromising and ideologically homogenous. The outlook of the Party has become very conservative, pushing and supporting extreme policy agendas.

The thesis has analyzed how Trump used history politics in his campaign speeches and has demonstrated that Trump tried to create strong link to the past, in order to benefit his campaign. The rhetorical slogans and statements were borrowed from the past presidents, Trump created a new political narrative that fitted his goals. Trump's speeches demonstrated that American politics have become more confrontational, uncompromising and polarized. His campaign reproduced the ideas and frames of Nixon's and Reagan's rhetoric, tiding it to a long conservative tradition. His audience perceived his as the champion of the people. Today's American politics reflects the cultural, racial, and economic divisions. These divisions are reinforced by party leaders and supporters. America's ideological divide is making it hard to balance the nation's needs with the representation of all its people. The Trump presidency is about division, and extracting them to his own goals, there is no reward in unity, only in division and fighting. Overall, Trump's victory in the presidential elections has sparked many research projects, and considering that the 2020 presidential elections are held in November, there will be many more studies coming in the years that follow.

Appendix

The division of states is done according to the census bureau's division of states, into four different regions

https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf (accessed 04.03.2019)

Midwestern states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Ohio, Wisconsin

Southern states: Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

Western states: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

Northeast states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

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Written, from March 21, 2016 to November 7, 2016

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April 27, 2016 Remarks on Foreign Policy Washington, DC

June 7, 2016 Remarks after Winning Primaries in Montana, South Dakota, New Mexico, New Jersey and California

June 13, 2016 Remarks at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire

June 22, 2016 Remarks at Trump SoHo in New York City

July 11, 2016 Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia

July 16, 2016 Remarks Introducing Governor Mike Pence as the 2016 Republican Vice Presidential Nominee in New York City

July 21, 2016 Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio

August 5, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin

August 8, 2016 Remarks to the Detroit Economic Club

August 9, 2016, Remarks at a Rally at the University of North Carolina in Wilmington

August 12, 2016 Remarks at Erie Insurance Arena in Erie, Pennsylvania

August 15, 2016 Remarks at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio

August 16, 2016 Remarks at the Washington Country Fair Park in West Bend, Wisconsin

August 18, 2016 Remarks at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina

August 19, 2016 Remarks at the Summit Sports and Ice Complex in Dimondale, Michigan

August 23, 2016 Remarks at Luedecke Arena in Austin, Texas

August 24, 2016 Remarks at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson, Mississippi

August 30, 2016 Remarks at the XFinity Arena in Everett Washington

August 31, 2016 Remarks on Immigration at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona

September 1, 2016 Remarks to the American Legion in Cincinnati, Ohio

September 1, 2016 Remarks at the Roberts Centre in Wilmington, Ohio

September 3, 2016 Remarks at Great Faith International Ministries in Detroit, Michigan

September 6, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the Greenville Convention Center in Greenville, North Carolina

September 7, 2016 Remarks at the Union League of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

September 8, 2016 Remarks at the Cleveland Arts and Social Sciences Academy in Cleveland, Ohio

September 9, 2016 Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C

September 9, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the Pesacola Bay Center, Florida

September 12, 2016 Remarks at the US Cellular Center in Asheville, North Carolina

September 12, 2016 Address to the National Guard Association of the United States 138th

General Conference & Exhibition at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland

September 13, 2016 Remarks at Aston Community Center in Aston, Pennsylvania

September 13, 2016 Remarks at Seven Flags Event Center in Des Moines, Iowa

September 14, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Canton Memorial Civic Center in Canton, Ohio

September 15, 2016 Remarks to the Economic Club of New York at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City

September 16, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the James L. Knight Center in Miami, Florida
September 17, 2016 Remarks at the Remembrance Project Luncheon at the Omni Houston Hotel at Westside in Houston, Texas
September 20, 2016 Remarks at High Point University in High Point, North Carolina
September 22, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Sun Center Studios in Chester Township, Pennsylvania
September 22, 2016 Remarks at the Shale Insight TM Conference at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
September 24, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Berglund Center in Roanoke, Virginia
September 28, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the Mid-American Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa
September 28, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at Waukesha County Expo Center in Waukesha, Wisconsin
September 29, 2016 Remarks at a Rally at the New Hampshire Sportsplex in Bedford, New Hampshire
September 30, 2016 Remarks at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan
October 3, 2016 Remarks at the Pueblo Convention Center in Pueblo, Colorado
October 3, 2016 Remarks at the Budweiser Events Center in Loveland, Colorado
October 4, 2016 Remarks at Prescott Valley Event Center in Prescott Valley, Arizona
October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada
October 5, 2016 Remarks at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno, Nevada
October 11, 2016 Excerpts of Remarks at Aaron Bessant Park in Panama City, Florida
October 12, 2016 Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala, Florida
October 13, 2016 Remarks at the Renaissance Hotel in Columbus, Ohio
October 13, 2016 Remarks at the South Florida Fair Expo Center in West Palm Beach, Florida
October 15, 2016 Remarks at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor, Maine
October 15, 2016 Remarks at Toyota of Portsmouth in Portsmouth, New Hampshire
October 17, 2016 Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Greenbay, Wisconsin
October 18, 2016 Remarks at the Norris-Penrose Event Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado
October 20, 2016 Remarks at the Delaware County Fairgrounds in Delaware, Ohio
October 21, 2016 Remarks at the WNC Agricultural Center's Davis Event Center in Fletcher, North Carolina
October 21, 2016 Remarks at the Newtown Athletic Club Sports Training Center in Newtown, Pennsylvania
October 22, 2016 Remarks on Proposals for the First 100 Days in Office at the Eisenhower Complex in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
October 23, 2016 Remarks at the Collier County Fairgrounds in Naples, Florida
October 26, 2016 Remarks at McGlohon Theatre at Spring Square in Charlotte, North Carolina
October 27, 2016 Remarks at the Champions Center Expo in Springfield, Ohio
October 28, 2016 Remarks at Radisson Armory in Manchester, New Hampshire
October 29, 2016 Remarks at the Jeffco Fairgrounds Event Center in Golden, Colorado
October 29, 2016 Remarks at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona
October 31, 2016 Remarks at Macomb Community College South Campus in Warren, Michigan
November 1, 2016 Remarks on Obamacare in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
November 2, 2016 Remarks at the Central Florida Fairgrounds in Orlando, Florida
November 2, 2016 Remarks at the Bayfront Park Amphitheatre in Miami, Florida
November 7, 2016 Remarks at J.S Dorton Arena in Raleigh, North Carolina
November 9, 2016 Remarks in New York City Accepting Election as the 45th President of the United States
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