

# American Presidential Election 2016 and the Post-Election Trends in American Politics

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The American presidential election 2016 marks a new round of major adjustments of American politics. Because the then US president Obama was unable to run for re-election due to the limit on presidential terms, the election was bound to elect a new president for the US presidency. In the meanwhile, 34 senators, all of the 435 members of the House of Representatives as well as six non-voting members of the House of Representatives would be re-elected; governors of 12 states, the head of government of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as well as the governments of several cities were faced with re-elections. Based on the election results, the Republican Party won a landslide victory: in spite of the decline in the number of seats held by the Republican

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Party in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, it continues to have majority hold over the Senate and the House of Representatives; the number of Republican governors has also risen from 31 prior to the election to 33 now; more importantly, the 70-year old Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump made his way to the White House by beating the Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton with 306 to 232 Electoral College votes surprisingly.<sup>1</sup>

The battle between two candidates who were widely seen as most unpopular for the White House ended up with the so-called “anti-establishment” beating the “establishment” candidate, which makes new and higher requirements for observing and studying the status quo and prospects of American politics. What kind of election is this? Why could Trump and the Republican Party win? What political situation will Trump be faced with after taking office? What does the American presidential election 2016 mean for American politics? In this section, the author attempts to make a preliminary study on relevant issues based on limited information obtained after the election.

## I. THE ENVIRONMENT AND TREND OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2016

The established and hard-to-change environment restricts and drives the strategy development of all participants of the presidential election to a certain extent.<sup>2</sup> The environment or particular trend shapes the campaign issues and even determines the ultimate direction of the election politics. As far as the 2016 election is concerned, the open positioning of the election itself, the popular grievances of American people, especially the whites, the anti-establishment trend against elite politics as well as the personalized effects exerted by the social media have jointly played a subtle role in setting the tone for the presidential campaign and sketching the electoral trajectory.

**Firstly, the open election determines the basic features of the election.** So-called open election means the presidential election in which the election is fully open to all candidates of both parties

because the incumbent president is unable to or unwilling to seek re-election and the vice-president also does not participate in the election. This type of election adds to the competitiveness and uncertainty of the presidential election. Since both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party participated in the presidential election simultaneously for the first time in 1856, there have been 12 open elections, including two in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (one in 2008, the other in 2016). In the meanwhile, the US has gone through the “political pendulum” process of three re-elected presidents and two rotations of political parties during the past 24 years, highlighting that the America’s president politics and its policy agenda have stepped into the historical stage of low level of continuity and high level of dynamics.

On the one hand, the Democratic Party is faced with the public’s desire for changes. The last time that a political party continued to have a hold over the White House was 1928, when Herbert Hoover took over the Republican Calvin Coolidge in the backdrop of the economic prosperity of the US and the split of the Democratic Party.<sup>3</sup> 88 years later, the America’s economy under the rule of the Democratic Party failed to win the satisfaction of the people and the Democratic Party was faced with significant pressure from the people if they wanted to continue to have a hold over the White House; on the other hand, the Republican Party was faced with the thorny issue of internal integration. In the Republican primary of historical size that accommodated 17 mainstream candidates, the Republican Party was divided and the fierce competition among candidates such as Jeb Bush, John Kasich and Chris Christie resulted in failure to integrate the “establishment” forces, which, in the end, provided Trump with the opportunity to rise suddenly<sup>4</sup>

**Secondly, the grievances of the white lower middle class shaped the public opinion environment of the election.** The 2016 election is riddled with the worry, discontent, anger and even fear accumulated by American people over economy & employment, social issues and ethnic relationships as well as international status and security over time. The grievance that calls for changes occurs mainly against the background of globalization and is manifested as two core contradictions, namely hollowing-out of the real

economy of America due to capital outflow as well as diversity in the domestic demographic structure of the US due to immigration.

Since the outbreak of the 2008 financial crisis, the slow recovery of the US economy has made the people feel “indifferent” and “helpless”,<sup>5</sup> To improve the economy and employment has been the top concern of American people.<sup>6</sup> On the one hand, the increase in employment is driven more by the low end service sectors rather than the real economy. According to statistics, 80.1% of the job opportunities were provided by the service sector in 2014 while the industrial real sectors and agriculture created 15.1% and 1.5% job opportunities, respectively.<sup>7</sup> The level, quality and stability of employment of American laborers are far from being ideal. To make it worse, due to strong substitutability and mobility as a result of low level of professionalism, the blue-collar low middle class whites can easily be replaced by the lower cost laborers such as the new immigrants and the minorities and go out of employment again; on the other hand, there has been an unprecedented tendency of shrinkage in the size of American middle class. According to the statistics of early 2015, the proportion of the middle class to the total population has decreased from 61% in the 1970s to the historical low of 49.89%.<sup>8</sup> Along with this, the wealth of the society continues to flow to the high income class at a fast pace so that the middle class and the low income class that constitute the bulk of the people have a strong “sense of being deprived”.

In addition to setbacks in economy and employment, the whites are also faced with the identity crisis resulting from diversity in the demographic structure. On the one hand, according to conservative estimates, due to the surge of the new immigrants and the high birth rate of the minority ethnics, the US is likely to become a country “without the majority ethnic” in 50 years.<sup>9</sup> The question of “who are we” raised by Samuel Huntington lingers in the mind of all American people, constituting one of the sources of continuous anxiety of the whites whose dominance is endangered, as a result of which the racial and ethnic conflicts left behind by the history began to surface again. On the other hand, the far from-being-satisfactory improvement of economy and employment, the rise of extreme Islamism in the Middle East, the chronic disease of gun

proliferation in America combined to throw the ethnic conflicts into a malicious cycle. Low level employment exacerbated the competition for survival between the blue collar lower middle class and the minorities and new immigrants, worsening the economic situation and social status of the minorities and new immigrants; and, these minorities and new immigrants who cannot realize their so-called American Dream are likely to be driven by the Islamic extremist thoughts to commit many malignant incidents amid poor gun control, therefore exacerbating the hostility between the whites and the minorities and new immigrants. The 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, 2015 San Bernardino shooting, 2016 Orlando nightclub shooting and similar incidents were committed by minorities and new immigrants who failed to realize their American Dream. According to survey results, approximately 40% of Americans agree to deport the undocumented immigrants; following the worsening of the situation in Syria, more than half of American people oppose accepting the Syrian refugees into the country.<sup>10</sup>

The public grievance in the 2016 presidential election can be seen as the accumulation and continuation of the public's desire for changes since 2008. Although Obama tried to honor the promises made during the presidential campaign during his 8 years in office, he failed to win the satisfaction of many people. The minority background of Obama himself as well as the policy tendency of the Democratic Party toward the minorities and new immigrants on the contrary exacerbated the discontent and anger in the mind of the white lower middle class.

**Thirdly, the “anti-establishment” tendency constituted the political trend of the 2016 election.** So-called “anti-establishment” tendency means the antipathy toward and distrust in the political elites with professional experience, policy accumulation and social resources and the desire for outsiders not connected with the political elites to change the political rules and policy agenda. Historically, the anti-intellectualism tradition of America is manifested as the “anti-establishment” tendency in politics. However, in reality, according to the polls since 2008, at least 70% of American people are unhappy with the development direction of the State and show no trust in the political elites at all.<sup>11</sup>

Since the outbreak of the financial crisis, the anti-establishment tendency is in particular evident in the Republican Party. The Tea Party that emerged in 2009 and commenced political operations gradually in 2010 strongly boycotted the Washington elites and sent numerous anti-establishment political figures to the elected posts such as congressman rapidly. The most representative incident is that the then House of Representatives majority (Republican) leader Eric Cantor was defeated by an outsider supported by the Tea Party forces in the primary election of the 2014 mid-term election, making him the first incumbent that lost the primary election since the majority leader position was created in 1899.<sup>12</sup> In the Republican primary of the 2016 presidential election, in addition to Trump, several other anti-establishment candidates that had no political experience at all including neurosurgeon Ben Carson, businesswoman Carly Fiorina participated in the primary. Like the Republican Party, the anti-establishment tendency is also evident during the entire process of intra-party competition of the Democratic Party. During the primary election, the establishment Hillary Clinton was strongly challenged by the anti-establishment Bernie Sanders, which is sufficient to tell that the voices against the traditional political elites inside the Democratic Party are rising.

**And finally, the personalized mobilization of the social media changed the ecology of the election campaign.** The change of the mass media is both the product of socioeconomic development, and the key to understand American political process.<sup>13</sup> If we say that Howard Dean's primary election signified that America's campaign politics has stepped into the Internet era, the presidential election 2016 is no doubt an election featuring full intervention of the social media for the first time. According to the results of a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 35% of the respondents aged 18 to 29 see the social media as the most important source of election information, followed by news websites and mobile app (18%); however, although 21% of the respondents aged 30 to 49 consider TV as the most important source of election information, the proportion of people who turned to news websites and social media for election information reached 19% and 15% respectively and the total number of respondents who see the social media as the

most important source of election information exceeds the number of respondents who see the traditional media as the most important source of election information.<sup>14</sup>

Presently, the extent to which the extensive use of the Internet, especially the social media during the campaign, affects political participation is still unknown<sup>15</sup>; however, the Internet and social media have indeed altered the way the American campaign politics operates. Firstly, research shows that instead of providing the voters with extensive public information, the Internet causes the voters to focus on the information of the candidates they support and connect with those with the same tendency only, therefore reinforcing and even radicalizing the political tendency of the voters.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, the traditional media were either controlled by the political elites in setting the agenda or riddled with negative messages of the political figures, triggering the antipathy of the public gradually.<sup>17</sup> As a result, the new media such as the SNS replaced the traditional media and even provided the anti-establishment political figures not supported by the mainstream media with the main channel for communication and mobilization. According to the remarks of another Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders after the election, his Twitter and Facebook accounts attracted three million and five million followers respectively during the campaign, “we wrote books for progressive politics by digging into the potential of the social media”.<sup>18</sup> Thirdly, the Internet and social media reshaped the fundraising model of the campaign and

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Among the four factors that determined the outcome of the 2016 presidential election, the open election structure is a unique factor.

the social media realized donations in opposite direction to mobilization by establishing bi-directional interaction.<sup>19</sup> Sanders received eight million counts of donations from 2.5 million donators over the Internet during the campaign,<sup>20</sup> and 59% of the donations made by individuals worth USD228 million are small sum donations, to which the Internet and social media contributed a lot.<sup>21</sup>

It should be noted that among the above four factors that combined to determine

the outcome of the 2016 presidential election, only the influence of the open election structure is limited to this election while the other three factors, namely the popular grievance, the anti-establishment tendency as well as the intervention of the social media in politics are continuing to determine the future development path and the pattern of American politics.

## II. ANALYSIS ON THE OUTCOME OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2016

The American presidential election 2016 ended up with victories of the Republican Party at different levels in the White House, Congress and the states. In comparison, the outcome that the Republican Party continues to have majority hold over the Senate and the House of Representatives was widely anticipated prior to the election: the majority of 59 seats held by the Republican Party in the House of Representatives of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress is the largest advantage held by the Republican Party since the 71<sup>st</sup> Congress in 1929, and it is a bit harder to overturn in Congressional election during the election year; the key seats held by the Republican Party in Senate election such as Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, North Carolina, New Hampshire and Illinois were occupied by incumbents who sought re-election and the overall likelihood of winning is slightly higher. Unlike the relative stability of the campaign situation in the Senate and the House of Representative, the outcome of the presidential election fell short of the expectation of most people: not only did the Democratic presidential candidate Hillary lost the key swing states such as Florida, Ohio and Iowa, but also was she defeated narrowly by the Republican presidential candidate Trump in the so-called rust belt states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin where the campaign situation was projected to be stable previously<sup>22</sup>. In spite of a lead of nearly 2.57 million votes over Trump by 48.2%:46.3%, Hillary Clinton still lost the election 232 to 306 in the Electoral College, which marks the fifth time that the number of the general votes deviates from the number of electoral votes in American history.<sup>23</sup> The historical cycle of American politics, Trump's accurate positioning of the campaign



as well as the inherent shortcomings of Hillary Clinton as the presidential candidate may provide some preliminary perspectives for interpreting such an unexpected election outcome.

**Firstly, the historical cycle of American politics is switching to the Republican Party.** Among the discussions about the historical cycles of America, the research done by American historians Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr is mostly widely spread. Based on the argument of Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. that the conservatism and liberalism dominate American politics in turns and one rotation occurs at an interval of 11.5 years on average, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. put forward the historical cycle theory that the domestic policies of the American federal government sways between public purpose and private interest and each backswing takes about 25 to 30 years.<sup>24</sup> Generally speaking, the “public purpose” oriented elections favor the liberal positions more, for instance, Theodore Roosevelt in 1901, Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s and the Kennedy administration in the 1960s; in contrast, the “private interest” dominated elections usher in governments shrouded by conservatism, for instance, the Harding-Coolidge-Hoover administrations in the 1920s and the 1930s and the Regan administration in the 1980s.<sup>25</sup> Based on the theory of Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr, the 52 presidential elections since the founding of the United States are divided into 20 “public purpose” dominated elections and 32 “private interest” dominated elections and at least since 1856, the “public purpose” or “private interest” orientation corresponds directly to the Democratic Party or Republican Party roughly.<sup>26</sup>

The present historical cycle of America is largely “public purpose” oriented and began with the Clinton administration elected in 1992. Although George W. Bush, the president who ran the White House between 2001 and 2008, is a Republican, certain practices adopted by him toward domestic policy issues still demonstrated the “public purpose” orientation, which is manifested in what he called “compassionate conservatism” social policies, for instance, the inclusion of certain prescription drugs into the coverage of medical insurance as well as No Child Left Behind education reform, etc. What is worth noting is that along

with the implementation of the “public purpose” oriented liberal policies such as ObamaCare, taxation over the rich and immigration reform by the Obama administration since 2009, a series of political waves that call for “private interest” have also emerged one after another, for instance, the calls for limited government, Tea Party movement against political elites as well as the public resentment of the white lower middle class that was fully demonstrated during the presidential election 2016. In other words, the presidential election 2016 or presidential election 2020 comes at the cyclic adjustment point when the political pendulum sways from “public purpose” back to “private interest”, namely from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party and the campaign success of Trump and the Republican Party followed this cyclic trend successfully.

To be specific, the presidential election 2016 preliminarily showed certain signs of integration between party realignment and sectionalism resulting from the swing of the historical cycle. From the perspective of “party realignment”, although it is still unknown whether the presidential election 2016 is one critical election that leads to major changes in the basic supporters of the two parties, the election result indicates that Trump won greater support from the lower middle class of the Republican, especially the blue collars. According to the exit poll data at the polling stations, in comparison with the 2012 presidential election, the groups of voters of simultaneous change in which the Republican Party saw the greatest increase and the Democratic Party saw the greatest decrease include “voters with middle school diploma or below” (16% increase for the Republican Party and 19% decrease for the Democratic Party), “people with annual family income of less than USD30,000” (6% increase for the Republican Party and 10% decrease for the Democratic Party), as well as unmarried males” (5% increase for the Republican Party and 10% decrease for the Democratic Party). The change of these groups directly points to the tendency of the blue collar lower middle class with little education to support Trump rather than Hillary Clinton during the presidential election 2016.<sup>27</sup> From the perspective of “regional integration”, the states that determined the final outcome of the election: Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan are located in the

rust belt where the blue collar lower middle class are concentrated and the process of the rust belt switching from being the basic supporters of the Democratic Party to being the basic supporters of the Republican Party has begun since the outbreak of the financial crisis. In comparison with the 2008 presidential election, Obama not only lost Indiana in the rust belt, but also registered the largest shrinkage of victory margin in the three rust belt states: Wisconsin (49%), Pennsylvania (52%) and Michigan (57%) in addition to the swing states such as Florida (31%) and Nevada (53%).<sup>28</sup> In the 2016 presidential election, Hillary simply continued the trend of the Democratic Party losing the advantage in the rust belt region during the term of Obama and the regional integration of the rust belt directly put the Republican presidential candidate Trump into the White House.

**Secondly, Trump implemented a target campaign that rode the trend of the presidential election 2016.** Objectively speaking, the open election structure, the popular grievance for changes, the anti-establishment tendency and mobilization of the social media in the presidential election 2016 disfavored the traditional political elites, but assisted Trump in the campaign; and, Trump realized accurate mobilization and campaign by making full use of the particular environment and trends of the election.

Firstly, Trump effectively appeased the resentment represented by the white lower middle class. At the beginning of his 2015 book titled *Crippled America: How to Make America Great Again* published for the campaign, Trump explained that the reason he chose the angry portrait for the cover is that American people now also have the same worry, anxiety, anger and even fear.<sup>29</sup> In the face of the grievance sentiment caused by the shock of globalization, unlike Sanders' "populism" proposal, Trump emphasized "America First" and advocated the "nativism" solution from the beginning to the end. To be specific, Trump defined all of the problems facing the USA now as "non-American" or "non-native". It is not the fault of the whites that hold a dominant position, but the faults of the "others" from outside world or the immigrants. So, it is essential to block the negative impact or intervention of these "non-native" factors. Among the many policy agenda, Trump appeared to be

very radical on the trade and immigration issues, repeatedly pledged to realize backflow of the manufacturing sector by forcing through such policies as “opposing free trade” and “imposing heavy taxes on relevant countries”; build walls along the America-Mexico border and impose comprehensive ban on Muslims and deport undocumented immigrants to defend the rights and interests of the whites. In foreign policies, Trump does not support America to maintain alliance with other countries, thinking that the focus shall be put on the “real threats” to the US.<sup>30</sup>

The campaign practice of Trump to direct the grievance sentiment toward the “non-native factors” is popular in today’s America. Generally speaking, Trump’s supporters are believed to be white males with low education, namely the groups of people who are employed in low skill jobs and need to feed their family in the face of the shock caused by globalization. However, as the election progressed, the groups of people who supported Trump tended to expand: Trump even found support to different degrees from people with more education, people engaged in traditional economy (agriculture, construction, manufacturing and trade), evangelicals, people born in the US as well as new immigrants that have obtained legal identity.<sup>31</sup> In other words, different classes and groups of Americans had their dissatisfaction and grievance and Trump’s “nativism” explanation is acceptable to them. It was under this situation that so-called “silent voters” who actually supported Trump emerged in America and these people might conceal their real intention out of “political correctness” considerations when polled, as a result of which Trump was underestimated in the polls. In fact, based on the exit polls, in comparison with the performance of Mitt Romney in 2012, the approval ratings of Trump grew among the Africans, Latinos and Asians, etc.<sup>32</sup> Further research reveals that in the American counties that saw growing competitive imports from countries like China and Mexico, the approval ratings received by Trump exceeded the average level of support of the counties for the Republican Party in the past 20 years.<sup>33</sup>

Secondly, Trump fully appeased the “anti-establishment” political aesthetics. In comparison with the “establishment” and even “family politics” represented by Jeb Bush, “anti-establishment” candidates

such as Trump could better cater to the wide spread grievance of American people over the Washington elites and polarized politics as well as the appeals to change the long-standing struggle between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. In particular, disappointed by Obama's failure to satisfy the appeals of the people, the people bet on an "anti-establishment" candidate not connected with traditional politics for some real changes. What is worth noting is that although seemingly not politically correct, such remarks of Trump of anti-foreignism and "racial discrimination" were protected by another form of "political correctness", which means any opposition to or criticism of Trump is to speak on behalf of the "establishment" political elites and "oppose to the public desire for changes".

Thirdly, Trump is popular, skilled in manipulating the media and good at campaigning over the Internet and social media. Although as a rich businessman Trump has been active on various media outlets of America over the years and is something of "Internet celebrity" in the sense of communications. Trump's participation in the election as a businessman itself was a news and his sensational way of expression during the campaign always created news topics for the American media, which contributed to increased media coverage of Trump's campaign. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, the first Republican primary debate attracted 24 million audiences due to the participation of Trump, creating the TV rating records of non-sports game programs.<sup>34</sup> More importantly, by sending messages to his followers in real time through SNS and expressing extreme remarks and policy positions different from those of traditional political figures, Trump affected and even dominated the traditional media agenda through real-time mobilization realized using the SNS, achieving the campaign effects that the traditional media channels could not offer. As of the voting date of the presidential election 2016, Trump led Hillary Clinton by four million followers on "Tweeter" and he was also the most mentioned candidate on "Tweet" and "Facebook".<sup>35</sup>

**Finally, Hillary Clinton was not the ideal candidate for the American presidential election 2016.** Prior to the election, Hillary Clinton had higher chance of winning in both the comprehensive

polls at the federal level and the forecast of distribution of Electoral College votes of the states. The final result of failure can attribute not only to the influences of such factors as the highly competitive nature of the open election and the reshaping of the public opinions by the Electoral College of the state, but also to the fact that the policy tendency and personalities of Hillary Clinton as the presidential candidate did not match the overall trend of the presidential election 2016.

Firstly, the policy position of Hillary Clinton could not win the support of the blue collar lower middle class effectively.

Over the years, the policy positioning of Hillary Clinton has been the New Democrats that emerged in the Democratic Party in the late 1980s, who are moderate on economic and fiscal issues and liberal on social issues while support free trade and advocate “employment welfare” by promoting economic growth.<sup>36</sup> Such policy tendency similar to the support of the Obama administration for Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) could not win the support of the blue collar lower middle class. It was for these reasons that Sanders, the representative of the traditional liberal inside the Democratic Party, namely the Progressive Democrats, could manage to garner the support of the trade unions and the lower middle class with such propositions such as reform of the Wall Street, opposition to free trade and promoting equal social rights. Although Hillary Clinton purposely followed the Sanders’ “populist” propositions and adjusted her own policy positions after winning the Democratic presidential nomination, she still failed to reverse the overall dilemma of low approval rating of the Democratic Party in the blue collar lower middle class and the “rust belt” regions.

Secondly, the personalities of Hillary Clinton did not match the political ecology of the Democratic Party. Traditionally, the Democratic Party is more likely to elect the young “new faces” to run for the public offices including the presidency, and the political

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ecology of the Democratic Party favors the new blood more. However, in the 2016 presidential election, Hillary Clinton was not only the oldest presidential candidate of the Democratic Party since its establishment, but also a long-term “old face” in the political arena. Since the introduction of the primary system in the 1970s, in the caucus of seven open elections, the Democratic Party elected “new faces” without any experience of presidential campaign in the first six elections except that it selected the old face Hillary Clinton who used to participate in the caucus in 2016. This change reduced the enthusiasm of the “basic” voters of the Democratic Party; while Trump basically maintained about 60 million popular votes of McCain in 2008 and Romney in 2012, the popular votes of the Democratic Party shrank directly from 69.49 million votes in 2008 by 14 million; the approval ratings of Hillary Clinton among the Africans (88%), Latinos (65%) and young people aged 18 to 25 (54%) were obviously lower than those of Obama in 2012 (93%, 71%, 60%)<sup>37</sup>. In other words, the decline in the turnout rate should be blamed on the Democratic Party voters who lost enthusiasm in Hillary Clinton suddenly rather than Trump and the Republican Party.

Thirdly, the “establishment” identity of Hillary Clinton intensified the pre-existing contradictions in the presidential election 2016. With Hillary and Trump nominated respectively, the presidential election became a faceoff between the “establishment” and the “anti-establishment”. On the one hand, Hillary Clinton acted as the best speaker of the “establishment” elites from different walks of life of the American society against Trump, resulting in the rarely seen “one-sided” endorsement by the mainstream traditional media and further dividing the elites and the ordinary voters; on the other hand, the “Email Controversy”, favoritism for scandal by the Democratic Party National Committee, foreign donations to the Clinton Foundation as well as a series of negative messages exposed by WikiLeaks overlap, reinforcing the negative stereotype image of Hillary Clinton as a limousine liberal, making her the target of the “anti-establishment” tendency of ordinary voters and producing significant “de-mobilization” effects among the people who oppose to the Washington elites and desire for real changes.<sup>38</sup>

Although Trump's election can be explained in a way and the voters' turnout rate (55.5%) is not low, the presidential election 2016 remains a "low quality" presidential election. Firstly, neither of the presidential candidates failed to win the support of the majority of American people. On the eve of the Election Day, Trump's approval rating was maintained around 30% only and the disapproval rating reached 60%; the Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's approval rating was also less than 40% and the disapproval rating reached above 50%.<sup>39</sup> The controversial topics and even scandals surrounding the two candidates during the campaign also exacerbated the resentment of the voters and the "I did not like either candidate, so I voted for the lesser of the two evils" election was obviously unable to provide the voters with effective and high-quality solutions. Secondly, Trump was elected to the presidency without majority popular votes in the primary and general elections. Under the interaction of the primary system unique to America and the "winner takes all" electoral college system of the states, Trump failed to win the simple majority support in the primary and among the voters of corresponding scope in the general election, but was elected to presidency with "fewer popular votes, but more votes in the Electoral College". This weak status of "being elected without majority popular votes in the primary and general elections" and "more electoral college votes but fewer popular votes" directly imposed limits on the political room for Trump to push ahead with the domestic and foreign policies.

It was because of such "low quality" of the presidential election that after Trump took office, the public opinions in America showed no sign of positive adjustment, but tended to deteriorate with accumulation of popular grievance coupled with growing polarization. According to the results of polls published by the Pew Research Center in May 2017, the public confidence in the federal government has dropped to 20%, the lowest level of the polls on the same themes since 1958. On the other hand, Trump faced with polarized poll performance: his overall approval rating hit a historical low, but the Republican camp provided him with firm support. According to Gallop's daily tracking polls, Trump took office with relatively low poll performance (both the approval



rating and the disapproval rating were 45%) and the approval rating basically fell short of the disapproval rating thereafter and he even recorded the worst poll performance with approval rating of 35% and disapproval rating of 59% in the polls conducted between March 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>40</sup> In comparison, the approval rating of Obama exceeded 60% and highest disapproval rating was 30% only during the same period of time.<sup>41</sup> Based on the observations from historical comparison of polls of the presidents' 100<sup>th</sup> day in office, Trump updated the record of the presidents' lowest poll performance since 1953 with 41% approval rating; the approval rating of none of the preceding 9 presidents dropped to 50% in the polls of presidents' 100<sup>th</sup> day in office. It can be learned that Trump was faced with the beginning of lowest and most negative public opinions in the sense of presidential politics.<sup>42</sup>

### III. AMERICAN POLITICAL PROSPECTS FACING PRESIDENT TRUMP

The popular grievance not fully vented during the American presidential election 2016, the political mobilization structure reshaped by the social media as well as the “unilateral” policy tendency of the Trump administration---these trends affect and reinforce each other, giving rise to new changes in the focus or theme of American politics. To sum up, the current theme of American politics is so-called “intra-party politics” in the short term and so-called “cycle change” in the long term.

#### **Short term theme: “intra-party politics” has priority over “bipartisan politics”**

During the American presidential election 2016, especially the primary and caucus of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party respectively, conflicts between different political concepts or different fractions have erupted inside the highly polarized Democratic Party and Republican Party, for instance, the rise of “anti-establishment” represented by Trump inside the Republican Party or the fierce conflict between New Democrat Hillary Clinton and Progressive Democrat Bernie Sanders inside the Democratic Party. Such intra-party struggle is not only the conflict between

so-called “establishment” and “anti-establishment”, but also the conflicts of different choices of paths of different fractions inside the two parties when dealing with the domestic and foreign challenges facing the US. What is worth noting is that since the Democratic Party and the Republican Party intervened in the presidential politics officially in 1856, the political ecology of the two parties has been manifested in most cases as “intra-party cooperation and inter-party conflict” and in rarely seen cases as “intra-party conflict and inter-party cooperation”, for instance, the “Southern Democratic Party” phenomenon. However, the political ecology of the two parties during the presidential election 2016 showed the rarely seen combination of “intra-party conflict and inter-party conflict” and such more complex polarization may be summarized as the new feature of “fragment polarization”.

The “dual conflict” situation has obviously been continued in the “Trump era”, but the main contradiction or focus has been adjusted, namely “inter-party conflict” is obviously weaker than “intra-party conflict”. By the standards of American politics, though the election of Trump is not a high quality election, the Republican Party indeed has a full control of the White House, the majority hold over the Senate and the House of Representatives, the majority of seats of 50 governors as well as the comprehensive control of powers that may determine the political trends in the Supreme Court of the United States since 1928.<sup>43</sup> Although the Democratic Party has the right to block the policy agenda of the Republican Party to a certain extent in the Senate through filibuster, the extensive use of so-called nuclear option is significantly eroding such defensive check and balance capability. Furthermore, the Democrats may demonstrate their influences over the White House only when 2/3 of the votes of the Senate (namely the super majority) are needed, for instance, upon ratification of treaties. It is because of the current asymmetry of political powers in the two parties that the inter-party competition and check and balance decrease temporarily while the intra-party conflicts and integration rise respectively to the center, that is, “intra-party politics” has given “priority” to “inter-party politics”.

On the part of the Democratic Party, the defeat of the 2016

presidential election accelerated the power reshuffle inside the party. The Democratic Party is going through the process of looking for new routes and integration of the new leadership. The above-mentioned Jon Ossoff who will run for the seat of the 6<sup>th</sup> district of the House of Representatives for Georgia on behalf of the Democratic Party is just 30 and the election he takes part in will be deemed as a “stress test” of the mobilization ability of the Democratic Party among the “millennials” and may become a signal that the millennials express dissatisfaction over Trump’s domestic and foreign policies and hold a symbolic referendum over him.<sup>44</sup> The unexpected rise of Ossoff as an “outsider” wins the support of popular Democratic political figures such as Sanders and Senator Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts), who are “progressive Democrats” of the radical liberal fraction inside the Democratic Party. Hence, the campaign prospect of Ossoff may be considered as a touchstone for observing the political ecology inside the Democratic Party. The effect of the ongoing intra-party integration of the Democratic Party can be first proved in the topic and path planning of the 2018 mid-term election as well as the primary election for nomination of the candidate for the presidential election 2020.

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The overall absolute political advantage of the Republican Party does not mean absolute control of the national agenda of America.

As far as the Republican Party is concerned, although it holds nearly absolute advantages in American politics, this does not mean that the Republican Party has absolute control over the national agenda of America but that the Republican Party is also faced with the challenge of intra-party integration. Objectively speaking, Trump was

simply elected as the Republican presidential candidate and his policy agenda need to be harmonized with those of the mainstream fractions inside the Party and his “anti-establishment” label is faced with the difficulty of interacting with the “establishment”. From the performance of Trump’s early days in office, the mainstream or “establishment” of the Republican Party is reshaping and has indeed

reshaped Trump. This is not only manifested in Trump's actual choices in foreign affairs and rapid return to the traditional track of the Republican Party, but also in the effects of Trump's promotion of the domestic agenda : the policies or issues that the mainstream of the Republican has supported and are accepted by Trump have been often implemented successfully (for instance, the nomination of associate justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, or the executive orders, such as de-regulation or repeal of Obama's energy policies) or are underway (the Republican version of the American Health Care Act or legislation over tax overhaul) while the policies or issues of strong Trump's personalities the mainstream of the Republican Party does not fully accept (for instance, the Muslim ban or the border wall) are generally suspended and even suffered failure. In other words, in the face of this "imperial president", although the mainstream fractions of the Republican Party cannot achieve effective control or communications over the decision-making process of the White House to realize "prior restraints", they are at least implementing result-oriented "post restraints" over the decision-making outcomes of the White House.

The status of "intra-party politics" as a priority theme may be terminated after the 2018 mid-term election. Based on the experience that the presidential party generally loses seats during the mid-term election and the historical fact that the past three "majority-minority" rotations in the House of Representatives occurred during the mid-term election (the Republican Party secured 54 more seats to become the majority in 1994, the Democratic Party secured 32 more seats to become the majority in 2006 and the Republican Party secured 64 more seats in 2010 to become the majority), it is highly likely that the Democratic Party will secure enough seats (24 seats or more) during the 2018 mid-term election to regain the majority status in the House of Representatives. In particular, during the 2016 election, the voters of the precincts of 23 Republican members of the House of Representatives supported Hillary Clinton at the presidential election level,<sup>45</sup> providing higher probability of the Democratic Party regaining the majority. Once the Republican Party loses its majority status in the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Democratic Party will acquire

sufficient capabilities and space to restrain the implementation of policies by Trump. It should be noted that the return to “bi-partisan politics” or “partisanship politics” only changes the status of “intra-party politics” as the priority and does not mean that the long-term integration process of both parties has come to an end.

At least prior to the 2018 mid-term election, the theme of “intra-party politics” can be seen as the “only yardstick” for judging the political trend of America, especially the stability of the Trump administration. On the one hand, as long as Trump is able to maintain the support of public opinion of the Republican camp as well as adequate support from the mainstream faction or “establishment” inside the Republican Party, including the Republican leaders in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and avoid collapse in the intra-party support, such crisis as so-called “Russiagate” may be kept under control and will not evolve to the extent that the impeachment proceedings are initiated. On the other hand, only by ensuring that the “mainstream faction” or “establishment” inside the Republican Party supports his policy agenda can Trump actually achieve certain policy results and honor the promises made during the campaign. The promises honored and ruling results achieved by Trump as the Republican president will boost the Republican Party in the Congressional mid-term election.

### **Long-term theme: party realignment in “cyclic change”**

As mentioned previously, during the entire presidential election 2016, the argument about “political cycle” and analysis frameworks such as “party realignment” and “sectionalism” were repeatedly mentioned and even considered as important perspectives for pre-election forecasts and post-election analysis on the election results as well as future political trends of America.<sup>46</sup>

As far as party alignment is concerned, it occurs as a result of so-called “critical election” that leads to major changes in the basic voters of the political parties. According to observations of competition for intra-party primary elections of the two parties for the presidential election 2016 and even policy adjustments of the two parties on certain core issues since the outbreak of the financial

crisis, the so-called “social issues” that have served as the political demarcation standards of the two parties at least since the 1960s are rapidly weakening and such “development issues” as “how to cope with the globalization challenges” have come to the center stage. In other words, the core issue of partisanship is shifting dramatically from “domestic issues” to “external issues” such as “tackling the challenges posed by globalization trends”. Here, the “social issues” basically cover many so-called “cultural affairs” that are closely related to the ideological values, for instance, gay marriage, abortion, gender equality and social welfare, etc. During the past 50 years, these diametrically different positions have not only served as the striking labels that distinguished the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, but also the starting point by which the two parties carried out differential voter mobilization, concealing the implicit differences inside the two parties over such “development issues” like economy & trade and immigration.

There are complex reasons behind such “externalization” adjustment of issues, the most prominent among them are two: First, many social issues are intergenerational in nature, and their controversies weaken with the replacement of generations. The most typical example is the growing tolerance of the American public toward gay marriage. According to the polls conducted in 2001, the proportion of people who support same sex marriage was 43%, 21% and 43% in the Democratic Party, Republican Party and independent voters respectively and the figures rose to 70%, 33% and 61% respectively according to the polls conducted in 2016.<sup>47</sup> It can be learned that the intensity of so-called “culture war” surrounding the social issues has kept decreasing. Second, America has been faced with many severe challenges such as free trade and immigrant flow resulting from globalization since 2008 and the pre-existing “intra-party” and “inter-party” difference over these major public concerns is magnified into the major contradiction, therefore leading to so-called “border war” between the globalists and the nativists.<sup>48</sup>

The direct consequence of switching of the “war” theme is the simultaneous change in the basic voter groups and policy preference of both parties. The pre-existing difference between the

New Democrats and the Progressive Democrats over the economic development issues is growing. The Democratic Party was faced with the hard choice between the inclinations of globalists (New Democrats) who spare no efforts in developing the economy and of the nativists (Progressive Democrats) who protect the interests of the domestic labor forces. In the primary for the 2016 presidential election, the choice of “New Democrats” further resulted in the blue collar lower middle class’s division and even switching to the Republican Party. According to relevant polls, the proportion of supporters for and opponents of FTA among the Democratic respondents is 56% and 38%, respectively, compared to 38% and 53% among the Republican respondents.<sup>49</sup> This means that the Democratic Party tends to embrace globalism, which makes it very likely for the Democratic Party to totally lose the votes of the blue collar lower middle class in the new cycle. In particular, when the Democratic Party continues to remain open on the immigration issue, the blue collar lower middle class whites are likely to switch more rapidly to the Republican Party. If this trend persists, the voter base of the Democratic Party will become the voter groups with globalism or multi-pluralism tendency comprised of well-educated whites, minorities and urban population in the new cycle.

The basic driving force behind the blue collar lower middle class switching to the Republican Party is actually the traditional values they share; however, at least in 2016, the Republican Party, in particular its presidential candidate Trump also came up with the nativist solutions such as “America First” and “Make America Great Again” over the economic issues that were also attractive to the blue collar lower middle class. If these economic concepts can be improved, yield results during the term of Trump, and then be totally accepted by the mainstream fractions of the Republican Party, the Republican Party will continue to reinforce the blue collar lower middle class, especially the whites, as its important basic voters. In other words, the Republican Party is highly likely to become a nativist party with voter base featuring co-existence of the blue collar lower middle class as well as the conservatives in southern states of America and the rural areas during the post-Trump era.

It should be emphasized that based on the general judgment that the Democratic Party is comprised of different interest groups while the Republican Party is driven by different concepts.<sup>50</sup> The blue collar lower middle class that has interest different from that of other groups inside the Democratic Party is more likely to switch in the sense of party affiliation and a Democratic Party that gradually loses the blue collar lower middle class will find it much easier to integrate the interest of other groups; and in contrast, it is much more difficult for the Republican Party to develop policy proposals and political positions that cater to the appeals of the blue collar lower middle class rapidly. This means that although the return to the nativism tendency due to Trump has become an important future option for the Republican Party, it is also the target of attacks of different concepts or fractions inside the Republican Party. In other words, the round of party realignment may continue through the entire 4-year term of Trump.

As far as sectionalism is concerned, the party affiliation of the states in the region is generally stable; however, along with the start of the new political cycle and party realignment, the regional distribution of the political parties will also see larger adjustments with longer period, for instance, the process of the south switching from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party since the 1960s. Following the 2014 mid-term election, all Democratic Congressmen from the southern states are non-whites, therefore complete this round of republicanism.<sup>51</sup>

In view of the political realities since the 2016 presidential election, America is now experiencing the integration of two regions. As discussed previously, one is the so-called “rust belt” that is thought to have determined the outcome of the 2016 presidential election. Within the region, Pennsylvania (20 electoral votes), Wisconsin (10 electoral votes) and Michigan (16 electoral votes) are the three key states that were widely polled to prefer the Democratic Party but in the end locked the victory for Trump. This region used to be the swing belt where the Democratic Party had certain advantages, but tended to switch to the Republican Party gradually while the swing state was maintained since the outbreak of the financial crisis. Certainly, the biggest catalyst behind the



change of the “rust belt” is in no doubt the change of voters in which the blue collar lower middle class whites who account for a significant proportion in the regions switch to the Republican Party gradually.<sup>52</sup> And, considering the difficult and time-consuming process of integration and realignment of different concepts inside the Republican Party, the “rust belt” change is also likely to go through a long and uncertain process, and the swing between the two parties may become a regional feature that is stronger than clear preference toward a party.

Another region that is deemed most likely to trigger the next round of major adjustments since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the eight states in the Rocky Mountain region that stretch from the south to the north. The change of the region in recent years has indeed catered to the new trend of ongoing intra-party integration of the Democratic Party: a surge of the minorities driven primarily by the inflow of Mexican immigrants in the south; an improvement in the education level of the whites in the region and a steep decline of the proportion of blue collar workers; an inward relocation of the hi-tech industries and population in the west coast; a concentration of the population into the urban areas due to the rapid urbanization process, etc.<sup>53</sup> It is because of such new composition of well-educated whites, minorities and urban population that match the Democratic Party that states like Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico and even Arizona have to different extent become the key swing states at the presidential election level.<sup>54</sup> However, due to the relatively small population of the Rocky Mountain area, it cannot be comparable to the southern states or the “rust belt” in terms of political influences. As a result, it can only be treated as a potential factor that may trigger a certain cyclic change in the future.

To sum up, the core of the “political realignment” and “regional adjustment” is the change of the blue collar lower middle class, especially the whites in them. The difference is that the former occurs in the sense of party affiliation while the latter is the overall movement of the region in political preference resulted from the change of party affiliation of the groups. This means that both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party will make major policy adjustments in the internal and external issues that are closely

related to the blue collar lower middle class whites.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The American presidential election is more of a social movement realized by the white blue collar lower middle class with the desire for changes and the “anti-establishment” sentiment mobilized by the social media that swept across America than a campaigning and voting process. The “anti-establishment” presidential candidate Trump provided the Republican Party with the “nativism” concept that is key to attracting the blue collar lower middle class, therefore following the overall trend of the 2016 election successfully. While the “establishment” candidate Hillary Clinton was no longer suitable for the particular environment of the election in terms of both the policy positions and personalities and finally lost the election as a result of failure to reverse the declining tendency of the Democratic Party in the blue collar lower middle class and the “rust belt” region.

Undeniably, the victory of Trump and the Republican Party is by no means the best solution that American voters sought for the current internal and external challenges facing America, but a 100% veto of the solution proposed by the traditional elites by the voters and also their “bet” on the solution proposed by non-traditional elites. This means that for Trump, the victory is his first step only and whether he can honor the promises and actually solve the problems is the forthcoming bigger challenge. If he fails to honor the promises, he will either be assimilated by “establishment” elites soon or will have to maintain partial yet enough support of the public through continuous radical mobilization to rule in the form of social movements.

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Trump’s victory is a 100% veto of the solution proposed by the traditional elites by American voters.

It can be predicted that the election of Trump marks the beginning of a new long round of realignment in American party politics and once again throws America into a period featuring easy and frequent occurrence of social movements with theme of class

and ethnic struggles. However, it is highly likely that Trump is not the starting point for real change, but rather the next target of the popular grievance and that American politics will step into a stage of self-adjustment that is rife with conflicts and uncertainties.

Or we can say, the national challenges as the starting point and the initiation of the historical cycle as a milestone constitute the new historical stage of development of American politics. And, the election of Trump, the emergence of so-called “Trump phenomenon” as well as uncertainties of the “Trump era” are the components and key features of this particular development stage of the political ecology. In this sense, the election of Trump is of course occasional and even his personalities are challenging the bottom line of American politics. However, the components that reflect the trend of the era are obviously the unavoidable costs of American politics embarking on a new round of change and realignment.

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<sup>3</sup> “United States Presidential Election, 1928”, *Wikipedia*, available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_presidential\\_election,\\_1928](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1928), accessed on January 30, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Diao Daming: An Analysis into the Trump Phenomenon, *Contemporary International Relations*, Issue 4, 2016, pp.31—39.

<sup>5</sup> The growth rate of America’s GDP has rebounded from -2.8% in 2009 to 2.4% in 2015, leading the western world; by the end of 2015, the unemployment rate has dropped to 5.0% and even a rate of 4.6% in November 2016, returning to the level of pre-financial crisis in 2008; the per capita disposable income even recorded 2.7% and 3.4% growth in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Refer to “Annual Growth of the Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States from 1990 to 2015”, *Statista*, available at: <http://www.statista.com/statistics/188165/annual-gdp-growth-of-the-united-states-since-1990/>, accessed on February 1, 2017, and “Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey,” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, available at: <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS14000000>. “Personal Income and Outlays: January 2016”, *Bureau of Economic Analysis*, Feb. 2016, available at: <http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/national/pi/pinewsrelease.htm>, accessed on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> “Problems and Priorities”, *The Polling Report*, available at: <http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> “Employment by Major Industry Sector”, *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_201.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_201.htm), accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> “The American Middle Class Is Losing Ground”, *Pew Research Center*, Dec. 9, 2015, available at: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/09/the-american-middle-class-is-losing-ground/>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> The proportion of the whites will drop to below 50% in 50 years, that of the Latinos will rise to 24% and the proportion of the Asians (14%) is likely to be more than that of the Africans (13%). Refer to: D’Vera Cohn, “Future Immigration will Change the Face of America by 2065”, *Pew Research Center*, Oct. 5, 2015, available at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/05/future-immigration-will-change-the-face-of-america-by-2065/>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> “Immigration”, *The Polling Report*, available at: <http://www.pollingreport.com/immigration.htm>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> “Satisfaction with the United States”, *Gallup*, available at: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1669/general-moodcountry.aspx>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

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<sup>13</sup> [America] W. Lance-Bennett: *News: The Politics of Illusion* (5<sup>th</sup> edition), translated by Yang Xiaohong, Wang Jiaquan, Beijing, Contemporary China Publishing House, 2005 edition, P15.

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<sup>16</sup> Philip Paolino and Daron R.Shaw, “Can the Internet Help Outsider Candidate Win the Presidential Nomination?” *P.S.*, Vol.36, Issue 2, April 2003, pp.193-197.

<sup>17</sup> [America] W. Lance-Bennett: *News: The Politics of Illusion* (5<sup>th</sup> edition), p.95.

<sup>18</sup> Bernie Sanders, *Our Revolution*, New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2016, p.100.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew Hindman, “The Real Lessons of Howard Dean: Reflections on the First Digital Campaign,” *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 1, March 2005, pp.121-128.

<sup>20</sup> Bernie Sanders, *Our Revolution*, New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2016, p.100.

<sup>21</sup> Visit [OpenSecrets.org](https://www.opensecrets.org/pres16/candidate.php?id=N00000528) for pages on Sanders’ campaign funding:<https://www.opensecrets.org/pres16/candidate.php?id=N00000528>.

<sup>22</sup> “Rust belt” refers to the states in the great lakes area and midwestern America where traditional manufacturing sector is widely distributed. The region is one of the areas with most obvious economic recession, loss of population and urban decaying in the US and also one of the regions where the American blue collar lower middle class is most densely distributed.

<sup>23</sup> “Presidential Results”, *CNN Politics*, Dec. 4, 2016, available at: <http://www.cnn.com/election/results/president>, accessed on February 1, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Cycles of American History*, Boston: Mariner Books, 1999, p.31.

<sup>25</sup> Xie Tao: America’s Historical Cycles, Party Realignment and Sectionalism from the Perspective of American Presidential Election, *American Studies*, Issue 4,2012, pp. 30—45.

<sup>26</sup> Stewart J.H. McCann, “Schlesinger’s Cycles of American History and Presidential Candidate Age (1789-1992): When Younger Is Better”, *Political Psychology*, Nov. 2001, Vol.27, No.11, pp.1429-1439.

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<sup>30</sup> Donald J. Trump, op.cit., pp.33-35.

<sup>31</sup> Neil Irwin and Josh Katz, “The Geography of Trumpism”, *The New York Times*, March 12, 2016, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/13/upshot/the-geography-of-trumpism.html>, accessed on February 10, 2017.

<sup>32</sup> “Exit Polls”, *CNN Politics*, Nov. 23, 2016, available at: <http://www.cnn.com/election/results/exit-polls/national/president>, accessed on February 10, 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Andrea Cerrato, Francesco Ruggieri and Federico Maria Ferrara, “Trump Won in Counties that Lost Jobs to China and Mexico”, *The Washington Post*, Dec. 2, 2016, available at: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/12/02/trump-won-where-import-shocks-from-china-and-mexico-were-strongest/?from=timeline&isappinstalled=0&utm\\_term=.4b25ea3e5798&wpisrc=nl\\_cage&wppmm=1.](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/12/02/trump-won-where-import-shocks-from-china-and-mexico-were-strongest/?from=timeline&isappinstalled=0&utm_term=.4b25ea3e5798&wpisrc=nl_cage&wppmm=1.), accessed on February 1, 2017.

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