Why does American White Nationalism rise in recent years?

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White nationalism is the evitable political trend in the current U.S. Three reasons for the rise of white nationalism will be demonstrated in this article: firstly, current identity politics actually marginalized the white race and become a new norm to restrain people's discourse. Thus the youth subcultural internet trolling and white blue collar's choosing of a racially outspoken politician is the rebellion of current white-discriminate discourse. Secondly, the demographic shift of the American social structure decreases the dominant position of the white middle class. As a result, nationalism tends to be the reaction of whiteness crises. Finally, the white working-class who are "natural conservatives" and treasure stable traditional values rather than economic growth fail to be represented by the current two parties since both democrats and republicans promote globalization and radical social change.

Keywords: White nationalism; white-discriminate discourse; demographic shift; natural conservatives; anti-globalization value

White Nationalism is a crucial branch of the American Alternative Right. Since affirmative action in the 1960s, political groups gathered by white identity have remained at a low level. However, after Barack Obama won the election in 2008, White Nationalism became more visible and active. Since 2015, White Nationalism has become a significant power on internet consensus and largely fueled Donald Trump's win in the 2016 presidential election. It may take an effort to understand why this group of people who harbored "unjust thoughts" such as white separatism, racism and anti-Semitism become prevalent in recent years. Therefore this paper will elaborate on how identity politics, demographic structure change in American society and failure of representing the interest of white working-class in current partisan politics stimulate the rise of white nationalism.

Three reasons for the rise of white nationalism will be demonstrated as follows: firstly, current identity politics actually marginalized the white race and became a new norm to restrain people's discourse. So the youth subcultural internet trolling and white blue collar's choosing of a racially outspoken politician is the rebellion of current white-discriminate discourse. Secondly, the demographic shift of the American social structure decreases the dominant position of the white middle class. As a result, nationalism tends to be the reaction of whiteness crises. Finally, the white working-class who are "natural conservatives' ' and treasure stable traditional values rather than economic growth fail to be represented by the current two parties since both democrats and

republicans promote globalization and radical social change. These three main reasons led to the bloom of white nationalism.

Conservative Mirror of Identity Politics

1. "Original sin" given by identity politics

The rise of White Nationalism is a self-defense reaction to current identity politics. Since the affirmative action in the 1960s, white identity became a taboo which is usually connected to "white supremacy", rather than a legitimate right of white people. Academic scholars, mass media and progressive politicians conducted systematic censorship from social institutions to daily utterance to prove white discriminate against other groups. For example, Professor Joe Feagin, a sociologist, and researcher of racism suggested in an interview that "white racial frame" does not only prejudice but within details in social life:

> "That white racial frame includes not only racist prejudices and stereotypes of conventional analyses but also racist ideologies, narratives, images, and emotions, as well as individual and group inclinations to discriminate shaped by the other features. Additionally, all whites, no matter what their racial prejudices and other racial framings entail, benefit from many racial privileges routinely granted by this country's major institutions to whites." (Yancy & Feagin, 2015)

Feagin (2015) further offered white child's joke, ape-black image and white young people's utility of their social net and other legal situation in daily details as evidence to prove white superiority is systematic and beneficial for white, regardless the racist frame in other ethnic group and non-white ethno-nation countries. It could be rephrased in the way that the anti-racism study only targets the white group and their normal everyday behavior could be called racism. It becomes a new nomos that "you can't be racist unless you're white" (Yiannopoulos, 2016)

2. Defense of White Identity—Internet Trolling and White Separatism

When anti-white racism becomes a new social discipline, it arouses resistance to two main groups. The first group is white male young adults. Mainly they use memes and gather on "Stormfront", "Daily Stormer", "Roosh V Forum", "Return of Kings" and other forums to discuss race, gender role and religion issues in a bold way and laugh at a current social consensus in an impolite manner. Similar to neo-leftist rebellion in the 1960s and 1970s, they "blaspheme, break all the rules, and say the unsayable" for fun and for drawing attention from the mainstream. (Bokhari & Yiannopoulos, 2016) Their intention was not deeply and politically, but transgressing the social "pseudo-religion taboo" of identity politics to make them hilarious and absurd.

Though not seriously racism, those young adults regard their speech and vote for Trump as "free-speech culture" which is against "political-correct culture". As Mike Cernovich comment on Trump's victory to Andrew Marantz, the columnist of New Yorker:

> "Most people know what it's like for some smug, élite asshole to tell them, 'You can't say that it's racist, it's bad.' Well, a vote for Trump meant, 'Fuck you, you don't get to tell me what to say.' " (Marantz, 2016)

Another group of people who are drawn to White Nationalism is aged white blue-collars. Living in the manufacturing area and less trained in the humanistic department in university, their lifestyle and value are relatively traditional. When academic elites claim whites discriminate against other races because of their whiteness rather than any visible criminal behavior, the inner logic is empirically incomprehensive to them. Whiteness became their original sin in academic and media discourse. In this term, White Nationalism shows their hope of equal identity as other groups:

> "We are a community of racial realists and idealists. We are White Nationalists who support true diversity and a homeland for all peoples. Thousands of organizations promote the interests, values, and heritage of non-White minorities. We promote ours. We are the voice of the new, embattled White minority." (Stormfront)

Therefore, to build a separated community for European immigrants is their method of protecting white heritage:

> "We want a few areas on the Earth (and states in the U.S.) that are reserved for Whites, and Whites only, where we can live in peace apart from the horrors of the third world. Our children deserve that, and we owe it to them. This is the basic principle of "White Nationalism" (W.N.)." (Ford, 2008)

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Voting to a presidential candidate who doesn't fear to offend identity discourse publically is another practice of white nationalists. As Cernovich, a son of white working-class in rural Illinois explained his parents' voting to Trump: "My parents voted for Obama, but they told me, 'If it's Trump versus Hillary, we'll go with him. He gets us. He talks like us." (Marantz, 2016)

Therefore, the anxiety of lost identity in current established identity politics is the first cause for the rise of White Nationalism, which appeared as young white adults' racism trolling and white working-class' racial separatism.

Crises of White Dominance—Demographic Decline of White Population and Middle Class

The identity crises of American white is a manifestation of racial demographic shift. Statistics show that the dominant status of white and middle class declined in past decades.

1. Drop of the share of the white population

The first factor is the population change due to the process of immigration. Immigrants are significant by number and account for a remarkable share in the labor market. According to Pew Research (Krogstad, Passel, & Cohn, 2016), there were 42.4 million immigrants overall living in the U.S. in 2014 and 11.1 million of them, which accounted for 3.5% of the nation's population, are illegal immigrants. Among those illegal immigrants, 8 million are work laborers and account for 5% of the total civilian workforce population. Their share in farming occupations is 26%, and in construction, occupations are 15%, which is much higher than the share 5% in the overall workforce. Meanwhile, 66% of unlawful immigrant adults had been in the U.S. for more than 10 years. Those data indicate that unauthorized immigrants are not only in a considerable number but occupied a large share of working opportunities in productive professions.

Consequently, the percentage of each race changed from 2010 to 2015. In 2010, the share of main minority groups was as follows: Hispanic or Latino are accounted for 16.3%, Black or African American 12.6%, and Asian 4.8%. All of their shares increased in 2015: Hispanic or Latino improved to 17.6%, which is largest among all races; Black increased to 13.3% and Asian to 5.6%. However, the percentage of Whites decreased sharply from 63.7% to 61.6% within 5 years (U.S. Census). Therefore, the population advantage of the white race in the U.S. declined rapidly in the past half-decade.

2. Middle class lost dominance in the overall population

Another important issue is that the economically dominant statue of the middle class also declined. In 1970, the middle-income households made up 62%, while the middle-class adult population was 61% in 1970. When it came to 2014, the share of middle-income went down substantially to 43% and the middle-class adult accounted for 50% in 2015. The middle-income adult population was 120.8 million, outnumbered by the combination of lower-income and upper-income population, which was 121.3 million people in early 2015. The middle class is no longer the majority demographically (Pew Research Center, 2015).

At the same time, the middle class witnessed an enlargement of the lower-income group and a wider gap between the middle class and upper-income group. From 1971 to 2015, the share of lower-income households rose from 25% to 29%. Besides, the aggregate household income of the

upper-income population increased noticeably from 29% in 1970 to 49% in 2014. By 2013, the upper-income families are seven times wealthier than middle-income families, increased from three times in 1983. (Pew Research Center, 2015 December)

Besides, the low-income situation is immigrant-related. For example, the Hispanic group suffered a 7.9% decrease in their income statue share (upper-income group share minus lower income group share) because the rate of lower-earning immigrants in the adult population rose from 29% in 1970 to 49% in 2015 (Pew Research Center, 2015 December).

Therefore, the traditional social structure which is dominated by the white population and middle-class household transferred to a more racially diverse demographic form and more polarized economical form. The white middle class experienced the loss of their main body statue of both population share and economic share. While President Obama promised to welcome "strivers and dreamers who want to earn their piece of the American Dream" and proposed Executive Actions on Immigration to legalize more undocumented immigrants (Obama, 2014), the subjective feeling of the white working class is like the citation of Arlie Russell Hochschild in Amanda Taub's essay:

"They were waiting in a long line to reach the top of a hill where the American dream was waiting for them. But the line's uphill progress had slowed, even stopped. And immigrants, black people and other "outsiders" seemed to be cutting the line." (Taub, 2016)

Absence of Political Representative of "Natural Conservatives"

Fukuyama argued since "The Republican Party was dominated by corporate America and its allies who had profited handsomely from globalization, while the Democratic Party had become the party of identity politics", so the economic interest of the working-class failed to be represented in the current partisan political system. And thus the nationalist populists utilize their democratic power in the presidential election to impede the current liberal globalization system in the U.S. (Fukuyama, 2016)

However, Democratic Party's representing of "a coalition of women, African-Americans, Hispanics, environmentalists, and the LGBT community" (Fukuyama, 2016) doesn't symbol negation of working-class' interest; but rather, they broaden the boundary of "lower class" to suit the requirement of globalization trend of more complex population structure. In other words, both two partisan powers reflect the need for globalization, and there's a vacuum of political representation for people who are in the middle and not benefit from the international free market. The vacuum was particularly present in the radical social change led by liberal globalization pursuit and how people evaluate the change psychologically.

1. Radical social change aroused by liberal economic pursuit of two parties

Economically, both parties promote further globalization processes. For white nationalists, Establishment Republicans evaluate expand of free-market worldwide more important than local residents' life quality (Bokhari & Yiannopoulos, 2016), while democrats represent new "suppressed groups" in order to smooth the conflict of heterogeneous groups in the process of capital and workforce flowing. Due to the political consensus on globalization, manufacturing moves out of the U.S. for lower production cost, while more immigrant cheap laborers flow in as a substitute of the

white workforce (Taub, 2016). Thus for the white working class, globalization decreased the working opportunity and increased competition in the employment market.

Despite the economic interest, the change of value and lifestyle pushed non-elite whites to more nationalism. The shift of traditional religious belief is the first significant change of value. From 2007 to 2014, the share of adults who identify themselves as Christians had dropped dramatically from 78.4% to 70.6%. Simultaneously, the religiously unaffiliated population, including atheist, agnostic or "nothing in particular", climbed from 16.1% to 22.8%. While the percentage of Americans who believe in non-Christian faiths, especially muslin and Hindu, rose from 4.7% in 2007 to 5.9% in 2014 (Pew Research Center, 2015 May). The rapid change of the religious environment, the ordinary white people—especially uneducated working class who rely on christian tradition to support their spiritual and social lives —has to confront more shock from heterogeneous religions in their neighborhood.

Secondly, the population who have political rights also changed largely from the 2012 election to 2016 due to the racial share of eligible voters shifted. The non-Hispanic white share of the electorate has fallen from 71% in 2012 to 69% in 2016. While Hispanic, Black, Asian and other ethnic minorities jumped from 29% to 31%. Overall, the net growth of the U.S. electorate grew 10.7 million in the past 4 years. Non-Hispanic white eligible voters only increase 3.2 million eligible voters, compared with a net growth of 7.5 million among Hispanics, Blacks, Asians and other minorities. (Krogstad, 2016). The shift of political preference caused by the change of racial shares of the voting population increased difficulty for non-elite white people to maintain their political tradition.

Thirdly, the public security situation also changed because of the terrorist attacks. There were 11 terrorist attack cases in 2014, 7 in 2015 and 15 in 2016, among all of those cases, 19 were Islamic terrorists, and 6 were racially related (Johnston, 2017). A number of white people who join white nationalism said the 2016 Orlando nightclub shooting and "Black Life Matters" movement awakened them from ignorance of politics and started facing their living situation (Yiannopoulos, 2016).

With the deepening of globalization, American white experienced a demographic shift in the religious and political fields. In the meantime, more racial conflicts happened around them because of a further mix of different ethnics. It is the necessary effect of a worldwide free market, but psychologically not easy for people who live within the process to accept the change.

2. Conservative instinct: the psychological reason for the discontent of the globalization process

Another crucial factor is that the conservative instinct of the white working-class makes them more tend to be nationalists. The main group of White Nationalists as "natural conservatives" in Milo's definition, who are "white, mostly male middle-American radicals" accepting the notion of identity politics to prioritize the interest of their own race. Psychologically, they prefer homogeneous, stable and hierarchic society to diverse, changeable and radically egalitarian ones. They are more likely to regard value and culture, specifically the European white tradition, as a more important source of happiness than economic growth. As a result, they believe current liberal policies and mainstream discourse represent the global elite's "foolish quest" to suppress the "universal instinct" for "belonging and a sense of common identity" rather than their interests (Yiannopoulos, 2016).

Specifically, the disgust of foreign immigrants and systematical anti-Semitism projected White Nationalists' anti-globalization attitude. No matter how immigrants labor soar GDP, they believe the particularity of their culture and genetic heritage shouldn't be substituted by the universalized multi-culture which matches the inhibition with alien group; while their elaboration of Judaism's nature of generalizing and radicalizing local culture to make it abstract, rootless and soilless (Ford, 2008) also revealed the fear of capital flow led by international corporations. Behind their hatred of foreign workers and Jews' capital is the anxiety of cultural shift. Therefore the conspiracy theories that Jews control politics, academia, and media to import "alien invasion" reflected their psychological rejection of globalization and their disappointment of lacking political representation.

To sum up, the internationalization process leads to a radical cultural shift and change of economical structure in current decades. The white working-class people who value cultural tradition more than GDP growth and make living by physical labor find their lifestyle was challenged while their employment opportunities decline. Meanwhile, the current partisan politics can't satisfy their appeal of slowing down internationalization. Thus the White Nationalists' anti-globalization ideology which is packed in exclusive racism and anti-Semitism gained great ground before the 2016 presidential election.

Conclusion

White nationalism is the evitable political trend in the current U.S. as identity politics makes the right and discourse of "minority" as new social norms, white people, especially middle-class white people, are hard to claim their identity. Meanwhile, the dominant position of the white middle class declined because of the demographic shift of the American social structure. In addition, as globalization becomes the common goal of both parties, the radical social change forces those who naturally prefer traditional and homogenous to seek for new representatives for their anti-globalization political appeal. Therefore the flourish of white nationalism is the reaction of the current political situation and people's sensibility.

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