

**PROTECTIONISM AND POPULISM:
TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS CHINA**



Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of

Master of Philosophy

In

International Relations

By

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Reg No: 02132011020

SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

QUAID-I-AZAM UNIVRSITY

ISLAMABAD

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Supervised By

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DECLARATION

It is certified that this is the result of my research and that it has not been submitted anywhere else for any degree. It is also certified that all the material quoted has been properly cited in the thesis.

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Dedication

To My Beloved Parents.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research work is the outcome of ingenious support received from many individuals. Firstly, I would like to mention my research supervisor Dr M. Nadeem Mirza, for his timely support and valuable input. It is the result of his quality supervision that made me able to improve my writing and research methods.

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ABSTRACT

The rise of populism in modern Western democracies is considered as the greatest challenge to the liberal democracy and multi-cultural global liberal order. The backlash to globalization and cosmopolitanism is evident from the recent rise of populism, which often is explained as a cultural backlash. Alternatively, economic insecurity perspective asserts that the uneven distribution of resources, technological advancement, and labor-capital imbalance created economic grievances and resentment among the leftovers which caused populism. The rise of President Trump as a populist leader in the US and his policy choices illustrates the domestic and foreign policy implications of Populism. Thus, this study takes into consideration few questions such as: What are the material and ideational factors responsible for President Trump's rise to Power? How does President Trump's political rhetoric relate to the broad political support received by these protectionist policies towards China? To answer these queries, the study hypothesized that President Trump opted protectionist economic policies towards China to consolidate his populist political narrative. Moreover, President Trump's election rhetoric for the restoration of past glory translated into popular policy choices which were instrumental in consolidating his in-group identity and electoral support base. The populist rhetoric and nationalist conception of trade and foreign policy rationalized President Trump's unilateral and protectionist trade policies towards China and other countries. Lastly, the study finds that President Trump's construction of China as an evil other and threat to sovereign people is a significant part of his election campaign and presidential years which he capitalized for consolidation of his in-group identity and populist support base.

INTRODUCTION

The recent resurgence of economic protectionism/ nationalism raised questions about the future of globalization and free trade which has been essence of modern liberal international order. Particularly, the western democracies being the architect of liberal political order, adopted the protectionist policies to support their political rhetoric. Constructivist explanations suggest that due to globalization the rigidity of identities is on decline and the boundaries of identities are being blurred. Populist political rhetoric provides a false sense of stability and predictability by giving the hope of restoration of the so-called glory of the past. These populist narratives need an external foe or competitor and configuration of us or in-group identity against them or out-group.

The economic policies of Trump administration actions against China were directly impacting American people, who were bearing cost of these tariffs and trade war. But these policies were benefiting President Trump ideationally and in consolidating its ingroup political support and in construction of outgroup enemy, that China is a foe that manipulates rules to hurt American economy.

The existing literature on political economy promotes rationality in terms of cost and benefit analysis. But sometimes states take decisions on the basis of ideational factors/forces. Trump administration got power on a specific political and economic narrative. To maintain the cohesion of his narrative President Trump needed to consolidate his in-group support base through the construction of an external enemy, and China was reasonable target and trade war was a favorable tool for trump to promote his narrative.¹

Rise of populism in the modern world, particularly in democratic states, is a significant development in the contemporary political context. President Trump's rise to power, Brexit and populist tendencies in Europe emphasize the prominence of the implications of these political developments. The causes and implication of rising tendencies are a

¹ Alexander Jedinger and Axel M. Burger, "The Ideological Foundations of Economic Protectionism: Authoritarianism, Social Dominance Orientation, and the Moderating Role of Political Involvement," *Political Psychology* 41, no. 2 (2020): 441, <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12627>.

prominent part of contemporary political discourse and literature. The existing literature distinguishes the right wing and left wing populist tendencies based on their ideological preferences and political priorities.² The left wing-populism tends to propagate, its claims of representing will of the people against the corrupt elite, on grounds of economic inequality and uneven distribution of benefits of globalization and free trade.³ On the other hand, the right-wing support base consolidates its narrative on ethno-cultural basis and anti-immigration.

The relation between populist political narrative and protectionist economic policies is significant to be explored and explained because of the remarkable rise of both these phenomena simultaneously. President Trump in his election campaign upheld his populist political rhetoric with a certain economic agenda which in turn reflected in his economic policies. The correlation between these two variables is important to be explained in contemporary international political and economic context.

Research Questions

1. What are the material and ideational factors responsible for President Trump's rise to Power?
2. What explains President Trump's choice of politically popular and costly economic policies?
3. How does President Trump's political rhetoric relate to the broad political support received by these protectionist policies towards China?
4. Why protectionist policies towards China were significant in consolidating President Trump's populist agenda?

² Yotam Margalit, "Economic Insecurity and the Causes of Populism, Reconsidered," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33, no. 4 (November 2019): 152–70, <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.33.4.152>.

³ Jeroen van der Waal and Willem de Koster, "Populism and Support for Protectionism: The Relevance of Opposition to Trade Openness for Leftist and Rightist Populist Voting in The Netherlands," *Political Studies* 66, no. 3 (August 1, 2018): 560–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321717723505>.

Hypothesis

President Trump opted protectionist economic policies towards China to consolidate his populist political narrative.

Theoretical Framework

Constructivism assumes that the world around us is socially constructed based on certain norms, ideas, and values. Thus, ideas have independent role in the construction of what exists out there. Hence, interests which states pursue are social constructions, according to ideas and norms, rather than objective realities. It argues that the structure of international system does not dictate the behavior the states; it is the interactions and intersubjective understandings of the states that give rise to condition of anarchy. Norms and cultural values shape the behavior of individuals. Furthermore, national norms impact states' foreign policy decisions and same goes with international norms. Our belief/identity/ideology play a crucial role in the construction of our reality. What exists as hegemonic reality is how it is constructed, and socially and culturally perceived and reflected upon.

Literature Review

This study assumed to focus on resurgence of economic protectionism and its relation to populist political construction emphasizing on President Trump's populist political rhetoric and protectionist economic policies. Jeroen Vander Wall explores explanations for populist voting behavior, in Netherlands, and support for protectionism based on three potential explanations- economic concerns, cultural concerns, and political distrust.⁴ This study separates leftist and right-wing populist variants because of their political priorities and agendas in the explanations of populist voter support for protectionism. It concludes, based on survey results, that the economic concerns are not drivers of support for protectionism, even in times of economic crises. It argues that leftist populist parties and their support base has criticized and opposed the neo-liberal economic policies because of

⁴ van der Waal and de Koster.

their economic egalitarian approach, they argue that free trade increases economic inequality. Despite these claims of the leftist populist, the survey results disprove any direct relationship between leftist populist voter's support for economic protectionism. However, it argues that support for protectionism is part of cultural concerns of right-wing populist voter behavior. Moreover, political distrust and resistance against elitist politics is part of the agenda of both faction's populist parties but support for protection is not mediating the link between voter's behavior and political distrust.

Quinones and Gates analyze the relation of economic risks and protectionist policies through cross-sectional data model to empirically test the propositions of the study. It argues that countries with primary commodities as their exports are prone to economic risk and therefore likely to adopt protectionist economic policies.⁵ Secondly, it argues that governments with high resources may compensate economic risks with their resources and avoid protectionist policies. It tests the proposition that countries with huge internal markets are likely to oppose free trade. The relation between economic risks and protectionist economic policies is instrumental in understanding the political dynamics of economic risks and protectionism.

Rodrick explains the causes of recent surge of populism in the age of globalization. It argues that globalization or 'hyper globalization' caused populism due to several reasons, populism is the backlash of globalization. It argues that, on one hand, the uneven economic benefits of globalization caused economic anxiety among the specific section of people and populist leaders and populist parties mobilized their support base, based on these economic fault lines.⁶ Secondly, the ethno-cultural and immigration issues remained prominent among the causes of right-wing populism in the advanced economies or developed world, like Europe and United States of America.

Siles-Brügge explains the resilience of free trade system and its resistance to protectionist outrages time and again. It argues that free trade system benefited different stakeholders

⁵ Sherry Bennett Quiñones and Scott Gates, "Economic Risk and the Politics of Protectionism," *International Interactions*, January 9, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629508434860>.

⁶ Dani Rodrik, "Populism and the Economics of Globalization," *Journal of International Business Policy* 1, no. 1–2 (June 2018): 12–33, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-018-0001-4>.

in the system and remained instrumental in poverty eradication.⁷ This research study highlights different explanations for the resilience of the free trade global economic system, like the rational institutionalist argue that the institutional infrastructure constrained any kind of infiltration into the system by protectionist forces. Furthermore, other liberal explanations argue that interdependency encourages free trade and increasing interdependency opposed protectionist forces in the system. Despite all these explanations Siles-Brügge argues that these accounts provide an insufficient account of explaining the resilience of free trade system and claims that this is not the complete story. This study emphasizes on a constructivist explanation for the resilience of free trade global economic system and association of different state into the system, even during the crises situations. This constructivist account argues that notions and ideas about the openness of trading system have embedded into the policy discourse which mediate the pressures of protectionist incursions and role of policy elite. It develops that the construction of ideas and discourses about of free trade global economic system helped the system to sustain protectionist pressures and attract the stakeholder to remain associated with the system.

Oatley and Galantucci tends to explain the reasons for demand for protections time and again and rise and fall during different periods of time. It argues that the demand for protection during different times is the result of changes in real exchange rates because the industries adjust their trading policies according to the real exchange rates to which cause the demand for protections from the industries. Furthermore, it argues that the rise and fall of demands for protection is conditioned with the industry's comparative advantage.⁸ This study develops the relation between incentive for the demand of protection and exchange rate environment by empirically testing antidumping petitions. The study explores that there are multiple variables in the study of demand for protection, but the most significant variable is exchange rate environment. It explains that as the value of currency/dollar increases the incentive to demand protection rises because of

⁷ Gabriel Siles-Brügge, "Explaining the Resilience of Free Trade: The Smoot–Hawley Myth and the Crisis," *Review of International Political Economy* 21, no. 3 (May 4, 2014): 535–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2013.830979>.

⁸ Thomas Oatley and Robert Galantucci, "The Dollar and the Demand for Protection," *International Interactions* 45, no. 2 (March 4, 2019): 267–88, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2019.1551006>.

different factors including the rise in cost of production. These factors analyzed through empirical analysis by analyzing the protection filings and antidumping petition filings in United States of America from 1974 to 2012.

Jedinger and Burger highlights the absence of research on the ideological roots of economic globalization and foreign trade from a psychological perspective. It approves that both these variables remained an integral part of political discourse in different societies and agrees that there are negative tendencies in different parts of the world but psychological investigations to trace the ideological roots these phenomena are absent from existing literature⁹. This study is a psychological perspective on the ideological foundations of economic globalization and foreign trade and investigates rise of right - wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation; the direct impacts of these tendencies on the trade attitudes, the data has been taken from two countries Germany and Unites States. The study constitutes that RWA augurs‘ protectionism beyond rationalist approach of cost and benefit analysis and economic self-interest; furthermore, it argues that this relationship of RWA and demand for protection is mediated by political factors. This study emphasizes on the ideological foundations of economic protectionism and economic globalization and the psychological reflections on trade attitudes of people.

Olaniyi Evans emphasizes on the implications of US-China trade war on global economy. This study argues that protectionist trade policies of United States towards China have global implications, beyond bilateral economic damage. It discusses possible implications on domestic economies and global exports. This study concludes that protectionist policies by trump administration towards China, and Chine’s retaliation will increase inflation, cost of exports will rise, it will impact future investment and businesses, and in this trade war the global economy will be the loser.¹⁰

Boucher and Thies elaborate the implications of populist rhetoric on foreign policy and global trade. According to the authors, social media networks such as Twitter has

⁹ Jedinger and Burger, –The Ideological Foundations of Economic Protectionism.”

¹⁰ Olaniyi Evans, –The Effects of US-China Trade War and Trumponomics,” *Forum Scientiae Oeconomia* 7, no. 1 (2019): 47–55.

happened to be an authentic and handful source for the spread of populist narrative around the world. In case of the US, the populist President Trump was able to construct public discourse on his trade policies and orientations with the help of a polarized social network. In this regard, President trump has used his Twitter space to access people and built their mindset based on specific circumstances such as _us vs them' or _good vs bad'. Furthermore, the authors also elucidate this use of social populist narrative on his trade and tariff policy where he frequently criticized the Chinese enterprises and government.¹¹

Research Methodology

This research aims to decipher President Trump's legacy vis-a-vis China. President Trump's election based on populist narrative required an external competitor therefor the construction of an external enemy was instrumental in consolidating his ingroup identity. President Trump's protectionist economic policies and trade war with China were politically strengthening his populist narrative. This study is a qualitative analysis of President Trump's election campaign promises and rhetoric and his protectionist economic polices derived by ideational factors. Content analysis of President Trump's twitter and policy statement is the analytical basis of this study. Both primary and secondary data sources will be utilized for the inquiry of research questions. For Primary sources, tweets, policy documents are analyzed, and secondary sources include research articles, books, and research reports.

Scope of Research

This study is explanatory research which aims to explain the ideational factors responsible for Trump administrations protectionist policies which directly impacted the American people. These economic policies were serving President Trump's populist political narrative and consolidation of an ingroup identity against an external enemy, China. This study thematically emphasizes on the current trends of populism and economic protectionism particularly the rise populism in western democracies, especially

¹¹ Jean-Christophe Boucher and Cameron G. Thies, —I Am a Tariff Man': The Power of Populist Foreign Policy Rhetoric under President Trump,” *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 2 (April 1, 2019): 712–22, <https://doi.org/10.1086/702229>.

America. This study analyzes president Trump's protectionist policies towards China and his legacy of constructing an enemy in shape China, which is now a bi-partisan reality in American Politics.

Organization of Research

Introduction

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 2: Populism and Protectionism in American Context

Chapter 3: Anti-China Rhetoric in Trump's Arrival to The White House and Its Policy Implications

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion

Conclusion

CHAPTER 01

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

The mainstream theories of international relations, Liberalism and Realism, explained and examined world affairs under rationalist economic theory of scientific analysis, Positivism. These two traditions remained engaged in debates over state behavior, cooperative and competitive nature of international politics under the given condition of anarchic nature of international system. Neo-realists argue that international system (structure) is anarchic, and it restricts and constraints state (actor) actions in a given context. Neo-realism emphasizes the materialist factors like military capability and wealth in shaping the behavior of states. The neo-realist argument suggests that in an anarchic world the distribution of material powers explains the conception of balance of power and state behavior. The material conception of neo-realist argument includes power and national interest as material capabilities to understand international politics.¹² Moreover, the conception of power is narrowly defined in terms of military capabilities and aiding resources which include economic resources and other supporting capabilities. Secondly, national interest is conceptualized as states desire to attain power and security in given context of anarchy, to ensure survival through balance of power. Power and national interest are regarded as objective driving forces in anarchic international structure to attain balance of power, which explains state behavior and action.¹³ Neo-Realism assumes that there is a lack of global hegemonic authority to maintain order of international system; therefore, the states, the most significant actors in international system have limited choices. It explains that anarchy is present out there as an objective reality. The anarchic structure presents state a situation in which states must ensure their security and survival, core national interest, through balancing the power of the other states. To achieve this goal, states must rely on self-help. It depicts that international

¹² Robert H. Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, Fifth edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 209–30.

¹³ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1st edition (Long Grove, Ill: Waveland Press, 2010).

anarchic system essentially leads states towards the self-help system of power and security maximization for Balance of Power. Neo-realist conception of international system with anarchy with as a permanent feature of the system signifies the role of materialist factors in international system. Ideational factor matters less or negligible in neo-realist explanation, because of anarchy as starting point of the theory.

The constructivist perspective in international relations is criticism on the material assumptions of traditional international relations theory for the explanation of international politics. The constructivist perspective argues that the materialist theoretical traditions are incapable of presenting comprehensive explanations for international politics. The constructivist perspective of international relations proposes a distinct framework of analysis of international politics which deviates from traditional theories of the discipline. The primary assumptions of constructivism include the primacy of ideational factors in explaining and understanding international politics, and prospects of change in behavior of states and change in international system.

This theoretical approach introduces the social aspects of international relations in its analytical framework. The traditional IR theories emphasized on the given anarchic nature of international explanation of system and assume anarchy as permanent feature of international system. The constructivist perspective disputes this static material logic of traditional theories and accentuates on the possibility of change in identities and interests and therefore state behavior as well.¹⁴ Constructivism emphasizes on the role of ideas, norms, values, culture, knowledge, shared beliefs, and intersubjective understanding of ideas in social life/ international life. Constructivism asserts that the role of shared beliefs and ideas in the form of ideational factors is essential in understanding the behavior of states as actors in the context of international system.

¹⁴ Timothy Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 187–201.

1.2 Primary Assumptions of Social Constructivism

The failure of mainstream theories of international relations, Neo-realism, and neo-liberalism, to predict and explain the demise of Soviet Union and transformation of international system gave rise the criticism on the materialist and static conception of international system of anarchy.¹⁵ The constructivist approach offers an alternative approach to explain and understand international politics beyond materialist approaches, which is based on ideational factors. The alternative approach to anarchy, and the role of norms, values, identity, and other social factors in the formation of identity and interests, the mutual constituent nature of agency and structure, and interaction between the states shape state preferences and policy choices are significant in Constructivist Perspective of International Relations. Constructivism signifies the role of ideational factors as primary factors to understand state behavior; it also acknowledges the role of material forces but as of secondary significance. Following are the key assumptions of constructivism which signifies the theoretical approach of this study

1.2.1 Anarchy: An Objective Reality or a Social Construction

The neo-realist and neoliberal perspectives of international relations presume anarchy as an objective reality, and it influences the state behavior of cooperation and confrontation. The assumption of anarchy as an objective reality led to the second assumption which contends that anarchy must essentially compel states for self-help, according to neo-realist perspective.¹⁶ For neo-liberal perspective, although anarchy is a permanent feature of international politics, but its effects can be minimized through cooperation; it can be achieved through the regulatory framework of international institutions. Moreover, International organizations regulate and facilitate cooperation which resultantly can create interdependence through bilateral and multilateral trade. Interdependence constrains

¹⁵ Muhammad Nadeem Mirza, "Enduring Legacy of Realism and the US Foreign Policy: Dynamics of Prudence, National Interest and Balance of Power," *Orient Research Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 14.

¹⁶ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

states from choosing conflict and confrontation over cooperation and peaceful coexistence.¹⁷

Constructivist perspective discards the notion of anarchy offered by neo-realist and neo-liberal. It argues that identities and interests are not for granted, as assumed by the neo-realist perspective. It also disputes the neo-realist conclusion that anarchy necessarily leads to self-help balancing of power. Alexander Wendt argues that it cannot be concluded a priori or taken for granted; it is the interaction between the actors(states) which decides their behavior towards each other¹⁸. The process of interactions gives rise to or generates identities and therefore interests. Wendt argues that constructivist social theory asserts that actors, individuals or states, act towards situations or objects based on the meaning they have for those situations and objects.¹⁹ It suggests that the process of construction of identities and interests, as primary factors, along with structural constraints and opportunities explains the behavior of state; structural factors alone are incapable explaining actor A's action towards state B. An actor A acts differently towards an B than actor C because both, B and C, have different meanings for actor A. This meaning is constituted during the process of interaction of actor A with both the actors, argues Wendt.

For instance, United States normalized its trade relations with China through a Congress act of US-China Relationship act and extended 1998's 'normal trade relations' (PNR) into 'permanent normal trade relations' (PNTR); previously China was a 'non-market Economy' alongside Soviet Union, under the trade act of 1974.²⁰ Consequently, this paved the way for Chinese accession to World Trade Organization (WTO). Neo-realist perspective of anarchy and distribution of power conception of Power is insufficient to explain this transformation and change in the relations between United States and China, because of its narrow materialistic and static approach. Social Constructivist perspective

¹⁷ Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 209–30.

¹⁸ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391–425, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300027764>.

¹⁹ Wendt.

²⁰ Reihan Salam, "Normalizing Trade Relations With China Was a Mistake," *The Atlantic*, June 8, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/06/normalizing-trade-relations-with-china-was-a-mistake/562403/>.

explains the transformation in relations in terms of change in identities and interests which are outcomes of interactions between the states. Interaction between actors mutually constituted the meaning of each with respect to other which transformed the behavior of the actors respectively. The conception of China for United States in 1974 was a ‘nonmarket economy’ which transformed with continuous interactions and this conception changed in 2000, as an emerging potential market for world economy. This transformation occurred due to intersubjective and shared understanding of both actors to the meaning they have towards each other.

1.2.2 Mutually Constituted Relationship of Agency and Structure

Anarchy is explained and understood as a structural constraint which constrains state action and affects state behavior. The neo-realist assumption of anarchy as an objective reality and structural constraint depicts neo-realist perspective of social and political phenomenon and structural understanding of existing political and social reality. The constructivist ontology disputes the objectivist/ foundationalist ontological position of neo-realist perspective. The constructivist ontology assumes that existence of a particular structure is not independent of socialization or interaction of actors. It argues that structure and social context is outcome of the interaction between social and political actors, the nature of actors’ interaction impacts the construction of a specific structural and social context.²¹ In addition to this, it also contends that structure and social context impacts agency/actors’ interaction with each other and their perception of structure. State action is not independent of structural context, but structures are not of permanent existence, structures transform because of transformation of interactions between the actors. Transformation of state identities change their perception of other which results into transformed attitudes or behaviors towards other. Consequently, the change in interactions transform the structures and social context. This logic leads to the constructivist assumption that structure and agency are mutually constitutive and declines the structure centric and agency centric explanations.

²¹ Jonathan Grix, “Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research,” *Politics* 22, no. 3 (2002): 175–86, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.00173>.

1.2.3 Material vs Ideational Factors

The distinction between material and ideational factors can be drawn from two competing theoretical frameworks of international relations: neo-realism and social constructivism. The neo-realist perspective emphasizes on the material capabilities for survival in an anarchic structure which is narrowly categorized as materialist structure. It logically follows the primary assumptions of the theory that self-interested and self-help system requires to enhance military capabilities to primary state objective of survival. In this context, the relative distribution of power is significant to understand the behavior of state and state interactions. States are in continuous competition with each other, and enhancement of military strength is essential to survive, an increase in power of a unit increases the insecurity of other which is termed as security dilemma. To overcome, security dilemma states tend to emulate the most powerful unit and conflict arises due to continues competition and conflict. This analytical fails to explain ideas and ideational factors to explain international political landscape. Neo-realism gives primary significance to material factors and their understanding, ideational factors matter less or negligible in their analysis.²²

In contrast, social constructivism signifies the role of identity and ideational factors as primary determinants of international politics and state action. In addition to this, constructivists assert that material capabilities cannot be interpreted and explained without the meaning attached to them.²³ Furthermore, constructivists also claim materialist structure is insufficient and incapable to explain anarchic logic of structure. In constructivist perspective anarchy structure is not a given and permanent feature of international politics, “anarchy is what state make of it”, claims Alexander Wendt, “structure has no existence or causal powers apart from process”.²⁴ Social constructivism acknowledges the role of material factors in understanding and explanation of conflict and anarchy, these factors are of secondary importance. For social constructivists role of

²² Georg Sørensen, “The Case for Combining Material Forces and Ideas in the Study of IR,” *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (March 2008), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107087768>.

²³ Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, “Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7, no. 2 (April 1, 2005): 3–12, <https://doi.org/10.1162/1520397053630574>.

²⁴ Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It.”

ideas/identity is primary in determining the interests of actors which shapes the nature of interaction between the states(process). This logic suggests that ideational factors are primary in understanding and explaining anarchy, competition, and conflict between the actors.

For instance, China's increasing material capabilities particularly its military capabilities are a sign of worry for United States, but it is a secondary significance. The primary factors are the transformation of interests and identities, and the nature of interaction between both states determines the competitive and conflictual tendencies of both states towards each other.

1.2.4 Intersubjectivity /Shared Knowledge/Shared Understanding

Constructivist perspective assumes a social ontology and refuses the rational individualist ontology. The rationalist logic of ontology presents an individualist ontology of actors either states or individuals. The individualist actors described as rational beings based on self-interested approach of survival. States in an anarchic international system in which there is no absolute authority to protect their interests and manage their relations. In these circumstances they have limited choices and must adopt a self-interested approach to ensure their survival. These individual states form the broader structure of the world system in which these states are in competition with each other, the competitive socialization of states fosters the anarchic outcomes of international structure, states Kenneth Waltz.²⁵ In contrast, the social ontology of constructivism claims a distinct position. It claims that states being individual/states give meaning to themselves and their actions in a normative context which identifies the actors and shape their understanding of other, their choices and actions.²⁶ It can be conceptualized as the realities around us in social realm exist because of our agreement of their existence, and this agreement of existence is termed as intersubjective understanding. International system and institutions exist because there is a shared understanding of their existence among the actors.²⁷ The

²⁵ Dunne, Kurki, and Smith, *International Relations Theories*, 187–201.

²⁶ Barry Smith and John Searle, "The Construction of Social Reality: An Exchange," *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 62, no. 1 (2003): 285–309.

²⁷ Dunne, Kurki, and Smith, *International Relations Theories*, 187–201.

logic of social construction asserts that the concept of sovereignty and respect for sovereign status of each other among the states exist because states have the shared understanding and intersubjective knowledge of sovereignty and a shared acceptance of the concept.

1.5 Definitional Issues

1.5.1 Populism

Populism is a contested phenomenon and studied under various conceptualizations. This phenomenon got prominence in academia in last two decades, and scholars investigated various populist movement in different socio-economic and cultural contexts. The origin of the term ‘Populism’ dates to the origin of democratic legitimacy in modern history, but the term is first used in nineteenth century for various political movements in Americas and Europe.²⁸ Populism is defined sometimes as an ideology, but others as an election strategy, and as a political movement in some cases. In addition to the contested nature of Populism, it has been associated with distinct political, economic, and socio-cultural phenomena in different regions of the world. In Europe populism is defined under the conceptual premise of anti-immigration political tendencies and rising xenophobic social and political inclinations, and it is often equated with these phenomena. In Latin America, its root causes and conceptual explanation and interpretation is grounded on economic grievances like failed economic policies, unequal and uneven distribution of resources, and labor capital imbalance.²⁹ It suggests that populism is a contested term and the literature on the definition and conceptualization is diverse and cumbersome, but it is essential to agree on a single, inclusive, and cohesive definition for this study to avoid divergence from the objectives of the study.

²⁸ Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser et al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, First edition, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford, United Kingdom ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 17, <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780198803560>.

²⁹ Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 02, <https://www.veryshortintroductions.com/view/10.1093/actrade/9780190234874.001.0001/actrade-9780190234874>.

The popular agency approach defines populism as a democratic way of life, based on people's engagement of politics, popular political participation. This approach describes populism as a phenomenon of mobilizing people and creating a communication model which promotes democratic norms of people's rule and accountability before the people.³⁰ This positive depiction of populism and interpretation of positivism specifically as a democratic phenomenon of public participation and democratic communication model, used by academics like Lawrence Goodwyn and other academics who studied populism in the North American context. Laclau's Model of Populism is associated with Ernesto Laclau, philosophically grounded in political philosophy, and theoretically related to critical theory, later adopted by other political theorists. This model justifies populism as an emancipatory force and describes it as a necessary component of the nature of politics in general.³¹ It explains that conflict is rooted in democratic politics and the reintroduction of conflict in politics serves the cause of popular mobilization which includes the leftovers of the society. This model of populism prefers radical democracy over liberal democracy because it argues that radical democracy forces the status quo to withdraw in favor of popular mobilization, and change occurs in this way.³²

Moreover, apart from these approaches, the socio-economic approach to populism is also prominent in populist literature, particularly in studies of the populist phenomenon in Latin American countries. The primary argument of this approach is that populism in its essence is a form of failed economic policies, economic stagnation in the form of foreign debts and strict economic adjustment programs. The populist economy includes the reckless economic programs of redistribution of wealth and economy which contains excessive public spending for popular objectives. Besides this, contemporary approaches to populism propose that it is a style of politics and political strategy to gain power and maintain it for a long term. This approach explains the strategies adopted by populist parties and leaders to gain; the rise of charismatic leaders and their unconventional and direct connection with masses explains populism as a political strategy. In similar way, the

³⁰ Mudde and Kaltwasser, 3.

³¹ Mudde and Kaltwasser, 4.

³² Yannis Stavrakakis, —Anomies of Formalism: Laclau's Theory of Populism and the Lessons from Religious Populism in Greece," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9, no. 3 (October 2004): 253–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1356931042000263519>.

folkloric style of politics also termed an approach to populism, in which populist parties and populist leaders mobilize people using informal language and communication strategies.³³ This approach is prominent in communication studies and journalistic studies of populism. Populist leaders disrespect the formal communication and personal projection like dress code and appearance to gain attraction and inspire and mobilize people; depicts that they are the part of the people and standing for ‘people’ against ‘elite’ and status quo.

The ideational approach to populism defines it as a thin-centered ideology because of the malleable essence of the phenomenon; it always appears or is associated with other political ideologies, and employs ideas from established political ideologies.³⁴ Populism is termed as thin centered because it lacks comprehensive set of normative ideas about the nature and organization of politics and society or it lacks a worldview of its own, it is attached with different other political ideologies in various contexts of time and space. The lack of intellectual cohesion and conceptual fluidity makes it a complex phenomenon to be explained or interpreted by its own. The ideational approach defines Populism as *“a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, the ‘pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the Volonté Générale (general will) of the people”*.³⁵ This definition presents three core features or components of populism; the people, corrupt elite, and general will of the people, and it offers an absolute concept of general will which threatens the pluralistic and diverse sections of the society which are not included in the people. Hence, it suggests that the narrow populist conception of homogenized people may lead towards authoritarian and dictatorial tendencies, excluding immigrants, religious and ethnic minorities from the ‘people’.

However, to distinguish political populism from economic populism and determine whether populism is an ideology, thin or thick, or not, is significant to make a clear distinction of

³³ Mudde and Kaltwasser, *Populism*, 4.

³⁴ Jan-Werner Müller, *What Is Populism?* (United States of America: UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS PHILADELPHIA, 2016), <https://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15615.html>.

³⁵ Mudde and Kaltwasser, *Populism*, 6.

theses parallel narratives and conceptual understandings of Populism.³⁶ Political populism is defined as *populism is a way of doing politics in which ‘the people’ are pitted in conflict against others—various ‘elites’, local minorities, immigrants, foreigners.*³⁷ This definition proposed by Jan-Werner Muller unambiguously stresses on the conflictual nature of populism; and it conceptualizes on moral grounds, the people ‘good’ including those on the side of people and elite ‘the corrupt and evil’ including all other who are supporting the elite. It suggests that it divides the society into homogenized groups: people and elite and discourages pluralism as a social and political fabric of the society.³⁸ According to this conception, populism lacks a comprehensive set of ideas to address the concerned political and social questions and problems; hence, it suggests that populism is not an ideology.

1.5.2 Protectionism

Why countries erect trade barriers, tariffs, and non-tariff barriers, on imports? And why states liberalize trade? Understanding the rationale behind protection and liberalization is of primary significance to analyze trade policy and its economic and political influence on international politics, relations between the states, and international structure. Here, the primary concern is What protectionism and liberalization means, what are objectives of protectionism, its significance in understanding President Trumps trade and economic policies towards China, and US-China competition of economic and political superiority. Trade policies are often influenced by political factors and contain political objectives in long run; therefore, understanding trade polices solely in economic realm will not serve the objectives of this study. In democratic countries political parties come to power based on proposed polices and election manifestos, it influences their policy choices to serve and please their constituency. Furthermore, political leaders and interest groups influence the policy making mechanisms to achieve their interests and objectives. Politics interferes

³⁶ Andrés Velasco, “Populism and Identity Politics,” *LSE Public Policy Review* 1, no. 1 (July 20, 2020): 2, <https://doi.org/10.31389/lseppr.1>.

³⁷ Müller, *What Is Populism*.

³⁸ Velasco, “Populism and Identity Politics,” 2.

and intrudes economic and trade policy making; the resultant outcomes also include political impacts.³⁹

The political economy perspective of trade policies encompasses multi-dimensional analytical factors which include both the political and economic explanations and their interdependent influence over each other. The theoretical and conceptual understanding of Protectionism is grounded in Mercantilist theory of economy/ political economy. Mercantilism is characterized with state intervention in maintaining economy and market to ensure wealth and economic well-being of the state.⁴⁰ There is a diverse set of propositions and theoretical assumptions associated with mercantilist school of thought. In brief, the central or most prominent argument of mercantilism is the emphasis on the positive maintenance of balance of trade in the favor of state through encouraging exports and constraining imports. Furthermore, mercantilism beliefs that enhancing state's wealth and power is essential for resource allocation, both at home and internationally. The mercantilist argument of state's prevention of negative balance of trade and trade deficit proposes protection of domestic market and industry through protectionist measures.⁴¹

The term protectionism refers state's policies to erect trade barriers, tariffs, or non-tariff barrier, to protect domestic market and industry, ensure positive trade balance and restrict trade deficit, and constrain imports or at least maintain export-import balance. The objectives for protectionism can be analyzed in domestic and international context. The domestic rational for protectionism include the protection of infant industries from giant international competitors, national security is another rational for protection of crucial sectors related to security of the state, income redistribution, protection of jobs, and collection of revenue from tariffs on imports. In addition to domestic rationales, there are international rationales for protectionist policies, for instance, imposition of tariffs to improve the terms of trade, balance of payments in case of trade deficit, and strategic

³⁹ Arvid Lukauskas, "The Political Economy of Protectionism," in *Handbook of Trade Policy for Development*, ed. Arvid Lukauskas, Robert M. Stern, and Gianni Zanini (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 223–24, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199680405.001.0001>.

⁴⁰ Renée Marlin-Bennett and David K. Johnson, "International Political Economy: Overview and Conceptualization," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, March 1, 2010, 4, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.239>.

⁴¹ Marlin-Bennett and Johnson, 5.

trade.⁴² These rationales for protectionism and explain trump administration's protectionist measures on Chinese imports to restrict repeated trade deficit with China. In addition to the economic argument, the political argument illustrates the domestic rationales of protections of certain industries like steel, centered in swing states Ohio and Pennsylvania for republican vote. In retaliation, and because of trade war, the agricultural paid the price on extra duties on exports.⁴³

⁴² Lukauskas, "The Political Economy of Protectionism," 224–31.

⁴³ Pablo D Fajgelbaum et al., "The Return to Protectionism*," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 135, no. 1 (February 1, 2020): 1–55, <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjz036>.

CHAPTER 02

POPULISM AND PROTECTIONISM IN AMERICAN CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

The populist style of politics and scholarly work on understanding and interpreting populism got much significance in contemporary global politics, but the roots of populist agenda are embedded in deep historical discourses and mass movements. There are different waves of populism and populist politics in history of United States (US) and other parts of the world, which are instrumental in understanding the contemporary rise of populism globally. The rise of populism in last two decades is widespread and across different regions of the world, expanded from Europe to Latin America, from India to United States, and other democratic states of the world. The contemporary wave of populism is often considered as a threat to liberal democracy and liberal international order because the champions of democracy and liberal international order United States and Europe are most effected parts of the world. The rise of President Donald Trump to the presidency and Bernie Sanders to the democratic nominations depicts the deep-rooted embeddedness of populist elements/discourses in US politics. The extreme polarization in domestic politics, withdrawal from international commitments and multilateralism, and extreme competition with China for global dominance reshaped the domestic priorities of US politics and its international preferences. The rationale for historical analysis of populism in US politics is to understand and interpret the contemporary currents of populism in American context and its far-reaching global repercussions.

The intellectual history of populism is diverse, contrasting, and confusing, which often leads to different and conflicting conclusions.⁴⁴ The historical scholarly work on populism

⁴⁴ JOSEPH LOWNDES, "POPULISM IN THE UNITED STATES," in *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, ed. Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser et al., First edition, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford, United Kingdom ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 299–300, <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780198803560>.

in United States include and encompass a diverse set of factors which inflicted populist movement, because of which there are diverse and conflicting conclusions it leads to. The Jacksonian era of populist democracy which determines some key features of populist politics in American context which are often associated with the contemporary populist movements. The popular self-claimed representation of ‘the people’ who are leftovers against the wealthy and powerful ‘elite’ who are thriving at the cost of the people. The key features of Jacksonian politics, majority rule, equality of male, and limited government, are prominent in populist rhetoric in contemporary context but with modified and evolved versions.⁴⁵

Two prominent Populist variants in American political history, often categorized as left-wing populism and right-wing populism, are crucial to understand populist outburst in US in various historical eras. The left-wing populism often observed to illustrate its hatred against the economic elite who have established their monopoly over capital and labor resources. In contrast, the competing right-wing tradition in US’s political history portrays non-white people and the corrupt ruling elite as adversary of the people, defined people in narrow racial and nativist term. Moreover, the term populism itself is a contested and highly disputed phenomenon. However, President Andrew Jackson’s political rhetoric of people’s liberty and freedom and the idea of popular will resounded in American political discourses for a long time and still part of contemporary populist strategy.⁴⁶ Jacksonian style of politics and rhetoric for the people and his presentation of corrupt elite against the poor people attracted a coalition of workers, farmers, middle class people and countryside agrarians opposed to bankers and industrialists.⁴⁷ The use of rhetoric to pursue people to attain power and maintain a decisive and powerful in the presidency and disdain for institutional constraints provide fundamental idea about the

⁴⁵ Harry L. Watson, —Andrew Jackson’s Populism,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (2017): 218–39.

⁴⁶ Michael Kazin, —Trump and American Populism: Old Whine, New Bottles,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 6 (2016): 17–24.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Nadeem Mirza, Lubna Abid Ali, and Irfan Hasnain Qaisrani, —Populism in the United States: Binary Constructions by Donald Trump in the Domestic and Foreign Policies,” *Global Social Sciences Review* 6, no. 3 (October 30, 2021): 59–71.

roots of populism in American politics, which later political leaders, activists, and presidents often followed the suit, either left-wing or right-wing populist forces.⁴⁸

2.2 Populism in America: A Historical Analysis

2.2.1 A Nineteenth Century Historical Perspective

From President Andrew Jackson to President Trump American politics witnessed various populist movements and the claim for the representation of common people, but the term populist originated in 1891 with an alliance of farmers ‘populist’ which advocated the rights of the agrarian people against the bankers, industrialists and the monopolies over wealth, this alliance later transformed into the people’s party, the alliance of farmers, worker organizations and labor unions also termed as third party.⁴⁹ The key objective of the people’s party was to assure the rule of the people, government of the people, and remove the monopoly of wealthy elite from power corridor of government and restore common people’s rule.⁵⁰ The progressive objectives and demands of people’s party which included concerns of farmers and workers, the smooth and easy supply of money supply at a time of economic sufferings of the farmers and workers of South, in the wake no government support, identifies it as a left-wing strain of populism, this movement also retains a xenophobic tendency and hatred against urban centers, big cities and cosmopolitanism.

Simultaneously, a right-wing populist phenomenon can be witnessed during the late nineteenth century, with an alternative approach to rising economic grievances of inequality.⁵¹ The proponent advocated xenophobic propositions against the immigrant labor force which is coming from China and Japan; its aim was to restrict immigration from given countries based on racial prejudice. The champion of this movement Denis Keary formed the Workingmen’s Party of California (WPC) which lobbied against Chinese immigrants, ultimately led to Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

⁴⁸ Watson, —Andrew Jackson’s Populism.”

⁴⁹ Benjamin Moffitt, *The Global Rise of Populism: Performance, Political Style, and Representation* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2016), 20–22.

⁵⁰ Kazin, —Trump and American Populism.”

⁵¹ Kazin.

Populist party's left-wing agenda of economic inequality and political gradients of the people' and Denis Keary's WPC's racial xenophobic rhetoric to address political and social inequalities demonstrate the variations in populist politics in US history.⁵²

2.2.2 Twentieth Century Resurgence of Populism in American Politics

The dawn of twentieth century follows landmark historical events of world war I and great depression of 1929-30 which transform international order and greatly impact domestic political landscape. The rise of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) to presidency, at an age of economic crisis, political uncertainty, popular discontent the struggling democratic and capitalist system, offers historical evidence in the rise of populist forces in the twentieth century. President FDR also exercised populist rhetoric to maintain his legitimacy and tackle economic crises in the wake of populist outburst. In FDR era the prominent is Huey Long, a former US senator and Governor of Louisiana, launched a widespread populist program –*Share the wealth*” for the redistribution of wealth and resources from the wealthy rich to the little man; he projected his populist rhetoric under a renowned slogan –*Every Man a King*”.⁵³ His radical approach towards the economic grievances of the people and his authoritarian personal tendencies project him as an eminent populist figure in American Political history. In late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the populist movements have been classified as right-wing variant of Populism because the prominent demands of popular sovereignty and economic rights of the common people were deeply influenced by racial xenophobia and masculinity.⁵⁴

The social movements of 1960s and 1970s in the United States challenged the existing social and cultural constructs of the society. The established racial majority of white, often asserted itself in populist trends, oppression on women and gender inequality, and other discriminatory social and political realities were under criticism. The social movement demanded multiculturalism, eradication of racial discrimination, gender equality, political and social inclusion, and more freedom and personal liberties. The

⁵² Russell M. Posner, –The Lord and the Drayman: James Bryce vs. Denis Kearney,” *California Historical Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (1971): 277–84, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25157336>.

⁵³ –The Populism of the FDR Era - The Legacy of F.D.R. - TIME,” accessed December 6, 2021, http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1908686,00.html.

⁵⁴ LOWNDES, –POPULISM IN THE UNITED STATES.”

challenge to traditional social and political constructs was prone to radical and conservative backlash which revived and restored populist tendencies in the form of segregationist and racial supremacists. George Wallace's populist attacks on social movements, government/institutional structure, against social inclusion of non-whites, and other movements of political and civil rights. In 1968, he ran for president from the platform of third party. His political rhetoric echoed later in presidential campaign of Richard Nixon who rhetorically defined white Americans as forgotten people, who are at the receiving end from top and bottom. In 1980s, American politics again resorted to populist political tendencies owing to Ronald Reagan conservative attacks and disdain for government on its non-traditional, liberal and welfare role. The claim for the representation of common people or great people, and pure people remained a common feature of different variants of the populist politics, but its depiction varied from movement to movement, or in different political eras it changed from one form to another; for instance, for people's party it was the "*producing classes*" and President Reagan's illustration of the people was "*silent majority*".⁵⁵ This indicates that the key populist claim in historical context is to ensure popular sovereignty amidst shrinking direct popular representation because of expanding governments in social and political role, whereas populist identity prefers direct representation/participation of the people over institutional mediation, in rhetoric at least.

2.2.3 Populist Backlash Against Post-Cold War New World Order

The disintegration of Soviet Union caused the end of cold war. Consequently, the tight bipolar world Order declined with the withdrawal of Soviet Union from bipolar competition. This landmark historical transition in world politics transformed the global manifestation of American foreign policy, and domestic dynamic of American politics as well. The American project of new world order, based on liberal principals of multilateralism and cosmopolitanism, under President George H.W. Bush attracted criticism at home, and resurrection of populism in US was based on the liberal

⁵⁵ Kazin, "Trump and American Populism."

internationalist policies of post-cold war American foreign Policy.⁵⁶ The multilateral approach and international cooperation during 1991 Iraq invasion were manifestation of a new era of capitalism and democracy is primary components of new world Order. The conception of open and free world encouraged free trade, human rights, free movement of people, and individual liberties increased. The policies of liberal internationalist world order backlash at home can be witnessed from the resurgence of populist movements in US during President George H.W. Bush era⁵⁷. Pat Buchanan's condemnation of multicultural and cosmopolitan policies of US foreign policy, and its international commitments, so called global policing, motivated his populist identity politics. He criticized liberal policies under populist belief that these policies are non-traditional and are shaking the core values of America. His attacks on banks, disdain for individual liberties, condemnation of feminist movements, and anti-immigration narrative make him a staunch populist of his times. Most prominently, Pat Buchanan's keynote speech resonated the populist and conservative agenda in famous "cultural war" for the American values and tradition, "—soul of America".

Moreover, besides Pat Buchanan's anti-immigrant and racially discriminatory political identity, Ross Perot, a business tycoon, participated in 1992 elections as an independent candidate against Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush. Perot's election campaign indicates his anti-establishment narrative when he describes ruling elite in Washington as a contemporary version of British Aristocracy.⁵⁸ He attracted the middle class towards his anti-elite program and his rhetoric of making Washington elite answerable before people which he believed are alienated from the common people and immune to popular critique. He got 19 percent of popular vote in 1992 election, mostly of middle class, and partially vote of college graduates. Later, Perot started a movement named as "United We Stand Party" and participated in 1996 presidential elections on this party platform. In 1996 presidential elections, Ross Perot could not sustain the ground due to internal

⁵⁶ Rovira Kaltwasser et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, 300–304.

⁵⁷ Jonathan Allen, "Bush's 'new World Order' Gives Way to Trump's 'No World Order,'" NBC News, December 1, 2018, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/bush-s-new-world-order-gives-way-trump-s-no-n942521>.

⁵⁸ Sean Wilentz, "Fox Populi," *The New Republic*, August 9, 1993, <https://newrepublic.com/article/92369/ross-perot-united-we-stand-not-for-sale>.

differences in the movement and organizational fault lines in his party prevented a sustainable organizational party structure. The likes of Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot could not make it to white house, but they left the footprints of their populist ideology on American Politics. Bill Clinton won the 1996 election, but during his time in white house he continuously faced populist attacks on his policies, on his personal sexual conduct, and gay culture in the military.

2.2.4 Financial Crisis of 2008: A new Wave of Populism in The United States of America

The 2008 financial crisis shocked the world economies, from advanced western economies of Western economies to the emerging Southeast Asian economies. The financial crisis swept the economies across the globe, but American economy suffered greatly. It reduced global economic growth around 4 percent, America housing sector crashed, and retirement holder suffered momentarily, as banking sector witnessed severe downfall, estimated American economic loss is 9.8 trillion USD.⁵⁹ People lost their jobs and millions of people lost their houses due to financial crash. How financial crisis helped populist resurgence? The primary concern of the study asserts tends to address this question. Policy interventions of Government by providing loans to banks, cutting interest rates, looking after industries like housing industry by pooling taxpayers' money, and social spending cuts fueled economic inequality. The middle class suffered due to rising unemployment and austerity measures of the government; it seemed that these measures were short term measures for financial stability of the global financial system. The cost of these policies was paid by the financially marginalized sectors of the society, which got public anger and provided favorable circumstances for populist politics.⁶⁰

However, Government intervention in market is exploited by populist forces as manifestation of government power beyond its boundaries and it was illustrated as an

⁵⁹ Renae Merle, —A Guide to the Financial Crisis — 10 Years Later,” *Washington Post*, September 10, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/a-guide-to-the-financial-crisis--10-years-later/2018/09/10/114b76ba-af10-11e8-a20b-5f4f84429666_story.html.

⁶⁰ Jacqueline Best, —How the 2008 Financial Crisis Helped Fuel Today's Right-Wing Populism,” *The Conversation*, October 4, 2018, <http://theconversation.com/how-the-2008-financial-crisis-helped-fuel-todays-right-wing-populism-103979>.

encroachment over individual liberties.⁶¹ The government intervention in economy has remained an enduring debate between the Keynesian and Hayekian economic school of thoughts, whether should intervene in market economy during crises or it should not. American government's policies of intervention attracted widespread criticism. Consequently, Tea party movement came into being in 2009, against government's pooling funds to mortgage from taxpayers' money.⁶² Tea party movement was a body of right-wing politicians, varying from far-right activist to politicians of the center. They organized massive protests against the government policies of spending in industrial and infrastructure sector during financial crisis, and the debated health care bill public meetings which made a prevalent issue in public discourse during midterm elections of 2010. of for limited government more economic freedom. The primary agenda of tea party movement was advocate economic freedom and knock back expanding government influence. The critics of the movement argue that the movement an anti-pluralistic, anti-multicultural, and racial right wing populist movement.⁶³

Analogous to right-wing populism, left wing populism resurfaced in American politics, owing to 2008 financial crisis. The historical evidence indicates that the right-wing populism remained a more dominant populist variant in American politics after 1960s than left-wing populist tendencies. Occupy wall street, a left-wing populist movement, which started 2011 sustained only for 95 days. The movement started in the backdrop of 2008 financial crisis. The protestors took streets against the government policies which helped the financial sectors to grow after the crisis but neglected the deep-rooted economic inequality in the society. The most important feature of the movement is the resurgence of social democrats and socialist tendencies in American politics due to its severe criticism on capitalist financial system. The significance on 99 percent people identifies their claim of advocating economic rights of the against the one percent wealthy elite; it proposes that the wealth is concentrated among the one percent wealthy

⁶¹ LOWNDES, "POPULISM IN THE UNITED STATES."

⁶² Walter Russell Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Means for Globalism," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2011): 28-44.

⁶³ Mead.

and 99 percent people are suffering and left behind.⁶⁴ Occupy wall street movement's claimed representation and economic rights of 99 percent, as common people, and patriots, called for the unity of good people against the evil one present which was identified as a common adversary. It was a short-lived movement, but its impacts are far reaching. Bernie Sanders got political prominence in the mainstream political landscape, and the democratic party got influenced in many ways. The democratic party borrowed the idea minimum wage \$15, free college for all, and healthcare for all manifestos. The organizational hierarchy, militancy to occupy wall street physically, incoherence in demands programs made the movement a failure in the wake of police's use of force.⁶⁵ Occupy wall street movement failed to endure or a longer period, but it rose the political discourse on economic inequality, anger towards wealthy elite, critical discourse on capitalist system which was absent after the decline of global socialist movements, and the issue concerning social welfare got much significance in Washington due to Occupy movement.⁶⁶

2.2.5 Presidential Elections of 2016: Populist Donald Trump's Rise to White House

The consequent political movements and anti-government protests, after 2008 financial crisis, depict the popular displeasure against the governing elite of Washington. These sentiments were exploited by both right-wing and left-wing populist leaders and their aids to promote their anti-elitist, anti-pluralist, anti-immigrants, and nationalist/nativist agendas. The rise of populism in America got electoral recognition in 2016 presidential elections when President Trump won elections. Donald Trump's election campaign thrived on anti-establishment and anti-elitist rhetoric using popular language which identified and exploited anti-elitist sentiments of the masses. In a historical perspective, the text in president trump's election campaign identifies some prominent and consistent features of right wing persistently existed in American society. Anti-immigrant world

⁶⁴ Emily Stewart, "We Are (Still) the 99 Percent," Vox, April 23, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/4/23/18284303/occupy-wall-street-bernie-sanders-dsa-socialism>.

⁶⁵ Stewart.

⁶⁶ JAMES A. ANDERSON, "Some Say Occupy Wall Street Did Nothing. It Changed Us More Than We Think," Time, November 15, 2021, <https://time.com/6117696/occupy-wall-street-10-years-later/>.

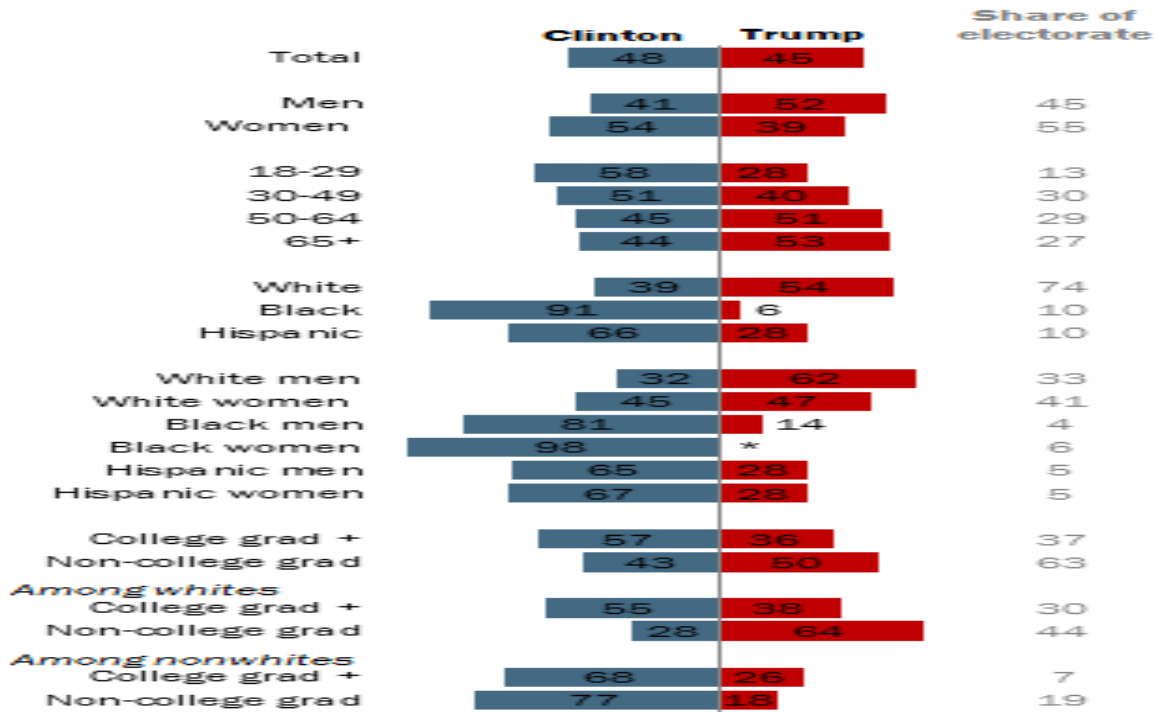
view, racial discrimination against Muslims and other ethnicities, anti-elite view, and a projection of an outsider from ruling elite, protectionist trade policies to rescue struggling domestic industry, blaming political opponents and personal attacks, manifestation of us and they by identifying foreign potential threats are the prominent concepts in Donald Trump's election run.⁶⁷ These themes identify his rhetorical discourse to persuade people against the ruling elite and foreign enemies. This political strategy of populist rhetoric explains basic definition of populism as pitting people against establishment or outgroup identity, for the purpose of consolidating ingroup identity. The populist rhetoric of Donald Trump also characterized with nostalgic appeals of reviving past glory which has been lost due to corrupt practices of the ruling elite. His popular campaign slogan *“Make America Great Again”* offers the accomplishment to the past glory under the leadership of President Trump. Michael Kazin for instance has mentioned his rhetoric of using the phrases such as, *“the American People”*, *“Our Middle Class”*, and *“Working Families”*.⁶⁸ In contrast, he continuously condemned his political opponents and all other minorities which are not included in his definition of the people. This style of politics indicated the revival of historical nationalist, nativist, racial, anti-multicultural or cosmopolitan, and anti-immigrant tradition of populist politics in America. The rise of President using rhetoric to convince voter on populist agenda explains the contemporary wave of populism in the United States.

⁶⁷ J. ERIC OLIVER and WENDY M. RAHN, *“Rise of the Trumpenvolk: Populism in the 2016 Election,”* *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667 (2016): 189–206.

⁶⁸ Kazin, *“Trump and American Populism,”* 23.

Among validated voters in 2016, wide gap among whites by education

% of validated voters in 2016 who reported voting for ...



Notes: Based on 3,014 validated 2016 general election voters. Validated voters are those found to have voted in any of five commercial voter files; corrected for questionable matches. Vote choice is from a post-election survey and excludes those who refused to answer or reported voting for a candidate other than Trump, Clinton, Johnson or Stein. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 1: Among Valid Voters in 2016, Wide Gap Among Whites by Education⁶⁹

Source: “An Examination of the 2016 Electorate, Based on Validated Voters,” Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy (blog)

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/08/09/an-examination-of-the-2016-electorate-based-on-validated-voters/>.

In figure 1, the data of the report conducted by PEW shows preference of the voters between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. The report mentions data of different voters with respect to demographic traits and characteristics. Among total voters, 48% has voted

⁶⁹ 1615 L. St NW, Suite 800 Washington, and DC 20036 USA 202-419-4300 | Main 202-857-8562 | Fax 202-419-4372 | Media Inquiries, —An Examination of the 2016 Electorate, Based on Validated Voters,” Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy (blog), August 9, 2018, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/08/09/an-examination-of-the-2016-electorate-based-on-validated-voters/>.

for Hillary Clinton whereas 45% has opted Donald Trump. Likewise, in terms of gender, 41% men have voted for Hillary Clinton while 52% has voted for Donald Trump. Nevertheless, among women, 54% has preferred Democratic nominee while 39% has preferred the Republican candidate. Furthermore, in terms of age, 58% of those who were below 30 years of age has voted for Clinton while 28% voted Trump. Likewise, in the age range of 30-49 years, 51% has voted for Clinton whereas 40% voted for Trump. Nevertheless, among those who aged above 50 years, 51% preferred Trump while 45% voted for Clinton. Furthermore, in terms of race, 54% of the white people have preferred Donald Trump while only 39% have preferred Clinton. In contrast, the blacks were more tilted towards Hillary Clinton where a big number (91%) of the blacks voted Hillary Clinton and only 9% voted for Donald Trump. Similarly, the report has later subdivided the white population based on college graduation. Thus, among the white population college graduates, 55% have voted Hillary Clinton whereas 38% have voted Donald Trump. Lastly, among the white non-college graduates, 28% have voted for Clinton whereas most of them (64%) voted for Donald Trump.

The examination of voter preference in the abovementioned survey results indicates that Donald Trump got majority white vote, particularly 62 percent of white men vote, which signifies the resonance of his racial nativist rhetoric in election results. Secondly, he got majority vote of the people above age 50, which validates the claim of cultural backlash assumption that old cohorts are more likely to support populist leader or parties. The third significant indicator is white college graduates and non-college graduates. Majority of the college graduates preferred Hillary Clinton over Donald Trump, but 64 percent of people without college degrees voted for President Trump.⁷⁰ It asserts his rhetorical discourse based on simplicity and repetition of language attracted people without college graduates, who are most likely relate to common and popular language. In contrast, the people with college degrees and political knowledge understand technical political discourse and jargons. These indicators imply the deep-rooted embeddedness of President Trumps populist rhetoric in American society which created political polarization and ideological extremes in the society.

⁷⁰ NW, Washington, and Inquiries.

Similarly, Bernie sander's run for democratic nomination deciphers the left-wing populist identity construction. His rhetoric was concerned with economic inequality and uneven distribution of resources which created economic insecurity among the common people. Bernie also used anti-elitist rhetoric, unlike Donald Trump who defined elite as immune and untouchable ruling elite in Washington, he defined elite as economic elite. Bernie sander's political strategy is also populist in essence, but an economic populist variant.⁷¹ He pitied people against economic elite to attract support base by exploiting economic grievances of the people, better explained by economic insecurity perspective. Bernie Sanders failed to get democratic nomination for presidential election of 2016, but he got an impressive total number 11.9 million votes against Hillary Clinton's 15.5 million votes. He got 63.3 independent vote, almost 70 percent of votes of young voters who are under 30.⁷² It interprets his appeal to the young voter, deciphers youth's condemnation of government policies, the exploitation of economic circumstances like rising unemployment to establish a populist rhetoric.

The contemporary wave of populism engulfed modern European democracies and United States along with struggling democracies of other parts of the world. The rise of Trump America, Recep Tayyab Erdogan's projection of authoritarian rule in Turkey, and PM Narendra Modi's two terms in India illustrates the prevalent populist penetration in power corridors around the world. A report by Toni Blair Institute for Global Change titled as *Populists in Power Around the World*" indicates the tremendous rise in populist parties and leaders in last 30 years; the report summarizes that, since 1990 around 33 countries are ruled by the populist leaders and parties, and the number of these parties and leaders is 46⁷³. Historically, the increase in populist leaders in office has not been a good sign for political stability and economic progress. The populist leaders in office disregarded and disrespected the constitutional institutions and exercised their power beyond their constitutional limits. It is perceptible from historical evidence that populist regimes created political instability, made political and constitutional institutions dysfunctional by

⁷¹ OLIVER and RAHN, — Rise of the Trumpenvolk."

⁷² WSJ com News Graphics et al., —How Hillary Clinton Won the Democratic Nomination Over Bernie Sanders," WSJ, June 7, 2016, <http://graphics.wsj.com/elections/2016/how-clinton-won/>.

⁷³ Jordan Kyle and Limor Gultchin, —Populists in Power Around the World" (Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, November 2018), <https://institute.global/policy/populists-power-around-world>.

encroaching their constitutional limits, left polarized societies, and espoused costly economic policies.⁷⁴

2.3 American Trade Protectionism: A Historical Perspective

2.3.1 Protectionism: A Mercantilist Perspective

Trade protectionism has long been intact in trade policy of United States, and European economies of colonial era practiced mercantilist policies of protectionism. Mercantilist theory accentuates the role of state in regulation of economic market by maintaining and managing imports and exports to balance trade and avoid deficit. Mercantilist approach to political economy recommends or suggest erection of tariffs and trade barriers to restrain imports and policies to facilitate the maximization of domestic production, particularly by subsidizing domestic industry, to foster exports for trade surplus.⁷⁵ The primary objective of Mercantilist approach was to maintain trade surplus to maximization of national wealth which ultimately guarantees maximization of state power.⁷⁶ Protectionist policies of tariff restraints and subsidies over production are embedded in traditional Mercantilist perspective of political economy.

Mercantilist policies were adopted, most prominently, by the colonial era European Empires to enhance their national wealth, power, and prestige. For centuries Protectionism is adopted as trade policy, for instance, king Edward III of Great Britain erected protections on trade with other countries during 14th century. He completely restricted the imports of wool cloths and encouraged domestic production of cloths. He ensured that everyone in England should use domestically made cloths.⁷⁷ Later, the colonies were restricted from trade with countries other than Britain. The tariffs were high on imports, particularly on manufactures. In 1820 the British tariffs were recorded

⁷⁴ Manuel Funke, Moritz Schularick, and Christoph Trebesch, "The Cost of Populism: Evidence from History," *VoxEU.Org* (blog), February 16, 2021, <https://voxeu.org/article/cost-populism-evidence-history>.

⁷⁵ Nancy Williams, "THE RESILIENCE OF PROTECTIONISM IN U.S. TRADE POLICY," *BOSTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW* 99 (March 2019): 701.

⁷⁶ Marlin-Bennett and Johnson, "International Political Economy."

⁷⁷ Larry Elliott, "From Edward III to Alexander Hamilton: History's Biggest Protectionists," *The Guardian*, March 10, 2018, The Observer International Trade edition, sec. Business, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/mar/10/edward-iii-alexander-hamilton-history-biggest-protectionists>.

as 45 to 55% more than its competitors, especially France.⁷⁸ The rationale was increase domestic productivity and enhance wealth. Correspondingly, the French Empire during the era of Louis XIV adopted Mercantilist economic policies designed by Jean Baptiste Colbert. These policies included measures to increase domestic productivity to avoid dependence on imported goods. Imports, only raw material was preferred as imported good, were controlled by enhanced taxes, and suggested the export of value added and finished good, the term “Colbertism” used to define these policy measures which were designed to bring wealth. Colbert believed that only money could increase power and prestige beyond anything else. Colbertism aims to enhance wealth of the nation. His policies depict his great support for protectionism and mercantilist approach to economy.⁷⁹

2.3.2 Alexander Hamilton: The Pioneer of American Protectionism

After achieving independent, the founding father of United States of America laid the political and economic foundations of nation. Alexander Hamilton was the first Secretary of the Treasury of United States of America. He proposed policies for new economy, its sustainable future, and policy for interacting with economic competitors. He presented his policies in congress in a report titled as “*Report on Manufactures*”. Hamilton recommended economy based on manufacturing against the proposition of agricultural centric economy. He emphasized on self-sufficiency for a secure and sustainable future by achieving self-sufficiency in essentials and security sector, especially military. Hamilton pioneered American protectionism to protect infant economy from foreign competitors and collect revenue for government expenditure, but he is also known for his strategic economic approach to establish an industrialized economy.⁸⁰

Although Protectionism remained an integral part of US trade policy in early years, but there are some prominent policies which explain the essence of protections in US trade policy history. In Nineteenth century, the tariffs were highest, around 45 to 50 percent

⁷⁸ Elliott.

⁷⁹ Marlin-Bennett and Johnson, “International Political Economy,” 4–5.

⁸⁰ Sarah Gardner, “From Hamilton to Trump, the U.S. Has a Long History of America-First Policies,” *Marketplace* (blog), August 11, 2017, <https://www.marketplace.org/2017/08/11/why-american-protectionism-still-rings/>.

tariffs were imposed on foreign goods, particularly wool and manufactures of wool, to protect industries of the north, while the agricultural economy of the south suffered due to retaliatory measure of the competitors.⁸¹ Throughout nineteenth century the protections stayed intact in trade policy and debates over protectionism and free trade in congress were significant, to determine the isolationist and internationalist posture of US foreign policy including economic and trade relations.

2.3.3 Smoot Hawley Act 1930: Twentieth Century American Protectionism

Twentieth century is significant in US history because US's rise to great power status, its economic primacy in global economic competition and cooperation, transformation from isolationism to internationalism. Additionally, the landmark historical events of World War I, great depression, World War II all are twentieth century political and economic phenomena. The Anti-dumping act of 1916 is a protectionist measure which was passed by the congress before the outbreak of the world war I. The aim of this tariff policy was to protect the domestic industry from the imports of specific economic and financial nature. The economic rationale for anti-dumping act was to discourage the imports which have been sold to US cheaper than home markets of the importers.⁸² In these years US economy flourished to new heights and European countries were on the Brink of war.

The world war I ruined the European economies beyond repair, at least in near future. The European economies suffered due to the disastrous outcomes of the great wars, their economies were debit ridden and their dependency over American industrial marvel was evident. The primary objective of the war affected states was to rebuild their economies, for this purpose they had to borrow from America. But a global financial collapse was not a positive sign for a flourished American industry and economy. In 1929-30 great depression paralyzed global economy and financial order. In the same year the congress United States of America passed the prominent Smoot-Hawley Act 1930 which significant in understanding the rationale for protections and the impact of protectionist

⁸¹ –Episodes of Protectionism in U.S. History,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 9, 2010, sec. Life and Style, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704696304575538030239055918>.

⁸² Williams, –THE RESILIENCE OF PROTECTIONISM IN U.S. TRADE POLICY,” 702.

policies in long run. The lessons from the Smoot-Hawley protectionism led US towards an internationalist approach to trade and economy and bilateral trade.

The Smoot Hawley Act erected protectionist measures on imports. The logic was traditional mercantilist rationale of discouraging imports and subsidizing exports to increase wealth and economic prosperity in domestic market. The American congress approved this act because the economic pundits suggested that this will restore pace of the economic development and industrial progress, tariffs on imports raised to highest of 60 percent. The policies further fueled crippling economy because of the retaliatory protections by the other countries. The backlash of protectionist policies, particularly agricultural south, initiated a discourse more in favor of free trade and reversal of protections, because agricultural economy was export led and retaliations stagnated the agricultural economy of the South.

2.3.4 Post War Reconstruction of global Economy: US Led Global Order

An attempt to lower tariff rates was initiated by then Secretary of the State Cordell Hull during the presidency of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He advocated lowering down tariffs under a new approach of renegotiating trade agreement with partners. In 1934, congress passed Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTAA), to renegotiate trade agreements with partners. The new agreement recommended a lowering tariff rate with partners only in exchange of reciprocal revisit of tariff rates by the trading partners.⁸³ This trade policy provided a balanced approach between the import dominated and export-oriented trade sectors of US economy, previously trade barriers were erected to protect industries of North from foreign competitors, specifically textile industry. In return export-oriented industries suffered due to reciprocal measures. It was a beginning of a new era in US economic and foreign policy; an internationalist world view started to dominate political discourse in US politics. RTAA policies were initially restricted to bilateral renegotiation of trade agreements, but later these policies guided post World War II global economic order.

⁸³ I. M. Destler, —America’s Uneasy History with Free Trade,” *Harvard Business Review*, April 28, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/04/americas-uneasy-history-with-free-trade>.

After the second world War United States became the economic global superpower because the competing economic powers of Europe were ruined due the war. The US started to reshape the global economic order. The US led multilateral global economic order started with General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT); GATT was adopted to reduce trade barriers multilaterally. It was a new beginning for free trade and a more open and liberal world, new round of talks started to regulate trade and tariffs i.e., Kennedy round of 1963-67, the Tokyo Round of 1973-79, and the Uruguay Round 1986-94. GATT and theses talks were global manifestation of RTAA. These policies capitalized the objective of reduced trade barriers and free trade, American tariffs rates witnessed graduation reduction from 60 percent to 5.7 and more following the years, in 2013 theses rates were 2.7.⁸⁴

GATT subsequently followed by successive multilateral and bilateral free trade agreement to enhance reduction of trade barriers. US-Canada free trade agreement, with the inclusion of Mexico it was transformed into North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), World Trade Organization was established in Uruguay round and other bilateral and multilateral followed the suit to ensure free trade. In recent past, the criticism on neoliberal policies of free trade increased, multinational corporations globalized production and labor and shifted their manufacturing units to favorable economic circumstance of cheap labor and available raw material. These policies are responsible for rapid development and improved living standard globally but there are mounting concerns of economic inequality and climate crisis which is haunting the global liberal economic order. President Obama advocated multilateral approach to ensure free trade and collectively address these concerns through keeping the essence of neo-liberal approach of free trade and multi-literalism via adopting policies like Trans-pacific partnership (TPP), Paris Climate accord, and Trans-Atlantic Trade (TTIP), and Investment Partnership. But politically the 2016 elections reversed the turn free trade again towards protectionism, as President Trump disparaged bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and imposed tariffs on imports. Democratic contestant for nomination Bernie Sanders also criticized neo-liberal economic and trade policies.

⁸⁴ Destler, 3.

2.3.5 President Trump's Trade Policy: Return of American Economic Protectionism

President Trump's administration trade policy deviated from decades long US policies of multilateral trading system of free trade. The increasing US trade deficit with trading partners, prominently with China, made President Donald Trump to revisit trade policy. Trump administration unilaterally imposed tariffs and trade restriction on Chinese imports, especially steel and aluminum. The administration also imposed tariffs on other trading partners as well Canada, Mexico, and European Union. The rationale for protectionist measures was to renegotiate trade agreements with trading partners and protectionists measures will leverage US position, to benefits workers and reduce unemployment, national security justifications for these policies of protectionism.⁸⁵ Trump administration argued that the Chinese mal practices in trade and concerns over intellectual property theft are directly threatening the national security of US. But the measures they took in response was a relentless withdrawal from multilateral trade agreements, like TPP, and protections were imposed on allies are unjustifiable with respect to the administration's rationale for protections.

Logically, these policy responses are flawed because of the withdrawal from multilateral agreements with allies, disrespect for global trade rule, and unilateral approach to inexorable policies. Without managing a multilateral global approach to address concerns over Chinese mal practices, goal of taking leverage over China in renegotiation is less likely to achieved.⁸⁶ Secondly, the administration persistently stated that the foreign companies are paying the cost of trade tariffs, but the several studies economic analysis suggest that the large size of protections has been paid by the consumers and domestic firm; due to increased consumer prices, domestic consumers paid more on average of thousand dollars per year.⁸⁷ It identifies that Trump administration failure to achieve its objectives of protectionist policies. Trade deficit with China remained unchanged except

⁸⁵ Geoffrey Gertz, "Did Trump's Tariffs Benefit American Workers and National Security?," September 10, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/policy2020/votervital/did-trumps-tariffs-benefit-american-workers-and-national-security/>.

⁸⁶ Stuart Anderson, "Trump Trade Policy Gets Failing Grades," Forbes, October 29, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2020/10/29/trump-trade-policy-gets-failing-grades/>.

⁸⁷ Gertz, "Did Trump's Tariffs Benefit American Workers and National Security?"

a slight negligible rate, from \$346.8 billion in 2016 to \$345.2 billion in 2019. It suggests that a breakout from global rules of trade and a unilateral approach of withdrawal from global trade agreements is not the solution for a mounting challenge of economic competitors, but a populist behavior of looking inward and satisfying popular demands.

CHAPTER 03

ANTI-CHINA RHETORIC IN TRUMP'S ELECTION AND ITS POLICY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Introduction

The end of cold war witnessed major shifts and transformations in global political and economic order. After second World War, two competing ideologies of economic and political order struggled against each other, the Soviet block and the US led western allies. The demise of Soviet Union and collapse of competing communist bloc gave rise to liberal international order. The triumph of American led capitalist and democratic order dominated the world affairs for coming course of years. United States of America emerged as the sole superpower of the unipolar world order. The major policy shifts emerged from domestic and international policy choices i.e., liberal, and civic values at home and promotion of democracy, and creation of a liberal, open, and free world abroad. The current tendencies of political polarization in domestic politics, around the world particularly the US, reflected on foreign policies of liberal democracies. The trump era in the United States of America is featured with polarized society over key social and political issues, and disrespect for multilateral institutional structure abroad.⁸⁸ The unilateral assertion of Trump administration against China, withdrawal from multilateral trade agreements North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), renegotiation of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and tariffs against allies. These events indicate emergence of a phenomenon which is contradictory to the principles of American established and American led Liberal international project on global and international level. Populist politics at home based on discourses of anti-immigration, racial disdain, and nativist nationalism denies or confronts liberal multicultural American Identity, featured beyond race and creed, at home. President Trump's triumph in 2016 elections

⁸⁸ Hilde Eliassen Restad, "What Makes America Great? Donald Trump, National Identity, and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Global Affairs* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 21–36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2020.1734955>.

indicates the transformation of liberal American identity or resurgence of ethnic nationalism in the US featured around white male dominant discourses.

The president elections of 2016 are significant in recent political history of United States of America. The revival of populist politics, political polarization of the American society, and ideological extreme positions on political and social issues got prominence during the campaign. President Trump outclassed his opponents in the republican primaries and got nomination for presidential election against Democrat nominee Hilary Clinton. Donald Trump's personal attacks on his opponents, racial comments, anti-immigration rhetoric, nativist approach to American nationalism were the prominent features of his election campaign. The voter tendencies and behavior witnessed division and polarization on issues of economy, racial supremacy, anger towards immigrants, and perception and attitude towards Muslims. His campaign for making America great again depicts his inspiration for past glory of America, dominated by a white race majority ethnically. His economic rhetoric illustrates immigrants responsible for job losses, Chinese mal practices in bilateral and multilateral trade, and inefficiency of Obama administration to cope with the expanding economic challenges.

3.2 American Nationalism and the Rise of President Trump

The debate over American national identity has been a prominent feature of American politics and scholarly works of political and social scientists. The post-cold war domestic political landscape of the US witnessed a civic strain of US nationalism with global manifestation of a liberal international order. The political parties and presidents were convinced on a global liberal order and an inclusive multicultural national identity beyond race and ethnicity.⁸⁹ American exceptionalism based on ideals of freedom, liberty, and equality has been a bipartisan agreement in post-cold war American domestic politics. The foreign policy narratives also remained under the premise of a democratic and prosperous American exceptionalism and American responsibility of global primacy

⁸⁹ Hilde Eliassen Restad, "Whither the City Upon a Hill? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," Texas National Security Review, December 18, 2019, <https://tnsr.org/2019/12/whither-the-city-upon-a-hill-donald-trump-america-first-and-american-exceptionalism/>.

for the promotion of liberal ideals of democracy and capitalism.⁹⁰ The of exceptionalism has been rationalized as the moral obligation of the US to guide the world towards liberal values; the discourse guided a multilateral and liberal American foreign policy.⁹¹ The post-cold war civic American nationalism is challenged by the ethnic constituent of nationalism advocated by President Trump in his election campaign and his policy during presidency; his rhetoric of “make America great again” and “America First” represents his unilateral foreign policy ventures and ethnic, racial, and nativist nationalism at home.⁹²

3.2.1 President Trump’s Election Campaign 2016: Populist Identity Construction

The identity debate got significance in American politics during 2016 election between two competing narratives ‘White Americanism’ by republican party under Trump and liberal multicultural American Identity by the Democratic Party. President Donald Trump’s election campaign is featured with the exploitation and manipulation of racial fault lines in the society, increasing resentment against the immigration, and economic frustrations. President Trump doubted the birthplace of Barak Obama and said that he is not American born; secondly alleged that Hilary Clinton had first questioned the citizenship of President Obama.⁹³ These racial allegations and racial homogenization helped President Trump to consolidate his white support base by intensifying white identity consciousness in the wake of declining the dominant white social and political status.

The modern developments, particularly, socio-cultural, and economic, challenged the dominant white ethnic race in United States. The rise of a globalized, multicultural, and cosmopolitan society was considered as an existentialist threat to the traditional white

⁹⁰ Hal Brands, “Choosing Primacy: U.S. Strategy and Global Order at the Dawn of the Post-Cold War Era,” Texas National Security Review, February 6, 2018, <https://tnsr.org/2018/02/choosing-primacy-u-s-strategy-global-order-dawn-post-cold-war-era-2/>.

⁹¹ Brands.

⁹² Restad, “What Makes America Great?”

⁹³ Maggie Haberman and Alan Rappeport, “Trump Drops False ‘Birther’ Theory, but Floats a New One: Clinton Started It - The New York Times,” September 16, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/17/us/politics/donald-trump-birther-obama.html?module=inline>.

majority society.⁹⁴ President Obama as the first black president in White House; it was argued that it revived the white conciseness in conservative sections of the American society, which resultantly increased white voter support towards Republican party and President Trump.⁹⁵ Previously, an equal white support for both parties turned into majority white support for Republican party. President Trump consistently emphasized on nationalism, nativism, and protectionism during his campaign. The components of his election campaign can be traced from his persistent adherence with make American great again narrative, the protectionist discourse and rhetoric of protecting economy, particularly American workers, and nativist securing national borders to prevent influx of immigrants. President Trump's racial rhetoric normalized racial prejudice among his conservative support base, he declared Mexicans as rapists and criminals and proposed a border wall, he capitalized over anti-Muslimism sentiments of radical conservatives and proposed ban on Muslim countries.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Thomas B. Edsall, —Opinion | Donald Trump's Identity Politics - The New York Times,” August 24, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/24/opinion/donald-trump-identity-politics.html>.

⁹⁵ Ezra Klein, —How Identity Politics Elected Trump — and Could Decide the 2018 Midterms - Vox,” November 5, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/11/5/18052390/trump-2018-2016-identity-politics-democrats-immigration-race>.

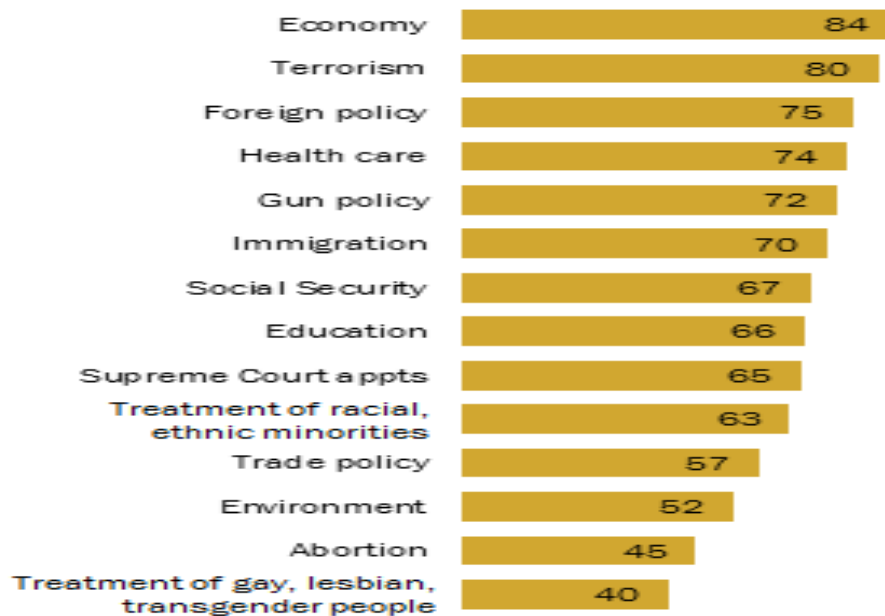
⁹⁶ David A. Graham Richards Adrienne Green, Cullen Murphy, Parker, —A Oral History of Trump's Bigotry,” The Atlantic, May 13, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/06/trump-racism-comments/588067/>.

3.2.2 Donald Trump’s Populist Rhetoric and Voter’s Perception of Most Important Election Issues

A pew research center report identifies top issues in the US presidential elections of 2016, issues among the voters of both candidates.

Economy and terrorism are top issues for voters in 2016

% of registered voters saying each is “very important” to their vote in 2016 ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Q40.
Source: Survey conducted June 15-26, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 2: Economy and Terrorism are Top Issues for Voters in 2016⁹⁷

Source: “Top Voting Issues in 2016 Election,” Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2016/07/07/4-top-voting-issues-in-2016-election/>.

⁹⁷ 1615 L. St NW, Suite 800 Washington, and DC 20036 USA202-419-4300 | Main202-857-8562 | Fax202-419-4372 | Media Inquiries, —Top Voting Issues in 2016 Election,” *Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy* (blog), July 7, 2016, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2016/07/07/4-top-voting-issues-in-2016-election/>.

The PEW research center report identifies top issues in the US presidential elections of 2016. The report is based on a survey conducted in June 2016 depicts that the rational for voter preferences and the top issues include economy, terrorism, foreign policy, health care, gun policy and immigration. Figure 2 suggests that most of the voters viewed economy as major issue to vote for a candidate in presidential elections of 2016.⁹⁸ It demonstrates the significance of economic factor in rise of populism tendencies in the United States of America. The economic insecurity explains the economic causes of the rise of populism; the globalized open economy transformed traditional of labor force, and it caused a resentment among the leftovers of globalization.⁹⁹ President trump capitalized over the economic frustrations of the people and manipulated the economic resentments of the American's and structured his campaign around economic protection of American workers from foreign manipulators.¹⁰⁰ The campaign was complemented with other social and cultural grievances and sensitivities i.e., immigration, social security, and nativist approach to racial origins.

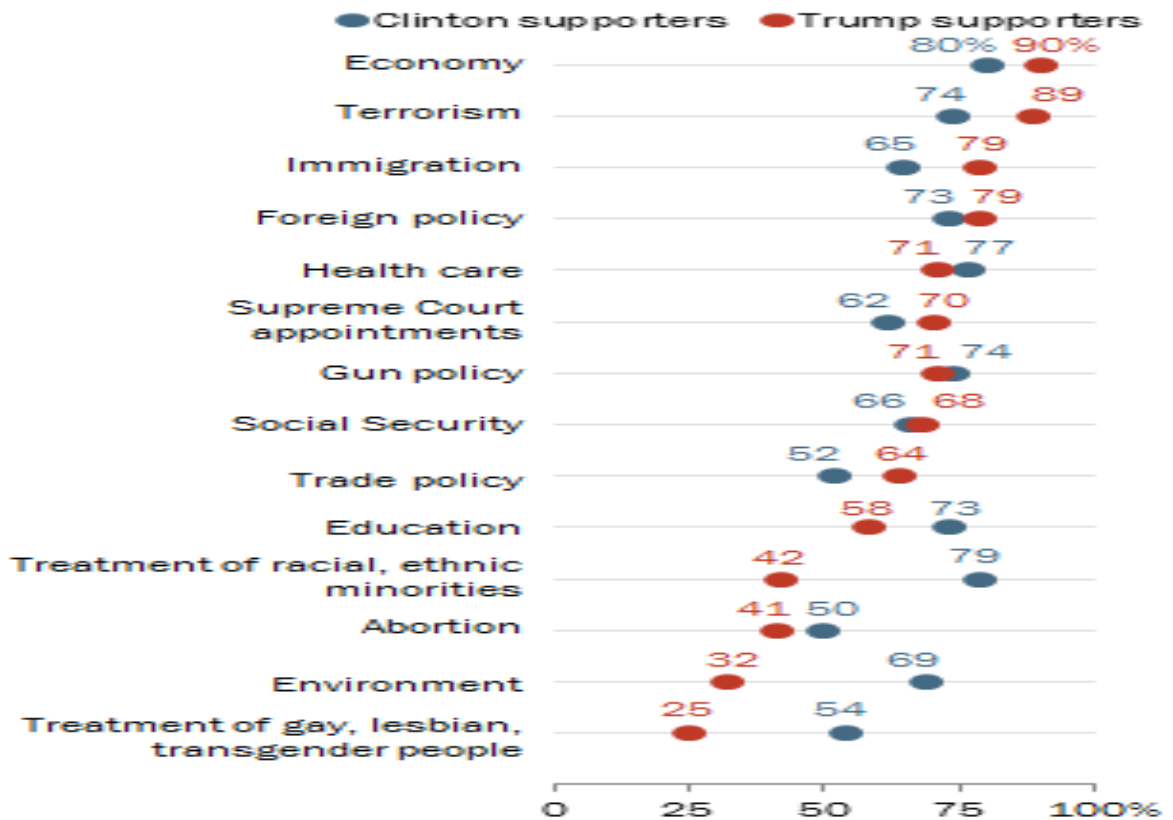
⁹⁸ NW, Washington, and Inquiries.

⁹⁹ Dani Rodrik, "Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism," *Annual Review of Economics* 13, no. 1 (2021): 133–70, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-070220-032416>.

¹⁰⁰ James McGann, "Why Donald Trump Won the Election and Does It Mean The End To Think Tanks and Policy Advice as We Know It?," *TTCSP Publications*, January 1, 2016, https://repository.upenn.edu/ttcsp_papers/6.

Views of 2016 issue importance among Clinton and Trump supporters

% of registered voters saying each is "very important" to their vote in 2016 ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Q40.
Source: Survey conducted June 15-26, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 3: Views of 2016 Issue Importance Among Clinton and Trump Supporters

Source: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2016/07/07/4-top-voting-issues-in-2016-election/>

Figure 3 elaborates the views of the supporters of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton on most important issues of 2016 presidential election. Figure 3 demonstrates that 90 percent of Trump supporter consider economy most important issues to vote for. In comparison 80 percent Hilary Clinton's support base considered economy as of primary significance to vote for. Further, 89 percent of Trump's voter support emphasizes terrorism as a significant issue for vote, it follows 79 percent of issues on foreign policy and immigration in voter preferences. Moreover, figure 3 demonstrates that the issues of

immigration, foreign policy, health care, gun policy, social security, trade policy, supreme court appointments, and issues regarding environment are most significant on which supporters of both candidates expressed their views.

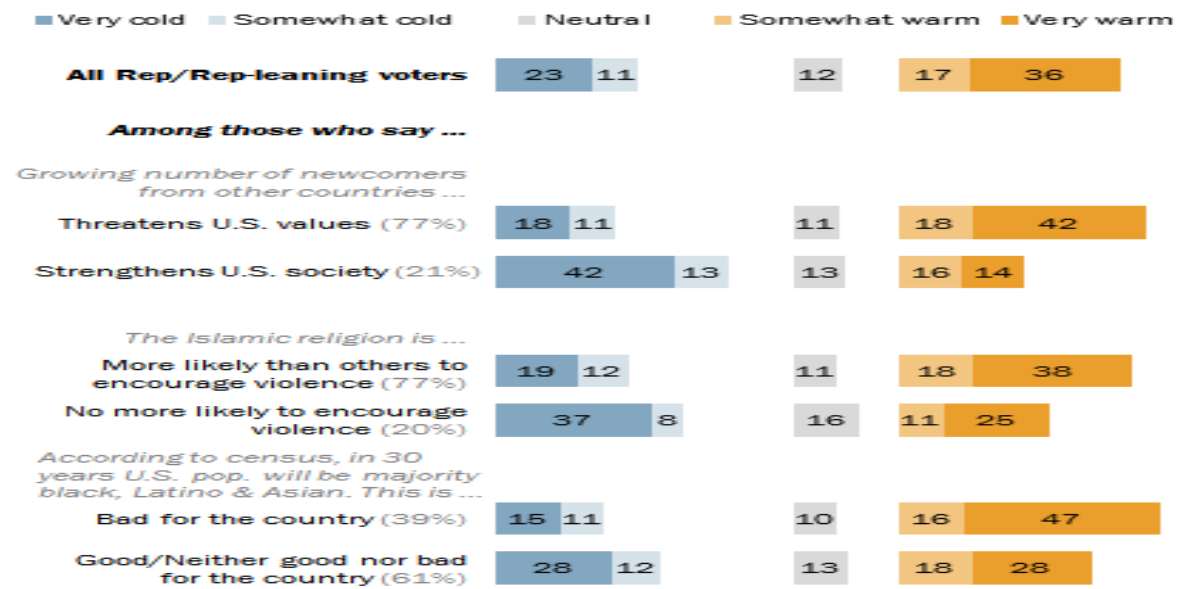
3.2.3 President Trumps Conception of Islam, Immigrants and Mexican Consolidated Popular Support

President Trump's rhetoric of white American nationalism, views on racial origins, narrative regarding immigration, depiction of Muslims as anti-American is directly associated with his appeal towards his voters.¹⁰¹ His populist rhetoric of American nationalism is racially exclusive and discourages diversity and multi-cultural cosmopolitanism which directly impacted his supporter base. Another Pew research center report suggests that the republican party voter preferences are directly related to President Trump's ratings, based on a survey conducted in April-May 2016.

¹⁰¹ Bradley Jones and Jocelyn Kiley, —More Warmth' for Trump among GOP Voters Concerned by Immigrants, Diversity," *Pew Research Center* (blog), accessed December 21, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/02/more-warmth-for-trump-among-gop-voters-concerned-by-immigrants-diversity/>.

Within GOP, views of immigration, Islam, diversity strongly associated with ratings of Trump

% of Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters who rate Trump on a feeling thermometer from 0 (coldest rating) to 100 (warmest rating) ...



Feeling thermometer ratings: Very cold (zero to 24), somewhat cold (25-49), neutral (50), somewhat warm (51-75), very warm (76-100).
 Source: Survey conducted April 5-May 2, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 4: Within GOP, Views of Immigration, Islam, Diversity Strongly Associated with Ratings of Trump

Source: “More „Warmth” for Trump among GOP Voters Concerned by Immigrants, Diversity,” Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/02/more-warmth-for-trump-among-gop-voters-concerned-by-immigrants-diversity/>.

The survey result is presented on a thermometer scale, fluctuated between two extreme positions, from very cold to very hot. The empirical results of the report, presented in figure 4, indicates that President Trump’s rating in republican voter base is in line with his rhetoric. On the scale, the republican voters demonstrated more warmth towards president trump and his rhetoric on the issues regarding immigration, diversity, and Islam. The respondents among the republican party who think that the core American values and culture is threatened by the immigrants have warmth feeling towards president Trump, and the percentage for warmth feeling towards President Trump is 56%. This directly contradicts perception of a diverse, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural America. Contrastingly, the percentage for those who think the influx of immigrants is enhancing and consolidating American values and customs, norms and culture is 21%. On economy,

the scale presents that most voters have warmth feeling towards President Trump, and 66% of voter perceive that the poor will have benefits from the government, as President promised to protect the poor American workers. The voters who have warmth feeling towards Donald trump on the question of fair economic or those who consider unfair economic system, the percentage makes little difference in warmth towards president trump, respectively 50% and 54%.

American suspicious view of Muslims as extremist, intolerant, or terrorist is embedded in historical discourses and landmark events like September 11 and Iranian revolution. But the hostile attitudes of conservative Americans were curtailed by the civic American nationalism and liberal ideals¹⁰². President George W. Bush stated that *“The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That’s not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace”*.¹⁰³ The rise of Trump reasserted the hostile conservative attitudes towards Muslims, which is evident from his campaign speeches. President Trumps campaign in a statement, released on 7th December 2015, affirmed that Donald Trump demands total ban on Muslim immigrants.¹⁰⁴ Besides this empirical evidence, it is hard to conclude that the Trump support base completely inclined towards anti-Islam narrative, but an anti-immigrant resentment an overt racism by Trump campaign was instrumental in mainstreaming anti-Islam or anti-Muslim narrative in American politics.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, President Trump campaign speeches included a racist and nativist approach towards Mexicans. President Trump’s campaign launch speech is of immense significance in American political history of modern era. In his launch speech he overtly and explicitly expressed his views on key issues election issues i.e., Economy, Terrorism, immigration, and trade policy with China and Japan. The launch speech identifies his rhetoric of normalizing overt expression of racial resentment and anti-immigration worries of the people. He termed Mexicans as rapists and problematic and emphasized that Mexicans

¹⁰² George Hawley, —Ambivalent Nativism: Trump Supporters’ Attitudes toward Islam and Muslim Immigration,” *Brookings* (blog), July 24, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/ambivalent-nativism-trump-supporters-attitudes-toward-islam-and-muslim-immigration/>.

¹⁰³ —‘Islam Is Peace’ Says President,” accessed December 21, 2021, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010917-11.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Jenna Johnson and Abigail Hauslohner, —‘I Think Islam Hates Us’: A Timeline of Trump’s Comments about Islam and Muslims,” *Washington Post*, May 20, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2017/05/20/i-think-islam-hates-us-a-timeline-of-trumps-comments-about-islam-and-muslims/>.

¹⁰⁵ Hawley, —Ambivalent Nativism.”

are stealing jobs of Americans. Addressing the issue of terrorism, he proposed complete ban on Muslim in America. He claimed to renegotiate trade deals with key trading partners and asserted that he will defeat China.¹⁰⁶

3.2.3 From Civic Nationalism to Ethnic Nationalism

In brief, the transition of American domestic political identity from a liberal and civic nationalism of inclusive and multicultural political society to a polarized domestic politics is evident from election campaign of 2016. The rise ethnic nationalism was amplified by President Trump's election rhetoric and explicit expression of racial statements. In American politics, the racial resentments have been a prominent feature of political and social landscape, but the liberal constitutional constraints have preserved the liberal and liberal values of the society. President Trump reasserted the social and political fault lines in his speeches and tweets and overly stated racist narratives. The creation of a new normal towards racial attitude discourses can be witnessed. In modern American liberal norms and values racial discriminations on political mainstream has been discouraged and considered as worst election strategy in worst case scenario, but president Trumps racial discourses established new normal towards the sensitivity of racial discrimination. President Trump covered his racist discourse with racial fig leaves by covering his explicit racism with complementary narratives, states Jennifer M. Saul. He argues that once racial equality narrative sensitized the issue of racism. President Trump's overt racism normalized the sensitive issue to those who are not racist but tolerating racist narratives. This new normal has created extreme polarization in American society and eroding American norms, values, and Culture.¹⁰⁷ The populist narrative at home and election promises pushed President Trump to transform American foreign policy preferences. United States has witnessed major transformations in the US foreign policy during Trump era, withdrawal from multilateral agreement, minimization of the significance of international organizations, unilateral assertion, renegotiation of

¹⁰⁶ Amber Phillips, —They'Re Rapists.' President Trump's Campaign Launch Speech Two Years Later, Annotated - The Washington Post," June 16, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/06/16/theyre-rapists-presidents-trump-campaign-launch-speech-two-years-later-annotated/>.

¹⁰⁷ Jennifer M. Saul, —Racial Figleaves, the Shifting Boundaries of the Permissible, and the Rise of Donald Trump," *University of Arkansas Press*, Philosophical Topics, 45, no. 02 (Fall 2017): 97-116 (20).

major trade deals, a new wave of American protectionism, and most significantly a trade war with China and construction of China as major competitor. American global leadership has lost the credibility which was achieved during post-cold war decades because Trump administration indiscriminately imposed protections on allies and constructed competitors, unilaterally withdrawn from Iran nuclear deal, withdrawal from Paris Climate deal of 2015, and unilateral emphasized on to renegotiation NAFTA and TPP.

3.3 Trump Administration Foreign Policy Towards China

Trump administration radically transformed American foreign policy towards China. President Trump's National Security Strategy (NSS 2017) termed China as a global competitor, and China got ample significance in the NSS 2017. Trump administration in NSS has emphasized on competition with China for a maintained and sustained American global influence. President Trump's National Security Strategy also stressed on a policy to compete and confront China's revisionist assertion on global level at every avenue, economic, political, and strategic plus security domain. National Security Strategy is an essential component of the administration's policy guide in United States which constructs policy discourse to complement policy choices of the president in office. Trump administration's NSS reflected president trump's election rhetoric of 'America First', the rhetoric was promised to check increasing Chinese global influence and its impact on United States. President Trump in his campaign launch speech asserted on transformation of US trade policies, particularly vis a vis China. He accentuated that trade with China is responsible for Job losses and economic grievances of the people of United States, he reassured the people that he will beat China.¹⁰⁸

President Trump and his team significantly emphasized on transformation of China policy during election campaign and advocated a change in American approach towards China. In presidency, Trump administration in the very beginning of the presidential tenure started building an alternative public discourse and policy choice towards China.

¹⁰⁸ Phillips, —They'Re Rapists.' President Trump's Campaign Launch Speech Two Years Later, Annotated - The Washington Post."

The rationale for an alternative policy choice was based on the administration's conclusion that China is expanding at the expense of America. Trump administration's primary objective was to constraint China's rapid growth and slow down a decrease in relative American advantage over China.¹⁰⁹ The administration argued that the previous US foreign policy rationale was based on the perception that integration of China to the global economy and institutional infrastructure will cause liberalization of China. The policy of engagement with China failed to achieve its objectives because the Chinese communist regime thrived over the policy and remained reluctant to liberalize its economy and restricted political and social freedoms at home, argued the administration. The NSS 2017 and President Trump's trade policy towards China depicts the alternative foreign policy towards China which conceptualizes China the major global competitor. It advocates a policy which proposes competition and containment rather than engagement and integration.

3.3.1 Populism and Trump Administration's China Policy

Rise of Populist forces in advanced western democracies got significance in 2016. Donald Trump got elected as US president, in United Kingdom Brexit vote campaign ended successfully and resulted the withdrawal of UK from European Union. These two events are significant in identifying the rise of populist forces and inward-looking politics in advanced western democracies. Although populist rise in western democracies is identifiable from such historical events, but the questions of how populism in domestic politics impacts the foreign policy choices needs to be inquired. The scholarship on populism significantly focuses on populism as an election strategy and studies populism in domestic political domain. The studies focused more on domestic implications of populism, its role in eroding domestic institutions, liberal values and traditions and causes of rise of populist movements in Americas and Europe. Comparatively, the correlation and causation Populist rhetoric in foreign policy choices got less significance in scholarly

¹⁰⁹ Ryan Hass, —Lessons from the Trump Administration's Policy Experiment on China," September 25, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/lessons-from-the-trump-administrations-policy-experiment-on-china/>.

investigations.¹¹⁰ President Trump's campaign rhetoric was centered on key global and domestic issues. He persistently proposed anti-immigration narrative, nationalist view on American trade deals, attacked and criticized multilateralism and international institutions, projected China, Mexico, and others as cause of job loss of Americans, and persistent criticism and disdain for institutional structure of United States and beyond. His nativist and nationalist populist strand depicts his understanding of US foreign policy based on zero-sum game of nationalistic agenda. His election rhetoric of nativist populism and foreign policy choices on immigration, new renegotiated trade deals, and trade war with China are persistent and consistent with each other.¹¹¹

3.3.1.1 Globalization and the Rationale for Protectionist Populism

The landmark phenomenon of globalization and integration of international economy transformed the cultural, ethnic, and racial demography of labor force, and advanced technological innovations altered the traditional essence of market forces. It created economic insecurity among the leftovers of globalization and a cultural backlash in indigenous communities against the increasing immigrant population. The populist leaders capitalized over these fault lines and assured to protect people from internal and external threats. The protectionist populism is stimulated by the globalization and the policies of liberal international order; these policies removed trade barriers and ensured freedom of movement across the borders. Furthermore, these policies provided the base for protectionist populism which aims to protect the 'people' from external and internal influences cultural, economic, and political. President Trump manipulated the resentment towards the policies of globalization and proposed a rhetoric to protect 'people' against the elite. In protectionist populism the external competitors are essential component of narrative to consolidate the populist narrative and ingroup identity.¹¹²

The US grand strategy after the end of cold war has been widely accepted and remained unquestioned in public and political discourse. The Liberal hegemonic foreign policy

¹¹⁰ Georg Löffmann, "America First and the Populist Impact on US Foreign Policy," *Survival* 61, no. 6 (November 2, 2019): 115–38, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2019.1688573>.

¹¹¹ Löffmann.

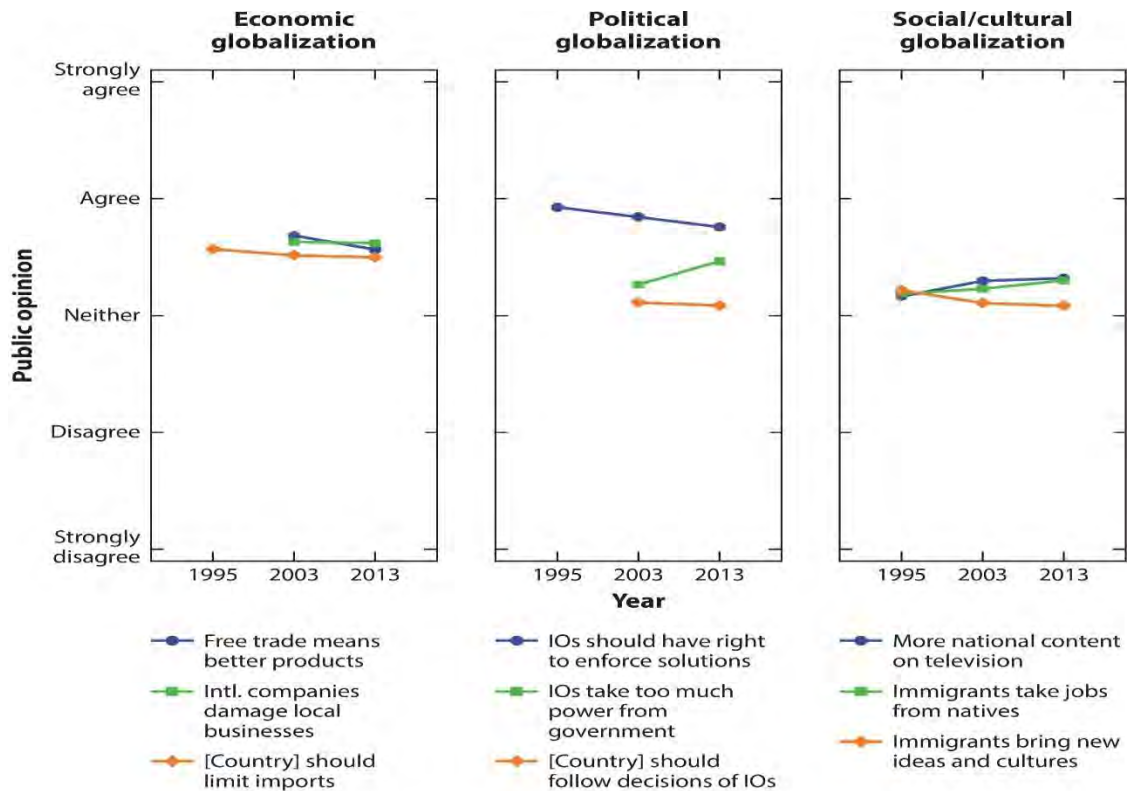
¹¹² Rogers Brubaker, "Why Populism?," *Theory and Society* 46, no. 5 (2017): 357–85, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-017-9301-7>.

narrative and policy choices propagated US supremacy in international affairs and supported strategy of primacy. The strategy included promotion of democracy and American liberal ideals abroad, use of political and economic means to restrict aggression, multilateral engagement through US led institutional system, ensure, and regulate global free trade, rule of law, and legitimacy of international organizations. The liberal American policies coupled with technological advancements intensified and catalyzed the phenomenon of Globalization. The phenomenon of globalization witnessed backlashes in recent times, particularly after the 2007-8 financial crisis. The competing parallel narrative explain the skepticism towards globalization in diverse explanations. Some argue that the explanation for the backlash is rooted in the grievances and resentments of the leftovers.¹¹³

The intensity and size of populist challenge to globalization is witnessed from the voter outcomes of the western democracies. The election results of President Trump got much significance because of the populist and protectionist rhetoric of President Trump. These phenomena often explained as a cultural and economic backlash from the threatened indigenous cultures and economic leftovers respectively. Stefanie Walter explains that it is not public opinion that led to anti-globalization or protectionist populism, but the politicization of globalization led to the anti-globalized outcomes in elections. The rhetorical appeal of populist leader convinced the people to vote for the candidates themselves not for anti-globalization agenda.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig, “The Surge of Economic Nationalism in Western Europe,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33, no. 4 (November 2019): 128–51, <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.33.4.128>.

¹¹⁴ Stefanie Walter, “The Backlash Against Globalization,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 24, no. 1 (2021): 421–42, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102405>.



Walter S. 2021
Annu. Rev. Political Sci. 24:421–42

Figure 5: Public Opinion on Globalization-related Issues in 15 Countries, 1995–2013.

Source: “The Backlash Against Globalization” <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102405>.

In figure 5, the survey data of 15 countries from 1995 to 2013 related to globalization is conducted and visualized by International Social Survey Project. The results of the survey demonstrate that there is no significance inclination of public opinion against globalization; it disputes the evidence concluded on the base of rising public opinion against globalization. Walter emphasizes that the voter’s support in favor of populist leaders is embedded in rhetoric and discourses of discursive identity construction rather than perceptions against globalization.

It is significant to assess President Donald Trump’s protectionist rationale for protectionist trade policies towards China in the backdrop of anti-globalization campaign. The important question needs to be investigated is either its nationalist approach to economy and trade that led Trump supported to support protectionism or a rhetoric

convincingly propagated and advanced by President Trump constructed populist nationalist identity.

Type of response	Reinforcement	Pushback and mitigation
Societal	Encouraging globalization-skeptic attitudes Pandering to the right	Proglobalization mobilization Deterrence effects
Domestic policy	Antiglobalization policies	Policies aimed at mitigating causes of backlash
International	Government responsiveness in international negotiations International organization responsiveness	Nonaccommodation in international negotiations Enhancing legitimacy of international institutions

Table 1: The Globalization Backlash: Responses and Dynamics¹¹⁵

Source: “The Backlash Against Globalization” <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102405>.

3.3.2 Protectionism: Trump Administrations Trade Policy Towards China

President Donald Trump’s trade policy towards China is a nationalist view of trade based on the traditional mercantilist conception of tariffs and protections. During election campaign Donald Trump emphasized on new trade deal with China to protect American jobs and industry. Donald Trump continuously blamed China for shrinking job opportunities in America. In office, President Trump conceptualized China policy as a policy of competition and containment rather than a previously prioritized engagement policy. The increasing American trade deficit vis-à-vis China was a sign of relative disadvantage for American economy. President Trump promised to push China towards a new trade deal and protect American workers and industries from Chinese Influence. The rationales for the tariff protections are multi-dimensional. Politically protectionist policies were motivated by the domestic political dynamics and populist and nationalist political narrative persuaded popular support for these policies.

In June 2016, President Trump during a campaign rally speech proposed a roadmap to constraint China’s allegedly unfair trade practices by invoking two section of Trade Act

¹¹⁵ Walter.

1974, respectively section 201 and 301.¹¹⁶ The persistent narrative to erect protectionist policies in trade policy by Trump administration was a transition from decades long propagation of free trade and liberalization of economy, the integral policy discourse of globalization.¹¹⁷ Trump administration in office translated these policy narratives into policy choices and adopted protectionist policies by adopting tariff policy towards China and beyond.

In January 2018, President Trump erected tariff protections on import of solar panels and washing machines from all over the world. Further, the administration expanded the tariff areas to other products and announced 25% tariffs on the imports of steel and 10% tariffs on aluminum, in March 2018. These tariffs were not against only Chinese exports, scope of these tariff rates on imports were expanded across the board over all exporters. These tariff hikes and protectionist policies were responded by China by increasing tariffs over various US exports to China up to 25%, most significantly soybeans and airplanes. These retaliations by China the largest US's trading partner further ignited a fresh wave of protectionist policies by Trump administration. The administration revealed new policies to impose tariffs up to 25% on Chinese exports of worth \$50 Billion. China responded with similar policy choices designed to increase 25% tariff US exports of same value.¹¹⁸ The protectionist policies of President Trump and retaliatory increase in Tariffs by China made headlines around the world and a beginning of trade war between the two largest economies of the world started.

3.3.2.1 US-China Trade War

Economy, particularly trade with China was of immense significance among the top issues of presidential elections of 2016. Donald Trump continuously blamed China for job losses and economic degradation. President Trump alleged China for unfair trade and malpractices. In May 2016 during a campaign rally in Indiana, President Trump stated that –China is raping our county...”. He accused China of rape through unfair Trade

¹¹⁶ Reuters Staff, –Timeline: Key Dates in the U.S.-China Trade War,” *Reuters*, January 15, 2020, sec. Business News, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china-timeline-idUSKBN1ZE1AA>.

¹¹⁷ Marcus Noland, –US Trade Policy in the Trump Administration,” *Asian Economic Policy Review* 13, no. 2 (2018): 262–78, <https://doi.org/10.1111/aepr.12226>.

¹¹⁸ Reuters Staff, –Timeline.”

practices and policy.¹¹⁹ President Trump's proposed trade policy during primaries and presidential debates indicated a different trade policy from previous administration. Trump administration erected tariff protection on solar panel and washing machines from all exporters in January 2018, and further extended tariffs on steel and aluminum. These protectionist policies are significant in context of American trade with China because of the size and volume of the bilateral trade and inter-dependency. The tariff escalation turned into a trade or tariff war between the two countries.

3.3.2.1.1 First Wave of Tariff War

The initial escalation of tariffs by Trump administration was responded by China through retaliatory on American Imports. In July 2018, Trump administration erected tariff protections by 25% on Chinese exports of worth USD 34 Billion. In retaliation, China raised Tariffs on US exports of same worth and value up to 25%. Figure 6 indicates that there is significant rise in tariffs from both side on bilateral trade in July 2018 and this rise continued till January 2020.¹²⁰ China's Tariffs towards the exports of the rest of the world remained stable or decreased to a lesser extent but towards US it remained increasing. Figure 6 illustrates that Chinese tariff rate for American exports increase from 8% in January 2018 to 10% in July 2018. Correspondingly, American Tariffs in the beginning of 2018 were 3.1% on Chinese exports which raised to 7% in July 2018. While American tariffs for the exports of the rest of the world raised form 2.2% in the beginning of the year to almost 3% in July 2018.

¹¹⁹ The Telegraph, *Donald Trump Accuses China of Trade —Rpe,*” 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy9iY6CvAHU>.

¹²⁰ Edwin L.-C. Lai, “The US–China Trade War, the American Public Opinions and Its Effects on China,” *Economic and Political Studies* 7, no. 2 (April 3, 2019): 169–84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20954816.2019.1595330>.



Figure 6: US-China Tariff Rates towards Each Other and The Rest of the World¹²¹

Source: <https://www.piie.com/research/piie-charts/us-china-trade-war-tariffs-date-chart>.

3.3.2.1.2 Second and Third Phase of Tariff Escalation

The second phase of tariff escalation between US and China started in August 2018. Trump administration expanded the scope of the tariffs to further Chinese exports worth USD 16 Billion, and the increased rates for new tariffs was 25 percent. It was indicated earlier by the Chinese authorities that China will respond with fresh tariffs on American exports. China responded with fresh tariffs on American exports. China enacted tariffs up

¹²¹ –US-China Trade War Tariffs: An Up-to-Date Chart,” PIIE, August 29, 2019, <https://www.piie.com/research/piie-charts/us-china-trade-war-tariffs-date-chart>.

to 25 percent on American exports of worth 16 billion US Dollars. The escalation continues between the two largest economies of the world. The rise in economic tensions between US and China caused uncertainty globally.

The third phase of trade war begins with additional American tariffs on Chinese exports and retaliatory tariffs by China in September 2018.¹²² President Trump enacted additional tariff protections up to 10 percent on Chinese exports of USD 200 billion. In retaliation China, levied additional tariffs on USD 200 billion US exports within the range from 5 to 10 percent tariffs. Figure 6 demonstrates the parallel rise in tariffs from July 2018 to September 2019. Further, figure 6 depicts that in the third phase of tariff war, the rate of American tariffs on Chinese exports raised from 7 percent in July to 12 percent in October 2018. Correspondingly, China imposed more tariffs and the percentage of Chinese tariffs on American exports to China 18.3. Trade war between China and US continued in 2019, and Figure 6 indicates that by the end of 2019 and in early 2020 the Chinese tariffs on US exports stand as 21.8 percent. Parallely, the US tariffs on Chinese exports to US stand as 21.0 percent.

Similarly, figure 7 demonstrates that US-China bilateral trade subject to tariffs. In January 2018, the value of US-China trade subject to tariffs is almost zero, but it increases as the escalation in trade war increases. After July 2018, there is a sharp rise in exports subject to tariff on both sides. In July 2018, Trump administration announces the erection of new tariffs on Chinese exports to China. Figure 7 illustrates that in July 2018 the American exports subject to Chinese tariffs increases up to 25 percent. US administration imposes tariffs on Chinese exports and the trade subject to tariffs raises up to 6 to 7 percent. Further, figure 7 depicts that there is a continuous rise in exports subject to tariffs. By January 2021, 64 percent of Chinese exports are subject to American tariffs; correspondingly, the percentage of US exports subject to Chinese tariffs is to 58.3 percent.

¹²² Lai, "The US-China Trade War, the American Public Opinions and Its Effects on China."

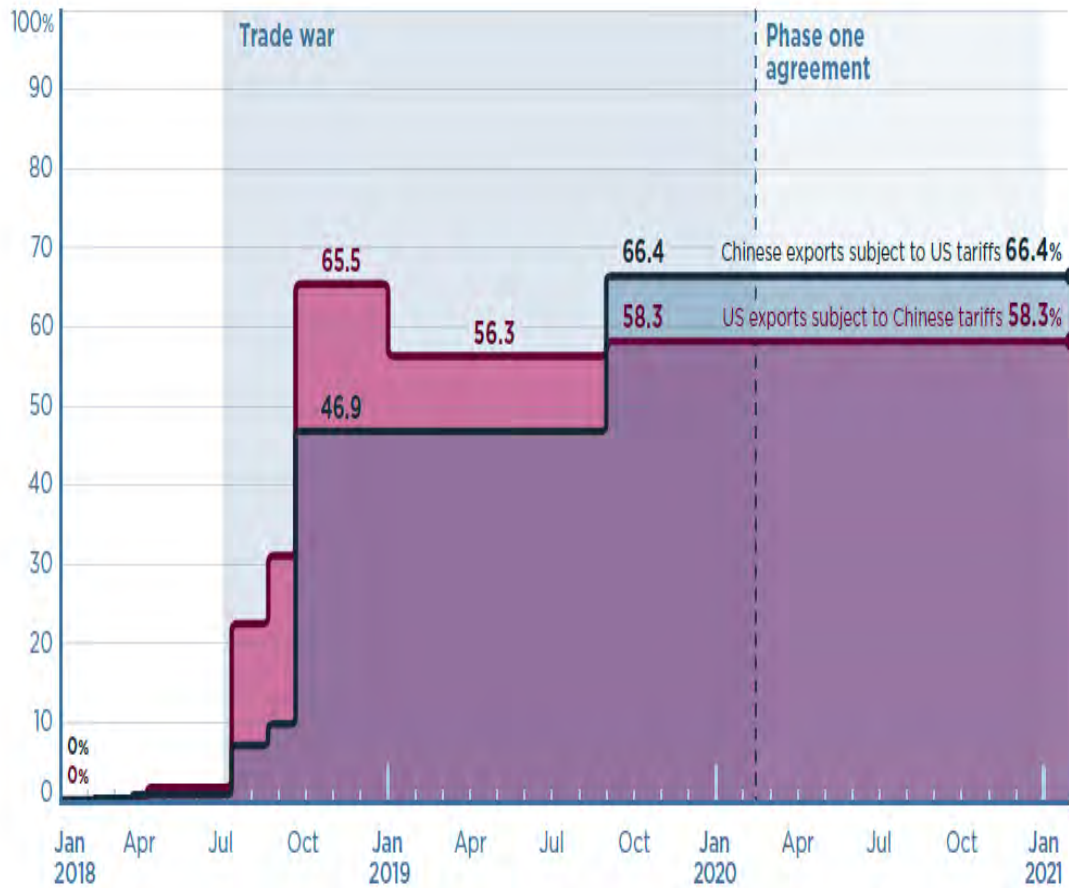


Figure 7: Percent of US–China Trade Subject to Tariffs

Source: *Source: <https://www.pii.com/research/piie-charts/us-china-trade-war-tariffs-date-chart>.*

3.3.3 Trump Administration’s Rationale for Trade Protections on Chinese Exports

China rapid economic growth in 90s and in the first decade of the twenty first century has changed global dynamics of trade. In 2001, China got accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and global trade was opened to China. United States Census Bureau indicates that negative balance of trade increase on US side. The trade in goods with China balance sheet by US Census Bureau illustrates that in 2001 the American exports to China were of worth USD 19,182.3 million, imports were of cost USD 102,278.4

million, and the US deficit was 83,096.1.¹²³ Trade deficit rises rapidly after the accession of China to WTO and US trade deficit with China kept increasing afterwards. The annual deficit of trade in goods with China in 2016 was recorded as -346,825.2. US imports from China increased to a greater degree from USD 102,278.4 million in 2001 to 462,420.0 million in 2016. Table 2 demonstrates that total value of exports of goods and services from China to US in 2016 is USD 500 billion. It further explains that it is 20.1 percent of total Chinese exports and 18.2 percent of American imports. Contrastingly, the total value of imports of goods and services of China from US is USD 182 billion. The table indicates that the bilateral trade imbalance between China and US is USD 318 billion.

Total value of exports of goods and services from China to US in 2016 (including exports through China's Hong Kong to the US)	US\$500 billion
The above value as a percentage of total value of Chinese exports	20.1%
The above value as a percentage of total value of US imports	18.2%
Total value of imports of goods and services by China from US in 2016 (including imports through China's Hong Kong from the US)	US\$182 billion
The above value as a percentage of total value of Chinese imports	8.4%
The above value as a percentage of total value of US exports	8.1%
The bilateral trade imbalance between the US and China in 2016	US\$318 billion

Table 2: Bilateral Trade Imbalance Between the US and China in 2016.

Source: "The US–China Trade War, the American Public Opinions and Its Effects on China." <https://doi.org/10.1080/20954816.2019.1595330>.

¹²³ US Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division, "Foreign Trade: Data," accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html>.

Total value of exports from China to the rest of the world (including US) (including exports through China's Hong Kong)	US\$2,494 billion
The above value as a percentage of GDP of China (GDP of Chinese Hong Kong is excluded)	22.3%
Total value of imports by China from the rest of the world (including US) (including imports through China's Hong Kong)	US\$2,263 billion
The above value as a percentage of GDP of China (GDP of China's Hong Kong is excluded)	20.2%
Total value of exports from US to the rest of the world (including China)	US\$2,177 billion
The above value as a percentage of GDP of the US	11.7%
Total value of imports by US from the rest of the world (including China)	US\$2,744 billion
The above value as a percentage of GDP of the US	14.7%

Table 3: Trade Dependency of China and the US in 2016

Source: “*The US–China Trade War, the American Public Opinions and Its Effects on China.*” <https://doi.org/10.1080/20954816.2019.1595330>.

Donald Trump during his campaign accused China of trade malpractices, unfair level playing field and more significantly accused China of technology theft. He promised in his campaign that he will be tough on China and only he can constrain China from these practices.¹²⁴ He alleged China of currency manipulation for maximization economic gains in global capital and economic market. He explicitly expressed his proposed trade policy China and vowed to impose tariff on China and sanction China for its currency manipulation.¹²⁵ His election promises to have a new trade deal with China based on tariff coercion indicated a future trade war, in an obvious case of Chinese retaliation. President Trump alleged US trading partner responsible for job loss. China shock and increasing Chinese imports to United States negatively affected the job market, particularly in rural areas where Donald Trump had his majority voter base.¹²⁶

Political rationale for protections were based on the unemployment and reduced labor participation in manufacturing caused by American Chinese exports to US. President Trump during his campaign assured to discourage Chinese imports and reduce unemployment causes by Chinese imports. Politically, this rhetoric consolidated Donald

¹²⁴ Zeeshan Aleem, “If Trump Delivers on His Promises on China, He’ll Probably Spark a Trade War,” Vox, November 22, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/world/2016/11/22/13676356/trump-trade-war-china>.

¹²⁵ Ian Talley, “Trump’s Vow to Target China’s Currency Could Be First Step to Trade War,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 15, 2016, sec. World, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/donald-trumps-pledge-to-get-tough-on-china-raises-threat-of-trade-war-1478804077>.

¹²⁶ David H. Autor, David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson, “The China Syndrome: Local Labor Market Effects of Import Competition in the United States,” *American Economic Review* 103, no. 6 (October 2013): 2121–68, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.103.6.2121>.

Trump's support in rural areas of United States. Donald Trump capitalized over the protectionist trade narrative towards China to reduce bilateral trade deficit.

Economic rationale was primarily based on American allegations on China for failure to compliance with the obligations to join WTO. US accused China of unfair trade practices and failure to enforce intellectual and property rights. It was alleged by the US authorities that Chinese authorities compel American partner for the allocation of American technology to the Chinese firms. Secondly, American deficit is among the primary rationales for the tariffs over Chinese imports to US.¹²⁷ The rationales provided the policy options for trade war to force China to ensure level playing field for bilateral trade. Moreover, national security was also rationalized for compelling China to ensure technology property rights and transform its behavior.

3.3.4 Trump's Security Policies: A Policy of Containment towards China

The Asia-Pacific region has always been at the core of the security and strategic calculations of the US policymakers. The geostrategic position of the region, the emergence of regional economic and military powers along the growing economic and strategic influence of China throughout the region has created a greater concern for the US. However, since the Obama administration, the US has been trying to reposition itself and strengthen its regional alliances to preserve and maintain its regional hegemony through bilateral or multilateral economic and security partnerships. Although, Obama administration has realized the emergence of China in the region has certain economic, political, and strategic challenges to the interests of the US, but never specified Beijing as a competitor or revisionist power rather hope for cooperation.¹²⁸ Throughout his "Pivot to Asia" or "Rebalancing Asia" policy has avoided a confrontational approach towards China, neither described China as a competitor to the US. While on the other hand, China has become at the core of Trump's presidential election campaign and throughout his presidential considered in various official documents and policy papers, Beijing is a major threat to the US-led order in the region. While under the "Free and Open Indo-

¹²⁷ Lai, "The US-China Trade War, the American Public Opinions and Its Effects on China."

¹²⁸ Jamie Fly, "Trump's Asia Policy and the Concept of the Indo-Pacific," GMFUS, January 8, 2019, <https://www.gmfus.org/news/trumps-asia-policy-and-concept-indo-pacific>.

Pacific Strategy‘ the US has adopted a more aggressive and competitive approach towards the emergence of China.¹²⁹

The Trump administration, along with the trade policies towards the region with specific reference to China, has also adopted its Indo-Pacific strategy in various security and defense papers. During Trump presidency, the US has shifted its security and strategic concerns towards the Indo-Pacific region owing to various factors happening in the regional strategic environment. Among these factors, the emergence of China’s economic and strategic sphere of influence throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans via the BRI mega initiative has created a sense of security threat in the US. Consequently, to deal, contain, and adjust the Chinese expansion the US has revived its hegemonic position as a leading stakeholder and the sole power to maintain regional economic, security and strategic order. Whereas, for that reason, the Trump administration has taken a hard stance towards China.¹³⁰ Various official documents published during his tenure have considered China as a peer competitor that is going to alter the US-led liberal order. As compared to the previous administration, Trump considered the Indo-Pacific region‘ a core factor in its foreign, security and economic policy area for dealing with China. As at the immediate after of the election, the US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson described China as a “less responsible” actor and undermining the international rules-based order which is one of the major challenges to Washington.¹³¹ But after Tillerson, the free and open Indo-Pacific strategy remains its top priority to engage with regional like-minded countries for the purpose to contain China’s emergence.

Furthermore, the National Security Strategy published in December 2017 by the White House has put the Indo-Pacific separately as an area of policy concern. This security strategy paper has rightly indicated Trump’s vision towards China and the region, that in the Indo-Pacific region, “A geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions

¹²⁹ Felix Heiduk, “From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific,” Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), 2020, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/from-asia-pacific-to-indo-pacific>.

¹³⁰ Lindsey W. Ford, “The Trump Administration and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” *Brookings* (blog), May 5, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-trump-administration-and-the-free-and-open-indo-pacific/>.

¹³¹ TRANSCRIPT, “Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century: An Address by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson,” October 18, 2017, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/defining-our-relationship-india-next-century-address-us-secretary-state-rex-tillerson>.

of world order.” Further, maintained that China is undermining the rules-based order, threatening other nations security and sovereignty, and endangering the free flow of trade and free movement and its effort of militarizing the South China Sea. Whereas, in this security strategy document, it has prioritized its political actions to strengthen alliances and partnerships, peacefully resolve conflicts according to international, ensure security and sovereignty of nations, and promote freedom of navigation. Whereas, on the economic realm, according to the document, the US will encourage free trade and cooperation, maintain the openness of the seaways for trade and commerce and pursue bilateral trade agreements based on a win-win situation. Besides that, in the security arena, the US has committed to maintaining its military presence to deter and if necessary to defeat any aggressive actor in the region.¹³²

Likewise, the Indo-Pacific Strategy Report published by the Department of Defense in 2019, clearly presented China as a Revisionist and assertive power today the Indo-Pacific region is confronting. China’s military advancements, its aggressive behavior towards its neighboring states, militarization in the South China Sea, endangering freedom of navigation for trade and transportation and threatening rules-based regional order in the Indo-Pacific region are serious concerns for the US as a superpower.¹³³ The US has also maintained its position towards the region, so in “The Free and Open Indo-Pacific” vision repeated the same things that the regional order is facing various challenges and “Authoritarian revisionist powers seek to advance their parochial interests at others’ expense”.¹³⁴ The strategy report further highlights the core principles or characteristics of Trump’s policies towards a free and open Indo-Pacific. These driving factors are comprised of firstly, respect for sovereignty and independence of all nations. secondly, peaceful resolution of disputes. Thirdly, free-fair, and reciprocal trade based on

¹³² —“New National Security Strategy for a New Era – The White House,” 2, accessed December 26, 2021, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/articles/new-national-security-strategy-new-era/>.

¹³³ Reports-U.S. Government Reports-U.S. Government, “The Department of Defense Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region | Andrew S. Erickson,” June 1, 2019, <https://www.andrewerickson.com/2019/06/the-department-of-defense-indo-pacific-strategy-report-preparedness-partnerships-and-promoting-a-networked-region/>.

¹³⁴ —“Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision,” *United States Department of State* (blog), November 2019, <https://www.state.gov/a-free-and-open-indo-pacific-advancing-a-shared-vision/>.

open investment, transparent agreements, and connectivity; and lastly adherence to international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight”.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ —“Free and Open Indo-Pacific.”

CHAPTER 04

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Populism, as a modern political phenomenon, is widespread and got immense significance after the rise of President Donald Trump and Brexit in 2016. The scholarly work on populism indicates that the rise of populism presents mounting challenges to the existing world system and society-state relations. The recent developments in the western democracies reveal broader trends of populism, in western democracies and beyond, increasing authoritarian tendencies and a transformation from multicultural society to an ethno-centric nationalism.¹³⁶ These trends increased polarization in democratic societies and extreme ideological positioning of democratic actors and their public support is evident. Populist leaders adopted discursive communication strategies to mobilize people around sense of collective resentment. For instance, President Donald Trump's populist rhetoric represents a remarkable communication strategy and convincing power to consolidate popular support towards his policies and election campaign. His imagination of America identity based on white American male at the core presents populist identity construction to consolidate electoral and political support.¹³⁷ His efficient and timely use of social media, particularly tweeter, to communicate his ideas, election campaign slogans, and policy initiatives during presidency is unprecedented in modern American politics.

President Trump populist rhetoric was instrumental in making his foreign policy decisions legitimate and rational. During his presidential campaign rhetorical narrative was based on the impression that America is in crisis, and only he can save the Americans and ensure the rule of the real people. The populist forces require condition of crisis, which they construct in their public communication with the convincing power of rhetoric, to mobilize their support base against domestic elites and foreign enemies. President Donald Trump foreign policy decisions got legitimacy among his support base

¹³⁶ Bart Bonikowski, "Ethno-Nationalist Populism and the Mobilization of Collective Resentment," *The British Journal of Sociology* 68, no. S1 (2017): S181–213, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12325>.

¹³⁷ Bonikowski.

due to his rhetorical projection of crisis and his ability to resolve this crisis.¹³⁸ President Trump's rhetoric ascends from domestic electoral politics to the issues of historically bipartisan essence. The expansion of presidential rhetoric and discourse on the issues foreign policy and trade policy was unprecedented in recent American history. President Trump's way of communication directly with his supporters through using social media network, particularly twitter, on issues of foreign policy, trade policy, and immigration like issues was not a routine experience in American Politics.

In his opinion piece in Wall Street Journal back in 2016, then presidential candidate, Donald Trump stated that *“The only antidote to decades of ruinous rule by a small handful of elites is a bold infusion of popular will. On every major issue affecting this country, the people are right, and the governing elite are wrong. The elites are wrong on taxes, on the size of government, on trade, on immigration, on foreign policy”*.¹³⁹ The repetition of anti-elite and pro-people narrative, significance to the direct popular rule, a new trade deal to protect American workers and industries, restricting migration to protect majority white American identity, being tough on China, a nationalist and unilateral foreign policy, criticizing opponents with derogatory and insulting statement, disrespect for institutions and rules, and hate for Mexicans and Muslims has been the key ingredients of President Trump's populist rhetoric. His social media use to convey his message to his supporters, in an uninterpreted and undistorted, is an example of populist strategy per excellence.¹⁴⁰

Theoretically ideational perspective defines populism as a ‘thin ideology’ which divides the population into two separate sections ‘the pure people’ and ‘the corrupt elite’, it claims that pure people are sovereignty and politics is direct representation of the people and general will of the people.¹⁴¹ This perspective illustrates there are three essential components of populist rhetoric: the pure people, an imagined community which is

¹³⁸ Jonny Hall, “In Search of Enemies: Donald Trump's Populist Foreign Policy Rhetoric,” *Politics* 41, no. 1 (February 1, 2021): 48–63, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395720935377>.

¹³⁹ Donald J. Trump, “Let Me Ask America a Question,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 2016, sec. Opinion, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/let-me-ask-america-a-question-1460675882>.

¹⁴⁰ Boucher and Thies, “I Am a Tariff Man.”

¹⁴¹ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (ed 2004): 541–63, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x>.

targeted audience of populist communication model, anti-elite discourse, and construction of ‘the other’ presents which direct threat to the sovereign authority of the people. The construction of other is of greater significance in this study. The populist leaders and their followers are more connected based on the construction of other, a competitor or an enemy, rather than what they have in common.¹⁴² This construction provides the basis for populist foreign policy discourse and rhetoric; justifies and legitimates foreign policy decisions of the leaders and consolidates popular support for these decisions.

President Trump’s foreign policy rhetoric on the issues of trade and security displays the incorporation of the abovementioned essentials of populist rhetorical discourse. During his election campaign, he adopted a strategy of denouncing and opposing the ruling elites and political and institutional establishment in Washington and presented himself as an outsider and leader of the people. He kept asserting that the elite has signed or made trade deals which are benefiting their own personal interests rather than the people. He illustrated that the elite and their businesses are flourishing at the cost of the ordinary Americans and American workers.¹⁴³ His populist discourse on trade depicts a revisionist perspective which he materialized and got support in the sections of the society which have lost their jobs and economy due to Chinese imports. President Trump preferred a direct and unmediated or filtered communication with his support base during his time in White House, for this purpose he used Twitter regularly to project his policies and position on issue. He used Twitter to justify his trade war with China and kept announcing his victory in trade war.

¹⁴² Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser and Paul Taggart, “Dealing with Populists in Government: A Framework for Analysis,” *Democratization* 23, no. 2 (February 23, 2016): 201–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2015.1058785>.

¹⁴³ Boucher and Thies, “I Am a Tariff Man.”

4.1 Data and Coded Themes

The data of President Trump's twitter includes the survey of his twitter handle during the first two years of presidency. This data has been taken from an open data source OPEN ICPSR. This data set is part of content analysis course taught in Department of Communication university of Utah United States of America. This data set presents the coding of themes which was coded by graduate students for a seminar project. Table 4 presents the complete set of coded themes. These themes illustrate the categories of tweets. The number of tweets per theme. For instance, the theme IMMIG represents President Trump's tweets about immigrants. His populist rhetoric depicts his anti-immigrant narrative. During his presidency Donald Trump kept pressurizing congress to change the immigration laws and fund the wall. He often criticized democrats for not supporting his proposed immigration laws and border wall for border security and restricting illegal immigrants. His tweets demonstrate his direct and uninterrupted communication with the people he imagined as true and pure Americans. On October 22nd, 2018, he tweeted that —*To those in the Caravan turnaround we are not letting people into the United States illegally. Go back to your Country and if you want apply for citizenship like millions of others are doing!*”. This tweet got 40 thousand retweets and 138 thousand favorite counts by the time of this survey. Likewise, he tweeted —*The Caravans are a disgrace to the Democrat Party. Change the immigration laws NOW!*” and —*Every time you see a Caravan or people illegally coming or attempting to come into our Country illegally think of and blame the Democrats for not giving us the votes to change our pathetic Immigration Laws! Remember the Midterms! So unfair to those who come in legally*”. His continuous tweets about his election slogans and rhetoric demonstrate the populist strategy of communication and consolidation of support base.

Codes	Coded Themes
HSTG	Hashtag used
ATSN	@ used
CRIT	Criticizes another person/idea (not his own)
MEDI	Derogatory/condescending statements about news media
FAMY	References members of his immediate family
PLCE	References the police
MAGA	Reference to this campaign slogan
CAPT	Capital letters used
INDV	References an individual
MARG	Explicit references to marginalized group(s)
INTN	References other countries/leaders
PRTY	Reference to partisan/ideological labels
IMMG	References immigration

Table 4: Codes Representing Respective Themes

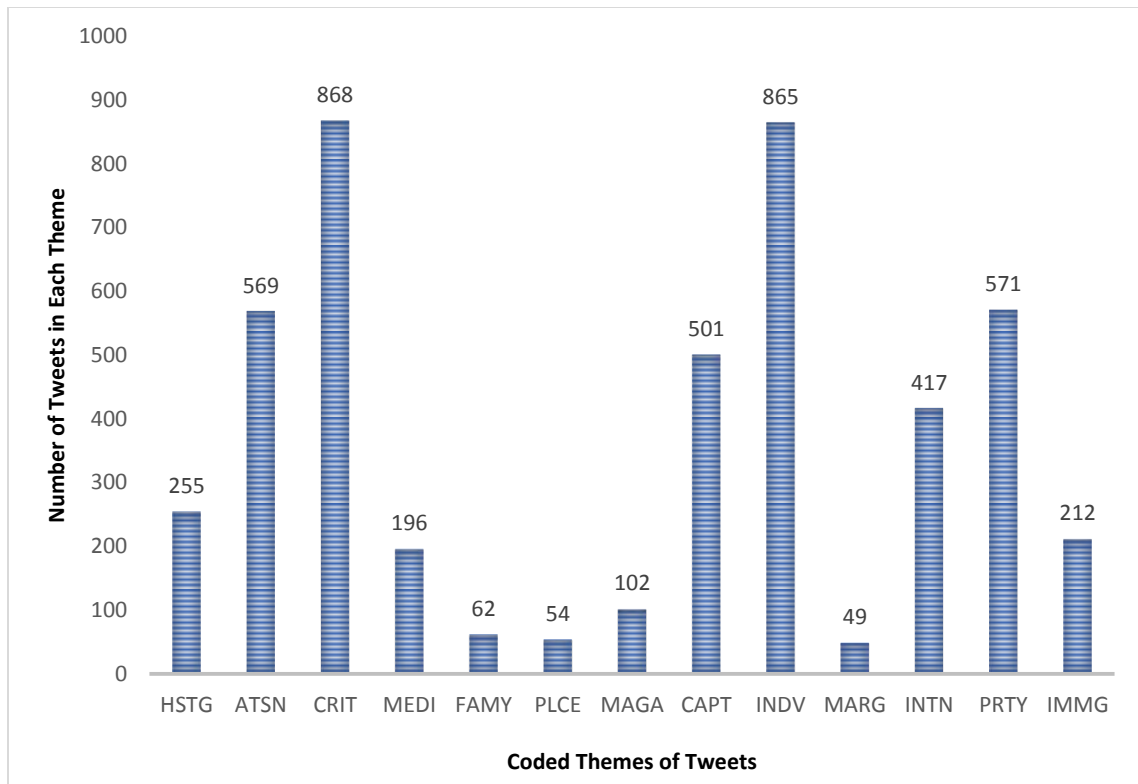


Figure 8: Total Coded Themes of President Trump's Twitter (2017-2019)

Source: Created by the Author by using MS Excel

Likewise, the content analysis of President Trump's tweets between February to April 2018 depict his protectionist policies and their projection; a strategy to consolidate the support of his voter and justify his policies. The tweet *“When a country (USA) is losing many billions of dollars on trade with virtually every country it does business with trade wars are good and easy to win. Example when we are down \$100 billion with a certain country, and they get cute don't trade anymore-we win big. It's easy!”* is one of the most significant tweets of President Trump at the beginning of trade war. It got 100 thousand likes and more than 20 thousand retweets.

CONCLUSION

The rise of populism in advanced western democracies is considered as the greatest contemporary challenge to liberal democracy. The rise of far-right forces to the executive offices demonstrates the deep-rooted penetration of populist forces in the western societies. Populist political strategy of manipulating socio-political cleavages in the societies resulted into electoral success of populist political parties and populist leaders; it indicates success of populist rhetoric and populist identity construction. The unprecedented rise of Donald Trump to the white house, the majority vote for Brexit, rise of Narendra Modi in India, Bolsonaro in Brazil, and numerous other populist leaders in power or in political mainstream signifies populism as an anti-globalization backlash. President Trump's time in oval office witnessed deep-rooted domestic polarization and an anti-globalization unilateral populist approach towards foreign policy. The US presidential elections of 2020 ended with President Donald Trump's removal from presidency but left a legacy of chaos and institutional disrespect which is rare in American political history. The 6th of January 2020 incident of riots on capitol by President Trump's supports on his incitement resulted into suspension of his Twitter and Facebook accounts, due to hate speech and encouragement of violence.

President Trump's election slogan –"Make America Great Again" was a typical populist slogan promised to restore the past glory and a false hope for nostalgic prestige. Further, his –"America First" policy demonstrates a nationalist and nativist approach to domestic and foreign policy. President Trump's anti-elite narrative and criticism for political elite and establishment in Washington illustrates ideational populist explanation of political polarization and rhetoric. The segregation of society into two competing section the elite and the people remained one of the core features of populist agenda and populist leaders projected themselves as the self-claimed leaders of the pure people. President Donald Trump persistently criticized the elite in Washington and accentuated that the elite are responsible for people's grievances, socio-cultural and economic. His ascendance made racial discrimination, nativism, and nationalism explicit among the hardcore American far right and beyond. Similarly, his foreign policy strategy has been influenced by his domestic populist political approach and rhetorical narrative building.

The US foreign Policy grand strategy after the cold war has been a multi-lateral liberal globalist approach of US primacy. The landmark phenomenon of globalization and integration of international economy transformed the cultural, ethnic, and racial demography of labor force, and advanced technological innovations altered the traditional essence of market forces. It created economic insecurity among the leftovers of globalization and a cultural backlash in indigenous communities against the increasing immigrant population. President Trump's President Trump manipulated the resentment towards the policies of globalization and proposed a rhetoric to protect 'people' against the elite. In protectionist populism the external competitors are essential component of narrative to consolidate the populist narrative and ingroup identity.

Foreign policy towards China, especially trade policy, is a significant component of Donald Trump's election rhetoric and his policies during his presidency. President Donald Trump's trade policy towards China is a nationalist view of trade based on the traditional mercantilist conception of tariffs and protections. Donald Trump continuously blamed China for shrinking job opportunities in America, intellectual property or technology property theft, and unfair trade practices. Politically protectionist policies were motivated by the domestic political dynamics and populist and nationalist political narrative persuaded popular support for these policies. Economic rationale was primarily based on American allegations on China for its failure to compliance with the obligations to join WTO. US accused China of unfair trade practices and failure to enforce intellectual and property rights. It was alleged by the US authorities that Chinese authorities compel American partner for the allocation of American technology to the Chinese firms. Secondly, American deficit is among the primary rationales for the tariffs over Chinese imports to US

The Trump administration, along with the trade policies towards the region with specific reference to China, has also adopted its Indo-Pacific strategy in various security and defense papers. During Trump presidency, the US has shifted its security and strategic concerns towards the Indo-Pacific region owing to various factors happening in the regional strategic environment. Among these factors, the emergence of China's economic and strategic sphere of influence throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans via the BRI

mega initiative has created a sense of security threat in the US. Consequently, to deal, contain, and adjust the Chinese expansion the US has revived its hegemonic position as a leading stakeholder and the sole power to maintain regional economic, security and strategic order.

Lastly, the study finds that qualitative content analysis of President Trump's tweets indicates that President Trump efficiently utilized twitter to justify his protectionist trade policies towards China. The analysis of President Trump's tweets during first two years of presidency depicts his protectionist policies and their projection; a strategy to consolidate the support of his voter and justify his policies. His direct communication with his target audience suggests that President Trump adopted the populist communication strategy with his supporters. A random sampling of President Trump's twitter demonstrates that the repetition of anti-elite and pro-people narrative, significance to the direct popular rule, a new trade deal to protect American workers and industries, restricting migration to protect majority white American identity, being tough on China. Moreover, a nationalist and unilateral foreign policy, criticizing opponents with derogatory and insulting statement, disrespect for institutions and rules, and hate for Mexicans and Muslims has been the key ingredients of President Trump's populist rhetoric. Further, the data suggests that President Trump's populist rhetoric against China consolidated support for protectionist trade policies against China.

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