**The 2016 US Presidential Election and Some Interesting Parallels with the Soviet Perestroika and the Current Developments in Europe**

 Коробков Андрей Владимирович – профессор политологии Университета штата Теннеси.

The proposed paper compares the situations in the US, the European Union, and the late USSR and discusses the systemic foundations of the current political trends in those states and regions.

The outcome of the 2016 Presidential campaign has become a true shock for the American political elite, regardless of its members’ party and professional affiliation. Meanwhile, the circus style of this campaign, the exotic figure of the 45-th President of the United States, and the hysterical reaction to him of the mainstream media have overshadowed the fact that the very emergence of such a figure indicated the existence of a serious systemic crisis facing the American society. Its emergence is rooted in the exhaustion of the capacity of the political and the socio-economic systems formed in the US during the Twentieth century.

The significance of the current developments is further underlined by the fact that similar trends are also visible in the leading EU countries. The situation there is marked, in particular, by a general shift of the public opinion to the right in both the foreign and domestic policy arenas (especially in regard to such issues as globalization, state sovereignty, group rights and privileges, and social welfare policy), and the emergence of charismatic populist leaders.

Ironically and regardless of significant differences between the US, European, and the Soviet political and socio-economic systems, some features of the current crisis are similar to those phenomena that took place in the USSR during the final years of Perestroika (1987-1991) and were related to the simultaneous crises of the political, economic, and social welfare systems, expressed, in particular, in the growing social divide on the basis of ethno-cultural and other group-based criteria that turned out to be more important than the purely socio-economic/class divisions.

Of special importance are also the technological aspects of the current political trends. In particular, Trump, as Yeltsin in the 1980s, while coming from the heart of the national elite, was able to «sell» himself as the anti-establishment candidate. Thus the paper analyzes the populist aspects of politics in the regions under consideration and the role of the evolving media technology in this process.

Comparing the situations in the US, the European Union, and the late USSR, the author suggests that a number of structural reforms are necessary to prevent the general systemic destabilization.