



2012 Presidential Elections in the United States: Challenges and Expectations

**Jagiellonian University
Institute of American Studies
and Polish Diaspora**

Kraków, October 26-27, 2012

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

FRIDAY, October 26th, 2012

Collegium Maius, Bobrzynski Hall, Jagiellonska Street 15

9.00-9.30 Registration

9.30-9.45 Welcome speeches and official opening

Adam Walaszek (Director of the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora)

Ellen Germain (U.S. Consul General in Krakow)

9.45-11.00 PANEL 1 Introduction to U.S. Presidential Elections

Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Rynek Glowny 34

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-13.15 PANEL 2 Presidential Elections in Historical Perspective

PANEL 3 New Developments in Campaigning

Collegium Novum, Club Convivium, Golebia Street 24

13.15-14.30 Lunch

Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Rynek Glowny 34

14.30-16.00 PANEL 4 Young and Minority Voters

PANEL 5 2012 Domestic Front

16.00-16.15 Coffee break

16.15-17.45 PANEL 6 2012 Cultural Issues

PANEL 7 European Point of View

U.S. Consul General's Residence, Grottgera Street 12

19.00-21.00 Reception Dinner

SATURDAY, October 27th, 2012

Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Rynek Glowny 34

9.15-11.00 PANEL 8 International Context of 2012 Elections

PANEL 9 Elections and Politics in Media and Culture

11.00-11.15 Coffee break

11.15-12.45 PANEL 10 Tomorrow

Collegium Novum, Club Convivium, Golebia Street 24

12.45-14.00 Lunch

Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Rynek Glowny 34

14.00-15.30 Plenary discussion and Conference summary

When the Dust Settles: Political Scenarios for 2013 and Beyond

PANEL 1. Introduction to U.S. Presidential Elections

9.45-11.00 *Collegium Maius, Bobrzynski Hall, Jagiellonska Street 15*

CHAIR: Adam Walaszek (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Robert Podolnjak (University of Zagreb, Croatia)

*The Constitution, the Electoral College and the American Concept of
Democracy – A View from Europe*

This paper analyses the institution of the Electoral College as the most unique and, at the same time, the most controversial of all American constitutional establishments. It was accepted at the Constitutional convention of 1787 as a result of a series of interrelated compromises among the Framers, because of their ideological differences (some delegates favouring direct popular election and some favouring congressional selection of the president) and conflicting states' and regional interests. But, the original presidential electoral system was essentially transformed in the first decades of the 19th century as a result of political (rise of political parties), constitutional (enacting of the 12th amendment), and legal developments (popular election of electors by general ticket). So, it is clear that the Electoral College cannot be defended from the original intent standpoint.

Contemporary supporters of the Electoral College defend this system as a historically proven model of extraordinary constitutional flexibility, which protects the federal system and the separation of powers, and guarantees respect for plural character of the American society and minority interests. Quite contrary, the author thinks that in modern times it is normatively impossible to defend the electoral college from the standpoint of preserving the principle of federalism in the American political system, because the presidential election system, as it functions today, is not a federal, "Madisonian" system of concurrent majorities, in the original meaning of those terms.

The thesis of the paper is that the electoral college system embodies a compound and highly contradictory compromise between the modern democratic principles of popular sovereignty and political equality of each citizen and the federal principle, which emphasizes the crucial role of the states in the process of presidential selection, and this compromise shows the distinctness of the American concept of democracy.

Patrick Vaughan (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

American Electoral System and the Dangers of Closed Primaries

This paper will explore the American electoral system and the dangers of closed primaries. There was once an old adage in American politics that a candidate must secure their “base” in the primary season. This would give them time to recover to “run to the center” in the general election. But this idea no longer applies in an increasingly partisan era. After the Vietnam War the increasingly open primary system led Democrats to select several candidates generally viewed as more “liberal” than the general public-or in the case of Jimmy Carter a sitting President was challenged in a primary by a more liberal opponent, Ted Kennedy.

At the same time several so-called “centrist” Republicans have faced bitter and well-funded primary challenge from more ideologically minded candidates. Over the past two decades this tendency toward favoring the extremes in the Republican Party has increased partisanship in American politics and replaced the idea of political compromise with “surrender.” The result since 1980 has to drive both parties toward an ungovernable fringe of the Party-reducing America’s ability to govern itself at a crucial time in its history.

PANEL 2. Presidential Elections in Historical Perspective

11.30-13.15 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 4*

CHAIR: Patrick Vaughan (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Jolanta Daszyńska (University of Lodz, Poland)

First Elections: from Washington to Jefferson

The national government under the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union had no independent executive system. The federal Constitution assumed the executive power to the President. The federal system went into life in 1789. To no one’s surprise George Washington was unanimously elected the

first president. His reputation rose during the War of Independence and the Constitutional Convention. He had an enormous support of the citizens what was widely observed during his journey from Mount Vernon to New York. The celebrations continued all the way. On April, 1789, he was inaugurated on the balcony at the Federal Hall. The oath of office was administered by Robert R. Livingstone, then chancellor of the State of New York. Washington swore on Bible and after taking the oath he appealed to God. After the ceremony Washington had written his inaugural address. It showed his attitude to his country and its citizens, and also his political ideas. He emphasized that the federal Union should be strengthened. Most of his ideas he managed to realize during two terms of his presidency. At the end of his second term he declared, that he would not be the president for the third time. So, in 1796 started the first real battle for the presidency.

The aim of the paper is to present the circumstances and political reality of the first few presidential elections which took part in the years 1798-1804 thus implementing constitutional traditions most of which are present today.

Bohdan Szklarski (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Dealing with Failure – How Presidential Candidates Lose Elections

Presidential campaigns always have crucial moments which make or break the candidates. When they are the events which initiate positive momentum that eventually lead to victory we call them leadership situations. When they contribute to defeat we call them electoral blunders. In the latter category we might find among others verbal mistakes, bad commercials, wrong gestures, untimely phrases, missed comparisons, broken promises . A special category of electoral blunders is “silence” as non-reaction to events and words coming from the opponents. After all, presidential campaign is an interactive process which the new media only intensify. My presentation will be devoted to the analysis of electoral blunders and their consequences. Presidential campaigns thanks to blunders become a form of damage control. Not always effective.

Marco Morini (Macquarie University, Australia)

A Study of Re-Election Chances of American Presidents: Does the Unemployment Rate Matter?

The economy matters. This is one of the dogmas taught us by those who have studied the history of the American presidential elections. It is widely believed that the higher the unemployment rate is in November 2012, the more difficult it will be for Obama to gain re-election for a second term. But is this collective perception of the influence of economic data on individual electoral behaviour confirmed by statistical analysis of the history of presidential elections? This study shows that the most commonly used economic indicators are poor predictors of election outcomes, and also that variation in the approval rating of the incumbent president is a variable independent from the real economic data.

Magdalena Paluszkiwicz-Misiaczek (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Wives, Advisors, Voters – Women in Presidential Campaigns

Although so far there has not been any successful woman candidate for the office of president, yet in presidential campaigns the fairer sex has always played the role which cannot be underestimated.

In historical context charm and charisma of the wife of a candidate could substantially strengthen his chances in the run for the White House. As time passed women, be it wives, relatives or simply strangers to the candidates began to work in boards of advisors and exert more or less formal influence on the final shape of the campaign.

From the moment the 19th Amendment was introduced and women were finally awarded universal suffrage in the US Presidential campaigns began to target women voters. According to statistical data in 2008 elections 10 million more women than men voted so in current campaign both candidates fighting actively for women's votes and address women issues with high intensity.

PANEL 3. New Developments in Campaigning

11.30-13.15 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 6*

CHAIR: Maciej Turek (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Anna Severse (Moscow State University, Russia)

The Role of Social Media in American Presidential Election 2012

Social media is changing American political communications. Integration of microtargeting and social media is the news of the American presidential election 2012.

Barack Obama is revolutionizing the way new media is used to inform, mobilize, and raise political activity of the voters. President's election headquarters "Obama for America" is developing a database that would help design political communications targeted at various voter segments.

President's innovation - intergration of Facebook with microtargeting technique. The database acquires personal information of Obama's supporters via Facebook. Voter's personal data is combined with his political affiliation and voting history. This data can be filtered by geographical, psychographical, socio-economic and demographic data, which was acquired on- and offline with the help of cookie technology, credit card records, etc. Voter segmentation and interaction with the use of the social microtargeting will lead to greater efficiencies.

Obama led innovation of political communications since his first presidential bid in 2008. In his presidential campaign candidate used microtargeting technique in combination with the online phone bank Moveon.org. Obama relied heavily on his supporters. Great efficiencies were achieved by giving supporters control of the campaign utilizing viral character of social media.

The share of internet in political campaigns it is expected to reach 10-15 % of advertising budgets in 2012. Expenditure reports to the Federal Communication Commission confirm that most of the presidential candidates use microtargeting as part of their online communications.

The use of social media in political communications is a controversial issue. Social media is changing the idea of privacy. Ethical dimension of social media use in microtargeting has to be examined for issues of privacy violation. A question of objective voting behavior arises in an environment when every voter sees customized message. Viral communications in social media make

communications uncontrollable and multiply one message exponentially, increasing its effect. Microtargeting may lead to discrimination leaving certain social groups out of political communication.

Stephanie Plante, Alessandro Nai (University of Geneva, Switzerland)

That's What (Rich) Friends Are For: Negative Campaigns in a post-Citizen United Election

Within hours of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. the Federal Electoral Commission, the New York Times predicted, 'The Supreme Court has handed lobbyists a new weapon. A lobbyist can now tell any elected official: if you vote wrong, my company, labor union or interest group will spend unlimited sums explicitly advertising against your re-election.'

In the first Republican leadership race since Citizens United was passed, attack ads by independent groups known as Super PACs with vague names such as 'Americans for Prosperity' or 'Citizens for Working America' have dovetailed with an increase in donations from anonymous, often small roster of sources. This paper examines the advertising from the primaries to prove that the rise of Super PACs has meant an increase in negative television ads throughout the Republican primary and since it is harder for the public to know exactly who is funding them, this results in an increase in positive ads sponsored by candidates compared to the 2008 Republican primaries. Since Super PACs can now be outsourced to do the 'dirty work' in terms of negative tone, candidates must now recalibrate the viewers' perception of them. This new realignment of political advertising in American will have effects to be studied in the Presidential campaign of 2012 and beyond.

Łukasz Wojtkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland)

Branding the Obama. New Approach to Political Campaign since 2008

The thesis of this paper applies to a branding approach during American presidential campaigns of 2008 and 2012. It is entrenched in theory of political

communication and branding. Since 2000 we can observe changes in the marketing communication during presidential campaign. The communication evolved into communication of the brands and the first candidate who comprehensively used this approach was Barack Obama. His first campaign in 2008 was based on building the core brand elements: brand value, value proposition, brand identity and image etc. Successful communication model between 'brand' and society, founded on the internet and social media helped Obama to be something more than a politician, the candidate and the President. He became the brand worth to vote for not because functional benefits, but emotional and self-expression benefits.

Istvan Szokonya (Eotvos Lorand University, Hungary)

US Elections (Web) 2.0 - Can Romney Outdo Obama in Social Media?

During and right after the presidential campaign of 2008, many articles were published on the significance of Barack Obama's social media presence in his success. Although attempts were made by the Republican candidate John McCain to catch up with Obama's new media strategy, he could hardly reach any success in this field. Four years passed, now Mitt Romney realized that he has no chance to win without building his campaign on new media. Is the Republican communications campaign strong enough to outdo the Democrats'?

In case of the governing Democrats, the nomination of Obama to run for his second term was not even a question; however, Republicans were divided in social media platforms too when it came to the issue of presidential candidacy. While focusing on new media activities of Mitt Romney, the paper also discusses the ways other Republican presidential candidates use social media tools to support and/or comment on Romney's political activity. Special attention will be paid to Web 2.0 platforms whose weight is often underrated when compared to Facebook. Furthermore, social media activities focusing on the so-called "swing states" will also be examined.

PANEL 4. Minority Voters

14.30-16.00 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 4*

CHAIR: Radosław Rybkowski (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Anna Bartnik (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Electoral Power of Latino Voters

Looking through different sources of information one can notice that political commentators repeatedly focus on Latino electoral power. In American society Hispanic population is constantly growing and according to U.S. Census Bureau, today, one out of six Americans is Hispanic. In addition, common projections say that by 2050 Hispanics can make up a third of the U.S. population. Presidential candidates are aware of the fact that Latinos make up an important part of electoral society. They are trying to get their attention by speeches given in basic Spanish or making never fulfilled promises of immigration reform.

The presentation discusses few basic questions e.g. is Latino electorate as important as it is presented in media; what issues are important for Hispanics and determine their support for a candidate; what Obama and Romney can offer and what Latinos think about it.

Donathan Brown (Ithaca College, USA)

The Immigration Question in 2012: A Precipice

In 2004, Latino's in the United States became the largest and fastest growing "minority" group in America, overtaking African Americans. Since then, various projections have forecasted the Latino population will overtake White's by either 2040 or 2050, whereby what once was considered a political "safe seat," no longer exists in such concrete terms. With respect to this growing demographic/constituency and in order to accurately assess the political terrain leading up to the 2012 Presidential election, one must first, at least, discuss the salient role immigration reform continues to play in the United States. It therefore is the aim of this essay to analyze the rhetorical construction of the immigration "problem" and its proposed "solutions" through the eyes of both individual state

laws, along with former Republican candidates for the Presidency, Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann and Texas Governor Rick Perry, as their platforms provide the best distance apart while accurately reflecting the sharp divide on this issue between Governor Mitt Romney and President Barack Obama. As the targets of my case study, my goal, like *Fantasy Theme Analysis*, seeks “to illuminate how individuals talk with one another about their here-and-now concerns until they come to share a common consciousness and create a sense of identity and community,” with the focus upon immigration reform. Here, the intended result of this essay seeks to better inform how and in what ways immigration reform will affect voter appeals and what challenges they will meet on the campaign trail.

PANEL 5. 2012 Domestic Front

14.30-16.00 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 6*

CHAIR: Alf Tomas Tonnesen (Volda University, Norway)

Soren C. Reimer (Friedrich-Schiller-University, Germany)

The Republican Party in the Age of Obama

My presentation focuses on the current state of the Republican party. The main goal is to inquire, how the Republican party reoriented after the electoral defeat in 2008 and during Obama’s first term. As I will show, the G.O.P. has not yet found a stable course. On the first glance, the Republican party seems to be united in its opposition to Barack Obama: However this is only a facade. Radical and pragmatic conservatives subtly battle for discursive dominance over the Grand Old Party. The radical conservatives, as defined here, promote classic ideals of small-government: shrinking or termination of federal social programs, lowering taxes and so forth. Pragmatic conservatives, on the other hand, turn away from the radicals’ focus on the government’s size and urge vaguely for “new thinking”. This includes policies that can account for worries the middle class is facing (e.g. raising costs of healthcare and education). The latter’s appeal, though, remained fruitless for the first two years of the Obama administration. Meanwhile, outside Capitol Hill, the Tea Party movement – a heterogeneous, decentralized grassroots organization of radical conservatives

with strong but not exclusive affiliations with the Republican party - gained momentum. The 2010 midterms showed the mobilization power of the movement, but also its limitations to appeal independent voters. However, since two years, radical conservatism is slowly losing its dominance. That was highlighted, first, with Mitt Romney's nomination of Mitt Romney who is not a candidate of radical conservatives. Second, the G.O.P. leadership in the House is trying to set a more pragmatic agenda to broaden the party's appeal. One reason for that development might be the reluctance of the party's establishment to apply a strict base-strategy in elections, which radical conservatism would imply.

Vincent Michelot (University of Lyon II, France)

Campaigning Against Divided Government: Rearticulating Congress and the Presidency

The 2012 presidential elections are unique before the name of the Republican nominee is even official. Incumbent presidents have run for a second term against a divided Congress (1984) or an opposition Congress (1948, 1956, 1972, 1996) but with the exception of 1948 and the case of Harry Truman running against "the do-nothing Congress", inter-branch conflict was never really at the center of the campaign. The context of 2012 is indeed exceptional: confidence in Congress, as reflected by opinion polls, is at a historical low with roughly one American out of 10 expressing a positive opinion of the legislative branch; two well-known observers of Congress, Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein, have just published what amounts to an indictment of the Republican strategies in Congress, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided With the New Politics of Extremism*; American voters have given the majority to a different party twice in 4 years (2006, 2010) and may do the same again in 2012 with the Democratic majority in the Senate hanging on a thread of 3 seats and the Republican majority in the House of Representatives a mere 25 seats. And yet the background is that of a Congress which, during the first term of Barack Obama, has produced three major pieces of legislation: the stimulus package, the Affordable Care Act and the Dodd-Frank Act; the background is also one of a President Obama announcing from the beginning of his campaign in 2008 that he would become a post-partisan president and transcend the red versus blue chasm and indeed abandon the "new imperial presidency" and return to a

more balanced from of government which would reinstate Congress to Article I status ; it is finally the background of a totally broken budgetary process with sterile debates on raising the debt ceiling and providing the US Government with revenue. The strange combination of productivity and gridlock with the arbitration of the Supreme Court on Obamacare looming large on the political horizon constitutes the eerie landscape against which the presidential elections will play. The second term of Barack Obama, if there is a second term, will be entirely predicated upon the terms of engagement in the campaign between the president and the Republican Party with 3 possible scenarios, unified government, divided government, and the status quo. Drawing on the literature on the changing party system in the United States (Milkis and Rhodes), this paper proposes to examine the progressive rearticulation of the Presidency and Congress in order to move beyond the conservative model of the “new imperial presidency”. We will start from the hypothesis that the implementation of the liberal agenda is not compatible with the present institutional dynamics and thus move to identify the levers the Democratic campaign will need to pull in order to shift checks and balances.

Zinovia Lialiouti (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece)

Discursive Strategies in the Era of Economic Crisis: Barack Obama and the American Middle Class

The current economic crisis poses a new challenge to the ‘rhetorical presidency’ after the controversial War on Terror. The fundamental myth of the American Dream is seriously challenged under the influence of unemployment rate and augmenting inequalities. Poll data show its diminishing appeal as far as public opinion is concerned. In this context, Barack Obama promotes a political/ideological and consensual reading of American national identity. In this reading, special attention is attributed to the American middle class who is identified with the nation. Barack Obama appeals to anti-elitism and populism in an effort to appear as the genuine expresser of the American people in contrast to the political establishment of the Congress. The “*We Can’t Wait*” slogan of his “*Putting America Back to Work*” campaign illustrates this tendency. The resurgence of the myth of the American Dream is also a basic priority for Barack Obama. As L. Dorset argues concerning the role of the rhetorical presidency “the nation is only as strong as the myth that he (the President) tells about it”. Obama implies that the success of his mission in restoring American prosperity and power requires the strengthening of the federal government and of the presidential institution as a symbol of national unity. As far as his perception of the American Dream is concerned, Obama tries to emphasize

its capacity to ensure individual and national well-being if combined with a sense of responsibility and solidarity. The outcome of the 2012 presidential election will depend greatly on Obama's success in establishing that his policies are a reliable solution to the economic and social impasses faced by the American middle class in the context of the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression. This paper discusses the above issues based on a discursive analysis of presidential rhetoric.

PANEL 6. 2012 Cultural Issues

16.15-17.45 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 4*

CHAIR: Pawel Laidler (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Karoly Pinter (Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Hungary)

God's Chosen Candidate: the Role of Religion in the 2012 Presidential Campaign

The religious views of candidates have always played a part in presidential election campaigns in the US. But never since perhaps the candidacy of John F. Kennedy have religious issues figured so largely in the primary season as this year. Most of the Republican candidates have clearly endeavoured to ingratiate themselves with conservative Evangelical Protestants while attempting to cast doubt on the moral credentials of the front runner Mitt Romney, whose Mormon faith earns him considerable distrust among the religious right. If we add to this the recent lawsuit initiated by several Catholic archdioceses against the Obama administration over the constitutionality of requiring employers to cover contraceptives in their health care insurance plans, it seems that issues involving religious values or preferences are going to play a significant role in the outcome of the 2012 presidential election.

In my presentation, I wish to examine the interaction between American party politics and the objectives and priorities of major religious groups in this election year from the perspective of the separation of church and state principle. I am going to argue that the increasing focus on religious or religiously colored principles is symptomatic of important demographic and social changes within American society on the one hand, while also signalling a major shift away from the traditionally pragmatic preferences within both major parties, towards symbolic and morally charged political matters.

John Bloom (University of Rennes II, France)

The Renewed Importance of Intelligence Design

Social issues play an important role in Presidential elections. American voters often care as much about a candidate's views on abortion as they do about foreign policy. This is why views on social issues are an official part of each candidate's platform. During the 2012 Republican primaries, several candidates openly supported the teaching of Intelligent Design (ID) in public school science curricula, making ID a factor of consideration for voters. The purpose of this paper is to determine how ID has become a point of interest for American voters.

In a legal ruling in 2005 (*Kitzmiller v. DASD*), the teaching of ID was deemed unconstitutional by a federal court. Since then, rather than becoming marginalized as a pseudoscience, the movement has gained momentum, resulting in laws that would allow it to be taught in Louisiana (*Louisiana Academic Freedom Act*) and in Tennessee (*HB368*). As mentioned above, it is popular enough to be strategically supported by Presidential candidates. But how does ID appeal to the American public? ID's theories have religious implications that have garnered support amongst conservatives who wish to see a return to religious education in schools. On a broader scale, its "teach the controversy" campaign disingenuously presents the scientific community's rejection of its theories as discriminatory. People unfamiliar with the movement can be led to misunderstand the issue as a question of fairness, or presenting both sides of an argument. In addition to these tactics, the movement's distrust of the American government, along with its generally conservative nature, have endeared it to certain Tea Party candidates. I argue that ID has effectively integrated American society and is here to stay.

Paulina Napierala (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Barack Obama's Attitude Toward Religion and the Separation of Church and State

The religious views of presidential candidates as well as their views concerning the separation of church and state principle have always been an important topic in American presidential campaigns. It became even more evident during the John F. Kennedy's campaign. However not until the creation of the Religious Right movement were religious issues placed at the center of attention.

Religious views of Barack Obama and his attitude toward the separation of church and state were at the center of attention both during the 2008 presidential campaign and during the 2012 campaign. During his political career, Barack Obama has made a number of comments about secularism, church and state separation, religion, and the role of religion in the public square. What is extremely interesting, some of these comments have been contradictory.

In my presentation I would like to try to explain some of the reasons for these contradictory statements. I will also focus on Obama's political decisions which are the most important in terms of the church and state separation principle, including decisions concerning faith-based initiatives, stem cells research or contraceptives coverage in religious organizations' health care insurance plans.

PANEL 7. European Point of View

16.15-17.45 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 6*

CHAIR: Łukasz Wordliczek (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Dagmara Suberlak (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland)

Europe in the Politics of Barack Obama Administration

Transatlantic relations are special relations, which connect Europe and The United States through the centuries. They embrace the same values of democratic world like freedom, civil rights, military and secure cooperation and economic interests. In my presentation I would like answer the question how the politics of Barack Obama administration has influenced on relations between the United States and

Europe? And how Barack Obama politics impacts on European countries after the elections of 2008? This analyses will be the topic of my presentation.

Alf Tomas Tonnessen (Volda University College, Norway)

Mitt Romney's Rhetoric of Anti-Europeanism and American Exceptionalism

In a speech in Iowa in February 2012, Mitt Romney, the presumptive Republican presidential candidate, argued that the policies of President Barack Obama would “poison the very spirit of America and keep us from being one nation under God.” He also accused Obama of turning the United States into “a European-style welfare state.” Further in his speech he mentioned Europe again, claiming that “this country can be as it’s always been, the shining city on a hill — but not by turning into Europe or anything like Europe, but by being quintessentially American.” Romney’s effort to juxtapose Europe and America is not new. In his Frontier thesis in 1893, the historian Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the further west settlers moved, the more American and less European they became. Now Romney juxtaposes his own “Merit Society” with the Europe-inspired “Entitlement Society” of Obama.

This paper will analyze and contextualize Mr. Romney’s anti-European rhetoric and his embrace of the notion of American exceptionalism, illustrated by references to the “city on a hill.” The paper will argue that Romney’s use of such abstract rhetoric is effective and serves to hide some of the specific policies that Romney and the increasingly right-wing Republican Party support, such as important components of Paul Ryan’s budget, which are unpopular among independent voters. Romney seeks to copy Ronald Reagan’s successful use of the rhetoric of American exceptionalism, thereby appealing to patriotic sentiments of important segments of the electorate, hoping to solidify his grip of a large majority of white voters. It is expected that Romney will use this rhetoric both in his acceptance address and in the televised debates, and the paper will refer to these.

Joost Baarsen (RuhrCenter of American Studies, Germany)

Europe Is Working in the United States: “Europe” and Anti-Europeanism in the 2012 Elections

Negative feelings toward Europe in the United States are in no way a novelty. Put rather eurocentrically, Americans literally and symbolically moved away from a continent that was thought to be teeming with corruption and evil, and this has become part of a cultural memory that is mostly ambivalent about European countries and Europe as a whole. Despite playing an ostensibly minor part in the Republican primary debates, Europe has assumed an important place in these kaleidoscopic elections. I hypothesize that the amount of negativity surrounding Europe has reached a simply unprecedented salience. At the very least, the amount of negativity functions as a breeding ground for highly distorted images and ideas of Europe and European countries.

In this paper, therefore, I seek to analyze some of the many instances of anti-Europeanism in the 2012 elections. In so doing, however, it is essential to distinguish legitimate, sober, and informed criticism of Europe from anti-Europeanism proper: the explicitly negative, largely irrational, often visceral attitudes toward European politics, economics, and culture. Anti-Europeanism, then, is less about what Europe does, than what people think it does, but more than that, it is about what people think Europe is: its essential identity. A Europe in quotation marks, an idea. I seek to explain what makes anti-Europeanism tick and stick, that is why “Europe,” *pace* Romney, *is* working in the United States and why it is a metaphor that functions so particularly well.

PANEL 8. International Context of 2012 Elections

9.15-11.00 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 4*

CHAIR: Łukasz Kamiński (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Spasimir Domaradzki, Piotr Józefczyk (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

*The Obama Administration and Human Rights: Between
International PR and American Values*

President Obama's foreign policy was supposed to bring fundamental changes to the perception of the United States all over the world. The last four years provide sufficient amount of data and information which allow comparing the 2008 elections promises and 2012 international position of the United States. During his 2008 elections campaign Barack Obama saw the foreign policy of the G.W. Bush administration as one of the main mistakes and ruthlessly attacked the former administration for the poor American image abroad. His arguments went further to emphasize the need for a new quality of foreign policy based on much milder and accommodative approach towards other players including the strongest American adversaries. A number of promises, like the closing of Guantanamo, the readiness to speak with Ahmedinejad, to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to improve the American image all over the world were in line with the criticisms of stubbornness and rigidity of the Bush administration. Undoubtedly, these statements allowed Barack Obama to become the 44th president of the United States. However, after four years an assessment of the U.S. foreign policy should be made in order to evaluate the impact of Obama's activities around the world on the core American values playing the role of cornerstones of the American foreign policy. In particular the paper will aim analyzing into what extent the concept of human rights was a guiding principle of the Obama administration and how much it respectively strengthened or weakened the American position in the international relations.

Marcin Grabowski (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

U.S. Policy in the Asia-Pacific – Current Problems and Challenges

G.W. Bush's policy towards Asia-Pacific region was often perceived and described as neglectful. Occupied with other regions, especially Iraq and Afghanistan, Bush couldn't devote enough time and energy to develop U.S. relations with countries in East Asia and the Pacific or regional organizations. Deeper research show, however, the policy wasn't as unfavorable, as characterized in both dimensions – in case of U.S. relations with countries of the region, we should look at improving relations with People's Republic of China, stronger alliance connections with Japan and Australia, as well as solution of nuclear problem of India. In case of regional organizations – after many negligence of the first term (and a risk of being excluded from the region in case of successful development of the East Asia Summit), we could observe many beneficial initiatives.

Barack Obama entered the White House bringing hopes of greater engagement in the Asia-Pacific Region, what was reinforced by his advisors' premises of U.S. foreign policy (especially reports prepared by Kurt Campbell, currently the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific). Also his engagement with regional powers (Strategic and Economic Dialogue with China), regional organizations (signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, what enhances the level of cooperation with ASEAN and finally membership of the U.S. in the East Asia Summit – Nov. 2011, as well as support given for the Trans-Pacific Partnership) made his term Pacific presidency. It was reinforced by the H. Clinton's statement that the 21st Century is America's Pacific Century.

The paper will try to analyze Obama's presidency towards Asia-Pacific, make comparison with the policy of his predecessors, especially G.W. Bush, and analyze challenges for the next president of the U.S. in this crucial dimension of the U.S. foreign policy.

Mateusz Bogdanowicz (University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland)

To Conduct or Not to Conduct the World (Again): 2012 U.S.

Presidential Candidates' Dilemmas

In the light of the economic crisis, social anxiety and general despondency, the 2012 US presidential elections looming ahead appear much more of a challenge than many previous ones. With the American society being 'a fifty-fifty' nation since the beginning of the century, discouraged, puzzled and clueless in many respects, the presidential candidates face enormously difficult a task of convincing their countrymen they have a set of clues to the mounting challenges.

Among those, there is the issue of the United States world hegemony understood as the American leadership. The candidates have to address the matter of the very serious present situation in this respect. They must propose new, potentially effective solutions, new approaches and attitudes to the question of the US worldwide headship.

The candidates' proposals need to include the answers to the questions:

1. How to regain the unquestioned top position?
2. Having restored the US world supremacy, how to secure it?
3. Having achieved both the above aims, how to maintain the US leadership in the long perspective?

And all that at the lowest possible (and acceptable) US taxpayers' expense.

Moreover, the candidates face the necessity to provide suggestions on how to reduce/decrease the level of Anti-Americanism all round the world (even, or especially in the countries once pro-American, such as Poland or the Czech Republic). Hence, the reference to a much more extensive application of soft power arises, adding yet another issue to the electoral list.

The potential alternative for the candidates in the above respects is an attempt to promise the electorate re-tracking the US foreign policy to 21st century non-interventionism (a.k.a. isolationism).

The paper looks into the ways and strategies that the candidates use in the above respects, at the same time evaluating the effectiveness and workability of the proposed projects and steps.

Marius Vacarelu (National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania)

A Mirror of Strategies: USA and Russia

This year we must see more than 50 elections (for president and for the parliamentary positions) in whole world. Is a very important year, because these elections are on a economic crisis time and mainly in the moment when a good part of monetary part of the economy started to be out of any control.

There are two elections able to keep our mind open: in Russia and on the US. In these cases, the geopolitical importance of both states make all eyes open to Moscow and Washington.

However, analyzing these states and their policy, we must note an important difference at the strategy level. That main idea is given by the number of years fulfilled by presidents: in US there are 4, but in Russia, 6. The consequences are quite very important, and our text want to underline few of them.

PANEL 9. Elections and Politics in Media and Culture

9.15-11.00 Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 6

CHAIR: Donathan Brown (Ithaca College, USA)

Bożena Pękala-Sobczak (Pedagogical University, Poland)

A Comparison of US Presidential Candidate's Media Image in Time and Newsweek

The press is one of the means of soliciting socio-political awareness, communicating information (including views, judgments and opinions) and influencing other people's attitudes and consciousness. Press readership may play a critical role in a presidential campaign.

While daily papers' main function is to inform readers about political events, periodical press is the place where those events can be commented on, political phenomena analysed and individuals criticised. Articles published in weekly magazines are usually more extensive and insightful too.

Time and Newsweek have a tremendous effect on shaping the public opinion in the US and have won themselves powerful prestige in the whole of America, and even across the world. They are therefore making a crucial contribution to how forms of thinking in US society are becoming standardized.

In my analysis, I discuss how the images of chief US presidential candidates, Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, are shaped in the two discussed periodicals. My analysis of the contents of the two magazines between 14 May 2012 (resignation of the Republican candidate Ron Paul, as a result of which Romney definitely came to the front in Republican primary elections) and end of September 2012 aims to demonstrate similarities and differences of views contained in messages communicated by Time on the one hand and Newsweek on the other, define differences in presenting events and shaping images of both candidates, and consequently determine differences in the level of emotional load involved.

In my opinion, criteria relevant for the analysis of that relationship include the frequency of publication and the size of articles published in the magazines, the frequency and form of expressing positive and negative judgments, the form of judging politicians and other persons indirectly or directly involved in the presidential campaign, and the way of passing judgment on events.

Maciej Turek (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

'Of Presidential Caliber': Paul Ryan and the Press

Every presidential cycle there comes a time for Veep. When the primary frontrunner receives enough delegates to assure the nomination and becomes a presumptive nominee, media began their speculation over who the running mate will be. By doing so, journalists and reporters not only mention names of potential vice presidential nominees, but they also focus on their qualifications and political experience.

Among those, the one most frequently mentioned is whether these potential running mates are qualified enough to be ready to assume the presidential duties if something happens to the chief executive. As the vice presidency is only heartbeat away from becoming president, this is a very important question for the American public. However, as no such a thing as 'presidential qualifications' or 'presidential caliber' can be objectively measured, the real question is

how media portrait vice presidential nominees and whether by doing so they contribute to the public opinion image of the running mates.

In the paper, I will focus on press coverage of Paul Ryan, Mitt Romney's running mate. How does the press, most notably *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, cover Ryan? Do reporters present Ryan as one with presidential qualifications or not that much? What are implications of that coverage for public opinions stands of Paul Ryan and his position within the Romney campaign?

These are the issues to be addressed in the paper.

Patrick M. Sadjak (University of Klagenfurt, Austria)

Indecision 2012: Cluster to the White House Redux: U.S. Presidential Elections, Satire, and the New Political Media

Since the U.S. presidential election in 2004 the role of the so-called "new political television" (Jones, 2010:5) has changed radically. Popular television shows such as *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* or *Colbert Report* "offered fresh and alternative perspectives from which to assess candidates and their campaigns". (Jones, 2010: 5) The influence of these satiric/fake news shows, especially on young voters, made them a respected factor in shaping U.S. American political culture.

In June of 2011, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* officially launched "Indecision 2012" with a parody teaser, re-introducing viewers to Comedy Central's long-running election-coverage franchise. In the months leading up to the presidential election in November 2012, the show is going to dissect the candidates and their campaigns like they did in 2004 and 2008. Since comedic formats are even recognized by the traditional media as an important factor in the political discourse, it is essential for candidates to distribute their campaign message in these shows. They have to do this in order to disseminate their message among predominately young voters, they would not reach otherwise.

Not only do the politicians reach the audience of these shows, but also the producers intent on reaching out to their audience, with events such as arranging the "Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear" that took place October 30, 2010 at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. This rally offered a venue

to people that believed that the political debate was dominated by extreme positions and wanted a change. It is this breach of traditional television and political discourse has not been entirely investigated so far.

By critically analyzing and juxtaposing the role, representation, structure and satirical roots of this new political television, especially *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and the *Colbert Report*, I will convincingly map the breach of boundaries. It sheds some light on the ascension of this television format within the last few years. Furthermore, the interviews that take place in the show are a focus of the paper; discourse analyses of some interviews with main political figures in the shows are part of it. The comparison and connection between the ways these shows present political satire and the historical roots of this form of humor are present.

Jolanta Szymkowska-Bartyzel (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Cowboys Go to Washington – Cowboy Culture in Presidential Politics

In 1939 a film *Mr Smith goes to Washington* directed by Frank Capra had its premiere. It tells a story of Jefferson Smith - a young, naive and idealistic leader of the Boy Rangers who is chosen to fill a vacant U.S. Senate chair. There he exposes corruption and depravation of the eminent Washington politicians. In film fiction simple-minded and gullible young boys can become heroes, but real politics requires more expressive and suggestive figures such as a figure of an American cowboy - representing the essence of American manhood and an ideas of self- reliance, independence, strength and courage.

The paper analysis how the icon of American cowboy and all the values cowboys and their culture represent were and are still are used by American presidents and candidates for the office to determine their identity, political program and values they want to be associated with. Theodore Roosevelt, Calvin Coolidge, Lyndon B. Johnson, Ronald Reagan and George W.Bush they all very intensively used the cowboy mythology to define themselves and their administration.

In 2008 presidential election also President Obama put a cowboy hat on, although he built his political identity on the basis of being 'not Bush' and rejecting everything Bush represented.

What is so powerful and universal in cowboy mythology? How different

politicians used the myth and what aspects of the myth developed in the 19th century are used by politicians in 2012 Presidential Campaign? – these are the issues discussed in the paper.

PANEL 10. Tomorrow

9.15-11.00 Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 6

CHAIR: **Andrzej Mania (Jagiellonian University, Poland)**

Derek Valles (London School of Economics, UK)

Public Policy & Presidential Politics: The U.S. Domestic Policy Agenda in 2013

As the Obama and Romney campaigns begin to materialize their campaign strategies to carry them through until November, the central campaign issues are becoming increasingly clear. No matter the outcome of the election, the domestic policy agenda will likely center around four central nodes: jobs, health, energy, and tax policy. This paper focuses on these issues, and potentially other major issues as they develop in the spring and summer of 2012.

While analyzing and discussing the practical policy realities of each platform, this paper will trace the development of campaign rhetoric by employing advanced content analysis of a vast corpus of political rhetoric, including campaign speeches and major addresses by the candidates. The paper will map the central rhetorical themes throughout the campaign and analyze statistical associations between the candidates and particular forms of language.

The methodology employed will shed light on how the domestic policy agenda for 2013 is portrayed and narrated publicly by the candidates themselves, and give discernible form to a type of data – political speech – often thought of as too disorganized and difficult to analyze in a timely and targeted manner.

Alix Meyer (University of Lyon II, France)

The White House in 2013: Tax Shelter from the Storm

The aim of this paper is to survey the fiscal situation that the next president will have to face and compare the different options that both candidates offer out of the budget hole. Whoever wins the presidential election in November will inherit an unsustainable situation. According to the projections of the Congressional Budget Office the federal budget's deficit will reach 7.6% this year. This comes on the heels of even larger deficits since the beginning of the Great recession in 2008. After having successfully passed a costly stimulus package, a health care bill and Wall Street reform, president Obama's Democratic party suffered a crippling defeat at the polls in the 2010 midterm elections. The Republicans returned to majority status in the House thanks in no small part to their onslaught of attack against the "sea of red ink" that the profligate White House was leaving behind. A very tense confrontation ensued on the vote to raise the debt ceiling that almost lead to a government shutdown in the summer of 2011. Both parties finally agreed to disagree and extend the notorious Bush era tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 until December 2012. At around that same time automatic spending cuts will be triggered unless they can agree to dramatic changes in the tax code and government programs. The joint deadline and the threat of "Taxmageddon" was meant to force a deal but, so far, the scheme has failed to work, leaving the voters with the ability to settle the dispute at the ballot box.

Pawel Laidler (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

The President and Judicial Politics: Possible Scenarios of the Change in the U.S. Supreme Court in the Next Four Years

The political role of the Supreme Court in U.S. governmental system accompanied by judicial activism of a constitutional court are today obvious for the researchers analyzing the position of American federal judiciary. Due to the process of Court's evolution from the "weakest link" in the tripartite form of government to an institution responsible for redefinition of the most important legal, political and social issues of everyday life, it is acknowledged that the Court seems one of the most attractive actors of American politics. Therefore each presidential administration is willing to influence Court's adjudication

both from the perspective of the nomination process and indirect impact on Justices' decision-making process. From time to time one may hear about growing awareness of the society with Court's membership as some vital social issues are to be confronted in the near future.

Today many observers of U.S. political life claim that the U.S. Supreme Court is dominated by conservative wing of five Justices, but in my opinion contemporary ideological layout of the Court should be viewed as 4+4+1, with Anthony Kennedy as the main swing voter and decisive voice in the most controversial issues. Whoever becomes the next President of the United States, may have an opportunity to influence the ideological shape of the Supreme Court, thus changing the direction of its adjudication to more liberal or conservative. The aim of the paper is to analyze possible scenarios of the change in the U.S. Supreme Court in the next four years, provided the President shall have a real influence on the membership of the institution. Both possible paths are to be analyzed: the electoral success of Obama and Romney, from the perspective of the main social and political issues to be addressed by the Court, such as abortion, affirmative action, campaign financing, LGBTI rights, and other.

14.00-15.30 *Rynek Główny 34, II floor, room 4*

PLENARY DISCUSSION AND CONFERENCE SUMMARY

When the Dust Settles: Political Scenarios for 2013 and Beyond

CHAIR: Andrzej Mania (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

PARTICIPANTS

Vincent Michelot (University of Lyon II, France)

Patrick Vaughan (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Alix Meyer (University of Lyon II, France)