РАДИКАЛЬНЫЕ ВЫБОРЫ 2016 ГОДА

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THE RADICAL ELECTION OF 2016

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В этой статье утверждается, что выборы 2016 года действительно были революционными, если не во всех смыслах слова «революционными». Это касалось не только передачи власти от одной политической партии другой и от одного человека другому. Предвыборный сезон и выборы переросли в успешную атаку на американскую элиту или истеблишмент. Сначала это произошло среди республиканцев, которые оказались не в состоянии предотвратить взлет Дональда Трампа — нового типа кандидата в президенты. Трамп не только продемонстрировал, что для победы в гонке за президентство не нужно уважать многочисленные элиты Америки. Он показал, что может быть политически выгодно не уважать эти элиты. Трамп также изменил отношения между большинством и мейнстримом в американской политике, присоединившись к белому электорату и не сумев пострадать политически за его зачастую грубое поведение по отношению к латиноамериканцам, афроамериканцам, мусульманам и женщинам. Одновременно с тем, что во многом являлось революционным в избирательной кампании Трампа, это была революция, которая проходила в установленных процедурных рамках.

Ключевые слова: выборы 2016 года, Дональд Трамп, Хиллари Клинтон, популизм, Демократическая партия, Республиканская партия, консерватизм, либерализм, политика статус-кво

This essay argues that the election of 2016 was indeed revolutionary, if not in every sense of the word “revolutionary”. It concerned more than the transfer of power from one political party to another, and from one individual to another. The campaign season and the election formed into a successful assault on the American elite or Establishment. This occurred first among the Republicans, who proved unable to prevent the rise of Donald Trump, a new kind of candidate for the presidency. Trump not only demonstrated that one need not respect America’s multiple elites to win the presidency. He demonstrated that it may be politically beneficial not to respect these elites. Trump has also reconfigured the relationship between majority and mainstream, in American politics, by aligning himself with a white electorate and by failing to suffer politically for his often rude behavior toward Hispanics, African-Americans, Muslims and women. At the same time that much in Trump’s

campaign was revolutionary, this was a revolution that took place within an established procedural framework.

Key words: election of 2016, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, populism, Democratic Party, Republican Party, conservatism, liberalism, status quo politics

The 2016 pitted two extremely well-known and entirely different candidates against one another, revealing an electorate divided against itself. The election was a severe blow to the bi-partisan foreign-policy Establishment, whose sole candidate, once the Republican primaries were over, was Hillary Clinton. Though there had been rifts in this Establishment during the Vietnam War and the Iraq War, they never reached the White House and State Department. Trump's election may indicate that a long chapter in American foreign policy, beginning in 1945, came to an end in 2016. The election also exposed diminishing consensus on the American economy. A commitment to free trade that goes back to the founding of the Republic can no longer be taken for granted. In addition, the election shed light on new qualities in American culture — a sharp divisiveness on matters of race, gender and class combined with the loss of civility and courtesy in public life, qualities to which social media have markedly contributed. However many turning points are contained within this one election, American elections are occasional episodes within a long governing arc. Presidential elections do not furnish the winner with a mandate or even with clearly articulated tools of governance. The crucial political story is the one that begins after the election. The 2016 election, then, is anything but a blueprint for American politics from 2016 to 2020. It is more a snapshot of American life, in all its robust contradictions, and never did an election supply as vivid or as fascinating a snapshot as the election of 2016.

Any evaluation of the 2016 presidential election must begin with its aura of novelty and strangeness. Given the election result, with the losing candidate garnering a national “majority” of some three million votes, whatever caused even marginal fluctuations is relevant to the final outcome. The 2016 election manifested two shocks to the system: a semi-covert Russian campaign to damage Clinton's reputation, which met with considerable success; then, at a critical juncture, FBI Director James Comey released information about a renewed criminal investigation into Hillary Clinton's handling of information when she was Secretary of State. Tellingly, both of these

shocks concerned email. The Russian influence campaign depended on hacked emails and on social media, which came into its own as a shaper of the public sphere in 2016. The Comey letter addressed e-mails stored on the computer of Anthony Wiener, the former husband of Clinton aid, Huma Abedin. Social media allowed for new methods of manipulation and distortion, just as social media democratized the 2016 election, flattening out hierarchies that in the past had separated the respectable from the taboo, the professional politician from the unelectable outsider¹. The surreal atmosphere of the 2016 election reflected a transformed public sphere. In 2016, social media upended the science and art of campaigning, although the competition itself was waged by two grandparents, both of them among the oldest candidates ever to seek the office. The media revolution mostly hurt Clinton and helped Trump.

Much is not yet known about the Russian influence campaign. Since the election, few issues have been as controversial or as politicized as “the Russian connection”. Investigations into this subject have already resulted in the firing of Michael Flynn, Trump’s National Security Advisor, twenty-three days after he was appointed, in the initiation of a criminal investigation into the Trump campaign and in multiple congressional investigations. Attribution is never perfect in the world of intelligence, but even public-source information overwhelmingly suggests Russian involvement in the hacking of Democratic National Committee e-mail accounts and in the e-mail account of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton’s campaign manager². Once hacked, these e-mails were passed along to Wikileaks, which undertook the job of making them public — at moments that were maximally damaging to Clinton. The e-mails reinforced Trump’s narrative of Clinton as a corrupt political operative and of the Democratic National Committee as biased against Bernie Sanders, Clinton’s rival for the Democratic Party’s nomination. The leaking of Podesta’s e-mails put the campaign off balance only

¹ The 2008 election demonstrated the efficacy of social media but mostly in the mobilization of voters, as documented in Matt Bai’s book about this election, *The Argument: Inside the Battle to Remake Democratic Politics* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008). The 2016 election showed the manipulative powers of social media. (Текст статьи и оформление сносок дается в авторской редакции. — Примеч. редкол.)

² On the technical details involved see three publications by Thomas Rid, “All Signs Point to Russia Being behind the DNC Hack” *Motherboard* (July 25, 2016); “How Russia Pulled Off the Biggest Election Hack in U.S. History” *Esquire* (October 20, 2016); and “Disinformation: A Primer in Russian Active Measures and Influence Campaign,” Testimony before the U.S. Senate (March 30, 2016), <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/os-trid-033017.pdf>. For a good essay on exaggerations and distortions in the American coverage of the hacking scandal see Joshua Yaffa, “The U.S. Media’s Murky Coverage of Putin and Trump” *New Yorker* (July 6, 2017).

a few weeks before the general election. If the exact effects of this influence operation are impossible to measure, and they are anything but insignificant, and the political salience of this operation has only increased after the election³.

FBI Director Comey's letter inadvertently magnified the impact of Russia's efforts at subversion. The letter's release shortly before the election violated an unwritten U.S. government custom of not acting in ways that might sway an election. Though Director Comey surely had reason for acting as he did, in retrospect there was a disparity between the evidence, which revealed nothing criminal, and the suspicion that the letter generated⁴. A new media landscape, driven by sensationalistic and often unsubstantiated claims, magnified the impact of the Comey letter, upon which unproven accusations could be easily embroidered. In sum, Hillary Clinton ran a conventional campaign that was overwhelmed by a series of unconventional challenges. Clinton's campaign also relied on its own data and on outside polling data that suggested an inevitable defeat for Trump.

In 2016, hubris was not confined to the Clinton campaign. It encompassed a broader portion of the population, which could — imprecisely — be called the American elite or the American Establishment. This elite has a natural home in Washington, DC and more broadly on the East and West coasts, in major urban centers and in the universities. It cannot be characterized in purely geographic or financial or demographic terms, and it is often the object of caricature and therefore of distortion. Initially a term associated with the British elite, it was popularized in America in the 1960s, when anti-war protestors accused "the Establishment" of complicity in the Vietnam War and competed for the honor of being anti-establishment. Most members of the current American Establishment would probably object to being labeled a part of the Establishment. Yet there are recognizable features, a cultural and intellectual style which has been long in the making. It combines education, taste and attitude with some degree of economic privilege. One can enter the Establishment without being born into it, especially if one attends an elite university. It so happens that the last four American presidents have represented this Establishment: George Bush, Sr., Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Obama and Clinton were its truest members, since they worked their way in from unusual backgrounds. All four

³ For a comprehensive article on Russian connections in the U.S. presidential election of 2016 see Evan Osnos, David Remnick, and Joshua Yaffa, "Trump, Putin, and the New Cold War" *The New Yorker* (March 6, 2017).

⁴ On the Comey letter see Matt Apuzzo, Michael S. Schmidt, Adam Goldman and Eric Lichtblau, "Comey Tried to Shield the F.B.I. from Politics. Then He Shaped an Election." *New York Times* (April 12, 2017).

studied at either Harvard or Yale or, as with George W. Bush, at both Harvard and Yale⁵.

If the American Establishment spans the Republican and the Democratic parties, it does not necessarily dominate these parties. Politicians as powerful as John McCain and Joe Biden may not exactly embody the Establishment, but both have learned to live with it in ways that make them of a piece with it. An ideal-typical description of Establishment attitude would go as follows: reverential toward the American political tradition and especially toward the constitution and its implied values (separation of powers, the unequivocal rights of citizens, limited government); reverential toward the office of the presidency, with the president construed as a symbol of the nation who is obligated to set a moral example; reverential toward the historical progression of civil rights in twentieth-century America, especially as it relates to the ideal of racial equality; reverential toward the main lines of American foreign policy as first articulated by Woodrow Wilson — the promotion of democracy, the support for political liberty, the equation of political with economic freedom and with free markets, the commitment to religious liberty, and the belief in free trade as an international good and as a practice in the national interest. Republicans and Democrats can disagree about the application of Establishment opinion to particular problems, as they did vociferously during the Vietnam and Iraq wars; but prior to 2016 there was more tacit agreement than met the eye. The parameters of the overall debate were so assured, so certain as to be almost invisible. Because they were invisible they were uncontested, or so it seemed until an acutely unusual political season began.

The Establishment suffered its first attack in the Republican primaries. It put forward three talented candidates — Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio and John Kasich. Ted Cruz, another strong candidate, stood on the edge of the Establishment, without outright rejecting or accepting it. Each of these candidates had the advantage of entering the fray after eight years of Democratic rule. They had the Obama legacy to argue against, and they had something to defend, the Republican version of Establishment principle in 2016. They could argue that once again the country needed to unleash the creative energy of free enterprise, to lower taxes, to curb federal spending, and thereby to make good on the age-old promise of limited government and free-market economics. They could argue that once again the country needed to assert itself abroad, to do a better job of defending American freedom and of advocating for this freedom in places wherever it was imperiled. They could argue

⁵ For a recent study of the Cold War American establishment see Deckle Edge, *The Georgetown Set: Friends and Rivals in Cold War Washington* (New York: Knopf, 2014). For a study of the next-generation Establishment see David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

for putting more military muscle behind American foreign policy, as Ronald Reagan had in 1980 — the Reagan who had once been a Democrat, who adored Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy, all Democratic presidents, but who believed that in the 1980s only a Republican could honor their ideals. The script had already been written for Bush, Rubio, Kasich and Cruz⁶. They simply had to enliven it with their personal intelligence and charisma. At the beginning of the primaries, the vast majority of expert speculation was about which of these four figures would capture the crown.

Yet none of them did. First Bush fell. Then Rubio fell. Then Kasich fell. Then Cruz fell. Four versions of a similar political argument were put forward by four articulate proponents with considerable careers and considerable money behind them. It amounted to four stories of political humiliation. This had happened once before, in 1964, when Barry Goldwater won the Republican Party's nomination by defying Establishment pieties, a historical detail that would not have comforted Bush or Rubio or Kasich or Cruz⁷. On the other hand, Hillary Clinton might have been heartened by the historical analogy, if it had occurred to her consultants and to her, for Barry Goldwater did two things in quick succession. He upended the bi-partisan Establishment of 1964 by becoming a wild-card Republican candidate, and he went on to lose to the Establishment's candidate, Lyndon Johnson, by the biggest margin of defeat in American political history. If Donald Trump was a latter-day Goldwater, then Hillary Clinton simply had to present herself as a twenty-first century Lyndon Johnson. She had the enviable job of saving the country from the lunatic fringe threatening to occupy the White House.

For the Clinton campaign, the 2016 election was meant to frame a momentous change. This was the election that would yield America's first female president, forming a pleasant symmetry with the election of 2008 when Barack Obama became — against all odds, it was assumed at the time — the first African-American president of the United States⁸. This symmetry

⁶ On the Republican foreign-policy tradition see Colin Dueck, *Hard Line: The Republican Party and U.S. Foreign Policy since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Geoffrey Kabaservice dates the break-up of the Republican Establishment to the 1970s, not to 2016. See Geoffrey Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin: The Downfall of Moderation and the Destruction of the Republican Party, from Eisenhower to the Tea Party* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). On foreign-policy outlook represented by Ronald Reagan see Justin Vaisse, *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁷ On Goldwater's path-breaking 1964 campaign see Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of American Consensus* (New York: Nation Books, 2009).

⁸ Starting with its title, David Remnick's history of the 2008 election highlights its transformative nature for American society. *The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama* (New York: Knopf, 2010).

was completed by the fact that President Obama's first Secretary of State had been none other than Hillary Clinton, even though the two had competed for the Democratic Party's nomination in 2008. Obama and Clinton were the two sides of a gradual progressive transformation, linked to the acceptance of homosexuality and of gay marriage, and linked as well to long-rooted patterns of immigration and demographic change. The country was obviously becoming less white: its cities and suburbs were the vehicles of multicultural mixing, in which the political future was being forged⁹. What Obama had begun, by getting elected twice, Clinton would perfect, ushering new figures into the political family and altering the very essence of this family. In its own eyes, the Clinton campaign was rigorously focused on the future, shot through with optimism about Clinton's purchase on an American polity "busy being born", to borrow a phrase from Bob Dylan's 1965 song, "It's Alright, Ma." Those not busy being born, Dylan reminded us, are busy dying.

The Republican candidates most to be feared, from Clinton's perspective, were Cruz and Rubio. Both were young and both were Hispanic, hailing from Southern states (Texas and Florida, respectively). They had the potential to be Republican Obamas — well-spoken, idealistic, from minority backgrounds and hence inspiring examples of the American dream and the American story, with its widening sweep of inclusion. Their race to the honorific of "first Hispanic president" could compete with Clinton's race to be the first female president. By comparison, Trump was in many ways the ideal foil to Clinton's campaign. He was a celebrity from the 1980s, a man past his prime. His biography communicated no progressive principle whatsoever. He was not a self-made man; he had inherited too much money from his father; and there was much about him that could be labeled retrograde. This was a man stuck in the 1950s: married to a much younger woman and former model, a host of beauty pageants and no stranger to crude sexual banter or to denigrating women. At the campaign's outset, he drew attention to himself by insulting the journalist Meghan Kelly. Trump was an embarrassing artefact from another era, and by pointing this out Clinton could underscore her campaign's promise of change — her campaign's proof of changes on the horizon.

When an audiotape of Trump's lewd comments came into the public domain in September 2016, he seemed to have walked into a trap already waiting for him. Known as the "Access Hollywood" tape, it depicted a man reveling in adultery, in boasts about sexual assault, in the unique privileges celebrity had bestowed upon him, America's billionaire Casanova. The

⁹ On anticipated changes in the Democratic coalition, rooted in demographic transformation, see John Judis and Roy Teixeira, *The Emerging Democratic Majority* (New York: Scribner, 2004). See also Hua Hsu, who argued for the beginning of a new cultural and social era in 2008 in "The End of White America?" *The Atlantic* (January/February 2009).

Clinton team placed the “Access Hollywood” tape at the symbolic center of her campaign. Trump was an unacceptable man. The culture had moved past him, and the polity would move past him by not electing him. Trump’s sexual entitlement was no match for women’s postwar empowerment. His entitlement would be demolished by their empowerment. Clinton’s vice-presidential candidate, Tim Kaine, diverted many of the questions, in his televised debate with Mike Pence, to Trump’s attitude toward women. Trump was unacceptable to Kaine and unacceptable by the standards of twenty-first-century American culture, Kaine argued. The Democrats’ nominating convention had struck similar themes, even before the “Access Hollywood” tape appeared, and countless journalists and commentators agreed that the tape had effectively ended Trump’s campaign. He had been felled by his own excessive past. This was a man with too little claim on the future to become America’s next president.

The Clinton campaign, which upheld Clinton as the agent of progressive change and lampooned Trump as yesteryear’s chauvinist, ran into several formidable challenges along the way. One was the sheer difficulty of electing America’s first female president, and the second was that Clinton’s party had owned the White House for the previous eight years. The Clinton campaign exacerbated this weakness by surrounding itself with countless markers of Establishment pedigree. Only on election day would people learn how radical a moment the 2016 election truly was. Somehow those who seemed least able to peer into the future were those at Clinton’s campaign headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. Brooklyn is itself a symbol of gentrification and of America’s left-leaning, creative class. It was an exceptionally maladroit site for the Clinton campaign’s headquarters, or it was the perfect choice in light of what would eventually happen. Once an iconically down-to-earth borough of New York City, Brooklyn was a place where most working-class men and women could not afford to live in 2016.

Running for the presidency as a woman might seem a non-issue in the twenty-first century. Female heads of state and of government were already commonplace in many countries. They have governed with distinction in Germany and Great Britain. Nor was it strange, by this point, to have women at the top of American corporations or serving in high positions in politics or in the military. Nevertheless, the American presidency is particularly unwelcoming to female candidates, regardless of how prevalent powerful women may be in the society at large. The American president is the commander-in-chief: head of state, head of government, head of the military. The president can decide to wage a war, with the consent of Congress, and the president can decide how war will be waged. For many Americans, this makes the presidency more naturally an office for men. Secondly, the president is a father figure, as indicated by the term, Founding Fathers, not all

of whom were presidents; by the cults of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, father to the nation and father to the new nation after the Civil War; and by the common preoccupation with the president's family and with the First Lady, whose causes and whose dress are often front-page news. Angela Merkel's husband can be a private citizen, and no one in Germany cares. When an American president is elected, the president's family has a distinct role to play and one overlaid with more than two centuries of tradition. Another obstacle to Hillary Clinton's becoming the first female president derived from her party affiliation. Both Angela Merkel and Margaret Thatcher came to power as conservatives. By the time they had risen up in their respective parties, they had neutralized conservative discontent with the thought of a female ruler. As a Democrat, Clinton ran the risk of crystallizing conservative discontent with the mere thought of a woman in the Oval Office¹⁰.

Thus it was Clinton's unique misfortune to telegraph certain controversial and unprecedented changes while also representing the Establishment and its ills. Compared to Trump, Clinton was from a much poorer family. She was from the Midwest, the country's heartland, and to the extent that this can be measured she was the more religiously pious of the two. These were biographical assets for an American politician, but they could not outweigh her deep and long-standing ties to the Establishment. She had attended Wellesley College and later Yale Law School, America's most elite academic institution. She might simply have practiced law, had she not married Bill Clinton. It was as his wife that she first achieved celebrity status, and Bill Clinton was a two-term president. If Hillary Clinton's real political career began when Bill Clinton left the White House, in January 2001, it was impossible to sever from her previous tenure as First Lady, reminiscent of the dynastic bond between George Bush, Sr. and his son George W. Bush. Had Hillary Clinton been elected to two terms (2016–2024) it would have meant twenty-eight years in which two families ruled the country, within a thirty-six year period. Whatever the policies Hillary Clinton might propose on the campaign trail, she was married to Bill Clinton's legacy. She could therefore be blamed for its consequences or for its alleged consequences. This was one aspect of the Establishment burden bearing down on Hillary Clinton, and there was little she could do about it.

¹⁰ Clinton herself went back and forth on the right campaign strategy for becoming the first female president. In 2008, she chose not to emphasize gender. In 2016, with help from advisors who "felt that gender was an important facet of her narrative" she made gender a bigger part of her campaign. Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes, *Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton's Doomed Campaign* (New York: Crown, 2017), 14. Even so, she struggled to win over white women both in the primaries and in the general election. In the Michigan primary, for example, she lost white women to Bernie Sanders by 47 percent to his 51 percent (according to exit polls).

Other aspects of the burden were more freely chosen. On economics, on culture and on foreign policy Hillary Clinton embraced Establishment positions at the expense of popular support — or, more precisely, at the expense of popular support in the three Midwestern states and one mid-Atlantic state necessary for victory in the Electoral College. These were Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, the states on which the election turned.

As Secretary of State, Clinton had worked on several free-trade agreements. Her husband had been the architect of multiple such agreements. Then Hillary Clinton supported the Transpacific Trade Partnership (TTP) for the same reason the Obama administration did: it increased Washington's role in shaping the economic balance of power in Asia; it was presumed to enhance American prosperity; and it had the potential to balance Chinese influence in the Asia-Pacific. Presumably Clinton also endorsed free trade, for much of her political career, because she felt it made overall economic sense. On most economic matters, candidate Clinton was closely aligned with President Obama. He was the president who had pulled the country out of its 2008 economic crisis and who, against the teeth of ferocious resistance from Republicans in Congress, had delivered the Affordable Care Act to lower-income Americans. Obama had continued the old Bill Clinton stratagem of advancing economic growth by working with Wall Street and Silicon Valley, while trying to accomplish as much redistributive reform as he could. Hillary Clinton was self-consciously working within an Obama-Clinton policy tradition, whatever nuances she may have been emphasizing¹¹. In doing so, she missed a transformation in attitude that had occurred since 2008, with roots that extend much further back in time. She missed the outrage with free trade, although Bernie Sanders's insurgent campaign forced her to abandon TPP and to back-peddle on free trade more generally. Together with the Establishment, she also missed the feeling, among many Americans, that a whole system of political economy was broken, that the country's economy had divided into islands of success and an ocean of stagnation and trouble¹². The Establishment tincture of her image sent more economic signals to the electorate than any of her speeches or policy papers.

¹¹ A tough primary battle against the populist Bernie Sanders sharpened Hillary Clinton's image as a friend of Wall Street and as a partisan of its interests. As Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes write, "[during the primaries] she'd become the candidate of minority voters on social justice issues while Bernie was hitting her as a corrupt, Wall Street-loving champion of the 'rigged' financial system that took advantage of working-class voters." *Shattered*, 178.

¹² Two pivotal books on the diverging fortunes of Americans, along class lines, are: George Packer, *The Unwinding: An Inner History of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013); and J.D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and a Culture in Crisis* (New York: Harper, 2016).

Clinton deepened her woes by mishandling the e-mail scandal and by tying her campaign too closely to her husband's foundation, the Clinton Foundation. From the beginning, the e-mail scandal was a tool of Republican opposition to Clinton, stemming from the investigation into the killing of American diplomats in Libya — in other words, into an entirely different problem. It was also a genuine scandal. Clinton was slow to apologize for it, and she and her campaign made a series of provably untrue statements about the e-mails and classified information¹³. This never-ending scandal shadowed her entire campaign. The movement of staff and family members between the Clinton Foundation and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign reinforced a stereotype of politics for profit, of revolving doors and lavish speaking fees and foreign influence for sale. The stereotype was often applied selectively and unfairly to Hillary Clinton, but by 2016 she had done too little to separate herself from the stereotype of the politician whose ultimate purpose is financial reward, a stereotype that relied on the Clinton Foundation and its allegedly nefarious activities as well as on the enormous personal wealth both Bill and Hillary Clinton had amassed since 2000¹⁴.

The Clinton campaign's progressive narrative and ideals foundered on an election that could not have been more culturally divisive. Hers were the ideals of America's elite universities and, as such, similar to the cultural ideals of the Obama administration: diversity and tolerance. Diversity entailed the active embrace of minority groups, of which the two key ones were African-Americans and Hispanics. This was not political departure for Hillary Clinton. It was the natural position of the Democratic Party, and a source of its strength so long as Barack Obama was president. The Clinton campaign's innovation was to ground its strategy in the expectation of high voter turnouts among these constituencies — in North Carolina, Florida and Michigan¹⁵. More than anything, tolerance meant an argument for gender and sexual freedom, for gay marriage, for freedom-of-choice side of the abortion debate and for the acceptance of transgender rights. Strong advocacy of diversity and

¹³ Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes write that "it was hard to keep track of how many times Hillary and her press team had said things on record that were contradicted, either directly or by implication, in [FBI Director James] Comey's statement about why a case [against Clinton] was not moving forward." *Shattered*, 249.

¹⁴ An acidly partisan book that was really opposition research for the Trump campaign inserted many accusations of Clinton family corruption into the public sphere: Peter Schweizer, *Clinton Cash: The Untold Story of How and Why Foreign Governments and Businesses Helped Make Bill and Hillary Rich* (New York: Harper, 2015). On the ways in which information from this book was broadcast on social media see Jane Meyer, "The Reclusive Hedge-Fund Tycoon behind the Trump Presidency" *New Yorker* (March 27, 2017).

¹⁵ A key campaign strategy is revealed in the decision to deploy Bill Clinton "in places where the most Hillary-inclined voters would see him. That meant talking to white liberals and minorities in cities and their close-in suburbs." Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes, *Shattered*, 131.

tolerance pegged Clinton as the candidate of the cities, the affluent suburbs and the universities. In the election itself, she would win 59% of the urban vote¹⁶. Economic discontent furthered the notion of Clinton as indifferent to the concerns of white working-class men; but her problem was broader than that. The Clinton campaign made little effort to include Evangelicals and conservative Catholics, whose views on abortion make them the natural allies of the Republican Party. After eight years of an African-American president, with a pronounced enthusiasm for LGBT rights, the pendulum was likely to swing in the other direction culturally, for reasons that were rooted in policy (opposition to abortion and to the redefinition of gender) and for reasons that were driven by prejudice (the dream of reclaiming some lost era of white privilege). Clinton was further from the center of cultural gravity than she thought she was. So too was the Establishment that championed her.

Foreign policy was supposed to be Clinton's cardinal asset. She had been in the White House for eight years in the 1990s. She had been a Senator, and she had been Secretary of State for five years. As Secretary of State, she embraced the idealistic American tradition, building on her famous assertion that "human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights"¹⁷. Advocacy for women's rights formed a core element of her foreign-policy vision, and she found many ways to act on this vision as Secretary. Otherwise, her tenure as Secretary was notable for falling to the hawkish side of President Obama. She was too enamored of international institutions — of the liberal international order, in the parlance of American foreign policy — to be a neoconservative; but she agreed with the neoconservative premise that military force could be invoked in the name of American ideals as well as American interests. Within the Obama administration she was an important voice for military action in Libya in 2011¹⁸. She also believed in confronting Russia on its deviations from democracy and its violations of human rights, whatever awkwardness this might cause in U.S.-Russian relations¹⁹. On foreign policy, Clinton would have been difficult to beat for a Jeb Bush, a Marco Rubio, a John Kasich or a Ted Cruz. All of them basically agreed

¹⁶ All statistics on the 2016 election in this article are taken from the New York Times website, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/08/us/politics/election-exit-polls.html>

¹⁷ On the 1995 speech in which Hillary Clinton spoke these words see Amy Chozick, "Hillary Clinton's Beijing Speech on Women Resonates 20 Years Later" *New York Times* (September 5, 2015).

¹⁸ For a detailed description of Hillary Clinton's role in the decision-making behind military intervention in Libya see Jo Becker and Scott Shane, "Hillary Clinton, 'Smart Power' and a Dictator's Fall" *New York Times* (February 27, 2016); and Jo Becker and Scott Shane, "A New Libya, with 'Very Little Time Left'" *New York Times* (February 27, 2016).

¹⁹ From 2011 to 2014, key years in Hillary Clinton's relationship to Russia, the American Ambassador to Russia was Michael McFaul, an outspoken advocate for democracy as an American value pertinent to Russian politics; McFaul was never a Kremlin favorite.

on a foreign-policy approach that went back to Ronald Reagan, and Hillary Clinton had much more experience implementing this vision than did any of her Republican adversaries in 2016²⁰.

Among the Democrats, Bernie Sanders had a more intuitive understanding of the national mood, complicated as is to characterize national mood. Sanders had voted against the Iraq War as a Senator, and though he did not speak at length about foreign policy his campaign sent out important signals: Sanders opposed free trade; he opposed ambitious foreign-policy ventures and especially those that were unilateral in execution; and he was eager to direct government spending toward working-class needs, which presumably meant reduced military budgets and more spending on education, health care and infrastructure. Beyond the partisan rancor, according to which only one party or one president was responsible for the nation's missteps — either Obama or George W. Bush — there was a long record of foreign-policy frustration. It went back to 2000. No longer was the United States economically and militarily preeminent, as it had been in the 1990s. The Iraq War had left a bitter legacy. The weapons-of-mass-destruction argument had been wrong, and the narrative of Iraq as the beacon of democracy in the Middle East had proven delusional. The Middle East overall had been lurching toward chaos ever since the Iraq War began in 2003, the Arab Spring of 2011 yielding to a destabilized region, within which ISIS made its bloody debut in 2013. Syria was, among other things, a metaphor for American futility. America had been damned for intervening in Iraq. Now it was damned for *not* intervening in Syria. At the same time, Russia's annexation of Crimea and intervention in the Donbas added to instability in Europe's East, while a migrant crisis from the South shook Europe's social and political order, contributing to the Brexit vote in the summer of 2016. Outright American foreign-policy victories have been few and far between since the late 1990s.

Foreign policy is by definition an Establishment pursuit, and for Hillary Clinton in 2016 this was a debit. The Establishment did not send many of its sons and daughters off to fight in America's wars, a circumstance that could combine with the economic anger that was finding its voice in 2016. The wars themselves, from Afghanistan to Iraq, were long and increasingly abstract to the general public²¹. The Cold War had its simple binaries: capitalism and communism, East and West, democracy and tyranny, the Soviet Union

²⁰ A good source for understanding Hillary Clinton's foreign-policy vision is her memoir, *Hard Choices: A Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014). For broader context see James Mann, *The Obamians: The Struggle inside the White House to Redefine American Power* (New York: Penguin, 2013).

²¹ On the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan see Peter Baker, *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House* (New York: Doubleday, 2013).

and the United States, us and them. This was the stuff of popular culture. The twenty-first century was different: there was no one conflict, no one enemy, no one cause, no more simple binaries. Al Qaeda was a nebulous group whose members came from many countries. ISIS recruited people in the West and at times the holders of U.S. passports. China could exhibit menace, but it was also a major American trading partner. It was investing heavily in the United States and heavily invested in economic stability, which is to say in the existing international order. Russia might remind Americans of the Soviet Union, but in the twenty-first century it lacked the Soviet aspiration to global domination. Its focus was on Syria and its own “near abroad.” Its economy is one-fifteenth the size of the American economy, its military far surpassed by the American military. The American Establishment’s cause was the liberal international order — the furtherance of international institutions, international law, free trade and the peaceful resolution of conflict — a cause that is hard to understand and hard to channel into strong emotion. Every time Hillary Clinton stressed her foreign-policy experience, which she did constantly on the campaign trail, she was stressing her refusal to change course.

When November finally came, Hillary Clinton lost the election by some 80,000 votes, within an Electoral College grid that happened to favor Trump in 2016. Democrats in particular have a hard time winning the White House after two-term Democratic presidencies. The last one to have done this was Harry Truman in 1948, in an election he was widely expected to lose. In an uphill battle, Hillary Clinton did not make it quite far enough up the hill. Many candidates, including Trump, have reached the White House by winning fewer votes nationally than Hillary Clinton did in 2016. Yet her loss remains shocking because of the person to whom she lost. Trump was not a politician. He did not have an intellectual command of the issues. His behavior and speech were often crude and abrasive, his campaign rallies edged with violence and bigotry. Of the scandals attached to his name, there were too many to count. Trump’s vanity and bluster destroyed the assumption that an American president must be a gentleman. He was unelectable, and yet he won. Or perhaps it is closer to the truth to say that Hillary Clinton lost. If so, hers was a loss of a particular class, of all the people sure that only she could win and equally sure that Trump had no chance of winning, in part because they did know anyone who was voting for him. Their self-confidence was the self-confidence of the people who write the mainstream news and even more of those who write the nation’s history — for whom Trump is, as the Clinton campaign had contended, an unacceptable man. What they could not see, before the election, was that for many Americans Trump was an acceptable man and an acceptable president. These Americans were not a minority. Almost sixty-three million of them voted for Trump to be their next president.

Among American presidents Trump is a self-evident anomaly. Most presidents have been lawyers or at least they have trained to be lawyers: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, to name only a few. Then there are the military men — George Washington, Ulysses Grant, Dwight Eisenhower. Woodrow Wilson stands out as the only president to have earned a doctoral degree. Herbert Hoover is the solitary engineer of the bunch, and the sole Hollywood actor is of course Ronald Reagan. An improbable president in his own right, Reagan was the Governor of California before he became president, and this is the path most aspiring presidents have taken. They have travelled either through the Senate or through a Governor's office before arriving at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC. In other words, they were politicians long before they were president. Trump was not. In fact, one of his credentials for becoming president was that he was not a politician, as he himself often said on the campaign trail, sometimes in a humorous vein and sometimes with malice toward those who had the misfortune of being politicians. In the scripted world of high-level American politics, he was exuberantly *sui generis*, the man from nowhere whom everyone knew. Improvising, he found a method of combining his personal celebrity and campaign promises with his feel for an electoral coalition that did not really exist before November 8, 2016.

The oldest man ever elected to the presidency, Trump had been a public figure for decades by 2016. He had grown up in Queens, New York, and he studied at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business. This is an undeniably Establishment institution, and Trump's passage through it flags a paradox of his extraordinary biography: he has always enjoyed wealth and privilege; but he has often denied himself prestige, just as prestige has often been denied to him. He speaks like a common New Yorker, and not one from Manhattan. He plunged into New York real estate, relishing the role of salesman and showman. His truest vocation was the elevation of his name to a household brand, which he first accomplished by building Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue and then by skillfully exploiting the New York tabloids to broadcast an image of himself as an avatar and purveyor of luxury, as a ladies' man, as the consummate dealmaker²². That his style was *nouveau riche* rather than refined was anything but an oversight or uncorrectable flaw. It was the whole point of his public persona. He was defiantly a parvenu. He did not need to be anything else, did not need to conform to the expectation that he be more educated, more sophisticated, more modest than he actually was.

²² See Donald J. Trump, *The Art of the Deal* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2015). For an excellent article on the writing of *The Art of the Deal* see Jane Mayer, "Donald Trump's Ghostwriter Tells All" *New Yorker* (July 25, 2016). On Trump's relationship to tabloid journalism see Jeffrey Toobin, "The National Inquirer's Fervor for Trump," *New Yorker* (July 3, 2017).

Rich as he may have been, there was in his wealth and in his way of displaying it a comedian's aping of the upper class. He was winking to the non-elite public that was hungering for all that he had and irritated by the taste and elegance with which other wealthy Americans try to disguise and insulate the fact of their wealth. Trump's wealth was theatrically obscene, and it was meant to be obscene. To find him admirable was to be in on the joke.

Professionally, Trump did not skip from triumph to triumph. Trump Tower was his one unequivocal business success. Its construction preceded such debacles as Trump Airlines and Trump University. Trump's signature involvement in casinos made him, for a time, the man who created Atlantic City, New Jersey's answer to Las Vegas. Then Atlantic City fell into decline and disrepair, a Western ghost town on the East Coast. Trump's record of business failure has made it impossible for him to get loans from American banks, and in the last twenty years he has relied on loans from Deutsche Bank and from other sources, including Russian financial entities. The Trump family business empire is sprawling and complex. Yet it was reality television, and not real estate, that rescued Trump's faltering career in the 1990s. His second round of celebrity was confirmed by *The Apprentice*, in which Trump played himself, the superstar businessman. His conduct on *The Apprentice* was also pseudo-presidential. He was the man in charge, the crisp decision maker; and the buck certainly stopped with him. The show was immensely popular. It created a national following for Trump among less educated audiences, the clientele for reality television in America. *The Apprentice* is recognizably Trump's first step toward the White House, though neither Trump nor his audience could have known this when the show was first aired on television.

A non-politician and at times an anti-politician, Trump was remarkably unburdened by a political past when he contemplated running for president. He entered the political fray in 2011 with a conspiracy theory about President Obama — namely, that the president had not been born in the United States. Five years later, Trump would jettison this theory, without apology, as an untruth. Yet he had commanded national attention by arguing so long and so strenuously for this spurious theory. Behind Trump was always his celebrity; his name alone could generate an audience; and Trump had an instinctual feel for media coverage of a certain kind. He had long had a presence on radio, appearing regularly on the Howard Stern show, for example, in which Stern and Trump bantered about sex, drawing little distinction between what is normally public and what is normally private. Trump was also a virtuoso of talk radio, an unregulated arena of political conversation, in which personality and strong opinions are the common currency. It is a conservative medium of political communication, and stylistically it tends toward polemics and grievance. It is also a populist medium, premised on the view that liberal elites

have taken over the culture and the culture must be forcibly taken back²³. Trump was born for talk radio, and his campaign was born of talk radio. By challenging Obama's citizenship he was auditioning to be the tribune of a vast, amorphous talk-radio constituency, for which Establishment Democrats were anathema. Establishment Republicans — such as the 2012 GOP candidate, Mitt Romney — were not much better. For this constituency, Republicans and Democrats in government blended into a single elite, alienated from the common man. Sarah Palin had electrified this audience as John McCain's running mate in 2008, a martyr to the Establishment that had mocked her and her supporters²⁴. Two talk-radio personalities with enormous listening audiences, Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity, paved the way for Trump's eventual victory.

Trump had no pre-set strategy for winning the 2016 election. He had minimal campaign staff and the subtle advantage of low expectations. He was exponentially more famous than any of his Republican antagonists, which meant that he did not have to pay for media attention. He received it as a public utility of sorts, transforming the Republican debates into spectacle. Or he exploited the way in which these debates had already been transformed into spectacle: politics as entertainment, politics as show business, politics as theater, politics as burlesque. Perhaps the respectability of American politics had thinned into veneer years or decades before Trump came on the scene, but veneer it was in 2016, and then there was no veneer at all. Trump relished designating his opponents with childish monikers — “little Marco” for Marco Rubio, “lyin’ Ted” for Ted Cruz, “crooked Hillary.” Rather than Trump cleaning himself up for the debates, the debates came to resemble professional wrestling matches for which Trump had been an impresario earlier in his career. The atmosphere was more raucous still at Trump's rallies. Trump hit populist notes other American politicians had hit before. William Jennings Bryan, Father Coughlin, Huey Long, Charles Lindbergh, Joseph McCarthy and George Wallace are Trump's obvious political ancestors. His methods and ideas are a composite of theirs, with Trump borrowing his “America first” slogan directly from the isolationist Lindbergh, but apart from Bryan none of these populist predecessors ever came close to the White House. With Trump, populist anger was the force that brought him forward politically²⁵.

²³ On the rise of talk radio see Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph Cappella, *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²⁴ Sarah Palin chronicles her war on the Establishment in *Going Rogue: An American Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009). See also the 2011 film by Steve Bannon on Sarah Palin, *The Undefeated*.

²⁵ The standard work on American populism is Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). Michael Kazin has written

Trump had no political forerunner in his use of social media. Previously, candidates for the presidency had worried about consistency of message, about offending one group or another, about a mystical property called being “presidential,” in which dignity and self-restraint were combined. For this reason, elaborate customs of campaigning had arisen — television advertisements, newspaper interviews, speeches timed to coincide with the media cycle and to reinforce the image of the candidate as a plausible president. Trump honored none of these customs, opting for Twitter instead, and Twitter created its own audience eager for excitement, immediacy, scandal and insult. Trump gave this audience what it wanted, feuding with his enemies, repeating his outlandish insults, breaking the rules and getting away with it time and again. Once the followers were there it was a cost-free medium. That was one of Twitter’s virtues for Trump. Another was its plasticity. To retweet a conspiracy theory, a specimen of bigotry, a dubious allegation was not necessarily to endorse these theories, specimens and allegations or not to endorse them with the finality of publicly stating them in one’s own word. Trump’s retweets and those of his campaign welcomed in groups and constituencies that until 2016 had been beyond the pale. Trump did not speak in favor of overt racists and anti-Semites, though he was often reluctant to “disavow” them, as was conspicuously the case with the Ku Klux Klan’s endorsement of his candidacy; but once they encountered his Twitter feed overt racists and anti-Semites began to speak in favor of him. Social media lessened accountability for the Trump campaign, while maximizing its ideological flexibility.

Trump’s one area of ideological consistency was on economics. He did not simply criticize President Obama for having done a bad job. He rejected the entire economic order of the past thirty years, contending that the American people had been swindled by financial elites, a crime in which both political parties were complicit. America’s elites had allowed the good manufacturing jobs to be shipped overseas. Under the flag of free trade they had formed alliances with other elites in other countries, which is why wealth had been accruing so rapidly at the top of the economic spectrum. These financial, political and cultural elites care little about the nation, Trump alleged. They care about themselves. As evidence Trump pointed to America’s many devastated communities, weaving them into his narrative: the medium-sized cities that had fallen behind the times; the big cities of vanished manufacturing prowess (the Detroits, the Clevelands); and the rural countryside, whose

a companion volume to his history of populism in *A Godly Hero: The Life and Times of William Jennings Bryan* (New York: Knopf, 2006). See also Jan Werner-Mueller, *What Is Populism?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); and Ivan Krastev, *After Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

decline had been ignored and forgotten or never noticed at all by those accruing wealth in Chicago and Los Angeles and Washington, DC. The typical backdrop for the Trump campaign speech and rally was the ruined factory, which signified a ruined community and a ruined nation, a nation that no longer knew how to win, a nation that would have to be made “great again” in the galvanizing slogan of the Trump campaign. The red baseball cap with these words emblazoned on it was the hat Trump himself wore on the campaign trail, a sign of his identification with the American working class. Trump’s economic prescriptions were simplistic and never really spelled out. They entailed reversing trade deals and cajoling American companies to stay in the United States. Yet from the beginning to the end of his campaign Trump was striking emotional chords that resonated — often with those who previously had been too disaffected to vote or had voted Democrat or who had unenthusiastically voted for Republican candidates. The working-class white man was Trump’s political darling, and he was their darling²⁶.

Immigration was at the center of Trump’s campaign. Trump denounced it as an economic cost, conflating rhetorically the illegal immigration that is a bi-partisan worry in American life with immigration per se, which most politicians of recent vintage have been happy to embrace. Trump also linked immigration with terrorism, referring often to the migrant crisis in Europe and to breaches of security that had followed from it. Trump was going to build a wall. The wall was to be between the United States and Mexico, and Mexico was going to pay for it: these were the words repeated so often on the campaign trail that people could repeat them back to Trump as he stood before them on stage. The wall was there to protect Americans and to protect the American economy, a policy proposal and a metaphor. One might almost imagine that the wall was needed to keep the good jobs in the country, to prevent them from flowing into the global economy, and to prevent criminally inclined immigrants from flowing into the country. By the end of the campaign, “the wall” was associated with the inchoate political aspirations of which Trump was the crusading protector.

Economic and cultural claims buoyed one another in the Trump campaign. Trump’s combative style created strong patterns of affection and hatred for him. He began his campaign by insulting Mexican immigrants. He verbally attacked an American judge for his Mexican heritage. At his rallies he singled out non-whites, and he made no genuine effort to win the African-American vote, showing antipathy the Black Lives Matter movement that had formed in response to racially-motivated police brutality. Trump had

²⁶ In the election, Trump won whites with only a high-school education by 51% and whites with some college education by 52%. He lost the vote of college-educated whites to Clinton; 58% of whites with a graduate degree voted for Clinton, 37% for Trump.

entered politics by seeking President Obama's humiliation, and his comments about President Obama on the campaign trail were brutal. (In the election, Trump would win 58% of the white vote; he received 8% the African-American vote.) A subtle anti-Semitism flourished at the margins of the Trump campaign — if not officially directed then officially tolerated. Comfortable in the fog of social media, Trump always retained some element of plausible deniability: he tacitly accepted support from extreme and intolerant groups to an extent unmatched in American politics since the 1920s, at least on the presidential level. These groups would come to be called the alt-right, a difficult term to define.

Another part of Trump's cultural appeal was religious. Trump himself had been several times divorced before running for president. He not only was a libertine. He celebrated his prowess as a libertine. His gaudy wealth, his adoring attitude toward fashion models, his narcissism, and the unbridled vulgarity of his speech, as recorded on many radio shows, showed Trump to be something other than a humble and pious Christian. Nor did he pretend to be one in 2016. He was mildly apologetic about his past. He did not need to pretend to be a family man: the Trump business and the Trump family were one and the same; his children were his agents and confidants. More than anything, Trump accepted the religious commitments of the Republican Party and of its more conservative members. As the sworn enemy of secular liberal elites, Trump promised his potential voters that, should he become president, he would fight for their religious concerns as no one else ever had. He made Mike Pence his running mate, and Pence was a born-again Christian. Trump outlined several policy positions dear to the heart of Evangelical Christians. He also declared that his Supreme Court nominees would honor conservative Christian causes, of which the curtailing of abortions was the most crucial. Trump was a tactical cultural conservative, not an embodiment of cultural conservatism, and this aspect of his campaign was necessary to his victory. Over eighty percent of Evangelical Christians voted for Trump. So too did substantial numbers of conservative Catholics. In many of the states that Trump won by narrow margin, these religiously inclined voters made up the difference²⁷.

On economics and culture, Trump's basic theme was the bankruptcy of the American elite. They had sold the country out, and their gender-bending,

²⁷ Trump got 58% of the Protestant vote, in the election, and 52% of the Catholic vote. There is a rich historiography of Evangelical Christians and modern American conservatism. See Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Darren Dochuck, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religious, Grass-roots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: Norton, 2014); and Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

promiscuous progressivism was at odds with mainstream American culture, which was fundamentally traditionalist and religious. Trump made his approach to foreign policy a variation upon this failure-of-the-liberal-elite theme²⁸. The elite had lost its national touch. Its sinister aim was to enrich itself through free trade or better yet through “globalism,” a diffuse term that appeared in many of Trump’s speeches. The elite’s culture was globalist and not really American any more, and its understanding of foreign policy emanated from its globalism, from its estrangement from national purpose. Since 2000 and possibly earlier, the elite had misdirected resources toward grandiose foreign-policy projects that were as expensive as they were pointless. Trump lashed out at George W. Bush for involving the United States in the Iraq War, which Trump himself had supported. He lashed out at Obama for two irreconcilable reasons: like Bush, Obama was too cavalier in use his of American power, too much the unrestrained Harvard-educated globalist; simultaneously, he was weak, feckless and effeminate in his approach to foreign policy. Trump offered no specifics on crises in Ukraine or Syria. He offered, instead, the promise that he would transcend the complexities of foreign policy by being unreservedly strong and by being strongly reserved, by not overcommitting but also by forcing those who had been laughing at the United States, who had lost their respect for this once and former hegemon, to sit up and take notice. He would compel them to stop laughing: America was to be made great again. Trump would be Dwight Eisenhower and Charles Lindbergh rolled into one, and the problems that had bedeviled President Obama — from Asia to Europe to the Middle East — would come into focus and find their peaceful resolution. A practiced salesman, Trump knew what many voters were wishing for — for greater power and for liberation from power’s perils and responsibilities — and he aligned his name with their collective fantasy.

In foreign policy, Trump blithely stepped outside the democracy-promoting tradition established by Woodrow Wilson. He did not have a word to say about human rights. He did not distinguish between countries that were democracies and countries that were not democracies, and he denounced any effort to fight wars on behalf of democracy. The war he had studied was the Iraq War, and he wanted no part of it. Trump broke from the foreign-policy Establishment in his rejection of the Wilsonian tradition and in his positive attitude toward Russia’s President Putin. As with his business career, his campaign had many areas of intersection with Russian money and poli-

²⁸ The most important pro-Trump essay of the election indicted the entire American elite and especially the conservative elite. It was published anonymously as “The Flight 93 Election.” *Claremont Review of Books* (September 5, 2016). Its author was later revealed to be Michael Anton, who is currently working in the Trump White House.

tics, and with this Trump was fully at ease. His claim was that he admired President Putin. He thought him strong and a man who had demonstrated leadership. Trump made no programmatic statements about Russia. He claimed to know little about the country, but he knew how controversial his comments about Putin and about Russia were during the campaign. Every one of his Republican opponents denounced his comments; Hillary Clinton denounced them. Whether people voted for him because of his position on Russia is hard to say. Probably they did not. Many Republicans may have voted for Trump *despite* his position on Russia. Yet they did not run away from a candidate who reversed the equation that had been the norm in American foreign policy: Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia are the close allies of the United States because they are democracies; Putin's Russia cannot be a partner because it is not a democracy²⁹. Whatever occurs in his presidency, Trump's election describes a major shift in the American public's attitude toward foreign policy. A consensus forged after 1945 is no longer a consensus.

Donald Trump's election illustrates several peculiarities of the American political system, starting with the Electoral College. The United States does not have a parliamentary system. Coalitions are formed before elections, not after elections — as in Germany. In a parliamentary-style election, Trump or Trump's party would have received around one-third of the vote, and this might have resulted in a far-left, far-right coalition, a Trump/Sanders coalition, as it were. There was acute dissatisfaction with both candidates in 2016 and much wishing for a third party, which Bernie Sanders effectively represented in the Democratic primaries. Trump, who has changed his party allegiance many times, was also a third-party candidate of sorts. Nevertheless, the voters had two actual choices in November 2016. They could vote for Trump or Clinton, for the Republican or the Democrat. A protest vote went for Trump, and those who cared primarily about limiting abortions or about preserving the laws on gun ownership could only vote for the Republican candidate. Trump got the votes of those who felt they had to vote Republican, because it was their party in the end and because they had no desire to see the Democrats, or to see Hillary Clinton, win the election. At the same time, Trump energized a new group of voters, which was his political gift. As president, Trump will face a brittle and incoherent coalition of Trumpists and traditional Republicans, whose views on the economy and on foreign policy will clash once the making of decisions begins. It will not be easy for Trump

²⁹ U.S.-Russian relations pre-Trump is analyzed by Angela Stent in *The Limits of Partnership: U.S.-Russian Relations in the Twenty-first Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014). On the Wilsonian tradition in twentieth-century American foreign policy see Frank Ninkovitch, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy since 1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

to retain the love of those who love him. He can only do so by betraying the most powerful elements of the Republican Party, or he can be a traditional Republican and betray his most ardent supporters. His divisive style, his unorthodox views and his lack of political experience will make it hard for him to control the Republican Party, and he will never have anything more than the short-term, pragmatic support of a few Democrats, if even that. Democrats hate Trump, and they have not forgotten that their candidate won the popular election in 2016 or that the Comey letter and Russian meddling left their marks on this most contested of contested American elections. This was an election that did more to perpetuate than to heal divisions in the American polity. Division will be a leitmotif of the Trump era.