

Hilary Clinton and Susan Anthony's Tears

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Short Communication

Susan Anthony had talked about her own dream, almost one hundred years before Martin Luther King did so in 1963. In her major 1875 speech in Chicago Susan Anthony called for gender equality at the ballot box, among other things. She pioneered and led the struggle for women in America to get their right to vote. Although Susan Anthony died in 1906, some 14 years before the 19th amendment of the American Constitution, which gave women the right to vote, went into effect, she has always stood for the symbolism of women's enfranchisement in the United States. Since then, it has become an electoral rite in the United States that women on the day of elections pay an homage visit to Susan Anthony's grave and put election stickers on her stela.

However, even if she was a great ambitious lady ahead of her time, Susan Anthony never thought there would come the day when a lady would vie for the presidency of the United States; by the standards of her time, that was not only too ambitious, but it also seemed a sheer lunacy even to contemplate such twist of fate. But that happened, and Hilary Clinton came from a long shot to contest the presidency, and to betray, unintentionally or otherwise, Susan Anthony's dream and vision.

How come that Mrs. Clinton started the presidential contest with a projected 268/270 electoral votes and loses the elections to a Trump whose electoral scope was around 204/270 electoral votes. How come that she failed to secure just 2 missing electoral votes and he managed to garner 66 electoral votes? How come that the American people have gone down such a long spiral of "rightism"; and the media failed to see all that metamorphosis. From Brexit to Clintonexit, polls have been dead wrong on most life-defining questions. That's the inevitable result of asking the same 3000-people sample the same questions about the same issue. Most media in the US fell in this trap, and refused to learn the Brexiteers' bitter lesson. Everyone is a loser here, not only Clinton of her lifetime chance to go down in history as the woman who made Susan Anthony's dream come true, but also Obama who would see the two pillars of his legacy- The Obama Care and the Iran nuclear deal evaporate on day one for Trump in the Oval Office.

How come that a nation of immigrants since the 1607 James Town colony in Georgia up to last year when America welcomed 1,3 million new immigrants, comes to undo all that the American Dream had always stood for. Even Trump's campaign manager two days before the elections clearly conceded that Trump needed a miracle to catch up with Clinton. How come that states like Pennsylvania, which

consistently voted democratic since 1988, and Wisconsin, which had been blue since 1984, and Michigan, the core of the rust belt that had always been sympathetic to the Democrats, all of them turned Trumpists overnight. In other words, how could a civilized nation go uncivil? How can all this be explained?

Andrew Sullivan, a prominent conservative from the New York magazine, explained and warned last May that America became "too democratic"¹. Indeed, by electing the first African-American as a president twice, by supporting a lady competing for the White House, by accepting Muslims, refugees and others, after the 9/11 tragedy...etc, America had become too liberal and too democratic, as if being democratic and liberal is a choice and not a must, given the nature and history of the American people as a nation of immigrants and a claimed example of a long time boasted "melting pot".

Trump simply heard a voice others were not hearing; the voice of the disconnected, the impoverished, the anti-immigration Whites, the anti-minorities angry Americans, the scared Americans from a Muslim neighbor and colleague. Trump has been speaking to apathetic and ill-informed people who gravitate around and toward emotional issues and appear to marvel at demagoguery and xenophobia. This election is clearly a repudiation of all the things that liberal America had taken for granted. It is indeed the death of Susan Anthony's dream of an inclusive and egalitarian America; but it's also an expression of the Trump's supporters' woes that could not be put into words.

It is clear that America has changed, but not the kind of change Obama had promised, and America is hopeless despite the flood of hopefulness Obama had promised. Is it a "whitelash" against America's "exaggerated" democracy and liberalism?

Stephen Walt, in his major piece in Foreign Policy, said that "The world is entering a period where once-robust democracies have grown fragile [and] now is the time to figure out where we went wrong"² ("The Collapse of the Liberal Order", Foreign policy, June 26, 2016). I think time is running thin to get to "figure out" why and how a Donald Trump, a racist, a misogynist, and xenophobe, could have confiscated Susan Anthony's dream of an open and inclusive America. How could Americans with sane minds trust a belligerent man like Donald Trump who hates everyone who isn't white? How can a nation of Immigrants, where immigration has been a constant source of economic vitality and demographic dynamism, comes to hate the non-American and the presumed un-American. Ask Susan Anthony; she must be sobbing in her grave after 110 years from her death.

¹ "The Collapse of the Liberal Order", Foreign policy, June 26, 2016; <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/26/the-collapse-of-the-liberal-world-order-european-union-brexit-donald-trump/>.

² <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/26/the-collapse-of-the-liberal-world-order-european-union-brexit-donald-trump/>.