

## Compromise and the American Founding

Why is today's political life so polarized? This book analyzes the ways in which the divergent apprehensions of both "compromise" and the "people" in seventeenth-century England and France became intertwined once again during the American founding, sometimes with bloody results. Looking at key moments of the founding, from the first Puritan colonies to the beginning of the Civil War, this book offers answers of contemporary relevance. It argues that Americans unknowingly combined two understandings of the people: the early modern idea of a collection of individuals ruled by a majority of wills and the classic understanding of a corporation hierarchically structured and ruled by reason for the common good. Americans were then able to implement the paradigm of the "people's two bodies." Whenever the dialectic between the two has been broken, the results had a major impact on American politics. Born by accident, this American peculiarity has proven to be a long-lasting one.

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*The Quest for the People's Two Bodies*

ALIN FUMURESCU  
*University of Houston*



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