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Grace Tung April 17, 2012

Tocqueville's Two Democracies: A Comparison of Complete and Revolutionary Conceptualizations of Equality

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Abstract

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Tocqueville argues that the democratic revolution has created different democratic societies each possessing different causes and a host of opinions, sentiments, and instincts despite sharing the same basic regimental architecture. The existence of this dichotomy is one of the primary reasons why Tocqueville insisted on not adopting a single model of democratic institutions and associations because he saw regimes and social states as always having more than one face and nature, "complete" and "revolutionary" with the respective examples of America and France as the primary specimens. But how can one regimental process produce such a variety of resulting models? What exactly is it that Tocqueville attributes to these diametrically striking sociopolitical differences, such that he claims, "democracy exists in Europe but prospers only in the United States? Is there a causational concept or variable that defines and influences the development of such divergences? I argue that Tocqueville saw a democratic social state as compatible with several different types of civil and political character that are ultimately determined by how the idea of equality is understood and implemented in their midst.

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The democratic revolution, the notion that all states will eventually adopt the democratic structure and lifestyle, is an inevitable world phenomenon that Tocqueville explored in both *Democracy in America* (henceforth cited as "DA" followed by the page number) and in *The Old Regime and the Revolution* (henceforth cited as "OR" followed by the page number); he is "firmly persuaded…that the democratic revolution…is an irresistible fact against which it would be neither desirable nor wise to struggle" (DA12, DA165). More importantly however, he alludes to the fact that not all democracies, which result from this phenomenon, are necessarily congruent or identical in every way. Such that he claims: "bring together two men in society, give to these two men the same interests and in part the same opinions" but "if their character, their enlightenment, and their civilization differ, there are many chances that they will not agree. The same remark is applicable to a society of nations" (DA361). Tocqueville thus cautioned for the careful distinction between the conditions surrounding ideological, peacefully born egalitarianism and those provided by a conception of equality tainted and defined by "the anarchy that revolution brings" during which time men almost always attempt "the painful work of founding [democracy]" (DA406) through violence and social cataclysm. "One must," he claims, "consider each of these two things separately so as not to conceive exaggerated hopes and fears for the future" (DA407).

Tocqueville argues that the democratic "revolution has created [different] democratic societies" (400) each possessing "different causes [and] a host of opinions, sentiments, and instincts" (DA399) despite sharing the same basic regimental architecture. The existence of this dichotomy is one of the primary reasons why Tocqueville insisted on not adopting a single model of democratic institutions and associations because he saw regimes and social states as always having more than one face and nature. He claims in the first half of *Democracy in*

America that he "does not consider…only one kind" of democratic institution as relevant and extant (DA220). There are, he asserts for example, distinctly "American democracies and *other* democracies" (DA297), a firm indication of at least two inimitable typologies. Additionally, he goes on to claim that there are "democratic peoples organized in [other] manner[s]" (260) around the world although his purposes are better served by scrutinizing the dominant ones found in America and Western Europe, specifically France. Amongst these caricatures, Tocqueville focuses intently upon the two most influential, in his opinion and in his lifetime. One, where democracy has emerged with great difficulty through means of a transition involving violent social upheaval, and another where "the great social revolution I am talking about seems to have…worked itself out in a simple and easy manner, or rather, one can say that this country sees the results of the democratic revolution that is working itself out among us, without having a revolution itself" (DA12). The former model is one Tocqueville emphasizes repeatedly as "complete" not with a view to perfection but to indicate that these societies have reached a "complete equality of conditions" (DA12). The establishment of democracy is finished and remains now to be polished, developed, and adjusted accordingly. However, the foundation is sound. Tocqueville concludes that complete democracies are those that have "attained the most complete and perfect development" (DA13) realistically possible for any society pursuing a doctrine of egalitarianism. Thus, in opposition, Tocqueville's European democracies are considered *in medias res*; they remain "revolutionary" because they have yet to achieve the more completed stage of the democratic revolution, which is still ongoing (DA6). Despite any prolonged prehistory (DA15) of egalitarian inclinations "in the material of society" the democracies displayed in Europe are still now in the midst of finishing the portion of the revolution that "makes [equality's] natural advantages emerge" (DA8). Henceforth, the two

models I will be addressing will be referred to as "complete" and "revolutionary" with the respective examples of America and France as the primary specimens in accordance to Tocqueville's own benchmarks. How can one regimental process produce such a variety of resulting models? What exactly is it that Tocqueville attributes to these diametrically striking sociopolitical differences, such that he claims, "democracy exists in Europe but prospers only in the United States (DA293)? Is there a causational concept or variable that defines and influences the development of such divergences?

I argue that Tocqueville saw a democratic social state as compatible with several different types of civil and political character that are ultimately determined by how the idea of equality is understood and implemented in their midst. Equality "changes [the] spirit and modifies [the] real relations" (DA400) amongst the people and is the primary causational variable in democratic life. Equality in democracies is so influential because it forms the horizon of the social conscience and is singularly capable of guiding the destiny of free societies through the dual process by which it undoes and remakes the social bond between the people and their state. As such, "the Americans form a democratic people that has always directed…affairs by itself" whereas the French are "a democratic people who for a long time could only dream of a better manner of conducting [everything]" (DA415). Tocqueville claims repeatedly that equality is democracy's most fundamental institutional principle and it must therefore effect the development and characteristics of the auxiliary tendencies in democratic life. These manifest most poignantly for Tocqueville in the concepts of liberty, religion, and self-interest. These three concepts are not only constantly revisited and emphasized throughout Tocqueville's analyses, they are understood to permeate democracies, specifically, in extremely inimitable ways.

The following pages argue that these questions can receive positive answers if we follow three methodological procedures. First, I will examine the characteristics of equality as a theory and its proposed role in human societies before analyzing how said character changes with exposure to specific historical restraints, using America and France as the strongest examples. Second, I will introduce the two democratic models that preoccupied Tocqueville's entire body of work, isolating three of what Tocqueville identified as the most influential ideological pillars of egalitarian society. Third, I will demonstrate how equality in effect is at the root of every pillar, either as a progenitor or a manipulator. Tocqueville cautioned, after all, for the careful distinction between the conditions provided by pure egalitarianism and those provided by a conception of equality tainted by "the anarchy that revolution brings" during the time men attempt "the painful work of founding [democracy]" (DA406) through violence. This paper therefore hopes to clarify those very hopes by piecing together the two most confounding regimental models of democracy Tocqueville illustrates in his research in order to better understand democratic life as a whole in both philosophy and practical politics.

My following analyses will draw predominantly from the three volumes of *Democracy in America* and *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* because not only are these two works Tocqueville's most well known, they contain the bulk of his political philosophy and predictions. The active part which the reader has to play in building his own comparisons out of the raw material provided by Tocqueville makes it all the more important that these sources be read in conjunction. The unelaborated comparisons in *Democracy in America* with "aristocratic societies" are much more understandable when one has read Tocqueville's analysis of such a society in *The Old Regime*. Many of his fears and insights regarding equality and the structure of democratic social states make considerably more sense in the light of Europe's revolutionary

history pitched in contrast with America's less chaotic and more peaceful (DA12) founding. With this in mind, I chose to depend upon the aforementioned volumes solely in my analysis. Whenever possible I have used their available English translations.

Before discoursing further, it is important to take into consideration, however, that Tocqueville presents a significant challenge in differentiating what elements or theories are peculiar to specific countries as opposed to being applicable to democracy and other regimes writ large. In particular, it is not always clear when Tocqueville is speaking of America or of "democracy properly understood". Tocqueville himself claimed to shy from "general statements" and preferred the use of analyzing examples to indirectly address broader theoretical beliefs. Tocqueville's philosophy contains no concept of nature as it stands without a societal framework. Tocqueville views all of his observations and theories within their external context. Therefore, drawing any kind of generalizing inference from his collection of illustrative examples, so to speak, is many times difficult to do. For Tocqueville, historical knowledge is more than mere factual, chronological knowledge. He possessed the conviction that to understand an event, an action, a gesture, or even a word, one must observe it in the proper pattern and context contained in the fabric of society at a specific time. In this way, Tocqueville makes use of the methodological assumption in suggesting that society is an ensemble in which the elements are indissolubly united. Herein lies the difficulty in sometimes deciphering exactly what Tocqueville is referring to in any one instance. For example, in the second volume of *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville endeavors to demonstrate how language, literature, the relations of masters and servants, the status of women, the family, property, politics and so forth, must change and align themselves in a new, symbiotic configuration as a result of the historical thrust toward equality. Nevertheless, it is not always obvious which changes or realignments of

which variables are specific to the American context, or peculiar to democracies of similar origins, or can be held as a general principles applicable to democracies as whole overall. After all, not every one of Tocqueville's examples are particular for as he, himself states, "in America I saw more than America; I sought there an image of democracy itself" (DA13) in several instances. Therefore, I acknowledge my analyses may illustrate weaker correlations at certain points depending on which interpretation one chooses to take at each turn – context specific or not, a task which Tocqueville many times unfortunately provides little aid for within the text.

Overall, I have pursued to answer the questions presented in this paper in the hopes to fill some intellectual gaps in the preexisting knowledge of past Tocqueville scholars, ultimately hoping to adequately synthesize and support the research done on both American and French democratic culture in Tocqueville. I wish, for instance, to support the great majority if not all scholars of Tocqueville who agree that his concept of the equality of conditions is the central plexus of his entire social and political philosophy regarding democratic development, character, and influence. Boesche (2009) and Manet (1996) argued that equality was the central "idea" of Tocqueville's overall democratic intellect, the driving force behind the "political experiment" of egalitarian ideology. However, fewer works have been done on how the fundamental concept serves as a comparative study of behavior in more than one democratic setting. To date, scholars have only dealt with either the American or Western European (even Northern African case studies) examples. Koritansky (1974) and Costner (1976) are the best examples of the first sort. Their work both explored some major aspects of equality's effect in the American arena, focused particularly on its influence in the behavior of local government and the development of culture such as philosophy, science, and literature. Janara (2004), Schleifer (1980), Lively (1965), Colwell (1967), and Smith (1995) explored similar but more exclusive concepts such as racism

and honor and their unique characters as reflections of egalitarian motives, morals, and culture. Smith (1995) in particular expounded the idea that equality is not just a generalized concept but also a very specific tool for building and deconstructing societal lifestyles. Janara (2004) agrees that equality manipulates certain outlooks manifest in the relationships democracy erects amongst different groups of citizens. Craiutu (2009) provides a far more ambitious guide to the development of post 1840 American ideologies by analyzing Tocqueville's less famous, secondary and tertiary writings (e.g. his letters and speeches). Craiutu's (2009) account zones in on specific and practical examples of the effect and growth of American democracy and emphasizes peril rather than promise; he highlights the evils of democratic despotism, the possibility of unprecedented democratic forms of human degradation, and heartfelt warnings about the incompatibility of slavery with Christian morality, what he considers the anchor democratic self-government.

The research on Tocqueville's arguments regarding the impact of mores in France come mostly through analyses of the intense conditions surrounding the revolution's advent and its conditions post-transition. There has not been as many studies focused on Tocqueville's idea of French democracy proper, which is something I hope to remedy at least to some degree in this paper. Studies mostly take Tocqueville's *Old Regime and the French Revolution* as their common point of departure and stay within the confines of the seventieth and eightieth centuries. Most of them desire to throw light on the different manifestations of mores in one particular aspect of the "Ancien Regime". Several examine the nobility as a character, or the urban men of letter and still others look at rural society as a microcosm. Halevi (2003) and Blaufarb (2003) for instance dissected the role mores had in forming fundamental divisions within the noble estate such as honor and how different perceptions of honor formed the motivating sentiment of

France's constitutional monarchy as well as the social glue that held the unequal parts of the political body together. Other scholars have focused on dissecting the attributes of France's anachronistic class framework and economic determinism, considering the era in purely political terms, focusing on the crown's deepening fiscal crisis, the failure of civic reform, and the relationship between the monarchy and the *parlements*. Welch (2003) along with Richter (1963, 2000) and Pitts (2000, 2001) for instance, examined the "Ancient Regime" in its shifts of political culture that created new possibilities for contesting power and prestige of both the king and traditional elites. They provide the most thorough and meticulous examination of the relationship between democracy and "human maxims" by analyzing French imperialism in international scenarios, most notably in Algeria and the influence these campaigns of, essentially, diverse political morals had on development of public opinion and nationality at home. The microcosmic work of colonialism reflects the concerns found in the building of macrocosmic democratic nations. As expected overall the majority of scholars focus specifically on the role of the state as the main agent of change and their theories trace the profound social effects the state, in its various forms, entailed during democratic transition and revolution but not afterwards.

Although there are endless amounts of literature on the comparison between American and French political systems already, only a few are devoted to focusing on the precise relationships involving differing mores, political culture, and institution building as I hope to. Not to mention, while all scholars address America and France as different countries, the two are not specifically considered as being two very different models of modern democracy. In fact, the term democracy is used as a singular concept that applies generally. Manet (1996) for instance saw Tocqueville's division between American and French democracy as the fundamental issue in

the study of the nature of democracy and really, the entire modern "human enterprise". Wolin (2001) also sheds light on the comparison of mores between the two countries but adopts more of a sociohistorical point of view, presenting Tocqueville as "perhaps the last influential theorist who can be said to have truly cared about political life." He compares the process of development of ideology between the two regimes through a period time, with a focus on the character of modernity and self-interest rightly understood in America in opposition the arising affinity for Bonapartist despotism and centralization in French political culture. Overall, divergences are mostly found in the lack or strength of the foundation of the separation of powers, different understandings of the rule of law, and the sturdiness of self-governing mores. However, these principles are almost always addressed as unique amongst themselves and not in relation with other broader mores or sentiment. If anything, their origins are traced to and halted at historical influences – the American pre-constitutional medieval roots versus French feudalism – as argued in Maletz (1998), Lawler (1993), and Myers (1960), who expounded the observation that Tocqueville's political science was to be viewed less from a doctrine of philosophy and more from a "mixture of nature and history" (Lawler, 86). Or, alternatively, as Kessler (1994) and Kessler (1995) argued, the comparison rests better on the axis of different religious conventions and their influences on civic liberty. In a majority of these cases if not all, equality is – although recognized as important – never actually explored as the true point of causation.

Hence, despite the wealth of research already done on Tocqueville's theories regarding comparative political structures and hypotheses that explore either French or American sociopolitical ideologies in isolation, it is clear that there has yet to be a combined, clear examination and acknowledgement of Tocqueville's regard for different types of equality and

their respective democratic structures and characters, utilizing America and France together as opposing case studies. This sets the precedent to my current undertaking.

I.
EQUALITY AS THE FUNDAMENTAL DEMOCRATIC MORE AND ITS TWO VARIATIONS

Based upon support in the preexisting literature and textual evidence throughout both *Democracy in America* and *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, it is clear that Tocqueville ceaselessly emphasizes the primacy of mores and how they are more powerful than laws and institutions (DA230) in shaping political behavior and state action. In fact, the entirety of *Democracy in America* has, by Tocqueville's own words, the study of the importance of mores as "the principal goal" of the work (DA295). He states that "the importance of mores is a universal truth…which…occupies the central position in [his] thoughts: all of [his] ideas come back to it in the end" (DA308). The abstract concept of mores subsumes both behavioral and cognitive dimensions, referring not only to opinions, beliefs, and ideas but also to the manners, habits, customs, and usages that follow from and are congruent with them. These intangible opinions undisputedly lie at the core of Tocqueville's social reality. Hence, Tocqueville claims that he uses the term to refer to the "whole moral and intellectual state of a people" (DA230). These are the "mass ideas that form the habits of mind" and "the moral and intellectual characteristics of social men taken collectively" (DA232). Within the political realm, these collective morals and ideals also compose the "spirit of the government" (DA758), animating those in power and forming its theoretical backbone. More powerful than kings (DA390), in both America and Europe it reigns as the dominant power (DA124, 435, 448). "It is ideas," Tocqueville claims repeatedly, "that stir the world" (DA58). Feelings and ideas "are responsible for the changed state of the world" for they are the basis of societal integration. In short,

Tocqueville concedes that it is indeed "ideas, often very abstract ideas, in the end, [that] govern society" (DA351). In other words, mores govern history and society directly, powerfully, and proximately. Social conditions cause and influence mores, which themselves constitute the core of a society; there is a karmic loop of mutual influence and herein is the method by which a country grows and develops. Therefore, whatever manipulates or directly impacts the creation and behavior of a state's social condition, both at the private and the public level, is of utmost importance to understanding how and why any individual part of that society functions.

For Tocqueville, democratic societies in particular share one more that reigns as sovereign, that is, the idea of the equality of conditions composing "the creative element from which each particular fact [in democracies] derive and all of [Tocqueville's] observations constantly [return] to this nodal point" (DA9). Tocqueville spares no pains in asserting the importance of equality as the central, driving more in the founding and growth of democratic political and civil society from which all others either sprout or are modified. "It creates [new] opinions [and reshapes the old], gives birth to feelings [and] suggests customs" (DA9). Penetrating everything (DA56), touching the public body and the individual mind all the same, equality as a more "modifies whatever it does not create" (DA9). Undoubtedly however, it would be crass to laud equality as the sole cause of all democratic features, a misunderstanding Tocqueville himself cautions against at the end of the first volume of *Democracy in America*. However, despite the existence of "all our inclinations and our ideas" the purpose of Tocqueville's work was not to isolate causal variable but to "demonstrate how equality has modified [all]" of them to a great degree such that democratic societies differ primarily on that fact. Ultimately, equality is the mother of all democratic states but very rarely do her children resemble each other perfectly. France, for instance, may one day attain the more efficient model

of equality found in America but Tocqueville does not conclude that France will necessarily draw the same political consequences from the same social state (DA18). In other words, neither one is the only compatible form of democracy; they are variations each with their own unique benefits and failings. But what, primarily, does Tocqueville think leads to the definition of these differences? Indeed, America's and France's divergent paths to equality and their consequent application and understanding of equality as a "habit" or as "law" ultimately results in their divergent sociopolitical outcomes.

Thus I propose equality as the root more from which all other democratic differences in character derive. The two forms of democracy and the processes through which they have been brought up, illustrate for Tocqueville two different manifestations of equality, democracy's most defining feature – the "single fact [and] single thought" (DA48) from which democracy stems – in both character and application. After all, Tocqueville considers "equality to be the unique cause of all that happens" in the democratic setting (DA399). For complete democracies, such as America, the character of equality is perceived as primarily civil which meant that its interpretation and influence goes beyond simple equality before the law: "I am speaking of equality in the relations of social life, an equality in view of which certain individuals gather in the same places, share ideas and pleasures, and join their families together" (DA272). It is something that directly "acts on the very souls of [the people]" (DA48). Equality is socialized and civilized. Here, there are no fixed social distinctions and no history of civic hierarchy to tincture the proceedings of the present state. The "aristocratic element" is so utterly nonexistent if not pathetically weak that Tocqueville asserts it is nearly impossible "to assign it any influence whatsoever in [this] course of affairs" (DA51) for natural democracies overall. Such societies are so deeply rooted in equality that "the hand that directs the social machine vanishes" with

"everything moving…and nowhere…the motor" (DA67) as if society directs itself without the edict or pressure of an external authority. The government itself "rests almost wholly on legal fictions" and the power of the nation is "ideal", something that "exists [and maintained" in [the] minds" (DA155) and hearts of its citizens, gathering its strength in the collective social imagination. In America, what Tocqueville called "equality of conditions" encompassed legal equality, social equality, and equality of respect" (DA150). For non-revolutionary democracies therefore, equality exists in both a moral and juridical sense – it breeches both the private and the public spheres of living into one cohesive unit. In fact, "up to a certain point, equality [even] extends to intelligence itself" (DA50), demonstrating just how internalized the concept is to the citizens of a natural democracy.

However for revolutionary democracies such as France, equality does not go beyond the law resulting in an expression of inequality in social relations. It is "covered with a democratic finish, beneath which…one sees the old colors of aristocracy showing through" (DA45). After all, Tocqueville warns "one must remember well that people who destroy an aristocracy have lived under its laws; they have seen its splendors and they have allowed themselves, without knowing it, to be pervaded with the sentiments and ideas that it had conceived. Therefore, at the moment when an aristocracy is dissolved, its spirit still drifts over the mass, and its instincts are preserved long after it has been defeated" (DA600). The remembrance of the extraordinary events to which they have been witness is "not effaced from [their] memory. The passions that the revolution had prompted do not disappear with it. The sense of instability is perpetuated in the midst of order…[and] survives the strange vicissitudes that had given rise to it." (DA600). Tocqueville reasoned that this disharmony was a consequence of a revolution having destroyed inequality of estate and of doctrine but did not succeed or focus on establishing the boundaries

between the upper and lower classes. At best it had only shifted those boundaries such that non-egalitarian mores and sentiments persisted and permeated society. In France, for example, the very notion of equality before the law could not be understood except in terms of the revolutionary break with the past; in society and culture inequality remained a potent and visible force. Revolutionary democracies were once "a society of servants…and masters [where] men exert[ed] great influence on one another" (DA95). Each found himself securely bound to his place where the ranks and rules of public life were fixed, a structure that was blown away suddenly and violently during the revolutionary era. For revolutionary democracies, equality is therefore "an expression of envy," and "a wish that no one should be better off than oneself" (DA92-94). The transition is therefore a process of leveling, during which elites, losing their privileges, are reduced to the level of their former inferiors and one of inclusion and extension, whereby more and more people acquire both rights formerly enjoyed only by the privileged and new rights as well.

Revolutionary democracies actually "consider equality of conditions as [a kind of] evil" (DA488) when left to self-perpetuate within the public mind where it cannot be easily controlled. This difficulty of integration is inverted in complete democracies. For this reason, equality is uncontested in the United States where equality found its origin in the "imagination" and the "hearts" of the people. This is not to deny that its unfolding was affected by local conditions, above all by the lack of a rooted feudal "aristocracy" to oppose it and thus the lack of the possibility of any actual regime based conflict. With its role in shaping both models of democratic society through their point of origin and its influence displayed from the largest corporate institutions to the smallest of individual desires, it is clear that Tocqueville held equality as the established, central democratic more. What remains to be examined are how

revolutionary democracies and complete democracies have each come to develop their own unique ideas of equality and for that, we must turn to examine the impact of historical precedent.

II.
TWO DEMOCRATIC ORIGINS AND HOW HISTORY INFLUENCES THE PERCEPTION OF EQUALITY

Before examining equality's impact on democratic development, it is important to determine how the concept of equality comes to fruition and what accounts for its different manifestations. Tocqueville envisions the global democratic revolution as giving birth to a dichotomy of results determined by historical precedent. It is from certain elements of the past that the present contrast of "two distinct branches of mankind, each of which has its own peculiar advantages and disadvantages, its good and its evils" (OR221) emerges. Tocqueville presents two models: a "society of orders" and a "society of individuals". The first society is one that is "born free" whereas the other one is very specifically "made" (DA453). The former is a model represented by Western Europe (France, primarily) and the latter is represented by America (DA18), coincidentally the only example of a democracy that has successfully "transplanted [equality] alone" and unadulterated. But tracing the evolution of equality in the two societies to their origins reveals far deeper rifts. Tocqueville notes that the most important thing about the society of individuals is its "great advantage…to have arrived at democracy without having to suffer democratic revolutions, and to be born equal instead of becoming so" (DA485). Although America experienced a war during its earlier days, Tocqueville claims it was not integral to America's founding and establishment of egalitarianism. Thus, America lacks the violent and centralized tinctures found in the democracy of France.

As a result, equality as an idea is more or less unscathed and the democratic society is birthed from the face of a sociopolitical tabula rasa, dependent upon ideas that were allowed to flourish without significant political influence. Revolutionary democracies in Europe on the other hand, the society of orders, were not so fortunate. These societies transitioned into democracy almost always through "violence to the instincts of equality…in favor of the order and the stability of the state" (DA296). Here, ideas of equality are mingled with the legacy of a complex past and easily evolves into a kind of "social revolution", a "great democratic revolution" (DA10). These democratic societies are therefore not born; they are meticulously built. As a result, the "national forces [are] more centralized" and "the laws…better" (DA297) for they have devoted themselves to perfecting the institutionalization of equality, not the socialization of equality, having not come upon ideas of egalitarianism intuitively. Complete democracies like America on the other hand "have a democratic social state *and* constitution, but they did not have a democratic revolution [because] they arrived on the soil they occupy nearly as we see them" (DA406) and thus their idea of equality remains distinct from that of their revolutionary counterparts.

To Tocqueville, the complete democracy is something best "imagine[d]" as it arrived "on the soil [it] occup[ies] nearly as we see them" (DA406). The past does not haunt the present here for these democracies are formed from something intangible, anti-temporal, specifically "from an idea" (DA157). They are not created as reaction to any immediate injustice or suffering; they are "abstract being[s]…works of art" (DA157) that maintain a "natural" (DA187) and unforced presence, "exist[ing] by itself without effort" (DA158). They are not shaped by "perils to fear or injuries to avenge" (DA187) for they have no history of hostile neighbors and no memory of ancestors. They were in no way constrained by necessity, but obeyed an "intellectual need"

(DA37). Their existence and major strengths come from virtues within themselves. The revolutionary democracy, in comparison, is the consequence of something rioting within, the forcibly formed antithesis of a past "supported by passions of disorder" (DA67). And try as it might, these democracies will never truly be able to shake off the tinctures of a bad historical record lined with wars, imperialist conquests, etc. What Tocqueville saw therefore as "distinguish[ing] [complete democracies] from all the others was the very goal of their undertaking. It was not necessity that forced them to abandon their country," he claims. They did not seek to build a democracy on agenda, laws, or forms. Instead, "they tore themselves away from the sweetness of their native country to obey a purely intellectual need: …they wanted to make an idea triumph" (DA32). This peculiar history and "point of departure" promotes a unique "public spirit" in their perception of equality that takes on the appearance "of a sort of religion." Tocqueville concludes that complete democracies "do not reason; [they] believe, [they] feel, [they] act" (DA225). Unsurprisingly, citizens understand both their rights and their duties in an extremely "natural" (DA286) and almost casual way. For instance, the civic relationships in this democracy are always simple and relaxed; they have a "natural strength" (DA283) where harsh, social enforcements in any form are alien and seemingly unnecessary. Hence, Tocqueville states "it is natural for love of equality to grow steadily with equality itself" (DA796) without the push of outside mechanisms; the entire edifice of complete democracy is more akin to a living organism than to a governed state. In complete democracies, "it is not only legislation that is democratic; nature itself works for the people" (DA267). As expected, their conceptualization of equality and democratic passions appears in this vein of austerity.

Revolutionary democracies, by contrast, are ones where there is no authority capable, or strong enough of eliciting, nor are there citizens willing to give, voluntary obedience and civic

loyalty. The governing body has no real respectable "majesty" here such that the people do not revere or feel affection towards it. It and its laws are seen as measures separate from the people, a conventional tool to be feared and followed out of necessity for the sake of the collective good. The nature of this kind of democracy, stripped of its social structures and rules, is far harsher. In this kind of democracy, which Tocqueville sees running rampant like an undisciplined child (DA274) throughout Europe, force is the preferred and most effective instrument for governing, and mutual suspicion, envy, and hatred prevail between classes (however perceived), groups, and citizens despite the guise of egalitarianism. Tocqueville explicitly associates this second democracy with the model of France. This, he says, is what "we" have put in place of "our ancestors' social state" (DA15), an evolutionary process he summarizes to be an effect of the unique experience of the revolutionary transition as a whole. He laments that "French democracy" is at best "hindered in its progress" or "left uncontrolled to its disorderly passions" (DA274). As a result, instead of bringing the peace and justice declared during the war, democracy "has overthrown everything it found in its path, shaking all that it did not destroy. It has not slowly gained control of society in order peacefully to establish its sway; on the contrary, its progress has ever been amid the disorders and agitations of conflict. In the heat of the struggle each partisan is driven beyond the natural limits of his own views by the view and the excesses of his adversaries, loses sight of the very aim he was pursuing, and uses language which ill corresponds to his real feelings and to his secret instincts" (DA16).

What causes these visible structural differences lies beneath the surface. Tocqueville avers that variation amongst all democracies arises first due to the conditions present at their initiation and second, from the history leading up to that point of origin, also known as, the "cradle" (DA28) of a society. These two series of events together form the "first cause of

prejudices, habits, dominant passions…[and] national character" (DA28) and to understand how equality, the most dominant democratic passion, functions in a society – how it emerges, is understood, and then applied – it is imperative that we observe the historical skeleton of the society that houses it. In fact, Tocqueville was confident that there was "not one opinion, one habit, one law, [or] one event that the point of departure does not explain without difficulty" (DA29) in any society. From determining what belongs to the past, we can better see the future that equality will implement upon its launch into the minds and lives of the people: we can better understand what it is that equality creates anew as opposed to the preexisting social characteristics it mutates instead.

First, it is clear for Tocqueville all democracies almost always emerge one of two ways: either with the aid of a revolutionary transition or through spontaneous generation, in other words, they are born democratic from the start. The former applies to revolutionary democracies, like France, who almost always suffer this unhappy legacy of transition that produces a tense, mutual animosity between people previously divided (DA432-433). This experience has a huge impact on the following character of democratic mores and structures due to the fact that revolutionary transitions to democracy are rarely comprehensive; they disorganized, heavily violent, and unmanageable. They usually occur "without those changes in laws, [or] ideas, [or] customs and mores, which were needed to make [such] revolution[s] profitable" (DA6). Secondly, Tocqueville highlights the specific sociopolitical scenario pre-transition as a major contributor to why the revolution itself had such trouble succeeding. He reasons that when there is a shift from preexisting caste and class systems (especially long-standing ones such as the old European aristocracies) to a democratic social state, the "only" course of action is total social upheaval. The shift must be that of "a long series of more or less painful transformations, with

the aid of violent efforts and after numerous vicissitudes during which goods, opinions, and power change place rapidly" (DA606) as a society attempts to rearrange itself completely and on multiple levels. The process therefore sets out to destroy what was old and to make everything new over a period of time. Yet Tocqueville doubts whether this regimental cleansing is necessarily as liberating and productive as it is preached to be. He challenges the notion that precisely when everything traditional is shaken, the mind is brought back to fundamentals. "There are no revolutions that do not disrupt ancient beliefs, weaken authority, and obscure common ideas," he retorts instead. "When conditions become equal following a prolonged conflict between the different classes forming the old society, envy, hatred and score of one's neighbor, haughtiness, and exaggerated self-confidence invade, so to speak, the human heart and make their home there" (DA406) in place of the tranquility distinctive of complete democracies.

Tocqueville describes this revolutionary democratic process not as a progressive method of advancement but instead as a strange derangement of political opinion and human reason. The consequences are therefore severe for the arrival of new political ideas even though the original goal may have been well intentioned. Tocqueville claims revolutionary democracies maintain, as a result, a constant air of "confusion" in their understanding of equality in which "the natural link" between opinions and "tastes, acts, and beliefs" is lost. "Men are no longer bound except by interests [and] not by ideas; and one could say that human opinions form no more than a sort of intellectual dust that is blown around on all sides and cannot gather and settle" (DA406). The transition to democracy not only mars the public social landscape but it also scars the private human mind by consuming it with disillusion, insecurity, and fear such that the shape of democratic life cannot grow without the aid of a hypothetical neck brace in the form of detailed laws and enforced, ritualized public practice. Thus the revolutionary democracy earns itself the

title “the empire of rules” (DA600) even though legislation is so regimented and meticulously created that it actually risks alienation from the people; it “does not know,” Tocqueville laments, “how to accommodate itself to the [real] needs and mores of men, which is a great cause of troubles and miseries” (DA152). In other words somatic legislation, no matter how efficient and omnipotent it appears at first blush, can never be as dynamic or powerful as the intangible, uncorrupted idea it is supposed to be built upon, an idea that easily get mutilated in the light of revolutionary transition and societal reconstruction. It is not the physical democratic forms that maintain and inspire “the spirit of the people” (DA265) and herein rests the central problem of the democracy of orders that Tocqueville critiques as structurally sound but ultimately impassionate (DA270) and idealistically unstable. Orders and cultic political behavior indicative of the revolutionary democracy is modeled not on ideas but on only “the imbecility of human reason” (DA273) such that the future “tranquility and happiness [of] the state” (DA272) is always questionable.

In contrast, Tocqueville stated that in complete democracies, one sees “the image of force, a little wild it is true, but full of power; the image of life accompanied by accidents, but also by [collective] movements and efforts” (DA88). The “general result of all the individual undertakings far exceeds what the government could do” (DA90). This is due to the fact that complete democracies arrive “quite civilized on the soil that their posterity occupies” and they do not have to “learn” or “create”, they simply “are” and so long as they “do not…forget” this, it will be “enough” (DA290). They are the sort of country “favored by nature” (DA297) and although their democratic system – the sociopolitical machine – is many times dangerously imperfect, they possess an incorrigible idea of equality. This equality is pure and comes from within the individual, not without from measures of the body politic. As in the United States,

complete democracies "have no childhood; [they are] born at the age of manhood" (DA290) and appear fully developed, wholly egalitarian without the aid of legal structures. On the other hand, revolutionary democracies, haunted by the instabilities of war and the failings of a past societal system, grasp narrow-mindedly at "uniformity and permanence of views, minute care of details, perfection of administrative procedures" (DA87). The actions of the revolutionary democracy are almost always "preventive" (DA103) in this light whereas those of the complete democracy are dynamic and active on their own. The former adopts an idea of equality and democratic existence that knows how to "defend itself" whereas the latter knows instead how to be "self-sufficient" (DA152).

III.
THE DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS AND TALENTS OF THE TWO EQUALITIES

Once the democratic foundation has been laid either through war or by peace, complete and revolutionary democracies are perpetually modified and differentiated by the two understandings of equality and their respective social functions. Both forms of equality produce "goods and evils…split equally enough" (DA674) that sculpt and define Tocqueville's two democratic models writ large. Within complete democracies like America, Tocqueville sees the concept of equality as primarily a privately held idea concentrated in the "human conscience" (DA670), its strength nurtured by self-sufficiency. In revolutionary democracies found in Europe, equality is seen concentrated in the public sphere "midst…the common obscurity" (DA300), its strength nourished in institutional forms. If unhindered and uncontaminated, a perception of equality as more heavily privatized is capable of "suggest[ing] several ideas to the human mind that would not otherwise have come to it" whilst simultaneously "modifying…those already there" (DA426). Hence, I argue that equality in complete democracies is a self-

perpetuating idea. It propagates as the citizen himself grows. But because equality is professed primarily in the people individually, the state as a whole risks becoming "weak…less brilliant, less glorious [and] less strong" (DA9). On the contrary, a more publically and conventionally conceived idea of equality as an entity that is removed from individual consideration manifests as a publically held idea that is masterful at manipulating the form and function of institutions. This means that equality in a democratic setting that occurs from revolution has the strongest effect on the public psyche. It sprouts directly from well-tailored policies and conventions but proves lacking in "experience and…sentiments" (DA301). In one scenario, democracy is built from within; in the opposing one, democracy is built from the top, down.

i. EQUALITY IN COMPLETE DEMOCRACY AND ITS DOMINANCE IN THE PRIVATE SPHERE

In complete democracies, Tocqueville sees equality manifesting as a mindset and a perception with a unique conduct that allows it to easily manipulate the way in which one comes to define oneself as well as how he relates to his peers within the same societal setting. This organic understanding of equality creates a dynamic through which the individual identifies himself as well as how that identity fares in relation to other people and to the state (DA294-295). As in America, it "brings down all the imaginary or real barriers that separate [people]" (DA568) by rooting itself in "the imagination" (DA571) of each person. For example, more relaxed gender roles, amorphous family structures, and laxity of religious formality. By this, Tocqueville means how this particular kind of equality, distinct in democracies not born of revolution, is defined by its talent of directing the way people mentally and emotionally come to reconcile dissimilarity and variation amongst themselves, both god given and conventional.

Initially, equality is internal for each person. It translates for the complete democracy into every individuals' acute sensitivity to the differences they perceive between themselves and others, and then, most importantly, into a tenacious determination on the part of each individual to tacitly overcome these differences. It is a an idea that "has penetrated little by little into usages, opinions…[and] all the details of…life" inspires individuals to "borrow" and "copy," "imitate and emulate one another" (DA295). For example, the extreme level of collective empathy is a consequence of this imitative equality. Empathy becomes common as a social condition because of this kind of equality and the ability to feel mutual pain or delight is no longer confined by class and acquaintance. It extends throughout the community in a "display [of] general compassion for the members of the human race. They inflict no useless ills, and they are happy to relieve the grief of others…they are humane" (DA50). In America, equalized empathy also shows institutionally in the laxity of the criminal justice system, the ease of universal suffrage (DA55), the collapse of capital punishment, and even a less severe practice of slavery, when it existed. In this borderline parasitic social behavior truly lies the fearsome power of naturally occurring egalitarian sentiment. Democracies that adopt this equality possess a kind of mimetic dimension through which individuals imitate each other and relate to each other. Even public officials are "intermingled with the crowd of citizens" (DA194) with a substantial dearth of ceremony and uniform, and they "always represent exactly the majority" in the same "elevated thoughts" and with the same "generous instincts" (DA192). In complete democracies there is no need for "a power…external to the social body [to] force it to march on a certain track" (DA55). There is no "sacrifice of will" (DA186) because the power of equality "exists only within [the people's] bosom" (DA55). Everyone instinctually knows what is necessary to make "common undertaking[s] succeed" (DA186). Tocqueville sees the people of American

democracy as constantly creating and re-creating themselves, redefining themselves as well as their concept of national character through this derivative relation to others. This is the reason why he claims that "men and things change continuously but monotonously" in the complete democracy because every second citizens work to mirror one another to ensure that changes are constant and "all the changes are similar" (DA587). In an "infinite variety…combine[d]…in a manner so that all these actions lead by a thousand diverse ways toward the accomplishment of one great design" (DA703). Complete democracies have an idea of equality that is individually accepted, reinforced, and constantly progressing. It is thus that Americans, observed Tocqueville, are capable of maintaining "an immense opinion of themselves…[enough to] form a species apart in the [rest of the] human race" while at the same time sustaining a "variety of characters and…passions" (DA359) amongst themselves. Thus, citizens of complete democracies naturally conform to a corporate image and maintain a sense of originality at the same time.

It is in this light Tocqueville understands the easy reconciliation of traditionally entrenched gender roles and age hierarchies within American democratic society. Here, the image of an individual who, becoming and re-becoming through imitation, is at the same time himself and the other, dominates; he sees himself at once his own person and a representation of the collective. Individual identity becomes, under the equality of complete democracies, multiplicitous and thus furthers a special "universal uniformity" that "draws tighter" the "great bond of humanity" (DA674). To achieve this, Tocqueville claims is "to have admirably understood the true notion of democratic progress" (DA576) despite all possible setbacks (DA674). To confuse the power of a complete democracy's equality with a general "leveling" of humanity is therefore incorrect. To think that the ultimate consequence and necessary effect of democratic institutions is to "intermingle citizens…to force them all to lead a common

existence" is to understand equality in a "coarse and tyrannical form" (DA577). At this point, Tocqueville very carefully emphasizes that "the preceding applies completely only to America and for the present cannot be extended in a general manner to Europe" (DA571). This shows once again how equality in complete democracy is of a different breed that is specifically, I argue, a personal and intimate one. Thus, Tocqueville asserts that in democracies not born of revolutions, equality is a "fact" (DA50). And though it is "perhaps less elevated" it is still "more just and its justice makes for its greatness and its beauty" (DA675). Equality in America is born fully formed, functional, and renews itself incessantly without external aid. It is "constantly repeated to the inhabitants" (DA359) by and through their interaction with one another. In complete democracies, equality is not perceived as just a conduct or rule; it is a self-governed repetition and imitation of collective spiritedness that occurs within the individual and is only later extrapolated out to affect the collective body. It is not something outward and imposed: the "laws do not give birth to it, but the people learn to produce it" (DA233).

In the complete democracy, equality of this type thus yields very distinguishing consequences in producing a special kind of humanity. For one, it gives man a certain faith in changeability and possibility. It encourages individuals to view whatever form they become to be an imperfect presentation that can always be improved upon. As a result, complete democracy is always in motion and men are frequently made anxious (DA307, 504). Tocqueville mentions a very similar phenomenon occurs in revolutionary democracies but it is clearly despised (OR200). Instability is greatly feared in revolutionary democracies; their entire perception of the power of equality is tailored towards preventing it. They cannot resist setting at least a few limits to human potential. European democracies fear the chimeric potential of its own citizens. Equality perceived as self-perpetuating and mimetic necessitates a renewal process in order to progress. It

represents the individual propensity for forgetting the past but when a society fears the future, they become wedded to memories and history that provide inert models and what they ultimately hope will manifest as sociopolitical safety. Whereas from the outside complete democracy appears a constantly changing montage of small differences, revolutionary democracies appear as a mosaic of inert primary colors. In other words, whereas democracy should facilitate every-quickening movement, aristocracy is (or was) perpetually immobile and this stiffness has leaked through to color the face of revolutionary democracies. Man under complete democracy is always "becoming" because their idea of equality is constantly on the move. But the revolutionary democratic man who tries to mechanize equality as a tool is a static "being". Equality in complete democracies makes it so that even "unmoving nature itself is moving, so much is it transformed daily (DA587); it makes individual identity plural and discontinuous because it is itself an internalized, personalized idea that has many adaptable forms.

Although the idea of equality in complete democracies works primarily in the private life, it can display institutional consequences as a byproduct. For instance, Tocqueville's discussion of the American court system is an example of how equality as a sentiment can be seen in public action. He describes the judicial system in complete democracies is not just a lawful institution but "the most energetic means of making the people reign" and "the most effacious means of teaching them to reign" (DA264). Even though the jury system is a political institution, it is viewed by the people as a sort of "dogma" and a "concept" (DA262) more so than just a governmental appendage as in England (DA696). It penetrates into the usages of life; it bends the human mind to its forms, and is so to speak intermingled with…idea[s] (DA262). It "touches all interests" and its "application falls before one's eyes at each instant" (DA261). In the revolutionary democracy of France, institutions are well-built and powerful in their own right but

nonetheless “do not strike all minds” and everyone “seems to have only a confused idea of the institution[s]” (DA261) they live under. The idea of equality in revolutionary democracies is more artificial and thus “the people see it act only from time to time and in particular cases; they are habituated to doing without it in the ordinary course of life” (DA261). As it happens, it is often that in European democratic settings, “great external appearances can often hide very base hearts” (DA581).

By participating in associations like the jury, citizens learn the rules of the democratic game willingly and the personalized idea of equality is shared and reinforced. This supplants corporate governmental strength. Complete democracies have not drawn “practical knowledge and positive notions from books” (DA291), corporeal elements, or what Tocqueville calls “physical causes” (DA293). Indeed, the people internalize equality and are very close to it. This psychological strength is a strong bastion against the forces of tyranny and despotism whether represented by a demagogic dictator or by the unruly anarchy of mob violence. It can create a barrier to evolutional uprisings and even war. Tocqueville argues that complete democracies lack stalwartly democratic forms because equality is not as strongly institutionalized yet. Instead, “it is from participating in [democratic life] that [man] learns to know the laws, from governing that he instructs himself. The great work of society in [complete democracies] is accomplished daily before his eyes and so to speak in his hands. Equality in complete democracies extrapolates the citizens’ self into the “politics” of public living whereas “in Europe, its principal goal is to prepare for private life” (DA292). The direction of equality’s progress is important in differentiating which types of democracies “live” an egalitarian life and “love their country in…that they love themselves,” carrying the habits of their “private [sentiments] over to their national [sentiments]” (DA586).

ii. EQUALITY IN REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY AND ITS DOMINANCE IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Revolutionary democracies, as previously mentioned, adopt a more publically concentrated understanding of equality, which manifests in how the sociopolitical body is unitary, continuous and consistent. Equality is settled in the vision of the collective political community and its actions are distant from individual consciousness. Men in revolutionary democracies may thus claim that they live in an egalitarian state; they do not claim they are an egalitarian people (OR30, OR31). The publically privileged idea of equality has many benefits. For one, the state is more stable. Revolutionary democracies suffer less from the "greatest vice of…inattention," motion, and insatiability that plagues complete democracies. Publically oriented equality is also very much revered by the people and maintains a "very lofty, very brilliant" character (DA674). It fills the mind with "a noble pleasure in regarding it" (DA581). Nevertheless, a perception of equality that is biased to the public sphere produces a social body that is less mobile, one that is easily "attached to pittances" and a demanding sense of public pride. For example, men in European democracies tend to enrich themselves by "war…by public posts…by political confiscations" and other specifically public activities (DA588), whereas the equality held by complete democracies drives men to very different passions that are narrower and "very petty" (DA579) in scope, maintaining "a family resemblance" (DA588) instead. Equality in complete democracies offers "few occasions to raise [thought] above preoccupation with domestic interests" (DA579) but the unique idea of equality employed by incomplete democracies is concentrated clearly in Tocqueville's opinion, in grander public functions and character. The dependency of revolutionary democracies on legitimizing mores in the power of the state has a historical root. In pre-revolutionary France, for example, a citizen would define

himself not by personal attributes or morals but by his ability to eke out an existence from the land he owned and the rights and tangible privileges he could procure from the government. His worth as a human being was determined not only by his holdings and his tools and skills but also invariably by the laws governing land tenure, tax exemptions, guild monopolies, sumptuary regulation, special punishments or reliefs from onerous labor services (Bossenga, 137). These publically defined privileges and habits defined identity and opinion; this is a cultural habit that Tocqueville claims revolutionary democracies carry through to the present day and can be observed in the way they apply equality as a more.

Tocqueville also claims that the idea of equality he finds in revolutionary democracies is more merciless and insensitive in character because it concentrates on creating equality very quickly and by any means possible. It breaks down social hierarchies, variety, and public titles; it "attacks not only specific forms of privilege but any kind of diversity whatsoever; to [its] thinking [everything] should be equal even if equality spelled servitude…every obstacle to the achievement of this end should be done away with immediately" (OR159). This is why Tocqueville often faults revolutionary democratic equality for producing "very ridiculous and very flat imitations" (DA580) of the equality shown in complete democracies, imitations that frequently become "newfangled monster[s], red of tooth and claw; when after destroying political institutions, it abolishes civil institutions; when, after changing laws, it tampers with age-old customs and even…language" (OR160). It "dethrone[es]…the social order" (OR3) of old at the public level, "trampling the masses underfoot" (OR3). As for the masses themselves, Tocqueville rarely discusses equality's specific effects on the people in this framework; he does not mention the personal habits and roles of the people who survived the democratic transition. Revolutionary democracy has elevated itself beyond individual contemplation, "operating

beyond the frontiers of its place…employing methods hitherto unknown, new tactics, [and] murderous slogans" (OR3). Revolutionary equality is an "opinion in arms" (OR3) that "declares war simultaneously on all established powers, to destroy all recognized prerogatives, to make short work of all traditions, and to institute new ways of living, new conventions…hence," Tocqueville concludes, "its so markedly anarchic tendencies" (OR8).

Publically oriented equality is not as intimately understood; it does not reside "at the domestic hearth" (DA526) of the people. It is instead reinforced and privileged by "bureaucracy" and the "affairs of State" (OR167), better at regulating classes than morality, which "appears more lax" (DA571). Tocqueville claims this "spectacle…to be distressing" although "not surprising" (DA572). The revolutionary democracies of Europe always "pass [too] suddenly from the interior of the family into the government of the state" (DA292). Americans, on the contrary, do not; their governing habits and public attitude arises as a direct reflection of their private lives. For example, among Americans "the idea of the jury is discovered in school games and one finds parliamentary forms even in the ordering of a banquet" (DA292). Publically oriented equality is efficient at remodeling the direct products of society writ large but it has not been able to penetrate the private lives of its citizens. For example, Tocqueville criticizes the "seemingly homogeneous mass" present in European democracies where the citizen body is "still divided within itself into a great number of watertight compartments, small, self-contained units, each of which watched vigilantly over its own interests and [takes] no part in the life of the [people]" (OR77). For example, the judicial magistrates in France are subject to the weight of constitutional equality as "the first of laws" thus personalized interpretation is impossible. Despite the egalitarian proceedings in the bench, "ordinary reason must [still] yield before reason of the state" (DA96). The more revolutionary democratic understandings of publically oriented

equality piquantly declares “the same laws for all” (OR78) and a reliable, powerful institutional system “fixed at the center” (DA99) but it has not been completely adopted into the daily exchanges of human life.

Tocqueville claims that equality in revolutionary democracies has trouble integrating into the minds of its people because it is blocked by their retention of “the sentiments, passions, virtues, and vices of aristocracy [and] its manners” (DA580). These attitudes are “more durable” than all else and are always kept “for some time [even] after [the regime has] lost its goods and its power” (DA581). This affects a variety of habits ranging from colloquialisms to industry and the benefits of keeping this aristocratic tincture can be a very productive additive to societal permanence with its ability to promote administrative stability and a “salutary fear of the future that makes one watchful and combative” (DA673). However, these hierarchical habits are capable of placing “beautiful illusions” over society “and…the picture [is] often deceptive” (DA581). Although Tocqueville contends that “these [more] vulgar sentiments” (DA581) will irrevocably fade with time as the people move farther and farther away from the direct experience of aristocratic life, those etiquettes often remain for several generations, shaping the perception of equality and the institutions built upon it at the start. For example, Tocqueville explains how many aristocracies required an egalitarian code of social graces, an outward “appearance on each” that renders the people “alike despite their particular penchants” (DA580). This habit transgressed into the understanding of equality in revolutionary democracies, where “the great picture of humanity” still dominates. “The genuine sentiments and individual ideas of each man” (DA580) are masked but the state is enlarged, making “society…agile, far-seeing, and strong; particular persons [may] do small things [but] the state does immense ones” (DA674).

The perception and application of equality adopted by revolutionary democracies thus draws men predominantly to public life where the individual self is diminished but where the collective is more powerful. In general, Tocqueville avers that "as conditions are equalized in a people, individuals appear smaller and society seems greater" such that "one no longer perceives [anything] but the vast and magnificent image of the people itself" (DA641). But this point of view appears far more augmented in revolutionary democracies. Equality that is imposed and created from outside the people tends to give men a "very high opinion of the privileges of society" prompting a fervent belief that "the government ought to be acting constantly and to take everything in hand" (DA642). The experience of instability and fear during the transition period reinforces the opinion that the "unity, ubiquity, and omnipotence of the social power [and] the uniformity of its rules form the salient feature characterizing [their] newly born political system" (DA642), that is, equality. The resulting democracy is one that is immensely powerful but has been "governed on wrong lines altogether" (OR159), that is, the people all conceive the government in the image of a "lone, simple, providential, and creative power" (DA642). Revolutionary democracies hold, Tocqueville states, "the belief that the greatness and power of a nation are products of its administrative machinery" even though Tocqueville argues it is "the driving force [equality] behind it [that really] counts" (OR175). When Tocqueville claims "laws are always unstable as long as they do not lean on mores," he means to emphasize the weakness of public forms without moral sustenance, "the sole resistant and lasting power in a people" (DA642). Revolutionary democracies have, as a result, "no concern for private rights" and tend to keep the individual separate from the public because "only the public interest matter[s]" (OR159) to them.

Tocqueville therefore avers that equality in revolutionary democracies supports a view that "the function of the State is not merely one of ruling the nation, but also that of recasting it in a given mold, of shaping the mentality of the population as a whole in accordance with a predetermined model…they think desirable…In short, [the people] set no limit to its rights and powers; its duty was not merely to reform but to transform the nation" (OR161). The people think that "the central power alone [is] capable" (OR162) of establishing equality, a mindset Tocqueville thinks needs to change. The public understanding of equality in revolutionary democracies allows the state to stake supremacy, to "make men exactly what it wishes them to be" (OR162) for it is within the legal architecture that equality resides and reigns, not in the people. The state is egalitarian but not the people. Tocqueville claims this resulting system as "impersonal" and nearly "tyrannical" (OR163), its authority "could not [in this way] be controlled by public opinion…the State was a law unto itself…a [new kind of] master" (OR163). But, unable to let equality roam freely in the hearts and minds of its people, revolutionary democracies attempt to restrain and define it through ritual and practice. Although equality can, in and of itself, mature through this process, the people are still undeniably separate from its real teachings.

In comparison, the complete democracy that perceives equality as the internal, "hidden source of energy, the life principle itself, independent of the organs which perform the various functions needed for survival" (OR79), is far less efficient in public matters and less mechanically perfect. However, Tocqueville accepts this as a necessary evil resonating from the distinctive understanding of equality in a private nature such that even if "certain organs may be faulty" within the social state proper, this "matters little" so long as the "life force of the body politic has…vigor" (OR175). Equality is not simply a way of life: it is practically a faith. The

strength of the public American political system stemmed only in part from the Constitution and its consciously sophisticated allocation of rights and responsibilities between the federal and state authorities. Tocqueville was never greatly impressed by purely constitutional contrivances; France had had more than her fair share of paper liberties, after all, and to little benefit. More important for a democratic society is a sense of democratic tradition, which develops best in an altogether unconscious and accidental way from the womb of a naturally occurring sense of equality. Although the sheer level and intensity of political activity in America is impressive, it is the way in which political feelings – of egalitarian sentiments and not mere ritual – are mobilized and channeled that Tocqueville felt to be particularly helpful in shaping a proper democratic lifestyle. This life force is no doubt the idea of equality, self-animated. As such, Tocqueville observed that America *is* equality whereas France is *for* equality. For the former, the social body at large is merely a reflection of the individual being. The reverse is true for the latter: the individual is the reflection of the whole. But no matter the exact direction, both societal reflections are a conglomerate of three images: liberty, self-interest, and faith.

IV.
LIBERTY AND THE TWO DEMOCRACIES

Liberty is the first of three important attributes of Tocqueville's democratic social state. Not only is its power palpable enough to "disturb societal tranquility" (DA130), it is the only sentiment other than equality that is easily "disposed to [man's] worship" (DA479). Predictably, liberty shares a special interactive relationship with equality. The intricacy of the relationship is influenced by liberty's character being both elaborate and intrusive; it is a mix of human energy, courage, independent judgment, and self-restraint. Mere independence to do what one pleases is not freedom, for Tocqueville. "So wrong it is to confound independence with liberty," he states.

"No one is less independent than a citizen of a free state…the citizen of a free country has [no] right to do whatever he pleases; on the contrary, more social obligations [are] imposed upon him than anywhere else" (229). For Tocqueville, liberty is not merely the manifestation of relaxed public norms and individual rights; liberty truly means the mastery of one's passions. It is the tempering of desires, the moral chains placed upon the appetites of men brought to the fore under the process of democratization. True freedom is the sense of inherent entitlement "presumed to [be] received from nature" in the form of an "intelligence" that is "necessary for [one's] own general guidance…to regulate at his own will his own destiny" that is "uncontrolled by his fellows" (DA90). For Tocqueville, freedom is thus directly related to the health of morals and the proper "art of conducting…affairs" at both the state level and the personal level (Boesche, 2006). It is optimal to balance liberty evenly at both levels and Tocqueville echoes this view when he speaks of slavery. To attain freedom, a slave must not only obtain legal emancipation, but also self-control over his own passions; otherwise, he becomes the "prey" of his own desires. People are thereby free to the extent that they enjoy the greatest possible room to pursue their own interests (DA384) with the capacity to employ morality and reason in making good choices so that "enjoyment is keener" overall (DA514). Liberty is not simply independence – it embodies the intimate and personally perceived rights a democratic nation allots to itself, found in the heart of every citizen.

All democratic men are touched by the "ruling passion" of liberty in light of the birth of equality because Tocqueville claims although every man under egalitarianism is possessed by "a desire to live…on an equal footing," they are simultaneously concerned about living "also as freemen" (OR208). A good relationship between equality and liberty is thus the first imperative to a salubrious democracy, although most of the time, this proves to be the most difficult bond to

balance. Depending upon how liberty and equality are perceived, therefore, the reconciliation process between equality and liberty – as well as the resulting society – will differ. For although equality inevitably bequeaths a love for liberty (DA479), the nature of equality transforms the character that liberty will adopt. Equality both invents the idea of freedom as well as manipulates its application. Different perceptions of equality hence affect how liberty will behave and how well (or how poorly) it comes to be integrated in the two democratic models.

i. THE EFFECT OF EQUALITY IN REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACIES ON THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF LIBERTY'S PURPOSE

In revolutionary democracies, equality affects liberty by first altering the collective desires which liberty lords over. The rise of equality allows for "every passion [to gather] strength in proportion as it is cultivated" and "increase by all the efforts made to satiate it." (DA572). This occurs because equality removes the old legal restraints on speech, hierarchical etiquettes, and increases the flow of information and opinion. However, because in revolutionary democracies equality works at the external level, the liberty born from it follows suit. This, Tocqueville argues, produces dangerous results. Because liberty is publically privileged, its ability to provide for the "regularity of habits" (DA572) that stirs in the conscience is diminished. The people, so attracted to the new and extreme atavism created by public equality, wrongly begin to believe that "individual selfishness [is] the source of general happiness," that the self-interested race for wealth coincides with individual freedom. Tocqueville concludes that the people then begin to mistake liberty for something it is not, creating "essentially a passion…that smoothes the way to servitude" (DA88). As equality is increasingly concentrated in the public sphere, "egoism [is given] a [unique] energy and…singular power" (DA482) that is very difficult to combat. This unchecked sense of entitlement allows "fatal taste[s]" to arise to

"ravish men" (Schwartz, 2003) and further isolate the individual, disrupting democratic participation. This explains why Tocqueville cites the average Frenchman as having neither experience nor affection for municipal associations and affairs. Whereas the American would feel betrayed if he suddenly lost the opportunity to vocalize himself in the public community, the Frenchman has learned to look upon external issues as concerns over which he has no control, as problems to be handled by a "powerful stranger whom he calls the government" (DA96). For Tocqueville, the revolutionary democracy thus adopts a patrician lean on both equality and the liberty it creates that is immediately political; to be free as an individual is to be so by proxy of living in a free political community. The nation "as a whole had sovereign freedom, while the individual citizen [is] kept in strictest tutelage" (OR167) under it. The "former was expected to display the sagacity and virtues of a free race, the latter to behave" in accordance to it. For the revolutionary democracy, both equality and freedom are perceived relatively, through the collective lens and the responsibilities that once belonged to the people have now been pushed onto the public at large. Liberty itself has been "grafted…onto institutions" (OR167).

In addition, revolutionary democracies not only apply liberty incorrectly but they define it and apply it inaccurately. It is "impersonal and function[s] under the aegis…of the State" (OR162) and the people "show no…enthusiasm" for it because "they want…not so much a recognition of [liberty] as reforms…in the existing system" (OR165). First, Tocqueville claims this is due to equality being so preoccupied with securing institutional legitimacy, "defending one of the great conquests of the Revolution" (DA92), that it fails to regulate and educate the people. Equality in this manner allows for the state to "remain popular…and an avowed lover of freedom" while the people hidden beneath the administration unconsciously become "hidden servant[s] of tyranny" (DA92). Tocqueville suggests that the public passion for equality is

caused by exposure to insurgency and contains a fear of disorder that arouses such a ardent desire for public tranquility that liberty cannot help but take a secondary role in the hierarchy of mores: desire for institutional constancy becomes the primary passion and the state is apt to succumb to a "very disorderly love for order" that implements a "peculiar, ill-assimilated, and, as it were, unwholesome liberty" (OR120). Freedom "has been so long extinct [in revolutionary democracies] that people…almost entirely forget what it mean[s] and how it function[s]" (OR161) such that when equality took hold post-transition, the reimagined concepts (Tocqueville calls them "impressions" and "substitutes" (OR161)) of liberty differed significantly from actuality. Tocqueville states that in "the continent of Europe, the taste for and idea of freedom began to arise only [after equality had] and as a consequence of that very equality" (DA481). For them, "equality preceded freedom; equality was therefore an old fact when freedom was still a new thing; the one had already created opinions, usages, laws proper to it when the other was produced alone and for the first time in broad daylight" (DA482). Even now, liberty as an idea is still maturing and this explains why its effects are extremely unevenly dispersed and disjointed. For example, though the idea of liberty runs strong in the "free exchange of commodities and a system of laissez faire and laissez passer in commerce and industry…political liberty in the full sense of the term was something that passed their [revolutionary democracy's] imagination or was promptly dismissed from their thoughts if by any chance the idea of it occurred to them" (OR159).

In addition, equality's public concentration in revolutionary democracies is very overbearing and very supercilious, so much so that Tocqueville is convinced he "does not think…at any moment in history or at any point on earth, anyone has seen such a number of men so sincerely impassioned for [equality]'s public good" (DA68). Tocqueville claims men in

revolutionary democracies are used to possessing a far grander "social imagination" than their complete democracy counterparts who are "less dreamers…and scarcely…want to abandon themselves to…contemplation" (DA571). Never, Tocqueville claims, has he observed a people "so absorbed in the contemplation of a grand purpose" from equality's working (OR 133, 134). This largess and assume incomprehensibility is also applicable to liberty in revolutionary democracies; liberty maintains an enlarged and glorified political role, allowing it to have "incomparable beauty" (OR134). But this grandeur also perpetually "produce[s] great agitations of the heart" (DA571) because the people develop an exaggerated idea of what liberty is capable of; they expect of liberty what it cannot feasibly deliver and what it was not designed to deliver. Their idea of liberty is so removed from their individual lives that it appears unfathomable and this "makes a sort of public virtue of indifference" (DA485). Equality in complete democracies "put much value on procuring…the sort of profound, regular, and peaceful affection[s] that make up the charm and security of life" (DA485). In revolutionary democracies, however, men "run after [more] violent and capricious emotions" (DA571) alone that cause liberty to be despotic and "raise barriers between men…separate[ing] them" (DA485). Tocqueville avers "distressingly" (DA572) that although people appear to be better regulated externally, "general morality is slack" (OR168). Tocqueville thereby deems this liberty the product of "meaner souls" (OR169). The revolutionary democracy "[has] the same tastes" of complete democracies as well as the same set of mores given to them after adopting a democratic regime but unfortunately they are "carried along toward disorder by the very effort that had to be made to overthrow laws and political customs" (DA573) that marks their beginning and characterizes their perception of equality which immediately effects their understanding and application of liberty. All of this then leads Tocqueville to conclude that, as it is with France, revolutionary democracies "rarely [have]

freedom [purely], but always disorder" (DA572). Real freedom "may well seem incomprehensible" (OR169) for them because "in the midst of this universal confusion of ideas and general shaking of opinions, amid this incoherent mixture of [mores], public virtue has become uncertain and private morality unsteady" (DA572).

Lastly, the more centralized characteristic of equality in revolutionary democracies makes it so that liberty at the state level "excel[s], in a word, at preventing, not at doing" (DA86). Revolutionary democracies are professionals at controlling the actions of the state and with a very centralized idea of liberty the state can sometimes at least display "freedom in its style [and] responsibility in its actions" (DA87). Contrarily, in complete democracies "one often regrets not finding those uniform rules that seem constantly to be watching over each of [the revolutionary democracies]" (DA87). However, the goods produced by liberty in concert with equality at the public level overwhelms the individual, making him rely upon "the powerful foreigner [of] the government" too much; men "cross [their] arms to wait for the nation as a whole to come to [their] aid" instead of "occupying [themselves] with removing danger[s]" (OR221). Freedom is so concentrated in the body politic that there seems little left for the people to covet and learn to use. In other words, freedom has become an utterly conventional, lawful thing and this centralization convinces the citizen to "completely sacrifice…his free will" so that he "constantly [swings] between servitude and license" (DA89). In revolutionary democracies, liberty has become "an authority always on its feet, keeping watch that…pleasures are tranquil, flying ahead of [your] steps to turn away every danger without [your] even needing to think about it" at the same time removing "the least thorns on [the] path" but becomes also in the process "absolute master of [your individual] freedom and [consequently your] life" by "monopolizing movement and existence to such a point that everything around it must languish

when it languishes, that everything must sleep when it sleeps, that everything must perish if it dies" (DA88). Thus, the individual himself in hoping the state grants him liberty, becomes less free. The citizen expects many individual guarantees from his governing and social body and this addiction turns the purpose of liberty entirely on its head. However, what liberty lacks in monitoring the citizen, it makes up for in affairs of state. Liberty is very well engineered in public works, forms, and policies and, similar to the equality that drives it, manages the conduct the "common opinions, feelings, and ideas" (DA750, 751) of the overall state impressively.

ii. THE EFFECT OF EQUALITY IN COMPLETE DEMOCRACIES ON UNDERVALUING LIBERTY'S POTENTIAL

Complete democracies' understanding of equality cultivates a different idea of liberty that produces societal results distinct from revolutionary democracies. First, because equality in complete democracies is born as an idea of the people, liberty too is "itself *felt* everywhere" (DA90). It is not just seen but *sensed*. It is nurtured in each individual's heart and copied through social interaction in a "simple" and "natural" way. Unfortunately, Tocqueville states, this results in complete democracies generally maintaining "a coarse[r] idea of [freedom]" (DA515). This is because their more active perception of equality prompts liberty to appear, in the same vein, not as tame and very much divorced from "administrative [and] political effects" (DA90). There are two significant costs to this. First, a self-sufficient equality allows the creation and maintenance of sentiments and mores to take place within the individual citizen; they are not creations of the state. Hence, Tocqueville states that complete democracies "have freedom in the blood" (OR169). This internalized freedom is more easily capable of imposing the necessary moral chains on human appetites. On the other hand, Tocqueville claims that complete democracy's equality has a tendency to corrupt liberty for the same reason, since both sentiments do not have

the benefit of conventionally set limits; an understanding of equality as personal and mimetic easily dodges material restraint. Therefore, liberty in complete democracies tends to "ask of freedom anything other than itself" (OR169) and undervalues liberty's potential. Second, and related to the first, complete democracy's equality promotes man to see liberty as primarily utilitarian (DA517). The people love liberty only so long as it works to keep them from being enslaved to their desires, thus promoting them to pursue their individual happiness. This view can be problematic because Tocqueville claims it severely undercuts the true potential of freedom as a mechanism for regulating equality and good scruples. In complete democracies, although the "spirit of freedom" and that of equality are rarely at odds, they do not perform to their full potential as Tocqueville sees in theory.

Second, equality professed and produced by complete democracies is decentralized, a feature that liberty also adopts, producing a "multitude [capable of] support[ing] freedom in great things [because] it has…learned to make use of it in small ones" (DA91). Liberty is not a very grand visage in complete democracies but in return, it is very widespread, touching and monitoring all the smallest aspects of daily life. The best example of freedom's multitude in complete democracies is found in the character of their newspapers, which are individually powerless but "dispersed over a great space" and are "numerous" enough that they nevertheless promote "motion in accord without being united" (DA494). Newspapers are physical manifestations of liberty in complete democracies because they give the people a place to voice themselves to each other and remain connected without being consolidated. In result, newspapers are a solid vehicle tailored specifically to temper pettiness, loneliness, and selfish tendencies. Tocqueville notes, for example, the United States adopts this method very successfully and hence enjoys "the greatest…local freedoms of every kind" (DA495). Through this example

Tocqueville displays liberty properly understood as a tool that complete democracies use to bar against the destructiveness of egalitarian cravings. Liberty in complete democracies gives man the ability to cooperatively take control of the social edifice while still maintaining a sense of individual self, however small. Freedom under the guidance of equality in complete democracies is not a convention but a sentiment that empowers a person to make choices, resolve problems, preserve himself and grow; freedom helps spread the natural mimetic perpetuation birthed by equality, especially in the example of widespread democratic participation. Tocqueville insists that through active civic participation, men can cultivate the knowledge and pride of their own will-power to unleash a "tremendous popular energy [that] infuses the body politic" as, for example, in the United States where man is seen as continually "fashion[ing] the universe" to please himself". In America, their concept of freedom as internally powerful makes all things "seem malleable, capable of being shaped and combined at will" from within "the human mind" (DA501). "The mental barriers which [imprison] society…are lowered" and although the public visage of society may not appear to move, "the human spirit rushes forward and traverses…in every direction" (DA501). Liberty's work in complete democracies is smaller and far more intimate than in revolutionary democracies.

Third, Tocqueville resolves that the type of liberty adopted in complete democracies does not offer the efficiency and permanence of structure in governmental order because equality itself is less condensed in the public sphere. Equality promotes self-regulation and liberty adopts the same pattern; neither sees the need to be synchronized by anything external. As such, the citizen of a complete democracy displays profoundly "deaden[ed] political desires" (DA492) and "private interest directs most human actions" (DA488). Liberty's public purpose is thus disregarded and defaced regularly. The people are content with keeping liberty in small doses

and for the good of themselves. However, liberty's application still brings about a popular energy that can, Tocqueville argues, "produce wonders" (DA80) on occasion. It is unmitigated for Tocqueville that "among the Americans, the force of equality and liberty combined in administrating the state is less well regulated, less enlightened, less skillful" (DA87) entirely. Liberty's reach is rarely extended to matters of the state and national affairs. The "details of social existence…health, good order and morality" under liberty's rule operate "independently of…the state" and its regulations (DA68). Tocqueville sees liberty creating small manipulations and psychological dams against the attitudes and passions people collect in a democratic lifestyle. Liberty in complete democracies never shows its strength in "the most skillful governance" but instead does so in the expression of "an all-pervading and restless activity, a superabundant force and…energy" (DA261, 262) in daily life. Such a self-perpetuation and liveliness of mores is unlikely in revolutionary democracies, "nation[s] so unused to acting for [themselves]," that any attempt to do so ordinarily terminates in "wholesale destruction" (OR167). Complete democracies like America, who adopt self-perpetuating ideas of equality and liberty, are more accustomed to the habit of self-reliance so that they do not risk being "reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd" (DA293).

iii. SUMMATION

"Liberty can appear," Tocqueville finally claims, "in the human spirit in two different forms…as the customary possession of a right or the enjoyment of a privilege" and it is through the different perceptions of equality and the different characters they promote that such forms are determined in each respective democratic civilization. In the complete democracy, Tocqueville sees that equality promotes an internalized understanding of liberty that promotes self-reliance

and self-moderation. It strengthens the value of the individual and his private relations, resulting in a high preference for local self-governance, a commitment to the right of personal advancement (as was displayed in the justification for Western American expansion), and the nature of partisan party politics. However, because equality perceived this way also has a strong propensity to swerve towards apathy and a decreased dependency on government and public works, this produces an idea of freedom that is often reduced in potential, privately contained and aggressively utilitarian. Complete equality thus sometimes results in extreme devaluations of freedom's abilities. Complete democracies therefore exhibit freedom in a meek form. In revolutionary democracies, equality is tainted by exhaustion, discord, and other morally destructive legacies of revolution, which together produce an idea of freedom that is many times overpowering and merciless. Revolutionary equality thus results in excessive exaggerations of freedom's potential in the attempt to extrapolate it and make it conventional and publically omnipotent. The revolutionary democracy's idea of equality as legally based and institutionally promoted is also one tinted with fear, antagonized and radicalized by the shadow of the instability of their past. This character is heavily represented in their misunderstanding of liberty's definition because revolutionary democracies are preoccupied with securing independence more so than moderation of specific liberties. The "general execution of its [liberty's] designs" is much more important; "public utility" and "public necessity" become doctrines that push liberty past its limits and makes it difficult to serve personal needs as well after it is exhausted in the public sphere. It seems, ultimately, that no matter what form of equality is established, Tocqueville concludes that the doctrine of liberty tends to be misconstrued in both types of democracies, giving each a distinct set of merits and flaws.

V.
SELF-INTEREST AND THE TWO DEMOCRACIES

The second attribute of democratic society encompasses a set of conducts that include self-interest, individualism, and materialism. This phenomenon is more clearly visible in complete democracies than in revolutionary democracies where egalitarianism is not yet an identity so much as a very prominent dogmatic veneer. Overall according to Tocqueville, democratic lifestyles in theory promote individual citizens to be highly concerned with the worth of one's own judgment and preference towards well-being. It is a special "spirit" that "attracts the regard of the public and fills the imagination of the crowd; all energetic passions are directed toward it" in a world dominated by the egalitarian creed (DA528). As a passion for equality grows, individual self-regard becomes stronger because it is the same as "the general idea of man" (DA127) and the nation as a whole. It is a passion that legitimizes to every man how he can best depend upon himself – his own will and reason being deemed sufficient – in order to triumph for his own purposes. Self-reliance on the basis of "fugitive perfection…presented to the human mind" (DA427) develops eventually to construct board and shared concepts of human perfectibility, will, and self-regard which, for Tocqueville, is one of the "principal…ideas that [the] intelligence can conceive" and "it alone constitutes in itself a great philosophic theory whose consequences are displayed" in all aspects of society. It is, in essence, the one defining characteristic, "old as the world" that truly characterizes Tocqueville's understandings of human and citizen behavior. Therefore, it is important to note that in democracies, "equality…gives [self-interest] a new character" (DA427) such that any change in the perception or implementation of equality will consequently effect that character and the character of related habits. In considering revolutionary and complete democracies, Tocqueville alludes to the existence of two different manifestations of "indefinite perfectibility" (DA426) and "enlightened

regard for [one]self" (DA636) the kind of equality preceding is therefore important to understanding the divide.

i. EQUALITY IN COMPLETE DEMOCRACY CREATING DYNAMIC SELF-INTEREST AND ANXIOUS CITIZENS

The self-reliant character of equality in complete democracies allow for citizens to naturally and strongly extrapolate the individual out to reflect the corporate body, to "place moral authority in universal reason, as they do political power in the universality of citizens" (DA218). The overall state becomes a hodgepodge of utilitarian and myopically pragmatic individuals united by the shared sense of respecting the self-interest and judgment of others. Self-regard becomes regard for the public body at large. They then come to "reckon one must rely on the sense of all to discern what is permitted or forbidden" because the "all" is merely a mirror version of the "one". Consequently, "most of them think that the knowledge of one's self-interest well understood is enough…they believe that at birth each has received the ability to govern himself, and that no one has the right to force one like himself to be happy." This archetype is all due to a remarkable understanding of self-interest reflecting a "lively faith in human perfectibility; [where] all consider society as a body in progress" (DA359). When manipulated and reinforced by a conception of equality that supposes "humanity [itself] as a changing picture, in which nothing is or ought to be fixed forever" (DA359), self-interest in complete democracies takes on the same unstoppable mobility. With this reasoning, Tocqueville implies that the equality found in complete democracies prompt the tendency to "yield to emotions of disinterest and spontaneous impulse" (DA506). This impulse and behavior is evident best in America, in the character of their ambitions, their reliance on public opinion, the types of

industry considered culturally honorable to pursue, and their uniquely anxious attitude towards the future.

This sense of utilitarian equality that characterizes self-interest in complete democracies influences the way the people pursue a diminished version of veracity and other virtues. Because "the useful is never dishonest" for them (DA501), higher concepts are flagrantly lowered to the level of democratic man and they are demeaned and tailored to his purpose. Tocqueville therefore comments on how ambition, for instance, and glory pursued in complete democracies such as America are considerably meeker and "milder" (DA535) in character. This is the moral danger Tocqueville warns in the last part of *Democracy in America*, when he critiques American society as suffering from "the laxity of all" (DA571). Equality spreads the individual thin and permits his interests and "imagination to fly only while skimming the earth" (DA571). This process takes place because a complete democracy's experience with self-interest usually proves so fruitful by its own means that they do not, in the end, see the need to appeal to anything surpassing individual human will, above or below them. They are preoccupied with their own miseries, needs, and desires. All of their efforts "seem able only to profit them without ever harming them" (DA200) and the more tangible political and social threats of egotism escape them. They contribute to the public good only by accident and bonds between citizens are fragile and narrow ones established by contracts (DA546) and cemented by money (DA556, 557). The true "enlightened regard" of their interest is reserved for the "welfare of…themselves" (359). Ambitions and determination are also lowered because one never needs to reach too far to obtain the same comfort and profit as other and undertakings are numerous but less grand in scale. All general ideas and indications of truth are kept "compel[ling] the soul to employ all its strength in doing mediocre things" (DA577). In fact, the idea of a "real" truth – a stable, statically known

idea – is not something self-perpetuating equality permits. Instead, the truth itself changes until it's merely effectual including beliefs about societies, public-private relations, and the limits of one's own ability and worth. Complete democracy is capable of changing reality to fit its people's specific needs, the demands of their self-interest. Hence "virtue," Tocqueville claims "is almost never said [to be] beautiful" but only "useful" and proven so daily (DA501) through works. Complete democratic man does not elevate himself to higher things in his pursuit of self – he instead finds a way to bring such things down to his level so that he is comfortable and "settl[ed] in mediocre desires" (DA600) directly in front of him. All things no matter how small or abstract become something he can directly manipulate, guide, and utilize. There is "no power on earth," Tocqueville concedes, "that can prevent the growing equality of conditions from bringing the human spirit toward searching for the useful" (DA503) in pursuit of self-interest in complete democracies, in this way.

But utility is personal and difficult to homogenize and even worse when supported by a dominating idea of equality as "extraordinarily fragmented" (DA493). The seamless integration of public and private dimensions is lost; corporate social cohesion is unmanageable. Because of this, Tocqueville claims it is notoriously difficult to "get many to act in common" (DA493). In America, for example, this problem comes to bare in the associative role of newspapers which attempt to prevent self-interest from hurling toward anarchy. Newspapers direct individual opinions and wants towards one "common design" (DA494) and create a tangible connection between the "small affairs…and the state of public affairs" (DA494). Tangible and prolific associations like this show how self-interest in complete democracies commonly lead men towards a schizophrenic, double-life not found in revolutionary democracies; one in which the mentalities of bourgeois and private citizen alternate in confusion (Lamberti, 105, 163). Once

minute, for instance, "an American attends to his private concerns as if he were alone in the world"; the next, "he gives himself up to the common welfare as if he had forgotten them" (DA654). The very mobility of self-identity prescribed by complete equality, which persecutes all barriers and limits, inevitably leads to this consequence: a people made up of "contradictions" (DA655) that has developed a splintered sense of identity and a habit of changeability. Such a people oscillate between a preference for the private life at one instance and a preference for the public life in the next. As a result, self-interest is splintered, bourgeoned, and unanchored too. Indeed, Tocqueville implies that men in complete democracies don't have self-interest per say but self-interests in the plural. Tocqueville claims, therefore that "if an American were condemned to confine his activity to his own affairs, he would be robbed of one half of his existence; he would feel an immense void in the life which he is accustomed to lead and his wretchedness would be unbearable" (DA279). Most importantly, a constantly perpetuating equality produces an idea of self-interest that also "frequently changes its views and more frequently still its agents, it will happen that its [a person's self-interested] undertakings may be badly conducted or remain unfinished…disproportionate [and] unproductive" (DA202) in the long run.

In concordance to the individually tailored idea of equality adopted by complete democracies, self-interest also necessitates a constant mimetic refreshing and renewing process of ideology and goals. The social body writ large is thus never satisfied with its pursuits. It "seeks constantly to change place" in all practices (DA523) so that self-interest is singularly immediate, commercial (DA526), and anxious. Self-interest "burns to increase the means of satisfying it[self] more" and there is above all an "immediate fear of need" (DA526). Tocqueville concludes that due to equality's emulative capacity in complete democracies, this

results in an amplification of self-interest and the immediacy of human actions (DA523). There thus exists in complete democracies an "agitation without a precise goal; there reigns a sort of permanent fever" (DA202) towards instant gratifications. Amid these "perpetual fluctuations of fate the present grows large; it hides the future that is being effaced, and men want to think only of the next day" where "great goods [are] easily acquired and lost, the image of chance in all its forms presents itself to the human mind" (DA523). Constant motion means constant work and so it is that the desire for well being – to "give luster to life" – becomes synonymous with "the desire to live" for the men of complete democracies (DA525). Work is thus expected and honest (DA526), physical and extremely "commercial" (DA528, 526). This is ultimately why Tocqueville sees most Americans engaging in industrial professions that produce immediate results rather than agricultural ones that "enrich…only little by little" (DA527). The self-interest of complete democracies is thereby consistently "reflective and calculating" and like the equality that shapes it, extremely personalized and urgent. It "prize[s] only solitary pleasures" and can be immensely progressive (DA529) due to its focus. However, its people "do not like to enjoy themselves" (DA205) in their work. Self-interest in complete democracies is "ashamed to appear contented" and stable (DA205). It fears motionlessness to the uttermost but creates skittish and frustrated citizens in its rampage. Beneath the dull, but respectable surface of a society committed to equality and its psychological prowess, self-interest produces relative ease in living but no joy. For example, Tocqueville find a surprising malaise in the American example where people think the happiness they seek consists in experiencing pleasures that are temporal and mortal so they fret under the awareness that they have a limited time for such experiences.

ii. EQUALITY IN REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY CREATING STABLE SELF-INTEREST BUT DESTRUCTIVE EGOTISM

The self-interest, perfectibility, and individualism of revolutionary democracies present a different picture. In Europe, because they implement equality as a public force, the "doctrine of self-interest is much coarser than in America," and it is simultaneously "less widespread and above all shown less, and among [them] one still feigns great devotions every day that one has no longer" (DA502). In the private sphere, revolutionary democracies all together fail to be convinced of the inherent perfectibility of man's self-interest, lacking "faith in [man's] innate virtue". They cannot yet stand to place "[man] on a pedestal...devot[ed] to his cause" and as a result, amputate their own "self-confidence…lacking which, a nation can be relapse into a servile state" (DA156). Their perception of equality as some fixed entity above the common demos is primarily to blame. It is so revered as to be untouchable, nearly unrelatable. Confidence and assurance in this idea of equality and the self-interest it produces is capricious "with [this] result, that men's minds [are] in a state of utter confusion; they [know] neither what to hold on to, nor where to stop" (OR151). For revolutionary democracies, the threat of "confining [man] wholly in the solitude of his own heart" (DA484) is far greater due to their severe misgivings regarding human perfectibility, modified through the lens of their understanding of equality as external and concentrated in public works. In revolutionary democracies, the concept of self-interest is aggravated by a particular characteristic of this type of equality that preserves the dangers of exposure to class conflict and subjugation. It is a concept irrevocably centered on the state (DA485). A good example is demonstrated by comparing "the manner by which the taxpayer comes to repay the costs of society" (DA209) where Tocqueville observes "without a doubt" the products of the self-interested "American [in] the United States gives a lesser part…to the state than the Frenchman" ever will (DA209). Altogether, individualism and ego becomes "greater at

the end of a democratic revolution than in any other period" (DA484) because it is given such a radical and corporately concentrated character. According to Tocqueville, American democratic societies maintain an idea of equality untainted by violence, fiscal distress, and class antagonisms because they built it up within a society far away from that kind of influence and history. Thus Tocqueville suggests that complete democracies realize the good of their condition and only wish to improve and protect what they already have as a people; they wish to reform themselves. Revolutionary democracies wish to construct an entirely new social structure and safeguard it, thereby "maintaining more than perfecting" (DA202).

The revolutionary democratic passion for equality has another special effect on self-interest by changing its view on human individualism, destroying old chains of dependency and responsibilities that their people were once akin to. As a result, the individualism inherent in self-interest frequently changes into "egoism," a particular kind of selfishness that "originates in blind instinct…proceed[ing] from erroneous judgment…deficiencies of the mind [and]…perversity of the heart" (DA98, 612). The already "frozen" democratic self (DA485) becomes further isolated from the greater whole in European democracies. The result is an idea of individualism having taken on a particularly virulent form. A forced society of equals, in which individuals lose the comfort of fixed social strata, turns every man's thoughts to himself and for himself without a sense of trust for anything or anyone external. This lack of collective trust that is an unfortunate byproduct of the revolutionary democratic view of equality mutates the concept of individualism into extreme egoism. Tocqueville reasons that societies formed immediately from the debris of an aristocracy "contain many independent citizens…who, having arrived at independence yesterday, are drunk with their new power: these conceive a presumptuous confidence in their strength…[and] have no difficulty in showing that they think

only of themselves" (DA484). This sentiment is caused by the experience of conflict "during which implacable hatreds among the different classes are [always] ignited" (DA484). The passions that fueled the revolution and gave it strength "survive victory and one can follow their track in the midst of the democratic confusion that succeeds it" (DA484). For example, those of the public who were once first in old aristocratic hierarchy display considerable difficulty in "forget[ing] their former greatness" (DA484) and therefore will "for a long time…consider themselves strangers within the new [leveled] society" (DA484). Consequently, they see "all the equals that this society gives them as oppressors…they [lose] sight of their former equals and no longer feel bound by a common interest to their fates" (DA484). Those, on the contrary, who used to be at the bottom of the social ladder and for whom a sudden revolution elevates to the common level, "enjoys their newly acquired independence only with a sort of secret restiveness; if they find some of their former superiors at their side, they cast looks of triumph and fear at them, and draw apart from them" as if on principle. Therefore, Tocqueville alludes to this very important consequence of an equality born from transitional impact upon a democratic society: although democracy "inclines men not to get close to [others]" at a very basic, ideological level, "democratic revolutions dispose them to feel each other and to perpetuate in the heart of [this kind of] equality the hatreds to which inequality [first] gave birth" (DA485).

Finally, the far more centralized and publically prejudiced character of equality adopted by revolutionary democracies alters self-interest so that first, people will become short-sighted "possessed by a relaxed love of present enjoyments that interest in their own future", and second, inflate the role of the state beyond measure so that "public favor [will become] as necessary as the air that one breathes and to be in disagreement with the mass is, so to speak, not to live" (DA615). Though stressful for the individual, the collective good is served because this outlook,

in Tocqueville's opinion, "marvelously favors…stability" and "the stability of beliefs" at large (DA615). However, Tocqueville "tremble[s]" and "confess[es]" that if this radicalized selfishness continues, if "citizens continue to confine themselves more and more narrowly in the circle of small domestic interests" they will become distressed, and will "altogether refuse to move for fear" (DA616). Men not only damage the building of important social relations by their equality-inflated ego, they will "exhaust [themselves] in small, solitary, sterile motions" and humanity will "no longer advance" writ large (DA617). Tocqueville laments that "in becoming equal, [their] citizens remained ignorant and coarse" so that it is "difficult to foresee what stupid excess their selfishness could be brought to, and one cannot say in advance into what shameful miseries they would plunge for fear of sacrificing something of their well-being to the prosperity of those like them" (DA503).

iii. SUMMATION

Overall, the qualities belonging to the different types of equality clearly help to foster two cults of private judgment and self-identity within the two democratic models regarding the material world. In the New World, Americans are un-self-conscious in their everyday lives. Their idea of equality as a force of nature, so to speak, independent and free of conventional shackles, encourages a love of physical gratification as well as the pervasive and curious habit of understanding all actions in terms of "self-interest rightly understood" (DA218). It also produces the illusion of a total personal independence, an illusion that made Americans think they "owe[d] nothing to any man" and that they held "their whole destiny in their own hands" (DA332). As such, complete democracies are marked by individualism properly understood. Revolutionary democracies, led by a structure, mechanized concept of equality, immediately produces atomized and isolated individuals who, upon entering such an arrangement, find themselves immobilized.

It is almost inevitable that such radically dissociated individuals would turn in upon themselves and be prone to live entirely privatized lives more easily combated by the creation of efficient public associations instead of the dual confusion of the complete democracy. Revolutionary democracies are therefore marked by egoism and selfishness the extreme forms of individualism proper.

VI.
RELIGION AND THE TWO DEMOCRACIES

How equality is perceived and implemented by a state and its peoples conjoins to impact, lastly, the final attribute of democratic society: faith and religion. Tocqueville repeatedly emphasizes the importance of religion as being something natural to man – indeed, necessary to his existence as a free individual within the context of a social contract. Irreligion or any mutation towards atheism therefore cannot exist as passions except as a consequence to "very particular" causes. In every successful society, religion must be present. Not only is religion a specifically political concern for Tocqueville because "alongside each religion is found a political opinion that, by a certain affinity, is joined to it" (DA418), religion is an intrinsically necessary variable for successful civic survival, especially in democracies (DA418, 419). "From the beginning," Tocqueville avers, "politics and religion were in accord, and they have not ceased to be so since" (DA275). This is caused by the fact that "men cannot do without dogmatic beliefs" as "there is almost no human action, however particular one supposes it, that does not arise from a very general idea of…[religion]" (DA417). These "necessary truths" are particularly vital to the survival and proper function of democracy because they promote ideas and habits counter to those created by egalitarianism. Religion is "therefore naturally strong in precisely the spot[s] where democratic peoples are weak," writes Tocqueville and "this makes very visible

how important it is that men keep…religion when becoming equal" (DA419). It is, after all, "the principal business of religions…to purify, regulate, and restrain the too ardent and too exclusive taste[s]…that men in times of equality feel" (DA422). In fact, by battling the negativities of self-interest, liberty, and equality combined, religion thus tempers the more radical and destructive aspects of democratic tendencies. Religious sentiments are ultimately "indispensable to the daily practice of [democratic] lives" (DA418) and should be, in every situation, "clear, precise, intelligible…and very lasting" midst the consciousness of democratic peoples. Faith is the most potent dam against "the abyss" (DA7) and as such, forms the final pillar supporting democratic stability.

Unsurprisingly, religion's role greatly differs in the two democracies. The basic difference between complete democratic religion and revolutionary democratic religion is very salient to Tocqueville because they are influenced by different passions for equality that respectively manipulate them. First, in the former, religion thrives but in the latter, it barely exists. Second, natural democratic religion is not purely an institution whereas the revolutionary democratic religion will never cease to be perceived as one. The central cause of these differences seem to be accrued to passions for equality and its ability to "dispose men to want to judge for themselves; but on the other hand, [also] gives them the taste for and idea of a single social power that is simple and the same for all" (DA424). In America, for example, "religion is a world apart" (DA423) and "does not collide unnecessarily with the generally accepted ideas and permanent interests that reign among the mass" (DA422). Alternatively, in France, religion (or what is left of it) is "burdened with external practices" and forcibly obscured with "symbols" and "puerile artifices" (DA421).

i. EQUALITY IN REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACIES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON RELIGION AS AN INSTITUTION

Tocqueville surmises that for the revolutionary democracies, arising from the ashes of sociopolitical upheaval, their interpretation of equality as an elevated and separate legal entity effectively takes the place of divinity and habits of worship. After all, "faith changes its object, it does not die" and men "escape its yoke only to submit to that of another" (DA286). It is then that "the old religion excites…implacable hatred in all hearts" (DA286). Tocqueville reasons that "in centuries of fervor," particularly those marked by revolution and regimental transition, religion becomes hated and mutilated because it serves as a reminder of the mores and regimental standards that disappointed and oppressed them in the past. The men of revolutionary democracies "are halted in doubt and already no longer pretend to believe" (DA287). Tocqueville states these men "see a necessary enemy of faith" because "by the very principles of its government, the Church stood in the way" of the new democratic age, a new era that declared egalitarianism as god. Religion for revolutionary democracies is therefore highly unfavorable; "tradition was fundamental to the whole conception" of religion and the reformers "professed a great scorn for all institutions that were founded on respect for the past" (OR140). They deplored religion's ability to "recognize an authority superior to individual reason, while they [wished to] appeal to reason alone" (OR240). Additionally, the old concept of religion is "founded on a hierarchical organization" which is in direct opposition to the strictly "blurred ranks" and legal egalitarianism imposed by the principles of revolutionary equality (OR151). The men of revolutionary democracy therefore reasoned that political and religious society, "being [in character] essentially different, could not be ruled by similar principles" (OR241) and anything that threatened to debunk the authority of equality now and the mission of "leveling out all differences between men" (OR151) must be forsaken for the sake of maintaining control and

completing the work of democratic transition. The tendency for religion to "mix in the quarrels" of the public and "preach against the general opinions of their country and time" (DA424) marked it as a danger to regimental permanence. Equality meant the rise of new principles that could not be demeaned by the old social order which "were modeled…derived" from the virtues of the Church (OR151).

Revolutionary democracies are peculiarly removed, sometimes alienated, in their understanding of equality and more so, in their religion as a result. Many times, Tocqueville describes the French has having "completely lost touch [with] and have no inkling of the part played by religion in the government of nations" (OR155). Religion is no longer welcome in the peoples' hearts. This does not mean that religion leaves them entirely but that it cannot remain "the most oppressive, the chief of all the power in the land" any longer. After all, Tocqueville claims "those who do not have faith [must] serve" (DA358). However, the equality of revolutionary democracies is so overbearing that it forces their concept of religion to dwell mostly in "forms, practices, and representational figures" (DA423). Its new purpose as a "State religion" (OR151) was to act as a vehicle for equality to "extend a mediocre happiness to all men rather than to concentrate a great sum of felicity in a few and foster something like perfection in a small number" (OR150). Unlike in complete democracies where everything is free to move due to the idea that equality is an ever-changing concept, revolutionary democracies are defined by an equality of conditions that is concentrated, manifest as an obsession with linked institutionalism. Revolutionary equality is based "on constraint" and "not…on belief" (OR152). This is a consequence of an idea of equality being perceived as a public concept, rooted in laws, contracts.

For revolutionary democracies, equality is such an overpowering social more that it is seen as "broadcast[ing] a gospel" (OR11). It is "an all-prevailing passion, fierce, intolerant, and predatory" (OR149). Tocqueville describes this revolutionary equality as containing a "missionary fervor" and in many ways it is "a species of religion" for revolutionary democracies, "if a singularly imperfect one, since it was without a God, without a ritual" (OR13). The near spiritual reverence the people have for it characterizes it with "passionate and persistent efforts…made to wean men away from the faith of their fathers" (OR150) and away from any relation to the past and the old. Equality for revolutionary democracies retains a distinctly religious fervor. Therefore revolutionary democracies do not see religion and equality as compatible. This is an unfortunate consequence of democratic transition because "when conditions become equal following a prolonged conflict…[an] exaggerated self-confidence invade[s] the human heart" and colors the "distrust [men have] of one another" (DA406). People are then prone to "seek enlightenment in themselves alone" and find "glory in making for [one]self beliefs that are his own" (DA406). They do not wish to be told what to believe by an external source. It is clear here that Tocqueville sees equality existing under law but not yet in the people. Tocqueville notes that as equality came to be settled in the public psyche of revolutionary democracies, the religious institutions were always the first to be "frontally attacked" (OR149) for "the independence of mind that [this] equality supposes is…so great and…so excessive" (DA406) that coexistence with anything other than itself proved challenging. This is unsurprising since for revolutionary democracies, religion was an "immobile…external…and secondary thing" (DA422) that was always intensely problematic to integrate into the citizens' private lives without seeming oppressive. Now, with the rise of equality, revolutionary democracies extracted the right for independence of judgment and

religion is seen as restraining and clashing with these "generally accepted ideas and…interests that reign among the mass" (DA423). A "total rejection of any religious belief, so contrary to man's natural instincts and so destructive of his peace of mind, [unfortunately] comes to be regarded by the masses as desirable" (OR150). The principles their Church were founded upon were incompatible with the "new, ideal system…they had set their hearts on" rooted in the new immobile and centralized idea of equality (OR151). The people are "convinced that in order to overthrow the institutions of the existing social order they must begin by destroying those of the Church, on which these were modeled and from which they derived" (OR151). Tocqueville claims that the loss of religious influence is "thankless" (OR149) not because of its institutional loss but because men get used to having nothing to believe in, not even "in themselves" (OR156). Therefore, Tocqueville concludes that it is not so much the institution of religion but the presence of some higher belief that is necessary for the nurturing and tempering of the base, secular tendencies promoted by the democratic lifestyle overall. In Tocqueville's eyes, this is the true salutary bridle of equality's worst potentials.

The perception of centralized equality adopted by revolutionary democracies externalizes mores and systems of belief concentrated in the body politic, but religion has a history of being intrusive and therefore difficult to reconcile with. In the old regime of France, religion was deeply integrated in political life. It kept watch on contemporary trends of thought and exercised a "sort of censorship" on literature, art, and speech (OR152). Tocqueville observes "the church represented that part of the government which was at once in closest contact with [the people] and irritated them most [as a result]" (OR151); this sentiment carries through to present day. This suggests that revolutionary democracies are wary and adverse to any politics or any institution that infringes upon their private lives, a sentiment that is wholesomely assimilated into their

perception of equality and the rest of the ideological pillars that follow it. Revolutionary democracies excel in fashioning equality in the isolated way they do to reflect their aversion to the combination of public and private dynamics. In comparison, complete democracies seem to mix the two, a modus that Tocqueville critiques as a more "practical politics" despite the possible complications (OR150). For revolutionary democracies, it was more important that the revolution was felt completely; it needed to replace the precepts of hierarchy, of its justification for class and entitlement that religion puts into people. After all, Tocqueville avers that it is religion that first settles into the minds of men about how to live, under most circumstances. However, revolutionary democracies need equality to be their new god, their new living standard and so religion had to come second if at all. In a society so used to being told what to do it is not ready to be self-reliant yet; it does not do well to think for itself. New democratic ideas and habits tend to be imposed externally.

ii. EQUALITY IN COMPLETE DEMOCRACIES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON RELIGION AS A HABIT AND IDENTITY

In complete democracies religion and a habit for faith thrive because they are naturally cultivated by a passion for equality that is mimetic and intimate. Belief becomes an integral part of self-identity and becomes another attribute by which people can see each other as equals in their private lives. One can see this in examining Tocqueville's emphasized importance of family life and the role of women in America. At one point, Tocqueville says that religion remains powerful in America because women remain pious and the family they direct is where democratic mores reside and are imparted. In this way, "religion is [so] intermingled with all national habits and all the sentiments to which [the] native country gives birth" that it has "a particular strength" to it as a result. Equality that resides in the mind and the private life creates

for the complete democracy a deep justification of democratic society within a kind of moral universalism which compliments the same universalism preached by religion: existence under one and the image of a divinity who is equal handed to all. Equality empowers religion in natural democracies; in return, religion justifies equality and its processes. Religion redefined by a natural conception of equality is strong by itself too because, in every man, everywhere, it easily finds a grounding and nourishment in his nature. Belief is natural because it is something that sprouts from a state of equality which itself is seen as natural. Religion in complete democracies is essentially equality manifest in a moral form. It is also a vehicle for equality in its material, public form, acting as a medium to display the extraordinary power of public opinion (DA420). Religion in complete democracies is the instrument of equality, of shared opinion, the specific mode of expression of the social power of democratic ideology. Though a "political institution" by trade, its "essence" is independent of forms. Natural democracies hold great "impatience" with any artifice "used to veil or adorn for their eyes truths it would be more natural to show to them altogether naked and in broad daylight; the sight of ceremonies leaves them cold and they are naturally brought to attach only a secondary importance to the details of worship" (DA421). In fact, "nothing revolts [their] mind[s] more…than the idea of submitting to forms" (DA421). In compete democracies, religion is a "natural instinct" and it does not need the help of external conventions to make its voice heard and its influences felt. Religion in this form seizes the "mind [that] float[s] at random between obedience and freedom" (DA425), integrating itself into the human soul that it is seen as not only "respecting all the democratic instincts" but also "taking aid from several of them" (DA424). As equality is simple, so is faith, presenting "ideas more clearly, simply, and generally to the human mind" (DA423).

The utilitarian personality of natural democratic equality is also prominent in their understanding of religion. Both ideologies share and display a unique "material force" (DA284) representative and supportive of the "doctrine of self-interest" (DA504). Tocqueville claims that natural democracies overall see religion acceptable less by love for its truth than by conviction in its use for the individual. As such, Tocqueville asserts "it is from this point of view that the inhabitants…themselves come to think of religious belief. [He does] not know if [they all] have faith in their religion…but [he is] sure that they believe it necessary" nonetheless (DA404). The religious situation in American democracy, for instance, is universally professed; its precepts are even more observed there than elsewhere but it "reigns…much less as revealed doctrine than as common opinion", as a tool to express and nurture the "the action of the greatest number" (DA409). It is from this point of view that the inhabitants of the United States themselves "come to think of religious beliefs…at all levels…to the entire nation" (DA408). Religion in complete democracies is manipulated into a personalized instinct and tool because of the influence of complete equality's intimate character. Due to his privatized passion of equality, the average citizen is incapable of "sacrificing his particular interests to the admirable order of all things" and cannot "expect...recompense [other] than the pleasure of contemplating" for its own worth (DA505). Natural equality's ability to highlight and emphasize the importance of private needs and utility thus makes it so that "interest is the principal means religion make[s] use of to guide men" in natural democracies.

With similar potency, natural equality's decentralizing propensity shows drastically in their understanding of religion. As in the United States, religion is not one body but "divided into a multitude of sects" and a variety of doctrines and loyalties. Every bit is "perceived…in the same light" though because once again, natural equality is "monotonously" dynamic. In addition,

not only is the application of religion decentralized but the understanding of religion is also splintered; natural democratic religion "does not try to attract and fix all the attentions of man on [one thing]" instead, they spread it across different "part[s] of his heart" (DA423). Religion is therefore utterly reshaped by their understanding of equality for it is not only constantly in motion, it is beautifully schizophrenic in concept to the individual. It is a perfect compliment to equality's own scattered and perpetual nature in complete democracy. As such, Tocqueville claims "among us [the Europeans], I had seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom almost always move in contrary directions" because revolutionary democracies keep their mores unitary and separate from one another. But "here [in America] I found them united intimately with one another: they reigned together on the same soil" (DA282). The strength of dynamic and decentralized religion is thus its ability to touch every aspect of life, breeching the public and private spheres correspondingly yet not intrusively enough to induce conflict. The American priests "always separate themselves carefully form all parties and voice contract with political power" (DA284, 286). Where revolutionary democracies find constancy in the civic and political setting, complete democracies find "everything…certain and fixed in the moral world" with religion as the central axis (DA279). As such, Tocqueville noted that Americans "profess openly a certain respect for the morality and equity of Christianity" which forms the only recognizable barrier capable of matching their wide-spread idea of equality in order to temper its innovations and "implacable" appetite. For in a society of equals that lowers and "relaxes…the political bond," Tocqueville claims, "the moral bond [must be] tightened" instead, or else "society [would] perish" (DA282).

Lastly, the "predominant taste…for generality" (DA425) sponsored by a mimetic and self-reinforcing concept of equality gives religion its final but most problematic conduct. "One

finds…in the heart of American society, souls altogether filled with an exalted and almost fierce spiritualism that one scarcely encounters in [the democracies of] Europe." Tocqueville argues that this is because the American and consequently complete democratic idea of equality as "vast" (DA463), unrestricted by structure, produces a similar anti-hierarchical perception of religion. It "happens that beliefs are as much afloat as are laws" in natural democracies, with no clear outline of order or place. In their view, "the taste for the infinite and the love of what is immortal" are "sublime instincts…not born of a caprice of…will: they have their immovable foundation in [human] nature; they exist despite his efforts" (DA510). But though faith is given this power by equality to "judge for itself" (DA424), Tocqueville is not entirely optimistic about the consequences. In the latter half of *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville cautions against a concept of religion that is self-perpetuating; he does not seem to approve of democracies creating this kind of faith and to allow it to run a unstructured coarse of renewal without guidance. It is better, he suggests, that religion when applied as an institution relies upon hereditary habits, structured ones that adopt the stability of history and tradition. When dealing with "abstract truths" like this therefore Tocqueville "believe[s] firmly in the necessity of forms" (DA421) to help "make [men] embrace [those truths more] ardently" and "forcefully" (DA421). When institutionalized and democratized, religion becomes a useful vehicle to vindicate equality. Elsewise, sometimes faith becomes "obsessive", volatile and veers suspiciously close to doubt by "losing the character of certainty in the eyes of men" (DA420) the more it refreshes itself. It will then begin to "nourish the haughtiness and flatter the laziness of [men's] minds" (DA426). In other words, free-roaming faith without any secure purpose or direction results in pantheism if not utter atheism through which religion no longer serves as a moderator but instead promotes democratic vices. If religion is unable to command true "authority" which cannot do without the

help of forms, it will "shock [men's] intelligence and they are almost as ready to conceive that there is no religion as that there are several" (DA424). Instead, complete democracy needs to learn to use external artifice to "retain only what is absolutely necessary for the perpetuation of the dogma itself…the substance of religions" whilst still promoting its natural flexibility under equality.

iii. SUMMATION

Religion in democracies is presented by Tocqueville as a shepherd and companion to equality. It is not only capable of combating equality at its worse, but it can "illuminate and enlarge [the] obscure sides of the human heart" (DA181) too. Religion is, in Tocqueville's own words, "the poetry of democracy" (DA463) if utilized and understood correctly. However, there is a unique quality and moral power to religion that demands a very delicate and vigilant handling. Any carelessness will lead it to fall victim to liberty, propel it to debunk equality, or allow it to decimate self-interest and individualism. For complete democracies, religion was refreshed and carefully diminished in the minds of men until it became understood in terms of utility and generality. It is completely divorced from external forms (i.e. "the complete separation of church and state" (DA283)) and has lost its "eloquence" (OR157) and "empire" (DA419). Instead, religion "finds its force in the sentiments, instincts, and passions that one sees reproduced in the same manner in all periods of history, it defies the effort of time" (DA285). Like equality that finds power within itself, "alone" (DA285), religion in complete democracy maintains a sort of "immortality" (DA285) and it is "often difficult to know…if the principal object of religion is to procure eternal felicity in the other world or well-being in this one" (DA506). For revolutionary democracies, however, religion exists meagerly and weakly because equality has taken its place and superseded its teachings. Their "unanimous attack on religion"

and its prompt success can be explained in terms of the "very special climate" revolutionary democracies maintain in their idea of equality as panacea for their past suffering. Religion is a symbol of that past and now a threat to equality's political sovereignty. The sentiment and "particular form of hope" religion is supposed to have has been "lost" with "nothing…supplied to fill the void within" (OR10). Thus the good moral work that religion is capable of has difficulty piercing the social veil to touch the hearts of men in revolutionary democracies. For these types of democracies, equality pushes religion to "wish to be supported by the interests of this world" chiefly and as a result "it becomes almost as fragile as all the powers on earth" so "it often falls with the passions of a day that sustain[s] it" (DA285).

VII.
CONCLUSION

The most important and basic assumption underlying Tocqueville's entire body of work is his practice of showing how the smallest aspects of society – law, religion, customs, policies, economics, and most importantly mores – dynamically interrelates with each other so that through examination of a society's parts we come to understand that society as a functioning whole. Nothing is, as he said in his famous January 1848 speech predicting the forthcoming revolution, an "isolated fact," because "each individual fact mirrors and illuminates the whole". This conviction that knowledge of the whole emerges from a thorough understanding of any one part is distinctly illustrated by Tocqueville's assertions that the truth enfolds itself in the "minutest particular" and that he himself begins any quest for knowledge by examining "from very nearby the particular case which is best known to me" (OR18). Specific examples of this assumption selected from Tocqueville's writings are many. The evolution of one word, for instance, can reveal the entire class structure of society; two households, one in Kentucky and

one in Ohio, separated only be a river, by themselves exemplify the differences between slave and non-slave cultures. Understanding the particular ideological variables that are at work within the two models of democratic society therefore must be unquestionably central to Tocqueville's philosophic quest towards understanding democracy as a regime more comprehensively. Tocqueville ends the second volume of *Democracy in America* with the assertion that providence has not created the human race entirely one way or another (DA676). Although equality and the rise of democracy are here to stay, as "to stop [it] would then appear to be to struggle against God himself" (DA7), Tocqueville always found it uncertain whether the specific combination of history and conception of specific mores and institutional styles will lead to "servitude or freedom, to enlightenment or barbarism, to prosperity or misery" (DA675). It is important to note here that Tocqueville admits a certain degree of trepidation for entirely pure democracy, developed to its full capacity. Thus any indication towards "completed" democracy in this paper does not refer to this outcome of which Tocqueville clearly alludes to in fear; I mean for it to refer to Tocqueville's idea that certain democracies develop to a more "complete" extent in comparison to others. In fact, he ends the second volume of *Democracy in America* with a portrait of democratic life left unaided to develop autonomously and immoderate, resulting in either a majoritarian tyranny or a mild despotism. Together these are the results of democracy at its extreme ends and often include an overpowered central sovereign, an "innumerable crowd" defined by small and increasingly vulgar pleasures (DA663), and a daily oppression of free will. True democracy, the "ephemeral monster" (DA665) that manifests as a consequence of both complete democracy and revolutionary democracy in their radical, augmented forms, must be either completely avoided or at the very least checked. Thus Tocqueville compares democracy to a boat "placed in the middle of a rapid river…carry[ing] away…toward the abyss" (DA7). This

abyss is equality full-grown and unbridled, consuming the people and the state; it threatens all democracies alike, regardless of historical origin or ideological model.

Both models are, regardless, unique despite their common "abyss" and their individual characteristics effect their propensity towards it. On the one hand, we are presented with Europe's model, the revolutionary democracy, with its strong democratic institutions and practices but is, unfortunately, "still half entangled in the debris of the world…falling…in the midst of the immense confusion that human affairs presents" (DA673). On the other hand, we observe America's model, the complete democracy, which is a "singular and original" archetype where egalitarianism is a lifestyle "constantly penetrat[ing] into the domain of conscience" (DA38). I have argued that both democracies differ primarily on the way they display two distinct perceptions of what equality is, how it functions, and where it functions best in the societal structure. Consequently, we can see how these two equalities modify two different applications of liberty as a more, the doctrine of self-interest, and the institution of religion, three important and influential ideological pillars of democratic character.

But are these differences permanent or temporary? Will revolutionary democracies ever be able to remove the influence of their violent pasts? Will complete democracies ever be able to properly moderate their despotic passions and bar against "the abyss" (DA7)? To that, Tocqueville appears to answer in the positive. Revolutionary democracies and their publically oriented idea of equality are prepared for a "firmer and calmer future" (DA12) of which Tocqueville is certain. For both models of democracy, the balanced dispersal of equality perfected in both public and private form needs considerable time with the support of a proper realignment of respective habits, mores, and passions. Democracy is, over all, a process, a "child" that needs patience, discipline, practice, and nurture. Nonetheless, Tocqueville claims it

"appears to [him] beyond [a] doubt that sooner or later we [the democracies of Europe] shall arrive, like the Americans, at an almost complete equality of conditions" and as such, a stable, completed democracy (DA12). But even then, democracy's work is not finished. As I've showed, Tocqueville also has considerable reservations for the faults and dangers possible in complete democracies such as the degeneration of public virtues, political atavism, and corrosive individualism and the despotism that could follow. Although a considerable step up from revolutionary democracy, complete democracy itself still needs instruction and daily reanimation of its beliefs, purification of its mores, and regulation of its movements (DA7), little by little (DA10) until the most peaceful "empire" of democracy can be established. Complete democracies have all the necessary tools to protect themselves against their own internal vices – just not enough of the necessary experience (DA10) yet. Either way, Tocqueville avers one certainty: "the political world is changing" and "henceforth one must seek new remedies for new ills" regardless of the form they take. Both complete and revolutionary democracies have thus far displayed a great deal of enlightened merits and debilitating failings but in order to properly address them, one must come to understand the root of the problem, the origin, and for democracies this is ultimately the perception and application of equality, the "generative fact" (DA3) from which all else follows.

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