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Tocqueville’s Tyranny of the Majority Reconsidered

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Tocqueville’s famous argument about “majority tyranny” in Democracy in America begins with an analysis of the “real advantages” of democratic government. The advantages include the effective use of certain authoritative beliefs to reconnect the individual to society in an era when these ties are weakening. But these beliefs tend to deepen a commitment to majority power as sovereign and even “absolute.” With this tendency in mind, Tocqueville presents two somewhat differing views of majority tyranny. The argument for the first and rather traditional view, direct majoritarian dominance of government, is weak though not entirely implausible. The more interesting and influential argument concerns the effects of modern majoritarianism on thought. The effects, especially a “soft tyranny” over the mind, are not a defect of democracy but its direct implication, if what is taken to be authoritative in the governing sense, majority rule, is not constrained by both constitutional measures and by a critique showing how majority power can be “absolute” in its sphere but prevented from claiming “omnipotence.” Tocqueville’s argument is a brilliant warning rather than a proven case, but it paved the way for a new understanding of the potential for harm latent in an unqualified commitment to democracy.

This article is devoted to exploring what Tocqueville means by “the tyranny of the majority” and understanding the role of this concept in his treatment of democratic government. The phrase, and the concept, are among the most well-known from his first book, the first volume of Democracy in America, published in 1835. Though memorably conjuring up a specter that has often found support among critics of mass society, the idea that majority tyranny is a real threat has aroused perhaps just as much skepticism as support. Even Tocqueville’s most sympathetic interpreters are divided about it. Pierre Manent observes that “in the Tocquevillian description of ‘democratic despotism,’ which seems to me to be full of truth, Raymond Aron saw a kind of myth, striking to be sure, but very far from describing our experience” (1998, 38). Students of

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Mahoney discusses the differing views of Manent and Aron in his “Introduction” to a recent collection of Manent’s essays (Mahoney 1998, 16–18). Tocqueville seems to have been introduced to the idea of majority tyranny by Jared Sparks early in his visit to America, although later Sparks wrote rather critically about Tocqueville’s use of the idea. In the writing of Democracy in America, Tocqueville studied Madison (see DA 260) and the Federalist closely but was not fully persuaded by their arguments on safeguards against tyranny (Schleifer 1980, 114–118, 139–40, 192–93, 217, 221–22).

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American electoral politics often have been rather skeptical, believing that majority tyranny is only a remote possibility and inclining to emphasize instead the dangerous influence of smaller but highly organized interests. Recent commentary on Tocqueville's ideas normally takes note of the "majority tyranny" thesis, of course, but it is mainly directed toward wider issues: fathoming his views on the "social state" called democracy (Manent 1996, chaps. 1–2), or on the broad theory of "liberalism" (Boesche 1987), or his role as a founder of sociological thought (Aron 1968), or considering his place in modern political philosophy (Lawler 1993; Manent 1994a). But I think the problem of majority tyranny as an aspect specifically of democratic governance is worth a second look, all the more so as we have entered an era when democracy seems so universally accepted. My purpose is to examine closely Tocqueville's view of how democratic government works in the one case where he actually observed it and to consider why he thinks he saw there a possibility of "tyranny" linked to these governing practices.

Democratic governing as conducted by "the people" is the specific theme of three chapters in Part 2 of Volume I of Democracy in America. Chapter 5 deals with government by "the people," Chapter 6 with the "real advantages" of democracy, and Chapter 7 with the "omnipotence of the majority." The first

2While the Federalist clearly has much to say about the threat of majority tyranny and the means to counter it, the concern with the problem weakened in the political science of the last century. J. Allen Smith argued that "the so-called evils of democracy are very largely the natural results of those constitutional checks on popular rule which we have inherited from the political system of the eighteenth century" (1965, toward the end of the unpaginated Preface). Views of this kind were later amplified by Vernon Parrington, Charles Beard, Richard Hofstadter, and Merrill Jensen, as Cushing Strout notes in his Introduction to this reprint of Smith's book (Smith 1965, xii–xiv). Hartz thought there was in the American tradition a "vast neurotic fear of what the majority might do" and that the majority was in fact "one of the tamest, mildest, and most unimaginative majorities in modern political history" (1955, 128–29). Ranney and Kendall took majority rule as the essence of democracy and, therefore, conceded that majority tyranny is a "real danger," but they also held that a variety of cultural and institutional factors softened majorities in the United States and believed Tocqueville thought the "American party system" would hinder majority tyranny (1956, 23–24, 29–30, 136, 477 ff.). Dahl saw that democracies create a "sovereign majority" but argued that pluralism in actual practice prevented cohesive majorities from forming and having their way in any direct sense (1967, 18–22). Green and Shapiro note that the "advent of rational choice theory" has called into question the very idea that majorities can effectively prevail in a modern democracy (1994, 3–4).

3There are important comments about local government in the colonial, or preconstitutional, era in DA I.1.5. One might regard I.2.8 (on what "tempers the tyranny of the majority") as part of the series of chapters on governing, but it is devoted to looking for correctives to the problem of "majority tyranny" and so reflects a remedial as well as a descriptive and analytical concern. References will be to Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, trans. George Lawrence (1969), cited as DA with Volume, Part and Chapter, or simply as DA with page number. References to the original will be to Tocqueville, Oeuvres Complètes, ed. J.-P. Mayer (1951–). De la démocratie en Amérique is published as Volume I, Parts 1 and 2 of this edition, and is cited as OC I.1 or 2, plus page number. In addition, I have used the Pléiade edition of Tocqueville, Oeuvres (1992), Volume II of which contains Democracy; this will be cited as PI with page number.
of these chapters is a lengthy discussion of election laws, the quality of officials, public expenses, administrative practices, corruption, the conduct of war and foreign policy, and so forth. I cannot consider it in detail here, but I will offer two observations about it.

First, there is an obvious difficulty with the entire thesis about how “the people” act. Tocqueville accepts that he saw in the United States a “democratic social state” and real popular sovereignty: “Above all the institutions and beyond all the forms there is a sovereign power, that of the people, which can abolish or change them as it pleases” (DA 171, opening thesis of DA I.2.). The problem with which he is concerned here is the problem of majority rule within that social state. About calling this social state “democratic,” Huntington observes that “like other European observers before and since, Tocqueville tended to confuse the values and ideals of Americans with social and political reality” (1981, 225). The point is less inadvertent confusion than his implicit acceptance of an older view, perhaps drawn from Montesquieu, that democracies constitute themselves first by determining who belongs in the body of citizens (1989, Book 2, chaps. 1–2). While Tocqueville maintains that “equality of conditions” is the “basic fact” influencing the “whole course of society” in America (DA 9), it is also true that democratic majorities sometimes configure equality with very significant exclusions, drawing the boundaries of citizenship far more narrowly than the language of equality suggests. Tocqueville is quite aware that there are persons who are treated as outside the framework of citizenship and are simply ruled despotically.4

With that very important caveat, it is worth noticing that while this chapter on governing practices contains little to differentiate it from a very old-fashioned skepticism about what “the people” will do with political power, at the same time it gives little indication that “the people” are inclined to tyrannize. Majority rule is characteristically populist, to be sure, and enforces its egalitarianism through an adamant repudiation of all forms of “aristocracy.” But the Tocquevillian report records no more than passing examples of a desire

4McDonald notes the existence of a republican doctrine in the eighteenth century that limited citizenship to “freemen” (1985, 54, 161–62). Tocqueville includes the oppressive treatment of Indians and slaves among the topics that have been placed by the Americans “outside of American democracy” (DA 316). Dahl discusses several cases of defining who is to be included in the “demos” and notes that an association can be “‘democratic’ with respect to its own demos, but not necessarily democratic with respect to all persons subject to the collective decisions of the demos” (1989, 32–33, 120 ff.). In the context of a detailed study of who was included and who was excluded from citizenship, Rogers Smith develops a critique of a “misleading orthodoxy” in understanding American citizenship that he attributes mainly to Tocqueville and those influenced by him (Smith 1997, 14–30). For another view of Tocqueville’s reasoning on these issues, see Lerner (1987, chaps. 4–5). Legitimist defenders of the old regime in France took note of the real inequalities in America to challenge Tocqueville’s claim that democracy was actually in practice. They “used this tension between egalitarian principles and real inequalities [in America] to show that democracy was an incomprehensible monster. From the existence of racism, they deduced the lie of democracy” (Mélonio 1998, 38).
or capacity on the part of the majority to act despotically. For an understanding of how the tyranny of the majority thesis emerges, it is necessary to consider the more theoretical analysis of the "real advantages" derived from democratic government in Chapter 6. This analysis, which does in fact demonstrate the powerful advantages of a specifically modern kind of democracy, is also the crucial point of connection in Tocqueville's mind between the unfocused populism of majority-rule governing and the threat of majority tyranny. It describes the path to the main claim and main defect of modern democracy, which are less actual governing practices than a set of beliefs about the authority of the majority.

The Advantages of Democratic Government

I stress the importance of the chapter on the advantages of democracy for two reasons. First, I believe that his account is one of the most original and insightful aspects of his analysis of democratic government. Second, however, I think the "majority tyranny" argument depends for its credibility on whether or how it is linked to these advantages. If that argument depends on the use of non- or anti-democratic principles, such as an a priori disparagement of the motives of "the people," then it is open to dismissal as a view not taking seriously the very premise of democracy itself. On the other hand, if the majority tyranny argument is somehow related to the principle of majority rule as actually practiced, or related to the genuine strengths of democracy, then the criticism gains force as having a substantial rather than accidental relationship to the phenomenon.

The study of the "real advantages which American society draws from democratic government" turns immediately to the most interesting of them, an advantage that lies in a "general tendency" of the laws that is beneficial, yet hard to discern, for it is so far from the surface of things that it is almost "imperceptible" or even "secret" ["occulte"] (DA 231, OC 1.1.264; cf. DA 267). Opponents of modern democracy, then as now, complain that it appealed to the most self-seeking aspects of human nature and was little more than organized selfishness. They forecast a society that would know no good other than private, individualized goods, that would be incapable of respect for country and law, and that would have no high aspirations. This dark prospect is a real danger but far from the whole story (cf. DA 15–16). But it must be seen in the light of the advantages conferred by democratic government. The rule of the American majority establishes a spirit or, as we might say, an ethos, to which individuals conform almost intuitively, and to which indeed they look up, and that spirit or ethos is rather different from pure individualism. The ethos gives a theme to

5 On the meaning of the term "spirit," see DA 184: "In all things the majority makes the law; it establishes certain ways to which all must afterward conform; the sum total of these common ways is called a spirit; there is the spirit of the bar, the spirit of the court." But the new order, while generating a spirit of its own, nevertheless retains some traces of the British and Puritan heritage, above all in its practice of local liberty and in its disposition in regard to religion (Lawler 1995,
the hunger for equality which, in the previous section, was treated as perpetually unsatisfied by the simple egalitarianism of the suffrage. It suggests the pursuit of an objective: “In general, the laws of a democracy tend toward the good of the greatest number, for they spring from the majority of all the citizens, which may be mistaken but which cannot have an interest contrary to its own... One can therefore say in general terms that democracy’s aim in its legislation is more beneficial to humanity than that of aristocracy” (DA 232).

In what sense are we to understand this “good” toward which the laws tend? It is difficult to read what is described, especially when a term such as “humanity” is used, without thinking that Tocqueville claims there is an aspiration in democracy to the human good as such. Yet he specifically contends that the tendency of the laws is not toward the good of all, but toward the good of the majority, for the “greatest number” is only the majority, not the totality, and the good that is pursued is general but not universal. The “good” toward which democracy aims is that of “humanity” understood in terms of its majority qualities, its commonness or averageness. Furthermore, the general good is not to be understood in moral terms, for it does not seem to require excellence of character or even great competence. Tocqueville repeatedly describes it in terms of prosperity (DA 232, 234), and yet he means something more than economic growth alone. It is also more than mere equilibrium or stability, for Tocqueville refers to a distinct good, a benefit beyond simply the avoidance of catastrophe or chaos.

This good of the greatest number is that objective pursued when there is no fundamental divergence between those who govern in the name of the majority...
and those who belong to the majority, a good that fosters the general well-being even in the midst of governmental effort of merely middling competence. It is that good that most naturally comes into view not from the clear thought of a calculating individual, but from the interests of the majority. The content of this good cannot be specified in a short phrase or formula, but it seems to be the goal of the remaining sections of this chapter on the “advantages” of democracy to outline its main features. They have to do with public spiritedness, the idea of rights, respect for law, and activity or energy within society (DA 235–245).

Public Spirit, Rights, Law

The dissolving force of rationalist criticism of custom, of belief, and of law has made “instinctive patriotism” and even the “reflective patriotism of a republic” a thing of the past.9 (DA 236) It is now “essential,” Tocqueville says, that “the people see that individual interest is linked to that of country, for disinterested patriotism has fled beyond recall.” The only way to “interest men in their country’s fate is to make them take a share in its government” by the grant of “rights,” for this is the only means “in our time” by which to nurture “civic spirit.”10 The possession of rights and the possession of an idea of rights enable the common man to regard the affairs of the commune, the state, and the country as a whole as in some sense his own. So equipped, he “understands” the influence of the general prosperity on his own happiness, he grasps this idea that is so “simple” and so little understood in former times by “the people” (DA 237). The very grant of rights fosters in some sense the bridge from “a narrow and unenlightened egotism” to the capacity of the common man to regard the general prosperity as “his own work” (DA 236–7).

There is something inherently questionable in this argument. The “grant of rights” is essentially a conferral of a benefit on the individual, for rights are a possession or an entitlement owed to the individual as such. The concept of rights is at the very center of modern individualism. Tocqueville concedes the partial truth of individualism by acknowledging that “interest” is the “only stable point in the human heart” (DA 239; cf. DA 79). But he also notes an elevated idea of “rights,” a notion of rights that does not simply ratify self-interest but that enlarges its meaning so that it encompasses that civic “understanding” marking a transition from egotism to a more enlightened view.

In a passage marked by a certain passion, Tocqueville addresses the reader: “Do you not see that religions are growing weak and that the conception of the sanctity of rights is vanishing? Do you not see that mores are changing and that

9“‘It is difficult to imagine middle-class Americans returning to the days when patriotism meant blind faith in one’s country and its leaders’ (Wolfe 1998, 299). For a contemporary airing of this theme, see the debate about cosmopolitanism and patriotism in Nussbaum, For Love of Country (1996).
10Civic spirit is: “l’esprit de cité” (DA 236; OC I.1.247).
the moral conception of rights is being obliterated with them?” There is a “uni-
versal collapse” of the beliefs supporting what were once disinterested views of
rights, rights grounded in religion and mores. As an antidote to this collapse,
perhaps an “idea of rights” can be linked to personal interest. This idea is al-
most as “beautiful” as the “general idea” of virtue, and is in fact “the idea of
virtue introduced into the world of politics” (DA 237–8).11

Rights, whose root is a form of “interest,” can be broadened into “the idea of
rights” and then by virtue of the generality of the concept into a form of moral-
ity itself. Rights are originally linked to personal interest, and the moral idea to
which they give rise depends on the individual first having rights.12 The pos-
session of rights induces the calculation that the rights of others should be
respected in order that one’s own not be violated or withdrawn. This is a calcu-
lation whose interested nature is obvious, but it is at the same time a calcula-
tion that passes over into a principle, the recognition of the rights of all. Rights
dignify the individual, but they are not in themselves individualized because
they reflect a status equally or indifferently belonging to all. They both give
special legal warrant to individuality, and complement individuality by attrib-
uting a general or universal property to those who bear the rights. Rights-
bearers easily become quasi-Kantians, as they discover general principle at the
end of a chain of reasoning that starts from their own interest. A democrat
conceives a “high idea of rights because he has some; he does not attack those
of others, in order that his own may not be violated,” and a certain respect for
authority is accepted as a necessary consequence of this reasoning, provided
that the authority of those who command is guided by the same logic (DA
238). “Rights” in the democratically relevant sense are abstract and general.13
They belong to persons independently of social status, of what that person has
done or achieved, of the moral caliber of the person, and of the ends a person
pursues.14

11 Lawler suggests Tocqueville calls the idea of rights “beautiful” because it is not a “useful” one
12 Mansfield traces the lineage and the consequences of this idea in “Self-Interest Rightly Un-
derstood” (1995).
13 Manent notes “the abstraction and simplification of human motive inseparable from the sys-
tem of liberty” (1998, 228). Mélonio claims that “Tocqueville was less interested in the intellectual
origins of the notion of democracy than in the emergence of an egalitarian sensibility whose essen-
tial trait was envy” (1998, 90). This is said in reference to The Old Regime and the Revolution,
where it might be more apposite, but it does not account for the position taken in Democracy in
America, which acknowledges the occasional force of envy (DA 198, for example) but rejects the
unqualified identification of egalitarianism with that passion.
14 Cf. Manent, 1996, xiii–xiv. In a discussion of “rights” and the development of “spirited self-
confidence,” Lawler sees in Tocqueville an attempt to blur the distinction between an aristocratic
sense of “rights” (i.e., the claim of an individual to distinction) and the abstract rights of all, which
are egalitarian and possessed whether one troubles to care about them or not. Cf. Lawler (1993),
If the “idea of rights” is “the idea of virtue introduced into the world of politics” (DA 237–8), it is also an idea that transforms the relevant aspect of “virtue” from completed perfection of character to the premise from which the political role of the person unfolds. “Rights” determine status, not ends. “Rights” can be limited or broad. If they include the right to vote, they allow even the dispersed and numerous members of a large republic to have some sense of ownership of the law, even if their participation in legislation is at best “indirect” (DA 240).15 The citizen gains a personal interest in obeying the laws because of the following reasoning: “a man who is not today one of the majority party may be so tomorrow, and so he may soon be demanding for laws of his choosing that respect which he now professes for the lawgiver’s will.” The law is then not merely the “work of the majority” but also “his own doing” and is to be regarded “as a contract to which he is one of the parties” (DA 241). This is once again the mechanism of generalization at work, arising from a capacity to pass from one’s own interest to a more general perspective that is not perhaps not truly disinterested but is at least rooted in a certain generalizability of “interest.”

In this manner, Tocqueville both reports his observations of a democracy that seemed able to cultivate civic spirit and indicates what he takes to be the key step required to sustain this spirit. The surface of modern democracy is one displaying a breakdown of old hierarchies and of inherited religious, moral, and political understandings, and the establishment of a new priority for equality and the pursuit of self-interest. Yet these views, if institutionalized under the aegis of an “idea of rights,” can elevate the single human being into a representative “individual” who sees in individuality a more general status and an obligation to respect that status. It is vital both that the members of the political community be furnished with rights and that those rights be understood and practiced a certain way. They must be seen not as possessions due to all simply by virtue of being a natural human animal, but as individual entitlements that are at the same time, and inseparably, capable of expression in an “idea” constituting the basis for political-moral principles. This understanding does not encourage the committed “citizenship” of the ancient republics. It is not rooted in the love of a particular fatherland, and it lacks altogether a divine authorization. Rather, it fosters a sense of public membership and duty arising from enlightenment, relying on the attractive force of rational principle.

This argument might seem sufficient to explain how and why democracy rightly understood possesses decisive advantages in the moral sphere, advantages perhaps outweighing the deficiencies in competence that limit the effectiveness of the governing bodies or personnel. Yet the foregoing needs to be considered in the light of some concluding observations about another advantageous characteristic of democracy, its ability to generate “activity.”

Activity

The concluding section of this chapter takes up what Tocqueville calls the "activity" or activism that he observed in the United States. He begins the chapter by referring to the great activity generally prevailing in any "free country" (DA 242) but a few paragraphs further on suggests something a bit different:

That constantly renewed agitation introduced by democratic government into political life passes, then, into civil society. Perhaps, taking everything into consideration, that is the greatest advantage of democratic government, and I praise it much more on account of what it causes to be done than for what it does (DA 243).

In the first remark, freedom itself is the source of the activity; in the second it is democratic government that encourages that activity still further. The difference can be explained this way. On the one hand, freedom taken by itself is energizing, and this effect can be seen even in "free countries that have preserved the forms of monarchy" and in "those dominated by an aristocracy" (DA 242). But the effect is intensified in "democratic republics" and ultimately raised to another level altogether. Democratic government itself agitates the political world, and that effect in turn has an energizing effect on civil society. Aristocracy "thinks more about preservation than about improvement" (DA 211). Democracy creates constant political movement in government, as any observer can see immediately, but the visible political motion is only the surface of a "universal movement which begins in the lowest ranks of the people and then spreads successively through all classes of citizens" (DA 243).

What is the character of this movement? The answers to this question are somewhat vague. Tocqueville portrays an intense pursuit of happiness through political activity, manifested in the constant discovery of "new needs," followed by presentation of demands to government for more action to address the needs. The constant agitation generates a "restless activity, superabundant force, and energy never found . . ." in other kinds of political order (DA 244).16 Habits shaped by this activity fill the mind. The citizen finds it unattractive to concentrate solely on "his own affairs" (DA 243). The business of the community elbows aside introspection, self-awareness, and self-cultivation.

In this milieu, the conflict of two rival moralities, one on the way out, the other coming in, creates a moment when "the destinies of the Christian world seem in suspense." Modern democratic society seems about to abandon the attempt to "raise mankind to an elevated and generous view," to foster "scorn

16 The activism described here should be contrasted with a restlessness portrayed in DA II. Lawler notes that "Tocqueville describes the general condition of the Americans the way Pascal describes the human condition" (1993, 129). In the writing of DA I, Tocqueville attributes the constant movement to a political effect of democratic government, which both permits more freedom for political activity and fosters the aspirations stimulating that activity to expand. But DA Volume II perhaps looks more deeply into democracy's meliorism to examine discontents that are not to be satisfied by political or economic reforms no matter how numerous (cf. DA II.1, chaps. 7–8 and II, 2, chaps. 12–14).
of material goods,” to inspire “deep convictions and prepare the way for acts of profound devotion,” to refine manners and taste, and to seek a great influence of the nation on history through “great enterprises.” Replacing these ambitions is a conviction that society should aim to “turn man’s intellectual and moral activity toward the necessities of physical life and use them to produce well-being,” to encourage “tranquil habits,” to see “brilliant society” replaced with a “prosperous” one, and to provide for everyone the “utmost well-being” (DA 245). Democracy encourages the replacement of one morality by another, re-valuing values, substituting an ethic that values the general well-being for the ethic of the old regimes.

It is a sign of the great strength and depth of modern democracy that it is more than just a form of government. It inspires an entire way of life, forming minds, liberating and energizing citizens, penetrating the spirit to suggest a new moral code.\(^\text{17}\) It is then not an accident that the next chapter is addressed to “the omnipotence of the majority.” The term is associated with theology, the discipline to which we look for the study of all-powerful beings. There is no such thing as literal “omnipotence” in political life.\(^\text{18}\) But perhaps the advantages of democracy culminate in a sort of “theology,” secularized to be sure, but emphatic about what is highest or most efficacious: the vital progressive force inherent in mass organization, for “there is no end which the human will despairs of attaining by the free action of the collective power of individuals” (DA 190; OC I.1.195). Modern democracy can inspire a faith of its own, and the problem of “majority tyranny” is ultimately an aspect of it.

**The Omnipotence of the Majority: DA I.2.7**

The study of “majority tyranny” is found in two subchapters within the longer chapter devoted to “The Omnipotence of the Majority.” The omnipotence theme of this chapter derives from, and extends, the conclusion reached about the “advantages” of democratic government, while exposing a darker side inextricably connected to those advantages. The advantages in their cumulative effect are so powerful and far-reaching that they contain within themselves a very real possibility of “majority tyranny.” On the whole the rather speculative argument is not fully convincing in purely governmental terms, for reasons to be explained. Its real importance lies in its portrayal of two distinct kinds of tyranny, one similar to that which has been known since antiquity, the other em-

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\(^\text{17}\)I do not suggest that Tocqueville believes democracy specifically legislates a new moral code; it is rather a matter of encouraging certain characteristic, but flexible, dispositions. Modern democracy in this sense has the comprehensive impact on life that Aristotle describes as the hallmark of a political regime. For attempts to explain the similarities and differences between Tocqueville and Aristotle, see Mansfield and Winthrop (2000), Salkever (1990), and Lawler (1993, 101–8, 115–6, arguing, however, that Tocqueville follows Pascal as well as Aristotle).

phatically new and closely related to what might be called the intellectual and moral understanding that gives modern democracy its strength.

Is “omnipotence” a possible feature of any political life, or of even the most consolidated democracy? Commenting on the governments he observed in some of the states, Tocqueville believed he saw a growing and aggressive majoritarian populism (DA 260 note 7). The people forced legislatures to become more dominant over the executive and the judiciary and made the members ever more subordinate to the “passing passions of their constituents” (DA 246, 260–61). He was able to cite Jefferson, “the most powerful apostle of democracy there has ever been,” in support of the reasonableness of fearing such legislative tyranny (DA 260–61). Yet in retrospect, fear of majority tyranny exercised through control of legislatures seems overdrawn (cf. DA 262). In his prior account of democratic government, democratic government has seemed relatively benign: it has a populist character, to be sure, but it fosters a certain kind of idealism about rights, it provides some genuine liberties, and it aims for the general well-being. Can democratic institutions of this character go beyond incompetence or intrusiveness and really tyrannize? Those who have seen in American pluralism a means to break up dominant majorities have, on the whole, been thought to have the better argument—better at least in the sense of more accurately describing the long-term development taken by American electoral politics on the national level.19 Moreover, I note that every Tocquevillian assertion in this chapter about the existence of majority tyranny is later qualified. For example, the tyranny thesis is sometimes read as a critique of American politics simply, whereas in fact it is directed principally against the state governments (DA 260, note 7). Again, the thesis of majority power is countered in the next chapter by noting how administrative decentralization makes coordinated majority action almost impossible (DA 262–3; cf. DA 87–98). The rhetorical strategy seeks to awaken a heightened awareness of the fragility of constraints against such tyranny, but the truth of the matter is that the majority is “aware of its natural strength” but not of how “art might increase its scope” (DA 263).20

But if direct political evidence of majority tyranny is scanty, there is another line of argument that indicates why the issue of tyranny must be considered. Here Tocqueville works from a thesis of political science, drawn, I think, from the language and practice of France and its “absolute monarchy,” but applied in a novel yet telling manner to American democracy.

The chapter on the “omnipotence” of the majority begins with this statement: “It is of the very essence of democratic governments that the empire of

19Not to be overlooked, however, are the difficulties fostered by pluralism itself, as many of its critics have argued. In a trenchant account of what he calls “the ideology of positivist pluralism,” Spragens notes that it “invites a slide into the disintegrative narrow particularism described . . . by Hobbes and feared by Tocqueville” (1981, 291–308).

20On the threat from majorities today, see the recent debate about “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy” (Plattner 1999; Zakaria 1997). For a more extensive discussion of the illiberalism connected with certain cases of modern democratization, see Huntington (1997).
the majority be absolute in them; for outside of the majority, in democracies, there is nothing which resists.”

In what sense is a democratic majority’s sovereignty “absolute”? The term itself sounds foreign, more familiar from the history of the French monarchy than from American politics. But Tocqueville holds that a society without a final or highest principle, attempting to mix “equally shared” principles, eventually will either dissolve or experience a revolution. “There is in truth no such thing as a mixed government (in the sense usually given to the words), since in any society one finds in the end some principle of action that dominates all the others.” “It is always necessary to place somewhere one social power superior to all others” (DA 251). The issue for democratic societies is not whether popular sovereignty and therefore majority rule should be “absolute” or not. It is whether “absolute” power can be constrained or limited in practice.

“Absolute” authority and tyrannical authority are not identical for Tocqueville. He noted earlier that a democratic social state for the French is “irresistible,” while the actual shape of the government this social state will produce, despotism or a republic, remains as yet undetermined, thus conceding that democracy (i.e., majority rule) can be republican (DA 196). Similarly, “The political constitution of the United States seems to me to be one of the forms that democracy can give to its government, but I do not think that American institutions are the only ones, or the best, that a democratic nation might adopt”

21 “Il est de l’essence même des gouvernements démocratiques que l’empire de la majorité y soit absolu; car en dehors de la majorité, dans les démocraties, il n’y a rien qui résiste.” (OC I.1.257; Pl 282) I have used in the text the translation by Kessler and Grant (Tocqueville 2000b, 104). The translation by Lawrence has: “The absolute sovereignty of the will of the majority is the essence of democratic government, for in democracies there is nothing outside the majority capable of resisting it” (Tocqueville 1969, 246). In the new translation by Mansfield and Winthrop, the passage reads: “It is of the very essence of democratic governments that the empire of the majority is absolute; for in democracies, outside the majority there is nothing that resists it” (Tocqueville 2000a, 235).

22 Keohane notes that the term “absolute,” applied in the context of the French monarchy, meant the “claim to act as the final interpreters of [the] laws, to reorganize the realm in accordance with their own vision of what the common good required, and to require from the French people whatever resources were needed in money and arms to pursue their policies without waiting for the legitimating imprimatur of any other institution.” Royal power was said by its apologists to be absolute but not despotic. It acknowledged limitations by the consideration of the common good, by Christian moral principles, and by the “fundamental constitutive laws of the French polity” (Keohane 1980, 3–4). Mélonio thinks Tocqueville’s Old Regime attributes the demise of French liberty to the growth of “absolutism” (1998, 90–94). But the issue in that study seems to be less the existence of an absolute monarch per se than the heedless expansion of central authority by means of a suffocating administrative apparatus eliminating all forms of independent political existence.

23 This point is not to deny, however, that the dominant power can coexist with others that supplement it. “Eighteenth-century England . . . was an essentially aristocratic state, although it contained within itself great elements of democracy” (DA 251). In The Old Regime Tocqueville claims the French monarch spoke “as a master” but in fact “obeyed a public opinion which inspired him or carried him along every day, which he consulted, feared, and constantly flattered” (Tocqueville 1998, 221). See also DA 124.
It is possible to hold to a principle such as the sovereignty of the people in an unqualified way, as the highest political principle. It becomes then, "absolute," in the sense that it is the unquestionably highest standard within the terms of that political order. But there are different ways of bringing that highest standard to bear on the political and social questions faced by government.

In a democracy, the majority possesses a "natural strength" because its primacy derives from the core principle of democracy itself (DA 246). That dominance is in the American case formally "absolute" because it is not opposed by any other principle recognized as equivalent or superior in authority. But natural strength is primacy, not necessarily irresistible strength; what is naturally strong may be complemented by other components. Democracy has its own nature: in democracies, the legislature is naturally strong, the executive naturally weak, and the order between them is part of "the nature of democratic government" (DA 246–7). Yet natural predominance can be "artificially" extended by measures that make the strong element not only predominant but irresistible. "Each type of government harbors one natural vice which seems inherent in the very nature of its being" (DA 137, cf. 248). The vice consists in strengthening the predominant element beyond measure so that it becomes not just "absolute" in principle but unresisted in fact. "Omnipotence in itself is a bad and dangerous thing" because it contains the "germ of tyranny," although it is not tyranny until power is employed tyrannically (DA 252).

The authority that is "absolute" in principle can be balanced by other essential elements of government or by informal powers, customs, or principles. When such balancing prevails, it is unlikely that the dominant power will be able to rule solely in its own interest (the true definition of tyranny, according to a suggestion at DA 253). Majority tyranny through direct political means might be a reality if majority power were completely unopposed. But such a case is rather unlikely at the national level. The nearer prospect of tyranny lies within the states, which are closer to the populist roots of American democracy and where most issues of domestic politics are addressed. The public in the states has sought to strengthen the legislatures by weakening other elements of the government, "depriving them of what little influence the nature of democratic government might have allowed them to enjoy" (DA 247). The result shows up to some extent in such matters as general administrative and legal instability caused by attempts to be increasingly responsive (DA 248–50). Yet the federal constitution, as Tocqueville knows, established a national government that is

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24Ranney and Kendall seem to concede something like what Tocqueville means in their discussion of majority rule. They argue that there are ultimately only two alternatives: majority rule or minority rule. Every claim for "limited" majority rule devolves into an attempt to give some minority a right to decide. Majorities must, in a democracy, always have the ultimate deciding power, even if they do delegate it in some cases to minorities (courts, for example). There is no intelligible procedure for creating a final veto on majorities that does not involve giving a minority some special power, and in the last analysis, they argue, the majority in the United States has not given such a veto to any minority (1956, 29–30).
rather more independent of the majority and that remains a counterweight against populist pressures. Moreover, there are only two real examples of majority tyranny cited, one involving mob violence in Baltimore, the other discouragement of the political activity of racial minorities in Pennsylvania (DA 252–3). These are two local cases, and surely similar examples could be multiplied. Yet it seems exaggerated to maintain, as Tocqueville does, that potentially despotic majorities are in control of each state (DA 260, note 7).

I think Tocqueville is more successful making the case that majority rule contains something “absolute” in itself than that majority tyranny is an immediate political problem. The primacy of the majority in political matters is established both in law and, more deeply, in the very origins, or “point of departure,” of the American society. Yet the establishment of majority rule as the dominant power is not by itself an extreme position. It can be justified by the general principle that any political order requires some highest authority, and, furthermore, it was the only political principle suited to American circumstances and their egalitarian premises. The majority principle also has a special advantage, or claim, because it is connected (historically and conceptually) with freedom (DA 247). But it brings a particular danger in American circumstances mainly because of the circumstance that left it unopposed by any institution or group contesting the dominance of the majority or creating obstacles for its power. Mores and circumstances were such that democracy was established with comparative facility, without the need to suppress a determined internal opposition. Political questions were not presented in the “absolute” fashion of France, where a minority with long-standing privileges absolutely opposed the institution of majority rule and the conflict between majority and minority was then itself absolute (DA 248). At the national level, the constitutional separation of powers inhibits the gradual extension of majority dominance into factual omnipotence, as Tocqueville notes with perhaps insufficient emphasis (DA 253). This is a sort of barrier against political tyranny, although it is in his mind a rather weak reed to lean on, offering an insufficient “guarantee” against tyranny (DA 252). If a majority were to develop the will to override the constitutional separation of powers, what would stop it?

Yet the fact is that democratic government in the United States has been comparatively gentle. Is the gentleness the result of the laws, or is it a presupposition of the laws, a precondition on which the majoritarian institutions have been built? Tocqueville thinks it is the latter: “The reasons for the govern-

25 Lincoln’s speech on “The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions,” given in Springfield, Illinois, in 1838 (not long after the publication of the first volume of Democracy in America), depicts a real threat of “mob law” (citing some specific cases) but does not regard it as an evil intrinsic to American democracy as such.

26 “In the United States, political questions cannot arise in such general and absolute fashion” (DA 248). It would be more correct to say the majority-minority issue with regard to the suffrage did not arise in the same absolute fashion as in France. The general and absolute question that does arise, of course, has to do with slavery, union, and secession.
ment’s gentleness must be sought in circumstances and in mores rather than in the laws” (DA 253). Given the original American circumstances, government could afford to be mild. But could the very mildness permit another, more insidious form of despotism? The more plausible specter of tyranny that haunts Tocqueville’s analysis is “the power exercised by the majority over thought” (DA 254–56).

Power of the Majority over Thought

Democrats insist on the primacy of the larger number over the smaller in political assemblies. But it is one thing to make political decisions according to a majority rule principle and another to allow this idea to pass into other realms, to attribute “moral authority” and “enlightenment and wisdom” to majorities. Or is it? Does the politically authoritative inevitably tend to become the morally authoritative?

There is a strong linkage, peculiar to our time, Tocqueville implies, between what is politically “absolute” and what prevails in the intellectual/spiritual realm. This linkage occurs because modern democracy is no longer seen as just one political possibility among others, likely to be encountered in some haphazard alternation with other regimes (aristocracy, monarchy, oligarchy, etc.). Modern democracy is a political movement backed by a rationale. It emerged from a long period of development as a consequence of an emerging sense for equality, and then for rights, both viewed as valid principles in themselves and as a protest against the injustice of age-old inequalities. That rationale is if anything intensified by the specific circumstances of the Anglo-Protestant settlement of America. Protestantism gives a spiritual gloss to equality and contributes to (or perhaps even instigates) the transition from political equality as such to the belief that there is a “moral authority of the majority” and consequently that there is more “enlightenment and wisdom in a numerous assembly than in a single man, and the number of the legislators is more important than how they are chosen.” This is “the theory of equality applied to brains” (DA 247). In the discussion of democracy’s advantages, Tocqueville showed that democracy replaces the emphasis on the special distinctiveness of a few with an emphasis on the “general well-being.” Democracy prefers what is common to all to what is unique only to a few. It does not necessarily deny the uniqueness, excellence, virtue, or character of a given individual, but it denies that the cultivation of that uniqueness, or the protection of it, is a proper concern of political life. Political life aims for what is “general” and suitable for all, what fosters the general well-being.

The absolutism of the old monarchies of Europe was linked to a person, and the sovereignty of the nation seemed inextricably linked with the person. In that sense those regimes of the past personalized power and authority. The absolutism of the modern democracies is linked to an abstract idea, that of individual rights. The idea of rights is in one sense an elevating factor, as we have seen. Linking the self-interested individual to an idea of rights may instill a capacity to see beyond self-interest to a more principled, general good. But when the politically authoritative is accompanied by a rationale beyond simple predominance of power, it affects other spheres of life, including morals. It is then not unexpected that modern democracy tends to extend the sphere of majority authority from the realm of government to “mores” and to “the smallest habits of life” (DA 247), even when there is no conscious program to do so (at least in liberal constitutional regimes). Abstract principles of political sovereignty seep over into habits and customs, affect the details of life, form the minds of those who see their scope, and tempt them to accord these principles a wide authority. As the French believed that the King of France could do no wrong, so the Americans now hold “the same opinion” about the majority. The “moral authority of the majority” (“l’empire moral de la majorité”) (DA 247; OC 1.1.258) begins to act on the will itself. It does so with more force and scope than was ever exercised by the idea of monarchy, because the majority seems to represent society generally and what is general is thought to be universal (DA 254). The last consequence of majoritarianism is the belief that there is effectively no more plausible standard than what the majority wills and no greater power than what organized majorities can do. The suggestion of omnipotence emerges.

Yet majorities cannot tyrannize as did old-fashioned “tyrants.” They lack the cohesiveness and consistency to do so (cf. DA 262–3). If they tyrannize, it will be by imposing their standards on all by indirect means. The heading to the chapter on “the power of the majority over thought” refers to the possibility of an “immaterial despotism.” The “power of the majority over thought” is a power greater than is found in any place in Europe, yet it operates without physical violence by closing off approbation and recognition. Let someone defy the majority, once it has spoken firmly and “irrevocably,” and he or she is ostracized like an “impure being.” Tyranny is no longer a combat between a despotic prince and the dissenter or opponent. It is, rather, the creation of a climate of opinion that establishes boundaries, within which there is considerable leeway but which nevertheless define firm limits for the permissible. A citizen who is tyrannized is fully entitled to keep his “life and property” and his “privileges in the city.” But such a person will be disregarded, ignored, overlooked, treated as an “impure being,” deprived of esteem (DA 255). The person who does not observe the boundaries sacrifices public recognition. “The power exercised by the majority in America over thought” means that there is no country in which “there is less independence of mind and true freedom of discussion than in America” (DA 254–5).
This chapter is stated in general terms but is in fact configured around a specific case that seems illustrative to Tocqueville, the case of a “writer” who has two aims: he wishes both to think independently and to find public and political support somewhere for his views. As examples, he mentions La Bruyère, who “lived in Louis XIV’s palace while he wrote his chapter on the great,” and Molière, who “criticized the court in plays acted before the courtiers” (DA 256). This writer wants the independence to be a scathing critic of the public world and also wants recognition and support from it, while being at least tolerated or even sheltered by it. The case reflects a peculiar symbiosis existing in the old aristocratic regimes between the ruling authority and its critics. The ability to coexist in this way is perhaps partly due to a certain ironic tolerance of the critics by the ruling authorities, but it is due also to the fact that such critical writers to some degree always appealed to alternative powers whom the monarch had some reason to fear or respect, be they the Church, the people, or the aristocracy. In a society where the absolute ruler is in fact opposed or limited, there is a possibility of a sort of public role for the critic through playing off the ruling power against alternative centers of power.

The situation of a writer in a modern democracy seems to Tocqueville to be more difficult when there is “only one authority, one source of strength and success, and nothing outside it” (DA 255). In such conditions, the writer may be weakened, deprived of a possibility of exploiting the tension between opposing powers, forced either to take the side of the majority or to withdraw altogether from a public role. It is difficult to establish independence of mind in a royal court, but more difficult to do so when the court is the whole of society. The temptation to become a mere courtier in the latter case is peculiarly difficult to resist. The real difficulty for the writer is less the intention of the majority to oppress than the weakness of real centers of opposition upon whom the writer may rely for support, for an audience, for a sense of having a role to play among a public, even if a small one.

One might reply that it is quite possible for persons so treated to live a free private life. To claim that “There is no freedom of the spirit in America” (DA 256) perhaps undervalues the extraordinary possibilities in a modern democracy for a private life that can include intellectual autonomy as well as the endeavor to influence public affairs through non-governmental means. To be deprived of public office is not inevitably to be consigned to complete silence and obscurity, nor to the loss of all influence. The forfeit of a public role is said by Tocqueville to be the fate designed for those among the rich in America who oppose democracy. Unlike the old aristocracy of birth in Europe, they are allowed no “recognized public position from which they can exercise on their fellow citizens a power of opinion” (DA 178–9; Manent 1996, 16–17). What

29 An example of a private life with a public dimension can be seen in parts of Tocqueville’s career, as Mélonio shows (1998); a more contemporary example is described by Manent in “Raymond Aron—Political Educator” (1994b).
Tocqueville fears is that the demand to accept a private life in this form could be extremely costly for a writer; it would be an oppression that inflicts no harm on the body but "goes straight for the soul" because the power of opinion is the very medium in which the writer lives and works.

There are no examples cited by Tocqueville of those who have suffered this oppression, and perhaps he does not mean that it is a force operating by single instances. It is rather that the force or power of majority opinion may operate invisibly and indirectly, creating in the minds of everyone an awareness of boundaries that must not be crossed. One might say those minds are weak if they are susceptible to this soft, indirect pressure. But Tocqueville means to argue that the conditions of majoritarianism weaken the spirit by removing a productive political tension that is elsewhere a source of energy.

**Conclusion**

The analysis of majority tyranny in these chapters displays an early ambivalence in Tocqueville's thought about what is most to be feared in democratic modes of government. In anticipating the encroachment of majorities on the institutions of government, Tocqueville echoes an understanding of democracy as old as Aristotle that was revitalized by Montesquieu. Democracy is corrupted when, as Montesquieu says, "the people, finding intolerable even the power they entrust to the others, want to do everything themselves: to deliberate for the senate, to execute for the magistrates, and to cast aside all the judges" (1989, Book 8, chap. 2). Yet this view reflects what happened in the small republics of the past rather than the real conditions of a very large, federal, liberal, representative, democratic republic such as the United States. Correspondingly, Tocqueville's alarm about majority tyranny in this form is intelligible in principle but perhaps in hindsight less readily applicable than was once the case.

On the other hand, the analysis of the tyranny of public opinion over thought strikes closer to the reality of modern mass democracy. In his chapter on "omnipotence," Tocqueville begins the movement toward an analysis of the distinctively modern phenomenon of "soft tyranny." This tyranny is the molding and enforcement of public opinion that the very large, federal, liberal, representative, democratic republic permits and possibly even fosters. There is surely a rhetorical strategy at work in his portrayal of what might happen if majority rule were not only the highest principle of public life but the exclusive principle. The worst outcome would be a majority tyranny in which government would be nothing other than the tool of willful majorities and in which all freedom of

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30 Mansfield and Winthrop maintain that Aristotle "all but equates democracy, which he defines as the rule of many, usually poor, for their own advantage, with tyranny" (2000, liii), citing Aristotle, Politics, 1281a14–24.

thought and spirit would be quietly suppressed. One takes the point, but its validity depends on accepting a premise that Tocqueville is otherwise at pains to reject as both untrue and unworthy, namely the premise that the collective “social power” of mass man is or could become not only powerful but all-powerful. Moreover, the argument is advanced with hardly any attempt to support it as an empirical claim, and it is in my view difficult to accept as a description of the political or intellectual atmosphere of the early and mid-nineteenth century. What might be said on its behalf is that Tocqueville observed a society in which there was no public or overt controversy about the value of “democracy” itself, whereas in Europe the confrontation between “aristocracy” and “democracy” remained a vital issue in his own day and for decades to come. But the seeming conformity on this point does not augur the entire suppression of freedom of the spirit.

The description of majority “omnipotence” sounds a warning, but the deeper insights in these chapters about democratic government arise from the analysis of the strengths of democracy: the creation of a new kind of public spirit, the role of an idea of “rights” in elevating self-interest, the activism now directed toward the pursuit of the “general well-being,” and above all the underlying convictions fostered by these advantages. The argument prepares the way for recognition of the psychological or cultural impact of democracy. Democracy in its modern sense becomes a powerful influence on mores, thought, and sentiments, paving the way for Tocqueville’s analysis of exactly these effects in the second volume of Democracy in America and ultimately for the twentieth-century critique of democracy as fostering a harmonized “mass” culture. The root of the matter lies less in the prospects for majorities taking total control of the government than in the means chosen to reconnect the emancipated individual to the community. For if we follow Tocqueville’s argument, we see that there is a preference for abstract uniformity at the basis of the very idea meant to protect our individuality. Majority tyranny as tyranny over thought or the spirit is nothing more than that principle of abstract uniformity taken in its most majoritarian sense and made into an item of authoritative belief.

It is noteworthy that Tocqueville later developed a third account of modern tyranny, one associating it with bureaucratic centralization in the service of administrative control. This possibility is discussed in somewhat general terms toward the end of the second volume of Democracy in America (DA II, 4, chaps. 6–7) and there explicitly acknowledged by Tocqueville to be a new ap-

32 The term “social power” is emphasized by Manent, who also gives the most powerful explanation in conceptual terms of what “majority tyranny” means in the specific context of modern democracy (1996, chap. 4). His analysis is, however, more abstract and even less connected to real conditions in America than Tocqueville’s.

33 For an overview of the later critique of mass society, much of which displays some debt to Tocqueville, see Löwith (1967, Part II, section 1: The Problem of Bourgeois Society), Bell (2000, chap. 1: America as a Mass Society), Arendt (1958, 43), Strauss (1967), and the issue of Daedalus devoted to the theme of “Mass Culture and Mass Media” (1960).
proach; but he made clear in *The Old Regime and the Revolution* that this kind of administrative despotism was in his own era less immediately an American problem than a French one. What the tyranny of the majority over thought and the administrative despotism of the modern bureaucratic state have in common is that they require a similar strategy in response. An essential political task for modern democracy is to re-create on a new basis groups that will be able to live with some independence from the state, in the sense of having some tangible basis for an existence insulated from the abstractions that foster uniformity. Legal protection of free speech is necessary but not sufficient as a protection for freedom of thought and spirit, if Tocqueville is right about the “soft despotism” over thought that he feared. Writers, and all with a desire for independence of mind, need not only the right to put thoughts on paper without fear of punishment but also a “recognized public position from which they can exercise on their fellow citizens a power of opinion” (DA 178–9).

Absolute authority is a condition of politics, in Tocqueville’s terms, but the danger of absolutism is strangely worse in modern democracy than in old Europe. The old Europe was a society composed out of highly disparate elements rather loosely stitched together—towns, clans, castes, clergy, guilds, regions. Princely absolutism was gradually imposed over them, but for a long time they retained sufficient power to constitute a subordinate but significant alternative to what was nominally superior. Those who thought differently could see “difference” given power and place in the role of these distinctive groups. There is “no country in Europe so subject to a single power that he who wishes to speak the truth cannot find support enough to protect him against the consequences of his independence”: where the monarchy is strong, the dissenter finds support from “the people”; where there is a republic or a democracy, the “royal power” may provide shelter. But in the United States “there is only one authority” (DA 255).34 The very meaning of independence, of freedom of the spirit, is affected by such facts.35 Personal independence and “freedom of the spirit” are rarely just psychological phenomena. They have a social precondition, which is the presence of tensions rooted in the conflict of real alternative powers. As Tocqueville demonstrated later in *The Old Regime and the Revolution*, the direct governmental threat to liberty comes more from bureaucratic centralization than from populist majorities. Bureaucratic centralization aims at the emasculation of alternative powers in the name of imposing administrative coherence or uniformity. Such administrative uniformity greatly enhances the influence of those convictions that breed uniformity of opinion. The “absolute” power of the modern democratic state in either its majoritarian or its bureaucratic form needs to be countered by preserving the

34 DA 255. See also DA 691–93, which is eloquent on the danger of a despotism of “schoolmasters,” arising when the “imagination conceives a government which is unitary, protective, and all-powerful, but elected by the people.”

possibility of significant alternative loyalties and connections, even if they remain subsidiary.

Finally, Tocqueville concedes that “circumstances and mores” (DA 253) have made a potentially monolithic majoritarianism in America comparatively gentle in its overall tendencies (with, again, the terrible exceptions for those outside the circle of citizens). If there is a proposal in this Tocquevillian argument pointing the way toward further study, it is that the character of those “circumstances and mores” must be better known and that some understanding must be reached about how they were shaped in the past and how they could be best shaped in the future in order to perform their function more reliably and continuously. This is in fact the theme that he pursues in the next chapters of DA I: how the possible tyranny of the majority was in fact tempered and how mores may be cultivated that will preserve the democratic republic as a real republic and a free society.

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