

FROM DEMOCRACY TO DESPOTISM Tocqueville on Slavery, Colonialism, and “Other”

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Abstract

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) was born in 1805 to a noble family in Verneuil. He belonged to an aristocratic family dating back to the 15th century. He is known mostly as far-seeing thinker and politician. After his US sojourn, Tocqueville published a study on the young American democracy called *Democracy in America*, which put him on the map during and after his lifetime. He was actively involved with the various political and social problems of his day, such as colonization, slavery and inequality. His analyses on the transitivity between democracy and despotism are very important to understand the nature of modern society. Analyses by Tocqueville of colonialism clearly put forth why the modern society needs an “other” and violence to legitimize itself. He considers colonialism as a complementary element of modern society and thinks that colonial violence outside of the country is required for the prevention of despotism within the country. His contradictory opinions on colonialism and slavery do not, as it is often claimed, arise from political indecisiveness or philosophical contradiction; rather, his opinion is due to the theoretical framework of his analyses of modern society. Henceforth, the article will treat Tocqueville within the scope of his approach to the “other”, to transitivity in his analyses on despotism, colonialism, and to the nature and structure of modern society.

Key Words: Tocqueville, colonialism, Algeria, slavery, other, democracy, despotism, modern society

Introduction: Story of Tocqueville

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) was born in 1805 to a noble family in Verneuil. During his first official post as a judge, he set off on a journey in 1832, together with his close lifelong friend Gustave de Beaumont¹, to investigate the penitentiary system in the United States of America. Throughout his US sojourn, however, Tocqueville analyzed not only reformatories but also the young American democracy in a comprehensive work called *Democracy in America*, which put him on the map during and after his lifetime.² Renowned for this work, Tocqueville was actively involved with the various political and social problems of his day. These issues were mainly concentrated on the methods and manners the French adopted regarding the colonies and slavery in general and Algeria in particular.

During the first decade after his demise, Tocqueville remained a much referred to intellectual. He was especially discussed in the process of accepting universal suffrage in France. By the 1880s, however, Tocqueville was completely forgotten. In the 1900s, his views on the French revolution and American democracy were occasionally mentioned, although he was no longer a popular thinker. His luck, however, changed after World War II. In the atmosphere during the Cold War, Tocqueville became one of the most read and studied thinkers in the US thanks to *Democracy in America*. Due to analyses on the content and functioning of American democracy and prophecies, he saw the US and Russia as the decisive powers of the future. Tocqueville has often been referred to in the literature on American political science, especially in contexts with a futuristic accent. His analyses on American democracy have mostly been employed in the defense of democracy against socialism. In the 1970s, also known as the detente era, Tocqueville was once again on the verge of oblivion. As Harvey C. Mansfield (1996) thankfully notes, Tocqueville was rediscovered in France (Europe) in the 1990s and was subsequently revived in the US. Mansfield explains this by means of the turn in French thought towards liberalism after cold war, following a period under the influ-

¹ As Seymour Drescher (1968b, 201) cites, the German poet Heinrich Heine defines Tocqueville and Beaumont as "inseparables." Throughout their lifetimes, the two were always together on voyages and in publications and politics.

² After his return from the trip, he published the first two volumes of his work in 1835. The last two volumes followed in 1840.

ence of various types of Marxism. Today, interest in Tocqueville has been gradually increasing in various contexts.

Tocqueville is not only a far-seeing thinker and politician but he is also a reference point for comprehending and explaining his era. His analyses on the transitivity between democracy and despotism and on the nature of modern society are often overshadowed by his writings on American democracy. Analyses by Tocqueville of colonialism clearly put forth why the modern society needs “the other” and violence to legitimize itself. Moreover, his realist attitude in debates about slavery reveals the pragmatist agenda beneath all liberal attitudes. Therefore, Tocqueville considers colonialism as a complementary element of modern society and thinks that colonial violence outside of a country is required for the proper functioning of democracy and the prevention of despotism within the country. His opinion does not, as it is often claimed, arise from political indecisiveness or philosophical contradiction; rather, his opinion is due to the theoretical framework of his analyses of modern society. Henceforth, the article will treat Tocqueville within the scope of his approach to the other, to transitivity in his analyses on despotism, and to the nature and structure of modern society.

Position of Tocqueville in Slavery Debates

Following the Revolution, the restoration period witnessed fervent debates concerning political and intellectual agendas, with respect to inequality within the context of the construction of a new society and colonialism activities in France. Tocqueville’s political and literary life mostly took form under such circumstances, and he predominantly wrote about inequality, slavery and poverty. Tocqueville approached these issues from within the frame of his political sphere and thus demanded the abolition of slavery. Nevertheless, his claims are founded not on enlightened egalitarianism but on the national interests of France.

Slavery Debates in France and Indecisive Position of Tocqueville

Tocqueville’s political and scientific career, which includes the period from 1830 to 1850, coincides with a period of time in which debates on slavery reached their height in France. Attempts to abolish slavery in France date back to the 1780s. The abolition of slavery, which was widely discussed before, during and after the Revolution,

remained on the agenda until the 1840s.³ Discussions on and attempts against slavery were closely related to the political agenda of the time. *La Société des Amis des Noirs* (Society of the Friends of the Blacks) was founded in 1788 for the abolition movement, which was protected by mostly liberals, and continued until 1793. The leader of the Society, Jacques-Pierre Brissot, was influenced by the Enlightenment. According to Brissot, all colonies should be independent, and slavery should be forbidden following the Revolution. This discourse, in line with the general philosophy of the Revolution, made its mark during this time period. On April 4, 1792, the right of free French citizenship regardless of color was granted, and on February 4, 1794, the parliament, under the presidency of Robespierre, enacted the abolition of slavery in France. However, the will, by revolution, to maintain control over the colonies played its part in the process. Indeed, there were concerns about losing the colonies in the havoc created by the Revolution. The beginning of the slave revolt in 1793 in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), the largest French colony, was also influential. The French administrator, sent to maintain the connections and commitment of Haitians to the Revolution, declared the abolition of slavery in Haiti.⁴

La Société des Amis des Noirs did not last long, although it did influence eventual movements and institutions during its brief existence. Because the abolitionary movement was represented by the *Société de la morale chrétienne* (Society of Christian Morality), which was connected to the British, and because the society included freemasons, Protestants and liberals, participation was quite restricted for a long time (until the 1840s). The moderately liberal abolitionary movement, to which Tocqueville also belonged, was positioned between the radical abolitionary pole under Victor Schoelcher and the conservative pole under Guizot.

In public opinion, both prison reform and the abolition of slavery were considered as deliberate British provocations against France

³ In 1840, there were 250.000 slaves in French colonies. For debates on the abolition of slavery in France before and after the Revolution, see (Drescher 1968b, 151-195); for discussions on abolition in Europe, also see (Drescher and Emmer 2010).

⁴ For the France-Britain clash on Haiti, see (Drescher 1968b, 154-157; Geggus 1985). For detailed discussions about the impacts of a Haitian revolution in the United States, see (Geggus 2001).

due to the British-Protestant connections (Drescher 1968, 160; Geggus 2010). Britain had enacted law on abolition in 1833 and released more than 800,000 slaves, although the French public was uneasy with this fact. This move by the British led to the conviction that France could hardly maintain its colonies unless slavery was abolished. Accordingly, the *Société française pour l'abolition de l'esclavage* (French Society for Slavery Abolition) was established in 1834, and Tocqueville and his old friend Beaumont joined in 1835. The group, which was led by the Duc de Broglie (the president of the Cabinet), maintained its elite position and never became a mass movement. As Drescher (1968, 163-164) indicates, society is not a movement of "Negro love;" rather, it reflects the struggle between certain interest groups. Nevertheless, the Society became the best known representative of the abolitionist movement in public opinion, the parliament and the academy. In those days, the various representatives for plantation⁵ and abolition often encountered severe debates in the parliament. In these discussions, abolitionist politicians showed that slavery, instead of universal equality, was an improper attitude that did not befit the French, and they noted slavery as an obstacle against the expansion of the French Empire. The Anglo-American world conducted the debate within the scope of civil society and rights; in France, however, this continued at a polemical level. Consequently, while discussions lasted for years, the awaited law was never implemented. In the parliament, the interests of slaveholders prevailed. Indeed, the supporters of abolition represented no singular, concrete interest group; their opposition directly stood for certain economic sectors.

As it was already noted above, on January 1, 1838, Britain abolished slavery in all colonies; whereupon discussions in France blazed up. In the following months, Hyppolite Passy, the president of the Abolition Society, submitted a petition to parliament for the abolition of slavery in French colonies. Upon receiving the petition, the parliament established an under-presidency of Guizot and utilize Rumusat as a law clerk to clarify the situation. Meanwhile, Tocqueville was elected as Member of Parliament in elections following the fall of government. The new government, in which pro-abolition members were stronger, renewed the commission in June 1839, and Tocque-

⁵ A definition for the owners of vast agricultural lands where slaves were employed in colonies.

ville became the judicial clerk. On July 23, Tocqueville presented his report on slavery, which comprised both what he had listened to and what he had thought. The commission accepted the report, which suggested immediate abolition everywhere. Unfortunately, the report was mothballed due to a lack of political support (Tocqueville 1840; for the text of the report, also see Drescher 1968b).

In 1840, a supreme Royal Commission was established on this same issue. The Duc de Broglie presided over the commission, and Tocqueville was one of the members. All of the members principally supported the abolition of slavery. However, they were generally spokesmen for the commercial sector and thus did not stand up for further action. As a result, the efforts of the commission ended in a final report, mostly written by Tocqueville.⁶ The report claimed the universal abolition of slavery would occur by January 1, 1853. A smaller group put an annotation in the report that only those who were born after 1838 should be completely freed. The Guizot-Soult government decided to wait for the opinions of slaveholders on the matter. Evidently, their opinions were never obtained, and the issue was suspended once again. Curiously enough, all of these discussions, parliament speeches and reports, as well as the public consensus for abolition, brought along no true consequences. By 1848, however, Napoleon III abolished slavery on April 27, following the Revolution of February. It is ironic that it was the conservatives, and not the liberals, who eventually abolished slavery.

As seen from the above discussion, Tocqueville was on the front line during the discussions on slavery. He drew up the above-mentioned report for the parliament commission while he was working on the second volume of *Democracy in America*. In the report, Tocqueville tackled slavery as a moral problem and an institutional fact. The report sought an analysis on both the concerns of slaveholders and the objectives of abolitionists. It included no idea of solidarity with the victims of exploitation and oppression. In his letter to Henry Reeve, the translator of *Democracy in America*, and in an English version of the report, Tocqueville indicates that he is aware of the lack of the “scent” of freedom in the report (cited by Drescher 1968a, 184). In another letter about the report to J. S. Mill, Tocqueville complains about colonialists and says he opted for a more cautious discourse because of their crazy oppression (Tocqueville 1862b, 57).

⁶ For further information about the commission, see (Jetté 2007; Nimitz 2003, 58-60)

Indeed, Tocqueville did not want to look like a sentimental abolitionist. Therefore, in a letter to Beaumont, he says “that noble passion which the mummeries of the philanthropist have made almost ridiculous” (Tocqueville 1862a, 75). Because of this cautious and moderate language, slavers occasionally used the report in their support.

The report includes no principal opposition against slavery. Rather, it concentrates on how to abolish slavery as soon as possible while minimizing the economic costs. On the other hand, the report focuses on how the vacuum of power due to abolition could be eliminated and how social control could be established in plantations. In the report, Tocqueville stresses the importance of a non-violent transition. Pursuant to his realist approach, the true problem is not the combat of races but rather economic chaos. Therefore, he thinks colonies should be provided with low-cost labor. The government should take three measures in the case of abolition: compensation of slaveholders, discipline of the freed, and low-cost for taxpayers (Tocqueville 2001h, 212-224).

The second article, by Tocqueville, on abolition appeared anonymously in the opponent newspaper *La Siècle* in six pieces between November and December 1843. In this article, Tocqueville shared his observations, which constituted his ideas, of the second parliament commission report and demanded abolition in a maximum of ten years. Articles at the time extensively focused on the harms of slavery on colonial policy and its burdens on the capital budget. Instead of a moral attitude, however, Tocqueville tried to convince the middle class, his target group, in terms of costs and benefits. He suggested that after abolition, slaves should be prevented from land ownership for a given time to maintain economic equilibrium. In Europe, a worker could not be a landholder; the same should apply for slaves as well (Tocqueville 2001h, 216). Indeed, his basic suggestion was to turn former slaves into landless proletariat: “In temporarily prohibiting Negroes from possessing land, what are we doing? We are placing them artificially in the position in which the European worker finds himself naturally” (Tocqueville 2001h, 221).

Furthermore, he thought that a worker, who has to sell his labor, would be more productive than a slave. In other words, the social status of slaves would be changed, although they would still be under control in economic and political terms. Once freedom was granted, education, family life and other social domains could be *naturally*

controlled. To that end, he recommended controlling mobility and the cost of labor. According to Tocqueville, following the abolition of slavery, colonies should be kept under tutelage until the society gained a rather European look. Deep down, Tocqueville believed that *slaves should be freed but their country and lands should continue to belong to the French* (Tocqueville 2001h).

Clearly, Tocqueville positions himself regarding abolition somewhere between the radical abolitionary views and the colonial plantation supporters (Pitts 2005, 228; also, see Lawlor 1959). Accordingly, he suggested a gradual abolition of slavery to maintain the national dignity of France and her position in the colonies (Tocqueville 1840, 14-18). For Tocqueville, as Britain had rapidly abolished slavery after long-lasting discussions, it was now even harder for France to keep hold of its colonies in the Antilles.⁷ In the Antilles, slavery had become an issue, to the detriment of France. Therefore, France had to abolish slavery before there were incitements against it. According to Tocqueville, the supreme memory and legacy of the Revolution and the glory, fame and prestige of France necessitated abolition in the colonies.

Colonialism or Slavery? Abolish Slavery but Keep Their Countries Occupied!

Throughout the above discussions, Tocqueville considered slavery as the social and economic institution of a former system and not only something demanded by a group. For him, social and economic change obligated abolition. Slavery does not comply with economic laws that administrate the production of the time (Swedberg 2009, 175-177). Tocqueville indicated that slavery leads to a spreading idleness in society. In a system that includes slavery, ignorance and pride and poverty and luxury simultaneously exist.

Slavery, ... dishonors work. ... It enervates the forces of the mind and puts human activity to sleep. The influence of slavery, combined with the British character, explains the mores and the social state of the South [of United States]. (Tocqueville 2010a, 52)

⁷ The French slave colonies were Guadeloupe and Martinique in the Caribbean and Guyana and Reunion in the Indian Ocean (for further information, see Gershman 1976).

Therefore, when a slave is freed, he will become a more prolific worker. As the British discovered, a man is more “active when he worked for wages, avid for the goods offered by civilization when he could acquire them, loyal to the law when the law had become benevolent toward him, ready to learn as soon as he had perceived the utility of instruction, sedentary when he had a home, regular in his mores when he had been permitted to enjoy the joys of family” (Tocqueville 2001i, 214). Tocqueville observed that marriage and family regulate the lives of Negro slaves. Therefore, the disenthralled slaves will work even more once they start families. Tocqueville also mentioned the dissidence on slavery in America, referring to the industrial north and the agricultural south by saying “[i]n the North emancipating the slaves was all profit; you rid yourself in this way of slavery, without having anything to fear from free Negroes” (Tocqueville 2010b, 578). Accordingly, he suggested abolition should be left to time rather than risk triggering a similar civil war.

Likewise, Tocqueville claimed that it is hard to abolish slavery in America in a rapid manner due to the economic, political and administrative structure. As a matter of fact, the slaves have certain difficulties in transitioning to free life (Tocqueville 2010b, 515-521). On the other hand, in the case of slavery abolition, the hatred of whites against the blacks will rise in the South, and the ground for coexistence will be completely destroyed. He says that he sees “the abolition of slavery as a means to delay in the states of the South the struggle of the two races” (Tocqueville 2010b, 578). Nonetheless, Tocqueville expresses that it is impossible for Southerners to maintain slavery forever in a world where industry gradually spreads. Therefore, only a progressive disenthraling process could be applied under such circumstances (Tocqueville 2010b, 581).

Thus, having told for so long how inhuman and *démodé* slavery is, Tocqueville paradoxically concludes that slavery should not be abolished immediately. He expresses understanding of the presence and necessity of the slavery institution in the United States, a country that is lauded for its functioning democracy. *Democracy in America* was published at a time when Tocqueville was a member of the *Society of Slavery Abolition*. At that time, he was under severe criticism by the press, parliament and academia; *Democracy in America* was among the much-referred-to texts by the anti-abolitionists in France. Evidently, Tocqueville wrote the work in consideration of the peculiar condition in the United States. He objected to slavery not in princi-

pal terms but because, for him, the market and goods production were no longer suitable for slavery. His constantly paradoxical position was due to political pragmatism. As his later writings on Algeria would show, for Tocqueville, there were specific principles for specific contexts instead of eternal and universal ones.

After all, he does indicate that even if slavery were to be abolished, the blacks and whites could never live together under equal conditions. For Tocqueville, the institutionalized exploitation relations will prevent the absolutely ruptured two races from coming together. The position of the blacks will be worse than that of the Indians:

The Indians will die in isolation as they lived; but the destiny of the Negroes is in a way intertwined with that of the Europeans. Although the two races are bound to each other, they do not blend together. It is as difficult for them to separate completely as to unite. (Tocqueville 2010b, 549).

In the Antilles, for example, as the whites retreated, the blacks became more and more dominant, eventually resulting in the whites withdrawing from society. According to Tocqueville, control by an external power is needed for these two races to live together without violence. This is where the colonial administration is needed. In 1839, Tocqueville submitted a report to Parliament in which he advised white landlords to employ blacks as workers to maintain a (white) French existence in the Antilles. Thus, the negroes would have a living space, and it would be easier to keep hold of the Antilles through such a relation of economic dependence (Tocqueville 1840, 16; see also Drescher 1968b, 129).

Therefore, Tocqueville's vision is related to imperial expansion and dominance rather than to universal equality. He saw, in abolition, the opportunity to maintain an imperial hegemony. He criticizes Gobineau,⁸ who predicted the fall of the white race due to abolition, saying, "A few million men, who a few centuries ago, lived nearly shelterless in the forests and in the marshes of Europe will, within a hundred years, have transformed the globe and dominated the other

⁸ "Gobineau's life was crucially affected by his relations with Tocqueville. Their correspondence, which began in 1843 and ended in 1859, the year of Tocqueville's death, contains both intense controversy and avowals of friendship." (Richter 1958, 152)

racess" (Tocqueville 1959, 268). Thus, in any case, whites will be superior to blacks according to Tocqueville. Nevertheless, for now, enslavement is not the right method for the political interests of the French. Consequently, support for abolition did not contradict expansion of the colonies for Tocqueville.

Difference between Races and In-Equality

In terms of race, Tocqueville adopted the French liberal tradition. Before and after the Revolution, the advantages of racial diversity were discussed, particularly in the light of the Roman Empire; nonetheless, the influence of such ideas did not last long. In the 19th century, the dominant opinion in France was closer to racism. In his *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, Gobineau (1967), a prominent figure in racism, claims that the radicals, defined as those who defend the equality of races, are deviants who are far removed from religious influence. According to him, the divine natural order shows that the races cannot be equal. Tocqueville was one of the earliest and strictest critics of Gobineau.⁹ In a letter to Gobineau on July 30, 1856, Tocqueville (1959, 292-294) expresses that Gobineau's ideas are absolutely wrong and harmful, and he criticizes determinism, which deeply influenced the French elite and the concept of racism. Explanations pursuant to biological factors closed the social domain in certain sections. In another letter to Gobineau on November 17, 1853, Tocqueville writes as follows:

Can there be any purpose in persuading those sluggish peoples who are already living in barbarism, indolence, or servitude, that, being what they are because of their race, nothing can be done to better their conditions, change their customs, or alter their government? Do you not see that from your doctrine follow all the evils produced by permanent inequality: pride, violence, scorn of fellow man, tyranny, and abjection in all its forms? (Tocqueville 1959, 227)

Tocqueville often expresses warnings of the potential dangers of racial discrimination to and in a society, as does his fellow traveler and close friend, Beaumont. Together, they explicitly defended this argument in public; an argument that they attained after their observations in America. *Marie*, written by Beaumont (1998) after the America trip, handles the dramatic and immoral circumstances that

⁹ For a detailed discussion on correspondence between Tocqueville and Gobineau about races, see (Richter 1958).

arose due to racial discrimination and became one of the most-read books in France in its time (see Greiman 2010, 76-120). Tocqueville was deeply influenced by the ideas in this work. On two occasions in *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville refers to the work by Beaumont. In the Introduction, he speaks highly of the upcoming novel, *Marie*, by Beaumont. Later, in a chapter on the race problem in American society, he admits that he had to touch shallowly upon the matter, heralding that Beaumont would comprehensively handle the problem in his work (Tocqueville 2010a, 29). According to Beaumont, racism has much higher costs for a society than just the apparent ones. For him, social strata, established by racism (which is institutionalized through slavery), yield decadence and violence; thereupon, it poses an obstacle for the social and economic progress of humanity. In this respect, it is as though Beaumont and Tocqueville had visited different countries because the former focused on the moral collapse in American society, while the latter described the same in an egalitarian manner. Despite referring to Beaumont, Tocqueville argues for the opposite (for a detailed discussion, see Schaub, 1998). In *Democracy in America*, he depicts equality in American society. According to Tocqueville, the problem of poverty is totally off the agenda of democracy in the US. Although the poor can have no property, they can still freely vote and intervene in government affairs. In *On the penitentiary system in the United States and its application in France*, which he co-wrote with Beaumont (1964) in 1833, the two discuss at length the institutionalized poverty generated by the American system; nevertheless, Tocqueville continues to define American society on an egalitarian axis, probably because he thinks such poverty does not prejudice the American egalitarianism. He claims that, in comparison to Europe, the rich are less rich and the poor are less poor in the United States. America hosts no poor, non-property proletariat or inhuman industrial serfs (Tocqueville 2010b, 335-336). Moreover, according to Tocqueville, the amount of poverty in America is decided by democratic channels, namely, poverty laws. Placing free voting and popular politics as the basis of American democracy, Tocqueville overlooks the blacks, who are dramatically depicted by Beaumont in *Marie*, and ignores their lack of seats in the white American democracy. Tocqueville was expected to address the issue through sociological depth and political analysis, instead of via the literary view as by Beaumont.¹⁰ Neverthe-

¹⁰ In the preface, Beaumont (1998, 4) indicates that Tocqueville explains the institu-

less, Tocqueville does not opt for such an approach and shrugs off blacks and the poor alike. As Curtis Stokes (1990, 13) puts forth, Tocqueville's new liberalism, which marginalizes the culture of peoples, was built on racial differences as much as ever.

Colony: Key to National Glory and Solution of Problems

Apart from abolition, Tocqueville concentrates on the problem of the colonies, especially that in Algeria. As of the second half of the 18th century, France was dramatically weak compared to Britain with regard to colonialism. Especially in the wake of the Seven Years' War between 1756 and 1763, the colonies in India were left to Britain, whereupon France fell behind in the race of colonialism. During the Revolution, France was expected to resume its former glory, but, as the revolution was suppressed by European powers, France faced the danger of becoming an impotent country. This fact was most apparent in the colonies. Although France evened up (America, the most important British colony, gained independence through French support), the British still possessed other significant colonies, such as India and China. Hastily and unready, the French occupation of Algeria was partially related to such political and psychological factors and partially to the position the British had begun to obtain in the Mediterranean. At the end of the 18th century, the French had nothing but the Caribbean and a few small colonies in the Indian Ocean; North Africa was considered more promising for French expansionism.

The Ottomans had suffered a serious loss of power both inside and outside the empire in 1770. This loss was particularly felt by the states that were far from the center. Algeria, which fell under Ottoman domination in the mid-16th century, was governed in collaboration with local authorities, like other North African territories. The *deys* who governed Algeria were symbolically connected to Istanbul. After Napoleon's attack on Egypt in 1789, the Bastian Trade Centre, the foundation of which was permitted to the French in 1578 on the conditions of paying taxes and not building castles, was also occupied. Therefore, political tension increased between France and Algeria. Moreover, throughout the 18th century, Algerian pirates threatened Mediterranean commerce; this was another source of tension between the parties. Nevertheless, in the late 18th century, the balance

tions while he tries to reveal traditions.

was shifted in the Mediterranean. The British beat the French in the battles of Abukir and Trafalgar in 1798 and 1805, respectively, and solidified the British presence in the Mediterranean. In 1816, Britain sent a fleet under the command of Lord Exmont and the Dutch navy to Algeria to terminate piracy in Mediterranean pursuant to the relevant decision by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The fleet bombarded Algiers and annihilated the naval power of the country. France thus sought acquiring new colonies in this region, instead of re-acquiring those previously lost. Accordingly, making use of the weak Algerian naval force and the stringent and difficult situation of the Ottomans (due to the Greek Revolt in 1828-29), France officially occupied Algeria in 1830. The Ottoman Empire could merely protest to France because of the reform process within the country and its difficult situation in world politics.¹¹

Over the next ten years, the French could not decide on what to do with Algeria. At first, they removed the Turkish elements lest they complicate French rule. Consequently, however, Algeria became uncontrollable.¹² The French had two options: they could either indirectly rule the country through control of the seaports on the coasts or domineer and colonize all of Algeria. By 1840, France left behind ten years of indecision and finally opted for complete control of Algeria; nonetheless, they faced extensive resistance. Bugeaud, the viceroy, indicated that it was wrong to conduct only a defensive war by remaining in certain castle-towns because this meant leaving the rest of the country in the hands of tribes. Accordingly, he declared the need for a radical change in the war strategy. The basic principle of the war conducted by Bugeaud, an astute tactician, was to attack the sources of people, to burn the crops and to plunder the villages. He aimed to make Algeria surrender through basic terror. The intense violence continued until the end of the resistance, which was guided by Amīr ‘Abd al-Qādir in 1847 when, also, the Ottoman Empire waived its rights on France. The occupation of Algeria, the practiced

¹¹ For further information about the French occupation of Algeria, see (Kahraman 1993, 488-489)

¹² Tocqueville (2001b, 10-11), who eventually visited Algeria, was surprised to see how the Ottomans kept hold of the country for 300 years with so few forces and suggested studying the Ottoman model. Nevertheless, Tocqueville had forgotten that the Ottoman model was not a colonial one and that France would have to completely change the basis of its colonies if they were to follow the Ottoman example.

violence, the methods for repressing revolts, the established rule, the military problems and the settler issues occupied the agenda of Tocqueville's generation.

Tocqueville was not happy with France's position among the colonialist countries or present colonies. During his sojourn in the US, he observed what a big and wonderful country the British had once maintained while wandering in this former colony that had recently gained independence. He considered Martinique to be very weak and unimportant compared to significant parts of India and China. In his trip to America, he was often lost in nostalgia of the French Colonial Empire, whose ancient remains were then scattered. Throughout the journey, Tocqueville had the following question in mind: Why does France not have better colonies than it has at the moment? What makes the British superior to the French in obtaining better colonies? On this problem, he wrote a short chapter in *Democracy in America*, named *Some Ideas about What Prevents the French from Having Good Colonies*; nevertheless, he eventually excluded the article from the book (Tocqueville, 2001g). Therefore, Tocqueville supported France having new and more important colonies. He treated the matter of Algeria, an important issue in the intellectual and political agenda, within this context. As he often did, he visited Algeria to analyze the problem in-situ and he corresponded with colonial rulers, collected information from visitors of the country, conducted comprehensive studies about Algerian society, history, law system and Islam, and attained a central position within the problem in his day.

Visit to Algeria: Tough Face of Beautiful Land

Tocqueville wrote his first articles on Algeria in a minor journal called *La presse de Seine-et-Oise* on June 23 and August 22, 1837, while he was trying to become a parliament member. Rumor has it that he wrote the two articles to attract attention to his political skills as a candidate. Moreover, he was closely related to the Algerian problem, a vital issue for France (Swedberg 2009, 183-184). In those days, Tocqueville carefully read the Qur'ān, reflected on Islam and wrote letters to friends for information¹³ (Tocqueville 2001d). In 1837, his

¹³ Tocqueville cared about having a great deal of knowledge about an issue before writing about it. This initiated his travelling to relevant places and not just contenting himself with a collection of written texts. In the introduction of his first article on Algeria, he clearly indicates this fact: "M. Desjobert, in a recently published book on our colony that in other respects was quite good, argues that in

main concern was to demonstrate Algeria's importance and great potential for France. Tocqueville noted this fact, saying, "I have no doubt that we shall be able to raise a great monument to our country's glory on the African coast" (Tocqueville 2001f, 24).

The Algerian problem divided the French public. Tocqueville is essentially closer to the anti-colonialist liberal intellectuals. Nevertheless, in regard to colonialism, he breaks away from the liberals so much so that he even ventures to contradict his own opinions. For example, in *Democracy in America*, he explains the necessity of an ethical principle in the encounter between Western forces and weaker nations, but the Algerian problem and the extended revolt by 'Abd al-Qādir forced him to give up his loyalty to such an ethical framework.

Once elected, Tocqueville thought he needed to address the problem in a closer manner and was assigned as a member of the Royal Commission that was established in 1840. In the preparation process of a Commission report, Tocqueville paid his first visit, which lasted about a month, to Algeria, together with Beaumont and Beaumont's brother Hippolyte. The notes Tocqueville took upon disembarking show how he was impressed by Algeria: "A promised land, if one didn't have to farm with gun in hand" (Tocqueville 2001e, 37). The journey was planned to last longer, but Tocqueville had to return earlier due to an illness.¹⁴ After his return, he retreated to his chateau and elaborated his notes, forming a point of view. In 1846, Tocqueville set off for a second, longer visit to Algeria. Probably because of his illness from the first trip, he did not demand to travel upcountry in the second trip (Tocqueville 1862c, 83). In 1847, he took charge as

order to discuss a foreign country properly, it is well never to have been there. This is an advantage I share with him, but I hardly pride myself on it. On the contrary, I take the popular view that in order to inform others about something, it is useful to know it oneself, and that to know something well, it is not useless to have seen it. So I do not pride myself on not having been to Africa, but I shall attempt to profit from the accounts of several of my friends who have spent a long time there, and to make it as little apparent as possible that I have never myself witnessed the things I am trying to depict" (Tocqueville 2001b, 5).

¹⁴ The disease was an opportunity for Tocqueville to understand it was more difficult than it looked to penetrate Algerian inlands; but he considered the illness only as a consequence of carelessness. In the wake of his voyages, he wrote reports and articles; besides, as a typical 19th century intellectual, he left behind many notes, memoirs and letters.

judicial clerk in the new commission, established by Parliament, to assess the occupation policy in Algeria. His two reports in the process played their part in determining the French policy in Algeria.

Colonialism for National Glory

Tocqueville paid his first visit to Algeria at a time when the country was subject to intense violence, and there were serious debates on the issue in France. During and after his visit, Tocqueville indicated, in his letters to General Bugeaud and in his articles, his support for the strategy of spreading the violence. According to Tocqueville, a strategy to destroy everyone would not be right; nevertheless, an amicable policy could not attain achievement either. For him, Bugeaud's method was the only option for breaking the resistance:

On the other hand, I have often heard men in France whom I respect, but with whom I do not agree, find it wrong that we burn harvests, that we empty silos, and finally that we seize unarmed men, women, and children.

These, in my view, are unfortunate necessities, but ones to which any people that wants to wage war on the Arabs is obliged to submit (Tocqueville 2001a, 70).

In this text, his main target is the liberals whom he worked with in Parliament. The liberals considered the colony to be costly and economically useless, but for Tocqueville, a colony could not be evaluated only in financial terms. According to him, the possession of colonies signifies a political prerequisite to becoming a great nation. Tocqueville indicates that France would never quit Algeria due to threats by "a few barbarian tribes." If France behaved so, it would be seen as a second rate and weak state. Instead, the sections inhabited by settlers should be fortified and transformed into agricultural oases; thus revealing European civilization (Tocqueville 2001a, 59).

Indeed, Tocqueville declared that European settlers in Algeria could not live together with the locals, just as with the Negroes and Indians in America. However, he also announced that it was time to leave behind military policy, which was about to come to its end, for the agricultural colonial model of settlers. The establishment of small, well-protected settler villages would provide the European population with due safety and peace. Although Tocqueville never directly criticized Bugeaud's policy, he argued that military politics had reached their limit and that public opinion had begun to evolve to-

wards a view that defended the necessity of ending the bloody stage. The suppression of the ‘Abd al-Qādir revolt and control of Algeria were influential on the process. Now, the foundations were laid for applying the new models recommended by Tocqueville.

Colonialism for Solution of National Problems: Dispossession, and Construction of a European Society

Tocqueville prioritizes the glory and pride of his country over anything else. More importantly, he believes that social problems due to industrialization cannot be solved if France falls behind in colonialism. According to Tocqueville, colonies are necessary to eliminate many internal and external dangers against France. “France cannot forget those of her children who live in the colonies, nor lose sight of her greatness, which demands that these colonies progress” (Tocqueville 2001h, 221).

In the first half of the 19th century, France considered colonies as an opportunity to found an agricultural utopia. A colony was seen as a means for solving the social and political problems within the colonizing country through provision of land to landless proletariat or exportation of ordinary criminals.

According to Tocqueville, in Algeria, France needed to suppress the Arabs and the tribes through violence before settling a European community who would live apart from the locals. A form of economic supervision had to be established following the military supervision. For this purpose, Tocqueville recommended deploying more French settlers in Algeria. Because more than 100,000 settlers taken to Algeria were stuck in cities, the colonization could hardly attain success. Tocqueville suggested providing these settlers with land so that they would appropriate Algeria as their homeland. For him, the parceling out of rural areas and the foundation of French settlements were needed to build a consistent and sustainable colonial policy.

Tocqueville put forth these ideas in the light of his travel to America. For him, the rural nature of American society was an important factor for success in the colonization of this vast continent. In fact, Tocqueville was aware of the Indian massacre, which lasted until the mid-19th century to rarefy the Indian population and seize the Indian lands; moreover, he knew that a similar slaughter would have to take place in Algeria. As he indicates in a cold-blooded manner, he considers this fact to be an unfortunate necessity. According to Tocque-

ville, once a country decides to become colonialist, it has to commit such crimes. The civilization, which should arrive in such lands in the future, would have enough glory and brightness to forgive everything it did in the past.

If settlers are provided with privileges and political power and if the colonialists become more powerful in economic terms, it will be possible to give lands to the landless villagers and proletariat in France and to more easily control the colony. Nevertheless, the problem of property should be solved to settle the French permanently in Algerian lands outside of the cities. To that end, it is first of all necessary to take the land from out of the hands of Algerians.

Establish by a law, or at the very least by royal ordinance, forms of expropriation that are less rapid and less savage than those used in Algeria. Impose the obligation of paying a real price for the property. Surround the declaration of eminent domain with certain formalities that prevent it from being as lightly used as it is now (Tocqueville 2001a, 114).

For Tocqueville, private property is among the “unalterable laws;” accordingly, he considers it to be an important institution for the existence of modern society (Tocqueville 1970, 75). This was the dominant view of the time, whereupon property could belong exclusively to the bourgeoisie in Europe and to the white outside of Europe. At the time when Tocqueville wrote these words, Marx and Engels (1976) declared in *The Communist Manifesto* the central position of private property for a bourgeois society and that dispossession was carried out for the sake of private property. In any case, dispossession was required for modern property. In the country, dispossession was employed for property based on bourgeois society; abroad, colonialists dispossessed locals to obtain property. This, in a sense, led to an equilibrium. The proletariat and peasantry were dispossessed in the homeland, which in turn had to possess colonies to provide them with property. As a matter of fact, Tocqueville saw colonies as a principal means of appeasing the ruthless struggle between classes in the motherland and of solving relevant social problems.

There is, however, a fundamental difference between the pre-colonial statuses of the Algerian and American societies that Tocqueville tries to model. In North America, the Indians were leading a nomadic life, whereas the North African locals had adopted a sedentary life for thousands of years. In America, no private property is in ques-

tion regarding lands, whereas Algeria has a private property regime on legal grounds. Therefore, it was necessary to dispossess the Algerian locals to provide the French settlers with lands and to hand over the ownership of Algeria to the French. Consequently, this difference may be the reason behind the failure of the French in Algeria compared to the success of the American colony in establishing a new European society.

Tocqueville asserts that people will not easily succumb to losing their lands; as a result, only armed French villagers could live in Algeria. Thus, if settlers have land and property, they will seek solutions to their own problems and make Algeria their homeland. The defense of private property and the fervor for earning money constitute significant passions for protecting one's colony. Otherwise, the provisional-looking occupants will indeed have to leave the country one day. These ideas by Tocqueville were mostly grounded in his almost obsessive conception of an egalitarian democracy that will emerge through the minor aristocracy as based on land ownership. He never mentions any future trade with Algeria or industry to be established therein. In fact, he considers merchants to be speculators. For him, if French people possess the lands, then all will be better for France.

Knowledge and Power: Footsteps of Orientalist Scholar

Tocqueville believed in the necessity of being knowledgeable about the history and society of occupied lands to execute a flawless and successful colonialism. His private correspondences, reports, and speeches explicitly reveal this conviction. According to him, the success of the British in India was grounded on the possession of such knowledge. Therefore, Tocqueville claims that the French should establish a school like the British Haileybury College (Tocqueville 2001c, 148). Such a school will ensure informing colonial leaders about their new land, which in turn will lead to a more prolific and efficient rule. By saying "One can study barbarous people only with arms in hand" (2001b, 130), Tocqueville asserts that the control of a colony is crucial for obtaining information. Thus, he puts forth a close relation between Orientalism and colonialism approximately 140 years earlier than Said. Tocqueville believes the veil on Algeria is removed thanks to colonialism; now, the "right and natural boundaries" of dominance will be determined through an analysis on the history and social institutions of the Arabs and the tribes. "The true and natural limits of our domination in Africa, what must be the normal state

of our forces there for a long time to come, the instruments we need and the appropriate form of administration for the peoples who live there, what we may hope of them, and what it is wise to fear.” (Tocqueville 2001c, 130). As Richter (1963, 365) indicates, this is the alternative view brought about by Tocqueville, who levees all his intellectual skills for the better colonization of Algeria. As a social scientist, he tries to create a colony model via deeper insight into the problems through historical and social structure.

According to Tocqueville, France fails in Algeria mostly because of lack of information about the latter. He often told his friends about necessity of analyses on Algerian history, social structure, Ottoman rule, Islamic law, and Islamic belief system. “It is victory that, establishing numerous and necessary connections between them and us, led us to penetrate their customs, their ideas, their beliefs, and finally yielded the secret of how to govern them” (Tocqueville 2001c, 130). Accordingly, he comprehended that more in-depth knowledge about a society would make it easier to rule. Thus, Tocqueville was among early thinkers who foresaw the need for an orientalist portrait as a vanguard of colonialists, just as depicted by Said (1977) in his *Orientalism*. In this respect, Tocqueville once again cites British model. British had sent the most reputable scholars in order to educate the officials in colonies; now, France had to follow this path. Indeed, the French were aware of such a necessity, as the first orientalist school was established in France. Nonetheless, due to the weak structure in the second half of the 18th century and the havoc following the Revolution, the French were late in building a system similar to that of the British (in the first quarter of 19th century). Tocqueville seeks the harmony established by the British between the orientalist and colonial officials.

In this respect, the demolition of former administrative records would be a huge mistake in Tocqueville’s eyes. The abolition of all local administrators will be an even greater fault (Swedberg 2009, 184). According to Tocqueville, a country can only be ruled in collaboration with local administrators. He insistently emphasizes that the full-scale colonial occupation started by the French in Algeria is unsustainable. In his opinion (2001c, 147), if France ensures the complete surrender of Algerians, then France should educate and transform them into a more European and high-profile society. Thus, the glory of the French nation will become even more apparent as it fathers a lower society. Indeed, Tocqueville sees colonialism as a

method for restoring the political virtues, such as glory, fame and courage that the Republic lost due to extensive individualization. For him, a colony is the shortest and least costly way to unify a nation towards an ideal. If the aboriginals surrender to French authority, they have to fulfil their obligations to France. Otherwise, France, “God forbid,” shall have to “take the sin by making them subject to what American Indians suffered.” Indeed, “This is how, without recourse to the sword, the Europeans in North America ended by pushing the Indians off of their territory. We must take care that it is not the same for us” (Tocqueville 2001c, 144).

Soft vs. Hard Despotism: Conquest of the Other as a Solution

Despotism is a concept that emerged in circulation once again as a fundamental component of European political and literary terminology in the 18th century, when the definitions regarding modern society and political forms began to mature in the West. The word “despot,” which originally dates back to Aristotle, turned into an adjective to define the current political system in the East. Montesquieu occasionally talked about the dangers of despotism in the West, and even Quesnay called out the danger of despotism in a well-structured system; nevertheless, at the end of the Age of Enlightenment, there was almost a conciliation that despotism would be used exclusively for the East. Hereunder, a kind of tyranny could be in question in the West due to domination by a political power, but this would be a temporary case. On the other hand, despotism appears as a systematic abuse of power, which is a natural consequence of the social structure in the East. Tocqueville is aware of the strong negation in despotism and uses the term for the industrial bourgeoisie, who he does not really like. Thus, he draws apart from the political writing tradition that uses despotism as a definition peculiar to the East and uses the term “democratic despotism” to describe the strong dominance of the industrial bourgeoisie, whose footsteps are heard in the West (Tocqueville 2010c, 1256-1261). On the other hand, Tocqueville considers colonialism to be an element in preventing despotism by the French bourgeoisie via its dynamic nature for the nation. In this respect, despotism means controlling the civilized, modern French in an unrestricted and unpreventable manner; according to Tocqueville, the suppression of uncivilized others is not included within the definition of despotism.

For Tocqueville, in a society established by industrialists, noble feelings leave little room for individual pursuits of interest. This is mostly because modern society is based on individualist foundations. In this regard, Tocqueville is concerned that this individualist egoism, which pulls people away from society and impels them to gain and collect more possessions, paves way for a new despotism. This is why he mentions a democratic despotism and uses these two words specifically, which were scarcely united until then in the history of Western thinking: “Democracy is even more compatible with despotism than with liberty” (Tocqueville 2010a, 76). In the chapter titled “What Type of Despotism Democratic Nations Have to Fear”, he discusses at length that, contrary to popular belief, despotism is quite possible in a modern democratic system: “It seems that, if despotism came to be established among the democratic nations of today, it would have other characteristics; it would be more extensive and milder, and it would degrade men without tormenting them” (Tocqueville 2010c, 1248). In such a society, everybody will focus only on his own affairs and will not pay interest to public issues; consequently, the government will begin to entirely dominate every affair regarding guilds, families and, finally, individuals (Tocqueville 2010b, 398). The power vacuum of the government fills the gap due to the fragmentation of society. In other writings, Tocqueville describes the problem as the centralization of the modern state, and points it out as the emergence of a soft democratic despotism. In the old regime, guilds, families, churches, and commercial unions prevented any attempt toward despotism, whereas no such forces are left now (Tocqueville 2010b, 399-400). In this respect, Tocqueville grounds his observations in American society and seems unaware about the working class, as fervently told by Marx, or the emergence of trade unions. He speaks as if none of these existed. Tocqueville seeks an individuality that does not pull the individual away from society and that participates in social life pursuant to a public objective. In such a community, the individual would regain his self-confidence thanks to being with others; the individual as part of a collective would obtain information and adopt personal courage.

In his notes in America, Tocqueville asks “Why do elite people die away as civilization spreads?” He also notes, “We are yet to come across an elite” (Journey to America, 161, 290). According to him, upon individualization within the society, the aristocratic, courageous, brave, and sensitive people of the past fade away, whereas

weaker and ordinary people become more common. This may be because the individual feels himself to be too small and lonesome in the face of the huge changes of the era. Everything changes in such a rapid and extensive manner that the individual has nothing to which to turn. According to Tocqueville, this weakness of individuals will finally pave way for the arrival of a buffoon like Napoleon III and the establishment of despotism. Tocqueville's predictions in 1830s in *Democracy in America* did become a reality for French society within merely two decades.¹⁵

A common critical view of the time considered the middle class to be the source of all evil. A vast section of society, including socialists and conservatives, concluded that the bourgeoisie changed society in an irrevocable manner pursuant to their own personal interests. The bourgeois civilization was a seductive one that detracted man from what is human. This class had become major landholder via earnings through trade and industry; consequently, it had radically captured society. According to many writers and artists in Tocqueville's generation, the bourgeois obsession for wealth created a world where everything had a price: art became a commodity, life and death became marketable, principles turned into interests, and the beauty of nature transformed into a commercial advantage (Boesche 1987, 72-77).

The central value of money is strikingly told in the works of Balzac, Dickens and many other thinkers of the time; the resulting deterioration gradually paved way for the emergence of new norms in the whole society. Although Tocqueville did not express it, the instrument of the state would soon capture many things that social structure had once dealt with on its own; this would, as another Frenchman would say a century later, lead to disciplinary society (Foucault 1995). Tocqueville was right in observing that in modern society, despotism comes to light only in a democratic liberal bourgeois society. Time would tell how democratic society would besiege the individual on every side through centralization and the structure of bureaucracy. Sixty years later, Weber (1978, 1403-1409) would explain the same by indicating that modern society is entrapped in an iron cage. According to him bureaucratization and rationalization may be an *inescapable fate* for modern society.

¹⁵ For a detailed analysis on the problem, see (Boesche 1987, 54-70)

Tocqueville severely criticizes despotism arising from equality. This theme would eventually feed many dystopias. He notes equality as a killer of virtues in public life and claims that equality lays the foundation for despotism by “leaving the individuals together but deprived of any common connection and tearing them apart.” “This, apart from equality, contributes powerfully to divide men, to make them mistrust each other’s judgment and seek enlightenment only within themselves alone” (Tocqueville 2010d, 708). In an order where people no longer care for one another, a despotic rule becomes possible because people are now deprived of the possibility of blending together. In such an order, every individual is seen as a client rather than a citizen. Tocqueville is loyal to the great civil society ideal of the Enlightenment; for him, the new lifestyle, which prioritizes individual interests and pleasures and overlooks other people, leads to the gathering of power in certain unsavory hands. People begin to lead a life without becoming a part of it, like an audience watching the stage. They like the order and harmony on the stage; nevertheless, as the harmony increases, their chance to intervene with the events on the stage diminishes. Establishers of the order on a stage can easily control the audience’s ideas and actions through this spectacle. According to Tocqueville, centralization and bureaucratization advance as an indispensable part of a democratic bourgeois society; consequently, decisions about society are made by certain power groups. These groups are the industrialist and merchant bourgeoisie who Tocqueville dislikes and describes as the new aristocracy.¹⁶

Tocqueville sees the modern prison as one of the best models of despotism (Beaumont and Tocqueville 1964, 47). The system in a prison established and operated by Quakers in Philadelphia inspired Tocqueville to study the functioning of the modern bourgeois society. According to him, the three principles (equality, isolation and weakness) that enable the establishment of absolute authority over prison-

¹⁶ Very few social theorists were aware of this fact in the 19th century. Almost all thinkers in the conservative, liberal or socialist flanks considered industry as a development that would bring along new horizons for humanity. According to them, the rise in production will generate a mechanism to ensure wealth and equality in society. In this respect, Tocqueville dramatically pulls away from his contemporaries and approaches the criticisms on modernity that would follow five decades later.

ers are also the principles of the democratic bourgeois society.¹⁷ In these prisons, which Tocqueville and his fellow traveler Beaumont visited, the individuals are isolated from one another by means of a social system, as it is too costly to isolate them through an architectural form. Thus, only a small number of guardians are able to manage the large number of prisoners whose connection with one another is interrupted and who are helpless and unable to organize.¹⁸ Terrified in the face of this technique, Tocqueville observed that American democracy is formed around this model, as is seen in the isolated structure of the rural regions he eventually visited. The American production and consumption system, the development of social life and the forms of city-building entrap people within their own personal worlds in search of personal desires and compel them to live in a disconnected manner; consequently, they are easily manageable by a small minority, similar to the guardians in prison.¹⁹ This rupture between and among people renders democratic despotism stronger than any despot and draws them to a total submissiveness before the instrument of state. Such despotism draws its strength from the lack of an apparent despot; thus, it is hard to observe and intervene. In fact, Tocqueville introduces the modern disciplinary society, which Foucault (1995, 195-228) would conceptualize about a century later, by grounding it on the “Panopticon” prison model. Tocqueville diagnoses the monsters of Nazism and totalitarianism in their cradles long before their emergence in Western democracy. Such farsightedness is partly due to his being one of the critics of the industrial bourgeoisie that is the founding power behind the present social structure.

Tocqueville belonged to an aristocratic family dating back to the 15th century; nevertheless, one will cut corners by saying he has a grudge against the modern bourgeois society and thus defends his

¹⁷ For an important discussion about the relation established by Tocqueville between prison and despotism, see (Boesche 1980)

¹⁸ The system in use in the mentioned prison bears similarities with “Panopticon” prison model, which was designed by the English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in 1785. Probably, the founders of the prison were aware of Bentham, who was also influential in the American Revolution. Tocqueville discovered that the model was not confined to the prison but rather included entire social order. Debates on the issue were started, not by him, a century later by *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* by the French Michel Foucault (1995).

¹⁹ For analyses by Tocqueville on democracy, see (Manent 1996)

former aristocratic lifestyle. Indeed, Tocqueville knows that the aristocratic order is irrevocably over. Yet, he is severely disturbed by the new social form trivializing individuals and gradually gathering power under monopoly. As a former aristocrat, he thinks that direct arguments about the bourgeoisie may lead to adverse reactions; therefore, he adopts a cynical style and writes about democratic despotism. Indeed, Tocqueville sees the new middle class, the subject of democratic despotism, as the source of the common weakness and helplessness in society. He expresses his ideas by writing about the distant America, and not directly on France. However, as he hints in a letter to his father from the US, he has France in mind in the process (Tocqueville 2010e).

We cannot see, however, the criticisms by Tocqueville on despotism in regard to relations with non-Western societies. He complains a great deal about isolation in the modern industrial society; interestingly enough, he recommends isolation in the administration of colonies. He suggests that bourgeois despotism, which he accuses for destroying all aristocratic values and spreading around the world, compels the Algerian people to isolation through common terror. Moreover, Tocqueville advises isolation for Algerians lest they hurt the colonial authority once slavery is abolished.

According to Tocqueville, war is bad; however, a calm peace is worse. Peace and order lead a nation to degradation and lay the foundation for its enslavement; war is necessary to correct this pacification (Tocqueville 2010c, 1244). In this respect, Tocqueville tries to prove his point by discussing how social inaction in China and India pushed these societies to degradation and slavery (Tocqueville 1985). Inspired by intellectual gurus such as Montesquieu, Turgot and Condorcet, Tocqueville believes that disruptions keep a nation alive and provide a basis for freedom. For him, societies that lose their vivacity may soon lose their freedom as well. In this context, he explains the fall of Ancient Rome through the continuous dynamism of barbarians against the loss of vitality in settled Roman civilization:

Because Roman civilization died following the invasion of the barbarians, we are perhaps too inclined to believe that civilization cannot die otherwise.

If the light that enlightens us ever happened to go out, it would grow dark little by little and as if by itself.

...

The Chinese, while following the path of their fathers, had forgotten the reasons that had guided the latter. ... So the Chinese could not change anything. They had to give up improvement. They were forced to imitate their fathers always and in all things, in order not to throw themselves into impenetrable shadows, if they diverged for an instant from the road that the latter had marked" (Tocqueville 2010d, 785-786).

Likewise, Tocqueville greets the constant change and colonial expansion in America. For France, the shortest way to the same end is to make a colonial war permanent because it is profitable in every aspect. Otherwise, the new despotism will take society under domination. In fact, Tocqueville discovers in-depth the fundamental principle for the smooth functioning of the modern political system: War and other. Underlying the fact that despots are always capable of finding lawyers to legalize their deeds, Tocqueville (1856, 223-224) insists that the legal system in the modern democratic bourgeois society supports an illusion. For example, the American government has done in a legal way to American Indians what the Spanish could not do through bloody methods. They were very quick to end the massacre so that no one could accuse them of murders. "The conduct of the Americans of the United States toward the natives radiates, in contrast, the purest love of forms and of legality" (Tocqueville 2010b, 546).

In this respect, Tocqueville's writings on Algeria find a totally different meaning. Defending the necessity of possessing colonies for protecting the pride of nation, Tocqueville considers war, disorder, and colonization for national pride as an opportunity to compensate for democratic despotism. In a humanistic manner, however, the colonial wars cause the destruction of other societies and are used as a means for promoting or concealing strict control within the country. Once the nation is flattered and content with itself, the internal control becomes more legitimate, acceptable and even demandable, just as in the modern US. Therefore, Tocqueville was unable to develop his criticism and to see that the colonies were indeed an instrument for reinforcing the power in the country. This may be due to his inclination towards war as a former aristocrat.

Conclusion: Position of Other in Defining Modern Society

In his voyage to England, Tocqueville visited a factory in Manchester and was shocked and terrified in the face of the miserable and

inhuman lifestyle of the workers, as already depicted by Engels (1975). The workers were living cuddled up in vaults and sheds while the bourgeoisie were enjoying a luxury life in mansions; these observations showed him the dreadfulness of the upcoming industrial era (Tocqueville 1958, 92-96). He estimated that the domination of this group, which he called the industrialist aristocracy in *Democracy in America*, would bring along the most harmful and strictest rule ever. This trouble of industry transformed the world into a crueler and more degraded place; eventually, it would sweep out all high feelings before finally decaying both classes. The greed of some for wealth and fortune would steer everyone to endless misery. As a member of the losing side, the aristocracy, Tocqueville thought this was different and more harmful than any former period. For him, this new order gradually levelled down human courage, creativity and intelligence. In a very early period, Tocqueville foresaw how industry reduces man to a one-dimensional being, thus weakening him. Yet, while worrying about suppressed European workers, Tocqueville also defended dispossession in Algeria. He accused the new, industry-related authority for reinforcing harm on the people while he reflected upon establishing a more profitable colonial domination; on the one hand, he defended the emancipation of people through socialization, and on the other, he generated ideas for how slaves could be isolated and controlled following abolition.

Indeed, this controversy, called the “Tocqueville Problem” by Swedberg (2009), deserves attention. According to Swedberg, there is a significant difference, due to lack of empathy, between his general assents on private life and his arguments in his public and political life with regard to colonies and slavery. Swedberg (2009, 198) adds that this problem is not special to Tocqueville and is an illusion that includes the entire 19th century thinking. Therefore, like his contemporaries with different opinions, such as Marx and J. S. Mill, Tocqueville has customized standards for Europeans and others (i.e., for whites and blacks). Perhaps he defends double-standard ethics for national glory, similar to the bourgeoisie whom he accuses of being hypocritical wealth hunters.

Nevertheless, the problem has a framework beyond the double-standard. Tocqueville’s analysis of modern society is grounded on solutions for preventing the despotic domination of industrialists on society via an alleged democracy. According to Tocqueville, the individualization, which comes with industry, paves way for the collapse

of solidarity networks in the society; as a result, a society model where authority is invisible but everyone inspects one another on behalf of authority comes to be, similar to modern prisons. The formation of such a society can be prevented only through maintaining the dynamism of a nation by means of the liveliness of individuals who act pursuant to feelings of the past, such as glory, reputation and honor. In this regard, Tocqueville sees colonialism as the only way out for preventing the formation of despotism in the West. The people, rendered passive, will dispose of passivity thanks to colonialism; thus, the unlimited control by the industrialists over the people will be hindered. Likewise, violence should be taken abroad to prevent violence at home, and despotism should be taken abroad to prevent despotism within. Therefore, Tocqueville's indecisive attitude regarding colonialism, slavery and the "other" is not merely due to an individual double-standard. Rather, he is fed by analyses on modern society. Like his contemporaries, Tocqueville classifies the entire world as West and others and sees the others only as a means in the constitution of a modern society.

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